

## Down With the UN Starvation Embargo!



AP photos



Reuters

## U.S. Hands Off Iraq!

SEPTEMBER 3—The war drums are beating ever more loudly in Washington. After months of “leaked” invasion scenarios and strident ultimatums for a “regime change” in Baghdad, Vice President Richard Cheney and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld last week declared the obvious: the Bush cabal is openly charting a course for war against Iraq. In response to widespread expressions of unease or opposition from imperialist allies, Near Eastern client regimes and even Republican stalwarts in the U.S., the White House arrogantly declares that it will press ahead with or without Congressional “debate,” international support or a United Nations fig leaf.

Some 200,000 U.S. and British troops are already in the region, including thousands just across the border from Iraq in Kuwait. Faced with Saudi Arabia’s opposition to the use of bases there, the Pentagon is massively expanding and equipping its air base in the tiny emirate of Qatar. Washington is mollifying opposition to the use of critical military facilities in Turkey with a \$4 billion aid deal, down payment for future services rendered. On August 8, 5,000 Turkish troops reportedly joined a large number of U.S. Special Forces commandos already in place in the imperialist-controlled Kurdish area of northern Iraq to attack the Hurriyet airfield, located near Iraq’s main oil fields.

Cheney, Rumsfeld & Co. are itching to “finish the job” they began under Bush Sr. in the 1991 Persian Gulf War, when then-Defense Secretary Cheney ghoulishly autographed a “bunker buster” bomb of the kind that incinerated hundreds of civilians crammed into a Baghdad air raid shelter. That war began with the bombing of a baby food factory and ended with the massacre of tens of thousands of Iraqi troops, literally shot in the back as they retreated along the infamous “highway of death.” The U.S. deliberately targeted water sewage and treatment systems, devastating what had been one of the most developed societies in the Near East. In the years since, thousands of families have seen their loved ones buried or



AP

U.S. warplanes menace Iraq. Women demonstrate in Baghdad, January 2001, on tenth anniversary of 1991 U.S. imperialist war.

homes demolished under U.S. and British bombs. A million and a half more have fallen victim to the more “civilized” terror of the United Nations starvation blockade, among them an estimated 5,000 children under the age of five who die every month from malnutrition and lack of medical care.

The war propaganda being churned out to justify another round of imperialist mass murder is breathtaking in its cynicism. The wealthiest, most powerful purveyor of terror in history fulminates against tinpot ruler Saddam Hussein as a menace to the world, “another Hitler.” Britain, which gassed insurgent Kurdish villages in Iraq in the 1920s, joins the U.S., which saturated the jungles of Vietnam with Agent Orange and CS gas, in denouncing Iraq’s use of chemical weapons in the 1980-88 war with Iran. The U.S. ought to know: it was secretly aiding and militarily advising Iraq at the time. The Pentagon “wasn’t so horrified by Iraq’s use of gas,” recalled a veteran of that covert aid program. “It was just another way of killing people” (*New York Times*, 18 August).

Washington rants about purported “weapons of mass destruction” in Iraq while providing Zionist Israel with fighter jets and helicopter gunships to kill Palestinian kids and wreak mass destruction in the Occupied Territories. And the

war-crazed Zionists could well nuke Baghdad should a single Iraqi missile land on Israeli soil. The Pentagon’s “Nuclear Posture Review” allows for a “pre-emptive” nuclear strike against Iraq, among other countries. Coming from the ruling class that A-bombed Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, this is no idle threat. Now Cheney ludicrously claims that Iraq, whose only nuclear reactor was bombed by the Israelis in 1981, is on the verge of developing nuclear weapons. The truth is the U.S. wouldn’t so readily contemplate an attack if Iraq did have a nuclear arsenal, which remains about the only real guarantor of national sovereignty in today’s world.

War is the continuation of politics by

other means. Imperialist war is the concentrated expression of the “normal” workings of the capitalist system, which daily condemns countless numbers of people around the world to death by malnutrition, lack of medical care and industrial “accidents.” As always, imperialist terror abroad will mean further repression and regimentation at home.

Wielding the bodies of the thousands slaughtered in the World Trade Center attack, the Bush administration declared an open-ended “war on terror” against all perceived enemies, foreign and domestic. The cry of “national unity” was used to mobilize the population behind a murderous military adventure in Afghanistan. In the U.S., it has meant anti-immigrant witchhunts and racist dragnets of Near Eastern and South Asian immigrants, increased surveillance and spying, draconian attacks on democratic rights and new laws targeting the rights of organized labor in particular. Now the government has met the possibility of a West Coast port strike with threats of everything from Taft-Hartley injunctions to a military occupation of the docks.

Against the “national unity” promoted by the bosses and the pro-capitalist labor bureaucrats, we counterpose the class unity of the proletariat internationally. If the working class is to defend its interests against the capitalist exploiters, it must stand in solidarity with the neocolonial victims of American imperialist depredation. In the face of impending imperialist war, we strive to inculcate in the working class and antiwar youth the Marxist understanding laid out by Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky in the 1930s:

“The struggle against war, properly understood and executed, presupposes the

*continued on page 12*

### Young Spartacus

### On the Slogan “No U.S. Aid to Israel!”

### See Page 6



# NYC Transit: Deathtrap for Workers

## Christopher Bonaparte Killed on Tracks



Bonaparte family

On August 9, New York City subway track worker Christopher Bonaparte was struck and killed by a rerouted A train in the subway tunnel near Liberty Avenue in Brooklyn. The circumstances surrounding his death—the normal hazards that track workers face every day—illuminate the callous indifference to the lives of workers exhibited by New York City Transit (NYCT) brass.

Bonaparte was a flagman. On the night of the accident, he was stationed some distance up track from his work crew in order to stop oncoming trains if necessary and alert his crew to “clear up” to allow the train to go by. Because of a sick pas-

senger on the A line in that area, a south-bound A train was rerouted from the local to the express track. Normally, at 3:00 in the morning there are no trains running on the express tracks. Bonaparte knew nothing of the service change and was struck by a train that he did not expect when he stepped onto the south-bound express tracks.

Over the past 20 years, nearly one transit worker per year has been killed by electrocution or being hit by trains. The majority of those victims were working in the track division, which is heavily black and lower paid. NYCT doesn't issue radios to flagmen, only to super-

visors. When trains are rerouted, crews working on the tracks are often not notified. The tunnels are poorly lit; footing is hazardous. According to NYC transit officials, the flagman assignment is normally considered a safe one! In reality, working track is scary and, of course, deadly dangerous.

Chris Bonaparte was killed by a system that substitutes workers' blood for capital investment: extra flagmen and clean, well-lit tunnels cost money, and so do radios. NYCT spends millions on drug testing and company spies, but won't spend the money for the necessary safety measures or adequate manpower to save workers' lives. Massive funding is needed to rebuild New York City's antiquated, decrepit transit system and institute real safeguards for workers' (and riders') safety.

Even as Chris Bonaparte lay dying, the NYCT's “safety” program was in motion. In accordance with standard company procedure, the traumatized train operator was drug-tested, as was the blood of Bonaparte. As usual, the investigation had little to do with safety—liability is what concerns the transit bosses. The conclusion is always the same: the worker made an error, and his death is the result of his own faulty actions. So blame the worker—dead men can't talk. Liability of the NYCT = \$0.

This was the same slander used against the late Samuel McPhaul, another flagman who died of electrocution in a dark and hazardous tunnel just over a year ago. In this case the company's Office of System Safety distributed a report based on McPhaul's subpoenaed medical records to track supervisors and track workers in order to squelch workers' anger and push management's baseless claim that McPhaul's prior health problems, such as high blood pressure, caused him to simply collapse onto the 600-volt third rail. At the Linden Avenue train yard in Brooklyn, supervisors went so far as to spend *four hours* reading aloud the entire document to assembled workers. According to Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 100 shop steward Michael Smith, “There was no purpose behind

it. They were just trying to blame Mr. McPhaul for his own death. They were going through this man's personal life” (*Chief-Leader*, 12 July). TWU Local 100 protested these outrageous actions by transit officials, getting them to cease distribution of the report.

Belying their claims of promoting safety, the NYCT does not meet the minimal state and federal standards for safety on the tracks. But the union's recent push for stricter standards falls far short of what is needed. Even now, after the death of Bonaparte, the union is worse than silent, going so far as to alibi the company's murderous and vindictive policies. “There were no safety violations. It seems to be just an unfortunate reality of this line of work,” said Local 100's vice president of track John Samuelson (*Chief-Leader*, 16 August). When a worker dies on the job there certainly is a violation! It should not happen and it certainly would happen a lot less if the next time such an incident occurred the union mobilized workers throughout the system to down tools and walk out in recognition of their fallen co-worker and in protest against the bosses' disregard of safety.

When current Local 100 president Roger Toussaint was a track worker and an up-and-coming union activist he made a big issue out of safety, but now he is a “responsible labor statesman.” The only way workers have ever won anything, including safety in the workplace, is by wielding their power in defiance of the bosses' laws. *Transit workers must fight for elected union safety committees with the power to immediately shut down any unsafe working condition on the spot*, unlike the present situation where union stewards and safety reps can only respond to the most outrageous violations.

Chris Bonaparte's funeral was a sad and somber occasion for the mostly black track workers who came to pay their respects. Every member of Local 100 should have been there, but the union leadership hardly publicized this terrible death on the tracks. It will take a class-struggle leadership, committed to fighting capitalism, to mobilize workers in defense of their lives and their futures. ■



TROTSKY

Leon Trotsky advocated and explained the policy of revolutionary defensism as it applied to China.

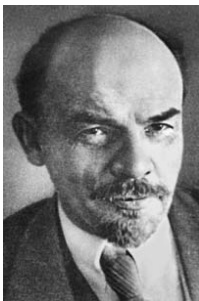
We must carefully distinguish between the imperialist countries and the backward countries, colonial and semicolonial. The attitude of the working class organizations in and toward these two groupings cannot be the same. The present war between China and Japan is a classic example. It is absolutely indisputable that, on the part of Japan, it is a war of rapine and that, on the part of China, it is a war of national defense. Only conscious or unconscious agents of Japanese imperialism can put the two countries on the same plane....

The working class movement cannot remain neutral in a struggle between those who wish to enslave and those who are enslaved. The working class movement in China, Japan, and in the entire world must oppose with all its strength the Japanese imperialist bandits and support the people of China and their army.

This does not at all suppose a blind confidence in the Chinese government and in Chiang Kai-shek.... In participating in the legitimate and progressive national war against Japanese invasion, the working class organizations must preserve their entire *political independence* of the Chiang Kai-shek government....

A pacifist who has the same attitude toward China as toward Japan in this terrible conflict is like one who would identify a lockout with a strike. The working class movement is against a lockout by the exploiters and for a strike of the exploited. At the same time, strikes are often led by misleaders who are capable of betraying the working class movement during the strike. This is no reason for workers to refuse to participate in the strike but it is reason for mobilizing the working masses against the defections and the treason of the leadership. It often happens that during or after a strike the organized masses change their leadership. This can very well happen in China. But this change can be favorable for the people only if the Chinese and international working class organizations support China against Japan.

—Leon Trotsky, “Pacifism and China” (25 September 1937)



LENIN

### Defense of Semicolonial Countries Against Imperialist Attack

*The Bush administration is openly preparing to invade Iraq. The working class in the U.S. and throughout the world must support the military defense of Iraq against American imperialism, despite the reactionary and oppressive Saddam Hussein regime. When in the late 1930s imperialist Japan invaded and occupied sections of China, then ruled by the reactionary nationalist regime of Chiang Kai-shek, Bolshevik leader*

## WORKERS VANGUARD

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

EDITOR: Alan Wilde

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PRODUCTION MANAGER: Susan Fuller

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Irene Gardner

EDITORIAL BOARD: Ray Bishop (managing editor), Bruce André, Jon Brule, Karen Cole, Paul Cone, George Foster, Liz Gordon, Walter Jennings, Jane Kerrigan, Len Meyers, James Robertson, Joseph Seymour, Alison Spencer

The Spartacist League is the U.S. Section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

*Workers Vanguard* (ISSN 0276-0746) published biweekly, except skipping three alternate issues in June, July and August (beginning with omitting the second issue in June) and with a 3-week interval in December, by the Spartacist Publishing Co., 299 Broadway, Suite 318, New York, NY 10007. Telephone: (212) 732-7862 (Editorial), (212) 732-7861 (Business). Address all correspondence to: Box 1377, GPO, New York, NY 10116. E-mail address: [vanguard@tiac.net](mailto:vanguard@tiac.net). Domestic subscriptions: \$10.00/22 issues. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Workers Vanguard*, Box 1377, GPO, New York, NY 10116.

Opinions expressed in signed articles or letters do not necessarily express the editorial viewpoint.

The closing date for news in this issue is 3 September.

No. 786

6 September 2002

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# — TWU Tops Feud After Queens Bus Strike — A Strike, a Sellout, a Lawsuit

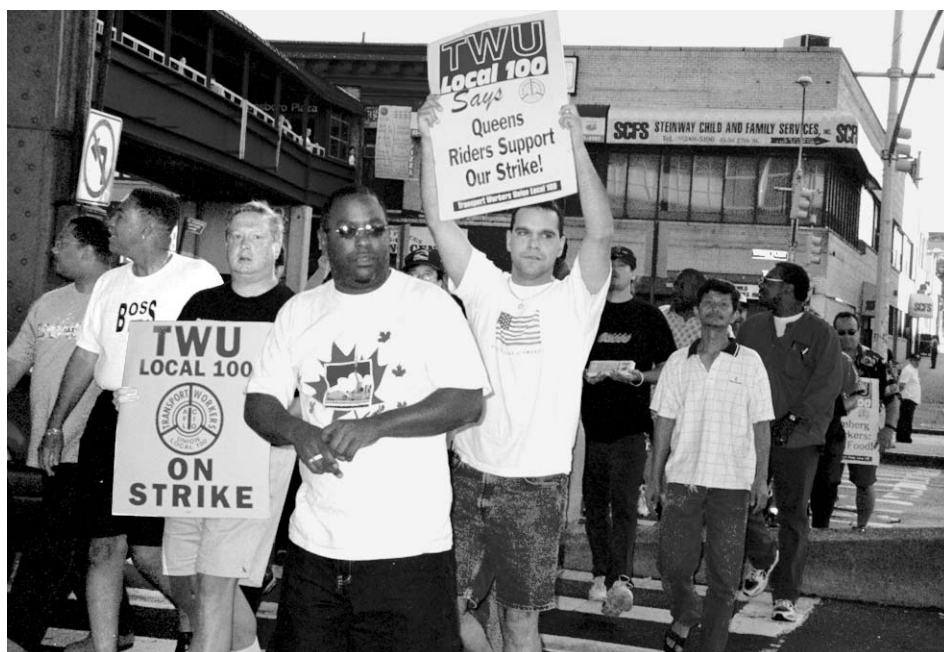
## NYC Transit

NEW YORK CITY—For seven weeks this summer, more than 1,500 striking Queens bus workers remained solid in the face of an anti-union offensive by the city and the private lines bus companies. These members of Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 100 were fighting in defense of their health benefits and for job security. But rather than mobilize the power of the 36,000-strong Local 100 in support of the strike, the TWU tops pursued the impotent strategy of appealing to “labor-friendly” Democratic Party politicians. And after a long, bitter struggle, the bus workers were sold out by the Local 100 misleaders who told them to swallow a contract that barely maintained existing health benefits and offered no assurances of job security.

Both Local 100 president Roger Toussaint and TWU International president Sonny Hall hailed the sellout as a “victory.” The contract, which expires in seven months, includes a 4 percent retroactive wage increase for 2001 and 4 percent for 2002, but this still doesn’t achieve parity with the union’s Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) bus workers. While the workers will have to jack up payments to their health plan from \$3 to \$10 per week, health benefits are only being kept alive by a \$3.75 million “advance” from the city. The companies are intent on paying back this “advance” through “productivity improvements,” which will mean speedup and other attacks on working conditions. As for job security, Toussaint pointed to a non-binding resolution signed by a majority of City Council members (that wasn’t even voted on) to “preserve” jobs and union protection. As one bus worker put it: “We were out seven weeks for nothing. We’re signing a contract that was the same as the original offer” (*New York Times*, 7 August).

Toussaint came to power last year as part of the “progressive” New Directions (ND) slate, which postured as a militant alternative to the discredited, more conservative candidate of the “old guard” bureaucracy led by Sonny Hall. Just days after the strike ended, Toussaint went to court to seek an injunction to stop Hall

from bringing union discipline against him for his comments to the labor-hating *New York Times*. Thus Toussaint treacherously invited the anti-labor courts to intervene into the union’s internal affairs. According to the *Times* (7 August), Toussaint had “advised the bus drivers’ negotiating committee against a strike” and said that George Jennings, vice president of Local 100’s private lines bus division



July rally of Queens bus strikers, who held out for seven weeks before sellout by union tops.

and an ally of Hall, “fomented the strike.”

Toussaint made these comments just as the bus drivers were voting to settle their strike, after walking the picket lines for weeks in the sweltering heat and living on only \$50 a week in strike benefits. But Toussaint’s opposition to strike action is a longstanding policy, as was seen during the tumultuous 1999 battle over the city’s subway and bus workers TWU contract. When the “old guard” bureaucracy then at the helm of Local 100 caved in to the city and state government’s anti-strike injunctions, Toussaint and the ND “opposition” also opposed a strike and even stopped workers from uttering the word “strike” at an ND rally. During the 2000 union elections, Toussaint and other ND candidates repeatedly stressed that they were not “strike-happy.”

Seizing on Toussaint’s statement to the

*Times*, Hall declared in an August 8 memo titled “Irresponsible and Unacceptable Statements” that the bus workers “should not have been told by their Local Union President that they were fools to be on STRIKE and to be told it was a STRIKE their President did not support.” Under pressure from the increasingly frustrated bus strikers, Hall’s ally Jennings led a walkout of hundreds of strik-

Association for Union Democracy, which specializes in dragging the unions into the bourgeois courts (see “Association for Union Democracy: Lawyers for Government Union-Busting,” WV No. 738, 30 June 2000).

It is *as stupid as it is criminal* to invite the courts and Labor Department to intervene into the unions. With the contract expiration date for the city’s 34,000-plus subway and bus workers less than three and a half months away, the last thing these workers need is the bosses’ courts and other government agencies mucking around in the union’s internal affairs. Far from being neutral, the capitalist courts are a crucial arm of the bourgeois state—a 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 strategy of appealing to the capitalist courts and politicians, which is pursued by *both* wings of the TWU bureaucracy, has shackled labor’s power. This encourages management attacks and undermines the union in the face of the bosses’ schemes to keep transit workers divided. In addition to the private lines, MTA public sector bus workers are divided between New York City Transit (NYCT) and the Manhattan and Bronx Surface Transit Operating Authority (MaBSTOA) divisions. Furthermore, several New York City bus lines and facilities are organized by various locals of the Amalgamated Transit Union.

Now, NYC mayor Michael Bloomberg has proposed that the private lines be taken over by the MTA and saddled with the state Taylor Law, which outlaws strikes by public employees. A union leadership unwilling to challenge the Taylor Law “negotiates” with its hands tied behind its back. The “Regional Bus Company” proposal pushed by Bloomberg is connected to plans to split Local 100’s subway and bus bargaining units, which would cripple the union, particularly in the event of a strike. What is needed is *one industrial union* of all NYC transit workers, *one expiration date*

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## Spartacist Forums

### South Africa Torn by AIDS Crisis Workers Struggle Against ANC Neo-Apartheid Rule

#### CHICAGO

Saturday, Sept. 7, 5 p.m.

University of Illinois Circle Center  
Room 505 750 S. Halsted

For more information: (312) 563-0441  
e-mail: spartacist@iname.com

#### TORONTO

Saturday, Sept. 14, 6:30 p.m.

U of T, International Student Centre  
33 St. George St. (north of College)

For more information:  
Trotskyist League (416) 593-4138  
e-mail: spartacan@on.aibn.com

### Defend the Gains of the 1949 Revolution! Workers’ Protests Shake China Forge a Leninist-Trotskyist Party!

Thursday, Sept. 19, 6 p.m.

University of British Columbia  
Room 212A, SUB

#### VANCOUVER

For more information: (604) 687-0353  
e-mail: tlft@look.ca

### The Reparations Controversy— Break the Chains of Capitalist Enslavement!

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2 p.m.

Broadway Presbyterian Church  
Broadway and 114 St.

#### NEW YORK CITY

For more information: (212) 267-1025  
e-mail: nysl@compuserve.com

### Feds Shred Constitutional Rights “War on Terrorism” Targets Everybody

#### LOS ANGELES

Saturday, Sept. 7, 3:30 p.m.

Echo Park Public Library  
1410 W. Temple St.,

For more information: (213) 380-8239  
e-mail: slsycla@cs.com

#### BOSTON

Saturday, Sept. 21, 2 p.m.

Harvard Science Center  
For information and room: (617) 666-9453  
e-mail: bostonsync@yahoo.com

Thursday, Sept. 5, 7 p.m.

UC Berkeley, 126 Barrows

For more information: (510) 839-0851

#### BAY AREA



# Black Bus Driver Assaulted by Chicago Cops

## Defend Arlene Russell!

CHICAGO—On July 17, black bus driver Arlene Russell was arrested on the job and manhandled by police after she protested a racist white cop calling her a “stupid black b---h.” Russell, a member of Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 241, was held for eight hours while the police ran her fingerprints against an international “terrorist” database—a vivid example of how the repressive measures adopted in the post-September 11 “anti-terrorism” drive target workers and minorities.

Russell’s case has sparked outrage among her union brothers and sisters, particularly black women drivers who face constant racist and anti-woman abuse on the job. Many Chicago transit workers remember the 1987 struggle to defend black bus driver Cassandra Seay against similar bogus “assault” charges after racist cops viciously beat her. ATU members mobilized to fill the courtroom in support of Seay, winning her acquittal. Out of this struggle, the Chicago Labor

Black Struggle League was launched.

Reprinted below is an August 6 letter by the Partisan Defense Committee to Cook County state’s attorney Richard A. Devine protesting this racist outrage. We urge all labor, minority rights, student and community organizations to take up Russell’s defense and send similar protest statements to: Richard A. Devine, Cook County State’s Attorney, 500 Richard J. Daley Center, Chicago, IL 60602. Fax: (312) 603-3000.

\* \* \*

The Partisan Defense Committee vigorously protests the arrest and prosecution of Arlene Russell, a black bus driver for the Chicago Transit Authority.

On July 17, Ms. Russell was driving

the number 12 bus east on Roosevelt Road, when she passed an elderly man who was waving to the bus from across the street; he was then immediately picked up by a police patrol car. Suddenly the police cruiser pulled in front of driver Russell’s bus, cutting her off. Two officers jumped out and stood on each side of her bus, a Hispanic officer falsely accused her of stranding a passenger and cited her with a supposed moving violation while a white police officer began banging on the door and shouting racial epithets, including calling her a “stupid black b---h.” Within minutes additional squad cars arrived on the scene, including one carrying a Chicago Police Sergeant. When Ms. Russell used her cell phone to report this racist abuse to the Office of Professional Standards on the spot, the policeman who

had been shouting racist remarks outrageously attempted to grab the phone out of her hand! He then proceeded to violently grab Ms. Russell’s arm, twisted it behind her, painfully squeezed handcuffs on her and dragged her down to the station. Claiming she struck a police officer, they charged her with a misdemeanor battery, which carries a prison sentence. The police continued their vendetta by running an international criminal check on Ms. Russell and held her in lockup for more than eight hours.

This is a blatant case of violent police brutality against a member of the Amalgamated Transit Union Local 241 and constitutes a threat to all working people, blacks and minorities in this city. The bogus charge of “battery” for supposedly striking a police officer is an obvious fabrication to cover up the brutal racist actions on the part of the police. *We demand that all charges against Arlene Russell be dropped immediately!*■

## South Chicago: Snapshots of Latino and Black Life

The following contribution, dated July 3, was submitted by Comrade Seneca of our Chicago branch.

\* \* \*

*Shame, shame, shame.*

*I don’t wanna go to Mexico no more, more, more.*

*There’s a big, fat policeman at my door, door, door.*

*He made me pay a dollar,*

*He made me go to jail,*

*I don’t wanna go to Mexico no more, more, more.*

This was the clapping game the neighbor’s young girls were singing in my kitchen just the other day. Incidentally, the father of these two immigrant girls came home about a month ago after serving six years in jail as a “convicted drug trafficker” (i.e., peddling a few grams of cocaine). He may be facing deportation soon, which will most likely mean yet another perilous trip across the river to come right back to where he was deported from. For the Mexican immigrant children of South Chicago—a neighborhood located on Chicago’s Southeast Side in the shadow of the old South Works steel plant—words like “*la migra*” and “social security numbers” have a place in their everyday vocabulary.

For Latino working-class immigrants, the fight for immigrant rights is *central* to the fight for labor rights. And *this is a life or death question* in many ways. Occasional news investigations offer a glimpse into the very real danger of the Mexican border crossing which many make after each time they get deported; and they *do* make it because, for many Mexicans, “home” offers them little or no means for survival. Immigrants without a social security number in Chicago cannot open an account with the electric or gas companies, and this means suffering sub-zero temperatures without heat in their homes. There were two cases in Chicago of immigrant children who needed organ transplants and could not get them because they were undocumented and the families couldn’t pay cash for the transplant procedure. This is to say nothing of life-threatening dangers of state repression for non-citizens, and particularly “illegal aliens,” on the part of cops, border patrol agents and vigilantes. Undocumented immigrant workers are very attuned to the fact that the American bourgeois injustice system does not offer

them a legal leg to stand on in *any* fight.

These points I mention just to provide a backdrop to the reality we are dealing with when we talk about the question of Latino immigrants in America. This is important to consider when dealing with the question of class struggle in America and specifically the wedge that the racist white ruling class seeks to drive between the black and Latino immigrant working class. And, together with the help of black and Latino petty-bourgeois misleaders, the bourgeoisie has been to a large extent successful in driving this wedge.

South Chicago has historically been, and continues to be, an entry port for working-class Hispanic immigrants. It is also one of the neighborhoods where the displaced black ghetto masses have moved, increasingly more so since the demolition of housing projects. While they live side by side, the two communities interact as little as possible. Many Mexicans say they are afraid of blacks, and they attribute criminality and violence in the neighborhood to black people.

Resentment is often expressed by Mexican immigrant women about the mistreatment and humiliation that they are subjected to by some of the black and even Chicano staff in the area’s public clinic. Many complain of being greeted with comments like, “You’re back again?” and “Speak English! You’re in America!” and being sent home from the Emergency Room with nothing but a bottle of aspirin to show for it. This reflects a conversation I had with a comrade from the Bay Area. His sister is a nurse in a school and she said to him that, as bad as the black children are treated, the Mexican children are treated even worse.

One also perceives a strong sense of resentment around the question of public aid (i.e., food stamps, vouchers, workman’s comp, etc.). Many Mexican immigrants I have spoken with perceive America’s “safety net” for workers and the poor, or rather what is left of it, as some sort of treasure chest that allows black Americans and Puerto Ricans to live so much better off than their immigrant counterparts. Rather than seeking to organize to fight for the same entitlements for immigrants, often this perception translates into a sour-grapes attitude of “well, we immigrants want to work, we don’t want any handouts.”

In the workplace, many Mexicans hold

a perception that blacks have a bad work ethic. Upon probing them to define what they mean, I have found that their conception of a “bad” work ethic amounts to wanting to have better wages, a shorter and less intensive workday, and better and safer conditions at the workplace! Mexican workers could stand a whole lot to gain by adopting the very “work ethic” that many now despise! Once I overheard a supervisor (who, incidentally, is a black Latina woman from Belize) say to her Mexican employee that she prefers to hire Latinos because blacks “don’t like to work.” And this employee, beaming with pride, just ate up every word she said. I later found out that 16-hour nonstop shifts are frequent occurrences for him.

The “work ethic” question is closely tied into the “Amnesty Campaign,” which is a nationwide campaign to legalize undocumented immigrants through public marches and lobbying politicians. In the precarious circumstances they live in, undocumented Latino immigrants tend to take comfort in the illusion that, if they just prove to the bourgeois rulers that they are essential to American capitalist society—by doing grueling work for pitiful wages in dangerous conditions and paying taxes faithfully while asking nothing in return in the way of benefits—then the capitalist rulers will somehow be convinced to grant them full citizenship rights.

On the other side of the issue, many black workers feel resentment toward Latinos. Many see yet *another* immigrant group which, in a generation or two, manages to climb the ladder and “pass over” them, so to speak, while they remain at the bottom. It is important to recognize that there is a lot of truth in this statement; being a white Hispanic and a U.S. citizen opens up a lot of possibilities that their immigrant parents, as well as blacks and black Latinos, just do not have. It can also lead to a false sense of security and a certain hostility toward “illegal” immigrants. I would like to make a side note here of the considerable antagonisms I have seen between Latino citizens “with papers” and the undocumented immigrants. Where I live, the term “Chicano” or “Chicana” has become a derisive term that Mexican immigrants use in reference to privileged, petty-bourgeois Mexican Americans who refuse to speak Spanish and use their position of power to humiliate immi-

grants or otherwise not solidarize with them in any way.

I know a young boy whose father is Puerto Rican and mother is Mexican American. He is dark-skinned with European features, and he can speak a little Spanish, which he learned at the insistence of his grandmother. He has two cousins on either side of the family; one is a blond-haired white boy and the other is black. All three are “Latino” since all six of their parents are “Latino.” But you would be a fool to think their experiences in America will be the same just because they are all “Latino.” My point is, within two or three generations, as the language falls away, “Latinos” in America are essentially assimilated into one of two categories: black or not black.

The central issue here is *the vital interest* of black and immigrant workers to unite in common struggle. It is necessary to combat the false consciousness that the black and Latino petty-bourgeois misleadership peddle: that the other worker is the enemy; that blacks will never fight for immigrant rights; that immigrants are nothing but scabs who want to steal black workers’ jobs.

Combatting such false consciousness is the task of a revolutionary workers party; this is what I sought to explain to incredulous Mexican immigrant workers in South Chicago who couldn’t understand why black longshoremen in Oakland would give up their Saturdays (when they can make \$1,000 in one day if they drive down to the L.A. ports) to come out to a labor-centered mobilization in defense of immigrants! It is not a moral issue; it is a question of survival and of labor defense, I told them. Our February 9 Oakland mobilization against the Maritime Security Act and in defense of immigrant rights has indeed made an impact on workers I have spoken with.

Racial tensions between black people and Hispanics is a nationwide issue, and this must be understood and fought against as we seek to forge a multiracial vanguard party. The fight against black oppression, which is a cornerstone of American capitalism, must be posed pointblank with any and all potential Latino contacts as part of the fight to raise the consciousness of the Latino working class to understand that black liberation is integrally linked to their own liberation.■

# Chicago Democrats Trash Public Housing

## Segregation City

CHICAGO—At a rate of nearly one building every month, the Democratic Party administration of Mayor Richard M. Daley is ripping down the city's high-rise public housing projects and dumping tens of thousands of mostly black families into the streets. In the past three years, 29 of 52 high-rises run by the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) have already been demolished, and the rest are scheduled to be razed in the coming decade with the aid of a promised \$1.6 billion from the federal government. The CHA's so-called "Plan for Transformation" is part of a nationwide destruction of public housing that, together with the "end of welfare," began under Clinton and continues to intensify under the Bush administration. Under the "HOPE VI" demolition plan instituted by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), more than 100,000 housing units are scheduled for destruction (roughly 10 percent of the nation's public housing), with one-quarter of these in Chicago, a whopping 65 percent of the CHA's family housing.

Chicago's high-rise projects are crime-infested, police-state wastelands, rotting away from years of so-called "deferred maintenance" which translates into residents living without electricity, hot water or elevators. Journalist Alex Kotlowitz captured the squalid conditions, describing what resident Gwendolyn Hull faces in her CHA apartment:

"In the living room and the bathroom, water from the vacant apartment above had seeped through the ceiling. Hull urged me to turn on the hot-water faucet in the bathtub. The water, even after running for five minutes, was cool. Hull boiled water as needed, and so did neighbors I spoke with. She showed me what she'd rigged to keep out the rats that had chewed through the base of her front door: She nailed three soup-can

lids to close up the space. The utility room that houses all the circuit breakers remained unlocked for months, so kids would turn off the electricity to many of the apartments."

—*Chicago Tribune Magazine*,  
10 March

The decaying projects are hardly a decent place to live—but they sure beat the streets, as evidenced by the large number of homeless squatters who have taken over vacant CHA apartments. There are already over 80,000 homeless people in Chicago, a population that has swelled as Illinois has purged its welfare rolls by almost 75 percent in the last five years. The wholesale demolition of Chicago public housing and casting out of its impoverished and overwhelmingly black

residents graphically illustrates that the racist American bourgeoisie views the black ghetto masses as an expendable population not "worth" providing with even the most elementary means of subsistence. As enormous numbers of black men are being imprisoned in America's jails, the only housing available to the women and children left behind in the inner cities is being snatched away.

Publicly owned housing for the poor was one of the hard-fought gains—along with industrial unions, social security, unemployment compensation and welfare—resulting from the labor battles of the 1930s. The Federal Housing Act of 1949 declared it to be the "policy of the United States" to provide a "decent home

and suitable living environment for every American family." But in Chicago, the North's most segregated city, this gain has always been undermined by the ruling class's commitment to stone hard segregation. With black people prohibited by racist "covenants" from owning homes in white areas, and white landlords refusing black renters, the mass migration of Southern black workers that flocked to Chicago industry beginning during World War I had literally no place to go but the hideously congested South Side ghetto. The horrendous conditions black families lived in are vividly depicted in the play and movie *Raisin in the Sun*.

But rather than build housing on vacant sites, the city's racist rulers were determined to keep blacks penned in to the South Side's "Black Belt." In the 1930s and '40s, the city tore down huge swaths of tenement housing, displacing thousands. The construction of one of the city's first public housing projects, the Ida B. Wells Homes, destroyed nearly as many apartments as were eventually supplied. When it finally opened in 1941, over 17,000 families battled for some 1,600 apartments. Later, in the 1960s, as federal funding dried up, black families were warehoused in cheap cinderblock high-rises like the soon-to-be-demolished giant, 28-building Robert Taylor Homes complex, where 28,000 residents were packed into an area two miles long and a quarter-mile wide.

The very few public housing projects built in white areas, such as the Trumbull Park Homes in Ironton near the South Side steel plants, were reserved for whites only. In the 1950s, the first black families to move into Trumbull Park were attacked by rioting mobs abetted by the local cops and politicians. The planned route of the 14-lane Dan Ryan Expressway, which opened in 1962, was changed by the current mayor's father, Richard J. Daley, to cordon off the largely black projects from the all-white Southwest Side neighborhoods—especially the racist enclave of Bridgeport, ancestral home of the Daley

*continued on page 11*



State Street housing project demolished in 1999, forcing many black residents onto the streets.

WV Photo

## From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal

### Life in the Democracy of Fear



proof, but opinion?

In Gen. DeWitt's words, "A J-p's a J-p." Period.

The Supreme Court, in the infamous *Korematsu* and *Hirabayashi* cases, although they used more elegant words, agreed.

Over 100,000 men, women and children were sent to U.S. concentration camps, in the nation's lifeless and desolate deserts, because they were guilty of being "J-ps."

A racist, sensationalist media, a power-hungry bigoted military leadership, and a craven corps of politicians and judges,—voilà!—you have hundreds, thousands, tens of thousands, and more, in concentration camps. For *years*!

Does this sound at all familiar? Look around you.

What is now taking place in Cuba's Guantanamo Bay took place on Indian reservations 60 years ago. Progress?

Or are we seeing the grim shadows of a repeat of U.S. history? Land of the free—indeed.

22 July 2002

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**Send urgently needed contributions for Mumia's legal defense, earmarked "Mumia Abu-Jamal," to: Humanitarian Law Project, 8124 W. 3rd Street, Suite 105, Los Angeles, CA 90048.**

**If you wish to correspond with Jamal, you can write to: Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM8335, SCI Greene, 175 Progress Drive, Waynesburg, PA 15370.**

FEAR does funny things to people.

As a direct result of the national wave of fear flooding the U.S., hundreds (if not thousands) of men are held virtually incommunicado in state, federal and military jails; a national snitch program is being proposed, and high-ranking military officials are angling for control of the nation's interior, including its police powers, in the name of "national security."

Although much of this is attributable to the events of 9/11, it is not mere coincidence that these efforts are taking place in the midst of rising unemployment and a widening economic recession.

High-ranking government and military officials, always in search of more power, now want even more. They want Congress to repeal or seriously water down the Posse Comitatus Act, which restricts the military from domestic law enforcement.

History, especially in times of great national hysteria, teaches us important lessons about when the military runs things.

When soldiers of the Japanese Empire struck Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, it would not be long before the media, the military and the politicians launched a racist assault on people of Japanese ancestry—even those who were born in the U.S., and were therefore, according to U.S. law, American citizens.

John L. DeWitt, the West Coast army commander, said it plainly, "The Japanese race is an enemy race, and while many second and third generation Japanese born on United States soil, possessed of United States citizenship, have become 'Americanized,' the racial strains are undiluted."

When it was raised to Gen. DeWitt that there was no evidence of Japanese American "sabotage or espionage," the General saw this as proof of their sneaky nature, "The very fact that no sabotage has taken place to date is a disturbing and confirming indication that such action will be taken." [See "A People's History of the Supreme Court," by Peter Irons, p. 350.]

When no proof becomes absolute proof, what is

# Young Spartacus

## On the Slogan “No U.S. Aid to Israel!”

The following article is based on a presentation by WV editor Alan Wilde at the SL/U.S. Eleventh National Conference this summer.

Israeli tanks and forces are laying siege once again to the West Bank. In our March 30 statement about the invasion of Ramallah and other parts of the West Bank, including the horrendous destruction wreaked in Jenin, we wrote that all this could very well be a first step toward a complete re-occupation of the entire West Bank and Gaza Strip. Now, to underscore the point, Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon and his government have announced that they indeed will seize land given to the Palestinian Authority under the Oslo Accords until “Palestinian terrorism” ends. Articles in the *New York Times* report that some members of the government, the Labor Party members essentially, are uneasy about this.

But this uneasiness has nothing to do with concern for the Palestinians. Israeli defense minister and Labor Party spokesman Binyamin Ben-Eliezer declared on Israel radio, “When you speak of occupation, the meaning is that you start dealing with everything from health to sewage. That’s not the intention. The intention is a presence on the ground in light of the present reality...for as much time as necessary.” That is, we’ll take their land and let them starve, if they’re lucky. A more direct statement came from an Israeli official who, in Nazi-like manner, declared that for every Israeli killed, 1,000 Palestinians should be slaughtered. To give a sense of proportion, that means that for the 19 people murdered in one of the horrible suicide attacks in Jerusalem, 19,000 Palestinians should die.

The pro-Palestinian movements all over the world have attracted the sympathies of millions of people horrified by the plight of a stateless population fighting to defend its rights, not least its right to self-determination, against an enemy with one of the world’s most advanced military apparatuses. On April 20 in the U.S., some 90,000 people rallied in Washington, D.C. and San Fran-

cisco against the “war at home and abroad” with the primary focus being Israel’s war. Despite the influence of religion, with many people mobilized through their mosques, the fact that tens of thousands of Palestinians and other Arabs came out to protest is significant in a country caught in the hysteria of an “internal enemy” exemplified by Arabs and Muslims. It is in this context, in the context of a national rebellion that continues after nearly two years of brutal suppression, that the slogan “No U.S. aid to Israel” comes up.

A lively debate over if and when it was appropriate to raise “No U.S. aid to Israel” has recently taken place inside our

with this slogan as follows:

“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) declared: ‘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.”

We then continue by pointing out how

principled question of the necessity of defending the USSR is accepted, we are still left with the problem of HOW to defend the Soviet Union. What shall we in this country do to defend the Soviet Union?” Well, many of these pro-Palestinian rights activists, much like the readers the *Militant* was trying to address, are asking, “What should we in this country do to defend the Palestinians?”

On the face of it, the question of U.S. aid shouldn’t be difficult. We are for ending U.S. aid to Israel. That means all aid, not only what is explicitly expressed as military aid. American economic aid to Israel is financial support to an ultra-loyal ally and a key prop for Zionism, including within Israel, because in addition to it being used to finance the slaughter of Palestinians, it is also used to maintain an illusory level of economic development within Israel itself. It has to do with the fact that Israeli Gross Domestic Product and per capita income resemble those of a European country rather than a Near Eastern one, serving as yet another glue binding the Hebrew-speaking population to its rulers. Additionally, the economic aid allows Israel to do what it wants to the Palestinians as long as it continues to anchor the flow of oil to the U.S. from the region.

The question we’re faced with is how to best express our position on the “No U.S. aid to Israel” demand. And questions on this subject have come up, like the issue of “hot-cargoing”—i.e., trade unions refusing to handle goods. Comrades said that unless this slogan “No U.S. aid to Israel” is given a class axis through a concrete example, it will come off sounding like we’re appealing to U.S. imperialism to be good and just. It would then follow that to express “No U.S. aid to Israel” in slogan form, we need an accompanying slogan that gives it a proletarian axis, like “Hot cargo military goods to Israel.”

One comrade stated that he did not think we should raise the “No U.S. aid” slogan. I don’t know if that comrade still has this position, but I think it’s important to address the questions that he posed. He pointed to the fact that we haven’t raised the slogan in the past, except in one or two examples dating back to the early 1970s, and the reasons for our not having done so should be considered. He argued that the whole question of government aid is not how Marxists normally motivate their class axis. The comrade also noted the fact that the U.S. aids Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, bloody and repressive regimes all over the world—why only select out Israel?

### Our Main Enemy Is U.S. Imperialism

In answering these questions, I want to outline what potential political problems you could encounter with the slogan. First, it was suggested that we raise “Down with U.S. aid to Israel” instead. “No U.S. aid” has the quality of pleading for a better foreign policy, while “Down with” is a call of condemnation and is aimed at mobilizing the American working



Young Spartacus

Spartacist banner at Washington, D.C. anti-war, pro-Palestinian protest on April 20.

organization. It was kicked off when comrades objected to a trend in our public work and press to what amounted to an equation and conflation of the demand itself with the very opportunist manner in which reformist groups used the demand. In WV No. 779 (19 April), we dealt

U.S. support to Israel has been a cornerstone of U.S. foreign policy for a long time and how, as Marxists, we seek to mobilize the proletariat in concrete acts of class-struggle solidarity on behalf of the Palestinians.

We have noted in almost every WV article on the Near East that Israeli military equipment is largely provided by the U.S. and have called for an end to U.S. intervention into the region. A logical extrapolation of these positions would be that we’re for ending American aid to Israel. However, that article in WV No. 779 dodged the issue of U.S. aid to Israel, and implicitly made it seem that we are opposed to the demand of ending American aid to Israel. But it’s not just that we don’t oppose the demand against U.S. aid to Israel—we enthusiastically support it.

There is a very useful article from the *Militant* (19 July 1941), the paper of the then-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP), titled “Shall We Campaign for Government Aid to the USSR?” The article begins with the following: “It is to be expected that many people who accept our fundamental principle of unconditional defense of the Soviet Union should be anxious in some way or other to translate that principle into action. Once the



ISO, SWP and Socialist Action feature variants on “No U.S. aid to Israel” slogan designed as appeals to U.S. government to alter its policy toward the Zionist state which is considered even worse than U.S. imperialism.



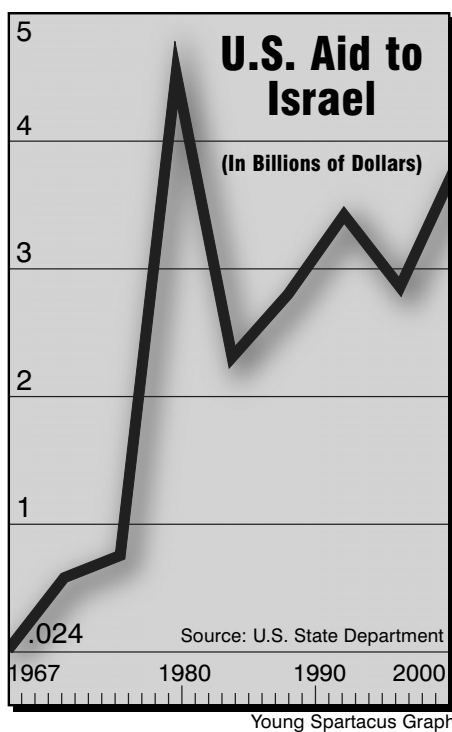
class, though I doubt this distinction will be appreciated by the average reader or person. Context is everything here, and I think this is where the problems arise.

Raised as a central demand, “No” or “Down with” U.S. aid lends itself to a campaign of altering American foreign policy, which carries the implication that the U.S. is somehow a lesser evil than Israel. This approach has certainly been true with our reformist opponents. I quoted a *Socialist Worker* article implying that earlier. Another example is a slogan the ISO sometimes raises that is similar to the “No U.S. aid” slogan—“Stop funding Israeli terrorism.” This latter slogan amounts to a direct appeal by the ISO to the U.S. government to stop funding entities that the ISO considers even worse than U.S. imperialism. For the ISO and other groups, but especially the ISO, “No U.S. aid” has become a very central feature of their interventions and has almost come to define their attitude toward the conflict as they tie the slogan to the campaign for American companies and campus administrations to “divest” from Israel. It’s sort of like, you’re an American or Arab American horrified by what’s going on in the Occupied Territories, what can you do? Demand that the U.S. stop aiding Israel.

We don’t want to ignore the fact that the U.S., our own government, is funding the army of the Zionist state, which is butchering Palestinians with impunity. At the same time, we want to use this as yet another example to show how the American imperialists aid in the oppression of the oppressed all over the planet. Israel is clearly an enemy, but U.S. imperialism is the main enemy. So we want to give the “Down with U.S. aid” slogan a proletarian axis. Our starting point is mobilizing American workers against American capitalists.

Here we and the reformists part paths. They want to appeal to the U.S. imperialist state, we want to appeal to the working class to mobilize against the U.S. imperialist state. Using the example of the 1935-36 Italian-Ethiopian War, during which the Stalinists were calling for sanctions by the “democratic” imperialists against Italy, the 1941 *Militant* article stated, “Our position [of opposing sanctions] was based on the following reasons: First, we cannot rely on any capitalist government to fulfill progressive tasks; Second: we cannot make a demand for government sanctions because the very nature of such a demand would have a tendency to compel us to support the government in an imperialist war which might result from the exercise of sanctions; Third: it is essential for us to stress independent working-class action.”

The article goes on to note that if a government, for its own reasons, was aiding a side we supported in a conflict—such as, in our time, Iran sending arms shipments to the Palestinians—we would not be opposed to that support, but we wouldn’t agitate for it. It stresses: “There’s a difference between not raising any objection, when a capitalist govern-



**U.S. aid to Israel: F-16 fighter jet on delivery flight from U.S. to Israel (top right). Site of F-16 air strike on July 22 in Gaza City that killed 15 Palestinians, wounded 160 and destroyed or damaged five apartment buildings.**



IDF/AF



Nureldine/AFP

ment sends aid, and *agitating* for such aid. The key to the whole question consists in the understanding that we cannot rely on bourgeois governments to aid our cause. Neither can we take any responsibility for bourgeois governmental policy.” In its own way, this answers the question about governmental aid that was posed by the comrade.

In the case of agitating for an end to American aid to Israel, this demand is a negative one, not qualitatively different from saying “U.S. troops out of the Near East!” or “U.S. hands off Iraq!” or “Abolish the racist death penalty!” We’re not calling on the government to do anything, but to stop doing something. In the context of the Israel-Palestine conflict, there’s nothing wrong with that.

At the same time, we don’t want to frame the discussion as one centrally around a slogan of trying to alter American foreign policy. The U.S. does aid repressive regimes all over the world. We’re for ending that, too. But that isn’t going to happen until the working class comes to power here. If the U.S. does stop funding and arming Israel as a regional gendarme, that money and military hardware will be given to someone else. For example, more military aid to Egypt or Saudi Arabia. On the other hand, I want to stress that the relationship between the U.S. and Israel is special and not replicated with anyone else. I would highly doubt that the U.S. would allow, say, Egypt to develop the world’s fifth-largest nuclear arsenal.

We haven’t used the slogan in decades, at least in regard to the Israel-Palestine conflict. Why not? In WV No. 31 (26 October 1973) around the time of the ’73

Arab-Israeli War, we had a front-page headline, “No U.S. Aid to Israel.” But the article really doesn’t motivate the slogan. It was written at a time when the U.S. was beginning to greatly increase its support to Israel, while at the same time continuing to support the Arab states. The article notes, “The U.S. bankrolls not only the Israeli army but also the armies of Jordan and Saudi Arabia. Outright U.S. military grants to Israel in the 1949-68 period totalled \$369 million, while outright grants to Jordan totalled \$556 million.” That is, more to Jordan than to Israel.

More interesting is the article that ran alongside the “No U.S. aid” article in WV No. 31. It was a National Maritime Union Militant Solidarity Caucus resolution that our supporters put forward around the same time. Officials of the AFL-CIO maritime unions had issued a call for a boycott of Soviet cargo and ships until the USSR stopped sending aid to the Arab states for use against Israel during the ’73 war. Obviously, no such action was called against the Americans who were sending aid to Israel. As against the anti-Communist call of the union tops, our supporters put forward this resolution to “raise instead the demand for a boycott of all military aid being flown or shipped from the U.S. to Israel as being the most important way American workers can oppose this reactionary war.” The resolution continues:

“Demand that since labor political strikes are possible, as indicated by the call of the AFL-CIO maritime officials, that this tactic be applied *in the interests of labor*, rather than in the interests of Israeli, U.S. or other ruling classes, through such actions as the ‘hot cargoing’ of scab lettuce and grapes to support the Cali-

fornia farm strikers, and, address the call of American maritime workers to our brother maritime and transportation workers in the USSR to oppose Russian aid to the reactionary Arab states as we oppose aid to Israel and to struggle against their false leaders for the institution of a working-class Soviet international policy of providing aid to the workers’ struggles around the world, that is, to Arab workers, not their bosses.”

In other words, oppose U.S. aid to Israel, oppose Soviet aid to the Arab bourgeoisie and oppose the foreign policy of American imperialism.

In *Young Spartacus* No. 20 (November-December 1973), we had a front-page article titled “Not Jew Against Arab, But Class Against Class.” At the end of the article, we had a paragraph under the sub-head “No U.S. Aid or Troops to Israel!” The article concludes:

“U.S. imperialism, which in the past has completely equipped the armies of both Israel and Jordan, in the present conflict is backing Israel to the hilt. The U.S. government has made it quite clear with the dispatch of Marines and additional aircraft carriers to the Mediterranean that it is prepared to intervene directly in the Near East chancing direct global confrontation with the Soviet Union and nuclear holocaust in order to prevent a decisive Israeli defeat. Further, Israel is known to have its own nuclear arsenal and this too could touch off a global confrontation. It is the responsibility of revolutionaries to struggle against U.S. military intervention into the Near East conflict, whether it takes the present form of supplying and equipping Israel or the form of direct intervention. A call for a trade-union boycott of all arms shipments to the Near East must be taken to the American working class.”

Note that it says “all arms shipments to the Near East,” not just Israel. This article

*continued on page 8*



Kyoichi Sawada

**U.S. imperialism, enemy of world’s working people. Left: U.S. Army torture during Vietnam War, in which U.S. killed two million Vietnamese in failed bid to smash social revolution. Right: Red Cross warehouse in Kabul destroyed by U.S. bombing last October in first phase of “war on terror.”**

AFP



## U.S. Aid...

(continued from page 7)

was written during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, when we had a revolutionary defeatist position on both sides. Today, we defend the Palestinians against the Israelis.

The question of U.S. aid to Israel has come to the fore in the last few months. During the first *Intifada* between 1987 and '93, Palestinian youth were pitted against Israeli soldiers with machine guns, and I would add, Israeli machine guns—for example, Uzis and Galil assault rifles. Yitzhak Rabin vowed to break bones, and they did, killing lots of people in the process. But this current *Intifada* is a bit different, and it hits you immediately in the face. Palestinian youth with rocks or lightly armed Palestinian militiamen are pitted not against machine guns, or not only against machine guns, but against U.S.-built and -supplied F-16 fighter jets, Apache helicopter gunships, Merkava tanks, which are built in Israel with German parts bought by American money, and numerous other weapons supplied by the U.S. The Palestinians cry out, not only are they killing us and doing it with the most obscene brutality, but they're doing it with *your* weapons.

At the same time, the situation in the U.S. and Europe is a bit different. Most West European countries are, or were until very recently, run by social-democratic or popular-front governments. As a result, the reformist left saw no problem in appealing to these governments to actually intervene in the conflict on behalf of the Palestinians. In the U.S., we have a very right-wing Republican administration. It is preparing to go to war with Iraq. For our opponents to call on this government to intervene on behalf of the Palestinians is for them going a bit too far. But our political opponents also cannot appeal to the Democrats because they are even more pro-Israel than the Republicans. Instead, they focus on the negative: "End American aid to Israel." For them, that's how the U.S. can play a "positive" role in the conflict, and that's how the reformists use and push the slogan.

We didn't come up with the "No U.S. aid to Israel" demand, but it's out there. People raise it, opponents raise it and we need to polemicize against them because they raise it to appeal to U.S. imperialism, to prettify it and to bill it as a lesser evil than the Zionists. There is a useful article to review on a similar question, in *WV* No. 47 (21 June 1974). In it we polemicize against the SWP, which raised the demand to cut off all U.S. funding to Pinochet's junta regime in Chile after the bloody coup that overthrew the Allende popular-front government. We wrote:

"Going beyond the demand of freedom for all victims of the generals' repression, this slogan purports to be a means of combatting the Pinochet regime. However, it leaves unanswered the fundamental question of which class can put an

**1917 Bolshevik Revolution inspired joint struggle by Jews and Arabs against capitalist exploiters. Right: Opening rally of Comintern's 1920 Baku Congress, with delegates from over two dozen peoples of Asia. Below: Communist Leopold Trepper (standing, second from left), a Polish Jew, with CP Arab-Jewish Unity group in Tel Aviv in 1925.**



Humbert-Droz Archives



McGraw-Hill

end to such bonapartist dictatorships. The implicit perspective behind the demand for cutting off aid to the junta, when raised in the absence of any explicitly revolutionary slogans, is that of toppling the Chilean butchers by pressuring Nixon."

This expresses a bottom-line approach to the question.

### On the Slogan "Hot Cargo Military Goods to Israel"

At the same time, all that does not mean that the "No U.S. aid" slogan in and of itself necessarily builds illusions in U.S. imperialism. As a methodology, it's not good to condemn a slogan simply because of how the opponents use it. The reformists are always reformist and will use every slogan in that light. Precisely because it so fits the present circumstances, we can and should raise the U.S. aid question both in slogan and propaganda form. We oppose American aid to Israel, and we should say so. We think Israel is an enemy but for us the main enemy is U.S. imperialism, and we should say so. While the opponents look to the American government, we appeal to the working class to rally to defend the Palestinian people. Here, I think, is the problem: how do you concretely express that appeal?

As I said, comrades argued that we

should raise a slogan, such as "Hot-cargo military goods to Israel," in conjunction with the U.S. aid slogan. But there's a point on fatuousness in calling for hot-cargoing; it has nothing to do with the current consciousness in the working class or what's even remotely realizable right now. Moreover, comrades worried that we'd be sliding over into implying that Israel was our main enemy. The Bay Area International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 10 motion against U.S. aid to Israel from April 18, while very important in itself, does not pose the hot-cargo question. It's not the ILWU that's going to be hot-cargoing anything to Israel. Shipments to Israel go out of the East Coast, so it's going to be the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) on the East Coast. Unfortunately, the ILA has far from a left-leaning union leadership. Further, the country whose goods should be hot-cargoed is the U.S., but fat chance of that.

Let me clarify one thing here. When we talk about hot-cargoing military goods to Israel, we are talking about a time-limited campaign against military goods, not a complete trade boycott of Israeli goods and trade, which would certainly make it look like Israel is the main enemy. Support to sanctions or a trade boycott is essentially calling for American warships to close Israeli ports and would result first and foremost in starving the working class.

An article in *Australasian Spartacist* No. 170 (Autumn 2000) is interesting in its handling of the hot-cargo issue. At the time, Indonesia was on a bloody rampage in East Timor, which later was used as a pretext for Australian troops to occupy East Timor. In polemicizing against the Australian Labor Party and the union tops who had pushed for hot-cargoing goods, including food, to Indonesia, our Australian comrades said: "As proletarian internationalists, opposed above all to our 'own' ruling class, we call for the Australian workers movement to black ban [hot-cargo] arms and supplies to the Australian-led military forces." Thus, this question can be addressed without losing sight of who your biggest enemy is. However, if it's not done right, hot-cargo calls

can put you in very bad company. In Australia, such calls were explicitly aimed at getting troops into East Timor, and they worked. The campaign also was replete with a lot of anti-Indonesian chauvinism.

### Anti-Semitism in the Arab World

We understand that the Israel-Palestine conflict is at bottom one between two nations claiming the same piece of land. However, in popular perception, Israel is seen as the Jewish state, and this has implications. The situation is more complicated than what one would encounter in a typical fight over national rights—it's exacerbated by the interpenetration of the two peoples. Anti-Semites will use outrage against Zionist atrocities to promote their repulsive program. They've come out to pro-Palestinian rights demonstrations, even waving Palestinian flags. A few years ago, I was reading a book on Jewish history by Israel Shahak, the late Israeli anti-Zionist and pro-Palestinian rights activist. I got on the Internet, typed his name and saw a link that claimed to have the entire book. It turned out to be a Nazi Web site that advertised the book as "Learn about the Jews from a Jew's own mouth."

Another example is how modern anti-Semitism in the Near East, or in the Arab world, is a new phenomenon born around 1948. There's an interesting new book called *The Ornament of the World: How Muslims, Jews, and Christians Created a Culture of Tolerance in Medieval Spain* by Maria Rosa Menocal and Harold Bloom. Now, it's not like these peoples all lived in peace at all times or something, but European anti-Semitism only found its way into the Near East in the 20th century. For example, when Jews were kicked out of Spain, it was Turkey and North Africa that took them in, not out of any intrinsic love, but this was where refuge was found.

The blood libel used to be unknown among Arabs. One guy I recently read put it another way: why would Muslims care if Christians and Jews are killing each other to make matzo? But today it's very widespread. Recent articles in a Saudi newspaper recounted this filthy rubbish as fact, while going on and on about how supposedly no Jews were killed in the World Trade Center attack. Arabic television regularly features this question, "Where were the Jews on September 11?" A recent television program on Al Jazeera asked the question, "The *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, did that book rightly predict what the Jews would be doing in the Middle East today?" The Egyptian state paper *Al-Ahram* when writing in English uses the term "Zionist." It does not make that distinction when writing in Arabic. It uses "Jewish."

It used to be that there were Jews in Arab countries. They helped found some of the most radical anti-colonial movements in the region and were portrayed in popular literature accordingly. Nobel Prize-winning Egyptian writer Naguib Mahfouz wrote positively about them. In one of his novels, *Midaq Alley*, he describes an Egyptian girl confined to her home, looking with envy at Jewish girls down the street working in a textile plant. She desperately wanted to be like them, as Mahfouz described it, "liberated."

One of the effects of the existence of Israel was the driving out of hundreds and hundreds of thousands of Jews from Arab countries, so today the only Jews an Egyptian or an Iraqi would know are in Israel, i.e., Israeli equals Jewish, Jewish equals Zionist. A book by a respected American scholar, Joel Beinin, titled *The Dispersion of Egyptian Jewry* was lambasted in the Egyptian press for arguing that 1) not all Egyptian Jews were Zionists, far from it, and 2) they were driven out against their will from a country where their ancestors lived for hundreds of years, if not longer. The 19th-century German Marxist August Bebel called

*continued on page 10*

**Programmatic Statement  
of the Spartacist League/U.S.**

**For a Workers Party  
That Fights for a Workers Government!**

**For Socialist Revolution  
in the Bastion  
of World Imperialism!**

SEE PAGE 2

**Organizational Rules and Guidelines  
of the Spartacist League/U.S.**

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**Opponents of the Revolutionary  
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# Sydney SYC Says: Australian/UN Troops Out of East Timor!

On August 21 at Sydney University, leftist and minority students joined the Spartacus Youth Club and the Spartacist League of Australia in a spirited protest to demand: “Down with Australian imperialism’s plunder of East Timor’s oil/gas!” and “Australian/UN troops out of East Timor!” Linking outrage at the imperialist pillage, codified in the Timor Sea Treaty, to the need to oppose the racist military occupation that helps enforce it, protesters chanted: “Down with the Timor Sea Treaty! Oppose the Australian military!” Among the endorsers were a shop steward from the Australian Manufacturing Workers’ Union (AMWU), the Freedom Socialist Party and Workers Power. The endorsement of this anti-colonial protest by the latter two groups stands in contrast to their participation in the 1999 rallies which screamed for Australian troops to be sent to East Timor.

Fighting to expose the “human rights” imperialism fraud pushed by the fake-left in 1999, an SYC speaker stressed that smashing illusions in the neo-colonial occupation of East Timor is key to mobilizing opposition to the impending U.S./Australia onslaught against the people of Iraq. Demonstrators enthusiastically received internationalist greetings from the Spartacist Group of Japan, which in calling for Japanese and all UN/imperialist troops out of East Timor, noted that the East Timorese had protested the arrival of the Japanese “Self Defense Forces” in their country earlier this year.

It was not surprising that the protest attracted interest from Timorese students. In the last several weeks the Australian/UN military force has arrested scores of opponents of their imperialist occupation, some of whom were involved in a spectacular breakout of 180 inmates from a jail in the East Timor capital on August 16. On the very day of the Sydney University demonstration, East Timor was shaken by the second day of actions by thousands of angry protesters shouting anti-UN slogans. We print below the call issued by the SYC and SL/A for the united-front action at Sydney University.

\* \* \*

When the prime minister [John Howard of Australia’s right-wing Liberal Party] was in East Timor in May for the proclamation of “independence,” he was met by some 500 protesters carrying signs such as “Howard: you are a thief.” They were denouncing the Australian imperialists’ extortion of East Timor’s huge oil and gas resources codified by the Timor Sea Treaty. Australia is to get **82 percent** of the massive Greater Sunrise field that is entirely on East Timor’s side of the mid-point between the two countries. As Australian resource giant Woodside is set to greatly increase its Timor Sea revenues, the East Timorese people live in the poorest country in Asia, with more than 40 percent of the population living below the official poverty line of 55 U.S. cents (!) a day.

In a darkly fitting testament to what they face, the Timor Sea Treaty was signed on [East Timor’s] Independence Day itself. That evening, Australian troops caused a scandal by stealing at gun-point an East Timorese flag from a hotel. Such vile piggishness is standard for the Australian-led UN occupation. An aid worker described a typical conversation

among UN administrators, recounting with disgust how these colonial overlords would speak about the East Timorese with **filthy racist contempt**: “They have an IQ of a dog—well, at least I can train my dog” (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 8 January 2001)!! After two and a half years of this arrogant, racist occupation, preceded by centuries of Portuguese colonisation and 24 years of brutal Australian-backed Indonesian rule, some East Timorese were understandably joyful about formal



Australasian Spartacist

**Demonstrators at protest initiated by SYC and SL/A calling for troops out of East Timor on August 21 at Sydney University.**

independence. But the kind of “independence” they face can be seen in Australia’s biggest direct neocolony, Papua New Guinea [PNG]. In June last year, the Australian puppet regime in PNG murdered six people following mass worker and student protests against privatisations and other brutal austerity diktats imposed by Australia and the IMF. **Australian military get out of East Timor, Bougainville, PNG and Solomon Islands!**

In PNG the Australian imperialist state—other than in Bougainville island which they militarily occupy—plays mainly the role of puppet-master. But in East Timor they are at the core of a force of 5,000 UN troops that are to be the main military power there for at least another two years. We call for a united-front demonstration on 21 August at Sydney University against the Australian imperialist plunder and military occupation of East Timor.

The social power of the working class must be mobilised in actions against White Australia neocolonialism. Only by implacable opposition to the racist rulers and their predatory designs in the region, can the Australian working class forge anti-capitalist class-struggle unity with the proletariats of Indonesia, Philippines, Japan, etc., and effectively fight against the increasingly violent union-busting and destruction of their jobs and livelihoods at home. Such a perspective requires a political struggle against the thoroughly pro-imperialist ALP [Australian Labor Party] and its White Australia, social-democratic program, in the fight to build a leadership that is proletarian, revolutionary and internationalist.

With even the servile East Timorese government complaining, some Laborite-left groups such as the International Socialist Organisation (ISO) and Workers

Power (WP) have recently written articles against the ripping-off of East Timor’s oil/gas...without saying a word about the Australian troops that enforce this! But the superexploitation and plunder of the neocolonies by the capitalists of the richer countries is maintained, ultimately, by the threatened and sometimes actual use of the violent might of the respective imperialist states. After the people of Bougainville revolted in 1989 against the brutal looting and destruction of their

North Korea to the dirty losing war against the heroic Vietnamese masses. Today, the U.S. and Australian rulers use military pressure to complement the economic penetration of China by foreign imperialist and overseas Chinese capital, with the goal of reversing the gains of the 1949 social revolution in China. Pre-revolutionary China was horribly exploited by the imperialist powers who carved up its territory between them, while the brutally oppressed women faced forced marriage, foot-binding and illiteracy. **Defend the Chinese, North Korean, Vietnamese and Cuban deformed workers states!**

The Australian rulers barely pretend any longer that the East Timor occupation is aimed at countering the murderous, pro-Jakarta militias. Rather they speak of urgent threats to “internal security” from disgruntled, former Falintil [Armed Forces of National Liberation of East Timor] independence fighters. Carrying banners comparing UN police to Indonesian secret police, East Timorese protested last month the brutal cop seizure of former independence leader, Mau Cali. Above all, the Australian occupation aims at ensuring the smooth flow of profits from semi-colonial Indonesia, where hundreds of millions seethe with discontent as they continue to live on the edge of economic disaster and where separatist insurgencies have flared. **Australian imperialism hands off Indonesia!**

It is hardly surprising that most of the left groups have not to this day called for Australian troops out of East Timor. Because when it counted most, in September 1999, the Democratic Socialist Party, ISO, Socialist Alternative (SA), WP and the Socialist Party joined the Laborite union bureaucrats in marching—and in the case of the DSP and ISO even **endorsing**—demonstrations screaming for Australian troops to “free” East Timor. With the growing unpopularity of the Australian/UN expedition, some SA and ISO cadre now verbally claim that they never supported it! No doubt they point to **abstract** statements warning against “reliance” on the UN or after the fact admissions that:

“Such an orientation towards a ‘troops in now’ position meant that the demonstrations called in Melbourne by Trades Hall were dominated by the slogan from the beginning. The union actions and public rallies were effectively reduced to a means to that end.”

—*Socialist Worker Review*, November 1999

But in the **concrete**, the ISO and SA hailed both the pro-imperialist “troops in now” union bans on Indonesia and the “troops in now” rallies as “magnificent”

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## U.S. Aid...

(continued from page 8)

anti-Semitism “the socialism of fools.” It has never done the oppressed any good, and it stands counterposed to the cause of the Palestinians.

There’s a related point to be made. We defend the Palestinians against Zionist state brutality, defend them wholeheartedly and fight for their national rights. But as Marxists, we understand that nationalism is counterposed to the cause of the international proletariat. In the forum given by Len Meyers that we printed in WV No. 783 (14 June), Lenin is quoted on this question: “Marxism cannot be reconciled with nationalism. Be it even of the ‘most just,’ ‘purist,’ most refined and civilised brand. In place of all forms of nationalism Marxism advances internationalism.” Moreover, it’s not always the case that the nationalism of the oppressed nations has a bourgeois-democratic content. Palestinian nationalism runs the gamut from radical left-nationalists like the PFLP and DFLP all the way to the reactionary fundamentalists of Hamas.

### The Complexities of the Israel-Palestine Conflict

There is a certain pressure on us to be concrete and provide some kind of solution to a pretty desperate situation in the here and now. The opponents, the pro-Palestinian groups, the Arab groups, that’s how they approach the question. We simply cannot. We understand that things can change very rapidly, including for the better, but we shouldn’t be Pollyannas. Hopelessness is a very foreign concept to Marxists, but on this question of Israel-Palestine there is a lot of hopelessness. There is not very much one can do in an immediate sense to relieve the condition of the Palestinians. The level of chauvinism in Israel is very high—higher than it’s been in decades. It’s not a situation that can be solved by saying “Independence for this” or “Israel out of that.” In fact, what comes closest to an immediate slogan that we raise is “Israel out of the Occupied Territories.”

But even this is a pretty long-term solution. There are now over 400,000 settlers in the Occupied Territories and East Jerusalem. A few years ago, they were extremely unpopular in Israel, for various reasons. But today, because of the hardening up, sympathy for the settlers is quite high. But let’s suppose that you get some Israeli government that says it will clear most of the settlements, then what? Do you think it’s just going to happen, do you think the settlers will just leave? Think of

how much consciousness in Israel will have to change for Israelis to accept the concept that the army may have to fire on settlers to get them out. The core of the settler movement is not in there because of cheaper housing, but for ideological reasons, and such hardened ideology is not going to be easily bought off, even with generous compensation.

So the situation is pretty bleak right now. Its nature demands social revolution, but the working class that holds the key, so to speak, the Hebrew-speaking proletariat, is deeply wedded to Zionist chauvinism. You can turn to workers in Egypt, Iran, Iraq, where the prospect of

add that the desperation of the situation drives people that may otherwise look to or at least consider a proletarian solution to instead just settle for “No U.S. aid” or divestment, something that, as they put it, at least “raises awareness.”

The more you try to be concrete, the more it seems you are at some distance from reality. Raising “hot-cargo” as a slogan has the same problem in a sense as using “For labor strikes against the ‘war on terror’” as a slogan. It sounds as fatuous as calling on Israeli workers to strike in defense of the Palestinians right now. It’s a perspective, but it’s not currently on the agenda. The Israel-Palestine conflict is



Daniel/Media

**Israeli workers protest layoffs at tire factory in Tel Aviv, 1989. Zionist state must be destroyed from within through Arab-Hebrew socialist revolution.**

social revolution is more favorable. It’s a point we have made on permanent revolution, that it’s not just a question of world socialist revolution happening everywhere at the same time, but of a sequencing of revolutions, in this case eventually bringing about revolution in Israel/Palestine.

But even in these other countries, there are enormous obstacles to overcome, including nationalism, fundamentalism, a lack of a communist alternative to embrace the justified rage of the masses. In the Near East, “more favorable” is a very relative term. That’s why the article “No Exit” by Amos Elon, an Israeli Labor Zionist, in the *New York Review of Books* (23 May) is impressive. Americans operate on a tacit assumption that every problem has a straightforward answer. This article convincingly makes clear that this is not true in Israel/Palestine. I would also

one of those questions that in the end can go in only a few directions: genocide and/or nuclear holocaust or social revolution.

### Raising the Slogan “Down With U.S. Aid to Israel”

I would argue that we can and should raise the slogan “Down with U.S. aid to Israel.” But it’s a secondary and subordinate slogan, necessarily so because of our program on the Near East. I mean, you can say “Down with U.S. aid to Israel” until you’re blue in the face, but if you don’t talk about a socialist federation of the Near East, it’s all for nothing. What we want to emphasize is our cutting-edge program, which can win people over to us. “Down with U.S. aid” is not cutting-edge. Social revolution is.

I want to raise the slogan, in a certain way, to get it off the agenda. To pro-Palestinian rights activists, “Defend the

Palestinians” in and of itself is not a very cutting-edge slogan. But it’s necessary to say it and to say where we stand. We share the aim of ending U.S. aid to Israel, so let’s debate how it’s going to be done. That’s when the politics come out. Having it as a subordinate slogan means that it doesn’t need to be out there every day. If you’re only going to take two signs with you, I wouldn’t make this one of them. If you’re going to have a contingent with a lot of signs, or a speakout with a lot of signs, why not?

The best and most complete expression of these questions is going to be propagandistic. We are a fighting propaganda group, not a mass party. However, that doesn’t mean that you can only raise slogans that are immediately realizable. Unless you’re talking about something like “Stop the Klan” when they’re actually about to march, our slogans are generally not realizable in any immediate sense. When we say “All Indian and Pakistani troops out of Kashmir,” it’s not like that’s around the corner. All our slogans demand propaganda to explain where we’re coming from, what we mean by them.

The problem is the more you try to be concrete, the more you have to deal with the relationship of forces. “Hot-cargo military goods to Israel” as a concrete slogan to end American aid to Israel—that’s not very real right now. I think, in fact, the way we did it in WV No. 779 is about as concrete as you can get in the present pass: “Marxists fight to mobilize labor in concrete acts of class-struggle in 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.”

Our aim is to intersect the most advanced section of the working class and radical milieus and to raise their consciousness, and that’s how we should approach the question of slogans generally. When we use the slogan on U.S. aid, it has to be linked with other slogans that express our defense of the Palestinians, our opposition to U.S. imperialism and our working-class angle to this question. By this I mean the whole question of proletarian revolution in the Near East, including to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict. I thought that *Militant* article stated it very well: “To leave the ground of independent working-class action in favor of a working-class cause is to jeopardize the cause itself.” ■

## East Timor...

(continued from page 9)

or “fantastic” (*Socialist Worker*, 24 September 1999). Opportunistically gushing about the national-chauvinist mobilisations, SA even called to “accelerate the campaign of industrial action that the union movement has initiated and build bigger and more militant demonstrations in the streets” (*Socialist Alternative*, September 1999).

For their part, WP carried out a feat of political gymnastics over the 1999 troops to East Timor campaign that centrists—revolutionary in words, social-patriotic in deeds—specialise in. They at times called for UN troops out and denounced as “in contradiction with all Marxist principles” the DSP being “at the head of the chorus calling for imperialist intervention into East Timor.” But they too, loudly joined the said “chorus,” which they hailed as “solidarity with East Timor,” cheering the trade union bans that egged on the Australian troops as “excellent demonstrations of working class solidarity and action in support of a progressive end” (*Workers Power*, November 1999-January 2000).

The capitalist state can never be pres-

sured to serve the cause of liberation because it exists to enforce the rule of exploitation of the racist capitalist class. That is why the cops brutally assault workers’ picket lines (such as recently at the BHP steelworks in Victoria) and pro-refugee protests, hunt down and seize courageous young children and adults who have fled immigrant concentration camps and tap the phone calls of the CFMEU construction union. Meanwhile the courts persecute union militants like the AMWU Skilled Six. In criminally promoting the fraudulent “human rights” credentials of the bourgeois state over East Timor, the fake left undermines struggles against state repression while greasing the skids for heightened imperialist militarism. The “human rights” military is busy kidnapping refugees on the high seas and dumping them in disease-ridden camps on desolate island neo-colonies. The May federal budget featured billions to expand the military and build more immigrant detention centres. And not content with the SAS joining the U.S.-led war of terror against Afghan villages, hospitals and wedding parties, [Australian] foreign minister Downer joins hawks in the U.S. administration in beating the drums for war against Iraq.

**U.S./UN/Australia get out of Afghanistan, Central Asia and the Persian Gulf! Hands off Iraq!** Against the fiction of a potentially benevolent capitalist state, we Trotskyists of the Spartacus Youth Club and Spartacist League say: *Not one person, not one cent for the Australian imperialist military!* In a small victory, on March 6 we led a demonstration at Melbourne’s RMIT campus that caused the Australian army to abandon their Orientation Day recruiting stall.

When we issued leaflets and held demonstrations against the Australian military expedition to East Timor in 1999, we fought against a huge wave of patriotism. Since then the Australian military has attacked anti-UN demonstrations of unemployed East Timorese and terrorised Timorese women in their homes, while we’ve all been promised “a war without end.” We need to struggle! *Students opposed to the superexploitation of the “Third World,” internationalist-minded workers, immigrants from countries under neocolonial subjugation and socialists must all come together in united front action to demand: Down with Australian imperialism’s plunder of East Timor’s oil/gas! Australian/UN troops out of East Timor!* ■



Reuters

**Australian occupation forces, part of UN “peacekeepers,” terrorize East Timorese in capital of Dili.**



Chicago...
(continued from page 5)

clan. For over three decades, every Democratic mayor—including Chicago’s first black mayor, Harold Washington—has defied a 1969 court order mandating integrated “scattered site” housing in white neighborhoods.

For Quality Housing for All!

Now Boss Daley Jr. is tearing down the CHA projects—which once housed 200,000—with a plan designed to maintain the same racist segregation. Nearly 80 percent of CHA families kicked out of the projects since Daley’s plan took effect three years ago have ended up in the poorest black neighborhoods. In a 2001 survey of 1,500 residents forced out of the Robert Taylor Homes, fully 10 percent wound up homeless. As the residents’ homes are bulldozed from under them, they are supposed to rely on the “Housing Choice Voucher Program” (formerly known as “Section 8”) that leaves CHA residents, 95 percent of whom rely on some form of public assistance, to the mercies of the racist cutthroat real estate market. Even before the lists were opened two years ago, there were 60,000 households on the waiting list for vouchers, and then another 100,000 people applied. And even if people do qualify for vouchers, there is a reported shortage of over 150,000 low-income apartments.

According to a recent study, only half of those driven out of the projects to date have been able to cut through the red tape and restrictions. In line with the “welfare reform” laws, you cannot qualify for a voucher if you have a prior drug arrest or have been late with rent payments! If you do manage to get a voucher, you have to find an apartment in 120 days, otherwise the whole application process starts over again. And if you do find an apartment, you still have to pass a credit check and pay a security deposit. Moreover, more than half of Chicago’s landlords simply refuse to rent apartments to people using the vouchers, especially black renters from the projects. As CHA chairman Sharon Gilliam remarked: “Housing has never been an entitlement...and currently there is no move to make it one” (Chicago Reporter, June 2000).

The “Transformation Plan” makes phony promises to build low-rise “mixed income” housing to replace the bulldozed projects. What this means for some 6,000 residents (down from 18,000 in the 1960s) of the 70-acre North Side Cabrini-Green projects—prime targets for destruction because of their location abutting the swanky “Gold Coast”—is that of the new units built, only 15 percent will be rented to specially screened families on public assistance. The real plan is to turn over the prime real estate to Daley’s cronies for private development of yuppie townhouses, while the less-favored tracts on the South and West Sides will end up looking like Afghanistan. Profit-hungry developers are having a field day: the Illinois Institute of Technology wants the Robert Taylor Homes site, while the



Contreras/Chicago Tribune

Police repression is routinely meted out to black youth in Chicago’s housing projects.

University of Illinois at Chicago Circle has used “eminent domain” to snatch up and demolish the once-vibrant Maxwell Street bargain shopping district, legendary home of the Chicago blues scene. As was often noted in the 1960s, “Urban renewal equals black removal.”

The black workers who migrated from the South between the two world wars were drawn by the promise of industrial employment. U.S. Steel’s South Works complex employed almost 20,000 at its peak, including many unionized black workers, though many of them worked in the harshest, lowest-paying jobs. But by the late 1970s the Midwest had become the Rust Bowl, with black workers being first among those losing their jobs. Formerly bustling industrial cities like Gary, Indiana became boarded-up wastelands with union jobs largely gone. Laid-off workers and their families were forced into humiliating welfare programs and rotting public housing. With hospitals closed and schools decrepit, the black ghettos are little more than prisons occupied by racist cops.

A primary vehicle for driving black people out of public housing has been the racist “war on drugs.” Black politicians from Democrat Jesse Jackson Sr. to reactionary demagogue Louis Farrakhan supported the launching of this campaign, whose main target has been the black and Latino ghetto poor. While Jackson today decries the “prison-industrial complex” and police brutality, in the 1980s he echoed the bourgeoisie’s anti-drug rhetoric, inanely declaring: “We’ve lost more to dope than to the rope.”

In an article titled “Deadly Symbiosis” (New Democracy Forum, April-May 2002), French researcher Loïc Wacquant powerfully demonstrates the “convergence of ghetto and prison” that has “put the United States on the path to mass imprisonment.” In Chicago, records for 2000 show that over three-quarters of those arrested for drug offenses—and over 90 percent of those sentenced to prison—were black. Nationally, 70 percent of the prison population is black and Latino, with one out of every nine black males between the ages of 20 and 34 incarcerated—a rate higher than that of South Africa at the height of the racist apartheid system! More than one-third of black men in their 20s are either in jail, on parole or on probation—and in the Northern inner cities, this increases to more than two-thirds.

The “war on drugs” has been a useful tool for the CHA as it empties the projects in preparation for their demolition. Last January, cops in Cabrini-Green were issued arrest quotas to speed up the pace of their drug busts. Wacquant points out that the CHA “has deployed its own police force and even sought to institute its own ‘misdemeanor court’ to try misbehaving tenants on the premises.”

Drug raids with names like “Operation Blue Thunder” have targeted housing project residents for arrest and eviction. Under a federal “one strike you’re out” law, a public housing tenant can be

evicted if a relative or even a guest is caught with drugs anywhere. Though this draconian measure was signed into law in 1988 by Reagan, it was Clinton in 1996 who ordered HUD to strictly enforce it. The law was upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court on March 26 in a case involving four elderly public housing tenants in Oakland, California thrown out of their apartments.

Unleash Labor/Black Power!

Chicago is the quintessential American city, where the racial oppression of black people—which is central to maintaining the capitalist exploitation of all labor—is



WV Photo

Chicago transit workers joined January 2001 PDC-initiated anti-Klan demonstration in Gary, Indiana.

played out in all its rawness. But the key to fighting this oppression is also at hand in the tremendous untapped social power of Chicago’s multiracial working class. Black workers are integrated into strategic sectors of the proletariat—transit, auto, steel and postal—and have a higher rate of unionization than white workers, even after decades of shutdowns and layoffs. Under the leadership of a revolutionary workers party, black workers can form a living link fusing the anger of the ghettos and barrios to the social power of organized labor.

The labor movement must fight for jobs for all at union wages and benefits! To unleash labor/black power requires breaking the hold of the labor tops, who chain the workers to the capitalists and their state, particularly through their prostration before the racist Democratic Party. The only difference between the Democrats and the Republicans is that the Democrats pretend to be friends of labor and the oppressed so they can get away with the same racist, union-busting program that the Republicans openly advocate. Fast on the heels of abolishing “welfare as we know it,” the Democratic Clinton administration passed the 1998 Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act that has served to gut public housing

for the poor and launched the current destruction of Chicago public housing.

Black workers who acknowledge that black Democratic Party leaders like Jackson Sr. are bankrupt may still look back with reverence to Harold Washington. In his 1983 election campaign, even as he fought the backlash of racist Democratic politicians like “Fast Eddie” Vrdolyak, Washington signaled his intention to carry out the same policies as his predecessors by refusing to call for open housing or to even broach the idea of busing to break down the Jim Crow segregation of the schools. And it was under Washington’s reign that rumblings began about doing away with the CHA projects, while neglect turned them into hellholes. Black politicians like Washington serve as front men for racist capitalist rule, posturing as defenders of black and minority rights in order to better enforce the bourgeoisie’s gutting of welfare, jobs, education and housing.

While poor families increasingly crowd into homeless shelters, millions of square feet of office space that could provide housing lie vacant in the Loop and suburbs. Decent public housing should be a basic right! But capitalism is an irrational economic system based on the exploitation of millions of working people for the profit of a tiny minority. As far as the capitalists are concerned, if there are no jobs for the ghetto masses, there is no reason to house, educate or feed them. The conditions first visited on doubly oppressed black workers are increasingly the reality for more and more of the white working class.

Today the ever-widening gap between the filthy rich and the immiserated poor

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No. 16

**South African Workers Battle ANC Neo-Apartheid Rule**

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# Iraq...

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uncompromising hostility of the proletariat and its organizations, always and everywhere, toward its own and every other imperialist bourgeoisie....  
“The struggle against war and its social source, capitalism, presupposes direct, active, unequivocal support to the oppressed colonial peoples in their struggles and wars against imperialism. A ‘neutral’ position is tantamount to support of imperialism.”  
—“Resolution on the Antiwar Congress of the London Bureau” (July 1936)

*For class struggle at home against the U.S. capitalist rulers! Defend Iraq against imperialist attack! Down with the UN starvation blockade! U.S., UN and all imperialist forces out of Afghanistan, Central Asia and the Near East!*

## Nuclear Cowboys on the Loose

Launched as the Soviet Stalinist bureaucracy was undergoing terminal degeneration, the 1991 Gulf War was billed as the “first post-Cold War war.” Shortly thereafter, the Soviet Union, a bureaucratically degenerated workers state, was destroyed by capitalist counterrevolution, an unparalleled defeat for the international proletariat that was hailed by the imperialists and cheered as well by liberals and many self-styled “leftists.” The end of the Cold War did not usher in a promised new era of world peace. Rather, as we warned at the time, the absence of the Soviet Union as a counterweight to U.S. imperialism would lead to a far more dangerous world. The decade following the Gulf War was marked by one American military adventure after another, from Panama, Somalia and Haiti to the Balkans and Afghanistan. At the same time, with the imperialists no longer united around an anti-Soviet consensus, rivalries among the major powers have sharply intensified.

Wielding its economic predominance and, above all, its unchallenged military might, the “world’s only superpower” asserted its right to ride roughshod over the planet. The American bourgeoisie has grown dizzy with success from a series of easy wins. And the current administration, with its bellicose “unilateralism,” gives particularly demented expression to that imperialist triumphalism. The Cheney/Rumsfeld/Wolfowitz cabal includes rabid “neo-conservative” Richard Perle, a former Reagan aide and adviser to the ultra-Zionist Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs. Their

perspective of “regime change” extends far beyond Iraq, as revealed in a recent think-tank report which denounced the Saudi monarchy, longtime client of the American oil monopolies, as an enemy and urged an American military takeover. As they plot one military adventure after another, these types act as if they truly believe that they are on a mission from the god of their choice.

With the exception of Zionist Israel and a deeply divided Britain, not one of America’s allies has endorsed an invasion of Iraq. With the Near East already seething over the U.S.-backed Israeli slaughter of Palestinians and the U.S.-led assault on Afghanistan, a number of pro-Western Arab regimes fear they could be swept away in the social turmoil provoked by an American invasion of Iraq. Turkey has also refused to line up behind Washington, concerned that if the Kurds in Iraq were to break away following Saddam Hussein’s downfall this would strengthen separatist tendencies among the deeply oppressed Kurdish national minority in Turkey.

In Europe, France’s right-wing president Jacques Chirac has denounced any American action taken without a United Nations mandate, and polls show that three-fourths of the population oppose a war against Iraq, with or without a UN mandate. The front pages of the French press, which in the aftermath of 9/11 proclaimed, “We are all Americans,” are now filled with stories of American complicity in the massacre of Afghan war prisoners. In Germany, Social Democratic (SPD) chancellor Gerhard Schröder denounces an invasion as an “adventure” and warns that Germany will not contribute a penny and will withdraw its elite “bio-terror” unit from Kuwait in the event of a war. Schröder’s right-wing challenger Edmund Stoiber also opposes a war against Iraq.

In Britain, Labour prime minister Tony Blair, widely reviled as Bush’s “poodle,” faces a split within his own cabinet over support to a U.S. war. If Blair were forced to pull out of a war against Iraq, this would leave the U.S. without even the most threadbare “coalition.” The Trades Union Congress is expected to adopt an antiwar resolution at its annual conference later this month, reflecting both widespread popular opposition to war and a resurgence of labor militancy which threatens the government with a number of major strikes in the coming months.

A demonstration called by the Stop the War Coalition for September 28 in London is expected to bring out the largest numbers in years. But the aim of the



Reuters

February 1991: Then Pentagon chief Cheney signs bomb of type that incinerated hundreds in Baghdad air raid shelter. Below: “Highway of death,” where U.S. air attacks slaughtered thousands of retreating Iraqi soldiers.



Der Spiegel

protest organizers, chiefly the reformist Socialist Workers Party (SWP), is to channel opposition to U.S. war moves into support for a wing of British imperialism less beholden to American interests. The SWP goes so far as to lionize the new Archbishop of Canterbury for his antiwar stance, enthusing that his “appointment is one more sign of a new turn in British politics” (*Socialist Worker* [Britain], 3 August). The Spartacist League/Britain and other sections of the International Communist League in Europe fight to win militant workers and antiwar youth to the program of class independence and proletarian internationalism.

At one level, the European (and Japanese) imperialists fear that a U.S. occupation of Iraq would further tighten America’s grip on the Near East oil spigot. More broadly, the American administration is seen as a gang of nuclear cowboys who tear up treaties and flout established rules of international diplomacy and commerce with abandon. An article in *Die Zeit* (1 August) by former SPD chancellor Helmut Schmidt, the elder statesman of German politics, was headlined: “Never before was American foreign policy so imperial. Europe must live with that—but shouldn’t subjugate itself.” As though in response to Cheney’s ravings that neocolonial Iraq is out for “domination of the entire Middle East,” a UN Security Council diplomat remarked: “The issue is no longer how threatening is Saddam Hussein, but how dangerous for the rest of the world is what the United States is planning to do to Saddam Hussein.”

Concerns over a go-it-alone invasion of Iraq are also fueling unease within U.S. ruling circles. What happens to Iraq—divided among a ruling Sunni minority, a Shi’ite majority and a distinct Kurdish population—after Saddam Hussein is brought down? Despite a relatively sparse occupation force in Afghanistan, anger against the U.S. “liberators” there is already running so high after a series of American atrocities that the country could well erupt. And an occupation of highly urbanized Iraq would be fraught with considerably more danger for U.S. forces.

Notably, it is not liberal “doves” who are the most vocal critics of Bush but rather leading elements of the Republican right, including Brent Scowcroft, national security adviser under Bush Sr. and key architect of the 1991 war, and (in a more muted form) James Baker, secretary of state at the time. In a prominent op-ed piece in the *Wall Street Journal* (15 August), Scowcroft warned that “an

attack on Iraq at this time would seriously jeopardize, if not destroy, the global counterterrorist campaign we have undertaken” and result in a “very expensive” occupation. Who pays is no small matter. In 1991, the U.S. got its coalition allies to foot 80 percent of the \$80 billion (in 2002 dollars) bill. The next military adventure will undoubtedly be at least as costly, and the bill will come due in the midst of a spiraling economic downturn.

As for the Democrats, they have done little more than mumble about the need for Bush to “make his case” for war before Congress, while focusing their Congressional campaign efforts on the worsening economy. This is not just a matter of short-term electoral calculations; the Democrats are at least as hawkish as the Republicans on Iraq and Israel. It was the Clinton administration which bombed and starved Iraq for eight long years, and it was Clinton’s UN ambassador, Madeleine Albright, who intoned when asked what she thought of the death of half a million Iraqi children due to sanctions, “That is a very hard choice, but we think the price is worth it.” *Down with the two imperialist war parties!*

## For Class Struggle Against Imperialist War!

War is a litmus test for professed socialists, demarcating revolutionary Marxists from every variant of reformist and centrist opportunism. From the start of the U.S. military buildup in the Gulf in 1990, we fought for a perspective of proletarian opposition to the imperialist war machine. In an article headlined “Break Blockade of Iraq!” (WV No. 509, 7 September 1990), we declared: “Working people in this country must stand on the side of Iraq against the warmongers and union-busters in Washington. And that means waging the *class struggle* at home.” We denounced the “UN fig leaf brigade” of liberals and leftists who promoted imperialist economic sanctions as an “alternative” to war and we declared that sanctions were themselves an act of war. We called for military defense of Iraq against imperialist attack, making clear that this could not entail any political support to the anti-working-class, anti-Kurdish regime of Saddam Hussein, who had himself earlier been a favorite of the American imperialists.

Today, rad-lib MIT professor Noam Chomsky tours the campuses decrying the murderous sanctions imposed on the Iraqi people. But in 1991, Chomsky urged the imperialists to use “the peaceful

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means prescribed by international law: sanctions and diplomacy” to get Iraq out of Kuwait (*Z Magazine*, February 1991). Some years later, Chomsky opined, “Occasionally, the population has compelled the state to undertake humanitarian efforts,” citing as a “real example” the “protection zone that the Bush administration reluctantly extended to the Kurds in northern Iraq” following the 1991 war (*Boston Review*, December 1993-January 1994).

Another left-liberal luminary, Boston University historian and self-described pacifist Howard Zinn, today writes that “an attack on Iraq would constitute an attack on the Charter of the United Nations” (*Boston Globe*, 19 August). In fact, the UN Charter has been a cover for one imperialist slaughter after another, from Korea in 1950-53 to the continuing starvation sanctions against Iraq. Zinn then immediately suggests that a U.S. war against Iraq might at some point be justified: “Let us suppose that international law should not stand in the way when extraordinary circumstances demand immediate violent action. Such circumstances would exist if there were, in the language of our own Supreme Court, a ‘clear and present danger’ represented by the Iraqi regime of Saddam Hussein.” So the professed “anarchist” Chomsky praises the potential beneficence of the imperialist state, and the pacifist Zinn allows that imperialist war may be justified! Even when sincerely held, the doctrine of pacifism—i.e., opposition to the use of force in principle—is an obstacle to a genuine struggle to rid the world of imperialist militarism.

With left-liberals such as Chomsky and Zinn echoing the aims of the imperialists, avowing the need to punish Saddam Hussein, the so-called “socialists” take on the garb of pacifism. Thus, at the time of the Gulf War the reformist Workers World Party (WWP) and International Socialist Organization (ISO) threw themselves into building antiwar coalitions

up to, for now. But its whole history is one of building coalitions aimed at appealing to “progressive” capitalist politicians, and that has not changed. A flyer by WWP’s latest antiwar coalition, ANSWER, for an “Emergency Response Protest” in the event of war conspicuously avoids the call for defense of Iraq and is limited to the same butter-not-guns pacifism that characterized its previous antiwar fronts, centered around such demands as “Money for jobs, housing, healthcare & education—Not for war!”

WWP, ISO et al. argue that only by limiting the struggle to the most minimal pacifist-reformist demands can a movement be built based on the broadest possible unity. What they mean by this is not the broadest unity of the working class and its allies internationally on the basis of *class struggle*, but class-collaborationist unity with capitalist politicians. The call to end war and allocate money for jobs and all the other things that working people and minorities need begs the question of *how*. Exploitation, unemployment, racism and imperialist war are intrinsic to the capitalist profit system.

The only way to put an end to them is for the working class to overthrow the capitalist order through a socialist revolution. At bottom, the reformists share and promote the lie explicitly propounded by liberals like Chomsky, that the existing capitalist state can act in the interests of the oppressed through mass pressure. In doing so, they serve to disarm and divert militant workers and leftist youth from the struggle against the capitalist system that breeds war.

### Defend Iraq! For Permanent Revolution!

While tailoring its politics to “progressive” Democrats in the U.S., Workers World simultaneously promotes the “anti-imperialist” credentials of Third World nationalist regimes, including Saddam Hussein’s Iraq. Thus Griswold lauds



Kurdish refugees, pawns and victims of U.S. 1991 war, were trapped in freezing mountain passes as they fled Iraq. Aral/Sipa

tions limited to nearly identical appeals to “bring the U.S. troops home” and to shift government spending from war to social services. The WWP formed the “Coalition to Stop U.S. Intervention in the Middle East” while the ISO endorsed the “National Campaign for Peace in the Middle East.” The ISO declaimed that “in the case of the blockade and in the event of an actual war, we are on the side of Iraq” (*Socialist Worker*, October 1990). But that line went no further than the fine print in its paper. In fact, neither of the “antiwar” coalitions called for defense of Iraq against the American imperialist behemoth, and the one backed by the ISO explicitly called for UN sanctions as an “alternative” to war (see “Liberal Mask Is the Real Face—ISO in the Antiwar Movement,” *WV* No. 520, 15 February 1991).

Today, WWP leader Deirdre Griswold writes: “The only course away from disaster is an independent, anti-war fight-back. It cannot rely on old warhawks of either capitalist party” (*Workers World*, 29 August). This is a statement that WWP can find no “antiwar” Democrats to suck

“the continued defiance by the Iraqi leadership of U.S. efforts to roll back their independence, won in 1958 by an anti-colonial revolution, and bring their country under the total domination of U.S. oil companies.”

Taking a diametrically opposed tack is the Progressive Labor Party (PL), which equates imperialist and neocolonial states because they are all capitalist, a notion shared by some left-wing anarchist youth. This ultra-“revolutionary” posture is a cover for crass capitulation to U.S. imperialism, preaching neutrality in wars between the imperialist oppressors and those they oppress. Thus, as the U.S. and its imperialist allies were terror-bombing backward Afghanistan, PL declared in an 8 October 2001 statement: “When bosses fight among themselves, workers must never choose sides among them.” Contrast this with what Bolshevik leader V. I. Lenin wrote in *Socialism and War* (1915): “If tomorrow, Morocco were to declare war on France, or India on Britain, or Persia or China on Russia, and so on, these would be ‘just,’ ‘defensive’ wars, *irrespective* of who would be the first to



Karen Robinson

Desperately ill children deprived of medicine due to U.S./UN sanctions that have killed over one million Iraqis.

attack; any socialist would wish the oppressed, dependent and unequal states victory over the oppressor, slave-holding and predatory ‘Great’ Powers.”

It is instructive to look at the attitude of Trotsky’s Fourth International to the Sino-Japanese War in the late 1930s. When Japanese imperialism invaded semicolonial China in 1937, the Trotskyists advanced a policy of *revolutionary defensism* toward China, then under the rule of Guomindang butcher Chiang Kai-shek, hangman of the 1925-27 Chinese Revolution. In a resolution titled “The War in the Far East and the Revolutionary Perspectives” adopted at its 1938 founding conference, the Fourth International declared:

“The defeat of Japanese imperialism will not only open roads to the revolution in China and Japan but will encourage fresh waves of revolt in all the colonies of the imperialist powers.... Revolutionary support for China’s struggle does not, however, mean that revolutionists must furnish cover for the bankrupt Kuomintang regime and the Chinese bourgeoisie.... China’s national liberation, and the emancipation of the Chinese masses from all exploitation, can be achieved only by the Chinese masses themselves, in alliance with the proletariat and oppressed peoples of all the world.”

Likewise today, the mobilization of the Iraqi masses in struggle against an imperialist assault must be combined with the struggle to overthrow the bloody regime of Saddam Hussein. In the 1950s, Iraq had a powerful proletarian movement under the leadership of the Communist Party (ICP). The overthrow of the British-backed monarchy by a military coup in 1958 opened up a revolutionary situation in which the proletariat could have seized power had the Stalinist ICP leadership not subordinated the struggle to the nationalists. This betrayal paved the way for a bloodbath of workers, Kurds and Communists by the bourgeois-nationalist Ba’ath Party, in which Saddam Hussein was then a rising star, with the CIA providing lists of those to be murdered. This is what Workers World describes as an “anti-colonial revolution.”

From the Chinese Revolution of 1925-27 to the Iraqi Revolution of 1958, the Stalinist program of “two-stage revolution,” subordinating the proletariat to a supposedly “anti-imperialist” national bourgeoisie, has meant bloody defeat for

the workers. From Egypt to Iraq and Iran, bourgeois-nationalist regimes act as local enforcers of imperialist subjugation and backwardness. Despite formal independence, the semicolonial bourgeoisies of the Near East remain dependent on the imperialists and fearful of any challenge to their class rule by the proletariat and the oppressed.

It is necessary to forge Trotskyist parties based on the perspective of permanent revolution: the chains of imperialist subjugation can only be broken through a workers revolution that shatters bourgeois rule as part of the struggle for worldwide socialist revolution, especially in the imperialist citadels. Only within a socialist federation of the Near East can the national rights of all the many peoples of the region be achieved, from the Palestinians to the Kurdish population, which is divided among Iraq, Iran, Syria and Turkey.

To a man, the reformists and centrists promote the liberal lie that imperialism is just a policy which can be changed through pressuring the capitalist state. But as Lenin stressed in polemicizing against similar views advanced by German Social Democrat Karl Kautsky, imperialism is the “highest stage of capitalism,” marked by the concentration and domination of finance capital, the pre-eminence of the export of capital and competition among the advanced capitalist countries to control markets and spheres of exploitation. War is a necessary product of the capitalist system.

The International Communist League adheres to Lenin’s injunction in *Socialism and War* that revolutionaries “not deceive the people with admitting the idea that a peace without annexations, without oppression of nations, without plunder, and without the embryo of new wars among the present governments and ruling classes, is possible in the absence of a revolutionary movement.” We fight for socialist revolution in the U.S. and internationally as the only way to put an end to war and imperialist oppression. This requires building revolutionary working-class parties like Lenin’s Bolsheviks, in the U.S. and around the world, as part of reforging Trotsky’s Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution. ■

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**Part Two**

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# ILWU...

(continued from page 16)

Council for Latin American Advancement put it at the Oakland rally, the government is “trying to break the ILWU and use 9-11 as an excuse. If they do it to these guys, they’ll do it to us.”

This understanding has brought the ILWU support from many other unions, including a pledge of support from the recent annual congress of the International Transport Workers Federation Dockers Section representing 400,000 port workers internationally, whose solidarity is key to the ILWU’s defense. *If the White House uses the military or other means to break an ILWU strike, longshoremen and other maritime workers throughout the world should refuse to handle American cargo, including military shipments.* International port workers solidarity was crucial in the successful defense campaign for the Charleston Five, International Longshoremen’s Association members who were threatened with jail sentences for defending their union in a South Carolina waterfront battle in 2000.

With the economy slumping and with an aggressively hostile government, the longshoremen are indeed in a tough position. Nevertheless, the concentration and centralization of shipping gives dock workers enormous potential social power. Since West Coast ports handle over 50 percent of all waterborne imports to the U.S., the *Los Angeles Business Journal* (27 May) worries that a ten-day work stoppage by the ILWU “would create a \$19.4 billion loss to the national economy.” Especially amid the current wave of corporate scandals, in which the Bush gang is directly implicated, any move to use the military to break the ILWU could very well trigger a popular backlash in support of the union. The need would be posed to mobilize the entire labor movement in defense of the longshoremen.

But this requires a fight against the policies of the labor misleadership that has *pledged loyalty to the government’s “war on terror” at home and abroad* that serves as the pretext for the capitalists’ attack on the ILWU. Indeed, an official ILWU placard raised at the August 12 coastwide rallies read, “Fight Terrorism, not American Workers.” The immense power of organized labor can only be brought effectively to bear when mobilized in complete independence from the capitalist state and from the capitalist Democratic and Republican parties. Instead, the official leaders of the ILWU are doing the exact opposite by promising to load military cargo even in the event of a strike and by signing on as guardians of “national security” in the ports. As the Pentagon war machine gears up for the mass slaughter of the Iraqi people, the labor bureaucracy sees the U.S. rulers’ export of terror as something on the order of a “public service.”

The ILWU has a longstanding policy of moving military goods during strikes. At the Oakland rally, Spinosa declared

that especially since the September 11 attacks, the union was “not against the men and women who serve this country.... We’ll give them the support they need.” In fact, the military is not there to serve “the country” but to defend the profits of the filthy rich U.S. capitalist class and its drive to maintain global dominance, using working-class youth recruited to fight as cannon fodder.

Embracing the chauvinist flag-waving of the U.S. ruling class cuts directly against international workers solidarity and especially sabotages the fight to organize immigrant workers in the U.S. *Workers Vanguard* salesmen were told that the “Fight Terrorism, not American Workers” sign was provocatively posted on August 13 at the APL terminal in Oakland, where low-paid, non-union port truckers—many of whom are Latino, Arab and Asian immigrants—line up to load and unload containers. Last year, in the midst of the post-9/11 anti-immigrant witchhunt, the ILWU International responded to the racist, anti-union Maritime Security Act then pending in Congress by pointing to the port truckers as a “national security” issue. Thus Spinosa & Co. are directly aiding the capitalists who use jingoistic anti-immigrant racism to divide the workers along ethnic

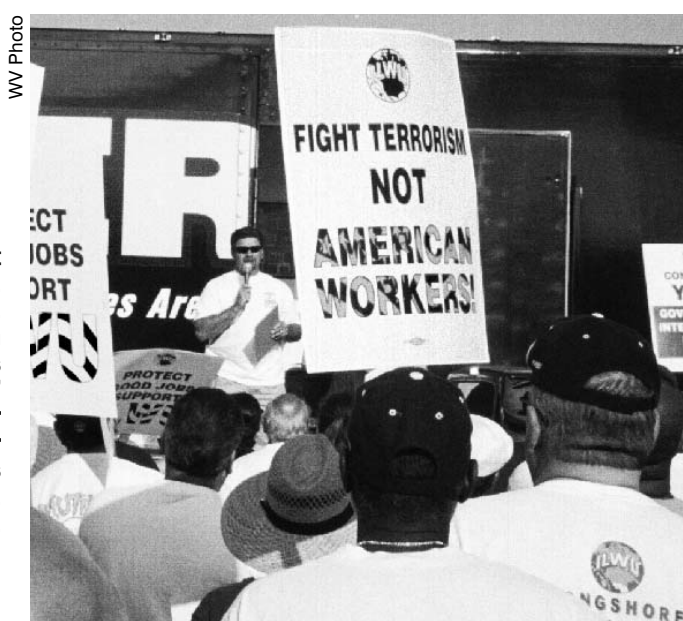


During 1971 strike, longshoremen were ordered to load military cargo for U.S. war against Vietnamese by ILWU “progressive” Harry Bridges.

and national lines. We say: *Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! Labor must organize immigrant workers!*

The power of the working class is shackled by the AFL-CIO bureaucracy, which regards production for profit—the foundation of the capitalist economic system—as sacrosanct. But that system is predicated on the exploitation of labor, and driven toward war in competition over spheres of trade and exploitation. While the Republicans flaunt their ties to big business, the Democrats are the “soft cops” of American capitalism. At the August 12 rallies, union officials paraded across the platform a range of Democratic Party politicians, from Senate majority

ILWU rally at L.A. port, August 15. Union tops push government’s “war on terror,” pretext for imperialist war and attacks on immigrants, labor.



leader Tom Daschle in Portland to Mayor Jerry Brown in Oakland, who claimed to be “friends of labor.” The labor bureaucracy seeks to deflect government attacks by appealing to such “friends in high places,” as Local 10 secretary-treasurer Clarence Thomas put it at the Oakland rally.

The “high places” of the capitalist state will only be used *against* the workers. At

(*Boston Globe*, 12 August).

Indeed, ILWU spokesman Steve Stal-lone pointed out that “we loaded military cargo even during the 1971 strike, when the Vietnam War was on” (*Lloyd’s List*, 8 August). Under founding leader Harry Bridges the ILWU did so even though, on paper, the ILWU called for the immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam, and even at the height of convulsive domestic opposition to the war. They thereby not only undercut the longshoremen’s own strike but kept the weapons flowing to bomb and kill insurgent Vietnamese workers and peasants fighting the U.S. imperialist colossus.

Isaac Deutscher, a veteran Marxist intellectual, commented at an earlier point in the Vietnam War that one dock workers strike would have been worth a thousand peace marches. Providing a taste of such labor power, Australian seamen struck against renewed bombing of Vietnam in January 1973. Likewise, at Japan’s Sasebo port late last year, the All Japan Dockworkers Union refused to load armaments and military supplies onto Japanese warships headed to assist the U.S.-led war of terror on Afghanistan.

On August 23 in Stockton, California, ILWU Local 10 and the ANSWER coalition, a group backed by the reformist Workers World Party (WWP), co-sponsored a rally against Bush, demanding “No New War Against Iraq! Government Hands Off the ILWU!” Speaking at the rally, Local 10 president Richard Mead quoted Bridges’ statement, “War makes rich people rich and working people dead.” But these are cynical empty words, as the ILWU tops have sworn in advance that they will continue to load military shipments in the event of a strike.

The 23 August *Socialist Worker*, newspaper of the International Socialist Organization (ISO), correctly stated that the slogan “Fight terrorism, not workers” raised by the longshore union tops on August 12 “plays right into the Bush administration’s hands—the government is justifying its threat to intervene precisely on the basis of a ‘national emergency’.” But in its reports on the August 12 rallies, *Socialist Worker* says not a word about the parade of Democratic Party politicians. Nor have they or the WWP’s *Workers World* made any mention of the ILWU tops’ promises to load military cargo in the event of a strike. Refusing to challenge the allegiance of organized labor to the Democrats, these reformists reinforce the ties between the working class and the “liberal” party of American capitalism.

It is a widespread sentiment among many working people that the Democrats are a “lesser evil,” and that while building a workers party might be a good idea, its time has not come. But the whole reason for the labor tops’ alliance with the Democrats is to prevent that time from *ever* coming. The struggle for the independence of the unions from the capitalist state requires a *political* expression—a workers party that gives conscious leadership to the struggles of the workers and the oppressed and wins them to the fight for a workers government to expropriate the capitalists. Those who labor must rule! ■

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NYC Transit...

(continued from page 3)

for all contracts and full parity in wages and benefits at the highest levels! Labor must smash the Taylor Law!

For Trade Union Independence from the Capitalist State!

Behind Toussaint’s lawsuit is a sellout, and behind the sellout is a strike that should have been fought through to victory as the opening battle of the TWU’s much larger contract fight against the MTA this December. Bloomberg cynically claimed that the strike was a “private dispute” between the unions and the struck companies, but in fact it was a strike against the city as well since the city franchises the routes to seven private companies and subsidizes them to the tune of \$100 million a year. Bloomberg declared a “state of emergency” one week before the strike began, and hundreds of “dollar vans” were given permits to act as scabs along struck routes.

The TWU must fight to organize the “dollar van” drivers, most of whom are immigrants. This is all the more critical now in the face of the post-September 11 anti-immigrant witchhunt carried out by the ruling class, which is a deadly threat to the labor movement as a whole. But the Local 100 leadership promotes the bosses’ “national unity” campaign, which fuels anti-immigrant and anti-labor repression. The TWU tops used a mass transit workers rally for health benefits in April to promote red-white-and-blue patriotism, kicking things off by singing the national anthem. The TWU tops have competed with the transit bosses in handing out T-shirts, hats and buttons emblazoned with the American flag.

The biggest factor weakening the bus strike’s impact was that other lines (public and private) were working streets parallel to struck routes. TWU officials vowed to prevent scabbing by their own members working for the MTA and raised money and food for strike assistance, but that’s as far as their “solidarity” would go. Instead of mobilizing transit workers in solidarity with the Queens strikers, union officials ran the contract fight and strike as a Democratic Party lobbying effort, never even calling a single union-wide rally. This was right in line with Toussaint’s stated aim of “establishing Local 100’s political machine,” trading votes for crumbs and empty promises from capitalist politicians. TWU officials turned every large meeting of private lines workers into a parade of Demo-



Local 100 president Roger Toussaint with Democratic Senator Hillary Clinton, who supported use of Taylor Law to prevent December 1999 transit strike. Right: November 1999 rally showed ranks’ determination to fight.

cratic Party politicians and hailed the “support” the union was receiving from U.S. Senators Hillary Clinton and Charles Schumer. Transit workers should remember that these “friends of labor” support the strikebreaking Taylor Law and backed the court injunctions that threatened massive fines and imprisonment and were wielded to crush the threat of a strike in December 1999. In a stark display of ruling-class unity, Republican mayor Giuliani and Democratic state attorney general Spitzer collaborated to level the anti-strike injunctions against the TWU.

In the lead-up to the 2002 contract expiration, Mayor Bloomberg is pleading “poverty” as Wall Street continues its plunge. Particularly with the invoking of “national unity” following September 11, the government will once again hold the sword of the Taylor Law over the TWU. But this union has enormous potential power, if unified and mobilized in alliance with the rest of New York City labor.

Since Toussaint took power last year, many transit workers have told *Workers Vanguard* salesmen, “We’ll see what Toussaint does when our contract with the MTA comes up in December.” The handling of the private lines strike is a small taste of the kind of “leadership” the workers can expect from both Toussaint and the “old guard” wing of the bureaucracy. Tipping his hand to the bosses months in advance, Toussaint declared in *Newsday* (25 August), “We will do everything within our power to avoid” a strike.

What transit workers need is a *class-struggle* leadership that fights for the complete and unconditional independence of the union from the capitalist state and its politicians. Such a leadership must be forged based on the understanding that the interests of capital and



WV Photo

labor are irreconcilably counterposed, and that the enormous social power of New York City’s transit workers must be mobilized on behalf of all working people and the oppressed. This is integrally linked to the struggle to break the political chains forged by the trade-union tops

South Africa...

(continued from page 16)

crackdown on any and all forms of protest is designed to intimidate all fighters for the oppressed and anyone who defies the ANC government.

Defying the threat of government repression, protesters against the WSSD voiced their intense hostility toward the Mbeki government. Some chanted, “Stop Thabo Mbeki’s AIDS genocide!” Others demanded: “No privatisation! No evictions! No cut-offs! No removals! No repression!” As the *New York Times* (1 September) reported, “Some of the bitterest attacks” were directed at Mbeki, “who was criticized for not tending to the needs of the poor.” Self-styled leftist groups like Keep Left! (aligned with the British Socialist Workers Party) and the Democratic Socialist Movement (aligned with Peter Taaffe’s Socialist Party in Britain), which in the past were staunch supporters of the ANC government, have been compelled to adopt a more denunciatory attitude toward the increasingly unpopular Mbeki regime.

At a WSSD march organised by the Anti-Privatisation Forum, which includes the Democratic Socialist Movement and Keep Left!, banners proclaimed: “America Breeds Misery! Power to the People!” and “America Gives More Aid to Israel than All of Africa!” That America

to the capitalist Democratic Party and to build a workers party committed to the fight for a workers government. When the working people rule, transport and industry will be ripped out of the hands of the greedy capitalists and put in the service of society as a whole. ■

breeds misery is obviously true. But it is also important to recognize that the ANC government is a *junior partner* of American imperialism just as the former white-supremacist regime was. In fact, having a black bourgeois-nationalist regime at the helm in Pretoria has facilitated the expansion of Anglo-American and the other white-owned South African capitalist monopolies throughout much of Africa.

We communists in Spartacist South Africa stand in fundamental opposition to various appeals to the ANC regime to help clean up the practices of global capitalism as represented by the World Trade Organisation, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. We oppose as well looking to the UN, an international den of imperialist thieves and their victims. Appeals to the capitalist masters to somehow become responsible and humane are reactionary because they foster deadly illusions that the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and its “democratic” trappings can be made to act as an agent for social change in the interests of workers and the oppressed.

The South African working class and all of the black, coloured (mixed-race) and Indian toilers need revolutionary leadership that is independent of the bosses’ parties to fight for a socialist future where the police-state repression of the ANC-led regime and its predecessors will be a dim and distant memory. ■

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# WORKERS VANGUARD

**Break with the Democrats—For Independent Labor Action!**

## Bush Steps Up Threats Against ILWU

### Labor Must Defend West Coast Longshoremen Against Government Union-Busting!

OAKLAND, September 1—As the U.S. military machine gears up to invade Iraq under the pretext of fighting terrorism, the Navy has menacingly sent its own crane operators to San Diego to keep West Coast ports running in the event of a strike or lockout of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU). In a 29 August statement, the ILWU revealed that “an attorney with the Administration has told the ILWU that Navy crane operators from its bases throughout the world have been sent to San Diego and are ready to move into the ports to lock out ILWU members on short notice.” Today, with contract talks at an impasse, the union walked out of negotiations after having extended the contract for two months. The employers’ Pacific Maritime Association (PMA) is bracing for slowdowns, having already threatened to meet any slowdown with a lockout.

“The ‘war on terrorism’ is aimed straight

at the heart of the working class,” the Partisan Defense Committee and Bay Area Labor Black League pointed out in the call for the February 9 united-front labor-centered demonstration in Oakland against the Bush administration’s repressive “anti-terror” laws and in defense of immigrant rights. The call continued, “Opposition to the war on labor, blacks and immigrants at home means opposition to the wars of American capitalism abroad.” This truth has been brought home by the government’s growing threats against the ILWU.

Well before the contract expired on July 1, ILWU International president James Spinosa received a phone call from “Homeland Security” head Tom Ridge warning that a strike could “threaten national security.” Since then, the Bush administration has talked about invoking a Taft-Hartley anti-strike injunction, dissolving the union’s coastwide bargaining



Charles Slay

**More than 1,000 turned out for August 12 Oakland rally to protest government strikebreaking threat against the ILWU.**

unit so that employers could use one port to scab on another during a strike, and calling out the military.

This outright government union-busting campaign is intended to intimidate the entire labor movement. Thou-

sands of West Coast longshoremen and other unionists rallied from Seattle to Long Beach on August 12, demanding: “Bush, butt out!” As the president of the Alameda County Chapter of the Labor

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## —South Africa— Protests Hit “Development Summit”



IMC South Africa

**Johannesburg, August 31: Demonstrators outside UN “Development Summit” of imperialist exploiters and their neocolonial victims.**



AP

*The following report was written for Workers Vanguard by our comrades of Spartacist South Africa, section of the International Communist League.*

\* \* \*

In the shadows of the United Nation’s World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), which ended on September 4, the South African government of Thabo Mbeki has effectively declared what demonstrators called a “low-intensity state of emergency” against the working class, poor and particularly the Landless Peoples Movement. As the summit opened in the posh suburb of Sandton, the state moved to silence opposition to yet another imperialist circus whose purpose was to peddle

the lie that capitalist “development” is possible in the “global South.”

The regime led by the African National Congress (ANC) is using racist apartheid-era measures to stamp out any protest deemed “illegal.” In the weeks leading up to the WSSD, the South African government carried out a series of arrests, detentions and police raids aimed at intimidating opponents of government policy. These attacks coincide with a revamping of a draft “anti-terrorism” bill, which is an expansion of the old Internal Security Act of the former white-supremacist regime. The new measures of state repression go hand in hand with Mbeki & Co.’s aim of running point for world imperialism throughout black Africa.

The bourgeois-nationalist ANC government, supported by the reformist South African Communist Party and the trade-union bureaucracy of COSATU, is seeking to create an “investor-friendly” environment for world capitalism.

On August 21, some 3,000 marchers gathered outside the offices of the provincial Gauteng government in Johannesburg, demanding an end to forced removals of squatters in “informal settlements.” Dozens were arrested, mostly members of the Gauteng Landless Peoples Movement (LPM). One LPM member who was arrested told a *Spartacist South Africa* salesman: “We were beaten up, including a disabled woman and a woman who was two months’ pregnant who suffered a

miscarriage in prison. They went to the extent of refusing her visits from her family.” She added: “This government, when they wanted votes, were very patient, telling us how to use the ballot papers and how to vote. After that, there was no one who came back to look at how we live.” Ann Evereth, U.S. media adviser to the National Land Committee, arrived separately and was thrown into jail and threatened with deportation.

Spartacist South Africa comrades have demanded, “Hands off the Landless Peoples Movement! Drop all the charges!” We defend all WSSD protesters facing police repression and harassment from the ANC-led capitalist state. The

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