

Victory to the Transit, Supermarket Workers! L.A. Strikers Defiant

Defeat Union-Busting Attacks! No to Binding Arbitration!

LOS ANGELES, November 4—As nearly 80,000 workers in Southern California go into their fourth week on the picket lines, the strikes by supermarket workers and L.A. transit workers are reaching a critical stage. These strikes have the potential to rock all of Southern California with class struggle and to point the way forward for workers around the country. But to do so, they must be strengthened and extended.

Some 70,000 supermarket workers at 859 stores represented by seven United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) locals have been out since October 12, fighting huge takebacks demanded by the Vons (owned by Safeway), Ralphs (owned by Kroger Co.) and Albertsons supermarket chains. On October 14, the third-largest transit system in the country was brought to a standstill by a strike of 2,000 mechanics in the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU); 6,000 other transit workers—bus and train drivers organized in the United Transportation Union (UTU) and clerical, custodial and tool room workers organized by the Transportation Communications International

Union (TCU)—whose contracts have also expired are honoring the ATU picket lines. Additionally, tens of thousands of L.A. County workers organized by Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 660 have been working without a contract since September 30. On October 28, they held a 2,000-strong rally against a county proposal to freeze wages and to shift health care costs onto the workers, declaring, “We’re drawing the line!”

With L.A. convulsed by major strikes, now is the time for the county workers to walk out, displaying a united proletarian fist against the bosses and underlining that it is labor that makes L.A. run.

But in their efforts to appease the Democratic Party city bosses, the union tops are undermining rather than extending the strikes. On Friday, the ATU is scheduled to vote on a rotten “last, best and final offer” from the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA). This insulting offer should be resoundingly rejected, as the ATU leadership is urging. But the answer is not to push for binding arbitration, as ATU president Neil Silver



Wells/L.A. Times

Transit workers picket MTA headquarters in L.A.

is advocating, which would place the fate of the union in the hands of the capitalist government’s “mediators.” Many ATU members on the picket lines are rightly worried about the likely decision of an arbitrator, and some have commented

that it’s ridiculous for anybody to go back to work while all three transit unions are without a contract. The ATU might take a lesson from the sanitation workers who withdrew their petition to

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“War on Terror” Means War on Immigrants, Blacks and Labor



Perez/El Diario-La Prensa

We print below a presentation, edited and abridged for publication, by Spartacist League Central Committee member Ed Clarkson at an October 11 SL forum in Chicago.

I want to begin by touting the most recent issue of *Class-Struggle Defense Notes*, which includes the *amici curiae* brief of the Spartacist League and the Partisan Defense Committee on behalf of Jose Padilla. It’s a great brief; among other things, it contains a concise history

of the United States in terms of the particular issue of democratic rights, as well as our past efforts in this regard. But in the specific, it is the defense of a particular American citizen of Puerto Rican descent, who was born here, arrested on American soil, and has been held since May of 2002 without charges, access to his attorney and without any prospect of a hearing or trial, or any opportunity to challenge his accusers—supposedly because he is an “enemy combatant.” Indeed, the brief itself is a call for his release, because we think he is guilty of nothing, as far as we know. More generally, of course, the brief in this regard is a defense of the rights of all American citizens: the right to an attorney, to trial by jury, to confront their accusers; rights I would say most Amer-

ican citizens still think they possess.

Now, under slavery, in 1857, there was the notorious Dred Scott decision by the Supreme Court. Justice Taney declared at that time, speaking for the court, that blacks “had no rights which the white man was bound to respect.” In the aftermath of the attack on the World Trade Center, and under the aegis of the hallucinatory “war on terror,” a war without a nameable enemy or a conceivable end, in a world dominated by imperialist capitalist oppression, the Bush administration bolstered by the Patriot Act—which was, incidentally, overwhelmingly passed by both parties in Congress—in essence declared that American citizens have no rights the government is bound to respect. But we are not just concerned with the rights of

citizens here. As revolutionary Marxists, Trotskyists and internationalists, our aim is to educate the world’s working people in their historic, and every day more important, mission of overturning the capitalist imperialist order and forming socialist societies based on production for human need, not profit. To that end we devote all our energies to building the international proletarian party necessary to accomplish that task.

Now, since September 11th, over 5,000 immigrants from predominantly Muslim countries have been detained in one fashion or another. As with Dred Scott, the courts have generally held that these people have no rights. Our programmatic response to anti-immigrant oppression is simple: Extend

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Canada

Bigots in Frenzy over Same-Sex Marriage

Full Democratic Rights for Gays!



Wattie/CP

Supporters of right to same-sex marriage staged counterprotest as religious bigots rallied in Ottawa, August 23.

SPARTACIST CANADA

We reprint below an article from Spartacist Canada No. 138 (Fall 2003), newspaper of the Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyste of Canada, section of the International Communist League.

The image of Canada as a tolerant, “gay friendly” country where you can smoke pot unmolested by the cops (if you’re white) may be consoling to some, but it’s a far cry from reality. The door opened for gay couples to marry when the Ontario Court of Appeal struck down the common-law definition of matrimony in June. The B.C. [British Columbia] Court of Appeal did likewise in July, and the federal government introduced a bill

to legalize same-sex marriages. With this, a wave of bigotry against homosexuals has rolled across the country.

Deeply divided over the issue, the federal Liberals [ruling bourgeois party] have gone all out to prevent gay marriage being legalized. Their earlier appeal against the Ontario case stalled it in the courts for months. They are still appealing a 2002 Quebec decision in favor of gay marriage. Now they are referring their own bill to the Supreme Court to ensure it’s “constitutional,” i.e., doesn’t bar religions from viciously discriminating against gays. A revolting mélange of reactionary anti-gay, woman-hating outfits will be granted official “intervener” status in this case.

The Catholic church is leading an all-

out war on gay rights, uniting Muslim and Hindu clerics and the demented religious right. A highly inventive crackpot from “Canadians Against Same-Sex Marriage” raved, “Will it mean that if a man wants to marry his dog, he can legally? If a grandmother wants to marry her cute little grandson, can she?” ([Toronto] *Globe and Mail*, 25 July). In the Vatican, the Pope and High Inquisitor Ratzinger cursed same-sex marriage, calling to ban it everywhere. Priests across Canada inveighed against it from their pulpits and a Calgary bishop threatened [Prime Minister] Jean Chrétien with eternal damnation if he approved gay unions. George W. Bush intoned that gay marriages in Canada would not be recognized and threatened a constitutional amendment to bar them in the U.S.

For the bourgeoisie, marriage is “one man on one woman for life.” Period. What drives the bigots nuts is that for gays to attain marriage would give homosexuality a modicum of acceptance it now lacks. Precisely because the institution of the family is a central prop in capitalist society, the right to marry is an important *legal* right. Married couples are accorded legal, social and medical protections denied to many common-law and gay couples. These include access to your partner’s medical insurance and pension benefits, the right to choose a partner from another country and live together, the right to adopt and have some protection against the state tearing your children from you because of your sexuality. Everyone, regardless of marital status, citizenship or sexuality, should have access to things like free medical care and decent pensions. It is an indictment of this society that such things are only accorded to those who do not breach the sanctimonious “moral codes” enforced by the ruling class on the exploited and oppressed.

We communists are committed to full democratic rights for gays and we welcome any legal advances that can be wrested from this cruelly bigoted society. We oppose all the laws and conventions that discriminate against gay people, including those barring marriage. Yet the right to marry is, for gays, a paradoxical and contradictory gain. The institution of the family, held forcibly together by “holy matrimony,” is the main source of oppression for women as well as gays. The patriarchal family decreed monogamy for the woman in order to determine the inheritance of private property, ensuring a man’s wealth and property passes to his own offspring. Anti-gay bigotry flows from the stereotyping decreed by the sexual division of labor in the family and its resultant, hypocritical “morality.”

It’s more than a little ironic that as the number of “traditional” marriages falls—now only about 70 percent—gay marriage is gathering steam. In Quebec, where approval for gay marriages is highest, the marriage rate is the lowest in the country and close to 60 percent of children are born “out of wedlock.” Last year the *Globe and Mail* editorialized in favor of gay marriage, declaring that “the state’s interest is in supporting the commitment and stability, imperfect as they are, that marriages can help nur-

ture” (30 July 2002). Others piously speak of gay monogamy and marriage “for life.” Little wonder many gay activists are deeply conflicted by the question of marriage rights. The U.S. *Advocate* captured this well:

“Within our community, many see this opening for marriage as the shining pathway to equal rights under the law. Others see it as the antithesis of liberation, the epitome of assimilation, forever short-circuiting the progress we have made in winning new forms of legal recognition and protections for families that don’t come with all the negative baggage of marriage. And still others are ambivalent, downright confused, or both.”
—Advocate.com, 29 July

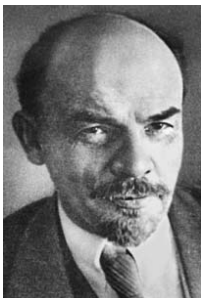
Legal marriage will do little to stop the bigotry and violence faced by gays and anyone else who steps outside the stifling boundaries of bourgeois morality. “Coming out” remains a dangerous gamble, especially for teens, and certainly for those in the suburbs and small towns where there isn’t even a veneer of “tolerance.” The 2001 beating death of Aaron Webster in Vancouver, the brutal gay-bashing of Robbie Petersen in New Brunswick, the suicide of Hamed Nastoh, 14, after repeated homophobic harassment despite not being gay are the tip of a large iceberg.

Prominent gay NDP [social-democratic New Democratic Party] politician Svend Robinson, who has been baited viciously in the hallowed halls of parliament, recently wrote about these horrible crimes. But his solution is...stronger “hate crime” laws. So the cops who harass and arrest gays are supposed to take special note of anti-gay violence? In Vancouver, Canada’s supposed gay Mecca, the largest number of “hate” crimes is against gay men and the cops are notorious for their contemptuous indifference to the victims of these crimes. “Hate crime” laws strengthen the repressive apparatus of the bourgeois state used to keep the capitalists in power. Calling for them only fosters illusions that the

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TROTSKY



LENIN

The October Revolution of 1917

November 7 (October 25 in the old Russian calendar) marks the 86th anniversary of the 1917 Russian workers revolution, led by the Bolshevik Party of V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky. In a 1942 speech, American Trotskyist leader James P. Cannon described the significance of this defining event of the 20th century, underscoring the Trotskyist Fourth International’s uncompromising defense of the conquests of October 1917. Undermined by nearly 70 years of Stalinist betrayal, the

Soviet Union was ultimately destroyed through capitalist counterrevolution in 1991-92. The International Communist League fights to forge parties modeled on Lenin and Trotsky’s Bolsheviks to lead the struggle for new October Revolutions around the globe.

The Russian Revolution proved three things for all time.... First, it proved that the party and the leadership necessary for victory can be created by the proletariat, as they have been created by the Russian proletariat.

Second, the Russian Revolution proved...that the system of nationalized industry and planned economy, introduced by a Soviet revolution, is superior, more progressive, more productive, than any device of capitalism, whether democratic or fascist.

And the third thing which we can say is demonstrated by the revolution, and proved now in the test of war, is that only one class is capable of solving the great social problems of our epoch. That class is the proletariat.

The Fourth International, with its program and its tactics anchored to these three propositions, has been proven correct by the whole test of events. Therefore, on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the revolution, we do not change our course. We see not only the Soviet regime’s terrible weakness, which derives from bureaucratic mismanagement and control. We see also the strength and the power which derives from the revolutionary origin of the Soviet Union and its basic conquests.

—James P. Cannon, “The Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Russian Revolution” (8 November 1942)

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WORKERS VANGUARD

On August 22, Texas governor Rick Perry issued pardons for 35 of 38 people convicted in 1999 on bogus drug charges in the Panhandle town of Tulia. (Of the other three, one was released on appeal and two others were convicted on supposedly unrelated charges.) The case had gained international attention, particularly through *New York Times* columnist Bob Herbert’s publicizing the atrocious frame-up. While the overwhelmingly black defendants breathed sighs of relief that four nightmarish years were over, the fact remains that *none* of the 38 should have ever spent a day in jail, ever been arrested, ever had their lives devastated in a frame-up that resulted in some 10 percent of Tulia’s black population—and half the town’s adult black males—behind bars. House after house in what local racists still call “N----rtown” was left empty, and virtually every black family in Tulia was affected.

Despite this welcome move to let those victimized finally get on with their lives, what happened in Tulia remains a particularly blatant indictment of the U.S. government’s racist “war on drugs,” which is aimed first and foremost at black people. At the same time, the fact that the Tulia victims were finally vindicated and freed shows that the various wars—“war on terror,” “war on drugs,” etc.—carried out by the Bush/Ashcroft administration do not always go their way.

The “investigation” by narcotics agent Tom Coleman, had it not had such ruinous effects, would have been laughable. Coleman’s work on the case was marked by sometimes wildly inaccurate physical descriptions of those arrested, discarded records, “reports” written on his body and unsubstantiated and uncorroborated testimony. Further, the cops found no illicit drugs in the houses of those arrested. More still, Coleman’s “evidence” was further discredited when defense lawyers for the Tulia victims revealed earlier this year that samples of the cocaine Coleman had submitted to the state narcotics lab had a purity as low as *1 to 2 percent* (cocaine sold on the street typically has a purity of 60 to 75 percent).

Coleman’s professional life has been marked by financial dishonesty, racism and abusive behavior. Even Coleman’s former boss, Cochran County sheriff Ken Burke, told the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement that “Mr. Coleman should not be in law enforcement if he’s going to do people the way he did this town” (London *Independent*, 20 August 2002).

In spite of this record, most of the 46 arrested were given astonishingly severe sentences through the efforts of District Attorney Terry McEachern and racist juries out for blood in what Freddie Brookins Sr. of Tulia’s NAACP chapter aptly described as a “kangaroo court.” The word of a white cop—even a paranoid, violent, clearly incompetent one—was sufficient to saddle the defendants, represented by underpaid, overworked public defenders, with sentences of up to *434 years* in the case of a white man married to a black woman (who herself got 25 years). The Texas state government, at that time headed by George W. Bush, gave its stamp of approval by naming Coleman the Texas “Lawman of the Year”!

The nature of the “war on drugs” finds



Thirteen Tulia frame-up victims at court hearing, June 2003.

a particularly concentrated expression in Texas’s regional narcotics task forces, of which the Panhandle Regional Narcotics Trafficking Task Force, Coleman’s employer at the time of the Tulia travesty, is one. Their activities have been so egregious that even some right-wingers in the Texas state house like Republican Terry Keel of Austin complain that “These task force operations are so nebulous and so unconnected to any accountable directly elected official that they just go off on their own” (*Texas Observer*, 14 March). The diffuse nature of these task forces’ relationships to various police forces and local governments can be seen in a recent lawsuit filed by two of the Tulia victims, which names 26 counties and four cities that participated in the Panhandle Regional Narcotics Trafficking Task Force. Indeed, the atrocity in Tulia is emblematic of the particularly vicious nature of the “war on drugs” in the American South.

It is hardly surprising that such task forces have been running amok. In Texas these bodies are formally *ad hoc* and draw their income from federal grants (\$27.5 million), local and state contributions (\$10 million) and, significantly, from asset forfeitures resulting from arrests they make (\$7 million). In order to sustain themselves, the task forces plunge into urban areas, relentlessly target black people and minorities and flout even such protections as bourgeois law grants in search of large numbers of arrests to report and assets to convert into yet more money for further rampages. Will Harrell of the Texas American Civil Liberties Union describes the activity of the task forces as follows:

“The Panhandle Regional Narcotics Trafficking Task Force and its kin are structured as unaccountable extra layers of bureaucracy that behave as free agents, financed by federal grant funds, and don’t report to any elected government body. Most of them focus too much attention on low-level drug stings in poor, minority neighborhoods.... And many of them perform racial profiling on Texas highways,

using traffic stops as a pretext to search cars randomly for drugs.”

—*Dallas Morning News*, 26 August

The travesties perpetrated by these task forces are hardly limited to Tulia. In Hearne, Texas, an informant set up 28 people, and in Wimberley a task force raid killed a suspect thought to have sold a paltry half-ounce of marijuana on two occasions. Nevertheless, an attempt to rein in the task forces at the state house, sponsored by Keel, foundered this summer. For at least the next two years, the vast majority of these state-sponsored vigilante gangs—including the Panhandle task force—will continue to receive state funding.

Texas has a justly infamous reputation for heavy-handed racist law enforcement. The cops and Klan have historically been heavily interpenetrated, and Texas as usual leads the country in the number of executions this year. This is, however, a question of degree. What happened in Tulia—what the task forces have done and continue to do throughout Texas—illustrates in concentrated form what the “war on drugs” is all about. The Tulia defendants, some of them parents, many of them with no prior criminal records, most of them poor, even in their moment of vindication have to return to lives damaged by the nearly four-year ordeal which kept them from jobs, family and loved ones.

In the U.S., the special oppression of black people is integral to the maintenance of capitalist class rule and the exploitation of the working class as a whole, and drug laws are used to herd a whole generation of black youth into prison. In the inner cities, minor drug charges have played a major role in entangling as many as one in three black men in the criminal “justice” system, while in the more isolated countryside, roving gangs of narcs are quite capable, as Tulia graphically indicates, of literally decimating black communities. Merely getting rid of the task forces, which are proving such an embarrassment to even

some “law and order” politicians, will not solve the problem.

The point is not to merely attempt to curb the worst excesses of a system that produces Tulias and has put over two million people—disproportionately minority—behind bars, but to get rid of it. The Democratic Party, which at times seeks to portray itself as an ally of black people and workers, has every bit as much stake in the capitalist system as the Republicans.

It was Democratic president Bill Clinton who ordered the Department of Housing and Urban Development in 1996 to strictly enforce the “one strike you’re out” law in public housing, which mandates the eviction of any tenant in public housing if they—or any guest of theirs—are caught using drugs anywhere. And black Democrats like Jesse Jackson Jr. play a prominent role in promoting the racist rulers’ onslaught in the inner cities in the name of “drug prevention.” The Spartacist League calls for the decriminalization of drugs, so that like smoking tobacco and drinking alcohol they will merely be bad for you.

The capitalists have many means of squeezing, railroading and repressing working people and the oppressed, and the “war on drugs” is not the least of these. But black people, as a strategic section of the American working class, are not helpless in the face of these assaults. The working class, which has both the objective interest and social power to take down the capitalist system, can and must take up the fight against the “anti-drug” crackdown as part of fighting for the rights of all the oppressed. To bring the working class’ social power to bear, a political struggle against the Democrats and their hangers-on in the trade-union bureaucracy is needed. A key to this struggle is forging a revolutionary workers party that will fight for an egalitarian socialist future that will relegate judicial atrocities like Tulia to a past that will look strangely barbaric to generations more fortunate than our own. ■

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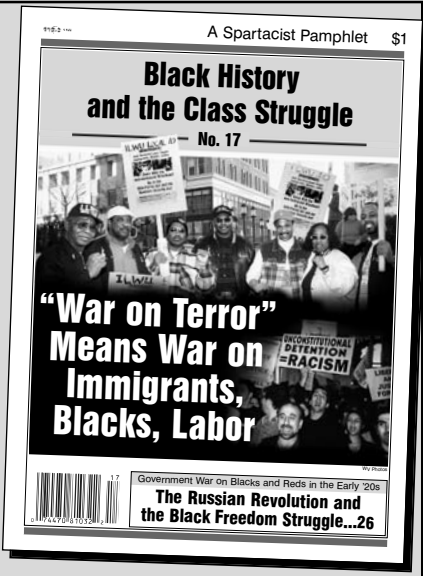
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Young Spartacus

Spartacus Youth Club Speaker at Columbia Rally

Down With the Patriot Act!

Some one hundred people came out to an October 23 Columbia University demonstration hosted by the campus ACLU to protest the USA-Patriot Act and support immigrant student rights. The student ACLU organizers courted Democratic Party city council politicians Margarita Lopez and Bill Perkins, who sent a spokesman. Also endorsing and speaking at the demonstration were representatives of various immigrant groups, the graduate student unions from NYU and Columbia, the Columbia Anti-War Coalition and the International Socialist Organization (ISO). The SYC intervened at the rally, speaking and carrying signs including “‘War on Terror’ Means War on Immigrants, Blacks, Labor!” and “Break with the Democratic Party of War & Racism! For a Workers Party that Fights for Socialist Revolution!”

For the ACLU and its Democratic Party friends, a common theme was that the Patriot Act is unpatriotic, as if the Patriot Act is at odds with what American capitalism embodies: two million people—disproportionately minority—in prison, cop rampages through the inner cities, the racist death penalty, demonization and deportation of “illegal” immigrants. They made it clear that they did not oppose the Patriot Act as a whole by building support for NYC Council Resolution 909, which calls for repealing only those provisions “that unduly infringe on civil rights and liberties.” Tellingly, the ACLU draped the U.S. flag over the speaker’s podium. This blood-drenched imperialist flag has no place in a protest in defense of immigrants or working people! Several speakers from immigrant groups recounted horrifying stories about attacks on immigrants and their purge from New York colleges and universities.

The ISO speaker said he wanted to



Young Spartacus

SYC at ACLU-sponsored demonstration on October 23 to protest Patriot Act.

“offer a slightly different perspective of why we should oppose unequivocally this attempt by our government to criminalize dissent.” “Slightly,” indeed. The fact that the ISO refers to the U.S. government and the Bush administration as *our* government indicates that the ISO identifies with the capitalist ruling class that it simply seeks to pressure to be nicer. The ISO table prominently featured a “We Need a Movement to Stop Bush” placard—this can mean nothing other than attempts to bolster the fortunes of the Democratic

Party, like those politicians at the rally. The ISO speaker ended his speech with the liberal cry of “No justice, no peace,” but the truth is there can never be justice or peace until capitalism is overthrown by a successful socialist revolution. We need a workers movement to smash the rule of capital! We print below the slightly edited speech of SYC speaker Erica Jones.

* * *

The USA-Patriot Act, which has the support of both the Democrats and Republicans, makes as its principal target immigrants, minorities, labor and all political opponents of racist U.S. imperialism. War, racism, attacks on immigrants and the working class are what capitalism is all about. A socialist revolution is the only solution to end capitalist oppression and imperialist war. The fight for immigrant rights goes hand in hand with the fight against black oppression, which is the key issue that keeps labor divided. We in the Spartacus Youth Club strive to mobilize the multiracial working class as champion of all the oppressed, much like we did in February of 2002, when we helped build a labor-centered united-front protest in defense of immigrant rights, in Oakland. This protest centered on the powerful longshoremen’s union and brought out labor, immigrants and defenders of democratic rights. As Marxists we understand that the stripping away of democratic rights is rooted in the class nature of the capitalist state. Such examples can be seen in the

Patriot Act, which has been used to do everything from monitor what books you check out of the library to withholding student visas to targeting Palestinian activists against Zionist repression, such as the L.A. Eight and Farouk Abdel-Muhti.

Patriot II seeks to take this repression even further by asserting the government has the right to disappear people and take away citizenship, much like what is currently happening with the case of Jose Padilla. Seizing on the September 11 criminal attacks on the World Trade Center—which killed thousands of innocent civilians—the Bush administration backed by the Democrats embarked on a pre-emptive global war against “terrorism,” creating havoc and killing thousands first in Afghanistan and most recently with the imperialist war in Iraq. Without the military might of the Soviet Union existing anymore, the U.S., unchallenged, wants to assert its bloody, imperialist drive to dominate and enslave the world. It is clear that by labeling the bureaucratically deformed workers state of North Korea part of the “axis of evil,” the U.S. capitalist rulers want to see what occurred in the Soviet Union, where a socialized planned economy was destroyed and replaced by capitalist starvation, also happen in the remaining workers states of the world. We in the Spartacus Youth Club, unlike the so-called International Socialist Organization who didn’t mention a peep about socialism today, defended the Soviet Union against counter-revolution. Today, and also in distinction to the ISO, we defend the remaining deformed workers states of China, Cuba, North Korea and Vietnam against counter-revolution, including North Korea’s right to bear nuclear arms and to defend itself against imperialist attack.

A tool of government repression is to declare political opponents of government policy terrorists. The “war on terror” campaign was initiated by laws under the Clinton administration, such as the Anti-terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, which has been responsible for the deportation of hundreds of immigrants and quickening the pace of executions of the disproportionate number of blacks and Latinos already on death row. The working class must break with the Democratic Party of racism and war. Remember Bay of Pigs, Korea, remember Vietnam! Down with the Patriot Act! For full citizenship rights for all immigrants! Down with the imperialist occupation of Iraq! And if you hate capitalism and think that socialism is the only way forward, join the SYC. Black rights, immigrant rights—same struggle, same fight! Workers of the world, unite! Remember Bay of Pigs, remember Vietnam! Democratic Party, we know what side you’re on! ■

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

BAY AREA

Monday, 5 p.m.

November 10: **Defend the Gains of the Chinese and Korean Revolutions Against Capitalism!**

San Francisco State University
Room TBA

Information and readings: (510) 839-0851
or e-mail: slbayarea@compuserve.com

BOSTON

Alternate Tuesdays, 6 p.m.

November 18: **Defend China, Cuba, North Korea and Vietnam! For Workers Political Revolution!**

BU Col. of Arts and Sciences, Rm. B25A
725 Commonwealth Avenue
(BU East/Central on Green Line B)
Information and readings: (617) 666-9453
or e-mail: bostonsyc@yahoo.com

CHICAGO

Wednesday, 6:30 p.m.

November 12: **Trotsky and the International Left Opposition: The Fight Against the Degeneration of the Russian Revolution**

U of C, Cobb Hall, Room 107
5811 S. Ellis Ave.

Information and readings: (312) 563-0441
or e-mail: spartacist@iname.com

LOS ANGELES

Alternate Saturdays, 2 p.m.

November 8: **The Economics of Capitalism**

3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215
(Beverly/Vermont Red Line Station)
Information and readings: (213) 380-8239
or e-mail: slsycla@cs.com

NEW YORK CITY

Alternate Tuesdays, 8 p.m.

November 11: **The Bolshevik Revolution: How the Working Class Took Power**

Columbia University
Kent Hall, Room 405
Information and readings: (212) 267-1025
or e-mail: nysl@compuserve.com

TORONTO

Saturday, 3 p.m.

November 15: **Break With the Racist, Pro-Imperialist NDP! Build a Revolutionary Workers Party! Independence for Quebec!**

Ontario Institute for Studies
in Education, Room TBA
252 Bloor St. West
(above St. George Station)
Information and readings: (416) 593-4138
or e-mail: spartcan@on.aibn.com

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Thursday, November 13, 7:30 p.m.

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Drop the Charges Against Hostos Student Activist Miguel Malo!

On 15 August 2001, Miguel Malo was arrested at Hostos Community College in the Bronx for holding up a sign in the school's "free speech area" protesting cuts in Spanish and bilingual education. Two years and 26 court appearances later, the CUNY administration still salivates at the idea of making an example of Malo. He has been targeted because he is an activist in defense of immigrant rights on the overwhelmingly minority campus and a student leader. (At the time of his arrest, he was the Hostos Student Senate vice president; he is now president.) The administration's agenda: to stifle all protest so they can, without challenge, continue to slash and burn education for minorities and the oppressed. Malo's attorney, Ron McGuire, explained (*Caribbean Life*, 20 May):

"At campuses like Hostos and City College [in Harlem], when students protest there's a fear of domestic insurrection. They call out this incredible security force. We have gotten documents about their deciding whether or not they need to wear guns to control the students. There's a very intense kind of racial profiling going on, and that's what Miguel is caught up in."

Malo has been charged with assault on two Hostos "peace officers," resisting arrest, disorderly conduct and harassment. Numerous faculty and student witnesses saw that it was the other way around—

seven campus cops threw him to the ground, leaving him with injuries to both wrists and forearms and with welts across his back. He could face up to a year in prison if he is convicted. **Drop the charges against Miguel Malo!**

The case's history shows the prosecutors repeatedly lying and suppressing evidence. The administration and the District Attorney have "amended" their story and their charges over and over, refused to turn over their videotapes of the protest where he was arrested, failed to bring key witnesses to court and have even gone so far as to attempt to have his lawyer thrown off the case.

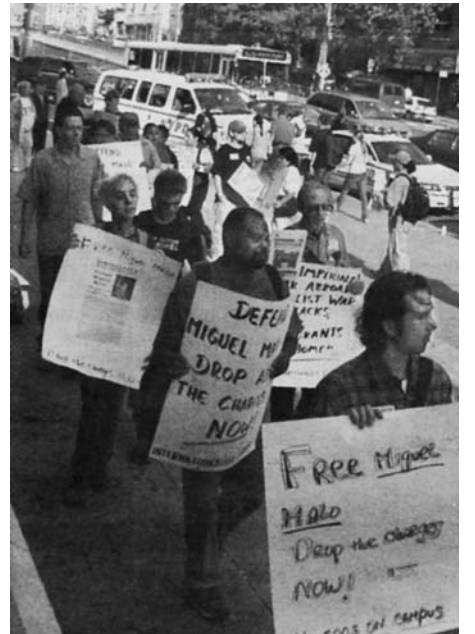
For the court's part, they refuse to provide Malo with a translator and have even demanded that he write an affidavit about what happened, a violation of his Fifth Amendment rights. If that doesn't make it obvious enough that the state is on the side of the administration—the campus representatives of the ruling class—then the arrest of two students, Moises Delgado, a supporter of the Internationalist Group, and Javier Genao, inside the courthouse at Malo's September 25 hearing makes it transparent. Genao was arrested for wearing a sticker solidarizing with Malo, and Delgado was arrested for inquiring about the arrest of Genao! Charges of disorderly conduct

were again manufactured in the service of political repression. **Drop the charges against Moises Delgado and Javier Genao!**

As the Partisan Defense Committee stated in a letter of protest to the Bronx County District Attorney (2 October):

"It is no coincidence that the more than two years of persecution of Miguel Malo have seen vicious wars and brutal occupations abroad. Mr. Malo's situation is a domestic reflection of U.S. imperialism's drive to suppress all in its way and is symbolic of the 'democracy' that can be expected in America's colonies and neo-colonies."

The fact that Malo was arrested before September 11 graphically displays that political suppression and oppression of minorities didn't begin with the "war on terror" but is endemic to the capitalist system. Educating the sons and daughters of black and immigrant workers has been deemed unwanted overhead for decaying American capitalism. For black youth, the racist ruling class no longer sees it worth "wasting" money on them even to keep them alive, let alone to educate them. The Spartacus Youth Clubs and the Spartacist League demand free education, open admissions and state-paid living stipends for all students. The fight against attacks on education is part of our program to smash this racist capitalist



James Trimarco

Protest outside Bronx courthouse in solidarity with Miguel Malo at his hearing on September 25.

system and replace it with an egalitarian socialist society.

Malo's trial date has been set for November 24. Join the rally across from the Bronx County Community Courthouse, on 161st Street, and demand: Drop all charges against Miguel Malo! ■

Canada...

(continued from page 2)

government which foments anti-gay bigotry can be a vehicle for liberation. Laws passed to "protect" gays today will be used against them, the working class and other oppressed minorities tomorrow.

The backlash against gay marriage comes on top of a years-long state-run anti-sex witchhunt aimed at regimenting society and instilling fear and guilt. Gay men are especially targeted, but the drag-net includes teachers who have sex with their students, adults who have consensual sex with youth, those who like pornography and youth, who, according to the state, should be abstaining from sex, not enjoying it.

An aptly titled series in the gay newspaper *Xtra*, "Getting the Criminal Code Out of Your Sex Life," details a panoply of laws criminalizing consensual sexual activity. Sex with more than two is illegal, so the Taboo Strip Club in Montreal was raided in May, as were bathhouses in Calgary and Edmonton. If you're under 18, or under 21 if more than two people are involved, then anal sex is illegal. Mere possession of "child" pornography is a crime. In Vancouver, John Robin Sharpe challenged Canada's anti-porn laws after he was charged for possessing his own short stories and photos depicting nude teens kissing. Infuriated when he was finally acquitted, the cops went on a fishing expedition, dredging up someone who claimed to have had sex with Sharpe over 20 years ago when underage. Sharpe now faces frame-up "indecent assault" charges. Stop the state witchhunt of John Robin Sharpe! Cops, courts, government out of the bedrooms!

The only principle that should govern sexuality is effective mutual consent, nothing more and nothing less. We oppose the reactionary "age of consent" laws and indeed all attempts to legislate sexuality. The Trotskyist League and our comrades of the Spartacist League/U.S.

are proud of our decades-long defense of NAMBLA (North American Man/Boy Love Association), hounded by the state for speaking out on the explosive issue of sex between youth and adults.

A measure of the hysteria over this issue is that today the article "Men Loving Boys Loving Men," first published in the Toronto gay newspaper *Body Politic* 25 years ago, is once again in the dock. In 1997 Ontario teacher Narcisse Kuneman was convicted for possessing the article and some critiques of it; today in arguing against Kuneman's appeal the crown prosecutor asserts that mere possession of the article is a crime under Canada's draconian anti-porn laws. *Body Politic* was subjected to a wholesale state vendetta for printing the article, which described the sexual experiences of several men with youths under the "age of consent" and made the simple assertion that such relationships are not inherently abusive. From jackboot cop raids on the paper's offices, to repeated, unsuccessful efforts by prosecutors to secure convictions under "obscenity" laws, the most elementary civil rights were shredded in the service of a vicious and far-reaching witchhunt. We actively joined the fight against this onslaught, declaring "Defend the *Body Politic*!" and calling on the organized labor movement to take a stand in defense of gay rights.

Two decades ago, raids on bars and bathhouses and anti-porn busts were met with huge protests. Today the raids still happen but the protests have vanished. Meanwhile, advocacy of (some) gay rights has gone "mainstream," as shown by the federal Liberals' current stance on gay marriage. Gay Pride Day is a corporate celebration replete with vote-hustling bourgeois politicians who could care less about gay rights. But on the shop floors of factories, anti-gay epithets and violence still occur with sickening frequency. Women in "non-traditional" or industrial jobs are taunted by bosses and co-workers as "dykes"—lesbian or not, you're outed.

Last year, when Oshawa teen Marc Hall had to get a court order to bring his boyfriend to a high school prom, the Canadian Auto Workers went to bat for him. Unions increasingly insist on contract language that ensures equal benefits and rights for gays. These are good developments. But the union leadership, whose flag-waving patriotism and "Canada first" chauvinism bring the reactionary ideology of the capitalist rulers into the working class, can hardly lead a fight for the liberation of anyone from this deeply oppressive system. And while NDP leaders like Robinson and Jack Layton campaign for gay rights, they simultaneously work to buttress the capitalist state and increase its repressive reach. Three years ago, the NDP premier of B.C. was campaigning to *raise* the age of consent to 16.

Our struggle for full democratic rights

for gays means a commitment not only to fight against job discrimination and legal inequality, but crucially to mobilize the power of the working class in defense of gay rights. That means struggling for a new leadership of the workers and oppressed dedicated to anti-capitalist class struggle. Sweeping away bourgeois rule and tsarist autocracy, the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution eliminated all laws against homosexuality. Today, exposing and combating every injustice and every outrage, communists fight to forge a revolutionary party that will combat every form of oppression, for this is central to the task of leading the proletariat to power. Only then will we be able to sweep out all the garbage of bigotry and build a socialist society that will make equality and freedom a living social reality for all. ■

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

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“War on Terror” Means...

(continued from page 1)

full citizenship rights to all immigrants, no matter how they got here.

Zacarias Moussaoui, who seems to have been an Al Qaeda affiliate, but who committed no evident crime, recently was made ineligible for the death penalty and the prosecution in his trial was prevented from introducing evidence relating to the September 11 attacks—by a judge with some respect for existing law—on the grounds that the government refused to allow him to call or cross-examine three witnesses. The Feds are now seeking a reversal of this decision; it would not be surprising if they got one.

Now, I want to qualify whatever admiration I have for this judge by noting that she brightly proposed that Moussaoui instead plead guilty to “conspiracy.” Being convicted of conspiracy is sort of like being convicted for having DNA. Unless nobody’s ever shared a bad idea with you, we’re all guilty. We’re for eliminating all conspiracy laws, which simply amount to charging people with “thought crimes.”

Patriot Act Targets Everyone’s Rights

In the immediate aftermath of September 11th, the Spartacist League on September 12th issued a statement that begins by describing the attack on the World Trade Center as “an indefensible act of criminal terror.” Then we go on to say:

“The ruling parties—Democrats and Republicans—are all too eager to be able to wield the bodies of those who were killed and wounded in order to reinforce capitalist class rule. It’s an opportunity for the exploiters to peddle ‘one nation indivisible’ patriotism to try to direct the burgeoning anger at the bottom of this society away from themselves and toward an indefinable foreign ‘enemy,’ as well as immigrants in the U.S., and to reinforce their arsenal of domestic state repression against all the working people.”

—“The World Trade Center Attack,” WV No. 764, 14 September 2001

A couple of months after the Patriot Act was passed, the Partisan Defense Committee and the Labor Black League for Social Defense in the Bay Area (these are organizations associated with the SL) organized a united-front demonstration of some 300 on February 9, 2002. At the core of this mobilization were longshoremen, blacks and immigrants, under the following slogans: “Anti-Terrorist Laws Target Immigrants, Blacks, Labor—No to the USA-Patriot Act and the Maritime Security Act!” and “Down With the Anti-Immigrant Witchhunt!”

This, though not such a large demonstration, was nevertheless a model for what needs to be done, and unfortunately remains unique in its thrust and labor centrality to this day. Our appreciation of the



Chappatte/International Herald Tribune

focus of the “war against terrorism” and the Patriot Act has proven correct: immediately after September 11 striking teachers in New Jersey were jailed; New York transit workers, who had voted to strike, were threatened with the anti-strike Taylor Law; these unions were characterized as “Taliban” and “jihadist.” When the contract expiration for longshoremen on the West Coast approached last year, their leader received a call from Tom Ridge, head of Homeland Security, informing him that a strike could threaten national security. Evidently an armada of Taliban in rowboats had been spotted.

A black woman transit worker in Chicago, Arlene Russell, who had the misfortune of offending some cops by carrying out her job, was jailed and had her fingerprints run against an international “terrorist” database. Fortunately, with union support, she has beaten the frame-up. Now, I simply don’t know if Mr. Ridge called the garbagemen in Chicago; certainly Chicago mayor Richie Daley wasn’t very fond of the recent strike. The Patriot Act is currently being used to investigate suspected criminals, supposedly corrupt foreign businessmen and suspected white-collar criminals. Who knows what fate awaits ye insidious downloaders of popular music?

The array of legislation and initiatives the government is marshaling in this “war” is breathtaking and marks a qualitative diminution of democratic rights. A Patriot II bill awaits Congressional consideration, with even more draconian measures than Patriot I. Now understand, under Patriot I, as an “enemy combatant,” Padilla could have been simply blown away at O’Hare Airport, where he was arrested. This is why, as is detailed in the brief, the SL has fought tooth and nail against any attempt to label us as “terrorists.” If you are so labeled you become simply dead men walking in the eyes of the capitalist rulers. Witness the Black Panther Party, labeled as “violent revolutionaries” by J. Edgar Hoover; subsequently 38 of them were simply gunned down in the FBI’s COINTELPRO operation. And many others were falsely imprisoned, some of whom are still in jail 30 years later.

Then there’s the Terrorism Information and Prevention System, with the cute acronym TIPS. This is “turn in your Mom if she’s seen in a long conversation with an Arab-appearing person at the convenience store.” This is something Hitler was especially fond of. Fortunately, it doesn’t seem to be getting much play. There’s the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, recently beefed up at the instigation of New York Democratic Senator Charles Schumer, which gives the Feds fairly unlimited rights to collect and save data on every aspect of your life: what you do, who you sleep with, who you talk to, what you read—everything. Recently, during the course of the elections in Philadelphia, the black mayor had his office bugged; I don’t know if the provisions of these acts were relevant in that decision.

After the revision of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, the federal government promised to generate a list of 100,000 terrorism suspects. And then

there’s the “no fly” list, to prevent suspects—who don’t know they’re suspects, incidentally—from using air travel, because somebody has labeled them potentially dangerous. So the prognostications in our September 12 statement about the scope and intentions of the “war on terror”—which were subsequently codified into the Patriot Act—were right on.

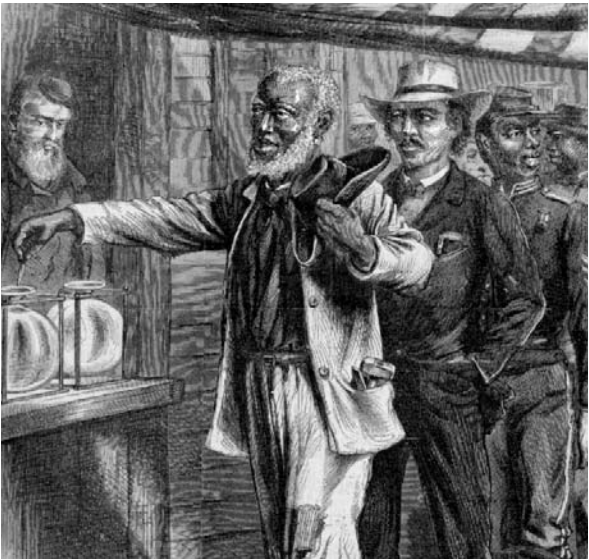
The Fight for Citizenship Rights in the U.S.

We understand, as Marxists, that the rise of the bourgeois nation-state has a contingent, and not at all inherent connection to the availability of democratic rights to society in general. Such an inherent connection is pushed by apologists for capitalist rule who generally overlook the fact that in most backward countries today—that is, in most of the world—capitalism comes wrapped in the form



Culver

Dred Scott (left): Supreme Court ruled in 1857 that blacks “had no rights which a white man was bound to respect.” Black people voting in the South in 1867 after Civil War smashed slavocracy.



Harper's Weekly

of some sort of highly repressive regime. Even in the more advanced countries, capitalist rule has appeared in a fascist uniform. Those with some familiarity with Marxism will know that we consider what is commonly known as “democracy”—that is, capitalist democracy—as a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, which means democratic for the ruling class, indeed, and hell for others.

We fight for a workers revolution in order to replace the capitalist system initially with the dictatorship of the proletariat; a democracy for those that toil, combined with such repression against those capitalists who would seek to regain power as is necessary. This as a prelude to a society that would produce all that is necessary and desired by all, for all; at which time all forms of repression of man by man—the state itself—would wither away and disappear, issuing an epoch of freedom in which all would be able to maximize their potential.

It is interesting to look at the history of the United States, in regard to the question of bourgeois democracy, because I think such analysis richly supports the Marxist understanding of capitalist rule. After all, this is the country that is mythologized more than others as the most free in the world. That is not factually the case, but

nevertheless it’s a common myth.

Now, at its beginning, the original Constitution structurally endorsed slavery. The slaves, who could not vote, were counted in that august document as providing an additional three-fifths to the population on which the number of delegates a state could send to the House of Representatives was based. This assured the South a dominance in national politics it could not have had if based only on free citizens. It should be noted that America had proportionally more black people then; about 20 percent of the population. And that in some Southern states over half the population was black.

The destruction of slavery in the Civil War resulted in the 14th Amendment and also the first definition of citizenship, which had not been defined in the original Constitution. All born on U.S. soil, of whatever color, or naturalized, were citizens. As a result of the Civil War, black people voted during the period that followed that’s known as Radical Reconstruction. But in the aftermath of the Compromise of 1877, Reconstruction was betrayed by the Northern capitalists in alliance with the ex-slaveholders. Within little over a decade, black people were again disenfranchised by various literacy tests and property qualifications which had a solely racist intent, and would not recover the vote in the South until the civil rights struggles of the 1960s. Women were accorded the vote in the U.S. only in the aftermath of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, when the USSR became the first major society to grant the franchise to women. And it happened in many other capitalist societies at approximately that time.

Many in Chicago are aware of the Haymarket martyrs, mostly immigrant working-class leaders, largely anarchists,

Partisan Defense Committee
CLASS-STRUGGLE DEFENSE NOTES
Number 31 50¢ Summer 2003

BRIEF OF AMICI CURIAE SPARTACIST LEAGUE AND PARTISAN DEFENSE COMMITTEE ON BEHALF OF JOSE PADILLA AND GRANTING HIS WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS

In The
UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
For The Second Circuit
Docket No. 00-2245
03-2438

JOSE PADILLA, Donna R. Newman,
as Next Friend of Jose Padilla,
Petitioner-Appellee-cross-Appellant,
v.
DONALD RUMSFELD,
Respondent-Appellant-cross-Appellee.

On Appeal from the United States District Court
for the Southern District of New York

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Reuters

Left: Iraqis rounded up by U.S. occupation forces, August. Right: Prisoners held without charges in indefinite detention at U.S. prison camp at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba.



AFP

Americans were rounded up and placed in concentration camps as potential enemy agents. After the war, the U.S. rulers, having effected a brief military alliance with the Soviet Union during the war, moved strongly to establish what one could call “American values.” The reds who had built the industrial unions were driven out of the labor movement; Taft-Hartley, severely restricting strike action, was quickly passed; and McCarthy’s witchhunting search for agents of the USSR began. Now, in reality this witch-hunt was directed against all socialists, of whatever persuasion; it was directed at labor militants, and at those who were for “race-mixing,” as it was then described; that is, for integration.

Tens of thousands were victimized during those years. Anti-terror legislation is always anti-working-class at root, and in this country also in the service of racial oppression. The lesson of this history is that rights for most are only forthcoming as a result of class and social struggle. Such rights are quickly subjected to attack and undoing by America’s capitalist rulers once such struggle subsides. The elements used by the bourgeoisie in this counterattack are almost invariably in the direction of recasting militancy in opposition to the system as “terrorist,” while invoking some insidious foreign enemy or other, and of course with outright appeals to racist bigotry. From our perspective, the only “reform” that will end imperialist war, racial oppression, exploitation and injustice is the revolutionary overturn of the imperialist system through socialist revolution.

The Russian Revolution and U.S. Imperialism

It is not accidental that the October 1917 Revolution in Russia was the focus of the adverse attentions of one of the most powerful capitalist imperialist societies in the world, the United States. Notably, after World War II, the United States killed seven million Asians, first in Korea, and then in Vietnam, in pursuit of its mission to prevent sequels to the October Revolution, that is, the overturn of the capitalist exploiters’ rule.

The October Revolution was the first, and to date only working-class revolution which overturned capitalist property relations, established a collectivized economy and in its first actions erased all of the legal restrictions of the old regime against women, against gays and national minorities. The Bolsheviks worked to forge a revolutionary communist international, the Third International, to spread the whirlwind of liberation over the planet, and devoted much of their meager resources to that end.

But in the context of a very backward society, devastated by World War I and by the efforts at counterrevolution afterward, and in the absence of the spread of socialist revolution, especially to the more advanced industrialized societies, a bureaucracy led by J.V. Stalin began to cohere as a caste, in pursuit of its own parasitic interests. Early 1924 marked the qualitative point at which the bureaucratic caste seized political power from the working class—from then on, the people who ruled the USSR, the way the

USSR was ruled and the purposes for which it was ruled all changed. It would then take a series of bloody purges through the 1930s for the Stalin clique to consolidate its rule. Throughout, the Trotskyists fought against the bureaucratic degeneration of the Soviet workers state—for authentic Bolshevism and in defense of the October Revolution.

Nevertheless, what remained in the USSR was a society that was able to provide a job, housing, education, medical care for all, albeit under bureaucratic caste rule. And the fact that it was able to do that shows the strength of the planned and collectivized economy. Those gains persisted until 1991-92 when Yeltsin led a capitalist counterrevolution in the USSR, which has been followed by the devastation of the social well-being of most working people, both in the USSR and in



Haitian/SF Chronicle

Police open fire on antiwar protesters and longshoremen at Port of Oakland, April 7.

the East European deformed workers states where there were similar capitalist overturns. The power of the October Revolution was also reflected in the ability of a once very backward society to act as a counterweight in world affairs to the ascendant imperialist power, the United States, especially once the USSR had attained an approximation of nuclear parity with the U.S.

There remain today societies in which the capitalist class has been expropriated, most importantly in China; also in North Korea, Cuba and Vietnam. Our position on these societies is identical to our position on the ex-USSR and East Europe. We are for the unconditional military defense of these countries against imperialist or domestically inspired capitalist counter-revolutions. We are for proletarian political revolution against the bureaucratic castes that rule these societies, whose policies threaten the gains of the revolutions themselves.

Those of you who are not familiar with us, or with our coherent critique and program to change this blood-soaked imperialist order, come here not just because of a concern with democratic rights, but with an equal concern about the seemingly out-of-control appetites of U.S. imperialism to dominate the economic and political course of all societies on the planet. The real motive force behind the

Iraq war is the desire of the U.S. capitalist rulers to maintain and expand the domination of U.S. imperialism particularly in the economically and geopolitically crucial Near East. Ask yourself this question: Could the U.S. have carried out this neocolonial assault without serious regard for the consequences if the USSR still existed? The answer is a flat-out no. No more than the U.S. could have—as it did consider—used nuclear weapons in the Korean and Vietnamese wars because there was a problem here: the USSR might respond in kind. And that gave some hesitation to the U.S. imperialists.

The current seemingly mad aspirations of U.S. imperialism are in no way different from those of the imperialist powers that initiated the conflagration of World Wars I and II. Just as the various imperialist capitalist classes must assure their

mately linked. And then there are those who call themselves socialist—one example in this city would be the International Socialist Organization (ISO)—who in various ways promote the reform of the capitalist order, normally by a capitulation to the liberal Democrats.


The congruence of all these types was expressed in their opposition to the Soviet degenerated workers state, and is currently expressed in their opposition to “totalitarianism” specifically in North Korea, in China, in Cuba, etc. That is their emphasis. This is hardly surprising for the Democratic Party, which is the *other* capitalist party in the American system, and thus supports the prerogatives of U.S. imperialism. In the case of the trade-union bureaucrats, it is an extension of their allegiance to that party, and in the case of the sham socialists, of their opposition to socialist revolution, and adherence to a policy of reform.

Let me return to the subject of democratic rights, and this time proceed from the present to the past. It is interesting to note that virtually all the Democratic candidates for the presidency are running on the platform that Bush has been *soft* on national security. You remember I mentioned Senator Schumer’s reforms, so that each of you can be investigated at the touch of a computer key. One wonders what they have in store for us. How much more “secure” could we be? Outside of being actually in lockdown, where you’re *very* secure.

Bill Clinton, for example, had his own fondness for the death penalty, even for the brain-damaged (which even the right-wing Supreme Court has found unacceptable). He signed into law the 1996 Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act. Most immigrants currently detained by the government, in fact, are held under the auspices of that law, not the Patriot Act. And Clinton’s Anti-terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act sharply undermined the centuries-old

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**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!**

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

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**Opponents of the Revolutionary
Internationalist Workers Movement**

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L.A. Strikes...

(continued from page 1)

the National Labor Relations Board and instead went out on strike just after the ATU and UFCW went out, winning Teamsters representation at Norcal Waste Services in South Bay.

What’s needed is for the UTU and TCU to go out on strike, to stop the MTA’s scab operations with mass, militant picket lines and to shut down all mass transit in L.A. *All transit workers in the L.A. metro area should be organized in one industrial union! Strike together, go back together!*

In the case of the supermarket workers, it has been clear from the beginning that the key to victory lies in joint action by UFCW and Teamsters members *to shut down the distribution centers*. There is widespread sentiment among the ranks of both unions to do precisely that. Instead, the UFCW and Teamsters leaders have dismantled those picket lines already in place at two distribution centers—picket lines that were being honored by the Teamsters. This was done at the request of the Teamsters misleaders, who claimed that their members had to work in order to keep their health benefits.

This is a betrayal, not only of the UFCW workers but also the Teamsters. It is reported that the grocery bosses are planning to replace Teamsters truck drivers with non-union “independent” truckers when their contract expires in two years. The dismantling of the picket lines was met with disappointment by many UFCW strikers, with one picket captain at Vons emphasizing to *Workers Vanguard* salesmen how this weakened the strike as a whole.

On October 31, UFCW Local 770 president Rick Icaza grandly announced that the UFCW locals were taking down the pickets at the 300 Ralphs markets in California as a gesture of thanks to the consumers who have been shopping at other markets since the strike began and with the aim, according to the *Los Angeles Times* (1 November), of “focusing pressure on the Vons and Albertsons chains.” Public relations doesn’t win strikes. Shutting down the flow of money to the bosses does. While the UFCW leadership is trying to play one supermarket conglomerate against the other, the supermarket bosses

are standing solid against the workers: the *Times* article spoke of the “possibility that Ralphs might share with Albertsons and Safeway any windfall from being the only one of the chains without pickets.”

The UFCW has reportedly threatened to extend the strike against Vons to Safeway stores nationally. If the UFCW is serious about taking this strike nationally, then the key to winning is extending it in California—which means maintaining and reinforcing all the existing picket lines, including against Ralphs. Even now, thousands more UFCW members are on strike in West Virginia, Kentucky and Ohio, while 7,000 members of UFCW Local 700 in Indianapolis are taking a strike vote tomorrow and 15,000 more in Arizona are working without a contract. All these workers should be out now in coordinated strike action against all the supermarket bosses.

A class-struggle strategy to win the transit and supermarket strikes is counterposed to the bureaucrats’ policy of abiding by what’s “legal” in the eyes of the bourgeois courts and requires a struggle against the bureaucrats’ strategy of class collaboration. It is reported that the ATU’s suicidal offer to submit to binding arbitration was strongly pushed by Miguel Contreras, head of the L.A. County Federation of Labor, and liberal Democratic city councilman Antonio Villaraigosa, who was elected through the backing of labor and who sits on the board of the labor-hating MTA. This dynamic duo, one a pro-Democratic Party labor bureaucrat and the other a “pro-labor” Democrat, have come out to help the bourgeoisie defeat the strike. In fact, Contreras calls for an end to the ATU strike because it hurts “low-paid members of our (other) unions that are having to walk to work every day” (*Los Angeles Times*, 30 October). This is merely an echo of the bosses’ vile propaganda against the transit strikers.

The employers, their Democratic and Republican politicians, their courts and other government agencies are all enemies of the working people. While some Democrats have paid lip service to the plight of the downtrodden supermarket workers, Democratic mayor Hahn is now threatening to reopen the city workers contracts in order to push through new concessions. Against the united front of the capitalists, the workers need class

unity in struggle. This poses the need for a class-struggle leadership in the unions based on political independence from the bosses’ parties and the bosses’ state. *Break with the Democrats! For a fighting workers party! Victory to the transit and supermarket strikes!*

Bust the Union-Busters!

While the capitalist media nationwide—both print and television—have instituted a virtual blackout, the L.A. strikes have struck a chord among workers throughout Southern California. On



WV Photo

Picket line outside L.A. supermarket. UFCW, Teamsters: Shut down the distribution centers!

October 20, workers from several unions marched and rallied with striking UFCW members at Ralphs in the Crenshaw area, among them Verizon workers from the CWA, AFSCME members, Justice for Janitors (SEIU Local 1877), H.E.R.E. hotel and restaurant workers Local 11 and SEIU Local 99, which represents workers at the L.A. Unified School District. UPS and other unionized drivers regularly honk in support of the mechanics’ pickets, and consumers in their great majority have honored the grocery store picket lines. Despite the gridlock and difficulties caused by the strikes, there is widespread sympathy for the workers’ fight to defend their health care benefits.

The L.A. strikes should be an inspiration to transit workers in Chicago, who have been working without a contract for

over four years, and in New York City, where the bureaucrats knifed a potential strike and pushed through a sellout last December, hiding behind the state’s anti-strike Taylor Law. With unemployment on the rise and the economy in shambles, the class battles in L.A. show workers across the country that they can fight back.

Threatening the union’s very existence, the supermarket bosses are demanding a two-tier wage system with significantly lower pay and benefits for new hires, the subcontracting out of union labor and the right to open non-union stores in “non-

union” areas. According to the president of UFCW Local 770, the bosses are also trying to cut health benefits by 50 percent. The MTA’s demands include a cap on its contributions to the ATU’s health care plan, leaving workers to pay for increases in rapidly rising health care costs, and a freeze on MTA funding of the retirees’ health care plan at the current level, which is already well below what’s needed to fund the plan. In announcing its “last, best and final offer” on October 27 after declaring negotiations to be at an “impasse,” the MTA, as the *Los Angeles Times* (28 October) noted, was “laying the legal groundwork for hiring replacement workers”—i.e., scabs. Although this won’t be easy because of the skilled nature of the mechanics, it is a clear threat to bust ATU Local 1277 and potentially

“War on Terror” Means...

(continued from page 7)

right of *habeas corpus*, which includes the right to appeal unjust convictions and demand a hearing and a trial. And this act has allowed the government to deport immigrants based on undisclosed evidence and made it a crime to support even lawful activities of any organization labeled “terrorist” by the State Department. The anti-terrorism act was supposedly passed because of the Oklahoma bombing, which was done by that well-known immigrant, Timothy McVeigh.

Before Clinton, it was Harry Truman, the Democratic supposed “working man’s” president, who launched the first Cold War against the Soviet Union and also oversaw the witchhunting in the late 1940s to early 1950s that was known as McCarthyism. To go back further with the Democrats is to locate them as the political expression of Jim Crow rule and of the KKK in the South. And usually during that period KKK members were also, in many Southern towns, part of the Democratic machine.

The Cold War trade-union bureaucracy was initially ensconced in power to replace the reds driven out of the unions in the 1940s, that is to say, it was the government agency within the trade-union movement *for* the purge. Its current composition seems to be mostly lawyers who barely passed the bar exam. It has little notion of class struggle, and while it



WV Photo

Oakland, 9 February 2002: PDC and LBL initiated labor-centered united-front demonstration against government’s “anti-terror” laws, in defense of immigrant rights.

would be unfair to say that these bureaucrats would never countenance a strike, it is more than fair to say that they will use every opportunity to concede to the prerogatives of capitalist rule.

The trade-union bureaucracy’s policy is that of “America first” chauvinist protectionism which divides the working class internationally, and the promotion of the Democratic Party, to which they are intimately linked and obligated. It should be known that the policies of the current trade-union bureaucrats and their immediate predecessors have led to the decimation of the American trade-union

movement, which now stands at a historic membership low. And it’s even worse than that, because many of the members of the trade-union movement now are cops and security agents, who in our opinion should be tossed out of the labor movement.

Finally, there are those who call themselves socialists, but who think it’s principled to cross picket lines when their jobs are in danger, and to call the bourgeois courts into the trade unions to promote “democracy.” As if the bosses had any interest in democracy for the working class, and as if further capitalist state con-

trol could do anything except annihilate the trade unions.

Currently, with Bush’s growing unpopularity, these socialist reformists are increasingly involved in “fight the right” campaigns. “Fight the right” campaigns—what does that mean? Who do you vote for—Do I hear Democrats? That’s what they’re into. During the Iraq war, these supposed leftists mobilized antiwar youth under the banner “No to war.” That is, under the banner of those few liberal Democrats who opposed the war. Our contingents in these demonstrations called for the defense of Iraq against the U.S. neo-colonialist war, and for class struggle against the capitalist rulers. This is not a small difference.

I attempted in this forum to outline an alternative worldview for those who are dismayed by the actions—both here and abroad—of our rulers. It is the perspective of class struggle and of world socialist revolution, one opposed to what imperialism ultimately has to offer, which is the prospect of a third world war, this time nuclear. I would encourage those who are motivated to look into these matters deeply. There will be only three possible choices: you can hope all this will fade away and return to normal, although I think that serious consideration will lead one to believe that “normal” is not all that very good; you can fight on the system’s terms for reform—hopefully this forum has presented some reason to question the value of such a fight; or, if the fires for justice and human freedom burn brightly enough, you can join us in the fight for a socialist tomorrow. ■

the other two transit unions!

Numerous scab operations are being launched against the transit unions: Metrolink rail, which transports suburban commuters, is running buses (under the name Transit Systems) to take passengers from the transit hub to various areas of the city. In addition, several scab outfits are operating from “Prime Time” vans, run by an ex-MTA boss, to buses run by MV Transportation and Ortley. Now, Teamsters-organized drivers for First Transit, who went out on strike one day after the MTA mechanics, have accepted a three-year contract and are expected to resume service on 12 MTA “contract lines” this week. First Transit drivers should stay out until all MTA workers are back on the job!

On October 22, the Bus Riders Union (BRU) community group started to assist the MTA’s scab operations. While the BRU claims to be on the side of the workers, it is organizing a “Peoples’ Bus Emergency Transit Service,” which can only weaken the impact of the strike. To win over the poor, Latino and black masses who depend on mass transit as allies, the transit unions must fight for *free mass transit* and increased bus and rail service.

The current L.A. strikes, where tens of thousands of workers are fighting for decent living conditions for themselves and their families, point to the potential for welding the social power of labor to the anger of the ghettos and barrios. If extended, these strikes could provide a platform for organizing the hundreds of thousands of unorganized, heavily immigrant workers in the L.A. area. But this means that the unions must champion defense of immigrant rights. Last week, the Feds carried out widely publicized raids at Wal-Mart stores in 21 states, arresting over 250 “illegal” immigrant workers (see article this page). In fact, the supermarket bosses falsely justify their demand for takebacks by claiming that they have to compete with non-union Wal-Mart “superstores.” The labor movement, including the UFCW, must take up the defense of these Wal-Mart workers, demanding their immediate freedom and opposing all deportations while launching a fight to organize Wal-Mart. *Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!*

Break with the Democrats!

The bureaucrats’ impotent class-collaborationist policy is exemplified by an “investor conference call” organized on October 30 by AFL-CIO president John Sweeney with the JP Morgan and Smith Barney Citigroup investment firms. Sweeney tried to convince investors that the supermarket bosses’ hard line against labor is bad for long-term profits. Wall Street didn’t buy it. The capitalists know, as every worker should know, that the interests of the workers and the bosses are diametrically opposed. For profits to go up, the capitalists must increase the rate of exploitation, driving down the living standards of the working masses. The trade-union bureaucrats, who only try to negotiate “fair” terms of exploitation, promote the lie that the interests of labor and capital can be reconciled.

A clear example of the labor tops’ fealty to the capitalist system is their attitude toward cops and security guards. The October 28 SEIU rally included hundreds of security guards organized by the SEIU, probation officers organized by AFSCME and other “unionized” cops and sheriffs. This is disgusting. These guards and officers are not workers; they are the core elements of the capitalist state apparatus. Their job is to enforce the bosses’ law and order. This means scabherding, repressing social struggle and terrorizing the impoverished ghettos and barrios. Several grocery store strikers have been arrested on the picket lines. And Albertsons is seeking a court injunction to take down the picket lines at its stores. Who would enforce the injunction? Cops and security guards! That the trade-union bureaucrats organize the armed thugs of the capitalist state

Over 250 Rounded Up by Feds

Labor: Defend Immigrant Wal-Mart Workers!

No Deportations!

Just before dawn on October 23, federal agents swooped down in military-style raids at 60 Wal-Mart stores in 21 states, rounding up more than 250 undocumented immigrant workers. These victimized workers, who are mainly from East Europe or Latin America, are now incarcerated, awaiting deportation proceedings. Reportedly, more raids are planned in at least Las Vegas, Nevada. The trade unions and all labor and immigrant rights organizations must mobilize and take action, demanding: *Free the rounded-up Wal-Mart workers! No deportations!*

These workers were working under miserable conditions for meager pay and no benefits, employed by a cleaning contractor colluding with Wal-Mart. The immigrant workers who clean the Wal-Mart stores, horribly abused by the Wal-Mart empire because of their vulnerable status as “illegals,” are the lowest stratum of a brutally exploited and oppressed workforce. Their story could sound like a modern-day version of Upton Sinclair’s *The Jungle*, except that the forces behind the atrocious victimization are much more sinister, wealthy, vicious and threatening.

The raids were carried out by the new Immigration and Customs Enforcement

Union protest against low-wage, anti-union Wal-Mart chain, Oklahoma City, November 2002.



agency created under the Department of Homeland Security. This makes clear that the bipartisan “war on terror,” aimed at immigrants in the first instance, is also ultimately directed against the entire working class. Indeed, the raids can only serve to chill union organizing efforts at Wal-Mart.

Wal-Mart is not only the top U.S. corporation, surpassing even Exxon-Mobil, with revenues of \$220 billion and \$7 billion in profit each year. With one million employees (three times more than General Motors), it is also the country’s largest private employer. The United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) union, which is currently engaged in a major Southern Cal-

ifornia strike, says it is trying to organize the workers at Wal-Mart. But two weeks after the terrorizing raid against the immigrant workers, the UFCW has yet to make one public statement denouncing this victimization, much less take the lead in mobilizing the AFL-CIO and other unions in their defense.

By rising to the defense of these immigrant workers, the UFCW would be mobilizing in defense of *all* Wal-Mart workers, undercutting the company’s rabidly anti-union maneuvers and facilitating the organization of Wal-Mart workers. The labor movement must mobilize in defense of immigrant rights and demand: *Full citizenship rights for all immigrants now!*



WV Photo

October 17: Other unionists have joined UFCW picket lines in solidarity with strike.

into the unions reflects the bureaucrats’ commitment to defend this system of exploitation. *Cops, security guards, probation officers out of the unions!*

County Federation of Labor head Contreras is considered the leader of the L.A. labor movement. But he spends most union resources on mobilizing the ranks to elect capitalist politicians (or keeping hated ones like Gray Davis in office), not on carrying out the class struggle desper-

ately needed to organize the heavily immigrant working class. In the month-long transit strike in 2000, which stayed solid on the picket lines and beat back a union-busting plan to divide the MTA into “regional transit zones,” Contreras called in Jesse Jackson Sr. to defuse the workers’ militancy. Jackson preached “reconciliation” with the Democratic Party politicians who run the city and dominate the MTA board and helped ram

through a contract settlement that made concessions to the MTA.

Strike support rallies organized by the UFCW have featured Jackson and other Democratic Party politicians. Jackson et al. paint themselves as friends of the workers but do so only to put Democrats in office so that they can get their chance to screw the workers by administering the capitalist system. Jackson openly seeks to direct labor and anti-racist struggle into an effort to get the Democrats into the White House in 2004.

The Democrats run this system in partnership with the Republicans. As these strikes pose the burning need for a working-class offensive against the bosses to fight for the interest of workers and all the oppressed, the first precondition is independence from all capitalist parties. What working people need is a new leadership in the unions that fights for their interests, a leadership forged in class struggle, against the pro-capitalist program of the AFL-CIO bureaucracy. This is part of the fight to build a workers party that leads the struggle not just for the immediate interests of the workers but for a socialist revolution to establish a workers government. *Those who labor must rule! Victory to the grocery and transit strikers!■*

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This volume of *Marxist Studies*, a series of bulletins for the education of Marxist cadres, contains the transcripts of four classes given in 1998-99 throughout the International Communist League dealing with the first four (1919-1922) Congresses of the Communist International. Also included are the list of related readings and a general chronology (1912-1924) of relevant events.

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1979 Greensboro Massacre

On 3 November 1979, five union organizers and civil rights activists, supporters of the Communist Workers Party, were murdered in broad daylight at an anti-Klan rally in Greensboro, North Carolina. KKK and Nazi gunmen drove up in a caravan, and with cool deliberation took out their shotguns and semiautomatic rifles and opened a barrage of fire directly into the 100 protesters assembled outside the black housing project of Morningside Homes as horrified news cameramen recorded it live.

Greensboro was a conspiracy of the fascists and their capitalist state patrons. From the outset, the KKK and Nazis were aided and abetted by the government, from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms agent who helped train the killers and plot the assassinations, to the “former” FBI informer who rode shotgun in the motorcade of death and the Greensboro cop who brought up the rear. Two successive all-white juries acquitted the Greensboro killers of all charges, affirming once again the meaning of “justice” in this racist capitalist country.

We wrote in *Workers Vanguard* at the time:

“Every successful cross burning, every fascist parade through a Jewish or black neighborhood, every courtroom victory in the liberals’ campaign for ‘free speech for fascists’ whets the murderers’ appetite for more violence.... This campaign of terror must be stopped. Socialists and militants in the labor movement must call on organized labor to mobilize its tremendous social power, in alliance with black and other minority organizations and the left to

stop the Klan in its tracks. No more Greensboro massacres—For massive labor/black action to smash the Nazis and the Klan!”

—“For Labor/Black Mass Mobilizations: Smash KKK Killers!” WV No. 243, 9 November 1979

When the Klan announced it would “celebrate” this massacre one week later in Detroit, the Spartacist League

We Will Not Forget



Greensboro Daily News



WV Photo

Left: Greensboro survivor Nelson Johnson kneels by his dying comrade Jim Waller. Above: November 1979 Spartacist-initiated labor/black mobilization in Detroit spiked KKK plans to celebrate racist massacre.

initiated a labor/black mobilization that drew over 500, primarily black auto workers, who made sure that the Klan did not ride in the Motor City. In city after city over the following years, when KKK and fascist provocations have arisen, we have repeatedly brought out core battalions of black and working-class militants who understand we can't ignore the fascists and

Klan—we must stop them.

Dr. Paul Bermanzohn, a survivor of the 1979 massacre, sent a message to our 23 October 1999 mass mobilization that rode the Klan out of New York City: “Giving the Klan the green light to march in NYC today will only invite more racist actions.... Only an alert, well-organized and strong citizenry can stop these outrages. And a necessary step in that process is to put a stop to the Klan and all it stands for.”

Today there's a revolting attempt to bury the bitter lessons of the massacre—a “Truth and Community Reconciliation Project” in Greensboro, modeled after the South African commission which was designed to whitewash the crimes of apartheid-era butchers and torturers. The Greensboro project, unsurprisingly, brags it has “the cooperation of former Greensboro Police Chief Robert White.” We bet it does.

It is grotesque to think that justice for the Greensboro martyrs can come from the same capitalist state whose forces helped to orchestrate the murders in the first place. Real justice will only come about when the workers rule America.

We honor the memory of the Greensboro martyrs—Cesar Cauce, Michael Nathan, Bill Sampson, Sandi Smith, James Waller—as well as the many others who were severely wounded that November day. And we dedicate ourselves to the fight against fascist terror. The working class in power—the third American revolution—will ensure that there shall be no more Greensboros.

Join the Labor Black Leagues!

The first Labor Black Leagues were formed as a result of the Spartacist League-initiated, 5,000-strong labor/black mobilization that stopped the Ku Klux Klan from marching in Washington, D.C. in November 1982. We stand for mobilizing the masses of minority and working people in militant integrated struggle against the brutal system of racist oppression that is capitalist America. Initiated by and fraternally allied with the Spartacist League, a multiracial revolutionary Marxist organization, the Labor Black Leagues are part of the revolutionary movement of the workers and oppressed against the bosses and for socialism.

If You Stand For—

1 Full rights for black people and for everyone else in jobs, housing and schools! Defeat the racist assault on affirmative action! For union-run minority job recruitment and training programs! For union hiring halls! Open up the universities to all—for open admissions, free tuition and a full living stipend for all students. Free, quality, integrated public education for all!

2 A fighting labor movement—picket lines mean don't cross! Defeat police scabberding and strikebreaking through mass pickets and union defense guards! For sit-down strikes against mass layoffs! Fight union-busting; keep the capitalist courts out of the unions! Organize the unorganized, unionize the South! Jobs for all—for a shorter workweek at no loss in pay with full cost-of-living escalator clause! Cops, prison guards and security guards out of the unions!

3 Fight for women's rights! Defend abortion clinics! Free abortion on demand; free, quality 24-hour childcare! Equal pay for equal work! For free, quality health care for all!

4 Full citizenship rights for all immigrants; everyone who made it into this country has the right to stay and live decently! Stop deportations! No to racist “English only” laws! Down with anti-Hispanic, anti-Semitic, anti-Arab and anti-Asian bigotry!

5 Defend the separation of church and state! Down with anti-gay laws! Full democratic rights for homosexuals! Government out of the bedroom!

6 Mass labor/black/Hispanic mobilizations drawing on the power of the unions against the racist terrorists. Stop the Nazis! Stop the KKK!

7 Abolish the racist death penalty! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Free all victims of racist capitalist repression! No faith in the capitalist courts! No to gun control!

Defend victims of cop terror and racist police frame-up! No illusions in civilian review boards or community control of the police! Down with the racist and anti-labor “war on drugs”! For decriminalization of drugs! For class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense; support the work of the Partisan Defense Committee!

8 Unconditional opposition to every attempt to abolish welfare! Down with slave-labor, union-busting “workfare” schemes! Fight any and every attempt of the government to take away or cut back even more social programs such as Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, public health and aid to education and housing! For a massive program of public works—high-quality integrated housing, schools, libraries, hospitals for the working people and the poor!

9 Down with the chauvinist poison of protectionism! For international working-class solidarity! Support revolutionary struggles of working people abroad! Defend the deformed workers states—Cuba, Vietnam, China and North Korea—against capitalist restoration and imperialist attack! For proletarian political revolution to oust their Stalinist bureaucracies! For labor action against U.S. imperialist war moves and military adventures! For the right of independence for Puerto Rico! U.S. troops out of Puerto Rico and the Caribbean!

10 Down with the Democrats and Republicans! For a revolutionary workers party that champions the cause of all the oppressed! Finish the Civil War! Those who labor must rule! For a workers government to take industry away from its racist, incompetent and corrupt owners! Rebuild America on a socialist planned economy!



WV Photo

—Join the Labor Black Leagues!

Membership pledge is \$3/year unemployed; \$10/year employed.

For more information, contact:

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From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal

Why Being Antiwar Means Being Anti-Imperialist



What everybody knows, after the mass protests that were held in cities around the earth over one-half a year ago, is that the forces of the U.S. government could care less about the popular protests that shook the planet.

They could care less because they do not serve the interests of the people, but the privileged; they do not serve the many; they serve the few. They serve Wall Street; Petroleum Row; Haarken Oil and Halliburton. In their heart of hearts, “democracy” is a dirty word.

They don’t really care about the latest round of protests that are being waged against the war; they have their hands on the levers of power, and they don’t want to let go. Those who dared to lie to the American people to start a needless war, could care less that there are millions of people who oppose it. That’s why they chose the vehicle of fear, the spectre of “terrorism,” to justify the Iraq attack, when every schoolchild now knows that the Baghdad government had nothing to do with the events of 9-11.

But the Bush Regime has used that fear; that anxiety; that sense of being under attack, to stoke the fires of war, and now the U.S. is involved in building and protecting a colony in the heart of the Middle East. That’s why it isn’t enough to simply say, “Bring the Troops Home,” as some have said. For to do so only means, “bring them home today, to unleash them

on some other unsuspecting people tomorrow.”

That is a recipe for postponing war, not ending it.

War is indeed, big business, but it is more than that; it is a social tool by which governments have always mobilized larger social forces for their political ends. The ends of government? What it has always been—power.

Why do you think the Bushites have unleashed the somber Ashcroft upon the American people? A man who lost a senate election to a dead man is now the ultimate arbiter of who may exercise civil rights in this “new era”? Students are being thrown out of school because politicians don’t like their t-shirts. Thousands are locked in dark gulags in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. They are denied lawyers, are being held incommunicado, and face torture. When some have dared to file suits against these fundamental violations of human rights, they are told that because this site is in Cuba, the U.S. suddenly lacks “jurisdiction.” What legalized drive!

If the U.S. doesn’t have jurisdiction, who does? Cuba? The UN? Clearly, the solution to the egregious human rights violations in Guantanamo Bay will not be found in U.S. courts, just as the solution to these wars for empire will not be found in anti-war marches.

This is but a beginning; not an end.

To be truly anti-imperialist means to oppose the

“soft”-imperialism of the Democrats, and the “hard” imperialism of the Republicans. Both imperialisms are fundamentally wrong, for they begin with the false premise that Americans know best, how other peoples should live their lives, and organize their societies.

One cannot believe in self-determination and imperialism; those two views are incompatible.

To be truly anti-imperialist means organizing, not demonstrations, but mass movements that pose an alternative to the deadly status quo.

It means believing, and fighting for, the idea that another world is possible.

It means thinking of the peoples of this world as the same as us; not “them.”

It means the renunciation of white supremacy. It means a foreign policy truly based upon simple humility; instead of domination.

It means a real transformation of the way things are done here; and that means change; revolution. It means this, or it means nothing.

For, if these steps aren’t taken, generations will be plunged into bloody and needless wars; wars fought for wealthy elites based on lies, and fear, and greed.

It means the surrender of your children and grandchildren to wars of ignorance. It means, in fact, endless war!

No to Imperial War!

11 October 2003

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Send urgently needed contributions for Jamal’s legal defense, made payable to “National Lawyers Guild Foundation” and earmarked for “Mumia” to: Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal, 130 Morningside Drive, Suite 6C, New York, NY 10027.

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

Universities...

(continued from page 12)

students, a tuition increase of \$950—the amount of the increase this year at the State University of New York—means the difference between staying in school and being deprived of an education. In the California community college system alone, fully 90,000 students were driven out last spring by budget cuts and tuition increases.

In September, Republican members of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, sensing a hot election campaign issue, published a report, *The College Cost Crisis*. Rejecting “a dramatic increase in federal funding for higher education,” the report took aim at “wasteful spending by college and university management.” The unspoken message: Take it out of the hides of university employees. This was highlighted by the strike this summer at Yale, that bastion of racist class privilege where campus workers earn less in one year than students pay in tuition and room and board. Meanwhile, faculty salaries across the country are being driven down as permanent staff have been replaced by part-timers, who now account for more than 43 percent of teaching positions and earn an average of less than \$20,000 per year, usually with no benefits.

Black and Hispanic students are under siege today because the capitalist rulers see no need to spend resources educating people they will only employ, if at all, at starvation-wage “McJobs.” Both capitalist parties, the Democrats no less than the Republicans, defend the priorities of the ruling class: Spend billions on prisons, weapons and the colonial occupation of Iraq, while shutting down schools, factories and hospitals. Black youth, particularly black men, are rapidly becoming “missing persons” from a society that has locked them into ghettos, with no exit from poverty and a likely stretch in prison other than by enlisting as cannon fodder for the imperialist military. As a result of the “war on drugs,” the prison population (over 2.1 million) is now four times what it was 30 years ago. *One in eight* black men between the ages of 20 and 34 is cur-



Little Rock, Arkansas, 1957: Black student jeered by rabid white mob as she enters Central High School.

rently behind bars, and 28 percent of all black men can expect to be imprisoned some time in their lives.

For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

In an undated flyer for the November 7 march and a “New Civil Rights Movement” conference that weekend, BAMN crows: “The historic civil rights march on April 1st, 2003 achieved its aim! We did it—we organized, we marched, we fought and *we won!*” To cover for its tailing of bourgeois liberals, BAMN makes it seem like there was a solid wall of opposition from the bourgeoisie to affirmative action.

In fact, an unprecedentedly wide range of bourgeois forces—including 24 states and territories, 65 Fortune 500 companies and many military leaders—submitted *amicus* briefs to the court defending the University of Michigan affirmative action program. In effect, school resegregation has proceeded to such a point that much of the ruling class fears that it will no longer have enough minority managers and military officers. One brief submitted by 29 generals, admirals and U.S. Senators underlined the importance of ROTC programs on college campuses in providing officers for the military, whose ranks are heavily black and Latino. The Pentagon brass frankly acknowledged that before they had a significant layer of black officers, the military’s “racial prob-

lem was so critical that it was on the verge of self-destruction,” noting that during the Vietnam War “racial tensions reached a point where there was an inability to fight.”

BAMN’s call for a “new civil rights movement” is simply a cloak for a liberal perspective limited to pressuring the capitalists and their courts to grant minimal concessions. The mass of black and white activists who were the foot soldiers of the civil rights movement in the 1950s and ’60s wrote a heroic chapter in the fight for black equality in racist America, shattering Jim Crow in the South and gaining formal legal equality for black people. However, liberal leaders like Martin Luther King Jr. worked to keep the movement confined within the strait-jacket of pressure politics, lobbying for concessions from those sworn enemies of black liberation, the Democratic Party and the capitalist government.

Today, BAMN promotes what was precisely the central *weakness* of the civil rights movement. The platform of the April 1 rally was chock-full of NAACP liberals and Democratic Party politicians like presidential hopeful Al Sharpton. In California, BAMN has concentrated on circulating petitions to pressure the University of California Board of Regents to demand the resignation of notorious black conservative Ward Connerly, who spearheaded the drive for a referendum ending state affirmative action programs

in California and is now pushing a similar initiative in Michigan. In appealing to the UC Board of Regents, an institution presided over by the governor and other state officials, BAMN is looking to the very university administration and capitalist government that are axing higher education opportunities for minorities and others.

The same week as the affirmative action decision, the Supreme Court struck down a Texas sodomy law that outlawed gay sex. We are far from indifferent to such occasional nods in the direction of elementary humanism, including by a Supreme Court whose rulings more often read as if they were written by a White Citizens’ Council. However, it is illusory to imagine that the road to achieving lasting gains lies through a strategy of pressuring the Supreme Court or other capitalist institutions. Today, as in the past, it will take massive social struggle to gain any improvement in the lives of workers and oppressed minorities in this society.

The starting point is the understanding that it is the multiracial working class that has the social power to lead all the oppressed in struggle against capitalism. We seek to mobilize the working class in a fight for free, quality education and jobs for all, particularly reaching out to the masses of unemployed minority youth and women through special union recruitment and training programs. The main obstacle to mobilizing the power of labor is the trade-union bureaucracy, which ties the proletariat to its class enemy, primarily through the Democratic Party, of which the trade-union leadership is a key component. To unchain the power of labor, it is necessary to *break* with the Democratic Party and forge a revolutionary workers party.

Just as it took the Civil War to smash chattel slavery and establish public education for black people in this country, it will take a socialist revolution to sweep away the entire capitalist system and lay the basis for wiping out the centuries-old legacy of racial oppression. Only in this way can the accumulated knowledge and culture of civilization be truly appropriated by those who are today deprived of that birthright. ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

Defend Affirmative Action and More!

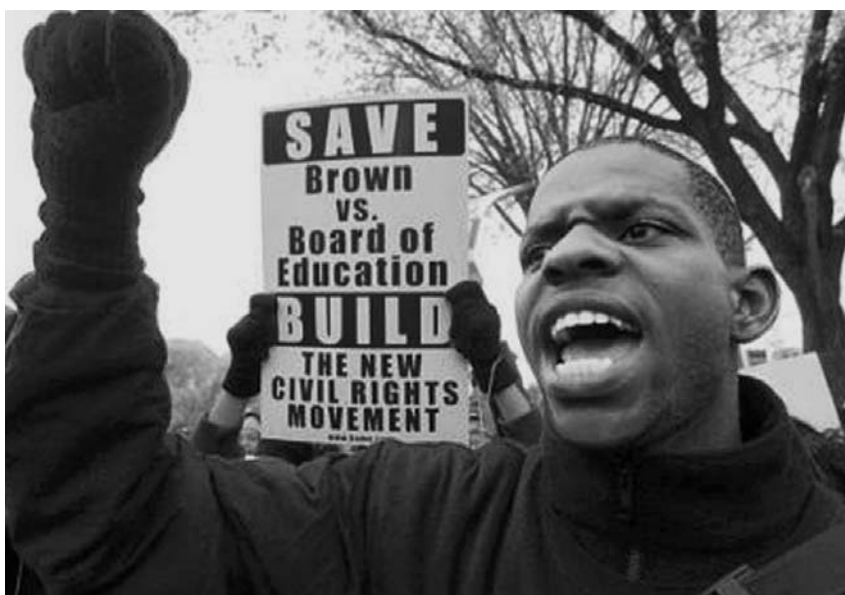
Down With Racist Purge of Universities!

The June 23 Supreme Court decision striking down the University of Michigan's undergraduate admissions point system for minority applicants hammered yet another nail into the coffin of affirmative action. While affirming the notion of "diversity" as a desirable goal, the court ruled unconstitutional one of the programs still available to implement it. At the same time, the judges upheld a more "narrowly tailored" program at the University of Michigan Law School, thus providing a way for colleges to preserve some minimal form of affirmative action. That many liberal proponents of affirmative action have seized upon this to hail the ruling as a major victory for the rights of minorities is nothing less than an admission of their political bankruptcy.

The contradictions in the Supreme Court decision were reflected in the conflicting reactions by black liberals. The NAACP Legal Defense Fund hailed the court ruling as a "victory," as did Jesse Jackson, who declared that it "sets back the assault by the racial and radical right and the Bush Administration to re-segregate the nation." In contrast, *Amsterdam News* publisher Wilbert Tatum angrily declared in a 25 June editorial that the court decision "took us 50 more years away from an America that is truly equal under law."

Both Jackson and Tatum imagine that the Supreme Court decision will, for better or worse, fundamentally alter the condition of black people in this country. This is also the view of the Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action & Integration, and Fight for Equality By Any Means Necessary (BAMN), which is sponsoring a National Civil Rights March at the University of Michigan's Ann Arbor campus on November 7. On April 1, some 50,000 people turned out for a BAMN-organized rally in defense of affirmative action outside the Supreme Court in Washington, D.C., determined to preserve what little access they have in this profoundly racist society to a decent education and a decent job. The turnout demonstrated the depth of opposition to the racist rollback of affirmative action and other programs even minimally redressing discrimination against black people and other minorities. But far from offering a perspective of independent social struggle, BAMN and other liberals seek to channel the youthful fighters for black rights who are turning out for these protests into the dead end of reliance on the Democratic Party, the Supreme Court and other institutions of racist capitalist rule.

A BAMN press release issued the day of the Supreme Court ruling hailed it as a "historic and momentous victory," dismissing as "a minor setback" the court's rejection of the University of Michigan's undergraduate point system. An opinion piece co-authored by BAMN organizer Kate Stenvig in the University of Michigan newspaper the following day, referring to the 1954 Supreme Court ruling



Washington, D.C., April 1: Rally outside Supreme Court in defense of affirmative action drew 50,000.

overturning legalized school segregation, enthused: "We have saved *Brown v. Board of Education* and are now in a stronger position than at any point in the past thirty years to realize the promise of Brown—integration and equality in American education."

Make no mistake: While the court did not simply do away with affirmative action, as many feared it might, the ruling creates a significant new obstacle to minority enrollment in law schools, medical schools and the best universities. Not least, administrations will be hesitant to shell out the huge additional sums for increased admissions staff—as much as two million dollars in Michigan's case—to satisfy the Supreme Court's requirements. And though the ruling effectively overturned anti-affirmative action court decisions in Texas and several other Southern states, it will have no effect in California and Washington, where affirmative action was banned in state universities not by federal court decisions but by state referendums. And it

does nothing to prevent other states from now instituting their own bans.

Even if the Supreme Court had fully endorsed the Michigan plan, it would still have been nothing more than a retention of the miserable, racist status quo. The Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Clubs defend affirmative action in university admissions because it has meant gains, however minimal, against the inherent race and class bias in higher education under capitalism. But as we asserted against the likes of BAMN in an article written before the Supreme Court decisions (WV No. 801, 11 April):

"The stark truth is that there is no way to overcome entrenched racial oppression within the framework of capitalism, in the universities or elsewhere. Affirmative action programs were set up as a sop to *defuse* social struggle and in order to create and co-opt a 'talented tenth' of black middle-class professionals. But these paltry, tokenistic efforts never made a dent in the deep-seated oppression of the black ghetto masses, whose condition has continued to deteriorate over the past few decades."



Spartacus Youth Club contingent at UCLA protest against attacks on affirmative action, May 1998.

We fight for *free, quality, integrated education for all*. To provide real access to higher education, we call for nationalizing the private universities and for open admissions and free tuition with a state-paid living stipend for students. We demand full remedial programs at the universities, an end to the racist "tracking" system in the high schools and genuine integration of the schools, including the aggressive implementation of busing. We seek to mobilize labor's social power in defense of even such partial steps toward racial integration and equality as are possible under capitalism, but we do not sow illusions that integration and equality, in education or any sphere of American society, can be achieved through Supreme Court rulings or liberal pressure politics. Full social and political equality for black people can only be achieved through workers revolution and the creation of an egalitarian socialist society.

Racist Rulers to Ghetto Youth: Drop Dead!

Even if the doors of the select universities—those most affected by the Supreme Court ruling—were opened far wider than they are today, most working-class and minority students would still be attending regional state schools and community colleges. There the question of who attends turns less on selective admissions policies and more on who can—or cannot—afford the cost of school. Public universities jacked up tuition by an average of 14 percent this year, the steepest increase in over a generation. Students faced increases of 30 percent at the University of California, 28 percent at the State University of New York and 25 percent at the City University of New York. This is devastating for poor and working-class students, many of whom work full-time and live on shoestring budgets to put themselves through school.

According to U.S. government statistics, 48 percent of college-qualified high school graduates were prevented by financial constraints from attending a four-year institution, and 22 percent from attending any college at all. And the numbers of those shut out from higher education are escalating as state and local governments ramp up tuition and gut funding for these schools and campus administrations fire professors, slash the number of classes and cancel remedial programs.

To gauge the impact of tuition hikes, consider that today almost three-quarters of the 13.6 million undergraduates in this country are what the Department of Education calls "non-traditional" students—that is, they do not depend on their parents for support, or they have returned to school after a number of years in the workforce. More than one-quarter of women college students in this country are raising children while pursuing their studies. For hundreds of thousands of such

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