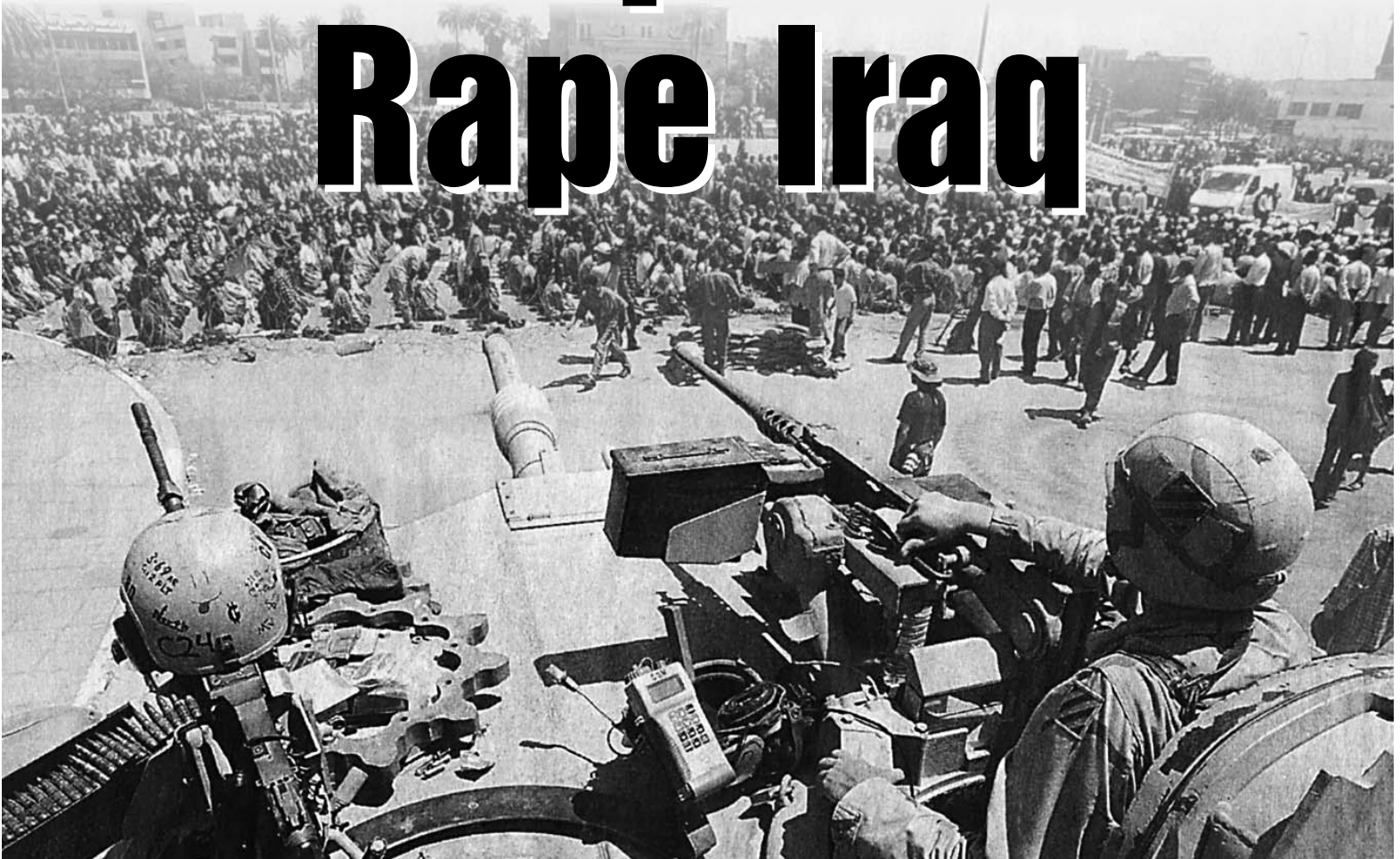


American Troops Out!

U.S. Imperialists Rape Iraq



Reuters

U.S. “liberators” train tank guns on Shi’ite Muslims demonstrating in Baghdad.

JANUARY 5—The media blitz celebrating the capture of Saddam Hussein could not disguise the fact that the American military occupation of Iraq is not going well for U.S. imperialism. The resistance continues, chalking up losses for the American side every day. The Iraqi people are seething with anger at the strutting U.S. “liberators” who can’t even turn the lights back on in Baghdad some nine months after the end of the war. (It took Saddam Hussein all of three months to restore the power grid and services after the first Gulf War in 1991, despite crippling United Nations sanctions.) The only weapons of mass destruction to be found in the region are in the hands of the Pentagon bombers, their British allies and the kill-crazy Zionists.

Meanwhile, back on the “home front,” New Yorkers partied in the New Year as military helicopters swooped overhead carrying marksmen with automatic weapons trained on the revelers. Holiday travel was turned to chaos as “intelligence sources” forced the cancellation of flights bearing passengers with “suspicious” (i.e., Arab) names. If U.S. government “intelligence” is often an oxymoron, their latest provocations prove they are just plain morons. Their list of suspected “terrorists” spells Arab names phonetically, leading to the harassment of anyone whose name sounds like anyone else’s! One “terror” suspect on a passenger list

turned out to be a five-year-old child!

Over the opposition of international pilots unions and foreign governments which argued that shootouts in airplane cabins at 30,000 feet did not make safer skies for passengers, the U.S. insisted that undercover armed marshals be stationed aboard. Some flights have been “escorted” by fighter jets whose only purpose can be to shoot down civilian airliners! In response to the blatantly racist plan to photograph and fingerprint foreigners entering the U.S., Brazil retaliated by fingerprinting every U.S. citizen who entered the country.

America’s rulers are in a bit of a pickle over how to try their prize captive, Saddam Hussein. His capture is a potential media coup for Bush’s domestic campaign to recapture the White House in the presidential election in November. Yet alive and well, Saddam Hussein poses a potentially huge political embarrassment for the Bush gang even in a highly orchestrated trial only simulating “fairness.” Any open court testimony on any charges against Hussein could reveal how fully George Bush Sr., Vice President Dick Cheney and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld (to name but a few) fully backed Hussein and his butchery of the Iraqi left, the workers movement and the Kurds, not to mention the millions of Iranians and Iraqis killed in the senseless Iran-Iraq War in which the U.S. helped to arm and finance Iraq.

It will take some fancy footwork to try Hussein for the poison gas attacks which killed up to 5,000 Kurdish villagers in Halabja in 1988 without revealing the response of the imperialists who posture today as the saviors of the Iraqi people. Bush Sr. extended \$1.2 billion in credits

to Hussein and Britain granted another \$500 million after the Halabja atrocity. As we stated last issue, “When workers tribunals of a victorious socialist revolution in the United States try America’s capitalist exploiters for their crimes against the oppressed masses of the world, black America, labor, immigrants and the poor, and when Iraqi Kurds, leftists and workers rip the oil wealth out of the hands of the military occupiers and judge them and their former henchmen, *then* we can start talking about justice.”

A high-profile trial means that Washington’s former ally, Saddam Hussein, will be spared the abuse and torture meted out to less famous captives rotting in the U.S. concentration camp in Guantánamo and in prison camps throughout Iraq. A lawyer for two Australian prisoners at Guantánamo was the first civilian lawyer allowed to meet any of the prisoners and described the camp as “a legal and moral black hole.” Prisoners have been tethered to stakes, forced to kneel in the blazing sun for hours, while guards fire rubber bullets at them. Some 32 prisoners have attempted suicide in the past 18 months. Back in Iraq, children and the elderly are

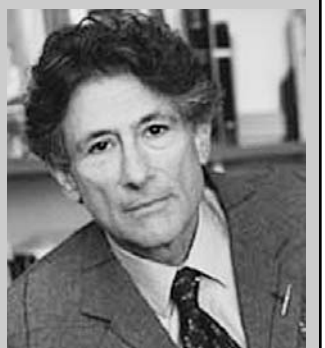
rounded up in huge prison compounds, such as in Umm Qasr where approximately 10,000 are held. Two Palestinian students who were held for two months described their ordeal in a *Nation* (22 December 2003) article titled, “Guilty of Being a Palestinian in Iraq”: “For the first seven days we were given no food or water.... All the time they were pointing their guns at us. They made us feel that we are going to die now, they gonna kill us now.” Before being released, the two students were compelled to sign a document stating that “the U.S. military bore no responsibility for what had happened to them while they were in custody.”

Yet, to be out of jail and “free” in occupied Iraq is also to suffer a terrifying daily gauntlet of privation and provocation. Iraq’s Labor Ministry has estimated that as much as **70 percent** of the workforce is unemployed. The capital city is blacked out **16 hours a day** and the lights are no brighter elsewhere in the country. To the lack of electrical power and potable water, add the absence of phone lines, the broken sewer lines, the schools reduced to rubble, the uncollected garbage, the

continued on page 4

Edward Said
Passionate Advocate
of Palestinian Freedom,
Human Dignity

SEE PAGE 3



Federal Court Rules Against Ashcroft, Bush on Padilla

On December 18, the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit ruled, by a two-to-one vote, that the federal government could not legally detain American citizen Jose Padilla as an “enemy combatant.” Padilla was arrested on 8 May 2002 at Chicago’s O’Hare airport on a “material witness” warrant based on his alleged associations with Al Qaeda. But after a month the Feds declared Padilla an “enemy combatant” with fantasies of exploding a “dirty bomb.” They sent him to a military brig, where he has been held without any charges being filed, with no prospect of a hearing or trial, and without even access to a lawyer. The Court of Appeals ordered Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld to release Padilla from military custody within 30 days, noting that Padilla is “entitled to the constitutional protections extended to other citizens.”

The Padilla ruling joins a growing list of judicial decisions that have called into question some of the more egregious aspects of the Bush administration’s drive to fortify an imperial presidency and shred the Bill of Rights. The same day as the Padilla ruling, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in California issued an order allowing access to attorneys for the more than 600 detainees held as “enemy combatants” at the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. The court also ruled that the detainees’ indefinite imprisonment without any hearing was unlawful. Declaring that its duty is “to prevent the Executive Branch from running roughshod over the rights of citizens and aliens alike,” the court ruled that the law was unconstitutional because it would ensnare anyone who did anything from donating to an orphanage run by a banned group to buying “cookies from a bake sale.” Two

Jose Padilla with relatives. He has been held incommunicado for 19 months.



weeks earlier, on December 3, the court overturned the part of Clinton’s 1996 Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act that made it a felony to provide “material support” to groups designated as “terrorist.” With support for the government’s attack on civil liberties eroding (including among some bourgeois circles), Attorney General John Ashcroft’s Justice Department was also forced to let Yasser Esam Hamdi, a U.S. citizen apprehended in Afghanistan and declared an “enemy combatant,” meet with an attorney for the first time, in anticipation of a Supreme Court appeal.

We welcome the Padilla ruling and the other legal setbacks to the administration’s attacks on civil liberties in the name of the bipartisan “war on terror.” However, the recent court rulings against the government are partial and reversible, with the government making clear its intention to appeal them to the Supreme Court. Moreover, the Court of Appeals went out of its way to assure the Bush administration that Padilla could be handed over to civilian authorities for prosecution on criminal charges or held in a civilian prison under the same “material witness” pretext on which he was originally arrested. The court went on to counsel Bush that “he can ask

Congress—which has shown its responsiveness—to authorize additional powers,” leaving open the possibility that the government could detain citizens as “enemies” and disappear them, as long as Congress says it’s okay. These rulings essentially reaffirm the constitutional separation of powers between the judiciary, executive and legislative branches. The rulings indicate that some of these “war on terror” measures—especially those that eviscerated the role of the courts—have eroded the standard division of labor within the capitalist state and angered the courts.

With Ashcroft’s proposed Patriot Act II, the White House would have unchallengeable authority to strip citizenship from Americans providing “material support” to “terrorism.” The Democrats have largely supported the administration’s military adventures abroad and evisceration of constitutional rights at home, including the USA-Patriot Act which radically curtailed due process rights for immigrants accused in “terror” cases. These legal measures represent a qualitative diminution of democratic rights, but they are the fruit of decades of attempts to increase the repressive apparatus of the state. Just as the Clinton administration

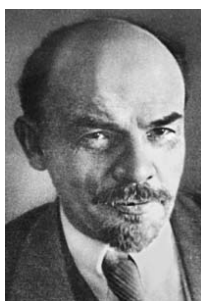
continued on page 10



TROTSKY

Lenin on Imperialism

Various liberals and pacifists promote the notion that organizations like the United Nations, by bringing together the countries of the world, including the imperialist powers, could be forces for peace. In the early 20th century, the social democrat Karl Kautsky similarly maintained that the imperialist powers could establish a stable and peaceful division of the world economy. But as Lenin explained in Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism, written amid the



LENIN

carnage of the first interimperialist world war, without socialist revolution to sweep away the system of capitalism, imperialist rivalries inevitably lead to imperialist wars.

Let us consider India, Indo-China and China. It is known that these three colonial and semi-colonial countries, with a population of six to seven hundred million, are subjected to the exploitation of the finance capital of several imperialist powers: Great Britain, France, Japan, the U.S.A., etc.... Let us assume that *all* the imperialist countries conclude an alliance for the “peaceful” division of these parts of Asia; this alliance would be an alliance of “internationally united finance capital.” There are actual examples of alliances of this kind in the history of the twentieth century—the attitude of the powers to China, for instance. We ask, is it “conceivable,” assuming that the capitalist system remains intact—and this is precisely the assumption that Kautsky does make—that such alliances would be more than temporary, that they would eliminate friction, conflicts and struggle in every possible form?

The question has only to be presented clearly for any other than a negative answer to be impossible. This is because the only conceivable basis under capitalism for the division of spheres of influence, interests, colonies, etc., is a calculation of the *strength* of those participating, their general economic, financial, military strength, etc. And the strength of these participants in the division does not change to an equal degree, for the *even* development of different undertakings, trusts, branches of industry, or countries is impossible under capitalism....

Therefore, in the realities of the capitalist system, and not in the banal philistine fantasies of English parsons, or of the German “Marxist,” Kautsky, “inter-imperialist” or “ultra-imperialist” alliances, no matter what form they may assume, whether of one imperialist coalition against another, or of a general alliance embracing *all* the imperialist powers, are *inevitably* nothing more than a “truce” in periods between wars. Peaceful alliances prepare the ground for wars, and in their turn grow out of wars; the one conditions the other, producing alternating forms of peaceful and non-peaceful struggle on *one and the same* basis of imperialist connections and relations within world economics and world politics.

—V.I. Lenin, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1916)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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

DIRECTOR OF PARTY PUBLICATIONS: Alison Spencer

EDITOR: Alan Wilde

EDITOR, YOUNG SPARTACUS PAGES: Michael Davissou

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Susan Fuller

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Jeff Thomas

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

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

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

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

The closing date for news in this issue is 6 January.

No. 817

9 January 2004

Justice, New York Style: First They Shoot the Man, Then They Sue the Family

For the past four years, the Busch family has been waging a legal battle against the New York Police Department over the August 1999 fatal shooting of Gidone Busch, a mentally ill Hasidic Jew. The Busch family sued the six cops who shot Gidone as well as the city administration in federal court. Unfortunately, they did not win. Now, in a despicable and depraved move, the city administration is suing the Busch family for \$176,000 to get back legal costs! After suffering the grief of their loss, the hardship of a four-year battle and an outrageous verdict clearing the cops, the Busch family is now faced with the vindictive legal assaults of Mayor Michael Bloomberg’s lawyers in an attempt to drain their financial resources.

The killing of Gidone Busch came amid a reign of police terror in New York City—like the sadistic torture of Haitian immigrant Abner Louima and the death-squad-style execution of black African Amadou Diallo. According to witnesses, Gidone was holding a hammer at the time he was killed. Much like how the cops who killed Diallo were acquitted because his reaching for a wallet was considered “threatening,” the cops who killed Gidone were cleared of any wrongdoing

on the basis that the hammer posed a “threat.” This was in spite of the fact that these cops shot a volley of 12 bullets into a mentally ill man whom they were originally called upon to help! A 28 December *New York Times* article, “The Intersection of Troubled People and Armed Police,” describes how the cops form a semicircle around the “emotionally disturbed person” with guns drawn.

The Bloomberg administration’s legal assault on the Busch family is an assault on all those in the cross hairs of the NYPD, particularly black people and immigrants. It sets a dangerous precedent: when you sue the cops for brutally beating you or killing a loved one, not only will they likely be acquitted, but you may be held liable for the cost of the lawsuit. And it demonstrates, yet again, that the capitalist courts are not “neutral” arbiters but exist to serve the interests of the capitalist rulers. Likewise, the cops serve to protect capitalist property not human life. The only way to get rid of cop terror for good is to get rid of the capitalist system itself. What is called for is the building of a revolutionary workers party to lead the struggle to sweep away the entire machinery of capitalist state repression. ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

Edward Said

Passionate Advocate of Palestinian Freedom, Human Dignity

After 12 years with leukemia, Edward Said, passionate advocate for Palestinian rights and scholar of modern literature, died on September 25. A tribute by the British *Independent's* Near East reporter Robert Fisk was appropriately titled: "Palestinian, Intellectual, and Fighter, Edward Said Rails Against Arafat and Sharon to His Dying Breath" (26 September 2003). In his last years, every public appearance Said made, especially if it involved travel, turned into a protracted battle with his advancing disease and the advice of his close friend and doctor, who he was quick to remind his Arab colleagues was Jewish. But he would not be stopped.

He devoted one of his last speeches to the dignity and courage of Rachel Corrie, the International Solidarity Movement member crushed to death by an Israeli Army bulldozer in March for trying to stop the demolition of a Palestinian home in Gaza:

"We need to remember that that kind of solidarity is no longer confined to a small number of intrepid souls here and there, but is recognized the world over.

"Whenever the facts are made known, there is immediate recognition and an expression of the most profound solidarity with the justice of the Palestinian cause and the valiant struggle by the Palestinian people on its behalf."

—*CounterPunch*, 23 June 2003

No one had done more than Said to make those facts known. The sworn enemy of cant, demagoguery and hypocrisy, he imbued the Palestinian cause with the integrity it deserved and presented it as part of a profoundly secular, universalist vision of human freedom.

Edward Said was born in Jerusalem in 1935. His very name expressed the confluence and clash of cultures. His father, Wadie, insisted on being called William. A successful businessman, he immigrated to the U.S. before World War I and obtained U.S. citizenship, then served in France during the war. His mother, Hilda, the daughter of a Nazareth Baptist minister, named her son after the Prince of Wales. Wadie imposed a strict Victorian upbringing on their children. Arabic was forbidden at home except when addressing servants. It was banned at school. Only English was permitted, although all the students had another native language, which they used among themselves behind their teachers' backs. In this stifling atmosphere, Said got himself expelled from the last school he attended in Egypt, fittingly named Victoria College.

Wherever he went, Said felt *Out of Place*, as he titled his 1999 memoirs about his childhood and student days. In Palestine, the Sais were members of a Christian minority with American passports. After the 1948 Israeli-Arab War in which 68 percent of the Palestinian population was expelled, Edward Said spent most of his childhood in Egypt. There the Sais were "Shami" in the double meaning in which Egyptians use this term, designating non-Egyptian Arab speakers as well as people from "Greater Syria" (Syria, Lebanon and Palestine).

With the thoroughly corrupt and rotten edifice of British colonial Egypt under King Farouk crumbling about them, the Sais shipped Edward off to boarding school in Massachusetts. He described those years as the most miserable of his life, as he was the only Arab in the very preppy student body. He went on to Princeton and graduate work at Harvard,

where he wrote his doctoral dissertation on Joseph Conrad, the great Polish-born novelist who became a British citizen and wrote in his acquired language, English. Against those who tried to reduce the novelist either to his Polish background or fondness for things English, with no small measure of empathy Said later wrote: "Eventually we realise that [his] work is actually constituted by the experience of exile or alienation that cannot ever be rectified" ("Between Worlds," *London Review of Books*, 7 May 1998).

After visiting the West Bank in 1998, Said was invited to speak in Nazareth. Annexed by Israel in 1948, it is the largest Palestinian Arab city in the "Jewish

Spinoza, Heine, Marx, Rosa Luxemburg, Trotsky, and Freud":

"They were *a priori* exceptional in that as Jews they dwell on the borderlines of various civilizations, religions, and national cultures. They were born and brought up on the borderlines of various epochs. Their mind matured where the most diverse cultural influences crossed and fertilized each other."

—*The Non-Jewish Jew and Other Essays* (1968)

Said represented that small minority from the Near East who are alienated from what they call home yet can never free themselves from it, whom the world sees as Arabs but whose fellow Arabs often see as foreigners, who find themselves caught between two very different



Northfield Mount Hermon

1935-2003

state." In his lecture, Said admitted to knowing little of the Palestinian second-class citizens of Israel

"who had been regarded in the Arab world as little short of traitors for remaining as non-Jewish citizens of Israel.

"It now struck me, I said, that Israeli Palestinians had become crucial for our future as a people since, given their circumstances as non-Jews in a Jewish state, they dramatised the anomalies of nationalism and theocracy throughout the Middle East. Nationalism had become the dead end of our political life, demanding endless sacrifices and the abrogation of democracy for the sake of national security."

—"West Bank Diary," *Al-Ahram Weekly*, 10-16 December 1998

Said, the champion of Palestinian national emancipation, was very much the "rootless cosmopolitan." He could not fully belong in either Palestinian or Egyptian society because his background was Christian. At the same time, he could not belong in American society because he was Palestinian. In his memoirs, Said describes how in some circles he would emphasize that his name was Edward, while in others he would emphasize Said. He embodied the heretical temperament that Polish Marxist Isaac Deutscher in "The Non-Jewish Jew" ascribes to "those great revolutionaries of modern thought:

worlds where they belong to neither. For Said, modern Arab society, with its inwardness, exclusivity and religious fanaticism, was far too constricting. And Western society, with its immense arrogance, brutality and hypocrisy, could not provide an alternative.

Impact of 1967 Arab-Israeli War

In 1963 Said joined the Columbia University faculty where he was headed toward a distinguished but otherwise uneventful career as a scholar of modern European literature and literary criticism. As he wrote in "Between Worlds":

"The big change came with the Arab-Israeli war of 1967, which coincided with a period of intense political activism on campus over civil rights and the Vietnam War. I found myself naturally involved on both fronts, but, for me, there was the further difficulty of trying to draw attention to the Palestinian cause. After the Arab defeat there was a vigorous re-emergence of Palestinian nationalism, embodied in the resistance movement located mainly in Jordan and the newly occupied territories. Several friends and members of my family had joined the movement, and when I visited Jordan in 1968, 69 and 70, I found myself among a number of like-minded contemporaries. In the US, however, my politics were rejected—with a few notable exceptions—both by anti-war activists and by supporters of Martin

Luther King. For the first time I felt genuinely divided between the newly assertive pressures of my background and language and the complicated demands of a situation in the US that scanted, in fact despised what I had to say about the quest for Palestinian justice—which was considered anti-Semitic and Nazi-like."

—*London Review of Books*, 7 May 1998

Said always insisted that the Hebrew-speaking nation has a right to exist and to self-determination in Palestine. However, it has *no right* to a "Jewish state" through the expulsion and suppression of the indigenous Palestinian nation.

The humiliating defeat in 1967 of the Arab nationalist regimes as well as Jordan's King Hussein, who in 1970 carried out the slaughter of some 10,000 Palestinians during the Black September massacres, spurred the development of Palestinian guerrilla groups. Even the largest and most moderate, Yasir Arafat's Fatah, which dominated the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), proclaimed "armed struggle" as its main strategy. However, in 1974 the PLO-led Palestine National Council (PNC) adopted a "Transitional Program" for a state in the West Bank as "a link in the chain of the strategy...to establish the Democratic Palestine state." At the time, we warned that such a "mini-state" would serve as a South Africa-like bantustan serving as a dumping ground for unwanted refugees. Nevertheless, we would defend the right of the Palestinians to set up their own government in the Occupied Territories "as a partial and deformed application of their right to self-determination" (WV No. 58, 6 December 1974).

Said first praised the "mini-state" proposal as an expression of the PLO's new realism, and in 1977 was elected to the PNC. But he grew disillusioned with the PLO's corruption and Arafat's despotism. Finally, Said resigned from the PNC, along with Ibrahim Abu Lughd, Abdulmuhsen Qattan, Mahmoud Darwish and Shafiq Al Hout, over Arafat's support to Saddam Hussein's 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

Meanwhile in 1987, the first *Intifada* or uprising of Palestinian youth swept through the Occupied Territories. Despite the brutal repression by Israeli storm-troopers, dubbed the "Iron Fist," this rebellion could not be suppressed. With America's quick military crushing of Iraq and the collapse of the Soviet Union, Arafat rushed to conclude the Oslo "Peace Accords." This was not even a deformed expression of self-determination but the PLO placing its "seal on the national oppression of the long-suffering Palestinian Arab masses" (WV No. 583, 10 September 1993).

Said became the most trenchant Palestinian critic of Oslo, branding it "an instrument of Palestinian surrender, a Palestinian Versailles" (*London Review of Books*, 21 October 1993). Unmentioned by the accord were the national rights of the millions of Palestinians in exile. The issue of the settlements, inhabited by fanatical anti-Arab racists and outright fascist auxiliaries of the Israeli army, was "postponed." Since 1993, the number of settlers has more than doubled. According to a report by B'Tselem, an Israeli human rights group, "Land Grab: Israel's Settlement Policy in the West Bank" (reported by the London *Guardian*, 15 May 2002), fully 42 percent of Palestinian land in the West Bank has been seized

continued on page 9

Iraq...

(continued from page 1)

three-kilometer queue (an overnight wait) for gasoline sold at extortionist prices by Kellogg, Brown & Root—a subsidiary of Halliburton, which bilked the U.S. government for more than \$120 million in scams whose costs are passed on to U.S. and Iraqi workers—and you get a glimmer of the physical suffering of the Iraqi people today. And that’s just the objective hardships.

The population also seethes under the daily insult and terror of foreign occupation. Israeli commandos are training U.S. special forces units in what’s euphemistically called “preventive manhunting”: i.e., killing civilians in search-and-destroy missions. Entire neighborhoods are raided or flattened, families torn apart and jailed, the less fortunate shot on sight. Borrowing a page from the infamous Israeli wall cut through Palestinian territory, Lieutenant Colonel Nathan Sussaman commanded a battalion to surround the town of Abu Hishma with a razor wire fence. Aping Dr. Strangelove, Sussaman explained: “With a heavy dose of fear and violence, and a lot of money for projects, I think we can convince these people that we are here to help them” (*Asia Times*, 13 December 2003).

We had a clear side in the war: *for the military defense of Iraq against U.S. imperialism and its allies*. Today we take a clear stand for the military defense of those who resist the imperialist occupation of Iraq. We lend not one iota of political support to remnants of the Ba’athist



“War on terror” at home: Sniper in chopper patrolling over New York City on New Year’s Eve.

say: *Anti-imperialism abroad means class struggle at home! U.S. troops out of Iraq!*

Military Occupation of Iraq Targets Labor

On 6 December 2003, the American occupation forces attacked the headquarters of the Iraqi Federation of Trade Unions (IFTU) in Baghdad; eight of its leaders were handcuffed, kidnapped and held overnight. The office was ransacked, IFTU banners, posters and other possessions were destroyed, the IFTU’s name and that of the General Union of Transport Workers on the front of the building was smeared with black paint, and the windows were smashed. The international labor movement protested this outrage with statements issued by the powerful South African COSATU federation,



Iraqi women in Kirkuk on hunger strike to demand release of family members jailed by U.S. occupation forces.

regime or Islamic fundamentalist forces seeking to impose their own reactionary agendas on Iraqi women, workers, ethnic and religious minorities. But we understand that there will be no freedom or justice for the long-suffering Iraqi people until the imperialist occupiers are driven out! We fight for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. imperialist and allied troops and we unconditionally oppose their replacement by UN blue helmets! As communists here in the belly of the beast, we have a special responsibility to make working people in this country conscious of the intrinsic connection between the attacks on their living standards, their right to strike and their basic democratic rights by the U.S. government on the “home front” and the imperialist occupation of Iraq. We

the Italian CGIL and British trade unions. On November 23, the occupation forces raided the office shared by the Union of the Unemployed in Iraq (UII) and the Worker-Communist Party of Iraq (WCPI). When a WCPI and a UII leader turned up, as requested, at occupation authority headquarters, they were arrested. During July and August 2003, some 54 UII members and the union president were arrested for sit-in protests.

Meanwhile, the U.S. occupation forces have enthusiastically embraced torturers, spies, police and other government agents of the Hussein regime to “stabilize” Iraq. They even resurrected a labor law from the old regime which forbids workers in the state oil industry from organizing a union. To back up Hussein-era anti-worker laws, U.S. occupation chief Paul

Bremer issued a new regulation about “prohibited activity,” which is defined as encouraging anybody to organize any kind of strike or disruption in a factory or any kind of economically important enterprise. The penalty for breaching labor law in occupied Iraq is to be arrested by the occupation authorities and treated as a prisoner of war!

Those Iraqis who find employment literally work under U.S. guns. An Iraqi construction worker at the Baghdad airport, Muiwafa al Saidy, described how “soldiers aim guns at us wherever we go, even to the toilet.” Workers are paid \$5.00 per day but \$2.00 is skimmed by their “translator” who tells them they will be turned in to the soldiers as “terrorists” unless he gets his cut. Adding to the tension is the continual roundup of new prisoners brought to a fenced area of the airport compound, including “children brought in from the soccer fields, balls in hand, old men in their 80s, and even hospital patients carrying their drip bags.” A 20 October 2003 Internet article by David Bacon titled “The Occupation’s War on Iraqi Workers” stated that al Saidy has seen the prisoners’ food thrown on the ground and also seen them beaten with sticks.

More than half the recruits for the new imperialist-sponsored Iraqi army walked out because the pay was so low and the treatment so bad. The soles of their boots flapped and fell off and their uniforms are pink and green and brown camouflage and shrink dramatically if washed. An Iraqi major said, “The men ask me, ‘Are we really going out in these clothes?’” Attempts to make the new army a “rainbow coalition” of Iraq’s diverse ethnic groups blew up in a cauldron of tensions. One hundred Kurds quit in the first few weeks.

Occupation Is Big Bu\$ine\$\$

How is it that a company like Bechtel, which built the Hoover Dam, can’t turn the light switch on in Iraq? Answer: they don’t want to. An article titled “Iraq Reconstruction’s Bottom-Line,” (*Asia Times*, 25 December 2003) states: “Another popular explanation making the rounds alleges that sabotaging the reconstruction is a conscious and deliberate effort on the part of the occupation forces to make the Iraqis completely dependent and subservient.” The press conferences where Bush and Cheney promised that American troops would be greeted as liberators were a line of crap designed to whip up domestic support for and disguise the American rape of Iraq. But it’s not mainly psychological terror, it’s just the best way for robber barons to make big bucks in the “free market” bonanza they drool for in Iraq. Yaarub Jasim, general director for the southern region of Iraq’s electricity ministry, has been pleading with Bechtel to get urgently needed spare parts for Iraq’s antiquated turbines. Parts are readily available from the companies which built the turbines—in Russia, France and Germany...the very countries banned from getting contracts in Iraq. (Washington has gone so loopy that even that notorious “rogue state” *Canada*, was banned from contracts in reprisal for its milquetoast opposition to the war!) Bechtel could let the turbines rust and

crumble until they are completely useless. *Then* they’ll bid to build new billion-dollar power plants themselves. As company founder Stephen Bechtel quipped, “We are not in the construction and engineering business. We are in the business of making money” (*Asia Times*, 25 December 2003). And Bechtel stands to make a ton of it, perhaps \$20 billion or more in the pillage of Iraq. Ditto for Iraq’s oil industry, which badly needs repair to refine enough crude for domestic consumption. Yet the U.S. is exporting Iraqi crude oil while giving Kellogg, Brown & Root, the company which is supposed to repair the refineries, the contract to import oil from Turkey and Kuwait. Charging more than twice what they paid for this imported fuel, KBR had no incentive to repair Iraq’s refineries.

On 19 September 2003, the U.S. occupation authorities issued “Order No. 39,” which permits 100-percent foreign ownership of businesses, including formerly state-owned industries, except oil, and repatriation of profits. This outright brigandage—a fire sale of Iraq’s natural resources and the wealth created by the Iraqi working people to U.S. imperialist corporations, with a few crumbs tossed to allies—is so explosive that the U.S. is considering delaying their plans. A manager of the Al Daura refinery predicted that privatization would mean firing 1,500 of the plant’s 3,000 workers. In light of the conditions in Iraq today, this manager said, “If I dismiss employees now, I’m killing them and their families.”

Blood and Oil

Iraq’s borders were drawn on a map by the British, who carved up the old Ottoman Empire after the First World War, forcibly compacting three different peoples together in an artificial “nation” for the benefit of imperialist exploitation of resources and labor and for diplomatic advantage. Together with the U.S., the British set up the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC), which had exploration rights to practically the entire country. After the 1958 insurrection that installed Brigadier Abd al-Karim Qassim, Iraq took back 99.5 percent of the land originally allocated to the IPC. In 1972, Iraq nationalized the IPC and became the first Arab country to take over a Western-owned oil corporation. Nationalization of the oil was a hugely popular move and possession of Iraq’s most precious resources provided the Ba’athist authorities with the wealth to build an extensive social infrastructure including free public services—something the Gulf monarchies, Iranian Shah or Ayatollahs surely never did. Oil wealth also provided the Ba’athists with the economic clout to build a massive arsenal of police-state repression which was brutally deployed against the workers movement and the left.

The U.S. now has its hands on the oil spigot in Iraq and Kuwait, and the “Seven Sisters” are ready to leap back into Libya now that the U.S. has morphed Qaddafi from “international outlaw” to a reasonable man to do business with. Secret negotiations between Qaddafi and British agents began as soon as the U.S. rained its devastating “shock and awe” on Iraq. Qaddafi decided to avoid “regime change” U.S.-style and made a deal to pay \$2.7 billion to the families of victims of the 1988 Pan Am jet bombing over Lockerbie, Scotland, and allow UN weapons inspectors to strip Libya of whatever defense capacity it has, in exchange for a relaxation of economic sanctions. Ever the grandstander, Qaddafi says he hopes that his move will encourage Israel to disarm its doomsday machine. Fat chance. Arming Israel to the teeth is a linchpin of U.S. policy in the region.

A top-secret document declassified in Britain on January 1 reveals that U.S. president Richard Nixon considered launching airborne troops to seize oil fields in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Abu Dhabi in response to OPEC’s oil embargo launched in retaliation for America’s support to Israel in the 1973 Near East war. Another document reveals that Nixon put American forces on a *global nuclear alert*

WORKERS VANGUARD
Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League

☐ \$10/22 issues of *Workers Vanguard*
(includes English-language *Spartacist* and *Black History and the Class Struggle*)
international rates: \$25/22 issues—Airmail \$10/22 issues—Seamail

☐ New ☐ Renewal

☐ \$2/6 introductory issues of *Workers Vanguard* (includes English-language *Spartacist*)

☐ \$2/4 issues of *Espartaco* (en español) (includes Spanish-language *Spartacist*)

Name _____

Address _____

_____ Apt. # _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (____) _____ E-mail _____

817

Make checks payable/mail to: Spartacist Publishing Co., Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116

during the 1973 war. We've said that the Near East could be a trip wire for World War III. Today the U.S. arsenal of death so vastly outstrips the capacity of any other imperialist power that no country is eager to spark a war in which they're out-gunned. But this situation will not last forever, and the American machinations in the Near East and the "Bush doctrine" of "pre-emptive war" without a UN cloak or European allies have strained the old NATO alliance. The heightened inter-imperialist rivalries outline new wars to come. Gulf War Two was as much or more intended to "shock and awe" America's imperialist rivals as it was about oil.

To very little fanfare in the bourgeois press, the U.S. passed a bill in early December that puts the U.S. openly and officially back in the business of developing and testing nuclear weapons for the first time since the Cold War ended with capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union. The bill funds research for so-called "mini-nukes" with an explosive power described as "only" up to a third that of the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima! The bill also funds development of "bunker buster" warheads designed to go deep into the earth and destroy buried bunkers or command centers. To explode nuclear bombs the size the U.S. is projecting in "bunker busting" groundbursts will irradiate densely populated cities.

The "bunker busters" are part of the U.S. nuclear threat against the North Korean deformed workers state. Following the devastation of the Korean War, North Korea built its military apparatus as deeply underground as possible because anything visible could easily be wiped

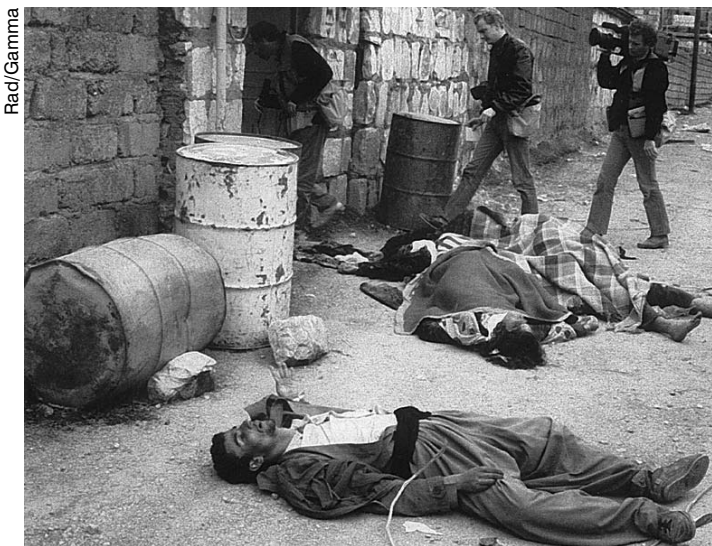
would pauperize the most populous country on earth and further devastate the masses of Asia. What's needed is a workers political revolution to defend the Chinese workers state and institute workers democracy, which would be a huge defeat for imperialism and encourage proletarian struggle around the globe. *We stand for the unconditional military defense of the deformed workers states of China, North Korea, Cuba and Vietnam! U.S. get your bloody hands off the world!*

The Left Between Iraq and a Hard Place

Shamelessly, the Iraqi Communist Party (CP) serves in the "Governing Council," the facade of stooges hand-picked by the Americans to lend legitimacy to the occupation. The Iraqi CP boasts on its Web site of "serious and frank discussions" held between the secretary of its Central Committee and the American top cop in Iraq, Paul Bremer, and his deputy, British Ambassador John Sawers. As if fronting for the occupation wasn't bad enough, the Iraqi CP calls on "activating the role of the United Nations"—the agency that murdered more than one and a half million Iraqi civilians with its sanctions—"in guiding the on-going political process in Iraq, as well as its role in relief operations and reconstruction" (18 October 2003 statement by the International Department of the Central Committee).

The Iraqi Communist Party used to be the largest, most proletarian Communist party in the Near East and recruited a large cadre of national, religious and ethnic groups. In 1958, a revolutionary upsurge was touched off when the Iraqi

**Halabja, 1988:
Kurdish victims
of poison gas
attack by
Saddam Hussein.
U.S. and British
governments
rewarded
Hussein with
millions in aid
following
this atrocity.**



resistance as "a direct declaration of a reactionary war, which is not in essence pertinent to demands and expectations of the masses in Iraq."

Like the Iraqi CP, the WCPI calls for UN forces to enter Iraq, insisting that this is necessary to "provide security and stability." Both the Iraqi CP and the WCPI are playing a reactionary role in telling the Iraqi masses that peace and stability demands tacit acceptance of foreign occupation and that salvation lies with the den of thieves in the UN. This is a reactionary call to accept the rape of Iraq by imperialist powers that are looting what's left of the productive capacity of the country, plunging the proletariat into further misery and impoverishment, while grabbing the natural resources for their own profits. The U.S. raids on the trade-union headquarters are just a hint of the terrible repression to come, including against "responsible" leftists who ally with the U.S. against the Ba'athists. In politics it is essential to know that the enemy of my enemy is not necessarily my friend!

Behind the CP and WCPI's reliance on the UN and/or U.S. imperialist troops to oppose the Ba'athists is their rejection of the politically independent mobilization of the Iraqi proletariat in struggle against imperialist domination, capitalist exploitation, religious obscurantism and reactionary bourgeois nationalism. It is urgently necessary to *forge Trotskyist parties* in the Near East, armed with the program of *permanent revolution*. There will be no emancipation of the women of the region, of the oppressed national minorities, of the exploited workers, short of thoroughgoing socialist revolutions which sweep away the sheiks, colonels and Zionists and imperialist occupiers, and which link up with proletarian revolution in the West. *For a socialist federation of the Near East! For world socialist revolution!*

The Enemy Is at Home: U.S. Imperialism

Wall Street likes the Iraq occupation: the Dow Jones stock market index topped 10,000, making a few more millionaires while the mass of American workers suffer through what the bosses cynically call "the jobless recovery." The presidential campaign has swung into gear and that means that the treacherous trade-union leaders are plunking union funds not into strike war chests but chiefly into the coffers of the capitalist Democratic Party. Between the two parties there's no choice for working people or minorities; indeed there's not much difference between the two. The Bush gang in the White House received overwhelming Democratic support for the draconian Patriot Act, which sets the pretext for stripping away the democratic rights of all in this country.

So-called "antiwar" candidate Howard Dean explained his campaign to beat Bush as follows: "I'm going to outflank him to the right on homeland security, on weapons of mass destruction and on the Saudis.... Our model is to get around the president's right, as John Kennedy did to Nixon" (*New York Times Magazine*, 4 January). Not even Dennis Kucinich says he would withdraw U.S. forces from Iraq immediately. He says, "UN in, U.S. out" and projects a three-month plan for U.S. withdrawal.

There are seething discontents in this country, including in the military which is disproportionately black and Latino. Welfare has been slashed and as the 50th anniversary of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision approaches, America becomes increasingly segregated. More black men in the U.S. are thrown behind bars than get into college. From growing anger with the war to fury over corporate greed and scandals reaching up to the White House while working people get layoffs, plant closings, bans on strikes, unaffordable health care, diminishing abortion rights, anti-immigrant racism and cop terror in the ghettos and barrios—class and social struggles over such issues would help crack the reactionary social consensus Bush has exploited since the September 11 attacks and the onset of the "war on terror."

Our message to the American workers is that the same ruling class that is waging war on the people of Iraq is waging war on labor, blacks, immigrants, youth and women at home. The American proletariat has to understand that the purpose of the U.S. occupation of Iraq is imperialist plunder and global hegemony over the American rulers' rivals. It is in the workers' own class interest to oppose this. Every strike, every protest in Iraq that puts a dent in the American rulers' war on Iraq is a victory for the side of labor here at home. Every victory for labor and minorities here at home is a blow to American imperialism's attacks on working people abroad.

The excruciating contradiction is that American workers hold in their hands the potential power to save humanity from the nuclear nuts in the White House and to use the tremendous wealth of this country for socially useful purposes worldwide. Yet thanks to the illusions promoted by the trade-union misleaders, there is little awareness in the proletariat of its position in this society and the enormous power it has if mobilized as a class in its own interest. The consciousness of the class that has the social power to change society lags behind its objective conditions and development. To resolve this contradiction it is necessary to build a revolutionary integrated workers party, and the Spartacist League is dedicated to this purpose. *Break with the Democrats! For a workers party to fight for socialist revolution! All U.S. troops out of Iraq now!* ■

Marxism, War and the Fight for Socialist Revolution

Two-part article from
Workers Vanguard Nos. 795 and 796,
17 and 31 January 2003



\$1

Order from: Spartacist Pub. Co.
Box 1377 GPO
New York, NY 10116



Mike Luckovich/Atlanta Journal-Constitution

out by the U.S. again. As Bruce Cumings, a scholar of Korea, points out, "The only problem with Rumsfeld's war plan is that no technology yet developed or imagined can penetrate the earth's surface for more than about fifty feet, which is why cruise missiles could not eliminate Saddam Hussein on the night the Iraq invasion began.... The only answer is larger and larger warheads, so that you target Kim Jong Il and wipe out a large urban neighbourhood, or maybe a city" (*London Review of Books*, 4 December 2003).

As the American empire redraws the map of the Near East, using the United Nations to disarm its targets, it could not be clearer that nuclear weapons are the only effective guarantee of national sovereignty. With the North Korean deformed workers state in Washington's cross hairs, as part of the U.S. drive for capitalist counterrevolution there and in China, we Trotskyists stand for the unconditional military defense of North Korea and its right to possess nuclear weapons. From the former Central Asian Soviet republics and Afghanistan to U.S. forces in the Philippines, the Chinese deformed workers state is now literally ringed by the worldwide expansion of U.S. military bases. China is the ultimate prize the imperialists are after, and they are applying pressure militarily and through massive encroachments of capital in "free trade" zones which are criminally encouraged by the ruling Stalinist bureaucracy. The fate of the Chinese workers state will have a profound impact on humanity, far greater even than U.S. imperialism's rape of Iraq. Capitalist counterrevolution

Free Officers movement overthrew the British-installed monarchy and brought the bourgeois nationalist Abd al-Karim Qassim to power. A revolutionary wave swept the countryside as peasants seized the land, and the Communist Party made spectacular gains in the cities. Workers revolution was on the order of the day, but the CP and Kremlin bureaucrats insisted that the party get no more than representation in the capitalist government. But Qassim and the anti-Communist nationalists knew the workers wanted more and so took the offensive to repress the CP. This was but a prelude for the bloodbath to come at the hands of the Ba'athists, who brought down Qassim in 1963 and hunted down Communists with lists supplied by the CIA. An estimated 5,000 were killed and thousands more jailed and tortured. (For a full discussion, see "Near East, 1950s: Permanent Revolution vs. Bourgeois Nationalism," WV Nos. 740 and 741, 25 August and 8 September 2000.) The Iraqi CP's hatred for the Ba'athists is utterly correct, but to front for the American occupation against them is *class treason* and likely every bit as suicidal as the CP's earlier subordination to Qassim.

What about the ostensibly more leftist Worker-Communist Party of Iraq? While denouncing the "Governing Council" and opposing the U.S. occupation, the WCPI simply *equates* the imperialists and their stooges with Islamic and Ba'athist forces. The title of its article "'Occupation' and Resistance: Two Poles Within the Same Reactionary Camp" (*Forward*, 15 December 2003) gives the game away. The article condemns the

Young Spartacus

Miami FTAA Protest: Cops Rampage Against Youth, Labor *What Strategy to Defeat Imperialism?*

This article is based on eyewitness reports from SYC comrades.

Thousands of protesters from across the U.S., and to a lesser extent Canada and Latin America, gathered in Miami during the week of November 17 to protest the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), as government ministers holed up in the downtown Hotel Inter-Continental were negotiating the pact's terms.

The FTAA represents the potential extension of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) to 34 countries in the Western Hemisphere, excluding Cuba. From NAFTA's inception in 1994, the International Communist League has opposed the pact as U.S. imperialism's "free trade" rape of Mexico; it has since brought increased misery and poverty to the people of Mexico. The U.S. is pursuing the FTAA as a means to further cement its control over the smaller capitalist states in Central and South America in the face of greater economic competition from rival imperialist powers in Europe and Asia. The fight against NAFTA and the FTAA is a battle against imperialist domination of Mexico and all of the Americas.

One unofficial slogan of the anti-globalization movement is "Another world is possible." Some steel workers in Miami even had the slogan emblazoned across the backs of their union T-shirts. How to bring about that other world? A range of political opinions was on display. The AFL-CIO officials presented the protests as an opportunity "to educate our elected officials and candidates in preparation for the 2004 elections" and collected "ballots" from "millions of workers" from the Americas opposing the FTAA. Liberals like those in the coalition United for Peace and Justice (UFPJ), in a call endorsed by the reformist International Socialist Organization and Left Turn among others, sought to inspire the delegates of poorer countries at the FTAA talks to walk out, as Brazil's Lula did at the Cancún WTO meetings



Miami, November 20: Direct action protest at security fence surrounding meeting site of FTAA talks.

earlier last year. Many youth activists, identifying themselves as anarchists and rejecting reliance on any government officials, wanted to disrupt the FTAA meeting through direct action. None of these tactics will actually stop the FTAA.

The FTAA talks did end a day early, without a broad agreement. But this failure was not a result of the protests. As one radio reporter observed, at the Inter-Continental the demonstrations went unheeded by the delegates, confident in the protection accorded by the armed police camp in the downtown area. Instead, this failure was due to the competing national economic interests of the capitalist governments involved in the FTAA.

Ultimately there is no way to stop capitalist exploitation and bring about a just world short of working-class socialist revolution. We look to the working class as the only force in society that has the ability and class interest to defeat imperialism.

Miami Blues: Armed Police Camp

Miami was witness to a massive police mobilization, now routine at anti-globalization demos. The "security" measures were underwritten by \$8.5 million from the federal government, allocated in the spending bill for the Iraq occupation. Also borrowed from the "war on terror" in Iraq: Miami police invited reporters to "embed" with them in armored vehicles and helicopters. The bourgeois media, civic leaders and Miami police engaged in an orgy of anarchist-bashing in the lead-up to the protests; several "suspected

anarchists" (youth with backpacks walking down the street) were arrested. Days before the protests began, the Miami City Commission passed an ordinance banning the use and possession of common items like glass bottles and the puppets used in street theater.

On Thursday, the main day of protests, the cops totally shut down central Miami. Stores and offices were closed, the streets were empty, the elevated rail system was locked up, with cops perched at the stations. The police, many in full riot gear, unleashed a variety of weapons from batons and tasers to rubber bullets and water cannons. Youth were allowed to gather at Government Center Park at 7 a.m. but were swarmed by cops when they broke off into smaller groups engaging in direct actions.

Later that day at the end of the AFL-CIO-sponsored parade demanding "No to

the FTAA!", some anarchoid youth and a small number of steel workers advanced to the security perimeter fence separating the rally site from the Inter-Continental. The cops decided to end the rally on their own terms, attacking and dispersing the protesters. Youth and steel workers alike were injured in the onslaught. As we retreated, we talked to several youth who were assaulted, including a young man who was shot in the leg and hobbled and another who was shot in the back with a paint ball. Outside the "Wellness Center," the temporary medical clinic set up by the protesters, a long line had formed. The cops later attacked the center.

"This should be a model for homeland defense," Miami mayor Manny Diaz would later say. Almost 300 protesters were arrested, including 62 in a protest outside Miami-Dade County Jail the next day in solidarity with those arrested on Thursday. The Partisan Defense Committee issued a statement on November 24 demanding: "Free the arrested protesters and drop all charges now!"

The Miami events were a vivid lesson in how the capitalist state cannot be neutral but is rather the armed and violent defender of the capitalist order. The armed police camp in downtown Miami was a complete refutation of those leftists who peddle the illusion that the capitalist state, sufficiently pressured, can serve the interests of working people and the oppressed. However, this lesson was not necessarily generalized by all. Even youth crippled in the cop rampages thought that the "Convergence Center" was a safe place to assemble afterwards. While it was not raided, police had it staked out and picked off protesters as they came and went. There was this dangerous belief that if one declares a "safe space" or "autonomous zone" it thereby exists. Not so—black inner-city youth or the hundreds of immigrants locked up in federal detention centers can attest to the brutal daily reality of police repression.

Proletarian Internationalism or Pressure Politics?

Despite the naked display of capitalist "law and order" in Miami, many youth were intent on somehow disrupting the



Cops went on rampage, assaulting and arresting protesters throughout the main day of demos.

Puck

SYC Class Series

CHICAGO

Thursday, 7 p.m.

January 15: **We Are the Party of the Russian Revolution!**

University of Chicago
Cobb Hall, Room 107
5811 S. Ellis Avenue

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

LOS ANGELES

Alternate Saturdays, 2 p.m.

January 10: **The Russian Revolution**

3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215
(Vermont/Beverly Red Line station)

Information and readings: (213) 380-8239
or e-mail: slsycla@cs.com

meetings. This impulse to fight the “system” through well-intentioned, but futile, acts of self-sacrifice sprang from a gut hatred of their “own” government and its attempts to ride roughshod over the rest of the globe. What often was behind this justified hatred was a misplaced feeling of responsibility for the fundamentally oppressive character of American capitalism.

But youth and the working masses do not share the blame for the crimes of the brutal U.S. ruling class, which exploits workers, makes life miserable for black people and goes to war for itself alone. It only serves the class enemy for radical youth in this country to feel guilt for these crimes, because this guilt flows from the dangerously false idea that the capitalist U.S. is or could be pressured into being a democracy “for the people” if only the anti-globalization youth were determined or creative enough to make the rulers pay attention. Under the circumstances of the anti-globalization protests, the cops will assault, brutalize and arrest youth without fail. Lacking a perspective of mobilizing the working class against the rule of capital, such confrontations with the cops amount to the streetfighting face of reformism.

Ultimately what is at work is an idealist conception of social change, which sees the transformation of society as resulting from enlightening the “misinformed” or tempering social attitudes like “greed” and racism in capitalist society. From the exploitation of the working masses to the racial oppression of black people, the evils of the capitalist world are not simply a matter of retrograde ideas; they are materially rooted in a system based on exploitation and oppression. This material reality we seek to change.

The direct action protests were meant to “raise consciousness” and inspire others to follow, thereby building a mass movement against “globalization” and bringing closer victory in the future. Who was to be inspired? For some, it was the representatives of “progressive” Third World countries at the FTAA negotiating table, e.g., the Brazilian and Venezuelan governments. A speaker from Venezuela at an anti-globalization conference on the University of Miami campus that Friday hailed Hugo Chávez for supposedly carrying forward the “Bolivarian Revolution” by refusing to sign on to an FTAA lacking human rights provisions and, above all, protections of national sovereignty. Stickers from the group Alternativa Bolivariana para América Latina (ALBA), an outfit with ties to the Venezuelan government, were popular. Mention of Lula likewise brought praise and admiration for his leading the walkout at the Cancún WTO meeting.

A Spartacus Youth Club supporter responded to the Venezuelan speaker in the discussion round, pointing out how the Chávez government is tied in a thousand ways to the imperialist system. She counterposed the blow to that system delivered by the working class in the 1917 Russian Revolution. Whether it is the social democrat Lula attacking the Brazilian pension system or the nationalist strongman Chávez deregulating the Venezuelan banks, these politicians protect and defend the capitalist order. Notwithstanding the differences in their countries, their backgrounds and their politics, both Lula and Chávez are openly servile to the IMF, enforcing economic austerity dictates to curry favor with the imperialist powers. As well, both have sought to bring powerful unions to heel and reneged on promises of agrarian reform. Lula went so far as to recently expel left-wing critics of his economic policy from his own Workers Party. As our comrades in the Grupo Espartaquista de México observed:

“The history of Latin American capitalism has been one of constant swings between populist protectionism and nationalist rhetoric on the one hand and ‘free market’ trade liberalization on the other. Alternatively, the bourgeoisie of

these countries, frightened by the unrest of the masses, resorts to populism and protects its industry with tariff barriers and subsidies. Then, under the political pressure of imperialism and because of its own internal inefficacy, this model fails. The bourgeoisie, handing over the economy to the imperialists, resorts again to ‘free market’ liberalism, which in a few years fails, too, as it destroys the internal market and condemns the masses to even greater impoverishment, and then the cycle begins again. The rise of bourgeois rulers with populist rhetoric like Chávez in Venezuela and the social democrat Lula in Brazil points to the latter. The only constants in this inhuman wheel of fortune are imperialist subjugation and the human misery of millions of peasants and workers.”

—“¡Por movilizaciones obreras contra el TLC, el ALCA y las privatizaciones!” [For Workers Mobilizations Against NAFTA, FTAA and Privatizations!], *Espartaco* No. 20 (Spring-Summer 2003)

More consistent left-leaning anarchist youth had little affection for the capitalist governments of the Third World. One young woman observed how Lula put himself forward as a leftist candidate of the workers but was actually doing exactly what the U.S. demanded of him. Another “hoped to cause headaches” to the U.S. by arousing the Latin American masses.

Naomi Klein expressed a clearly reformist take on this position in her article on the Miami protests: “Despite the [Bush] brothers’ best efforts, the dream of a hemisphere united into a single free-market economy died last week—killed not by demonstrators in Miami but by the populations of Argentina, Brazil and Bolivia, who let their politicians know that if they sign away more power to foreign multinationals, they may as well not come home” (London *Guardian*, 25 November 2003). This perspective, too, is the dead end of seeking to pressure bourgeois governments, in this case those of Latin America, to stand up to the depredations of capital.

It was “the people” that the more radical youth wanted to inspire. But “the people” invariably consists of members of different classes that have their own distinct interests. Lula and the Brazilian bourgeoisie have some interests in opposition to the U.S. imperialists, but are dependent on imperialism to maintain their own class rule and are not going to challenge the system as a whole. The existence of imperialism has arrested the development of the Third World, as the imperialist countries have already divided up the vast majority of the wealth and power. The investment of imperialist capital in countries like Mexico has resulted in uneven and combined development; age-old conditions of subjugation in the countryside exist alongside modern industry and a powerful proletariat.

As our comrades in the GEM wrote: “The social, economic and cultural development of Mexico can only be achieved through a *socialist revolution* which puts the proletariat in power, leading the peasant and indigenous masses and all the oppressed, and establishes a planned, socialist economy. From its inception, a victorious workers state in a backward country—which also shares a border with

the U.S.—would have to fight to promote proletarian revolution inside the American imperialist beast and on a world scale. A socialist revolution in Mexico would really have an electrifying effect on the workers in the U.S.”

Fighting the Imperialist Order

It is essential to understand what imperialism actually is in order to defeat it. Imperialism is a system, capitalism at its most developed stage, and is marked by the export of finance capital. What it is not is a series of belligerent government policies. The imperialist bourgeoisies, in pursuit of profits and spheres of economic influence, exploit the world’s backward countries for raw resources, cheap labor and new markets. The constant competition and conflict between nation-states over such influence is the impetus to war. War is therefore an inevitable characteristic of imperialism.

Although it is an agreement between governments, the FTAA is referenced as another case of “globalization,” supposedly a new world system in which sovereign nation-states are overtaken by transnational corporations. But these corporations do not and cannot operate without a national base. For example, many of the corporations involved in “rebuilding” Iraq today are multinational in the sense that they have capital invested in more than one country. Yet the corporations still retain their national base—it is ultimately the U.S. military and none other that enforces the property rights of these corporations.

Several groups claimed that “globalization” promotes war. Typical was the US Labor Against the War statement, which concludes: “Unfair trade policies destroy American jobs, impoverish workers around the globe, and lead to violence and military conflicts.” Likewise, in a leaflet it distributed, the UFPJ argued: “Globalization undermines the ability of governments to regulate and mitigate the damaging effects of the market, which leads to an intensification of all of the economic causes of war.” There is no fundamental separation of interests between the bourgeois state and its capitalist economy, whatever the particular policies of the government. The above views

wrongly imply that the governments of capitalist states could betray the fundamental interests of their propertied class and that the imperialist system could be a peaceful one.

All the talk in recent years about “globalization” is a reflection not of any profound new economic transformation but rather of a tremendous political defeat, the collapse of the Soviet Union. As we noted in our pamphlet on “globalization”:

“A *fundamental political condition* for the present triumph of capitalist ‘globalization’ was the retreat of Soviet global power under Gorbachev, the disintegration of the Moscow Stalinist bureaucracy and the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92. It was no accident that the electoral overthrow of the [Nicaraguan] Sandinista regime in 1990, capping a contra war armed and organized by Washington, coincided with the beginning of a massive investment boom by U.S. banks and corporations in Mexico. At the same time, capitalist counterrevolution in the former Soviet sphere has opened up a new, huge sphere for exploitation, especially for German imperialism.”

—*Imperialism, the “Global Economy” and Labor Reformism* (September 1999)

We had several lengthy discussions with youth about the Soviet Union. One anarchist youth dismissed the USSR as a “statist” superpower; his attitude was one superpower down, one to go. To the contrary, the collapse of the bureaucratically degenerated Soviet workers state cleared the field for the hegemonic power of the U.S. The Soviet Union when it existed was a counterweight to U.S. imperialism.

A member of the North Eastern Federation of Anarcho-Communists argued that the precipitous drop in the standard of living in post-Soviet Russia was due not to the restoration of capitalism but rather to the defeat of the USSR at the hands of (and its subsequent economic trampling by) the U.S. He made a comparison to the economic devastation in Germany following the First World War. He considered the class character of the society and its form of economic organization to be subordinate to the degree to which the state “interfered” with people’s daily lives.

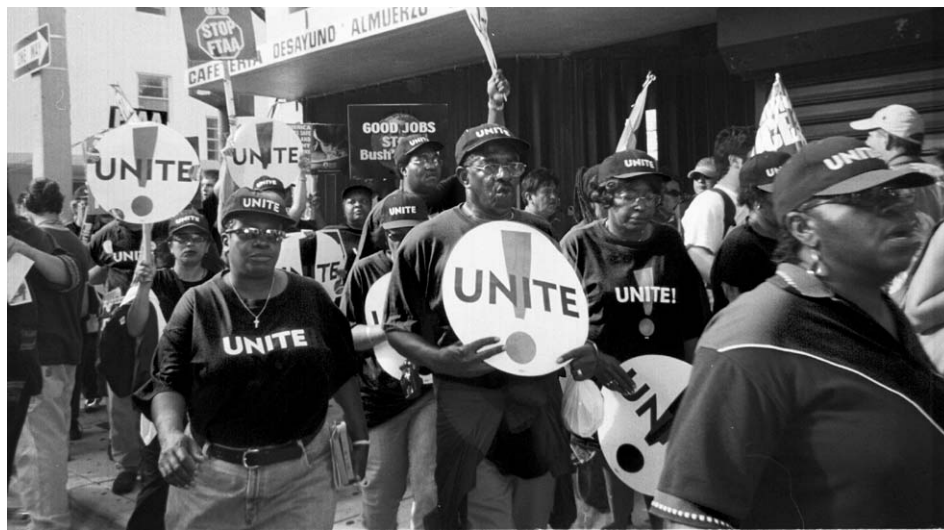
But the Soviet Union was not a capitalist country, in which production is for profit; it was a society based on the establishment of collectivized property and a planned economy, made possible by the expropriation of the capitalist class. Despite the degeneration of the Soviet workers state under Stalinist misrule, it was a measure of the power of the planned, collectivized economy that it provided jobs, housing, education and health care for all. Today, however, Russian life in all aspects is in drastic decline.

Opposition to imperialism requires defense of those gains the international working class has already won. We Trotskyists fought tooth and nail against capitalist restoration in the Soviet Union.

Treachery of the Labor Bureaucracy

The fundamental contradiction in capitalist society is the antagonism between

continued on page 8



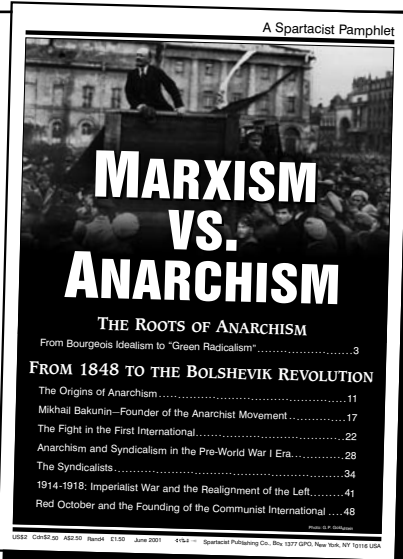
Young Spartacus

UNITE contingent in AFL-CIO march, November 20. Class-struggle labor leadership must be forged to unleash power of multiracial working class.

This pamphlet presents a comprehensive historical analysis of the origins of anarchism and the views of its leading figures through the 1871 Paris Commune and the split in the First International and discusses the impact of the 1917 October Revolution. The first article addresses radical youth today who, in an ideological climate conditioned by the so-called “death of communism,” are drawn to all variants of anarchism, Green radicalism and left liberalism. The pamphlet is dedicated to the fight to win a new generation to revolutionary Marxism.

\$2 (56 pages)

Make checks payable/mail to:
Spartacist Publishing Co.,
Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116



Defend the Berkeley Three!

At the University of California at Berkeley, three antiwar student leaders have been found guilty by the administration and penalized for their opposition to the imperialist rape of Iraq. The convictions stem from the students' role in organizing a demonstration on 20 March 2003, the day U.S. imperialism embarked on its terror bombing of Iraq. Approximately 4,000 students filled Sproul Plaza and about 400 occupied the front entrance of Sproul Hall, the main administrative building. The protesters demanded that the administration declare the University of Baghdad its sister school and that the university not increase student fees or cut staff wages during the war. They also demanded that the university not give student records, especially those of international students, to federal agencies. 119 sit-in protesters were dragged out by the police, arrested and threatened with discipline.

The administration ultimately dropped the charges against most of the students arrested, but fingered three prominent antiwar students—Snehal Shingavi, Rachel Odes and Michael Smith, all organizers of the Berkeley Stop the War



Campus Antiwar Network

From left: Rachel Odes, Michael Smith, Snehal Shingavi.

Coalition—for prosecution by Student Judicial Affairs. At the university's kangaroo court hearings, the students' privately retained lawyer was prevented from effectively defending his clients and the doors were barred by university cops and security guards in an attempt to keep the students from mobilizing campus support. We say: *Cops off campus!*

The three faced bogus charges including “disturbing the peace and failing to comply with an official” but were selected and prosecuted by the administration on the basis of “prior offenses,” that is, having organized and led demonstrations in the past. As the campus news-

paper, the *Daily Californian*, aptly commented, “The message sent by the university seems to be that free speech includes the right to participate in a protest, but not the right to organize one.”

Now the university administration, acting as the ideological watchdog for the bourgeoisie, has sentenced Shingavi and Odes to 20 hours of community service and placed a letter of reprimand in their permanent academic files. These two students are not just leaders of the Berkeley Stop the War Coalition, but supporters of the International Socialist Organization. Despite our very real differences with the reformist ISO, we vig-

orously defend these ISO spokesmen against victimization by the capitalist state and university administration, which has singled them out because of their leading role in protesting the U.S. war against and brutal occupation of Iraq. Michael Smith, the third student, was sentenced to 30 hours of community service, the same letter of reprimand and a one-semester suspension, which the administration grotesquely said might be commuted to a letter of reprimand if Smith submits to “anger management” at the University Student Health Center.

The attack on the Berkeley Three is an attempt to silence opposition on campus to Washington's drive for world domination. This is consistent with a pattern of attacks on protesters nationally the group Students for Justice in Palestine at Berkeley; Miguel Malo at Hostos Community College in the Bronx; the Palestinian Solidarity Movement at Rutgers; and Tony Van Der Meer at UMass Boston. It is also of a piece with the voluntary collaboration by campus administrations—like at San Francisco State University—in handing over the names of Near Eastern and other immigrant students to the FBI and the use of undercover police agents to spy on political activities. We say: *Down with the prosecution of student protesters! Abolish the administration! For worker-student-teacher control of the university!*

FTAA Protest...

(continued from page 7)

labor and capital. Workers create the wealth of this society with their labor and can bring the capitalists to their knees by withholding that labor power. With its vast numbers, its location in the urban centers and its hands on the means of production in the factories, where the common experience of workers lays the basis for solidarity and organization, the proletariat is the key social force to bring about the shattering of the imperialist order.

More than one youth argued that the American proletariat no longer has any social power due to the disappearance of jobs and the transformation of the American economy from manufacturing to service-oriented industries. One pro-working-class anarchist youth argued that proletarian centrality is impossible today, essentially claiming that only by defeating the FTAA and other supranational economic institutions will the working class recapture its social power in this country and save the Third World proletariat from the ravages of the “multinationals.”

The decline of the American labor movement is not fundamentally caused by the objective effects of “globalization” but by the defeatist and treacherous policies of the AFL-CIO misleaders. The transfer of production to low-wage areas in semicolonial countries has led to a sharp decline in unionized manufacturing jobs here, particularly in the Northeast and Midwest. But instead of seeking to organize international class struggle against attacks on jobs and unions,

the AFL-CIO bureaucracy limits union struggle to what is acceptable to the U.S. capitalist rulers.

The strength of the unions is not in their paid lobbyists on Capitol Hill but in their numbers, their militancy, their organization and discipline. What is crucial is the question of leadership. The existence of “multinationals” only underscores the historic need for an internationalist class-struggle perspective that transcends parochial, nationally limited trade unionism. We are for a class-struggle leadership in the trade unions. This is part of the fight to build a revolutionary workers party that mobilizes the working class and all the oppressed against imperialist rule.

In Miami, the labor tops worked to keep the radical youth separate from the union ranks and the working class away from radical politics. Union marshals wearing “Peacekeeper” badges forcibly kept any youth wearing black from entering the amphitheater where the union rally was held; security patted down those who were not in labor contingents and used metal detector wands on them. Youth were disgusted by this exclusion, and we found anger at the treatment of the leftist youth among the workers.

Given that the protest was to “raise consciousness” against globalization, the “unity of anti-FTAA forces” was very important for many youth, irrespective of the broader political program of any of those forces. Whether one was for or against capitalism did not so much matter; in fact, an “anti-corporate” attitude was sometimes what youth meant when they said they were against capitalism. By this they meant opposition to “large monopo-

listic” corporations, not capitalism *per se*. Others subscribed to an anti-technology attitude. Much of the resentment against the AFL-CIO bureaucrats was not so much for making anarchist youth *persona non grata* as for breaking this unity. But pleas for “unity” with those who alibi capitalist rule can only reduce what is fought for to the lowest common denominator, namely Democratic Party electoralism.

Many youth did make a distinction between the steel workers and the AFL-CIO apparatus. The steel workers were spoken of with admiration for standing down cops harassing youth activists and widely cheered when they first arrived on Thursday. Then, the steel workers were prevented from entering the union rally site by the cops and later marched together with the youth to the security fence, taking arrests. But the leadership of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) is politically indistinguishable from that of the other AFL-CIO unions. Following the protests, the USWA tops called for a Congressional investigation into the police assaults, breeding illusions in supposed Congressional “impartiality” when the police repression had been paid for with money approved by Congress!

Central to the political outlook of the USWA officials is their protectionist “Stand Up For Steel” tariffs campaign, with its rhetoric of saving “American jobs” for “American workers.” This outlook is shared by liberal Democratic presidential hopeful Dennis Kucinich, whose supporters mobilized widely for the demo. Protectionism is poison to the workers movement because it sets workers of one country against workers of another country, obscuring the reality that the enemy of both is the capitalist rulers at home. In his 11 November 2003 “anti-FTAA” campaign flyer laced with protectionism and patriotism, Kucinich intones: “NAFTA allows foreign owned companies to challenge our Constitution, our Congress, and our rights to enact American laws.”

Those youth who were pro-labor offered boycotts against particular companies as the best means of defending the interests of working people here and in other countries, citing campaigns against Taco Bell and Wal-Mart. Consumer boycotts were seen as the “practical” alternative to organizing the unorganized be-



Young Spartacus

Berkeley anti-ROTC protest, April 2001: Spartacists oppose FTAA and NAFTA, call to defend Chinese deformed workers state.

cause residents of the U.S. “are not there” in the countries miserably exploited by sweatshop labor. Boycotts may occasionally serve a useful purpose in conjunction with a strike action, but behind timeless consumer boycotts is a liberal-moralist worldview positing that one corporation is more benevolent than another. This presupposes that capitalism can be made into a humane system and is counterposed to mobilizing the power of labor.

Defend Cuba, China Against Counterrevolution!

Che Guevara probably was the most highly regarded political figure among the youth, though the anarchists would distinguish between the Che before and the one after he was a part of the ruling state apparatus in Cuba. The adulation of Che generally came from a romantic identification with the guerrilla road, i.e., “armed direct action.” While opposing imperialism, Che's program was fundamentally elitist, posing a band of intellectuals as leadership for the peasant masses—an isolated, parochial social layer whose primary aspiration is property holding. This program is an obstacle to workers taking power in their own name.



Geutmann/Zetterspiegel

Cuban youth celebrate anniversary of victory over U.S. imperialism. Cuban Revolution has meant real gains for workers, peasants, blacks, women.

Edward Said...

(continued from page 3)

by the Israeli government and designated for Zionist settlements. Using the advanced military hardware generously supplied by the U.S., the Israeli juggernaut crushed what existed of a West Bank economy, ravished social institutions and reduced Palestinian collective life to a pre-modern level.

In his 1996 book, *Peace and Its Discontents*, Said eloquently denounced the Palestinian Authority (PA) as a “kingdom of illusions, with Israel firmly in command.” He further noted that “a slave mentality prevails among Arab leaders, for whom a favorable reception in Washington is the summit of their political lives.” Said would later write, the “peace process” that began in 1993 “has simply re-packaged the occupation, offering a token 18 per cent of the lands seized in 1967 to the corrupt Vichy-like Authority of Arafat, whose mandate has essentially been to police and tax his people on Israel’s behalf” (*New Left Review*, September-October 2001).

Said was an uncompromising truth-teller—reminiscent of the late Israel Shachak who was a courageous opponent of the semi-theocratic Zionist state and its bloody repression of the Palestinian people, and a declared enemy of racism, chauvinism and injustice wherever he found it. Both Said and Shachak were fighters against the reactionary features of their own societies. In the same *New Left Review* article cited above, Said wrote of the Palestinian Authority leadership: “Could they not once speak as human beings, rather than third-rate imitations of Kissinger and Rabin?” And he bitterly declared: “The Palestinian people deserve better.” It is little wonder that the books of this courageous and independent thinker were banned in the Occupied Territories by the corrupt and venal PA.

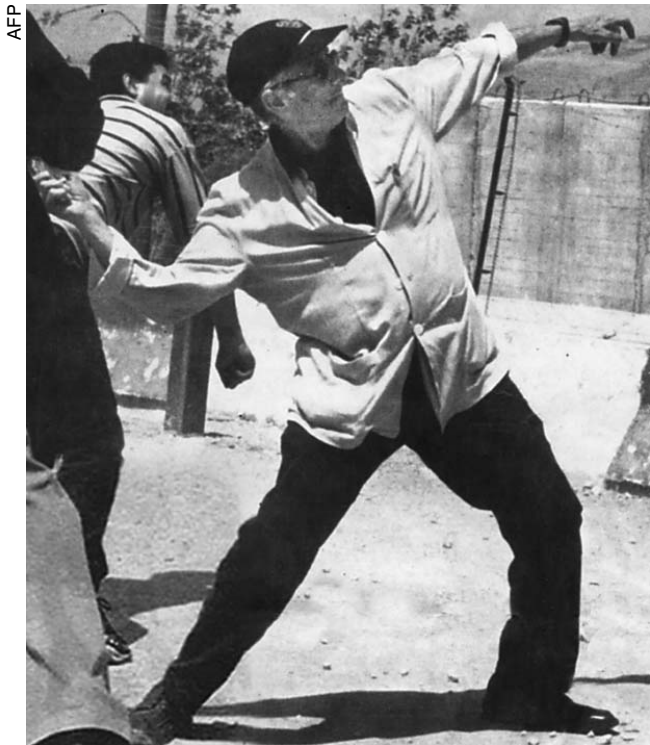
Said: A Genuine Humanist

In his fight for Palestinian national rights, Said had many enemies. He had countless times declared his repudiation



Edward Said with his close friend, Israeli conductor Daniel Barenboim.

Edward Said
tossing a stone
over border in
celebration of
Israeli withdrawal
from Lebanon,
July 2000.



of terrorism in all its forms, whether Palestinian or Israeli. Nevertheless, *Commentary*, that voice of Zionist zealots and die-hard Cold Warriors, in its August 1989 issue ran a calumny on Said titled “Professor of Terror.” Just before that, the fascistic Jewish Defense League called him a Nazi and his Columbia office was firebombed.

Said made a family visit to Beirut in 2000, where he also gave a couple of lectures. Earlier that year the Israeli army had conducted a humiliating withdrawal from southern Lebanon after a 22-year occupation that cost some 20,000 lives. Said made a daylong excursion to the area, which included the notorious Khiam prison, built by the Israelis in 1987. Some 8,000 were incarcerated and tortured there under bestial conditions. Next stop was an abandoned border post in an area deserted except for Lebanese visitors who came in large numbers to throw stones of celebration across the still heavily fortified border. Said joined in and cast a pebble.

Unknown to him, a photo was taken that would find its way to Israel and across the Atlantic, where it became the source for a vicious witchhunt. He was showered with hate mail and death threats, a media blitz of defamation, and a campaign to get him fired from Columbia, where he had taught for 38 years. An editorial in the campus *Columbia Daily Spectator* branded Said’s pebble throw a “violent act.” In a protest letter to the *Spectator*, the New York Spartacus Youth Club wrote:

“The Zionist rulers hurl not stones but bullets and bombs at innocent civilians.... Israel has repeatedly bombed Lebanese towns and cities, killing thousands and driving hundreds of thousands more from their homes. In 1982, the Israeli rulers orchestrated the massacre of well over a thousand Palestinians in the refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila. Thousands of Palestinians languish in Israel’s torture chambers, and thousands more

have been killed by occupation forces in the West Bank and Gaza. But the only ‘violence’ the Zionist apologists at the *Spectator* see is a stone falling on empty ground in Israel. The Spartacus Youth Club says: Defend the Palestinian people against Zionist state repression! All Israeli troops and settlers out of the Occupied Territories!”

— WV No. 743, 6 October 2000

The huge blind spot in Said’s work was the 1917 Russian Revolution. No single event did more to unleash and shape the struggle for social emancipation in the 20th century. The ascendancy of counter-revolution in the former USSR in 1991-92 is an unparalleled defeat for working people all over the world, decisively altering the political landscape, not the least in the Near East. It was precisely the destruction of the Soviet Union, removing a key base of political and financial support to the PLO, that paved the way for the 1993 Oslo accords. In his *New Left Review* (November-December 2003) tribute to Said, left-wing writer Tariq Ali recalled, “When I asked if the year 1917 meant anything to him, he replied without hesitation: ‘Yes, the Balfour Declaration.’” (Named after the British foreign secretary Arthur James Balfour, the declaration supported the Zionist claim to a “national home for the Jewish people” in Palestine in order to mobilize Jewish support behind the British in the First World War and stake out Britain’s claim to Palestine as war booty.)

Said opposed the dead-end and reactionary programs of nationalism and religion and advocated a binational and secular solution to the Israel/Palestine conflict. In his later years, he recognized that the Palestinian and Hebrew populations were so interpenetrated that he rejected a two-state solution. But as Israel/Palestine, the Balkans and Northern Ireland have demonstrated repeatedly, *under capitalism* the only possible outcome to geographically interpen-

trated peoples who claim the same land is one nation on top with the others either exterminated, expelled, subjugated or some combination thereof.

The only genuinely democratic resolution requires the conquest of power by the multinational proletariat that has the material interest in the fullest development of all peoples irrespective of nationality. Here the greatest example is that provided by the Russian Revolution, which Said ignored. The Bolshevik Revolution, despite its later bureaucratic degeneration under Stalin, brought unparalleled and all-sided social development and national collaboration to the most oppressed regions of the tsarist empire, like the Caucasus. Likewise, in the Balkans, long a seething cauldron of inter-ethnic bloodshed, the social revolution led by Tito in Yugoslavia laid the foundation for almost 50 years of national peace and social development. The restoration of capitalism in both countries also restored the old nationalist hatreds and murderous “ethnic cleansing,” aided and abetted by the imperialist powers.

Said’s many books included his much-lauded and controversial 1978 work, *Orientalism*, which, along with several of his other works, attempted to delve into the relationship between culture, domination and imperialism. Adding to the breadth of his interests, Said was also an accomplished pianist and musicologist. In his last years, he took much satisfaction in cofounding with the great musician and fellow iconoclast Daniel Barenboim an orchestra that brought together musicians from both Israel and the Occupied Territories. They named it the *West-East Divan*, after Goethe’s greatest collection of poetry, which in turn was inspired by the 14th-century Persian lyric poet Hafiz and his collection of sonnets, *Divan*. Joined by the cellist Yo-Yo Ma, they held one of their first workshops in Weimar, the city where Goethe lived, only a few miles from the Buchenwald concentration camp. In an *Atlantic* interview (22 September 1999) Said recalled:

“My role there was to lead the discussions that we had every other night. The night before we went to Buchenwald I gave a talk, and said, ‘Look, if you just go to this and see it as part of the Jewish experience, it’s wrong, because it’s part of the human experience, which we as human beings have to understand. In other words, universalize it and understand it as a horror that afflicts all of humanity’.”

Though not a Marxist, Said stood head and shoulders above the many other intellectuals who dealt with the Near East; he was a genuine humanist. But Said also found himself in an impossible situation: He was at bottom a liberal—an honest and sincere liberal, but a liberal nonetheless—in a situation where liberalism could offer no realizable solutions. We owe him a great debt and would do well to learn from both his weaknesses as well as his strengths. ■

Some anarchist youth we talked to defended Cuba and the gains of its revolution (e.g., education, health care) but did not like Castro, whom they considered an authoritarian. A group of youth asked about the dollarization of Cuba out of justified concern over the threat to the Cuban Revolution. Indeed, making U.S. tender legal opened a breach in the state monopoly of foreign trade, a serious danger making the Cuban deformed workers state more susceptible to capitalist forces. This has sharply increased social divisions, particularly affecting women and black Cubans.

The Cuban Revolution has survived decades of CIA plots, a U.S. blockade and imperialist economic penetration. Miami itself is a haven for the *gusanos*, the counterrevolutionary Cubans who fled the 1959 Revolution. In fact, the stretch of Biscayne Boulevard where much of the anti-FTAA protests took place was renamed Jorge Mas Canosa Boulevard, after one of the more vicious historic *gusano* leaders.

Although the Cuban workers state was deformed from the outset by the rule of the nationalist Castro bureaucracy and the absence of the proletariat in the revolution, the smashing of capitalist class rule in 1960-61 has enabled the Cuban masses to make great strides forward in their living conditions. The restoration of capitalism would bring many horrors to the people of Cuba and would further embolden U.S. imperialism in exploiting the peoples of Latin America, more than any “free trade” agreement could ever do.

It is part of our struggle against imperialist capitalism that we stand for the unconditional military defense of Cuba, China, North Korea and Vietnam—the remaining deformed workers states—against imperialism and capitalist counterrevolution. Simultaneously, we call for workers political revolution to oust the sellout Stalinist bureaucrats and fight to extend proletarian rule to the advanced capitalist countries.

World socialist revolution is the prerequisite to raising the productive forces

of society to a level where material scarcity is eliminated. Opposition to trade between nations leads either to support for protectionism or to primitivist economic decentralization and isolation, programs that would exacerbate the differences between the industrial and the underdeveloped worlds. It is only through centralized planning on an international scale, based on global exchange terms

favorable to underdeveloped nations, that the divide separating the impoverished of the world from the wealthy of this country can be overcome. The way forward is to build a revolutionary party that can infuse the working class with an understanding of its historic task to overturn the imperialist order and reorganize society on an egalitarian socialist basis. ■

Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyste Forum

“War on Terror” = War on Immigrants, Workers

Labor Must Fight Ottawa’s Racist Dragnet!

Saturday, January 17, 6 p.m.

International Student Centre
University of Toronto, 33 S. George Street

TORONTO

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

From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal

“Good Police Procedure” in Cin. City



“Here we go again,” laments a Cincinnati religious leader as local and national TV stations broadcast the harrowing footage of cops beating a black man, striking him with long truncheons perhaps two dozen times.

The Rev. Damon Lynch, Jr., pastor of New Jerusalem Baptist Church, is not alone in that sentiment.

Cincinnati is but the latest of a long train of abuses, this latest is based on that often-used pretext: “the Big N----- Defense.”

It was used in the infamous beating of Rodney King in L.A. (one of the cops charged spiced up the imagery by likening him to a “gorilla”). A decade before Rodney King became a household name, a man named Delbert Africa was beaten, rifle-butted, and repeatedly kicked while giving up after the 1978 Phila. police assault on the home and headquarters of the MOVE Organization.

Initially, the city’s police chief denied Africa was beaten (in fact, all the men were beaten that day) but the videotapes made it difficult to disprove Delbert’s pummeling.

When a trial took place, the cops took the stand to announce they were in fear of Delbert because of his muscles. (The judge would dismiss the jury

and proclaim them “not guilty,” *ignoring videotape evidence!*)

Now, a man named Nathaniel Jones is beaten to a pulp on tape in Cincinnati. When he dies, the first thing the corporate media proclaims is his size. On some early reports, Mr. Jones was described as “nearly 400 pounds.”

It took a day or so to shrink to around 350 lbs. Still, we see the rudiments of the BND: “Big N----- Defense.” Six cops, each armed with a variety of weapons, were threatened by the BND syndrome.

Of course, almost predictably, drugs have been introduced into the case.

If it were not so tragic, it would be almost comical. One is reminded of a stand-up routine by comedian Dave Chappelle. He describes cops beating a Black person into the concrete. The cops get together, and one tells the other, “OK—let’s just sprinkle some crack on ’em, and get outta here.”

The line never fails to score laughs from the audience. It is so deep in American consciousness, that it’s become a national, private joke.

It is a joke that stems from something deadly serious. And it stems from a national problem that shows no signs of abatement.

For far too many men and women, it is no laughing matter.

There is not a social explosion in the last half of the 20th Century that did not stem from events of just this nature. From Watts of 1965 to Los Angeles of 1992, the trigger has been the same—police violence against Black people. Courts have issued judgments up into the billions (in total), but to no avail.

Like cancer, it goes on and on....and on.

It matters not a whit what color the police chief, or mayor is.

It matters not whether there is a police accountability board or not.

It matters not whether there is a Republican or Democratic Administration in power, nationally, or locally.

How many politicians, whether they are running for president or dog catcher, have raised the issue? How many have offered anything close to a solution?

The solution will not come from City Hall. Indeed, often, City Hall is the problem!

The solution will come from the people themselves, who organize themselves to make a difference, directly.

Our history provides many examples of average, everyday people, organized to change social problems.

That time has come again.

7 December 2003

©2003 Mumia Abu-Jamal

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.

Padilla...

(continued from page 2)

seized upon the Oklahoma City bombing to pass the Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, the Bush administration seized upon the criminal attack on the World Trade Center. What the Bush administration is seeking to do is to make its array of repressive laws and measures permanent features of the American legal system.

When the government has allowed such legal niceties as lawyers and trials, several of their “anti-terrorism” prosecutions have faltered. In October, a federal judge barred the government from seeking the death penalty against Al Qaeda supporter Zacarias Moussaoui or arguing that Moussaoui was involved in the September 11 attacks based on the prosecution’s refusal to let the defense have access to detainees who could exonerate him. And on December 16, a federal judge in Detroit formally admonished Ashcroft for violating a “gag” order during the trial last spring of four members of an alleged Islamic terrorist “sleeping cell.” Despite Ashcroft’s efforts, one

defendant was acquitted and another was found guilty only of document fraud. Based on the government’s withholding of evidence helpful to the defense, the judge also indicated he might order a new trial.

Last summer, the Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee submitted an *amici curiae* (friends of the court) brief on Padilla’s behalf, warning that through his detention the government is asserting nothing less than the right to *disappear* citizens. “If the imperial President is upheld,” we wrote, “Padilla’s detention threatens to become the Dred Scott case of our time, a declaration that ‘Citizens have no rights that the government is bound to respect.’” The “war on terror” has served as the pretext not only for U.S. imperialism’s bombing of Afghanistan and bloody occupation of Iraq, but also for a war on the population at home. As we pointed out in our brief, the “war on terror” is “in fact not a military conflict but a political agenda.” It is no more a real shooting war than is a “war on evil” or a “war on cancer.”

While at first directed mainly at immigrants, particularly Arabs and Muslims, the “war on terror” is also taking aim at

minorities, blacks, labor and all perceived opponents of the government’s policies. When the contract for longshoremen on the West Coast was about to expire in 2002, Tom Ridge, Bush’s head of Homeland Security, called the union president warning that a strike could threaten “national security.” The government’s objective is to smear and chill dissent and political action.

In the end, what the capitalist ruling class can get away with will be determined by class struggle. In ruling that the government could not hold Padilla, a U.S. citizen, as an “enemy combatant,” the Court of Appeals relied largely on a 1970 federal statute, 18 U.S.C. § 4001(a), known as the Non-Detention Act, which declares that “No citizen shall be imprisoned or otherwise detained by the United States except pursuant to an Act of Congress.” As we wrote in our Padilla brief, the Non-Detention Act is itself a gain of the tumultuous social struggles of the 1960s: “Section 4001(a)’s clear, straightforward disavowal of Presidential imperial power to detain citizens without lawful authority is the sole legislative constraint on the Executive’s police power to come out of the brief period of expansion of judicial recognition of democratic rights during the civil rights movement and Vietnam War period.” The brief documents how the modern notion of citizenship is itself “the cumulative product of not only the American Revolution, but the bloody battlefields of the

Civil War and the class and social struggles of the 19th and 20th centuries.” We explain that “the rights of citizenship are reversible in the context of social reaction. With the decline of the social struggles of the 1960s, and particularly with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991-92, the American bourgeoisie has taken aim at the rights gained through those earlier struggles.”

Our Padilla brief has struck a responsive chord among trade unionists, immigrants, blacks and leftists who understand that they will be the victims of the government’s all-sided attacks on civil liberties. Some union locals have ordered multiple copies of the brief, such as Chicago’s American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 3506, which recently wrote to the PDC: “This attack on Jose Padilla represents an attack on every one of us. If they can make unsubstantiated charges, imprison him, and deprive him of his rights, they can do the same to any of us. Keep up your good work!” What is necessary is to mobilize labor’s social power in defense of immigrants, which requires tearing through the lie of “national unity” promoted by the American capitalist rulers and breaking down the poisonous racial and ethnic divisions they promote to weaken the labor movement and maintain their rule. *Down with the government’s “war on terror”! Free the detainees! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!* ■

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

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

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

Boston

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

Chicago

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

Public Office:

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

Los Angeles

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

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

New York

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

Public Office:

Sat. 1-4 p.m.
299 Broadway, Suite 318

Oakland

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

Public Office:

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

San Francisco

Box 77494
San Francisco
CA 94107

TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA/LIGUE TROTSKYSTE DU CANADA

Toronto

Box 7198, Station A
Toronto, ON M5W 1X8
(416) 593-4138

Vancouver

Box 2717, Main P.O.
Vancouver, BC V6B 3X2
(604) 687-0353

Get Your Copy of CLASS-STRUGGLE DEFENSE NOTES!

No. 31
Summer 2003

50¢ (24 pages)

Order from/
make checks payable to:
Partisan Defense Committee
P.O. Box 99
Canal Street Station
New York, NY 10013-0099

Phone: (212) 406-4252
E-mail: 75057.3201@compuserve.com

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. 03-2235
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

SEE PAGE 2

Free All MOVE Prisoners! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!

25th Anniversary of Powelton Village Siege 18

"Anti-Terror" Dragnet Threatens 13,000 with Expulsions

Stop the Deportations! 22

UFCW...

(continued from page 12)

7,000 Indianapolis UFCW Local 700 members are working under an indefinite contract extension. In Chicago, 9,000 workers in UFCW Locals 1546 and 881 at Safeway-owned Dominick's face contract negotiations beginning this month; in November 2002, the workers overwhelmingly voted down a rotten contract from Safeway despite the fact that the union allowed the company to literally bus the workers to the contract vote in an attempt to intimidate them into a "yes" vote. Meanwhile, in Seattle the UFCW has just begun contract negotiations. What is needed is a solid strike by all UFCW workers against every Vons/Safeway, Albertsons and Ralphs/Krogers across the country.

Break with the Democrats!

The UFCW has been part of a campaign urging consumers not to shop at Safeway. Picketers from Southern California have been sent north to man "informational picket lines" at Safeway stores. Cynically proclaiming "Supermarket strike spreads to No. California stores," the bureaucrats have pushed a "shop out" as a diversion from effective picket lines at all the distribution points in the south and from the extension of the strike north by shutting down Safeway and Albertsons throughout the state. (UFCW workers in the Bay Area, whose contract is up on September 11, are divided into eight separate locals. Local 588, representing 30,000 workers in the rest of Northern California, has a contract expiration date of July 7.) A 1 January article in the San Diego *Union-Tribune* quotes Greg Denier, a UFCW official, saying, "We will begin asking UFCW members in stores outside of Southern California to honor the picket lines." However, the article added that Denier "would not say when that would happen." As the strike moves into its third month, what are the bureaucrats waiting for?!

While the UFCW and AFL-CIO tops have simply been paying lip service in urging consumers not to shop at Safeway, workers leafletting both Safeway and Albertsons in the Bay Area are actually serious about implementing this tactic. Consumer boycotts, which appeal to consumers of all classes, are no substitute for effective strike action, where workers can use their concentrated power to cut off the profits of the employers, and in the absence of a strike are always a losing strategy. However, in conjunction with the active picket lines at the stores in the south, a boycott of these supermarket chains is a measure of support for the strike. We call on everyone to boycott Safeway (and its subsidiary Pak N Save) and Albertsons as an elementary act of solidarity with the UFCW strikers, whether there are pickets at the stores or not.

As Sweeney was speaking from the podium at the December 16 rally, a Ralphs worker yelled out, "You never should have taken us away from Ralphs." Ralphs workers are still reeling over the betrayal by the leaders who took down their pickets at Ralphs and have grotesquely told consumers to support the union by shopping there, even as the workers are locked out! Reportedly, the Ralphs picketers have been sent to man the "informational lines" in the north. What the UFCW should do is spread the strike to Northern California and re-establish the picket lines at Ralphs.

For its part, Ralphs is now hiring scabs—who today are euphemistically called "replacement workers." It is notable that the company they have employed to get their scabs is Personnel Support Systems Inc., owned by one Clifford L. Nuckols, a professional strikebreaker and convicted felon. A *Los Angeles Times* (19 December 2003) article quotes a Teamsters warehouse worker aptly describing Personnel Support and its scabs as "locusts": "They fly in, destroy the good jobs and then fly out to do it again somewhere else. This is the equivalent of hired

guns in the olden days." The article described how an employee at one of the hotels where Nuckols' scabs are housed complained that they are "volatile and that fights broke out regularly." Cops had to be called to the hotel housing some of the scabs to investigate a rape allegation made by one of the female scabs against one of the male scabs.

In the face of such vicious thugs, what is needed is mass union mobilizations and strong picket lines that no one and nothing crosses. Ever since the defeat of the 1981 PATCO air traffic controllers strike, when President Reagan personally



Workers Vanguard salesman at UFCW strike rally and march, December 16.

fired the entire workforce and had it replaced with a massive scab operation, it has become common for the labor tops to accept massive scabbing as a "normal" part of strikes. Behind the bureaucrats' treachery is their fealty to bourgeois legality and capitalist politicians, particularly in the Democratic Party. The labor fakers' allegiance to the Democrats and a mythical alliance between labor and capital means that the real interests of workers and the oppressed (such as jobs for all at the highest union wages and benefits, free, quality health care and integrated education for all) are sacrificed on the altar of class collaboration with the profit-hungry bosses.

The Democratic Party, no less than the Republican Party, is a capitalist party, which cannot serve the interests of workers. For example, the recent strike by L.A. transit mechanics was knifed by the bureaucrats in partnership with Democrats like City Councilman Antonio Villaraigosa. The transit workers went on strike mainly to defend health care benefits, but they went back to work with their benefits in the hands of a pro-company "mediation" committee! Break with the Democratic Party!

The developments in the grocery strike, as well as the betrayal by the union leaders in the scuttled L.A. transit strike, illustrate that the trade-union bureaucracy is an obstacle in the path of workers struggles going forward. It is little wonder that with the mechanics strike knifed, L.A. bus drivers just voted—with a turnout of only 344 out of 5,000 workers—to approve their contract without having gone out on strike.

The task of building a fighting, class-struggle labor movement—mobilized in defense of its own interests and the interests of blacks, immigrants, and all the oppressed—is at bottom a political question. Workers in the U.S. today are faced with not only a stagnating economy but a war-crazed and viciously anti-labor administration in the White House. Such a difficult situation only further underscores the importance of having the right leadership to carry out the necessary struggles.

The starting point for such a leadership must be the understanding that capitalist society is divided between two antagonistic classes: workers, who produce all material value in society and are

forced to sell their labor power in order to survive, and the capitalist class that exploits labor for profit. The interests of these two classes are irreconcilably counterposed. Class peace between the oppressed and the oppressors is precisely the goal of the labor officials, from the national AFL-CIO's Sweeney on down to Santangelo and UFCW Local 770's Rick Icaza. As we wrote at the time of the UPS strike in 1997:

"The class traitors who currently run the unions long ago separated themselves from their working-class base. In the words of early American socialist leader Daniel De Leon, the top union officials serve as the 'labor lieutenants of the capitalist class.' So strong are the bureaucrats' ties to the capitalist order that they have renounced the very means by which the unions were built. Those unions were built in *opposition* to the bosses' cops and courts. Leaders, then, went to prison and died for the union cause. Strikes were virtual wars. Now the union tops call for 'informational' picket lines, impotent consumer boycotts, moral witness 'protests' at stockholder meetings, corporate campaigns...anything except the hard class struggle that is necessary to win even in defensive battles."

—Workers Vanguard Supplement, 27 August 1997

What is necessary is a class-struggle leadership of the unions based on political independence of the labor movement from the bosses' state and political parties. Militant grocery workers who want to fight for better health care and a decent future must link the fight against their sellout bureaucrats to the struggle to build a revolutionary workers party—a party that starts from the proposition that there is no such thing as a "fair" profit, that all profit is extracted through the exploitation of labor; a party that understands that to eliminate union-busting, unemployment, racism and war requires a socialist revolution.

Only the proletariat has the power and objective class interest to overthrow capitalism. Workers produce the wealth of society, they should run society! Only the international rule of the working class can lay the basis for the elimination of all scarcity and open the door for humanity to move forward into a classless communist society of abundance. This is the program that the Spartacist League fights for.

For a Fighting Workers Party!

Tailing the "labor lieutenants of capital" are a variety of self-styled "socialists" who have no revolutionary program to offer workers seeking an alternative to the pro-capitalist program of the union leaders. Such reformist groups include the International Socialist Organization (ISO), Workers World Party (WWP) and the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), which all help to promote the illusions pushed by the trade-union bureaucracy.

The ISO lavishes praise on Miguel Contreras, writing that "Miguel Contreras, Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, has played a crucial role in mobilizing solidarity" (*Socialist Worker*, 12 December 2003). Contreras' "crucial role" was in brokering the sellout deal between ATU head Neil Silver and liberal Democratic MTA board member Antonio Villaraigosa that stabbed all the transit workers in the back.

In the same article, the ISO alibis the UFCW tops' treacherous decision to take down the picket lines at all Ralphs stores as a "strategic blunder." But this decision was no mistake. It logically flows from the UFCW bureaucrats' program of narrowing, rather than extending, strike action and their belief in class collaboration: the notion that workers can unite with some mythical "good" capitalists against the "bad" capitalists. The ISO caters to the liberal view that it is possible to have a non-greedy (i.e., more humane) capitalist system, if only "nice" people were running it.

During the grocery strike, ISOers have actively engaged in "disruptive shopping," consciously crossing picket lines and entering struck stores! In a letter to the editor printed in *Socialist Worker* (21 November 2003), one Justin Akers reports, "Members of the International

Socialist Organization and other labor supporters engaged in what has come to be called 'disruptive shopping.' After informing the picketers that we were entering the store, about a dozen or so activists filled up shopping baskets to the brim and then simultaneously occupied each checkout stand." Crossing picket lines is nothing new for the ISO. For example, during the 1996 New York City Service Employees International Union Local 32B-32J strike, ISO members crossed picket lines outside the New School for Social Research in downtown Manhattan in order to hold one of their advertised weekly meetings.

Likewise, the reformist SWP ran an article on the UFCW strike favorably characterizing a rally co-organized by the left Latin American nationalists of Conciencia Libre at UCLA, which ended with "disruptive shopping," as "a pro-UFCW protest inside a Ralphs store near the campus" (*Militant*, 17 November 2003). The fact that the ISO and others are carrying out such actions with the consent of the bureaucrats only further underlines how they go along with the labor tops in eroding workers' consciousness and undermining the basic trade-union principle that *picket lines mean don't cross*.

WWP, another reformist outfit, has intervened into the grocery strike in order to more thoroughly line up workers behind treacherous union misleaders. WWP staunchly supported the UFCW tops' pulling down of the pickets at Ralphs. Outrageously, in an article titled "Solidarity Shifts Balance Toward Union" (*Workers World*, 20 November 2003), WWP writes, "On Oct. 31, the union pulled its pickets from Ralphs stores to focus on Safeway and Albertsons. The tactic seems to have worked.... The picket lines are now larger and more effective, as a result."

WWP alibis the bureaucrats' taking down of the picket lines at Ralphs by claiming that "exploiting bitter rivalries among Ralphs, Albertsons, and Vons (Safeway) could be an effective tactic" (*Workers World*, 6 November 2003). The bureaucrats' rationale for this betrayal was in part to split the supermarket bosses and win a separate agreement with Ralphs. Predictably, this exploded in their face when it was revealed that Ralphs has a deal to share its profits with the other supermarket bosses! The supermarket bosses are united against the unions. The unions must unite against the bosses in order to bring the maximum power to bear and actually win. It is the trade-union bureaucracy that is undermining that power.

Why do these groups tail after the trade-union bureaucracy? The reason is that they acquiesce to what is possible or "practical" under capitalism. The reformists, precisely because they oppose the struggle for workers revolution, reinforce the illusion that the Democratic Party can be pressured to serve the interests of the oppressed and that class collaboration can really work to bring concessions to workers. Nothing could be further from the truth. Where the reformists see allies in the pro-capitalist union tops and Democrats, in reality these are obstacles to advancing the interests of workers and the oppressed. We in the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Club focus our efforts to politically arm the workers so they can forge a leadership that will fight.

The ongoing UFCW strike is a major class battle for American workers today. Its victory or failure could affect the conditions of millions of workers in the U.S., not least in regard to the vital issue of health care. Militant workers must draw the necessary political lessons from this strike. We must learn the lessons about the nature of the bosses, the capitalist state and government, and the trade-union misleaders. To go forward, workers must fight for a leadership based on a program of militant struggle against the entire capitalist system of exploitation and oppression. Above all, what is needed is a revolutionary workers party that fights for a workers government. *Those who labor must rule!* ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

Vons Pickets Defy Bureaucrats' Sabotage

Build Picket Lines! Extend UFCW Strike!



WV Photos

Shut Down All Distribution Centers!

Left: 5,000-strong UFCW strike rally and march in Los Angeles joined by Teamsters and other unionists on December 16. Right: Militant pickets defy union tops' instructions to take down picket lines at El Monte Vons distribution center, December 23.

LOS ANGELES, January 6—70,000 UFCW grocery workers in Southern California are now in their third month on the picket lines in a popular strike. They are holding strong in the struggle for the survival of their union and the fight to maintain company-paid health care benefits as well as the protection of current wage, benefit and pension scales for future UFCW members. As most workers are keenly aware, the effects of the outcome of this strike will be felt nationwide. A 17 December article in the *New York Times* quotes UCLA professor Harley Shaiken, who aptly said, "All the tensions and fears about health care that run through the larger society are there in spades on the picket line." But the workers have had to contend with the treacherous policies of the union misleaders who cringe before the bosses' laws and bow down to Democratic Party politicians.

On November 24, picket lines were finally put up at all the distribution centers for the Vons, Albertsons and Ralphs supermarket chains, and Teamsters employed at these locations honored the lines. This was a necessary step to extend and strengthen the strike. However, as we noted at the time, thousands of scab trucks were still allowed in and out of the distribution centers, defeating the whole purpose of the picket line. We wrote: "Picketing the distribution centers should not be just a temporary pressure tactic for the holidays; nothing should move until the UFCW strike ends in victory.... What's necessary is to mobilize mass, militant UFCW and Teamsters pickets at the distribution centers to **stop all scabbing!**" (WV No. 815, 5 December 2003).

But three weeks later, on December 19, the UFCW and Teamsters leadership announced that they would take down picket lines at the distribution centers and send the Teamsters ranks back to work as

a "good faith gesture" to the supermarket bosses, appealing to Ralphs and Albertsons to end the lockout they declared after the strike began at Vons. The UFCW also offered up a deal which included \$350-\$500 million in health care concessions by the union. But the supermarket bosses, gunning for a full **\$1 billion** in concessions, rejected the union's offer. They smell blood and want nothing less than to bust the UFCW as it is, to turn it into an irrelevant organization incapable of defending its members. They want to deal with the workers they employ much like the notorious anti-union outfit Wal-Mart deals with its employees: low wages, token benefits, no work rules, victimization of actively pro-union workers. On the other hand, a UFCW victory would go a long way to helping unionize Wal-Mart.

Conscious of the threat against their union and their livelihoods, UFCW workers at the El Monte Vons distribution center on December 22 defied their own rotten leadership. They militantly refused to take down their picket line; in solidarity Teamsters drivers, while not manning the lines, have refused to cross. One Vons warehouse worker told WV: "They told us to picket at the stores, but we don't work at the stores. We work here, and we're not leaving!" These workers understand that taking down the lines can only spell defeat for the UFCW. Many Teamsters see this struggle as their own, as the outcome of this strike will affect them in two

years when their contract with the grocery bosses expires and they face the threat of being replaced by "independent" non-union truckers. These workers have a fundamental sense of the trade-union solidarity needed to defeat the bosses, a solidarity which the union bureaucrats have undermined at every juncture in this strike. In carrying out such betrayals, the bureaucrats are acting as the political police of the bosses inside the labor movement.

When the UFCW pickets went up at the distribution centers in November, Jim Santangelo, president of Teamsters Joint Council 42, declared, "We either end this thing together or we die together." But only a few weeks later, in an attempt to explain the treacherous decision to send the Teamsters back to work, Santangelo said, "Say we were out for another two months. What is it doing? How is it helping?" These obviously contradictory statements reflect the utterly cynical outlook of the labor bureaucrats who clearly never had any intention of actually shutting down the distribution centers by stopping the scabs in order to win the strike. Workers clearly have the power and determination to win, but they are hampered by a rotten leadership.

On December 23, the UFCW released a statement declaring: "As a result of the corporations' stubborn and ill-advised stance, which the unions continue to believe to be driven by the corporate

greed of Safeway CEO Steve Burd, the unions announced today that the picket lines would remain up at Safeway distribution centers and warehouse facilities." Santangelo was quoted in the *Los Angeles Times* (23 December 2003) as saying, "I told my guys... 'As long as those lines are up, you will not cross,' and they have no problem with that." The reality is the other way around! The union leaders only authorized this action after feeling the heat from the ranks. One worker told WV, "We did this action and then the *L.A. Times* makes it seem like it was the tops who did it." The removal of the picket lines from the Ralphs and Albertsons warehouses is a betrayal by both the UFCW and Teamsters bureaucrats.

AFL-CIO president John Sweeney and 150 leaders of UFCW locals from across the U.S. and Canada had a strategizing session on December 16 in Century City, Los Angeles. There was a spirited, 5,000-strong march and rally following this meeting with contingents of Teamsters and other unionists. When asked what is necessary to win the strike, one worker said, "Shut the state down." Another worker said the strike "should have been extended on a national level." That's right!

But the only "strategy" Sweeney and the UFCW leadership came up with was the threat of calling for a future one-day national consumer boycott of Safeway. The bureaucrats have isolated UFCW locals facing the supermarket giants in each region of the country. When UFCW workers struck in West Virginia, Ohio and Kentucky, the bureaucrats brought them back to work under a contract with health care concessions to the bosses. In Arizona, UFCW workers have been working despite the fact that their contract expired on October 25. Similarly, more than

continued on page 11