

All Israeli Troops, Settlers Out of Occupied Territories!

Israeli Wall Seals Palestinian Ghettos

Defend the Palestinian People!



PENGON

FEBRUARY 3—Palestinian children in Qalqilya play in the shadow of a three-story-high concrete wall as Israeli soldiers train guns on them from guard towers. A despairing family at a checkpoint pleads with Zionist troops to be allowed to take a pregnant woman to a hospital, only to be turned back. Palestinian construction workers under Israeli military guard, sickened by the job they are forced to accept in order to feed their families, construct the wall segregating the Palestinian quarters of East Jerusalem from the rest of the city. Such are the images today of the West Bank under lockdown. The Palestinian population is being imprisoned behind a barrier of huge concrete walls, electrified fences, trenches and razor wire. It is a wall that divides families, separates farmers from their land and cuts off the population from jobs, hospitals, schools and even water.

The path of the wall, which is projected to be over 600 miles long, snakes deep into the West Bank to envelop Zionist settlements and steal Palestinian land. In the west, the wall already juts up to 13 kilometers beyond the “Green Line,” the border between Israel and the West Bank, securing Israeli control of much of the best Palestinian farmland. It also includes on the Israeli side the water wells of the Western Aquifer, the second-largest water resource in the region after the Jordan River. According to a 24 January article by Seumas Milne in the London *Guardian*, when complete, the wall will enclose about 57 percent of the West Bank. Movement between the two Palestinian ghettos being created by the wall will be nearly impossible.

As a result of the closures, the Palestinian economy is frozen as laborers can-

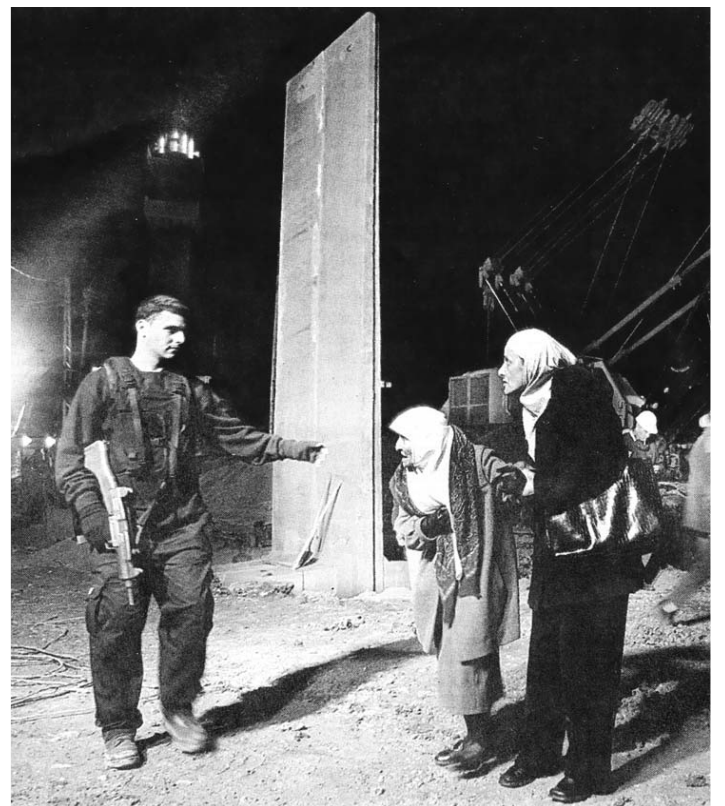
not get to jobs, farmers can only sell crops locally and unhindered trade is impossible. Palestinian unemployment is a staggering two-thirds in some areas, and more than half the children suffer from malnutrition. Incomes have fallen by more than half to \$900 a year—compared with an average of nearly \$17,000 for Israelis.

Qalqilya, the first town to be hermetically sealed off by the wall, reveals what other communities will face as the wall tightens around the West Bank. Penned in on all four sides, Qalqilya is today accessible only through a checkpoint nearly a mile to its east. Fully 85 percent of Qalqilya’s land has been lost as the Israeli military, despite denials, prevents farmers from tending their fields. A third of Qalqilya’s shops have closed, and more than 4,000 residents have already given up and left for good. It’s not just Qalqilya’s residents who are walled in, but the Palestinian villagers from nearby towns and villages are now walled *out* of the metropolitan center they depended on for everything, from basic services to shops and medical care.

The wall is but the latest grotesque step in the long, bloody history of Zionist colonization and provocation, which are aimed at forcibly driving out the Palestinian population. “Ethnic cleansing” is the logic of all strands of Zionism, from the “Labor” Zionists who founded the state of Israel to the rightist fanatics who inhabit Sharon’s government. The Zionists encouraged emigration to Palestine on the racist premise that it was a “land without people for a people without land.” They forcibly drove out over 700,000 Palestinians in what they called the 1948 “War of Independence,” what the Palestinians call “The Catastrophe” (*Al Naqba*). And they forcibly drove out thousands more after their victory in the 1967 Arab-Israeli war.

It’s a measure of the degeneration and desperation of the situation that policies like the forcible transfer of the Palestinian

Above: Fortress-like wall around Qalqilya imprisons city’s 42,000 residents. Right: Palestinian women try to visit home for last time before completion of Jerusalem wall.



Castelnuovo/NY Times

population, which used to be openly advocated only by the right-wing Zionist fringe, are now common currency. Correspondingly, as the bourgeois-nationalist Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) is proven to be politically bankrupt, increasing numbers of Palestinian youth and even women are turning to the reactionary Islamic fundamentalism of Hamas and Islamic Jihad.

Marxists oppose nationalist irredentism, which only offers the prospect of reversing the terms of oppression. The only solution to two peoples laying claim to the same sliver of land requires breaking out of the capitalist, nationalist framework. The only salvation for the Palestinians—and the Hebrew-speaking Jewish population—lies in proletarian revolution and a socialist federation of the Near East. We have no illusions that winning the Hebrew-speaking working class to this perspective will be easy or

quick. Yet social and class fissures do exist in Israel and it is the duty of revolutionaries to exploit every contradiction in order to win the Israeli proletariat away from the Zionist rulers.

There is a restive working class in Israel today which has recently engaged in large strike actions. Last spring, the country was paralyzed by a general strike by public workers against finance minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s legislation imposing huge wage cuts and layoffs in order to finance the ultra-Zionist settlements in the Occupied Territories and the costs of military repression of the Palestinians. The cost of the Zionist garrison state is literally coming out of the hides of the country’s working poor, both Hebrew-speaking and the second-class citizens of the state of Israel, the “Israeli Arabs.” If the Israeli Jewish proletariat is to pursue its class interests against its own

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Mexican Trotskyists Say:
For Workers Mobilizations
Against NAFTA, FTAA!

SEE PAGE 3



Egypt: Stop Persecution of Leftist Militants! Free Ashraf Ibrahim!

The following statement, addressed to Egyptian president Mohamed Hosni Mubarak, was issued by the Partisan Defense Committee, a legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League, on February 2.

The Partisan Defense Committee adds its voice to the many civil liberties groups, leftist organizations and socialists demanding that charges against leftist activist Ashraf Ibrahim be dropped and

that he be released immediately. Ibrahim was arrested in the aftermath of demonstrations against the U.S.-led Iraq war last year—demonstrations that were brutally suppressed by the Egyptian state. He is being charged with leading an illegal organization, the Revolutionary Socialists group, that purportedly aims to topple the regime, possessing publications related to this organization with the intent to distribute, and sending false information

outside Egypt which damaged the state's reputation and position abroad. Outrageously, Ibrahim faces up to 15 years in prison. Four other Egyptian leftists—Yehya Fikry Amin, Moustafa Al Bassiouni, Nasser Al Behiri and Rimon Edward Guindi Morgan—are being tried in absentia on similar charges.

The case against Ibrahim is beyond flimsy; purported “evidence” includes a rough drawing of the house of the education minister which Ibrahim says was drawn by state security forces as part of the frame-up. Among the publications the state is going after Ibrahim for possessing are *History of British Trotskyism* and *Lenin and Trotsky: What They Really Stood For*. Ibrahim and his comrades are being tried for nothing but their political beliefs.

The Egyptian state, a longtime ally of U.S. imperialism and second only to Israel in the amount of American aid it receives, has latched on to the U.S.-led “war on terror” to further stifle political dissent in the country. By using the state security courts, which were established

by your regime in 1981 as part of the emergency measures under which you have ruled for over 20 years, the state is ensuring that Ibrahim and the other activists not even be allowed the option of appeal once convicted. These courts have a sordid history of brutality in Egypt, targeting everyone from Islamic fundamentalists to homosexuals. Ibrahim was held without charges for over four months before he was finally indicted in August and his trial began on December 6, 2003. He aptly described the case against him and his comrades as a message to leftists by the government: “We will not allow you to grow after we suppressed other political groups.” **Drop the charges against Ashraf Ibrahim, Yehya Fikry Amin, Moustafa Al Bassiouni, Nasser Al Behiri and Rimon Edward Guindi Morgan! Free Ashraf Ibrahim now!**

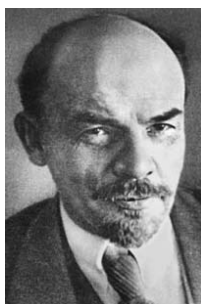
Protest letters on behalf of Ibrahim, Amin, Al Bassiouni, Al Behiri and Morgan should be sent to: Mr. Mohamed Hosni Mubarak, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, Abdeen Palace, Cairo, Egypt. ■



TROTSKY

Black Liberation and the American Socialist Revolution

To commemorate Black History Month, we honor veteran Trotskyist Richard S. Fraser. Fraser's writings on racial oppression illuminate the road to black freedom through the program of revolutionary integration, the fight for a workers revolution that will lay the material basis for the full integration of black people into an egalitarian socialist society. In opposition to the dead end of nationalism and token liberalism we fight for black liberation through socialist revolution!



LENIN

The Negro question appeared upon the scene as a class question: The Negroes were slaves. But alongside of this grew the race question: All slaves were Negroes and the slave was designated as inferior and subhuman. This was the origin of the Negro question.

The abolition of slavery destroyed the property relations of the chattel slave system. But the plantation system survived, fitting the social relations of slavery to capitalist property relations.

Because of these unsolved problems left over from the second American revolution, the Negroes still struggle against the social relations which were in effect a hundred and fifty and more years ago.

The modern Negro movement dates roughly from the era of the cotton gin—approximately 1800. The first answer of the Negroes to the intensification of labor brought on by the extension of the cotton acreage was a series of local and regional revolts.

The slaves learned in these struggles that the slave owners were not merely individual lords of the cotton, but were also enthroned on the high seats of the nation's political capital. They had all the laws, police forces, and the armed might of the country at their disposal.

At the same time the Northern capitalists began to feel the domination of the slave power to be too restricting upon their enterprises. The farmers began to feel the pressure of slave labor and the plantation system. These three social forces, the slaves, and the capitalists and the farmers, had in their hands the key to the whole future of the United States as a nation.

Thus the Negroes were thrust into the center of a great national struggle against the slave power. This was the only road by which any assurance of victory was possible.

Because of their position as the most exploited section of the population, each succeeding vital movement of the masses has found the Negroes in a central and advanced position in great interracial struggles against capitalist exploitation. This was true in the Reconstruction, the Radical Populist movement of the South, and finally in the modern labor movement.

—R. S. Fraser, “For the Materialist Conception of the Negro Question” (January 1955), reprinted in *Marxist Bulletin* No. 5 (Revised), “What Strategy for Black Liberation?”

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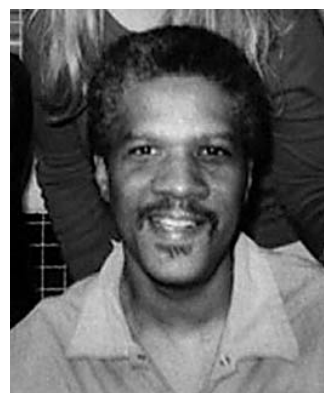
6 February 2004

Stop Execution of Kevin Cooper!

The following protest letter by the Partisan Defense Committee was sent to California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger on January 26. Schwarzenegger denied clemency for Kevin Cooper on January 30, letting stand an execution date of February 10.

The Partisan Defense Committee opposes the execution of Kevin Cooper by the state of California scheduled for 12:01 a.m. on February 10. Capital punishment, whether by electrocution, hanging, gassing or the now-preferred method of lethal injection, is an act of state-sanctioned murder that underlines the already advanced brutalization inherent in this class-divided and race-biased society. The death penalty is the barbaric legacy of medieval torture and, in racist America, of chattel slavery. The primary victims of this legal lynching in the U.S. are black people like Kevin Cooper. Cooper's execution, the first in two years, would place in greater danger the over 640 men and women, largely black and Hispanic, who “live” on California's death row, the largest of any state.

In Kevin Cooper's case, the term legal lynching is not metaphorical. Cooper's 1984 trial on quadruple murder charges was held in an atmosphere of grotesque racist hostility epitomized by the hanging of a toy gorilla in effigy, with signs reading “Kill the N-----” outside the courthouse after he was taken into custody. The evidence against Cooper was tampered with by the police; evidence pointing to another killer was discarded and a confession ignored; clumps of blonde hair, never tested, were found clutched in one victim's hands; and the sole survivor of the quadruple murder, Joshua Ryen, insists that three



Campaign to End the Death Penalty
Kevin Cooper

white or Hispanic men killed his family.

Cooper was tried and convicted as the sole killer despite a statement by an expert from the American Board of Pathology who, after examining the autopsy reports, stated it was “impossible for one person to have accomplished this entire trauma.” Yet the prosecution maintained that Cooper, using a hatchet, an ice-pick and a knife, inflicted 159 wounds in 60-90 seconds.

Cooper and his lawyers insist that DNA testing in 2000 falsely linking Cooper to the murders was done on evidence illegally altered by the police. There is, indeed, a long and sordid history of corrupt tampering by the police in this case, from the initial crime lab detective, since fired for stealing heroin, to the criminalist who admits to altering Cooper's test results. Joshua Ryen and his grandmother have questioned the verdict and have supported Kevin Cooper's efforts to get unbiased DNA testing.

We protest the racist frame-up of Kevin Cooper and demand he be freed immediately! ■

CLASS-STRUGGLE DEFENSE NOTES

No. 31, Summer 2003

50¢ (24 pages)

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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. 03-2248 (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

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Mexican Trotskyists Say: For Workers Mobilizations Against NAFTA, FTAA!

We reprint below an article from *Espartaco* No. 20 (Spring-Summer 2003), newspaper of the Grupo Espartaquista de México, section of the International Communist League.

On January 31, more than 100,000 demonstrators filled the huge Zócalo in Mexico City to protest the brutality of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). This was in response to the clauses in NAFTA that went into effect on

ESPARTACO

PART ONE

January 1 which open up all the basic products of the agricultural economy (except corn, beans and milk) to “free trade” theft. At the same time, the Vicente Fox administration is in the middle of an inhuman campaign to withdraw all subsidies to the countryside. (Today, the government subsidy to the countryside in Mexico is one-tenth of that in the U.S.!) The demonstrators were mainly peasants, but there were also thousands of workers organized in union contingents, both from the Sindicato Mexicano de Electricistas (SME—Mexican Electricians Union) and the Unión Nacional de Trabajadores (UNT—National Union of Workers), as well as a large number of students and individual citizens who supported the peasant demands. Days later, on February 5, 19 demonstrators were brutally beaten and arrested by anti-riot police for having hung a banner against the FTAA (Free Trade Area of the Americas) on the Ángel de la Independencia monument. Meanwhile, the national and international press of every stripe report on the desperate situation the Mexican countryside faces. The name of one of the peasant organizations that has emerged in the past months renders the situation quite clear: “¡El Campo No Aguanta Más!” [The countryside cannot take anymore!].

The beginning of NAFTA on 1 January 1994 was marked by the EZLN [Zapatistas] uprising in Chiapas, with its denunciation of “free trade” as a “death certificate for the indigenous peoples in Mexico, who for the government are expendable.” While this is a country with approximately five million poor and landless peasants—largely horribly oppressed in-



Above: Protest by electricians union against capitalists' privatization drive. Right: Mass demonstration of workers and peasants against NAFTA rape of Mexico, January 2003.



Carlos Ramos Mamahua

indigenous people—barely 4,000 individuals own 56 percent of the arable land. Without enough funding, with obsolete and even age-old production techniques, and incapable of competing in the capitalist market, most of what the rural toilers produce is essentially for self-consumption, and the average monthly income for peasants is less than 500 pesos. In these conditions, millions of peasants are forced to abandon their lands and emigrate to the cities, where they face a future as beggars, small-time merchants and prostitutes. In Mexico City alone 600 peasants arrive daily.

For most of the past decade, *maquiladoras* [foreign-owned “free trade” factories] served as a small safety valve for the explosive state of the countryside, attracting the rural population which migrated to urban centers in search of a regular income—meager as it might be. In the period between 1997 and 2001 alone, the number of workers in the *maquiladoras* grew from some 800,000 to 1,240,000. But even before the current economic recession, industry could employ only a

very small part of the rural population which was driven off its land. Now that valve has closed, with massive layoffs and plant closings throughout the country and in even bigger proportions near the border. According to the Universidad Obrera [Workers University], there were 810,000 layoffs in the country in 2001 alone, 310,000 of which took place in the *maquiladoras*. These layoffs have especially affected women workers, who constitute the majority of the labor force in the *maquiladoras*.

The NAFTA agreement came about as part of the worldwide capitalist offensive set off by the counterrevolutionary destruction of the USSR in 1991-92, a huge defeat for workers which shaped the world we are still living in today. This is a world in which arrogant U.S. imperialism sees itself as omnipotent and struts around the world, missiles in hand, confident that it is not going to face any real opposition. In the absence of the powerful “common enemy” which U.S., Japanese and West European imperialists saw in the Soviet Union, the economic rivalries between them have come to the fore.

It is as part of this furious competition that U.S. imperialism needs to fence off its “backyard” (i.e., capitalist Mexico) economically, to keep its rivals out and prove that it is the only imperialist power that can plunder this territory at will. For a backward country like Mexico, trade liberalization in relation to an imperialist country like the U.S., with its highly advanced and productive agricultural industry, can only mean a death sentence by starvation for thousands of peasants and an even greater deepening of political subjugation and economic plunder. At the same time, “free competition” with the U.S. demands from Mexican capitalism an increase in its “competitiveness” campaign, which is the euphemism used by the spokesmen of capital to refer to their permanent war against unions and the gains the workers have won. It is precisely cheap labor and the brutal working conditions allowed in bourgeois Mexico that attract the rapacious capitalists in the U.S., Spain and other countries in the search for profits.

At the same time, the Mexican bour-

geoisie desperately seeks to please its imperialist masters by selling off the nationalized industries to private enterprises. With the exception of electrical energy and oil, practically all of state industry has disappeared—Altos Hornos [steel company], Concaril [railroad company], the Fábrica Nacional de Máquinas-Herramientas [National Machine-Tool Factory], etc. The experience of Ferrocarriles Nacionales, which after privatization laid off four-fifths of its workers, is still fresh. Moreover, the horrifying crisis in Argentina, a country where key industries had been privatized, clearly shows where the IMF-mandated path leads—more than 60 percent of the population lives under the official poverty line! As an evocative poster issued by the SME said: “If privatizing is the cure, then why is Argentina in agony?”

We Marxists defend nationalized industry against the current privatizing onslaught, which is an attempt to increase the rate of exploitation of workers and the profits of the capitalists, especially in the context of the imperialists' plundering through NAFTA. The nationalization of the oil and the electrical industries was a blow against imperialism, and we are for the right of colonial and semicolonial countries to exploit their own natural resources. As Trotsky explained in “Mexico and British Imperialism” (1938) referring to the oil expropriation: “Expropriation is the only effective means of safeguarding national independence and the elementary conditions of democracy.” In the end, the only way to achieve emancipation from the imperialists is to expropriate the *entire* bourgeoisie and to build a planned economy through socialist revolution.

As an international tendency, we Spartacists have opposed NAFTA from the beginning, just as we today oppose its intensification and its extension to the rest of Latin America in the form of the FTAA. It is not enough to “renegotiate” this or that clause, we must bring it down! When negotiations on the treaty started between the Carlos Salinas and Bush Sr. administrations in 1991, the sections of the International Communist League in Mexico, the United States and

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Factory workers in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico. *Maquiladora* workers, predominantly women, face massive layoffs.

Economist

Young Spartacus

Racist Frame-Up in “New South”

Free Marcus Dixon!

In present-day America, where black and minority youth are routinely warehoused in deteriorating schools and face futures of minimum-wage jobs or unemployment, one might have said that black teenager Marcus Dixon was living proof of the vaunted “American Dream” story that is shoved down every school kid’s throat. The high school senior had a 3.96 grade-point average, was a member of the National Honor Society and a football star and had earned a scholarship to prestigious Vanderbilt University. But the racist nightmare began for Dixon last February when he did what teenagers often do: he had consensual sex with a classmate. He was 18 and black; she was just shy of 16 and white. Now, he is sitting in a Georgia prison facing a minimum sentence of *ten years with no hope of parole*, convicted of “aggravated child molestation.” If his pending appeal to the Georgia Supreme Court made on January 21 fails, he will spend the rest of his young adulthood behind bars, leaving prison marked as an ex-felon, barred from the teaching career he had planned and permanently registered as a sex offender wherever he goes. The charge against him is appropriately known in Georgia as one of the “seven deadly sins,” where the “first strike” mandates ten years without parole and the sentence for the “second strike” is life.

The girl, reportedly in mortal fear of her racist father, followed the well-worn path of accusing Dixon of rape. Dixon was originally indicted under six different Georgia statutes, but the jury found the sex so self-evidently consensual that they acquitted him of all but two charges. They kept the misdemeanor statutory rape charge for which consent is irrelevant, and also “child molestation” since one person was over 16 and the other was under—that’s all the law requires. It was deemed “aggravated” because the girl was proclaimed to be a virgin, and breaking the highly prized hymen is considered an “injury.” The D.A. said on TV that they threw in this charge as a kind of “backstop,” in case the rape charges failed!

The so-called “New South” beats the same drums as the Old South, and in both the North and South the taboo combination of race and sex explosively exposes the inherent racist underpinnings of American capitalism. Memorials and tributes to the Southern slavocracy dot the landscape of Georgia, and Dixon’s hometown of Rome boasts its own statue of none other than Confederate general Nathan Bedford Forrest, a founder and Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan. Dixon was adopted by a white family who were called “n----- lovers” for taking the child in. This adoption was an affront to white-supremacists, and so he was a target from Day One. His family also reported receiving threats from the very much alive local Ku Klux Klan during the course of the trial. Last spring, the day after a Rome church held a support rally for Dixon, the church building was trashed.

The hard lines drawn against sex between blacks and whites reflect the caste nature of racism in America. Not until 1967, 13 years after *Brown v. Board of Education*, did the U.S. Supreme Court strike down “one drop” rules, which defined as black any person with “one

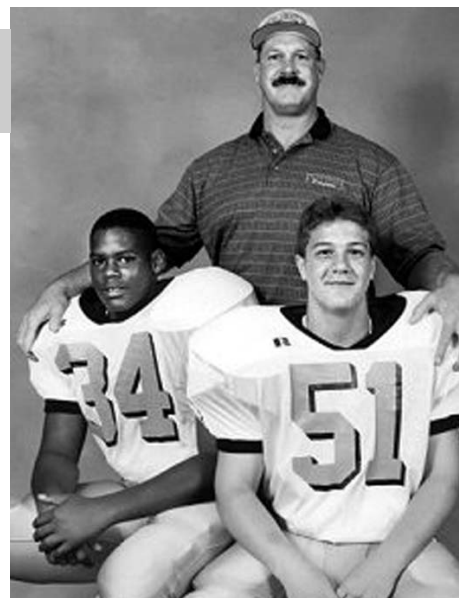
drop” of “black blood,” and the anti-miscegenation laws with the case of *Loving v. Virginia*. Georgia overturned their anti-miscegenation statutes in 1972 after a white Fort Benning soldier tried to marry a black woman, and the local judge refused to issue a marriage license. Alabama was the very last to abandon its provisions against interracial marriage—in November 2000. The 170-year-old Georgia law against “fornication” was just overturned in 2003! This law, which bans sex outside of marriage, was historically used primarily against mixed couples since the state never recognized them as married. These laws are the heritage of the grotesque myth of the “sacred Southern white woman” and the “black male rapist” that has been wielded with deadly lynch mob terror since the Civil War to seal in blood the continued oppression of the black masses. Dixon’s case highlights the fact that blacks continue to be an oppressed race-color caste in America, forcibly segregated at the bottom of capitalist society but at the same time a strategic component of the working class. Even if you happen to escape poverty to be as successful as Michael Jackson, you will still spend your entire life parrying racist attacks and humiliations (see “Stop Vendetta Against Michael Jackson!” WV No. 818, 23 January).

Georgia’s current governor, Sonny Perdue, was swept into office as the first

ing the country over the last couple of decades, and it set up this black youth just as surely as the whole history of anti-“race-mixing” legislation set up blacks for lynch law injustice for over a century.

The capitalist state with its courts and prisons is not “neutral,” nor is it any kind of safeguard of youth in a racist class society. Rather it serves the interest of the ruling class by enforcing its class domination. Laws that limit access to abortion, encourage “abstinence only” anti-sex education and whip up hysteria about child molestation and pornography have as their sole purpose to discipline youth to grow up to be good, submissive foot soldiers in support of the racist capitalist status quo. The Republicans and Democrats are both parties of the capitalist class that uses racism to divide the working class, pitting white workers against black workers, thus obscuring the fact that they share a common enemy, the property-owning, profit-driven ruling class. Brooks’ job, like that of other black Democrats, is to politically disarm those who struggle against racist reaction and funnel just outrage into the impotent electoral shell game.

Dixon’s case is part of a whole history of demonization of black youth and conjures up not-too-distant memories of the infamous “Scottsboro Boys” case and the lynching of Emmett Till. The Scottsboro case began in 1931 when nine black



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Marcus Dixon with father and brother.

seared into the minds of all who hated this rotten racist system.

In 1958 in Monroe, North Carolina, a lesser-known horror story unfolded known as “The Kissing Case.” It began when a six-year-old white girl excitedly told her mother that she had seen the nine-year-old son of her mother’s black former housemaid and joyously kissed him on the cheek. The girl’s mother called the police, and the two black children who had been playing with her were locked in the county jail incommunicado. One boy was sentenced to 12 years and the other boy to 14 years in prison. The mothers of the boys sought help from Robert F. Williams, president of the county NAACP. Williams was a well-known critic of the official NAACP and the pacifism of Martin Luther King Jr. because he packed a pistol and advocated and carried out armed self-defense against the Ku Klux Klan nightriders. Williams went all the way up to Roy Wilkins of the NAACP national office for help, but they would not touch the case. Williams then turned to the courageous black civil rights lawyer Conrad Lynn, whose legal office was called “the house of last resort” because he took cases that were unpopular or dangerous. Lynn recounts in his autobiography, *There Is a Fountain*, that when he approached Roy Wilkins, Wilkins replied, “Why do you want to represent those scum who are on welfare?” Lynn pursued what he could in the courts, but he knew what was key to freeing the children was to mobilize a mass outcry. The U.S. ruling class was particularly sensitive to international opinion during the Cold War since it needed to trumpet the U.S. as the “bastion of democracy” to counter the Soviet Union. After demonstrations in support of the children were held all over the world, in 1959 the federal government forced the state to release them.

Today the history of the civil rights movement of the 1950s and ’60s has been rewritten to make the pacifistic, legalistic strategy of the NAACP and Martin Luther King the official version, effectively disappearing Malcolm X, Williams and other militant fighters who were central to the struggle for black rights. This lie only serves to undermine the necessary understanding that it will take integrated working-class struggle to smash the racist capitalist system. Today police terrorize the ghettos, affirmative action is rolled back, re-segregated urban schools are turning into mass detention halls, and a stint in Iraq might look like a better job opportunity than stocking shelves at Wal-Mart. Marcus Dixon’s case shows the fragility and reversibility of democratic rights as long as capitalist class rule exists. Black liberation can only be achieved through socialist revolution. Abolish reactionary “age of consent” laws! Free Marcus Dixon! ■



Brown Brothers

ILD-led international campaign saved Scottsboro defendants—framed up on bogus charges of rape in 1931—from legal lynching.

Republican since Reconstruction, and his election victory was partly attributed to his support for a popular referendum on bringing back the state flag prominently featuring the “stars and bars” of the Confederacy. On January 20, a rally of Confederate die-hards at the state capitol claimed that 43 legislators would support a new referendum to bring back the Dixie flag, symbol of slavery and racist reaction. Prominent in opposing the Confederate flag was Tyrone Brooks, a black Democratic Party state representative and Southern Christian Leadership Conference notable. But Brooks co-sponsored the legislation against “aggravated child molestation” that has put Marcus Dixon in prison. Brooks purportedly was disturbed that his law was used against Dixon and even admitted on *HBO Real Sports* that it was used to send a message to the black population, summarizing: “Young black boys better not have sexual relationships with young white girls.” Brooks’ despicable draconian molestation law is part of a whole new wave of anti-sex laws sweep-

teenagers riding on a train through Alabama were framed up for the rape of two white girls. The “respectable,” legalistic NAACP shrank from defending the youths; and the Communist Party through its legal arm, the International Labor Defense, launched an international campaign to free them and stayed the hand of the executioner. The trials and appeals stretched on for years. Four of the young men were not released until 1937 and the others endured lengthy prison sentences.

Emmett Till was 14 years old in 1955 when he traveled from his home in Chicago to Mississippi to vacation. The youth dared to go into a store and allegedly flirted with a white woman. That night he was kidnapped from his cousin’s home, shot through the head and dumped in the river tied to the metal fan of a cotton gin. His self-confessed murderers were tried and acquitted. Emmett Till’s brave mother insisted that her child would have an open casket at the funeral so that his murder would be

Trotskyist Youth Intervene in Student Strikes at Berlin Universities

From mid-November until school let out for winter break, universities around Berlin were rocked by student strikes and protests against proposed budget cuts and tuition fees. In Berlin, the strikes have begun to taper off as the Senate, the city government run by the German Social Democratic Party (SPD) and the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS), moves

Spartakist-Jugend

ahead with its attacks on education. However, student strikes and protests are now erupting in Hamburg.

Throughout the strikes, workers, such as those of the Ver.di (United Public Services Union) and the GEW (Educators and Scientists Union), have supported the students. Our comrades of the Spartakist Youth, youth group of the Spartakist Workers Party of Germany, called on these unions to put their social power behind the students by walking out in solidarity.

Starting last week, the powerful IG Metall metal workers union has held multiple one- to two-hour-long “warning” strikes in anticipation of their own upcoming contract negotiations. A contingent of up to 50 students from Berlin



Berlin, November 2003: Thousands of university students protest against education cutbacks, tuition fees. Banner reads: “Better Endless Education than an End Without Education.”

General Assembly [GA] of Humboldt University [HU] students on 26 November 2003:

“The General Assembly resolves: These attacks are part of a broader wave of attacks by the capitalist SPD/Green government led on the front lines by the SPD/PDS Senate in Berlin. Instead of illusory appeals to the university president

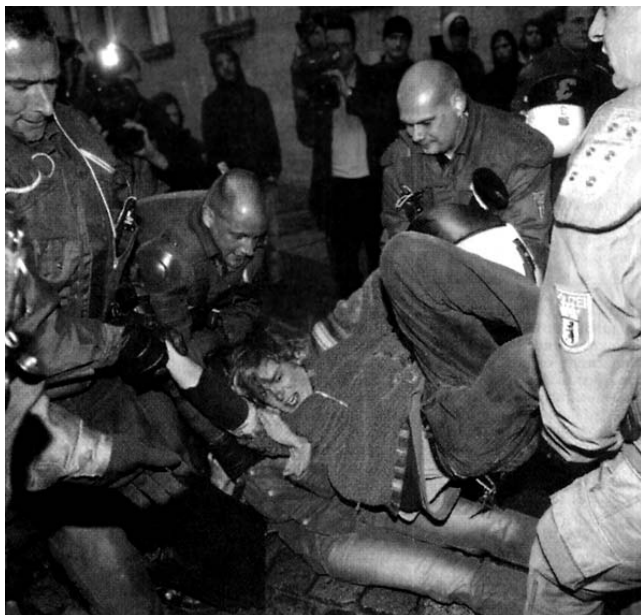
[Humboldt student parliament] “strike leadership,” they bureaucratically suppressed our resolution. This motion was counterposed to the list of demands of the so-called “action council”—a reflection of the RefRat’s preference for polite appeals to the SPD/PDS Senate and the HU administration. We protested strongly against this censorship. This act made clear that the supposedly pro-strike RefRat hates us communists, who were active in the strike, more than it does those opposed to the strike. Furthermore, it drew a political line: the RefRat tore the microphone away from our comrade precisely at the point when he spoke out against the *Rasterfahndung*, in the wake of the “war on terror,” and against the university administration. At the end of 2001, HU president Jürgen Mlynek willingly made available data on students from 28 countries to the State Criminal Police in accordance with the racist *Rasterfahndung*. This political line doesn’t come out of nowhere. The current RefRat has close connections to the so-called Hummel-Antifa [anti-fascists] and to the group Liberté Toujours, anti-Arab racists who have repeatedly stood out for their attacks on leftist and Palestinian groups and their public events. For example, the Hummel-Antifa openly called for preventing a 27 September 2003 demonstration against the occupation of Iraq and Palestine. These groups have attacked leftist and Palestinian public events many

times [see “Germany: Apologists for Zionist Terror Attack Spartakist Youth Meeting,” *Workers Vanguard* No. 806, 4 July 2003]. The group Liberté Toujours slanders the student strike as “anti-Semitic” on its Web page... while simultaneously receiving its mail under RefRat’s address! These so-called “anti-Germans” are henchmen of Interior Minister Schily—their intent is to do his work at the universities, terrorizing leftists and students of Arab or Muslim background. *Stop the attacks of the “anti-nationals/anti-Germans” against leftists and Palestinians!*

Further evidence that the HU administration is not on the side of the students is the fact that right after the capitalist reunification of Germany, they hired *Sturmabführer* [Nazi-era SS Stormtroops leader] Wilhelm Krelle. He was hired to rid the university of leftists and ex-DDR [East Germany] lecturers, which he then carried out, saying: “No Marxist will set foot over this threshold as long as I am here.” For this he scandalously received an honorary PhD in 1994 from Green Party [Humboldt] university president Dörkop.

At the GAs, many students argued that one can pressure the [Berlin] Senate and [federal] government to change their priorities. But one has to understand that it is *necessary* for German imperialism to attack education and the “welfare state” in order to strengthen it against its imperialist rivals. There has been a rapid intensification of the rivalries between the imperialist powers since the counterrevolutionary destruction of the workers states in the DDR, East Europe and the USSR. This became especially obvious as fissures developed over the Iraq war between the imperialist axis of Paris-Berlin-Moscow and that of Washington-London. As revolutionary internationalists, we took a clear side in defense of semicolonial Iraq against U.S. imperialism. We said: “Opposition to imperialism abroad means class struggle at home!” This is counterposed to the open support for “peace chancellor” [Gerhard] Schröder offered by the liberal antiwar movement of the social-democratic trade-union bureaucracy, the PDS and their left tails like Linksruck [of the International Socialist Tendency, formerly aligned with the International Socialist Organization in the U.S.]. That support meant nothing

continued on page 6



Tobias Schwarz/RKR

Berlin, November 2003: Cops forcibly remove students occupying SPD city councilman’s office.

universities marched from the school to the factory gates to join the striking workers in protest. Students should follow this example and look to ally with the working class.

We publish below a translation of the Spartakist Youth leaflet (2 December 2003), originally headlined “Victory to the University Strikes! For Class Struggle Against the Capitalist SPD/PDS Senate!” The leaflet is reprinted in Spartakist (No. 153, Winter 2003/2004).

* * *

As anger mounts in Berlin over the SPD/PDS Senate’s dismantling of social services, the developing student strikes at the three Berlin universities have become a focal point of protests in the last few weeks. These are the largest student protests in years. Many buildings have been occupied, and protests of various kinds happen almost every day. The Spartakist Youth have participated actively in these protests, defending picket lines and arguing among the students that not only are militant protests necessary, but also that it is necessary to link the strike with the social power of the working class. As part of a struggle for this perspective we presented the following resolution before the

to improve his bargain with the Senate, we call for the mobilization of all those affected by the cutbacks—workers, unemployed, immigrants and students. The GA solidarizes with the protests by the BfA [Federal Insurance Institution for the Employed] workers against mass layoffs. The Humboldt administration has, in line with [SPD interior minister Otto] Schily’s racist *Rasterfahndung* [a system of computerized “racial profiling” aimed at millions of mainly Muslim immigrants] and the “war on terror,” criminally made available data on our fellow students of Arab or Muslim background. The universities should be run by those who work and study there!

“We demand full citizenship rights for all who live here and free access to quality education for all, including a living stipend! Close the university down tight! For common action with the university workers and teaching staff, whose living standards are also in danger. The GA will send a delegation to the membership meeting of Ver.di CCM and CVK [university hospitals Charité at Mid-Campus and Charité at the Virchow Clinic Campus] on Thursday, 27 November 2003, with solidarity greetings from the HU students. The GA calls on Ver.di and the GEW to also strike. The families of all university employees should have full access to the scientific resources of the HU.”

To underscore how distant this perspective is from the goals of the RefRat

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

CHICAGO

Alternate Thursdays, 7 p.m.

February 12: **The Russian Question Pointblank: Afghanistan and Polish Solidarność**

University of Chicago
Cobb Hall, 5811 S. Ellis Ave., Room 204
Information and readings: (312) 563-0441
or e-mail: spartacist@iname.com

TORONTO

Thursday, 6:30 p.m.

February 26: **The Spanish Revolution: The Betrayals of Stalinism and Anarchism and the Trotskyist Alternative**

York University Student Centre
Room 311C
Information and readings: (416) 593-4138
or e-mail: spartacan@on.aibn.com

LOS ANGELES

Alternate Saturdays, 2 p.m.

February 7: **The Economics of Communism**

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

NEW YORK CITY

Alternate Tuesdays, 8 p.m.

February 10: **Black Oppression—Bedrock of American Capitalism: The Fight for Revolutionary Integrationism and Socialist Revolution**

Columbia University
Fayerweather, Room 302
Information and readings: (212) 267-1025
or e-mail: nysl@compuserve.com

Students Pass Spartakist Motion Condemning Anti-Strike Slanders

Humboldt University, Berlin

We print below a translation of a Spartakist Youth article from Spartakist (No. 153, Winter 2003/2004).

* * *

Threatened by the capitalist SPD/PDS Senate's plan to impose tuition fees, which would force many to drop out of school, students at the Berlin universities last November decided to strike. Already many students have to slave away at various part-time jobs just to keep their heads above water. And as if it weren't enough to be hassled by strikebreaking students and professors demanding class work, yet another enemy has entered the fray. In a May 2003 leaflet, the "anti-German" group Liberté Toujours denounced student protesters as being driven by a "crazed anti-Semitism." In their latest tirade from November, they go so far as to assert that the logic of the strikers would lead to attacks on synagogues. Monstrously, they rail that the protest statements of the students display "fascistic tendencies."

We don't know if Liberté Toujours has ever dared to hand out these leaflets to strikers, but anyone can look at these provocateurs' intellectual outpourings on their Web page. This group is part of

the "Krähenfuss Collective," a café at HU [Humboldt University] that is linked to the RefRat [Humboldt student parliament]. During their bar shifts, this group tried to turn the café into a hangout for strikebreakers. Thus, for example, they refused to serve coffee to student strike pickets on Friday, December 5. Horrified students had to listen to these gangsters calling them "anti-Semites." Only after furious protests and the intervention by members of the strike "action council" did Liberté Toujours give in.

Particularly now, with the growth of angry protests by students and working people against the SPD/Green [federal] government's plans for slashing social benefits, these people are emerging from their rat holes to cast vile slanders against those driven onto the streets out of fear of losing their means of subsistence. These "anti-Germans" are attempting to squash the urgently necessary social protest, thereby acting in the interest of the ruling class. The "anti-German" provocations are a direct threat to all students fighting for their education and future in opposition to the plans of the capitalist SPD/PDS Senate. By their various attacks on leftist events,

these people have shown that they aren't just being provocative but pose a real threat. On 3 July 2003, for example, they attacked one of our forums at HU, entitled "Defend the Palestinian People!,"

with a smoke bomb. The "anti-Germans" are, however, known above all for their verbal and physical attacks on Palestinians and other immigrants of Arab or Muslim background.

To protest against the anti-strike witchhunting by the "anti-Germans," the Spartakist Youth introduced the following resolution at the 3 December 2003 General Assembly of Humboldt University:

"The 'anti-German' group Liberté Toujours, which operates out of the office of the RefRat, is slandering our strike as 'anti-Semitic.' The General Assembly of HU students of 3 December 2003 decisively rejects this dirty slander. The GA stands opposed to every form of racism and anti-Semitism and demands full citizenship rights for all who live here."

Although the RefRat—at whose address Liberté Toujours receives their mail—bureaucratically put off the vote, the resolution was ultimately passed by a clear majority. Now that the "anti-German" slander has been rejected by the GA, the task of further isolating these provocateurs is posed. If university students want to win their fight against the dismantling of the "welfare state" by the SPD/PDS Senate, they have to oppose the mudslinging campaign of the "anti-German" agents of Schily, [SPD Berlin finance minister Thilo] Sarrazin and [PDS Berlin minister of science, research and culture Thomas] Flierl.



June 2003: Spartakist Youth speak out against attack by "anti-national" thugs at Humboldt.

Germany...

(continued from page 5)

other than sowing chauvinist illusions that German imperialism—responsible for two world wars and the Holocaust and with occupation troops today in the Balkans and Afghanistan—is a force for peace. This "national unity" behind the SPD/Green government paved the way for Schröder's brutal program to dismantle the "welfare state" (his "Agenda 2010").

During the university strikes of 1997, the RefRat bureaucrats channeled the protests into electioneering for the SPD and PDS, aiming to replace the CDU/FDP [Christian Democratic Union/Free Democratic Party] government. Now that these bureaucrats have gotten what they wanted, they are seeking to disappear the role these social-democratic parties have played. In fact, an SPD/PDS-run Senate is a more effective instrument for pushing through austerity measures, since the PDS, in particular, is seen as a "leftist"

party representing the interests of workers and the oppressed. It is necessary to emphasize that the SPD and PDS are bourgeois workers parties—meaning that while they have a working-class base, they have pro-capitalist leaderships. In February 1990, the PDS was screaming "Germany, one Fatherland!" just like [then Chancellor Helmut] Kohl and the SPD, thereby doing their bit to cast the DDR deformed workers state—born from the victory of the Red Army over the Nazi regime—back into the jaws of the German bourgeoisie. Today, the PDS has ministers in the capitalist government, who are railroading through the attacks on the gains of the working class. In 1989-90, we were the only organization that sought to build a revolutionary leadership in the fight against capitalist reunification and for a red Germany of workers councils (soviets). Today, we want to win leftist students to our perspective of breaking the working class from their social-democratic misleaders and building a multiethnic revolutionary workers party.

Spartakist



Spartakist Youth hold rally at Berlin Technical University in solidarity with IG Metall strike, May 2003.

As communists, we intervene not only for increased militancy in struggles, but also to convey how such struggles can be won. Success necessitates a fight against false and backward consciousness. The SAV [German section of the Taaffeite Committee for a Workers' International] stands in contrast to this. They may sound pretty militant, calling for a one-day general strike and for the founding of a new workers party. But at the same time, they practice the crassest form of class betrayal; in the last issue of their paper they repeatedly speak positively about the cop "union" (GdP) in Hessen [a German state]—pointing to this as a progressive force against the cutbacks being pushed by the government. But when, on 26 November 2003, the cops surrounded almost 200 economics students in front of the Reichstag [parliament building], the role of police during strikes became absolutely clear. Now these students are threatened with fines of up to €10,000 [about \$11,000]. Or think about the arrests and beatings of students in Hamburg on 27 November 2003. The police are part of the capitalist

state, the armed fist of the ruling class. They carry out racist deportations, attack leftist demonstrations and break strikes. As V.I. Lenin, the leader of the Russian Revolution of 1917, explained in *State and Revolution*, the working class cannot simply appropriate the existing state apparatus as its own; that apparatus must be smashed and replaced by the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat. In contrast to the SAV, we fight for the independence of the workers movement from the capitalist state and demand: *Cops out of the DGB [German Trade Union Federation]!* The SAV's hailing of the police demonstrates its reformist faith that the capitalist state can be utilized in the interest of the working people. Thus, it is clear what their "new workers party" would look like: another social-democratic obstacle to class struggle. What is urgently needed is a revolutionary workers party to fight for a socialist society in which free education for all is a reality and the social causes of war, women's oppression, racism and anti-Semitism are overcome. Join the Spartakist Youth! ■

Spartakist

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Students: Take a Side!

Support UFCW Strike! Donate Now!

Since October, 70,000 supermarket workers organized by the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) union in Southern California have been locked in a strike battle against the rapacious Vons, Albertsons and Ralphs bosses. The bosses' campaign to slash health care coverage and drive down the wages and living standards of the heavily immigrant UFCW members to the poverty level imposed on employees of the miserable non-union Wal-Mart is emblematic of what working people around the country face. The Spartacus Youth Clubs call on students and youth who hate exploitation and oppression to join us in supporting the striking workers. Their fight is our fight!

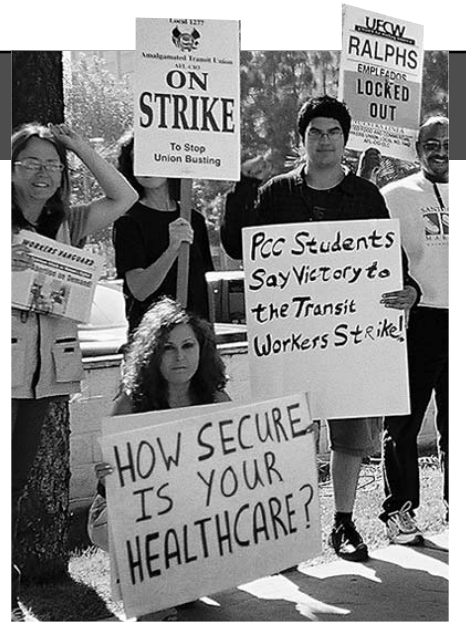
The capitalist rulers are engaged in an all-out assault on working people and the oppressed—they're shredding democratic rights and targeting immigrants, black people and labor under the guise of the "war on terror"; there are massive

cutbacks in education; layoffs are mounting and a generation of minority youth are being criminalized and incarcerated. From the bloody U.S. military occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan to the cop sieges of the Los Angeles black community and Miami anti-FTAA protesters, it is the capitalists who are carrying out a war of terror. A victory by the UFCW would be a blow against the same vicious ruling class behind this global onslaught. It is vitally necessary for all those who want to fight capitalist reaction to come to the aid of the UFCW strikers.

Unions across the country are raising funds for the striking workers. The SYCs appeal to youth nationwide to show their solidarity by donating money to help the striking workers pay rent, feed their families and remain on the picket lines so that they can hold out and win. We urge you to contribute! Where UFCW pickets are up, youth

should help man the picket lines, as the Los Angeles SYC and youth we have brought along are doing.

The capitalist rulers would have you believe that you can change society for the better by deciding which of their representatives—Democrat or Republican—will oversee the repression and exploitation of the working masses for the next four years from the White House. What a charade! This illusion is echoed by the pro-capitalist union bureaucrats, who chain the workers to the class enemy. Gains for working people, black people, immigrants, women and all the oppressed have never been won except through hard struggle. If students are to have any hope of a decent future, they must ally themselves with the working class, which uniquely has the social power to bring the capitalist system to its knees. We fight to win students and young workers to the perspective of building the revolutionary work-



Young Spartacus SYC and Pasadena City College students at UFCW picket location in Pasadena, October 2003.

ers party essential to the victory of socialist revolution, which alone can lay the material basis for the elimination of exploitation, oppression, racism and war.

The SYCs say: Victory to the UFCW strike! Show your solidarity—every dollar counts! All money collected by the SYCs will go to the UFCW strike fund. Make donations by contacting the local Spartacus Youth Clubs or by sending a check or money order to the Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013, earmarked "UFCW Strike Fund."

UFCW...

(continued from page 12)

the UFCW and Teamsters tops ordered that the UFCW picket lines at the nine distribution centers that service the struck Southern California supermarkets be taken down. A militant refusal by the Teamsters and UFCW ranks to abide by this, in particular at the Vons distribution center in El Monte, forced the bureaucrats to temporarily keep up picketing at the four Vons distribution centers. Today, UFCW strikers are defiantly picketing the El Monte distribution center.

After taking down the Ralphs lines, the UFCW leadership sent picketers from Southern California to the north to man "informational picket lines" at Safeway stores, pushing a halfhearted "shop out" as a diversion from extending the strike. While the UFCW and AFL-CIO tops have simply been paying lip service to the "shop out," the workers leafleting both Safeway and Albertsons in the Bay Area are actually serious about implementing this tactic. We call on everyone to boycott Safeway (and its subsidiary, Pak'N Save) and Albertsons as an ele-

mentary act of solidarity with the UFCW strikers, whether there are pickets at the stores or not.

The supermarket workers are facing an enemy that wants blood. Demanding a full \$1 billion in health care concessions, the supermarket bosses rejected an offer by the UFCW conceding up to \$500 million. They want nothing less than to crush the UFCW as a union capable of defending its members. They want to treat their workers like notoriously anti-union Wal-Mart treats its workers—low pay, token benefits, intimidation and abuse of immigrant workers, victimization of union activists, etc. A UFCW victory would be a powerful springboard to organizing Wal-Mart, the largest private employer in the U.S.

The viciousness of the grocery bosses is revealed by the scabs they have enlisted. On January 17, two women strikers at an Albertsons in Orange County were attacked by a scab, who punched one of them repeatedly in the face and broke the 52-year-old woman's nose. In the next few days, there were a number of similar incidents particularly targeting women strikers. UFCW Local 324 president Greg M. Conger said, "The scabs

who work at these supermarkets are, by their very nature, desperate people of suspicious moral character. Some of them have a history of violence and theft." Indeed, Ralphs and other grocery giants have engaged professional scab-recruiting outfits like Personnel Support Systems Inc., which is owned by one Clifford L. Nuckols, a low-life who was sued for swindling the scabs he recruited.

The UFCW strike is the front line of a fight that needs to be waged by all of labor in defense of health care benefits and against the undermining of unions through the imposition of multi-tier divisions within the workforce. And the rest of labor must back them all the way. Trade unions located where the UFCW strike is happening must officially mobilize their members to help build mass picket lines that no one dares to cross. Every worker—unionized and non-unionized—black people, immigrants and all the oppressed have a stake in this strike.

Mobilize Labor Power to Win!

Despite the treachery of the labor tops—the failure to pull out UFCW workers at the struck chains nationally, the taking down of lines at Ralphs, the dismantling of lines at the distribution centers—the strike has been seriously hurting the grocery bosses; they have lost an estimated \$1 billion and Smith Barney is now recommending that its clients sell their Safeway stock. However, the strike is also taking a toll on the strikers—health care benefits have expired for many UFCW workers, and many have also fallen behind on their car and housing payments while struggling to put food on the table for themselves and their families. Despite these hardships, the over-

whelming majority of UFCW strikers have demonstrated their determination to fight and win. At the January 31 rally, a UFCW Local 770 worker carried a placard reading, "I'm Tired and I'm Broke but I'll Never Be 'Broken'."

In the AFL-CIO fund-raising campaign on behalf of the strike, \$600,000 has been donated. ILWU locals in the L.A. area—13, 63 and 94—have pledged over \$1 million for medical insurance for the strikers and their families. At a January 12 "stop work" meeting, ILWU Local 13 members voted unanimously to assist the grocery workers; Local 13 has also issued 100 temporary casual cards to allow UFCW strikers to get work on the docks through the union hiring hall. The Harry Bridges Institute, named after the historic leader of the ILWU, has launched an Adopt-A-UFCW-Family program to help the neediest UFCW families pay their rent, electricity and heating bills. At the January 31 rally, a steamfitters official said building trades District 36 had given \$70,000 to the grocery workers, while the UTLA teachers union has raised \$37,000 thus far, and the SEIU International has pledged \$100,000. Checks have also come in from trade unions in Canada, Ireland, Japan, Germany, Denmark and other countries.

All militant workers must do everything in their power to throw their unions' support behind the UFCW strike—through financial donations *and* especially through building effective, mass picket lines. This is also an opportunity for students and young activists to show their solidarity with the strikers by donating money and helping to man the picket lines. The

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Oxnard, October 2003: Five hundred strikers and supporters marched from rally at Vons supermarket to nearby outlet of anti-union Wal-Mart chain.

Carey/L.A. Times

Spartacus Youth Club Forum

Grocery Workers Struggle: Which Way Forward?

Thursday, February 12, 5:15 p.m.
Meet at Malcolm X Plaza
San Francisco State University

For more information: (510) 839-0851
or e-mail: slbayarea@sbcglobal.net

SAN FRANCISCO

UFCW...

(continued from page 7)

Spartacus Youth Clubs, youth groups of the Marxist Spartacist League, have launched a campaign in solidarity with the UFCW strike (see article on page 7).

The AFL-CIO ought to be doing everything they can to ensure that every striking UFCW worker can pay their rent, utilities and food bills. Such a campaign must be carried out as an *auxiliary* to effective strike action, especially through nationwide *extension* of the strike. But the aim of the labor tops is to use the much-needed financial support as a substitute for the class-struggle tactics necessary to win the strike. The AFL-CIO is engaging in an impotent “corporate campaign,” appealing to the capitalist bosses to act more “humanely” toward the UFCW strikers. Fat chance! The bankruptcy of this tactic is demonstrated by the fact that when the AFL-CIO organized a rally on behalf of the strike in New York City, they organized it on...Wall Street! Richard Trumka, the AFL-CIO’s secretary-treasurer and one of the key figures running the national campaign on behalf of the UFCW strike, is a former president of the coal miners union who rose through the ranks of the bureaucracy by taming the militant tradition of the miners, pushing impotent schemes to pressure shareholders and civil disobedience as a substitute for effective, militant strike action.

For a Workers Government!

The UFCW strike takes place in the post-September 11 period in which the U.S. bourgeoisie, having invaded Afghanistan and Iraq, is also taking aim at the working class and minorities at home. Here in Los Angeles in recent weeks the ruling-class offensive has been demonstrated not only in the attacks on the UFCW. On January 21, more than 400 LAPD officers and FBI agents carried out a racist police occupation of the Nickerson Gardens housing project in Watts,

arresting 41 people and terrorizing the residents in the name of fighting “gangs.” Meanwhile, the County of Los Angeles is dismantling piece by piece the King/Drew Medical Center, a vital if insufficient lifeline for the impoverished black and Latino masses of South Central L.A.

As we have repeatedly said, the imperialists’ phony “war on terror” targets immigrants, blacks and labor. This was confirmed in December when the union-busting CEO of Safeway, Steve Burd, was appointed by Tom Ridge to the Private Sector Senior Advisory Committee to Homeland Security. A January 27 “Grocery Workers Justice Pilgrimage” to give petitions to Burd at his home, organized by Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice, was subjected to police intimidation. Two officers from the Contra Costa County sheriff’s homeland security detail showed up at a nearby union hall in Martinez demanding information on the march, and a police mobilization prevented the marchers from entering the gated community where Burd lives. The same two cops then carried out undercover surveillance at a January 24 union rally in San Francisco (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 28 January).

The January 31 mass labor demonstration in Inglewood took place a day after a mistrial was declared for a second time in the case of the racist Inglewood cop whose beating of black teenager Donovan Jackson in 2002 was captured on videotape. That video showed what happens all the time in racist capitalist America. The courts, cops and prisons are not neutral; they are instruments of capitalist repression, the core of the capitalist state. The cops who carry out racist terror against blacks and immigrants are the same cops who arrest striking workers. To fight for the rights of labor and the oppressed requires an understanding of the nature of the capitalist state as an apparatus of repression to defend the interests of the capitalist class against working people and the oppressed.

The unions are disarmed by the trade-union misleaders’ acceptance of the

capitalist system of profit, their acceptance of the labor laws issued by the capitalist government and capitalist courts, and by a program of class collaboration with the capitalists, expressed chiefly through political support for the Democratic Party.

The money that the unions have donated in support of the strike is a drop in the bucket compared to the millions they waste every year trying to get Democrats elected into office. At the January 31 rally, Democrat and California District Attorney Bill Lockyer spoke from the podium and was widely applauded when he announced that he was charging the supermarket chains with violating “anti-trust” laws. Lockyer represents the capitalist state, the very forces that would go after the strikers if, for example, the UFCW and Teamsters defied the bosses’ laws and injunctions and shut down the distribution centers.

The starting point for any union leadership worth its salt 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, which owns the means of production and extracts its profits from the exploitation of the working class. The interests of these two classes cannot be reconciled. As Trotskyist leader James P. Cannon wrote at the time of the 1934 Minneapolis Teamsters strike in the *Organizer*, the daily strike bulletin put out by the union:

“Local 574 doesn’t take any stock in the theory that capital and labor are brothers, and that the way for little brother labor to get a few crumbs is to be a good boy and appeal to the good nature of big brother capital. We see the issue between capital and labor as an unceasing struggle between the class of exploited workers and the class of exploiting parasites. It is a war. What decides in this war, as in all others, is power. The exploiters are organized to grind us down into the dust. We must organize our class to fight back.”

—“The Secret of Local 574,”
18 August 1934, reprinted in
Notebook of an Agitator (1958)

The unions need a class-struggle leadership based on the political independence of the labor movement from the bosses’ state and political parties. It is in the crucible of class struggle that such a leadership will be forged, as part of the struggle to build a revolutionary workers party to lead the working masses to power. The workers produce the wealth of society—they should run it!

The struggle of this determined, militant union, with its heavily immigrant and minority components, expresses the aspirations of what working people and the masses of the oppressed and victimized in this country are fighting for: decent wages, a decent job and health care for themselves and their families. This is a major class battle for workers in America, and every worker has a stake in the outcome of this strike.

The capitalist system means immiseration, unemployment, union-busting, racial oppression and war. Militant workers must understand that they have to get at the root cause of their oppression; that, to be liberated from capitalist enslavement, their struggles must be directed toward the building of a workers party to lead the workers in the fight for a workers government. As Karl Marx wrote in his 1865 work *Wages, Price and Profit*, in their everyday conflict with capital, workers

“ought not to forget that they are fighting with effects, but not with the causes of those effects; that they are retarding the downward movement, but not changing its direction; that they are applying palliatives, not curing the malady. They ought, therefore, not to be exclusively absorbed in these unavoidable guerilla fights incessantly springing up from the never-ceasing encroachments of capital or changes of the market. They ought to understand that, with all the miseries it imposes upon them, the present system simultaneously engenders the *material conditions* and the *social forms* necessary for an economical reconstruction of society. Instead of the *conservative* motto, ‘A fair day’s wage for a fair day’s work!’ they ought to inscribe on their banner the *revolutionary* watchword, ‘Abolition of the wages system!’”

Victory to the UFCW strike! ■

Stansbury...

(continued from page 12)

This racist police killing was no aberration—we will not forget Timothy Stansbury Jr.; Amadou Diallo, shot at 41 times; 57-year-old black trade unionist Alberta Spruill; African immigrant worker Ousmane Zongo; and all other victims of police terror. These killings are part and parcel of the police violence that is systematically employed against the black population under racist American capitalism, where all young black men are treated as criminals under the guise of the “war on drugs.” This can only intensify as the so-called “war on terror” is brought home with a vengeance, targeting immigrants, blacks and the whole labor movement, tearing up rights that have been won through decades of militant struggle.

The cops can’t be reformed—not with “more black cops,” not with civilian review board watchdogs, not with any kind of “community control,” for the simple reason that they are the armed fist of a ruling class whose profits are derived from the exploitation of labor and the racist oppression of blacks, immigrants and all minorities. There will be no end to police brutality without getting rid of the capitalist state—with its entire apparatus of cops, prisons, courts and armies—through workers revolution. What is needed is to mobilize the power of the multiracial working class in struggle against the capitalist exploiters and their state terror, in defense of immigrants and the ghetto poor and indeed against the whole capitalist system.

Timothy Stansbury Jr. did everything they tell you to do—he was working at a local McDonald’s, had acquired his GED and also had aspirations of attending college one day. But his is a generation that the capitalist class deems a surplus popu-



Labor Black League for Social Defense at 9 February 1999 NYC protest against racist police killing of Amadou Diallo.

lation for whom there are no jobs, only prison hellholes or being used as cannon fodder in brutal imperialist wars like Iraq. Black and Latino youth today face armed guards in their schools, cops patrolling the housing projects where they live, daily harassment, and are targeted under the guise of the so-called “war on drugs.” “We’re staring down the barrel of guns every day,” said a resident of the Louis Armstrong Houses. Racism is fundamental to American capitalism. The shooting of Timothy Stansbury Jr. by the cops starkly exemplifies the daily treatment meted out to the black population in the ghettos, which are run like huge prison complexes.

Black Democrat Charles Barron rightly calls Timothy Stansbury’s death a “cold-blooded killing,” while he tells people to beg this rotten system for “justice.” Barron has recently declared himself a Democratic Party candidate for mayor, flaunt-

ing his Black Panther past. But militants like the early Panthers and especially Malcolm X powerfully condemned any reliance on the Democrats, and they called for armed self-defense for the masses. And they were right. The Democrats and Republicans just represent different wings of the ruling class. Giving lip service to the fight against black oppression and making speeches against the Iraq war makes Charles Barron that much more effective in channeling the justified outrage right back into the dead end of bourgeois electoral politics. Barron wholly embraces the Democratic Party as a vehicle to advance his agenda, acting to keep the outrage in check and safely tied to the system.

The labor misleaders divert any struggle with calls to “vote Democrat” and for “reforming” the racist NYPD, like the UFT, which outrageously calls for even more cops in ghetto schools. Following

the Diallo shooting, when thousands of working people, unionists, students and youth protested, the Labor Black League for Social Defense and the Spartacist League said: “Massive protest and strike action by New York’s powerful and integrated working class—transit, hospital, city and hotel workers—would give an organized political expression and social power to the outrage of the inner cities against cop terror.” Such a protest, based on the organized muscle of the labor movement, would have given the cops and their capitalist masters some pause. This was directly counterposed to what black Democrat Al Sharpton and the labor bureaucrats did—they mobilized on behalf of the capitalist class. One-time FBI fink Sharpton even called for a pay raise for the cops as part of a so-called “reform” of the police. Breaking the working class away from their illusions in the Democratic Party is key to unleashing the power of labor. Cops out of the unions!

Black liberation can only be achieved through fighting against the foundations of the capitalist system and the building of an egalitarian socialist society. In American class society, black people are forcibly segregated at the bottom, yet form a strategic part of the working class. The interests of the working class are inseparably linked to the defense of black and Latino youth of the ghettos and barrios and to the fight for black freedom. What is required is the mobilization of the multiracial working class, the only class which has the social power to shatter the bloody rule of the most violent ruling class in history, and link these struggles to the justified outrage of the ghetto population. The Labor Black League joins in the fight to build a multiracial, class-struggle workers party that can lead the American working class in the coming socialist revolution. Finish the Civil War!

—1 February 2004

Mexico...

(continued from page 3)

Canada published an internationalist statement of opposition to the treaty (see “Stop U.S. ‘Free Trade’ Rape of Mexico,” *Workers Vanguard* No. 530, 5 July 1991). Taking as a starting point the indivisible interest of the world proletariat, the statement explains:

“Far from ‘freeing’ trade internationally, the pact is aimed at setting up a private hunting preserve for the American imperialist bourgeoisie, their Canadian junior partners and their lackeys in the Mexican ruling class. Already at the time of the First World War, Lenin noted that the narrow limits of the capitalist nation-state had become a fetter on the development of the productive forces, producing a struggle over redivision of the world. The various ‘common markets’ in no way overcome this, but instead intensify interimperialist rivalries. We Trotskyists, communists, struggle for the economic integration of the world on a socialist basis. But the FTA [Free Trade Agreement] is a reactionary move toward global trade war (and from there to a shooting war). The trade pact with Mexico is U.S. imperialism’s answer to the Fourth Reich and Japan Inc.”

To fight against privatizations and NAFTA, it is necessary to mobilize the *social power* of the working class: *For workers mobilizations to stop NAFTA and the FTAA!*

For Workers Revolution! For a Socialist Federation of the Americas!

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.

Mexico is a backward capitalist country, politically and economically dependent on the U.S. imperialists. Throughout the last few decades, there has been massive investment of imperialist capital. This has translated into uneven and combined development; the age-old conditions of subjugation in the countryside co-exist with a modern industrial infrastructure and, correspondingly, with a young, powerful and dynamic urban proletariat. Most of those modern industries which have been built on Mexican soil do not belong to a correspondingly developed national bourgeoisie but to foreign imperialism (in large part, the U.S.). That’s why the national bourgeoisie in countries like Mexico controls state power but is socially weak and condemned to live dependent on its imperialist masters, confronting at the same time a modern and powerful proletariat and a mass of discontented peasants in its own territory.

Unlike the old peasantry, the modern working class has a direct relationship to the most dynamic and productive means of production (and of creation of profits) in society: it has, therefore, the social power needed to successfully engage in the struggle to emancipate all the exploited and oppressed. It is this modern industrial proletariat, created as a result of capitalist investment and thirst for profits, which can become capitalism’s gravedigger. Ultimately, the national bourgeoisie fears the mobilization of its “own” masses much more than it does its imperialist masters.



WV Photo

Spartacist-initiated NYC protest in defense of Mexican UNAM student strike, February 2000.

But if the subordination of the PAN [National Action Party] rulers to the dictates of the U.S. is frank and well known, there are other capitalist forces with nationalist ideology which present themselves as an alternative to this blatant subjugation and propose a subjugation with more “dignity.” This is the case of the PRD [Party of the Democratic Revolution], founded by former PRI [Institutional Revolutionary Party] leaders like Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, who opposed the “neo-liberal” turn of the PRI in the 1980s.

Today, PRD government officials grant minimal measures of social welfare in the states they rule (like López Obrador’s subsidies to older adults in the D.F. [Mexico City]) which, in contrast to the outright anti-popular measures of the PAN governments (like the increase in the IVA [value-added tax]), make them look like friends of the masses. From the outset this nationalist party has been a pole of attraction for all the reformist “left,” which dreams of a bourgeois nationalist solution to the most urgent democratic demands. But the PRD is nothing other than a bourgeois party committed to the perpetuation of capitalist rule. That is why it cannot question the subordination of Mexico to U.S. imperialism either.

This has been explicitly reflected in the PRD’s stand regarding NAFTA, which this party *does not oppose*, limiting itself to calling for the renegotiation of the agricultural chapter on less unfavorable terms. When the treaty was signed in 1991, Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas talked about a fantastical “alternative agreement” on free trade with imperialism which would include a “social charter” and “common standards for labour, social and environmental rights” (*Canadian Tribune*, 21 January 1991). Cárdenas offers his bourgeois populist politics as a more feasible way to create a “convergence of national interests” with the Yankee imperialists, because “only a Mexican government with...impeccable nationalist credentials” can get the working class to accept its “share” of the burden (*Foreign Policy*, Spring 1990).

These politics are not the product of a covert betrayal or the corruption of a given leader, but rather are the necessary and inescapable logic of their class character. Although the PRD occasionally uses popular mobilizations the better to position itself in its competition against its bourgeois rivals, this party has shown all too well that it is perfectly willing to suppress any attempt by the oppressed to rebel against the injustice endemic to capitalism. Thus, the PRD government of Mexico City systematically repressed the demonstrations of the 1999-2000 student strike in defense of free education, repeatedly tried to derail it through political means, and eventually supported the reactionary “referendum” which the campus authorities used to “justify” the brutal repression of 6 February 2000, besides sending its own riot police to support the

Federal Preventive Police in breaking the strike. This is the government which ordered the bloody eviction of the Xochimilco residents [squatters on government land] last fall. Today, the Mexico City government has gone as far as asking for the advice of racist pig Rudolph Giuliani, who as New York mayor became famous for his state-of-siege police measures. This included the famous case of Amadou Diallo, an unarmed, innocent African immigrant who died riddled with 41 shots at the hands of Giuliani’s police—this is what his famous “zero tolerance” means!

Many young activists have through repeated beatings lost their illusions that the PRD itself can act as a genuine champion of the interests of the oppressed. But in the absence of a militant and prominent workers movement many continue to look hopefully toward peasant organizations like the EZLN or the *ejidatarios* of Atenco [peasants who resisted government attempts to displace them in order to build an airport], hoping they will act as the core of a popular resistance movement. For such activists, the proletariat is only one more oppressed sector, or, in any case, a potentially useful ally. The absence of a militant workers movement that could attract the thousands of youth who now look to the Zapatistas as a leadership underlines the reactionary role of the current pro-capitalist leaderships of the union movement.

Actually, the peasantry on its own does not have the social weight or the objective interest to become the vanguard of broad emancipation. That is why it is destined to politically follow one of the two fundamental classes in modern urban society: the proletariat or the bourgeoisie. In the context of a direct confrontation between the working class and the bourgeoisie, the poor peasants can be an important ally of the proletariat. But, as the experience of the Mexican Revolution of 1910 showed, in the absence of an independently mobilized proletariat, the peasant movement is doomed to return to the orbit of bourgeois politics (see “Un análisis marxista de la Revolución Mexicana de 1910” [A Marxist Analysis of the 1910 Mexican Revolution], *Espartaco* No. 12, Spring-Summer 1999).

A contemporary example is the EZLN guerrilla organization which, throughout its history, has systematically followed the leadership of the PRD at every nationally relevant political conjuncture (like the elections). Despite its recent and justified denunciation of the PRD for having voted in favor of the infamous “[anti-] indigenous law” in the Senate, the EZLN’s fundamental strategy is to pressure whichever bourgeois government is in office. The EZLN does not question capitalism—in which the misery of the cities and the countryside is rooted—but instead seeks to reform it through mass pressure. We communists raise the call for the defense of the EZLN and other leftist guerrillas against bourgeois state terror, but we also combat every illusion that they can act as an independent leadership for the social movement against the bourgeoisie.

One of the foundations of the agricultural economy of subsistence is the *ejido*

[communal land]. In its crusade to completely open the Mexican countryside to imperialist plunder, in 1991 the Salinas administration passed a reform to Article 27 of the Constitution which allows private landowners to buy, rent or transfer ownership of *ejido* property, supposedly to make the land more competitive. But most of the *ejido* lands are not fertile: they’re rocky hillsides or semi-arid valleys like the “*Tierras Flacas*” [Lean Lands] described in Agustín Yáñez’s famous novel. The loss of these *ejidos* deprives their owners of their thin base of subsistence and condemns them to a life of extreme poverty in the cities, because the money they might get in exchange for their *ejidos* is barely enough to maintain a family for one or two months.

We communists oppose the forced stripping of lands from poor peasants and we stand with them in their struggles against the landlords and the government, just like we did when the Fox government sought to expropriate the *ejidos* of San Salvador Atenco to build an airport. However, we understand that the preservation of the current conditions of *ejido* property is in no way a panacea. As we wrote in a leaflet last July:

“We do not romanticize, as many petty-bourgeois intellectuals and pseudo-leftists do, the current conditions of poverty, isolation and backwardness of the Mexican countryside. We want to make the advances of science and technology—education, tractors, irrigation, communications, etc.—available for all the rural population and to elevate their level of comfort, productivity and culture. It is impossible to carry out this perspective within the framework of capitalism—a system based on the production of profit for the handful of bosses and the misery of the overwhelming majority.”

—“Mexico: Peasant Protests Against Land Seizure,” WV No. 785, 9 August 2002

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.

An important part of the U.S. proletariat is made up of workers of Mexican background, especially in California, Texas and some cities in the North and the East. The immigrant workers, many of whom have strong family ties in Mexico and other countries, have brought with them the experience of bitter class struggle in their countries. To unleash this potential for revolutionary struggle we need a *revolutionary internationalist party* capable of breaking the hold that the racist and pro-imperialist AFL-CIO bureaucracy has over the American working class. This perspective underlines the crucial nature of the struggle for full citizenship rights for all immigrants in the U.S.—an integral part of the daily work of our American comrades.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

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Israel...

(continued from page 1)

bourgeoisie, Marxists must win it to consciously champion the defense of the Palestinian people.

In the lead-up to the U.S. invasion of Iraq, we warned that Israel might use the cover of war to “transfer” all Palestinians out of the Occupied Territories. Instead, the wall and the intolerable economic hardships and repression are choking the life out of Palestinian areas. As one of Sharon’s cabinet ministers suggested last year, “Make their life so bitter that they will transfer themselves willingly.” The Zionists shoot to kill not only Palestinians who breach the wall’s checkpoints, but now Israeli youth as well who are moved to protest this atrocity.

Oslo “Peace” Accord Paved Way to Ghetto

The wall—Sharon calls it “unilateral disengagement”—is the ultimate expression of the “unilateral separation” that the Zionist “peace camp,” represented by the likes of Meretz spokesman Yossi Sarid, has long championed. It is also the fruit of the 1993 Oslo “peace” accords that created the Palestinian Authority. At the time we wrote, in an article headlined “Israel-PLO Deal for Palestinian Ghetto,” that this deal “does not offer even the most deformed expression of self-determination” and instead “would place the PLO’s seal on the national oppression of the long-suffering Palestinian Arab masses” (WV No. 583, 10 September 1993). An academic study by Harvard University research scholar Sara Roy, “Ending the Palestinian Economy” (*Middle East Policy*, 1 December 2002), described the formation of the Palestinian ghettos:

“The fragmentation of Palestinian land into geographically noncontiguous areas

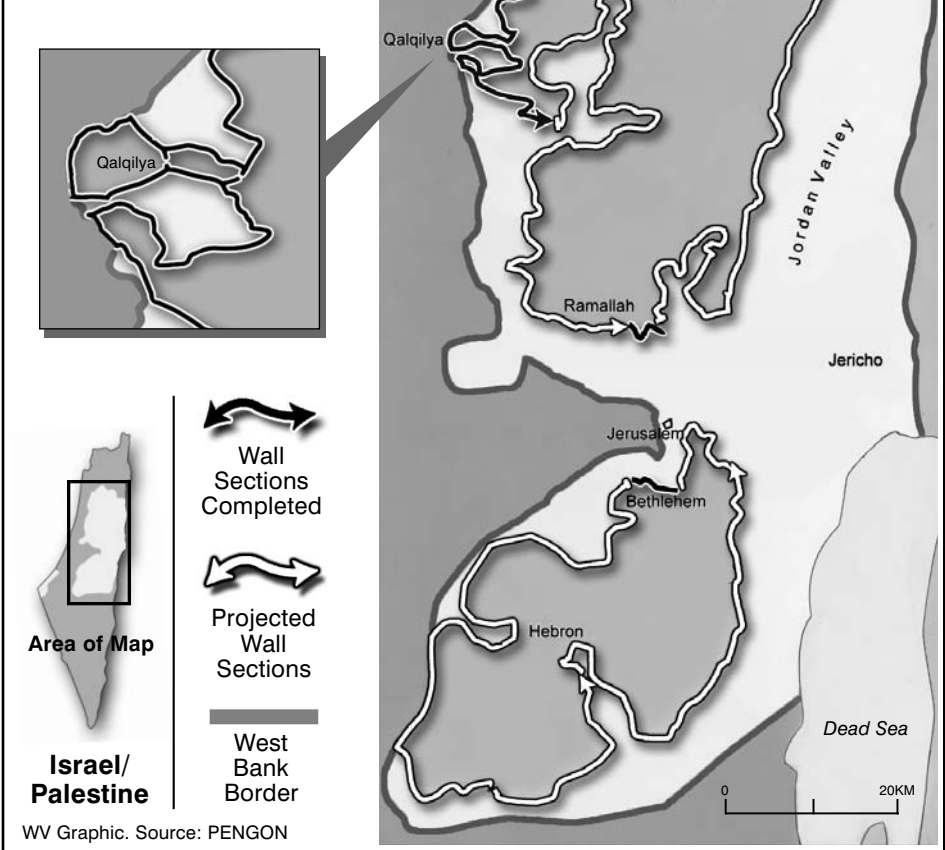
or cantons, with exit and entry tightly monitored and controlled by Israel, was a reality directly imposed on the Gaza Strip and the West Bank by the terms of the Oslo peace agreements. It is not well known that the division of the Palestinian territories was first carried out in the Gaza Strip in October 1993, just one month after the Declaration of Principles—the first Oslo document—was signed on the White House lawn....

“By December 1999, the Gaza Strip had been divided into three cantons and the West Bank into 227, the majority of which were no larger than two square kilometers in size. While Palestinians maintained control over many of the cantons and were promised authority over more if not most, Israel maintained jurisdiction over the land areas in between the cantons, which in effect gave Israel control over all the land and its disposition.... The logical and intended consequence of territorial cantonization was separation and isolation, greatly facilitated by closure policy. In fact, although closure was imposed prior to the implementation of the Oslo agreements, these agreements institutionalized and formalized closure as a policy measure.”

Following the 1967 war and the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip, the problem for the Zionists was how to ensure control over the land and resources of these areas while avoiding integration into the Zionist state of the millions of Palestinians living there. The consensus among the Zionist political parties was that the Palestinians should be given some minimal voice in their own affairs while final control of the land, resources and economy remained in the hands of Israel. The first of a series of plans to realize this objective was put together by General Yigal Allon, the deputy prime minister for the Labor Party. Allon proposed to establish a string of settlements in the Jordan Valley, in the Judean desert and around East Jerusalem as a preliminary step leading to formal annexation by Israel. Altogether, the plan envisaged establishing some sort of Palestinian entity in about 50 percent of

Zionist Ghetto Wall

Completed and Projected Sections, July 2003



the West Bank while Israel annexed East Jerusalem, the Jordan Valley, the Hebron Hills in the south of the West Bank and the southern part of the Gaza Strip.

When Likud came to power in 1977, the Allon Plan was supplemented by the Sharon Plan, which called for a new belt of settlements to be built along the western side of the West Bank. The massive settlement expansion envisaged by Sharon was carried out starting in 1992 by a new Labor government under Yitzhak Rabin, which offered settlers large economic incentives. From the signing of the Oslo “peace” accords in September 1993 to the end of 2000, the number of settlers in the West Bank increased by 90 percent. Rabin, expanding on an idea originally proposed by Allon and Sharon, introduced the network of “bypass roads” that reinforced the isolation of West Bank cities. The 1995 Oslo II agreement outlawed Palestinian construction within 55 yards of either side of these roads, rendering hundreds of Palestinian houses vulnerable to demolition. The map of the wall being constructed in the West Bank corresponds, almost to the square mile, to earlier maps drawn up by Allon and Sharon.

Today, the entire West Bank is dotted with military outposts and fortified settlements, crisscrossed by “bypass roads” that are off-limits to Palestinians. The Zionists have implemented “collective guilt,” imposing restrictions, razing buildings and launching military assaults against entire communities in retaliation for attacks against Israeli civilians or soldiers. Zionist settlers, who number over 400,000 (including East Jerusalem), freely rampage throughout the Occupied Territories, stealing land and murdering Palestinians by the dozens. A Zionist settler in Gaza told the *New York Times* (15 January): “In Jerusalem, when you see an Arab you don’t know whether he’s with you or against you, but here if you see an Arab you know he’s dangerous and you shoot him.” Defense of the Palestinians must begin with the demand for *the immediate removal of all anti-Arab fortifications in the Occupied Territories—the walls, the troops, the settlements and the apartheid highway network.*

Fissures Within the Zionist Fortress

The construction of the wall in the West Bank takes place as some in the Israeli establishment and Washington are

starting to feel that the Sharon government’s unbridled repression against the Palestinians and refusal to negotiate with the Palestinian Authority may not be in the Zionist state’s best interests. When some prominent Israeli and Palestinian politicians negotiated an unofficial “peace plan” in Geneva in December, an implicit condemnation of Israeli government policy, the gesture was hailed by U.S. secretary of state Colin Powell, UN secretary-general Kofi Annan and even by U.S. deputy defense secretary Paul Wolfowitz, a Zionist hardliner. As Justice Minister Tommy Lapid, of the Shinui Party, Sharon’s main coalition partner, put it last month: “We could become the South Africa of today, and there is the danger that we could be subject to international boycotts” (London *Independent*, 6 January).

There is also growing unease in the armed forces and security apparatus, including among elite Zionist troops and top officers. In late September, 27 Air Force reserve pilots signed a letter saying they refused to carry out air strikes against civilian areas. The following month, the Israeli army chief of staff criticized the restrictions on Palestinians. On November 14, four former heads of the sinister domestic security agency, Shin Bet, from both the Labor Party and Sharon’s Likud, came out against the government’s policy in the Occupied Territories, with several explicitly criticizing the wall. On December 28, 13 reservists of the elite General Staff Reconnaissance Unit sent a letter to Sharon seconding the pilots’ refusal to serve in the Occupied Territories. Altogether, in the past three years, more than one thousand Israelis have refused to serve in the armed forces in the Occupied Territories. Last month, five of them were court-martialed, the first time this has happened in 20 years.

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On February 2, Sharon announced a plan to remove nearly all Jewish settlements from the Gaza Strip because they are a “security burden” and a cause of “continuous friction.” When Sharon proposed last week to dismantle four isolated settlements in the northern West Bank—representing less than one-half of 1 percent of the total number of settlers—in exchange for an agreement to keep all the others, the deal was vetoed by leaders of the fascist settler movement.

Part of what is behind the Zionists’ brutal imprisonment of the Palestinians in unlivable ghettos is what is referred to as the “demographics” problem, a euphemism meaning that the birth rate of Palestinians, including Israeli Arabs, far outstrips that of Israeli Jews. In explaining what might be behind Sharon’s proposal for the Gaza settlements, the *New York Times* (3 February) wrote, “Some members of Likud argue that Israel must draw borders in a way to part with as many Arabs—but as little land—as possible.” Seeking to exploit the “demographic” problem as a way to pressure the Zionists, Palestinian prime minister Ahmed Qurei warned last month that “Israel’s continued policy of building the wall means that talk about a Palestinian state makes no sense” and threatened that “if this Israeli policy continues, we are going to come back to the option of a single, bi-national democratic state” (Agence France-Presse, 9 January). Thomas Friedman, a staunch supporter of Israel, explained in the *New York Times* (14 September 2003) what that meant:

“Rather than create the outlines of a two-state solution, this wall will kill that idea for Palestinians, and drive them, over time, to demand instead a one-state solution—where they and the Jews would have equal rights in one state. And since by 2010 there will be more Palestinian Arabs than Jews living in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza combined, this transformation of the Palestinian cause will be very problematic for Israel. If American Jews think it’s hard to defend Israel today on college campuses, imagine what it will be like when their kids have to argue against the principle of one man, one vote.”

Under capitalism, Israel will never be transformed into a binational democracy in which Jews and Arabs live together on



Kay Fernandes

Tom Hurndall, British member of International Solidarity Movement shot by Israeli forces in Gaza in April 2003, died of his injuries last month.

the basis of political equality, and both Friedman and Qurei know it. The Zionist state is a racist, exclusivist state, predicated on the expulsion, “transfer” or “displacement” of the Palestinian people. As we have warned in the past, the Zionist rulers are entirely capable of carrying out massacres of the Palestinians on a truly genocidal scale. It is vitally necessary for the working class, in the U.S. and internationally, to take up the call: *Defend the Palestinian people!*

Capitalist Divestment Is No Solution

The question of how to defend the Palestinians was debated at a January 24 workshop on “The Apartheid Wall and Its Effects on Palestinian Society” at the National Conference on Organized Resistance in Washington, D.C. The workshop was led by members of SUSTAIN, an organization whose full name expresses the campaign which is its primary activ-



AFP

Israeli army blows up buildings in Rafah refugee camp in southern Gaza, November 2002.

ity: Stop U.S. Tax-Funded Aid to Israel Now. SUSTAIN also sponsors a campaign to get universities to divest their holdings in the Caterpillar Corporation in order to force it to stop selling Israel the bulldozers which are used to demolish Palestinian homes.

A Spartacist speaker at the workshop noted that just as the bourgeoisies of Europe and America closed their borders to the Jews in the 1930s, today they close their eyes to the plight of the Palestinians. This was particularly evident when shamefully even many leftists in the Iraq antiwar movement often dropped any mention of the Palestinians to tailor their protests to appeal to the Democrats. In contrast, Spartacist contingents in those marches consciously made prominent our demands: “Defend the Palestinians! Israel out of the Occupied Territories!”

Our speaker noted that we are opposed to the U.S. government funding the army of the Zionist state, but our starting point is seeking to mobilize workers against their “own” capitalist rulers. She recalled the 1991-92 Caterpillar strike, a critical class battle that was sold out by the UAW union bureaucracy in favor of a “consumer boycott” not very different from the “corporate campaign” today proposed by SUSTAIN. Divestment schemes and calls for capitalist boycotts foster illusions that union-busting corporations like Caterpillar, or even the blood-drenched U.S. imperialist government, could somehow become the agents for social justice through campaigns of moral suasion. In contrast, we fight to mobilize the labor movement in defense of the Palestinian people and against its class enemy at home, the rapacious U.S. ruling class.

In individual discussions after the workshop, SUSTAIN members insisted that it was necessary to drop defense of the Palestinians in the antiwar movement because “nothing should detract from the main struggle to defeat George Bush.” But the Democrats have historically been, if anything, closer allies of the Zionists than the Republicans. It was President John Kennedy who initiated the close alliance with Israel, breaking the long-standing U.S. embargo on supplying major weapons to Tel Aviv while turning a blind eye to Israel’s development of nuclear weapons. Following Israel’s victory in the 1967 war and conquest of the Occupied Territories, Democratic president Lyndon Johnson showered Israel with political, economic and military support, making the U.S. Israel’s major supplier of sophisticated weaponry (see Amos Elon, “A Very Special Relationship,” *New York Review of Books*, 15 January).

The main problem with strategies such as those put forward by SUSTAIN, which seek to pressure the U.S. bourgeoisie to pressure Israel, is that they are premised on the idea that U.S. imperialism, the main force for reaction in the world today, is in some way superior to the Zionists. Ironically, the organizations pushing for the U.S. to pressure Israel

inadvertently mimic the outlook of the Zionist “neocons” who promote U.S. intervention around the globe in the interest of “democracy.” Tell that to the Iraqi people suffering under the boot of U.S. military occupation!

Proletarian Revolution Is the Only Solution

Sharon claims that the wall in the West Bank serves to stop “Palestinian terrorism.” The Sharon regime is using Palestinian suicide attacks, which have killed hundreds of innocent Israeli civilians, as a pretext for even bloodier attacks on the Palestinians by the Zionist war machine. The suicide bombings against Israeli civilians, which are entirely criminal from the viewpoint of the international proletariat, serve to further drive the Hebrew-speaking population into the arms of the Zionist rulers.

Last fall, in an article in the *New York Review of Books* (23 October 2003), New York University professor Tony Judt described the situation as he saw it:

“The two-state solution—the core of the Oslo process and the present ‘road map’—is probably already doomed.... The true alternative facing the Middle East in coming years will be between an ethnically cleansed Greater Israel and a sin-

gle, integrated, binational state of Jews and Arabs, Israelis and Palestinians. That is indeed how the hard-liners in Sharon’s cabinet see the choice; and that is why they anticipate the removal of the Arabs as the ineluctable condition for the survival of a Jewish state.”

When Judt suggested that the “desirable outcome” might be a binational Israeli state, he provoked an uproar, as prominent Zionist intellectuals accused him of hating Jews, “pandering to genocide” and being “party to preparations for a final solution.”

This clash between intellectuals in the realm of ideas reflects the material fact that there is no solution to the oppression of the Palestinian masses within the framework of capitalism, which is based on the nation-state and national aggrandizement. The Palestinians and the Hebrew-speaking people of Israel represent a case of *interpenetrated peoples*, two populations with competing claims to the same territory. Under capitalism, such conflicts can only be resolved through the suppression of one people by another through forced assimilation, forced population transfers (“ethnic cleansing”) or outright genocide.

The only road to national and social liberation in the Near East is the mobilization of the proletariat on the basis of revolutionary internationalism to sweep away all the oppressive capitalist regimes in the region in the fight for a socialist federation of the Near East. To break the Hebrew proletariat from Zionist chauvinism will likely require an enormous shake-up in the region, such as the victory of socialist revolution in one of the other Near Eastern states. However, if the Zionist madmen are not to ultimately unleash their nuclear arsenal and engulf the whole of the region in a holocaust, the Hebrew proletariat must join with Arab workers in sweeping away the entire rotting edifice of capitalist class rule in the Near East. Only then can the right of national self-determination for both the Hebrew and Palestinian people be assured. What is required above all is the construction of internationalist workers parties, sections of a reformed Fourth International, in opposition to Zionism, Arab nationalism and all variants of religious fundamentalism. *Defend the Palestinian people! For a socialist federation of the Near East! ■*

Spartacist Black History Month Forums

On the Civil Rights Movement — A Marxist Analysis —

Tuesday, February 17, 7 p.m.

University of Chicago
Ida Noyes Library
1212 E. 59th St. (at Woodlawn)
For more information: (312) 563-0441
or e-mail: spartacist@iname.com

CHICAGO

Saturday, February 21, 1 p.m.

322 W. 48th St., 1st floor
(between 8th and 9th Avenues)

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

NEW YORK CITY

South Africa: Workers Struggle Against ANC Neo-Apartheid Rule

Saturday, February 28, 2 p.m.

Rockridge Branch Library
5366 College Avenue
(5 blocks south of Rockridge BART)

For more information: (510) 839-0851
or e-mail: slbayarea@sbcglobal.net

OAKLAND

Spartacist/Spartacus Youth Club Forum

Down With the U.S. Occupation of Iraq! All U.S. Troops Out Now!

Saturday, February 21, 2 p.m.

First Parish Church, 3 Church Street
Harvard Square, Cambridge

For more information: (617) 666-9453
or e-mail: bostonsyc@yahoo.com

BOSTON

WORKERS VANGUARD

Extend the Strike Nationwide!

UFCW Strike: A Battle for All Labor

20,000 Rally in Support of Grocery Workers

LOS ANGELES, February 3—The over 70,000 members of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW) in Southern California who have been on strike or locked out for four months received a giant boost when some 20,000 workers turned out for a strike support march and rally in Inglewood on January 31. Called by the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, the rally was titled “Holding the Line for America’s Health Care” and included contingents from over 20 unions, some of which had several locals participating. The demonstration came in the wake of the January 20 announcement by the AFL-CIO that “the labor movement will extend nationwide its efforts” in solidarity with the UFCW strike, including an international effort to raise desperately needed funds for the striking workers. This could also break the near-total blackout of the strike in the bourgeois media outside California.

The many unions that participated in the rally included mainly Latino laborers from LIUNA; HERE Local 11 hotel and restaurant workers, whose contract with

16 hotels expires in April; SEIU Local 1877 “Justice for Janitors”; SEIU Local 399 home health care workers; county workers from SEIU Local 660; L.A. county firefighters; the California Nurses Association; NALC postal workers; IBEW electrical workers and UNITE garment workers. A contingent of over 100 International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 13 members—including several longshoremen from Portland, Oregon—marched in the rally behind a drill team and a banner declaring, “An Injury to One Is an Injury to All!”

What is most importantly posed for the UFCW to succeed in its struggle against the supermarket bosses is the national extension of the strike. UFCW Local 655, representing more than 10,000 workers in St. Louis, Missouri, struck 97 stores and won a contract guaranteeing that the companies will continue to pay full health care premiums for members and their families. But the general strategy of the UFCW bureaucrats has been to limit the strike to the Southern California area. UFCW workers who struck in West Vir-



WV Photos

Top: Massive January 31 rally in Inglewood in support of UFCW strike was joined by contingents from over 20 unions, including powerful longshore union (bottom).

ginia, Ohio and Kentucky were sent back to work. Some 15,000 UFCW workers in Arizona and 9,000 in Indiana are working under an indefinite contract extension. Meanwhile, contract negotiations just began in Seattle and Chicago. What should happen is a solid strike by all UFCW workers against every Vons/Safeway, Albertsons and Ralphs/Krogers in California and across the country.

The national extension of the strike must be accompanied by the crucial task of shutting down the *distribution centers*—nobody shops at empty stores. It was a real betrayal by the UFCW bureaucracy that they ordered that picket lines be taken down at Ralphs, which locked out its workers. And it was an even greater betrayal when on December 19

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NYPD Guns Down Black Teenager

We Will Not Forget Timothy Stansbury Jr.

Statement by the New York Labor Black League for Social Defense

“They’re killing us like dogs out here, pure dogs!” stated Phyllis Clayburne while talking about the horrific death of her 19-year-old son, Timothy Stansbury Jr. Posing no threat whatsoever and unarmed, Stansbury was brutally shot by a trigger-happy NYPD housing cop. It happened on the frigid morning of Saturday, January 24 in the Louis Armstrong housing project, located in the black Brooklyn

neighborhood of Bedford-Stuyvesant. Stansbury and two friends were headed back to a party, taking a shortcut tenants sometimes used across the roof of the apartment complex where they lived. At the doorway to the roof Stansbury was met by two housing cops on a routine patrol with their guns already drawn. Stansbury was shot on sight—at close range and without warning—as cop Richard Neri fired his 9mm Glock. Stansbury made his way down the stairway, bleeding, and collapsed in the building’s lobby.

Unlike the previous “in your face” Giuliani administration, Mayor Bloomberg

and top cop commissioner Raymond Kelly have taken a different tack. Kelly’s statement that “the shooting appears to be unjustified” provoked an uproar from kill-crazy cops. In a rare move, the Brooklyn district attorney has already convened a grand jury. They’re scrambling to keep the lid on while preparing for the upcoming Republican Party convention and ratcheting up police terror. What they are trying to prevent is the kind of social unrest we saw after the killing of Amadou Diallo, when thousands protested in the streets. That Bloomberg’s obscene presence at Stansbury’s funeral is taken as



Family photo

something more than an empty gesture is due to the profound vacuum of leadership among the oppressed as sellout black and Latino Democrat capitalist politicians preach love and reconciliation with our most bitter and murderous enemies.

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