

**Break with the Democrats, the Other Party of War and Racism—
For a Workers Party That Fights for Socialist Revolution!**

U.S. Out of Iraq! UN Stay Out!

The article printed below is adapted from a Spartacist forum given by Workers Vanguard managing editor Rosemary Palenque in Boston on February 21.

It is now almost a year since the U.S. imperialists began their invasion of Iraq—a war that was opposed by working people around the world who rallied in their millions against this brutal, one-sided slaughter. While the U.S. war to unseat Saddam Hussein's regime was over relatively quickly, the war against the peoples of Iraq takes the form of a bloody colonial occupation today. But not all has gone as planned for the U.S. imperialist rulers—their occupation of Iraq has faced unabated opposition, with more American forces killed during the occupation than during the war. There are no exact figures for how many Iraqis have perished at the hands of the U.S. imperialists, given that the U.S. considers Iraqi lives too worthless to count, but there is no doubt that the number outstrips U.S. losses by orders of magnitude.

We in the Spartacist League call for all U.S. troops out of Iraq and the Near East now! We take a side with the peoples of Iraq against the imperialist occupiers. In a statement issued by the Spartacist League Political Bureau as the war began last spring, we stated: "It is in the class interest of the international proletariat to clearly take a side in defense of Iraq without giving any political support to the bloody Saddam Hussein regime." What we declared then remains true today: "Every victory for the U.S. imperialists can only encourage further military adventures. In turn, every humiliation, every setback, every defeat they suffer will serve to assist the struggles of working people and the oppressed around the globe" (WV No. 800, 28 March 2003).

This was in sharp contrast to the organizers of the antiwar protests, who refused to stand for the defense of Iraq in the lead-up to the war. This is because their strategy was (and still is) to build a movement based on the broadest possible "unity," that is, a movement that reached out to primarily Democratic Party politicians who did not oppose the aims of the war, but the methods by which it was carried out.

Many participants in the antiwar coalitions and protests were rightly frustrated at their inability to put any dent in the U.S. war drive against Iraq, and there



Reuters

U.S. occupation forces terrorize the people of Iraq: Military policeman assaults man during protest in Karbala, July 2003.

have been debates subsequently on how to more effectively oppose the occupation. However, what is currently on offer from the liberal organizers of coalitions such as United for Peace and Justice and International ANSWER is a continuation of the politics of the antiwar movement. This could be best encapsulated by the main slogan of the protests against the Republican National Convention later this year: "The World Says No to Bush!" Just as the war couldn't be stopped through mass displays of moral outrage and indignation, the horrors of U.S. imperialism trampling the globe won't be stopped by voting Bush out of office.

It is a welcome development that the Bush administration is in some real trouble over the exposures of its fabricated pretexts for the Iraq war and occupation, as more and more working people are realizing that it is they and their children who are being made to pay for an imperialist adventure sold to them on a mountain of lies. The war was touted as a war for the liberation of Iraq, and indeed the world, from the regime of Saddam Hussein. This nationalist butcher was a long-

time client and main ally of the U.S. in the Near East until he fell out of favor by making a grab for Kuwait in 1990. At that point he became an all-purpose bogeyman for both Bush administrations as

well as Clinton's. Hussein was supported by the U.S. imperialists when they knew he was massacring tens of thousands of Kurds and killing and imprisoning thousands of leftists, trade unionists and religious opponents.

Two U.S.-led wars and over a decade of UN sanctions, which killed over one and a half million people, have devastated Iraq's economy and infrastructure. Today most people in post-war Iraq have no electricity, potable water, basic medical care or jobs—unemployment is estimated at 70 percent. If life weren't already terrifying enough under such conditions, in occupied Iraq the rules of engagement are that U.S. troops can "use overwhelming force on any entity considered hostile, even if it does not represent an immediate threat and is near civilians." This was the rationale given by Lieutenant-General Sanchez, commander of allied forces in Iraq, last September for why U.S. soldiers of the 82nd Airborne Division who killed eight Iraqi police officers in one incident, and shot a sleeping family of six in another, would not face penalties. There are over 10,000 detained by the occupation forces in Iraq today. As a lawyer with the Human Rights Organization of Iraq told the *New York Times* (7 March): "Iraq has turned into one big Guantánamo."

Following the criminal Madrid bombings of March 11, the shock and revulsion felt by millions in Spain turned to fury against the right-wing Aznar government as it became clear that the bombings were

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WV Photo

SL/SYC contingent at January 2003 Chicago antiwar protest.



Israel Out of the Occupied Territories!

Greece: Down With State Terror!

Drop All Charges Against the Thessaloniki Protesters Now!



Indymedia UK

In June last year, the Greek state orchestrated an attack against demonstrators protesting the meeting of the European Union leaders who had gathered in Thessaloniki to scheme to intensify the oppression, repression and exploitation of the working masses.

The Greek bourgeoisie showed its true face—sending its cops to tear-gas the demonstration and to attack demonstrators, beating them and carrying out arrests.

More than 100 people were arrested, 27 of whom were held in custody. In some cases, felony charges were brought while others were charged with lesser offenses. Out of the blue, some of the offenses were changed into felony charges, and seven protesters were remanded to custody, facing false charges of rioting, possession of explosives and resisting authorities. Once again, the mask and pretenses of the bourgeois state have slipped.

Those arrested were Suleiman Dakdouk, a Syrian immigrant trade unionist, Carlos Martinez, a member of the Spanish trade-union federation, the CNT-AIT, Fernando Perez, Simon Chapman, Spiros Tsitsas and Michalis Traikapys and Dimitris Fliouris, who as minors were taken to Avlonas young offenders prison. The Greek bourgeois state again used fabricated evidence. As was shown by the cameras of Thessaloniki state TV station ET3, the cops who arrested Simon Chapman replaced his bag with another, containing Molotov cocktails.

We condemn this frame-up. This is an act of state terrorism which targets the workers movement and all those who dare to oppose capitalist exploitation. An injury to one is an injury to all! We demand the immediate release of the Thessaloniki demonstrators.

Once arrested, even though five of them had their police identity cards with them, they were handcuffed and taken to the cells of the security police of Thessaloniki for identification. There they were beaten by police in the expert way that leaves no marks that can be traced by forensic doctors, while the anti-racist material found on them was deemed “suspicious.” At the same time they were forbidden access to their defense counsels, who on several occasions didn’t know where they were being held. Those arrested were beaten and tortured many times. Against the illegal arrests, the inhuman conditions of detention and the “sentence of punishment of the whole movement” (as Suleiman Dakdouk denounced it), they began a hunger strike which five of them continued for two months until their temporary release.

After protests in Greece and abroad and after more than five months of imprisonment, they were temporarily “freed” until a trial date is fixed where new charges may be brought. Their freedom is restricted; they are forbidden to leave the country or the area in which they are resident. In February of this year, Simon Chapman was released, while charges against the rest still stand and the prosecution proceedings continue. According to the Greek Communist Party (KKE) daily *Rizospastis* (14 February), two more individuals, Timor Pundrusniak and Epaminondas Vasiliadis, have also been charged with crimes. During his stay in the hospital, Carlos Martinez was tortured with hands cuffed behind his back, naked, and every time he tried to sleep he was beaten on his hands and feet.

The anarchist protesters who protested the symbols of capitalist exploitation in Thessaloniki have their heart in the right place. All our sympathy is with the self-sacrificing demonstrators, even if we don’t share their political outlook.

On the pretext of the preparations for the Olympic Games, the Greek state is heightening repression and oppression, imposing their capitalist “law and order” against the left, anarchists, immigrants and the whole workers movement. At the same time that Athens has been transformed into a giant building site, construction workers are in a strong position in that they have the power to shut down all the sites. That could be the beginning of a mobilization in defense of immigrants, who are a large component of the workers in construction.

Suleiman Dakdouk, an elected official

Greek cops attack protesters outside European Union meeting, June 2003.

of the builders union of Rethimnos, an immigrant, persecuted for years by the Greek police for his trade-union activities, found himself after his arrest in immediate danger of deportation to Syria where he was also persecuted for his political activities. The new “prosecution of illegal immigrants” police corps, which terrorizes immigrants, makes clear in an ever more violent way the real intentions of the bourgeois state. This was former ruling party PASOK’s law “against discrimination.”

The builders union must mobilize all construction workers for the defense of Suleiman Dakdouk. We demand full citizenship rights for all immigrants. We also defend the seven trade unionists of P.A.ME (a trade-union organization in which the KKE plays a leading role) who were given suspended prison sentences in October 2003 following their occupation of the Labor Ministry during a protest in April 2001.

In the last year, more and more strikes have been declared illegal and “excessive.” Workers are threatened with layoffs and some are prosecuted. We stand on the side of the land technicians, the IKA Institution of Social Security doctors, the POE-OTA local council workers, the Olympic Airways workers whose strikes were illegalized, as we stand on the side of all strikers.

We revolutionary Trotskyists seek to mobilize the power of the multiethnic proletariat in class struggle, not simply in protests against the capitalist system, but to uproot it. We fight for the forging of Leninist vanguard parties as part of a revolutionary international, which is necessary to lead the working class to sweep away the capitalist exploiters and their states and to build workers states and a worldwide egalitarian socialist society.

An injury to one is an injury to all! We demand the immediate dropping of all the charges against the demonstrators, trade unionists and strikers.

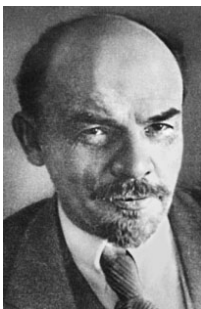
Down with the anti-terror witchhunt!
For a Leninist vanguard party! ■



TROTSKY

The Capitalist State Cannot Be Reformed

Particularly as the fall presidential election approaches, the illusion is continually being reinforced that the American capitalist state can—through reform or the election of “pro-labor” candidates—be made to represent the interests of working people and the oppressed. In a 1920 appeal to the American syndicalist organization, the Industrial Workers of the World, Gregory Zinoviev, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Communist International founded by Lenin,



LENIN

underlined that the working class needs its own state.

The war and its aftermath have revealed with startling clearness the real function of the capitalist state, with its legislatures, courts of justice, police, armies, and bureaucrats.

The state is *used* to defend and strengthen the power of the capitalists and to oppress the workers. This is particularly true in the United States, whose Constitution was framed by the great merchants, speculators, and landowners with the deliberate purpose of protecting their class interests against the majority of the people.

At the present time the government of the United States is openly acting as the weapon of the capitalists against the workers....

Any worker can see this fact with his own eyes. All the people vote for governors, mayors, judges, and sheriffs; but in time of strike the governor calls in the militia to protect the scabs, the mayor orders the police to beat up and arrest the pickets, the judge imprisons the workers for “rioting,” “disturbing the peace,” and the sheriff hires thugs as deputies to break the strike.

Capitalist society all together presents a solid front against the worker. The priest tells the worker to be contented, the press curses him as a “Bolshevik,” the policeman arrests him, the court sentences him to jail, the sheriff seizes his furniture for debt, and the poorhouse takes his wife and children.

In order to destroy capitalism, the workers must first wrest the state power out of the hands of the capitalist class. They must not only *seize* this power, but *abolish the old capitalist apparatus entirely*.

For the experience of revolutions has shown that the workers cannot take hold of the state machine and use it for their own purposes—as the Yellow Socialist [i.e., social-patriotic] politicians propose to do. The capitalist state is built to serve capitalism, and that is all it can do, no matter who is running it.

And in place of the capitalist state the workers must build their own *workers’ state*, the dictatorship of the proletariat.

—Gregory Zinoviev, “Appeal to the IWW,” *The Communist International in Lenin’s Time: Workers of the World and Oppressed Peoples, Unite! Proceedings and Documents of the Second Congress, 1920*, Vol. 2 (Pathfinder Press, 1991)

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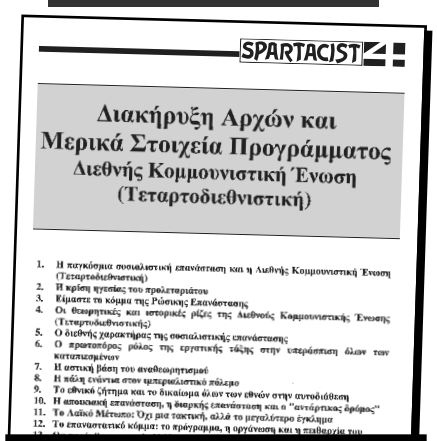
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WORKERS VANGUARD

Al Sharpton: Political Hustler for Hire

Al Sharpton has been exposed as a pawn for the Republicans, and now he is in hot water with the liberal and Democratic Party-loyal “left” whose crusade is “anyone but Bush” in the White House. According to the *New York Times* and the *Village Voice*, Sharpton’s campaign strategist and financier is one Roger Stone, a Republican Party specialist in “dirty tricks.” On January 25 the *New York Times* reported that Sharpton was working closely with Stone, described by the *New Republic* in 1985 as “the State-of-the-Art Washington Sleazeball”—or “a Reagan Republican,” as he described himself. Then muckraking reporter Wayne Barrett followed up with a devastating exposé in the 4 February *Village Voice*, “Sleeping with the GOP,” which stated: “Roger Stone, the longtime Republican dirty-tricks operative who led the mob that shut down the Miami-Dade County recount and helped make George W. Bush president in 2000, is financing, staffing, and orchestrating the presidential campaign of Reverend Al Sharpton.”

U.S. presidential elections are a cynical billion-dollar shell game, played every four years to give people the “choice” of which capitalist party will preside over

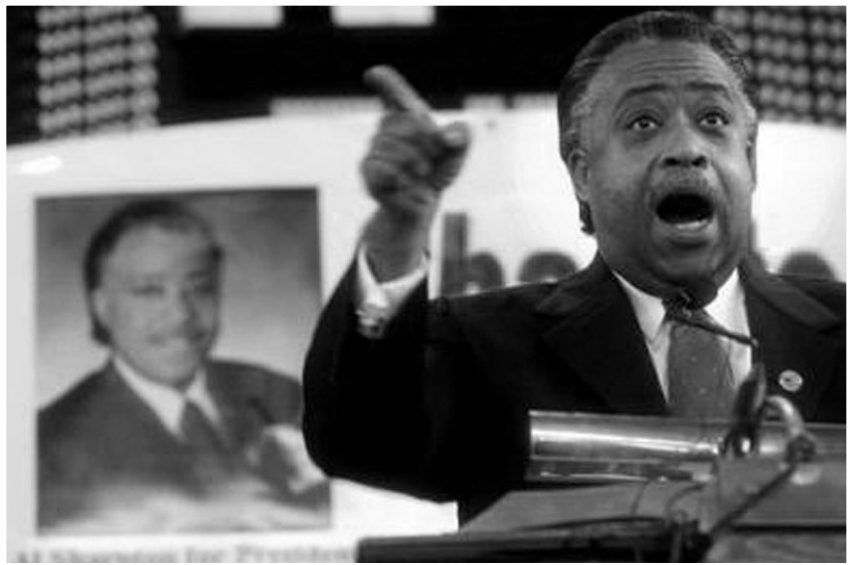
be deeply troubling: He was the only one to step forward.... Whites of all political persuasions denounced Sharpton as an opportunist and publicity seeker—as if they were telling black folks something we didn’t know. But we desperately needed publicity, and an opportunity to be heard. Rev. Al seized the spotlight and shook things up, which was a lot better than nothing.”

The *Black Commentator* is wrong: Al Sharpton is not “a lot better than nothing.” To the degree Sharpton mentions the legitimate aspirations of the oppressed black masses it is to divert any effective struggle for these aspirations into the dead end of the Democratic Party. While not dropping out of his current campaign, Sharpton just announced his endorsement of John Kerry for president. We frequently hear the argument that you can’t criticize Sharpton because that would play into the hands of the racist ruling class. To the contrary, we stand with Malcolm X who scathingly denounced the role of black front men for the capitalist parties. As he said in “Prospects for Freedom in 1965,” “I just read where they planned to make a black cabinet member.... They’re going to take one of their boys, black boys, and put him in the cabinet, so he can walk around Washington with a cigar—fire on one end and fool on the other.”

To package himself as a “respectable” politician, Sharpton worked to keep a lid on anger over the cop killings of unarmed black people, like high school student Timothy Stansbury Jr., gunned down on the roof of his own building. Sharpton has virtually dropped all mention of victims of racist police terror, and says little to nothing about the racist death penalty and America’s foremost political prisoner, Mumia Abu-Jamal. Former Black Panther Dhoruba Bin Wahad said it well in 1990 shortly after his release from 17 years in prison on a COINTELPRO frame-up: “If someone told me in 1969 that an informer with processed hair could be considered a leader in the African-American community, I would have told them they were crazy. So when I stepped out and found things of that nature, I realized how desperate things have become in the black community.”

Liberals Hate Sharpton for the Wrong Reason

Al Sharpton, along with everybody to the left of Attila the Hun, has regularly denounced the 2000 Florida electoral farce, which relied heavily on obstructing and invalidating black votes to get Bush into the White House. It was Roger Stone, walkie-talkie in hand, who personally directed mobs of right-wing Miami Cubans against the headquarters of the canvassing board, helping force an end to the recount. But, says Stone, “I like Al Sharpton.” So, apparently, do a lot of slithery, sinister right-wingers. Sharpton supposedly supports “civil unions” for gays. Yet among Stone’s friends and associates who made \$250 donations to Sharpton’s campaign to boost his contributions enough to get Federal matching



AP

funds was one Paul Jensen, a top Bush official who, according to Barrett’s article, “has filed suits in 16 states seeking to defrock Presbyterian ministers who’ve ‘violated their vows’ by ordaining gays.”

As for Stone himself, Florida was just another day’s work. His original mentor was vicious redbaiting attorney Roy Cohn, Senator Joe McCarthy’s attack dog during the 1950s anti-Communist witch-hunts and one of the prosecutors responsible for sending Ethel and Julius Rosenberg to the electric chair. Stone was involved in 1972 in the CREEP (Nixon’s “Committee to Re-Elect the President”) sabotage plan against the George McGovern presidential campaign. Stone helped Oliver North with money for the Nicaraguan contras, the CIA’s operatives who sought to overthrow the left-wing Sandinista government. He also worked with Lee Atwater (creator of the notoriously racist Willie Horton ads against Michael Dukakis during the 1988 presidential campaign).

Democratic Party liberals are incensed at Sharpton’s association with and service to the Republican Party. We Marxists point out, however, that it is primarily illusions in the Democratic Party as a supposed “friend” of labor and minorities that are the main bond shackling the oppressed to their oppressors in this country. The right to vote was a cherished gain of the black freedom struggles in this country. Today Sharpton is flirting with the very right-wing forces that would overturn that right and every other hard-fought gain by labor and the oppressed.

Sharpton: A Bipartisan Hustler

Sharpton has always been a cynical hustler, no stranger to the Republican side of the shady street of capitalist politics—and worse. In 1988 Sharpton, then known mainly as a local New York City activist preacher, was exposed in *Newsday* as an informant for the FBI. He began finking for the FBI in 1983, after being caught in a “sting” operation where he was videotaped during a cocaine deal with a narc posing as a South African businessman. Such dirty set-ups are typical of the political police of racist American capitalism. But Sharpton went along, admitting he let the Feds install a tapped phone in his home, that he carried a concealed microphone and even accompanied “wired” cops to meetings with people the Feds were trying to entrap.

And it wasn’t just about drugs. As we pointed out in “The Case of Al Sharpton, FBI Fink” (WV No. 460, 9 September 1988): “[Sharpton] admitted that he finked on two black Brooklyn politicians, Congressman Major Owens and state assemblyman Al Vann, back in 1986 when the Reagan/Meese gang was investigating ‘vote tampering.’ At the time, Sharpton was working for Owens’ campaign opponent, Roy Innis, notorious as a recruiter for the South African-backed UNITA terrorists in Angola.” Innis not only recruited black Americans in 1975-76 for UNITA’s CIA-funded

rebels, but also for Uganda’s bloody dictator, Idi Amin.

All this happened in NYC just as Mayor Koch and the NYPD were setting up a “Black Desk” (an updated version of the old FBI/NYPD “red squad”), planting informers in community meetings, tracking black militants and taping black radio station WLIB. Before he cleaned up his act to seek the “respectability” of bourgeois politics, Sharpton made his mark leading vile campaigns against Korean, Arab and Jewish shopkeepers. As we stated in our article: “Sharpton wasn’t just wired—the man was a walking provocation. In 1986, he tried to whip up a pogromist backlash against Arab shopkeepers in Harlem (for supposedly selling drug paraphernalia). That same year he backed Reaganite Senator Alphonse D’Amato for re-election (while D’Amato was describing blacks living in housing projects as ‘animals’).”

While the liberals scream about Sharpton’s collusion with the Republicans, the worst thing about Sharpton, from our



AP

Sharpton’s campaign adviser, sleazy Republican hatchet man Roger Stone, with wife.

their exploitation. It’s a measure of the intensification of racial oppression in this country that none of the main Democratic Party contenders even pay lip service to black rights. The electoral charade takes place against the real landscape of unprecedented and astronomical imprisonment of black people nationwide, of increased segregation in housing and schools, and a black male unemployment rate nearing 50 percent in New York City.

This bleak reality explains why so many black people support Al Sharpton—a self-promoting, cynical hustler, proven FBI fink and willing tool for Republican dirty tricks. But he’s the only pretender to even talk about racism. The *Black Commentator* Web site noted, in “The Problem with Al Sharpton” (5 February): “We must ask why Al Sharpton emerged as a contender for national black leadership via the presidential primaries. The answer is simple, and should



Sharpton’s defense of KKK’s “right” to march in New York City in October 1999 made headlines in black press in Britain.

viewpoint, isn’t his cynical small-change politicking between two racist, anti-working-class parties. The worst thing, besides his sinister FBI collusion, is his decades-long work in trying to tamp down, divert and head off any attempts by militant blacks and working people to fight for their rights. When New York City exploded in mass protests over the cop killing of African immigrant Amadou Diallo in 1999, Sharpton rushed to corral these protests into electoral politics and a program for police “reform” to spruce up the image of these killers in uniform—including a pay raise for the police!

Al Sharpton would rather see the race-hate terrorists of the Ku Klux Klan rally in NYC than a rally of blacks and labor, independent of the capitalist class, to stop them. In 1999, when we in the Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee built a mass rally to stop the Klan from riding in NYC on October 23, Al Sharpton actually filed an *amicus* brief in court on behalf of the Ku Klux Klan’s right to

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Spartacist League/SYC Forum

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LOS ANGELES

UFCW Strike and Class Struggle in America

We print below the conclusion of a January 31 Spartacist League forum given in Los Angeles by Steve Henderson on the recently concluded strike of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) union in Southern California; Part One of this talk appeared in Workers Vanguard No. 821 (5 March). The UFCW strikers waged a hard, determined class battle for five long months despite a series of betrayals by their trade-union tops. The workers returned to work in early March under a new contract that gave the supermarket bosses most of what they were gunning for, including the creation of a new two-tier system of wages and benefits. The responsibility for this defeat lies squarely at the feet of the trade-union bureaucracy. Although Henderson spoke before the outcome of the UFCW strike had been determined, he laid out the political lessons of the strike and proposed a way forward. Learning these lessons is crucial in order to prepare for and win future class battles, and particularly so for the 50,000 UFCW workers in Northern California whose contracts expire in July and September.

PART TWO

How, if not through class struggle, do the trade-union tops propose to get workers a supposedly “fair” wage? I’ve already mentioned the “corporate campaign” moral appeals to stockholders. But more fundamentally, they look to the American government to police the capitalists and limit corporate “excess,” and at the same time call for protectionist measures to make “their” national capitalists more competitive internationally so they can get some of the “trickle-down.” In the eyes of the bureaucracy of the trade-union movement, the chief task lies in “freeing” the government from the clutches of the capitalists and pulling it over to their side. And they try to do this by demonstrating to the “democratic” state that they are “reasonable” labor statesmen and by showing in word and deed just how reliable and indispensable they are in peacetime and especially in time of war.

In reality, the government is not some neutral institution—it is the administrative organ and executive committee

which serves the capitalist class. It runs the capitalist state—the bosses’ repressive apparatus made up at its core of the military, the cops, the courts and the prisons—all of which enforce capitalist rule.

Unlike our reformist and liberal political opponents, ranging from the fake socialists of the International Socialist Organization (ISO) to liberal trade-union bureaucrats, we Marxists are for the complete and unconditional independence of the trade unions in relation to the capitalist state. You can’t successfully wage class struggle if the capitalist government is controlling your union.



5,000-strong UFCW strike rally and march in Los Angeles, December 2003. WV Photo

The political expression of the reformists’ reliance on the government is their support to pro-Democratic Party “lesser evilism.” They argue that Bush and the Republicans represent “corporate greed” while the Democrats, while not perfect, can be pressured to represent workers, the oppressed and the poor. Much of the liberal mythology in America regarding the possibility of a caring capitalist government and a labor-friendly, “progressive” Democratic Party is based on self-serving lies about Roosevelt’s New Deal administration, which is the liberals’ model of social reform. AFL-CIO head Sweeney, for example, cites the New Deal as the example of fighting the good war

abroad and lifting up working people out of poverty at home. So I want to briefly touch on what happened in the ’30s and ’40s.

New Deal: Labor’s Coalition with Democrats, Dixiecrats

Roosevelt’s paltry New Deal reforms were not enacted as return payment for the new CIO unions’ electoral support, but to head off an extended period of increasing political radicalization and hard class struggle that brought millions of workers into organized labor. The major strikes of 1934 in Minneapolis,

revolutionary proletarian party in this country, but the much larger CP had more social weight in the working class and their reformist politics by and large prevailed. So despite the great militancy of the CIO unions and the political opening for the creation of a workers party, bourgeois ideology was in the end strengthened within the labor movement through the New Deal alliance with the Democratic Party. And what was the result?

Support to Roosevelt meant a renunciation of not only class struggle but all social struggle against America’s racist rulers. In America, where capitalism rests on the racial oppression of black people, labor struggle and black struggle will either march forward together, or fall back separately. And support to the New Deal was a betrayal of both. The New Deal put labor in an unholy alliance with not only its liberal class enemies in the North, but with Southern Dixiecrats, to whom Roosevelt gave free rein to wage naked racist terror against blacks and unions. Roosevelt’s vice president from 1933-40 was John Nance Garner, a hard-line white-supremacist from Texas, an “open shop” state where the union movement scarcely existed.

The New Deal alliance resulted in the crippling of subsequent struggles. In one crucial example, the CIO in 1946 announced a major campaign to organize the South, called “Operation Dixie.” The task of organizing the South would have run head-on into “Jim Crow” segregation and the racist oppression of black workers. The necessary fight for integrated unions would have aroused a vicious backlash from Dixiecrats and their fascist auxiliaries in the Ku Klux Klan, in the process blowing apart the New Deal coalition. And amid the witchhunting atmosphere of the anti-Soviet Cold War, the CIO leaders feared the spectre of black workers joining with Communist labor organizers and scuttled “Operation Dixie” after only two years.

Following WWII, American capitalism was the only major imperialist power with its industrial infrastructure left intact, and thus emerged as the unchallenged military and economic power of the capitalist world. The largest strike wave in American history broke out in 1946 by workers seething at the wartime austerity for workers and wartime profiteering for the capitalists. In response, the American bourgeoisie, facing no capitalist competitors internationally and rolling in profits, could afford for some time to placate workers with regular wage increases and the promise of an American Dream. Simultaneously, the government orchestrated the postwar witchhunts which purged the reds from the unions and installed the Cold War anti-communist sellouts whose political heirs still run the unions today. The anti-labor laws which ban effective strike tactics, like the Taft-Hartley Act, were also passed at this time. The Cold War labor leaders ritually denounced these as slave-labor acts, but of course they always complied with them.

During the 1950s and early ’60s the treacherous nature of the trade unions’ pro-capitalist leadership was partly masked by the fact that American capitalism was still strong enough to raise living standards for a majority of the working class while maintaining a high level of

Toledo and San Francisco were all led by reds and paved the way for the later mass organizing drives of the 1930s. Roosevelt’s labor laws were not a license to organize. Art Preis, a Trotskyist participant in those struggles, wrote:

“What followed the signing of the NRA [the New Deal’s National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933] was not the recognition of labor’s rights but the most ferocious assault on American labor in its history.... Hundreds of workers were killed, thousands wounded, tens of thousands arrested or otherwise victimized from 1933 to 1938.”

— Art Preis, *Labor’s Giant Step* (Pathfinder Press, 1972)

So how did this workers upsurge which formed mass, integrated industrial unions become chained to a capitalist party? Central responsibility lies with the American Communist Party (CP). Following the Stalinists’ turn to “popular front” class collaboration in 1935, the Communist Party union militants who had helped organize the CIO in the 1930s used their considerable political authority to channel this groundswell of class struggle into the dead end of the Democratic Party. Newly radicalized workers had to ask themselves: well, if even the reds are for Roosevelt, how bad can the Democrats be? By 1935, the CP had broken from its revolutionary origins and become a reformist party, seeking to influence a supposedly “progressive” wing of U.S. imperialism. This eventually led them to support the U.S. in World War II, including supporting the internment of Japanese Americans in camps, the no-strike pledge, and dropping the atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It was the Trotskyists who continued the fight to build a



Minnesota Historical Society

Unionists battle strikebreaking cops and deputies during 1934 Trotskyist-led Minneapolis Teamsters strike.

profits. American blacks, of course, never saw the short-lived American Dream—for them it was more the American nightmare. The courageous civil rights movement of the late '50s and early '60s finally defeated Jim Crow segregation in the South and eliminated formal legal inequality, but its liberal program could not overcome the racist oppression of blacks which is the bedrock of American capitalism North and South—the de facto discrimination in jobs, education, housing, health care, and the racist cop and Klan terror that enforces it. The trade-union bureaucracy was largely indifferent to the civil rights struggles in the South and actively hostile to the later black militancy which swept Northern cities, especially when it found expression among Detroit auto workers in the UAW. The bureaucracy's racist defense of the capitalist status quo further divided and weakened the American labor movement.

By the late 1960s—with its profits declining because of an aging industrial infrastructure, increased international competition and the inflationary effects of the Vietnam War—the American bourgeoisie no longer promised prosperity for anyone. The next decade brought stagnating wages followed by a major intensification of the rate of exploitation. Smashing the air traffic controllers union (PATCO) was the signal union-busting event of the 1980s Reagan years. The IAM machinists union, whose members serviced the airplanes, was uniquely situated to shut down the airports and defeat Reagan's frontal assault on the labor movement. But the head of the IAM, William Winpisinger, refused to pull the mechanics out.

It's no accident that, like John Sweeney today, Winpisinger was a prominent leader of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), which is composed of pro-capitalist "socialists" operating within the Democratic Party. While such "labor statesmen" complained about Reagan's domestic policy, they fully shared his aims to foment capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union. But the anti-Soviet war drive was necessarily combined with a war on labor and blacks at home. And the anti-communist union leaders routinely caved in the face of rampant union-busting. For the last several decades, the trade-union bureaucrats, continually acquiescing to what is "possible" and "practical" under capitalism, presided over the steady decline of organized labor and the increasing immiseration of workers and the oppressed.

For a Multiracial Revolutionary Workers Party!

I spoke of the labor movement's failure to organize the South back in 1946. Well, now the South is coming North after the unions. The grocery giants have all cited non-union Wal-Mart's low wages and benefits as the excuse to gut the UFCW. This is partly a negotiating ploy, since the "big box" stores are only projected to get 1 percent of the Southern California market share in retail food. But the fanatically anti-union corporations like the Arkansas-based Wal-Mart, now the world's largest retailer, *are* driving down wages and living standards everywhere. Labor needs to organize Wal-Mart workers, starting in those areas already unionized and extending the organizing drive to

the South. Though today's union tops often speak at MLK Day assemblies and invoke racial equality, labor officialdom still disdains the hard class struggle it will take to organize integrated unions in the South, where "right to work" laws are backed up by racist Klan terror.

But it's not just in the South. When fascist skinheads attacked black and Latino grocery strikers last November, the union needed to organize picket defense guards, drawing in all of Southern California labor and the minorities and immigrants who bear the brunt of fascist terror. But the UFCW leadership did nothing. In the face of similar fascist provocations over the years in major cities, the SL and Partisan Defense Committee have initiated mass labor/black mobilizations—drawing on the social power of trade unions—to stop the KKK and Nazis. This is what a fighting labor movement led by a class-struggle workers party would do, championing the cause of all the oppressed, combatting every manifestation of anti-black racism and demanding full citizenship rights for all immigrants.

Organizing Wal-Mart will require the active defense of immigrant rights. Two weeks into the UFCW grocery strike, "Homeland Security" federal agents raided 60 Wal-Mart stores and rounded up more than 250 undocumented immigrant workers. We said: Free the rounded-up Wal-Mart workers! No deportations! But the UFCW leadership, which says it wants to organize Wal-Mart, has done nothing to mobilize the unions on their behalf. By rising to the defense of these



Cops in riot gear arrest protesters outside Vons headquarters in suburban Los Angeles, January 21.

immigrant workers, the UFCW would be mobilizing in defense of all Wal-Mart workers, undercutting the company's rabidly anti-union maneuvers and facilitating organizing efforts.

In 2000, the AFL-CIO finally dropped its opposition to a limited amnesty for immigrants, but it still demands government action to stop the flow of "illegals" and pushes protectionist poison, such as opposition to Mexican truckers, which ultimately targets foreign workers and immigrants. The UFCW, which has a relatively large immigrant membership concentrated in the food processing industry (much of which is located in the South), says it wants to organize all workers regardless of origin. But the union ludicrously wants the government's stamp of approval and complains: "Too often, it appears to workers that INS [Immigration and Naturalization Service] is a partner, intentionally or not, with employers in



With outbreak of Cold War, bosses' press pushed anti-red scare. Right: Fighting breaks out at National Maritime Union meeting, 1950, where right-wing bureaucrats called cops against leftists as part of drive to purge Communists.

the exploitation of immigrant labor and the suppression of workers rights. INS seems to show up more often during an organizing campaign or a strike situation" (UFCW Web site, "Where We Stand"). It doesn't just *seem* that way, it *is* that way. But the UFCW bureaucrats can't even say straight out that the INS is racist and anti-labor, because that would implicate *every* governmental enforcement agency that they rely on. And it would certainly expose the Sweeney bureaucracy's criminal policy of "organizing" the cops, prison guards and security guards who are paid to *repress* working people, immigrants and minorities.

Unfortunately, instead of union organ-



workers state where capitalism was overthrown as a result of the 1949 Revolution and whose core economy is still based on nationalized property. Just as workers defend their unions—despite sellout leadership—against the bosses, workers must defend China against imperialist-backed counterrevolution despite the Chinese bureaucracy's accommodation to capitalism. The American trade-union bureaucracy's hostility to China is based on visceral anti-Communism, with the added convenience of scapegoating a "foreign enemy" for the loss of American manufacturing jobs instead of fighting capitalism at home.

Most of the articles I've read on China's sweatshops are about foreign-owned factories in the SEZs. These private factories are deliberately conflated or confused with state-owned enterprises, with the assertion that China has gone capitalist or is heading to capitalism. But, in fact, China's fate has not yet been decided. The Chinese working class must sweep away the Stalinist bureaucracy, which has gravely weakened the system of nationalized property internally while conciliating imperialism at the international level. We stand for a proletarian political revolution—to defend and extend the gains of the workers state, i.e., the planned economy and collectivized property, while also placing political power directly in the hands of workers and peasants councils. This could inspire proletarian socialist revolution in the capitalist countries throughout Asia, including the industrial powerhouse of Japan.

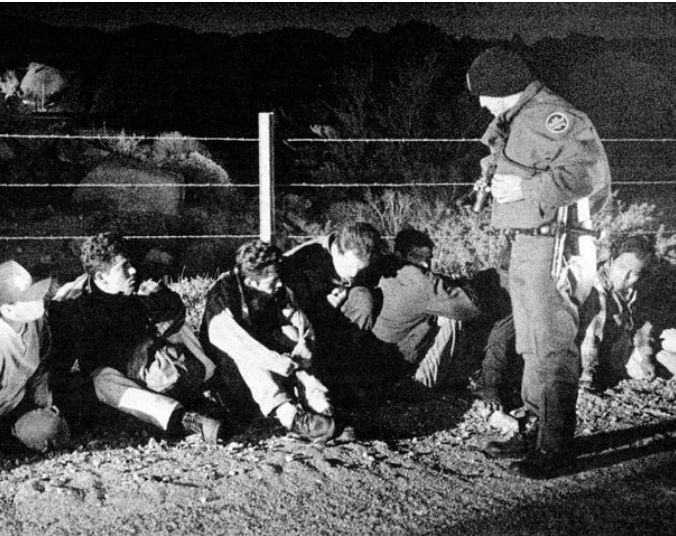
A few of the more honest newspaper accounts tacitly concede that in fact collectivized property benefits China's workers and peasants. Here's a few quotes from a foreign correspondent for the *Washington Post*, comparing workers in the private factories to those in state enterprises:

"They are more likely to work for private companies, often backed by foreign investment, with no socialist tradition of cradle-to-grave benefits."

And: "In private factories where migrants often work, managers are primarily concerned about profit. By contrast, despite new market pressures, managers of state factories in China often resemble political leaders, responsible for the overall welfare of their workers."

—Washington Post, 13 May 2002

continued on page 6



Immigrants rounded up along U.S./Mexico border. U.S. labor movement, with its vital immigrant component, must take up fight for immigrant rights.

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No. 17

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Spartacus Youth Clubs Raise Funds for UFCW Strikers

One month before the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) supermarket strike in Southern California ended, the Spartacus Youth Clubs undertook a fund-raising campaign to

Young Spartacus

provide the workers some material aid and help them stay out on strike. We raised \$1,837.71, motivating support for the UFCW workers at campus meetings, classes, newspaper sales and student rallies across the nation. Our campaign call was "Students: Take a Side! Support UFCW Strike! Donate Now!" The campaign was a way to broaden support to the striking workers and to "Mobilize

students behind the social power of the multiracial working class!" as our SYC Ten-Point Program states. In California, the SYC also brought youth out to help walk the picket lines.

The campaign was no charity drive but rather an elementary act of solidarity with the workers. At a time when the capitalist ruling class in this country is engaged in an all-out offensive against the working people and the oppressed at home and across the globe, the workers of the UFCW were waging a struggle that sought to hit them back where it hurts—their wallet. Any victory for the working people against the union-busting of the bosses would mean a blow against U.S. imperialism.

Under capitalism, most youth face a future of no education and no jobs. The

way forward is for youth to ally with the working class. At a February 23 protest at San Francisco State University against education funding cutbacks and the axing of a financial aid program for minority and poor students, an SYC speaker talked about the campaign and observed, "We must link our struggle to labor, who have the social power to tear down this capitalist system and replace it with a socialist society. Those who labor must rule!"

For many, the campaign was a break from the electoral politics offered by supposed "socialists" and the labor bureaucrats who recently sold out the strike. We sparked debate at a Students United for Peace meeting at Suffolk University in Boston when we condemned the Democratic Party during a

presentation motivating the fund drive. The Democratic Party—the party of slavery and then Jim Crow, the party of Vietnam and the deadly sanctions against Iraq, the party that wants nothing more than to administer the occupation of Iraq and the "war on terror" at home—is a party of war and racism.

As an SYC spokesman said in a presentation about the UFCW campaign at a February 21 forum in New York titled "On the Civil Rights Movement—A Marxist Analysis":

"Fundamental change does not come through elections. Gains for working people and the oppressed have only come through hard struggle. The working class needs a party that defends *its* interests. The only way these interests can be realized is through a socialist revolution, led by a workers party, putting the working class in power over an egalitarian, planned economy, and putting therefore the capitalists out of power. Youth, students, blacks, immigrants, women should ally themselves with this cause because a socialist revolution alone can lay the material basis for the elimination of exploitation, oppression, racism and war."

UFCW...

(continued from page 5)

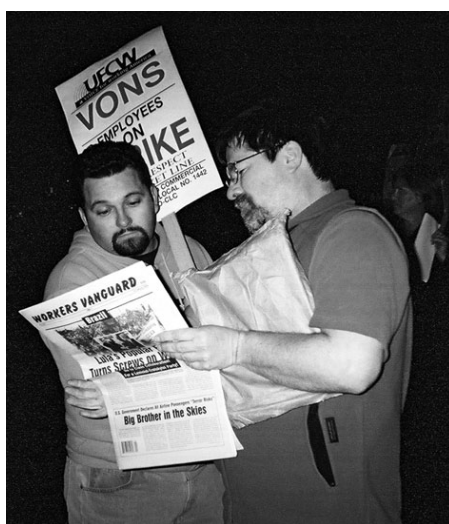
"Market reforms have undermined the socialist health care system that once covered 90 percent of China's population. In its place has emerged a jungle of a medical system in which many workers are receiving inferior care, at higher costs, with little or no insurance."

—Washington Post, 4 August 2002

What the pro-capitalist union bureaucrats and their reformist apologists can't stand is that a collectivized economy with centralized planning—in which production is for human need, not for profit—is the real solution for the world's working people. Such an economy must be established on an international scale, particularly tapping the vast productive resources of the United States, Western Europe and Japan. Tiny Cuba, despite a decades-old U.S. embargo, has been able to provide decent health care to its population, resulting in an infant mortality rate on a par with that of the U.S. and Canada. In America, with

its vast wealth and medical technology firmly in the grip of the capitalists, health care has become a crisis of epidemic proportions. As the rates of poverty and unemployment rise, the number of those without health insurance has grown to some 40-45 million nationally. At the same time, Medicare payments are being slashed and millions driven off the welfare rolls. Those not lucky enough to find job-based health insurance are one medical crisis away from a major family catastrophe. And with medical insurance premiums rising at a double-digit pace, this is the first thing employers want to cut.

The irrationality of capitalism is such that the basic needs of life are held hostage to profit. Medical care is denied to improve the capitalists' bottom line. Safeway/Vons CEO Steven Burd declared that the grocers' hardline stance slashing medical benefits and labor costs "is an investment in our future" (*Los Angeles Times*, 17 October 2003). Well, working people need to fight for a future without capitalism. The only way that immigrants,



WV Photo

Spartacist supporter on UFCW picket line.

blacks and all working people can be assured of free, quality medical care is to rip the means of production out of the hands of the capitalist class and put it in the hands of those whose labor builds this society.

That's why we need a revolutionary workers party. As Lenin explained in *What Is To Be Done?*: "The history of all countries shows that the working class, exclusively by its own effort, is able to develop only trade-union consciousness," a form of bourgeois consciousness which accepts the framework of capitalism and limits the struggles of the proletariat to questions of wages and working conditions. The labor bureaucracy is also the medium for the transmission of the social and political prejudices of the more backward layers of the working class. Socialist consciousness can only be brought to the working class from without, through the intervention of a Leninist party, a fusion of intellectual and proletarian elements, which aims to imbue the working class with a Marxist understanding of its historic mission of abolishing capitalism.

The trade-union bureaucracy is the chief obstacle to class struggle in the U.S. Through the instrument of the Democratic Party, they chain the workers to the capitalists and their state. In times of sharp class struggle or imperialist war, the labor bureaucrats become the open political police of the bourgeoisie in the labor movement. It is the task of the revolutionary party to educate the workers so that they can politically oust these misleaders and set the unions on the path of class struggle against the capitalists and their system. In fighting for a victory to the grocery workers strike, we hope you'll also draw the broader lessons of this struggle and join us in the task of building a workers party that fights for socialist revolution. ■

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(continued from page 12)

Jamal's death sentence while affirming his conviction, condemning him to a life of prison hell. Jamal's attorneys appealed that decision, seeking to overturn the conviction. The state appealed as well, seeking to uphold Jamal's death sentence. Jamal still sits on death row. His federal appeal is on hold while the Pennsylvania state court decision is appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Lynch Law Justice

The case of Mumia Abu-Jamal is nothing but Texas lynch law justice—up North. Not only have the courts barred Beverly's confession, but they have rejected the evidence discovered only two years ago of the sworn account of court stenographer Terri Maurer-Carter of a conversation she overheard in the courthouse where Mumia was tried. In that conversation, Judge Sabo declared in regard to Jamal's case, "I'm going to help 'em fry the n----r." Last October, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court refused to even consider Maurer-Carter's testimony on the grounds that Sabo's bias had already been litigated and ruled upon in Mumia's 1995 PCRA (Post-Conviction Relief Act) appeal—before the same Judge Sabo, who exonerated himself of any racist animosity and prejudice toward Mumia!

Jamal's petition to the Supreme Court points out, "Where a judge in the trial of an African-American defendant expresses in ugly racist terms his intention 'to help 'em fry the n-----r,' even the appearance of justice is not satisfied. To the contrary, such a trial is a sham. In the context of a case involving the death penalty, it is essentially a lynching party." Jamal's papers need only cite a handful of Sabo's numerous actions evidencing his bias: he denied Jamal's motion to remove a white juror who had stated he could not be impartial; he improperly removed a black juror; he barred Mumia from representing himself and took over questioning of prospective jurors; he permitted improper cross-examination of character witness Sonia Sanchez, a renowned poet who was smeared as a "friend of cop killers." The papers also cite the improper cross-examination of Jamal during the penalty phase of his trial. In this instance, Sabo encouraged the prosecutor's interrogation regarding Jamal's past membership in the Black Panther Party—a gross violation of Jamal's First Amendment rights of speech and association. The prosecution argued that Jamal's BPP membership proved he was planning to kill cops for the past 12 years.

The second ground cited by Mumia's petition is the refusal of Pennsylvania Supreme Court justice Ronald Castille to recuse himself from participating in that court's deliberations and last year's decision denying post-conviction relief to Jamal. Castille was the Philadelphia Dis-



Mumia Abu-Jamal in 1969 as Minister of Information for Philadelphia Black Panther Party.

trict Attorney from 1986-91, at a time when his subordinate Jack McMahon made an infamous videotape instructing members of the D.A.'s office on how to dismiss blacks from juries—as was done in Mumia's case. Jamal's petition states, "As District Attorney, he appeared in the appellate briefs that argued for the upholding of the conviction and Petitioner's execution, and supervised the successful effort to uphold the conviction and death sentence." As a member of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, Castille joined in turning down Jamal's appeal of Sabo's denial of his PCRA in 1997. Jamal's attorneys highlight, "For the same person to function as both prosecutor and judge in a capital case violates the due process clause and mandates that the conviction be reversed."

Another example of Sabo's bias cited by Jamal's attorneys was his refusal to admit 600 pages of FBI files on Mumia. These files document over a decade of surveillance, harassment and frame-up attempts by the FBI's COINTELPRO terror operation—working in conjunction with the Philadelphia police headed by racist demagogue Frank Rizzo—aimed at “neutralizing” black and leftist militants. A 24 October 1969 FBI report urging that Jamal be placed under high-level surveillance noted:

"In spite of the subject's age (15 years), Philadelphia feels that his continued participation in BPP activities in the Philadelphia Division, his position in the Philadelphia Branch of the BPP, and his past inclination to appear and speak at public gatherings, the subject should be included on the Security Index [list of those deemed a threat to national security]."

When Mumia told MOVE's side of the story following a bloody 1978 cop siege of their Powelton Village home, Rizzo fingered a "new breed" of journalists such as Jamal, who he threatened would one day "be held responsible and accountable for what you do." Three years later, on a dark Philadelphia street at four in the morning, the cops finally got the chance they'd been waiting for.

oppression in this country, where more young black men are in prison than in college. Many black “convicted felons” are effectively disenfranchised—they have no right to vote, and no bourgeois election will change the systematic racial oppression which is rooted in the whole rotten system of American capitalism.

The road to black freedom lies in the struggle to shatter this racist capitalist system through proletarian revolution. The power to do that lies in the hands of the multiracial working class. But that power cannot be realized unless a fighting labor movement champions the cause of black liberation and breaks the chains, forged by the labor bureaucrats and black front men for the Democratic (and Republican) Party, like Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton, that bind working people and the oppressed to the capitalist class enemy. The purpose of the Spartacist League/U.S. is to build a revolutionary internationalist party that will lead the struggle for the class rule of the proletariat. Break with the Democrats! For a multiracial, class-struggle workers party! ■

First as police commissioner and then as mayor, Rizzo ran the city for more than a decade as a local police state. In 1964, when the black ghetto in Philadelphia was one of the first in the U.S. to explode, the police set up the notorious Civil Defense (CD) squad, which worked with the FBI to infiltrate or spy on virtually every civil rights or political organization in the city. Lieutenant George Fencel, who headed the CD unit, boasted that “we have some 18,000 names” on file. Fencel’s “counter-intelligence” program served as a model for the FBI’s COINTELPRO operations against the Panthers and other black activists.

For those who scoff at the notion that Mumia's prosecution was a political vendetta and that the massive government surveillance of Jamal was not "relevant" to the trial, consider this interruption in the proceedings just as the prosecution's key witness, prostitute Cynthia White, was about to testify:

"THE COURT: Just a minute. Fencel is on the phone.

MR. MCGILL: Off the record.

(A discussion was held off the record.)

THE COURT: Did you work it out?

MR. MCGILL: There's no problem."

As coached by prosecutor McGill & Co., White went on to falsely testify to seeing Mumia shoot Faulkner. Nobody on the scene remembered seeing White near the shooting. With a police record a mile long, and awaiting trial on three charges at the time of Jamal's arrest, White was particularly susceptible to police coercion. Veronica Jones, another prostitute who knew White, testified she was offered a deal similar to that given White to falsely testify against Jamal: "They were trying to get me to say something that the other girl said...and they told us we can work the area if we tell them." Sabo struck this testimony which went to the heart of White's credibility and police misconduct as "not relevant."

No Justice in the Capitalist Courts

From the moment a critically wounded Jamal was handcuffed to a hospital bed 22 years ago, court after court trampled on Jamal's constitutional rights, including making Jamal's case an exception to their own rules to keep him in the shadow of death. For example, the U.S. Supreme Court in 1990 refused to hear Jamal's petition for review of the initial Pennsylvania Supreme Court decision. The petition challenged the prosecution's use of his past membership in the Panthers in securing the death sentence. About a year later, the same court reversed the death sentence of David Dawson on the grounds that the prosecution improperly used his political affiliation as a member of the racist White Aryan Brotherhood to prejudice the jury.

The “justification” used by both the federal and Pennsylvania state courts for slamming the door shut on Beverly’s confession was that it wasn’t submitted to the courts within the time limitations for newly discovered evidence set by recent laws to cut off death row appeals—Democratic president Clinton’s 1996 Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act and a 1995 Pennsylvania law.

Adopted at a time when it was well known Jamal would soon be filing for post-conviction relief, the latter was explicitly intended to cut off Mumia's appeal rights. Nearly 150 years after the infamous Dred Scott decision, a fighter for black freedom like Jamal has no rights which the capitalist courts are bound to respect.

The capitalist rulers want to see Mumia dead because they see in this eloquent journalist, MOVE supporter and former Panther spokesman the spectre of black revolution, defiant opposition to their system of racist oppression. They seek to execute Jamal in order to send a chilling message to all those who challenge vicious cop repression in the ghettos, who stand up for labor's rights on the picket lines, who protest imperialist mass murder from the Balkans to Iraq. Jamal's case throws a spotlight on the barbaric, racist death penalty, a form of institutionalized state terror directly descended in the U.S. from the system of black chattel slavery.

The death penalty is the ultimate sanction employed by this repressive system as it seeks to contain the explosive pressures generated by the growing gap between a handful of filthy rich and those on the bottom. The parties of capital, Democrats and Republicans, join in pushing racist “law and order” campaigns aimed at intensifying capitalist repression, including through the grotesque speedup on death rows across the country. As Marxists, we are unequivocal opponents of the death penalty, regardless of innocence or guilt; we do not accord the state the right to determine who lives or who dies.

We seek to mobilize working people, minorities and all opponents of racist capitalist repression in protest actions centered on the social power of the labor movement to demand Jamal's freedom. Our fight to free Jamal and abolish the racist death penalty is part of our perspective of winning workers to the understanding that the bourgeois state, with its cops and courts, is not some "neutral" agency which serves society as a whole, but rather exists to defend the class rule and profits of the capitalists against those they exploit. Those who subordinate the call to "Free Mumia" to one for a "new trial" peddle dangerous illusions in the justice of the very courts which have repeatedly upheld the racist frame-up of this courageous fighter for the oppressed.

To put a final halt to the grisly workings of capitalism's machinery of death—be they the guardians of death row or the cops who operate as “judge, jury and executioner” in gunning down minority youth on the street—requires sweeping away this entire system based on exploitation and oppression. The social power to do that lies in the hands of the multi-racial working class, with its numbers, organization and discipline—and most importantly, its capacity to bring the wheels of the profit system to a grinding halt. *Free Mumia Abu-Jamal now! Abolish the racist death penalty!* ■

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September 2001

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Iraq...

(continued from page 1)

not the work of the Basque-nationalist ETA, as Aznar & Co. lyingly insisted. Reportedly, Islamic fundamentalists claimed responsibility for the attack as bloody retribution for Spain’s participation in the Iraq war, which was opposed by 90 percent of the Spanish population. In a surprise upset, the social-democratic PSOE won the election, and the incoming Prime Minister Zapatero threatens to pull Spanish troops from Iraq if the United Nations does not go in. Meanwhile, Zapatero vows to pursue the “war on terror” with a vengeance, targeting the Arab immigrant population in Spain as well as the Basques. Zapatero seeks to deflect massive opposition to the Iraq war by swapping the blue helmets of the UN for the stars and stripes of U.S. imperialism.

In the U.S., many liberals like Ralph Nader and Democratic Party presidential primary candidates Dennis Kucinich and Al Sharpton advocate UN troops as a preferable alternative to the current occupation forces. Contrary to claims that the UN weapons inspection teams helped to stave off the war, they actually set a defenseless Iraq up for slaughter. The UN is nothing more than a den of imperialist thieves and their victims; it has served since its inception as a democratic fig leaf for imperialist slaughter, from the Korean War of the early 1950s that killed over three million people to the first Gulf War. We say: No to UN intervention! Down with the colonial occupation of Iraq!

Imperialists Carve Up the Near East

In an article titled “Hold Bush to His Lie” (*Nation*, 23 February) popular anti-globalization author Naomi Klein wrote, “All of Washington’s reasons for going to war have evaporated; the only excuse left is Bush’s deep desire to bring democracy to the Iraqi people. Of course, this is as much a lie as the rest—but it’s a lie we can use. We can harness Bush’s political weakness on Iraq to demand that the democracy lie become a reality, that Iraq be truly sovereign.” A stable bourgeois democracy in Iraq is a pure fiction, as revealed by the reactionary forces that have emerged under the occupation, from fundamentalists demanding a constitution based on Islamic law—against which many women in Iraq have protested—to



Corbis

U.S. prison camp at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. Under “war on terror,” prisoners are held indefinitely without charges.

rhetoric aside—cleansed of its Ba’athist elements and pliable to U.S. dictates.

Every blow aimed at the U.S. colonial occupiers, as well as their local army and police puppets, is in the interest not only of working people in Iraq, but in the Near East and throughout the whole world. We oppose any repression against those who take up arms against the occupation. At the same time, the communalist attacks against Shi’ites and Kurds (and others) are entirely criminal from the standpoint of the international proletariat and must be condemned. We do not lend one iota of political support to the remnants of the Ba’athist regime or the Islamic fundamentalist forces seeking to impose their own reactionary agendas on Iraqi women, workers, ethnic and religious minorities. Marxists seek to mobilize *proletarian* resistance against the occupation of Iraq using proletarian means of struggle (strikes, hot-cargoing military goods, etc.) in the service of a revolutionary perspective against U.S. imperialism, not only in Iraq but internationally.

The Near East is a patchwork of nationalities and religious and ethnic groupings, with states whose boundaries were artificially drawn by the imperialists to suit their colonial appetites, including control of vital oil reserves. The struggle against imperialist domination and the oppressive rule of the sheiks, kings, colonels, ayatollahs, nationalist and Zionist rulers cannot be resolved under capitalism. There will be no end to ethnic and national oppression, no emancipation of women or an end to the exploitation of working people in the Near East short of thoroughgoing socialist revolutions that open the road to the establishment of a socialist federation of the Near East, as part of the struggle for international socialist revolution.

Among the opponents of the war and occupation many see a huge gap between the U.S. imperialists’ rhetoric about freedom and democracy and what these same rulers do at home and around the world to working people and the oppressed. A graphic example in the Near East itself is U.S. imperialist support to the Zionist rulers in their onslaught against the Palestinian people—many of them now being walled in and walled off from any kind of livelihood while Zionist stormtroopers raze whole towns in the Occupied Territories. If anyone in the Near East possesses weapons of mass destruction it is certainly Israel, courtesy of the imperialists.

Whether or not to raise the call for defense of the Palestinian people and for an end to the Israeli occupation has been a major topic of debate among the organizers of the March 20 protests against the occupation of Iraq. This issue has been divisive because the more right-wing elements in these coalitions fear alienating Democratic Party politicians, who are staunchly pro-Zionist. We call for the defense of the Palestinian people and demand the withdrawal of all Israeli troops and settlers from the Occupied Territories. For both the Palestinian and Hebrew-speaking peoples to equitably exercise their right to self-determination

requires Arab/Hebrew workers revolutions to topple not only the Zionist rulers, but capitalist rule throughout the region.

Imperialism in the Post-Soviet World

A common view among many antiwar activists is that the Bush administration, which has well-known links to U.S. oil companies, simply wanted to get its hands on Iraqi oil. It is the beginning of wisdom to see that the U.S. imperialists had an economic motivation for going to war, but reducing it to that ignores the intent of U.S. imperialism, which was not merely to loot Iraq but to assert its *unique* right to do so against its main economic rivals, such as Germany and Japan.

The war was an assertion of U.S. military superiority and of its control over



Chappatte/International Herald Tribune

the Near East oil spigot on which both Japan and West Europe heavily rely. The intent was to “shock and awe” the U.S.’s imperialist rivals, who are militarily far weaker. In the absence of the destruction of imperialism through socialist revolutions, the economic conflicts between the imperialists can only lead to interimperialist wars, such as World Wars I and II, except this time fought by nuclear-armed powers. While at this time no single imperialist power has the ability to prevail militarily in a war against the U.S., things will not remain the same forever. The possibility of alliances between a combination of imperialist powers, down the road, represents a threat to U.S. hegemony.

There has been a lot of discussion, especially among anti-globalization activists, about a “new imperialism,” which is not surprising given that the Iraq war and occupation empirically negate the ideology of “globalization”—the spoils are going to U.S. imperialism and no one else except on their say-so. Yet the false theory of globalization posits that capitalism has transcended the nation-state. So rather than big corporations being dependent on a particular state power to defend and further their interests, you have so-called multinational and transnational corporations. Supposedly, the world economy is actually controlled by international institutions such as the IMF, World Bank and World Trade Organization.

The fundamental workings of imperi-

alism haven’t changed since Russian revolutionary V.I. Lenin described them in his 1916 work, *Imperialism: the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, where he stated that imperialism is “a struggle of the great powers for the economic and political division of the world.” This struggle is based on international competition for cheap labor, raw materials and spheres of influence. The world economy is defined by this competition between the larger, more advanced nation-states which seek to defend the economic interests of their respective capitalist classes. A capitalist has to be able to defend his property rights with bodies of armed men—if you default on your mortgage, it’s not a bank officer who comes around to throw you out, it’s the police. The same operates on a larger scale and internationally—the imperialist military exists to defend the economic interests of the capitalists of an imperialist nation against their competitors.

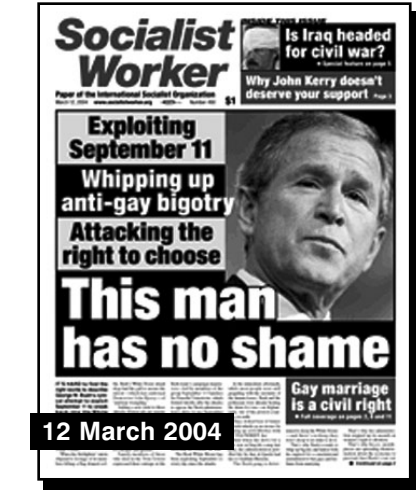
The U.S.’s unrivaled military dominance today is the result of the destruction of the Soviet Union through capitalist counterrevolution over a decade ago. In contrast to most liberals and organizations on the left, who joined the imperialist powers in hailing the destruction of the Soviet Union, we fought to mobilize the working class against counterrevolution and warned that the destruction of the world’s first and most powerful workers state, albeit degenerated and betrayed by the Stalinist bureaucracy, would be a defeat for working people around the world. This was not least because we understood that the U.S. imperialists, the biggest purveyors of death and destruction on the planet, would see no challenge to their appetites for global domination. They are now emboldened enough to announce “pre-emptive” war as official doctrine. The rape of Iraq today is in fact

one of the grim consequences of the destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state.

Class Society and the State

Of all the lies working people are told by the government, the media and the education system, the biggest one is that they share any interest in common with the people who rule this country—and that doesn’t just mean the Bush administration. It means the people who own the factories, mines, banks, industry—what Marxists call the means of production. It also means their representatives in the capitalist Republican *and* Democratic parties whose job is to administer the state so that nothing gets in the way of the capitalists’ right to make and amass profit off the backs of working people here and around the world. The capitalists have cops, courts, prisons and an army—i.e., a state which exists to defend the capitalists and their property rights. The government of the United States is not “our” government, nor can it ever be so long as the system of capitalism remains in place.

One of the most fundamental aspects of capitalist society which is obscured by everyone from George Bush to liberals and especially anti-globalization ideologues is that this society is divided into two fundamental classes with irreconcilable interests. The interests of those who own the means of production cannot be reconciled with those of the working



...neither does the International Socialist Organization, pandering to “anybody but Bush” sentiment.

monarchists and “democrats” who’ve long been on the CIA payroll.

More fundamentally, Iraq is not a nation but an entity carved out of the three major populations in the area by the British imperialists following World War I. These include the Kurdish north, the Sunni Arab center and the majority Shi’ite south (and various others), with each region further riven by clan and tribal rivalries. Under capitalism, “democracy” can only mean the domination of the Shi’ite majority over the Kurdish and Sunni Arab minorities. In such a society, the exercise of secular rule under capitalism is only possible under something like Hussein’s Ba’athist dictatorship, which the Bush administration aspires to replicate—democratic

Noam Chomsky: Radical Poseur

The article below is reprinted from Spartacist Canada No. 140, Spring 2004, the newspaper of the Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyiste, Canadian section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

The featured speaker at the March 20 anti-occupation demonstration in Vancouver is Noam Chomsky, a self-styled “anarchist” whose writings and speeches are popular among radical youth. While

Chomsky exposes some of the more bloody excesses of U.S. military and foreign policy, at bottom he is an ideologue for a more “just” and “democratic” imperialism.

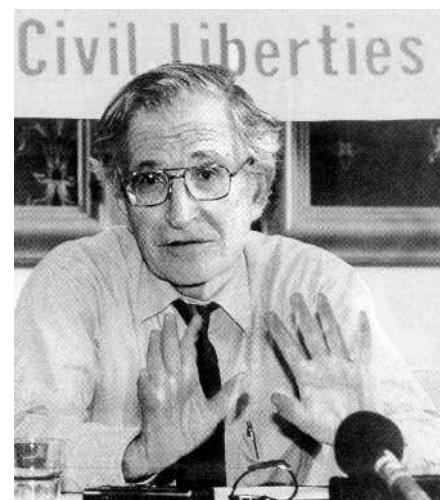
In the buildup to the 1991 U.S. attack on Iraq, Chomsky (like the NDP [social-democratic New Democratic Party]) pushed as an “alternative” to war “the peaceful means prescribed by international law: sanctions and diplomacy”

(Z Magazine, February 1991). The “peaceful” UN sanctions *killed* 1.5 million Iraqis. For years, Chomsky had also been prettifying as an “alternative” one Ahmed Chalabi, head of what he claims was Iraq’s “democratic opposition.”

A wealthy bourgeois politician, Chalabi is a U.S. stooge, head of the American-funded Iraqi National Congress and currently a prominent figure in the U.S.-run “Governing Council” in Iraq who rode into Baghdad with U.S. troops last April. (For more detail, see “Down With Colonial Occupation of Iraq!” SC No. 137, Summer 2003.)

For all his “exposés” of the U.S. rulers’ crimes, Chomsky does not challenge the imperialist world order. Take, for example, his op-ed piece in the February 23 *New York Times* on Israel’s “security wall,” “A Wall as a Weapon.” He rightly condemns the Zionists’ attempt to “turn Palestinian communities into dungeons, next to which the bantustans of South Africa look like symbols of freedom, sovereignty and self-determination.”

But while protesting that the wall’s existing path grabs Palestinian territory, Chomsky opines: “Few would question Israel’s right to protect its citizens from terrorist attacks like the one yesterday, even to build a security wall if that were an appropriate means.” If the wall were built inside “the internationally recognized border,” he continues, it “could then be as forbidding as the



Fergus Wilkie

authorities chose: patrolled by the army on both sides, heavily mined, impenetrable. Such a wall would maximize security, and there would be no international protest or violation of international law.”

While the “anarchist” professor kowtows to “international law,” we Marxists know that the 1948-49 “Green Line” was drawn through the living body of the Palestinian people. Our fight is for a socialist federation of the Near East, the only road for the liberation of *all* the peoples of the region.

Chomsky’s “alternative” is to call on U.S. imperialism to play a progressive role: “Any real chance for a political settlement—and for decent lives for the people of the region—depends on the United States.” Radical youth beware—Chomsky is doing his own bit to “manufacture consent,” pushing the deadly illusion that the imperialist system of war, racism and oppression can be reformed.



AP

Mass Palestinian protest against Israeli wall sealing Palestinian ghettos, February 23. Chomsky defends Israel’s “right” to build wall, as long as it’s inside “the internationally recognized border.”

class—the people whose labor creates the wealth in this society. The fact that the working class creates this wealth through its labor means that it has the social power to shut down production.

Workers actions against the war, especially in the U.S., would have had a qualitatively greater impact than the millions of people marching in all the cities of the world. Why? Because if the people who load the ships with armaments and supplies for the war were to go on strike, and defend such a strike with mass picket lines, the ships wouldn’t get loaded. There were several such actions by transportation workers in Scotland and Italy who refused to drive trains loaded with supplies headed for Iraq during the war. These were a model of what needed to happen more broadly.

Our class-struggle perspective was in direct counterposition to the politics of the antiwar coalitions, which were built in essence to provide a platform for capitalist politicians. The lie promoted by these groups was that if the demands of the antiwar movement were kept to the lowest common denominator that would draw in the greatest number of people, and the rulers would have to take heed of the outrage of the masses. Obviously this didn’t work. Some activists might retort that if our alternative of working-class struggle against the war was so great in contrast, then why didn’t it happen in the U.S.?

The capitalists understand what a huge threat the social power of the working class is to them, and that’s why they not only have cops and anti-union legislation to break up strikes, but also the ideological means such as promoting patriotism, nationalism and racism to keep the workers from using that power. The bloody and militant history of the American labor movement is replete with examples of workers organizing, often under the leadership of reds, to take on the capitalists and succeeding in turning their anti-union laws into worthless pieces of paper. However, especially since the reds were purged from the unions during the McCarthy-era Cold War witchhunts, the leadership of the union movement in the U.S. has been staunchly pro-capitalist and anti-communist.

Part of our task as revolutionaries is to unmask all the false ideas promoted by the capitalists and much of the current leadership of the trade unions so that the social power of the working class can be unlocked and mobilized in the interests of all the exploited and oppressed. We seek to organize workers on the basis of a class-struggle policy rather than the current AFL-CIO politics of exercising pressure on the capitalist politicians through the ballot box and lobbying. No right or reform in favor of the working people and oppressed has ever been won through an election or lobbying—it took class and social struggle to win these things, and that is what is needed to defend them when the capitalists inevitably try to take them away.

That the gap between U.S. rhetoric about “liberating” Iraq and the reality at home is especially palpable for many blacks and minorities in the U.S. was captured by black author Walter Mosley in an interview published in the *New York Times Magazine* last month, where he noted that black people in the U.S. weren’t surprised by the criminal September 11 attack on the World Trade Center. Because of their own experiences with racial oppression at home, black people more readily perceive the widespread hatred of racist U.S. imperialism around the world and this is one of the Achilles’ heels of U.S. imperialism.

The racial oppression of black people

has always been integral to American capitalism, and despite the abolition of slavery through the Civil War and despite the civil rights movement, which won an end to formal Jim Crow segregation, blacks remain forcibly segregated at the bottom of this society. A reflection of this is their disproportionate representation in the military—for many black youth the only chance of going to school or getting a job is to enlist. This, along with the important black component of the American working class, means that black people and the fight for black liberation will be central to ending racist American capitalism.

Break with the Democratic Party of Racism and War!

A whole range of bourgeois supporters of the Iraq war are now wailing that they were cruelly misled by the Bush administration—such is the case of the Democrats who in their majority voted in favor of the March 2003 resolution in support of the war and who retailed the Bush administration’s lying pretext for it. In its defense, the Bush administration is now correctly pointing out that a lot of the intelligence on Iraq dates back to the Democratic Clinton administration which also had a policy of “regime change” in Iraq. To the extent that Democrats have opposed the war, including growing numbers in retrospect, it was based on accepting the premise of the war as justified but quibbling over *how* the Bush



WV Photo

Jesse Jackson addresses October 2002 antiwar protest. Antiwar coalitions built platform for Democrats.

administration went about this.

There were also those politicians, such as those on the platform at antiwar demonstrations, who understood that because many black, minority and working-class people stood in opposition to the war, some Democrats had better position themselves against the war to make sure all these people didn’t lose faith in the Democratic Party. This is why many of the spokesmen at the antiwar demonstrations were black Democrats such as Al Sharpton, Cynthia McKinney and Barbara Lee.

We are opposed to any kind of vote or support to the Democrats, not because of this or that bad policy they might pursue, but because their purpose is to administer capitalism and defend the interests of the capitalists, which necessarily means against the working class and the oppressed.

That is not to say that there aren’t differences between the Democrats and the Republicans. In essence these boil down to the Democrats being better at masking imperialist plunder and capitalist exploitation with a facade of human rights and democracy, while the Republicans are just in your face about it—they don’t feel the need to hide their cronyism or throw a few more crumbs at the poor. The capitalists can make use of either of these faces for a capitalist government—it

continued on page 10



Arab woman weeps in front of her Kirkuk home seized by Kurds, April 2003. U.S. colonial occupation exacerbates national and religious conflicts, which threaten to erupt into all-sided communalist slaughter.

Iraq...

(continued from page 9)

doesn't fundamentally change the system.

There is no better proof of the Democrats' fundamental commitment to defending the interests of U.S. imperialism against working people at home and abroad than their wholehearted support for the so-called "war on terror." The criminal attack on the World Trade Center on September 11 was a huge gift to the American rulers. Under the rubric of the "war on terror," civil liberties have been shredded, thousands of immigrants in the U.S. have been detained and deported, and unknown numbers of foreign nationals as well as U.S. citizens have been declared "enemy combatants" with no rights and spirited off to U.S. military prison camps.

Such a person is U.S. citizen Jose Padilla, on behalf of whom the Spartacist League and the Partisan Defense Committee, a legal and social defense organization in accordance with the views of the Spartacist League, have submitted a "friend of the court" brief. In this brief we describe the "war on terror" as follows:

"It is a 'war' without a defined enemy, a war without end. There is no war by any military definition. There is no shooting war and no battle between state powers. The 'war against terrorism' is a fiction, a political construct, not a military reality. It is a political crusade conducted in the name of ridding society of a perceived evil. It is no more a 'war' in a military sense than 'war against cancer,' 'war against obesity' or a 'war against immorality.' Like the 'war against communism' and the 'war against drugs,' this 'war' is a pretext to increase the state's police powers and repressive apparatus, constricting the democratic rights of the population."

The "war on terror" is a political construct which justifies not only the U.S. government's right to disappear anyone they claim is a terrorist but to assassinate them as well.

Last November the *New York Times* reported that the FBI issued a memorandum ten days before last October's demonstrations against the occupation of Iraq advising local law enforcement officials to report any suspicious activities at demonstrations to the FBI's counter-terrorism squads and warning of potential "threats" ranging from "homemade bombs" to the "formation of human chains"!

The California Anti-Terrorism Information Center helped plan a premeditated cop attack on an April 7 antiwar protest last year at the Port of Oakland where riot-equipped officers fired potentially lethal wooden bullets, pellet-firing "sting bags" and concussion grenades on antiwar activists and longshoremen. In Iowa, federal prosecutors went after participants in an antiwar conference, issuing subpoenas which were fortunately withdrawn after widespread publicity. Under the watchwords of "fighting terrorism," trade unionists, black people, immigrants and all opponents of this oppressive sys-

tem are targeted. But as we have pointed out from the beginning, what this government can get away with in applying their laws depends on class and social struggle.

Liberal Left Pushes Reformist Schemes

There is a veritable hysteria among liberals and many leftists over the 2004 presidential elections as the most important in the history of the world. In a statement urging West Coast longshoremen to campaign for the Democratic Party against Bush, International Longshore and Warehouse Union president James Spinosa stated, "The fate of all American working people...of working people around the world, of human and civil rights and of the global environment hang in the balance." Another example of this hysteria is the panicked liberal/Democratic reaction to Ralph Nader's presidential campaign.

In 2000, the International Socialist

Letter to the Left," which states that "Traditional debates on the left about the value of electoral politics and the lesser evil pale in light of the need to defeat Bush and his congressional accomplices." Funnily enough, the words Democratic Party don't actually appear anywhere in the letter, but the conclusion one should draw is clear.

The *Progressive* (January 2004) published a speech liberal academic Howard Zinn wrote for whoever ends up being the Democratic presidential candidate, which already tells you who Zinn will be voting for. The speech promises a whole range of reforms and pledges to change U.S. foreign policy to that of a "peaceful nation, always ready to defend ourselves, but not sending our troops and planes all over the world for the benefit of the oil interests and the other great corporations that profit from war."

In that small sentence Zinn obliterates



Young Spartacus

As Democratic president Carter launched Cold War II over Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in 1979-80, Spartacist League hailed Soviet forces against U.S.-backed Islamic fundamentalists.

Organization (ISO) and Socialist Alternative called for a vote to Nader. While the ISO has not (yet?) declared its support to Nader's 2004 campaign, Socialist Alternative has. We opposed a vote to Nader in the 2000 elections, as we do today, on principle. Nader is a capitalist politician who ran on the ticket of a small capitalist party, the Greens. Far from being a real working-class alternative, Nader's campaign was intended by his own admission to pressure the Democrats somewhat more in the direction of liberalism, and actually served to draw youth disgusted with the Republicans and Democrats back into the fold of bourgeois electoral politics.

Supposed "anarchist" and virulent anti-communist Noam Chomsky (see page 9) has also been bitten by the anybody-but-Bush bug. He has signed on to a document called "Bush Can Be Stopped: A

any real understanding of imperialism, and perpetuates the myth, as does the whole speech, that capitalism can be reformed to serve the interests of working people and the oppressed rather than those of the rapacious capitalist class. Imperialism is not a policy that the capitalists can choose to employ one day, and not the other—it is a system that will only end with the uprooting of capitalism, and its replacement with a planned and collectivized economy of production for human need and want, rather than profit.

Anti-globalization ideologue Naomi Klein looks to international law to rein in U.S. imperialism's "economic colonization" of Iraq. How? In an article titled "Bring Halliburton Home" (*Nation*, 24 November 2003), she wrote: "Easy: by showing that Bremer's reforms were illegal to begin with." She says, "It's too late to stop the war, but it's not too late to deny Iraq's invaders the myriad economic prizes they went to war to collect in the first place." All the exposure of lies leading into the war and outrage by millions around the world couldn't stop the war, yet Klein believes that through the pressure of international law the U.S. is not going to pillage its new colony!

In a statement author and activist Arundhati Roy made to the World Social Forum in Mumbai in January, reprinted in the *Nation*, she calls for the anti-globalization movement to focus on the struggle to end the occupation of Iraq and become the global resistance to it by "acting to make it materially impossible for Empire to achieve its aims. It means soldiers should refuse to fight, reservists should refuse to serve, workers should refuse to load ships and aircraft with weapons."

While Arundhati Roy stands out in calling for working-class struggle, she also promotes a "corporate campaign" along the lines of some of the actions already carried out by groups such as Direct Action Against the War. Shortly after the war, Roy began calling for

imposing "a regime of Peoples' Sanctions on every corporate house that has been awarded with a contract in postwar Iraq.... Each one of them should be named, exposed, and boycotted. Forced out of business." Roy is falsely positing that consumers, rather than workers, can shut down these companies. Furthermore, with a goal of driving these companies out of business, what makes the others that would take their place any better? A humane or fair capitalist is a fiction.

The view underlying these various campaigns against the likes of Halliburton and Bechtel is that poverty and war don't stem from the capitalist system itself, but from malfeasance, out of control corporations and "undemocratic" rulers such as the Bush administration who fail to listen to the will of the people. This is what leads many to believe that if only we could just shut down the IMF or WTO, or if we could get the UN to enforce international law consistently, then we could have "peace and justice." Fundamentally, this is the illusion that imperialism is a policy rather than a system that needs to be destroyed.

Another premise of such campaigns to "disrupt business as usual" is that through acts of civil disobedience you can force the capitalist rulers to listen to the people and thereby have effective democracy. This wrongly assumes that the ruling class, or a section of it, would do the right thing if only we grab their attention and show the way. Meanwhile, these activists largely ignore the people who really do have the power to shut these companies down and bring production to a grinding halt—the workers. At best, they might view the struggles of the working class as actions by just another of the many sectors of the oppressed. They don't see the working class as the force uniquely capable of shutting the capitalist system down.

The Left Tails on the Left Tails of the Democrats

The main ostensibly revolutionary or Marxist organizations that participated heavily in building antiwar coalitions were the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), International Socialist Organization and Workers World Party. All these organizations are now writing lengthy articles arguing against voting for the Democrats. Yet these words stand in stark contrast to their deeds. In an article arguing against support to supposed "antiwar" candidate Howard Dean, the RCP concludes with the following question: "What would it mean...if the energies and resources of antiwar forces get *subordinated* to a Democratic electoral program that is so fundamentally pro-war and pro-imperialist?" (*Revolutionary Worker*, 18 January).

Here's a news flash for the RCP: the antiwar forces *were* subordinated to a pro-imperialist Democratic electoral program from Day One, thanks to organizations like theirs. These three organizations which are now bemoaning that the antiwar movement has been derailed into an electoral campaign for the Democratic Party are reaping exactly what they sowed. They were the main left-wing proponents of building an antiwar movement designed to boost the electoral fortunes of the Democrats—that is why all these so-called revolutionaries not only couldn't bring themselves to forthrightly call for the defense of Iraq, but didn't dare get on the antiwar demonstration platforms and denounce the Democratic Party for being a party of racism and war, especially if Al Sharpton or Barbara Lee were within earshot. These organizations wanted Democrats on their platforms and did all they could to get them there, and *now* they tell working people to beware! What chutzpah!

We intervened in antiwar demonstra-

NYC NOTICE

The New York Spartacist League's public office will be closed on Saturday, March 20 due to demonstrations against the occupation of Iraq.

WORKERS VANGUARD

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

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

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

Boston

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

Chicago

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

Public Office:

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

Los Angeles

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

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

New York

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

Public Office:

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

Oakland

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

Public Office:

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

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Box 77494
San Francisco
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Columbia...

(continued from page 12)

out to protest on March 9!

At Columbia University, where the black student population is fairly small, the CCCC attempted to heighten racial divisions between students by promoting the lie that Jews run this country and black students are given a free ride. This racist stunt was organized to coincide with the Center for Career Education's Diversity Recruiting Conference, a program to help minority students find jobs. The CCCC, those boys and girls for whom the College Republicans are insufficiently right-wing, are infamous for targeting everyone from gay students to leftists to the late Professor Edward Said. In recent years, the CCCC has brought slavery apologist and all-purpose Reaganite pig Dinesh D'Souza to campus, along with other racist, right-wing ideologues. The Spartacus Youth Club (SYC) has initiated protests at Columbia to expose D'Souza, and also to keep ROTC and military recruiters off campus. A militant, mass, integrated protest on campus would make the racist yahoos think twice about spewing their filth!

The newly formed Columbia University Concerned Students of Color (CUCSC) has submitted a list of demands to the administration. The student de-

mands included calls to create a "safe space" for minorities on campus. The CUCSC leadership seeks to defuse the anger that continues to boil by pressuring the administration to defend the rights of black students. Racial oppression is the bedrock of capitalist America, where black people are a race-color caste forcibly segregated at the bottom of society. The main role of elite schools like Columbia is to train the next generation of technocrats, union-busting lawyers and State Department officials to help maintain the capitalist system. Columbia is also a notorious slumlord of neighboring predominantly black Harlem. It was the administration who turned over the names of foreign and immigrant students to the INS in 2001 soon after Bush declared his "war on terror" anti-immigrant witchhunt. As one campus maintenance worker remarked to a *Workers Vanguard* salesman, Columbia is run by a gang of union-busters. We say that calling for "anti-oppression training" or "disciplinary actions and policies to prevent and handle transgressions against marginalized student populations" will only give the administration a freer hand in attempting to squash political dissent and social struggle on campus.

Tailing behind the CUCSC leadership, the International Socialist Organization (ISO) prefers to beg the administration to act in the interests of the oppressed

rather than endorse our protest mobilizing *against* it. This is not the first time the ISO is trying to head off social struggle. When the KKK sought to stage a race-hate provocation in New York City in October 1999, we mobilized labor/black power and stopped the fascists while the ISO shamelessly enlisted with the Democrats in a "tolerance" for the Klan diversion, even sharing a platform with Latino cops.

Lasting gains cannot be achieved through a strategy of pressuring the campus administration, Congress, the Supreme Court or other capitalist institutions. It took militant, mass struggle to integrate the schools and kick ROTC off campus. Today, as in the past, it will take social struggle to gain any improvement in the lives of oppressed minorities in this society. The SYC defends affirmative action against attempts to further purge blacks and minorities from higher education. We fight for free, quality, integrated education for all! To provide real access to higher education, we call for nationalizing the private universities and for open admissions and free tuition with a state-paid living stipend for students. Open the gates of Columbia to the people of Harlem! We demand full remedial programs at the universities, an end to the racist "tracking" system in the high schools and genuine integration of the schools, including the aggressive

implementation of busing.

As the recent cop killing of 19-year-old Bedford-Stuyvesant resident Timothy Stansbury Jr. shows, to be black in this racist society is to be treated like a criminal. Stansbury was part of a generation that the capitalist class treats as surplus population, to be locked away in prison hellholes or to serve as cannon fodder in brutal imperialist wars like in Iraq. At the same time as the American military terrorizes the people of Iraq, the bipartisan "war on terror" targets immigrants, blacks and labor here in the U.S. It is all an inherent part of the capitalist system, a system where a tiny minority profits from exploitation, oppression and war.

Lacking social power, students must take their fight against racism on campus to the multiracial working class of the city. Only the working class, the class that produces all the wealth of society, has the social power and objective interest to lead the oppressed in struggle against capitalism. Just as it took the Civil War to smash chattel slavery, it will take a socialist revolution to sweep away the entire capitalist system and lay the basis for wiping out the centuries-old legacy of racial oppression. We seek to win students to the perspective of fighting in the interests of the working class and building a revolutionary workers party to lead this struggle. Join us in protesting the racist offensive on campus! ■

tions and events on the basis of the need for working-class struggle against the war and in opposition to the Democratic Party. Imperialist war is an inevitable outgrowth of the capitalist system itself, therefore you cannot fight to end it by joining with representatives of the very system that breeds war. The ISO, RCP and Workers World, including through their Not In Our Name and ANSWER coalitions, did all they could to convince people to unite with a wing of the capitalist class enemy. We are called sectarian for rejecting such "unity," but our business is speaking the truth to working people and youth based on the lessons of the hard-fought struggles of the past.

For New October Revolutions!

The core issue distinguishing us in practice as well as theory from pretty much all those groups and individuals claiming to have a program for changing the world for the better is the defense of those states where capitalism was overturned. The Soviet Union was born in October 1917 during the interimperialist slaughter of the First World War. After three years of war the Russian workers, peasants and soldiers rose up and overthrew the tsarist rulers, and months later the Bolshevik Party under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky led a workers revolution against a weak capitalist coalition government of bourgeois and socialist elements. This was the first time ever that the working class took political power on the basis of its own institutions; the soviets, or workers and peasants councils, served as the basis for the new government. The capitalists and landowners were expropriated and the economic resources of society

were reorganized in the interests of workers and the oppressed, establishing a centrally planned and collectivized economy. The revolution had an enormously liberating effect on all aspects of social and cultural life. The Bolsheviks saw the revolution as the beginning of spreading socialist revolution worldwide, and it inspired millions of workers and the oppressed around the world.

But capitalism was not overthrown in any other country in the wake of the October Revolution—the main reason being the absence of revolutionary vanguard parties such as that built by Lenin in Russia. After a brutal civil war and invasions by imperialist armies seeking to overturn the October Revolution, the Soviet Union was economically and socially devastated and faced international isolation. It appeared that the gap between the liberating goals of the revolution and the grim realities of life in the Soviet Union could not be bridged. Under such conditions the working class tended to become demoralized. Many of the administrators and officials of the ruling Communist Party lost faith in the prospect of socialist revolution internationally and became increasingly concerned with maintaining and advancing their own privileges. These tendencies led to what Trotsky described later as a political counterrevolution in 1924 in which a bureaucratic layer headed by Stalin took political power out of the hands of the working class and proceeded to consolidate his regime.

Trotsky's attitude to these developments was not to wash his hands of the Soviet Union. He understood that while the political regime was no longer one of

working-class democracy, the overturn of capitalist property relations was not reversed. He urged workers around the world to defend the Soviet Union in the same way that workers must defend a trade union in any battle against the capitalists and their state, even if the union has a bureaucratic, sellout leadership. Trotsky understood that there were only two ways in which this contradiction could be resolved: either the Stalinist bureaucracy, becoming more and more the tool of bourgeois forces in the workers state, would open the door to overturning the planned and collectivized economy, bringing back capitalism; or the workers would crush the bureaucracy through a proletarian political revolution and open the road to socialism through the struggle for workers revolution internationally.

Unfortunately, the former took place in the USSR and throughout the East European deformed workers states in the early 1990s. The toll of human devastation for the working masses in these countries as the result of the restoration of capitalism is testament to the superiority of the collectivized economies of the workers states and underscores why defending these was so important. The social gains won through struggle by workers in the countries of West Europe are being shredded in large part because the capitalist classes there no longer feel threatened by the spectre of communism, and interimperialist rivalries have been unleashed as the imperialist powers have dispensed with their former alliance against the Soviet Union.

It is against this scary and brutal post-Soviet world that we fought, not just in words, but in deeds, most notably in East

Germany and Russia. We stood up to the Cold War drive to destroy the Soviet Union, being unique in hailing the Soviet Red Army when it entered Afghanistan on the side of social progress and women's rights against the Islamic fundamentalist cutthroats. These Islamists were cultivated by U.S. imperialism as a bulwark against the spread of communism in Central Asia and the Near East, and it was thousands of innocent working people in the World Trade Center who died when this Frankenstein's monster turned on its U.S. imperialist masters.

Today we apply the same program of unconditional military defense, including the right to possess nuclear weapons, to the remaining deformed workers states: China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba. These are states where capitalism was overturned, but which were built on the Stalinist model, meaning that the working class never held political power. It is elementary that an organization which cannot defend the gains won in the past is incapable of fighting for new victories. That is true of all those who refuse to defend the workers states, including the anarchists, ISO and RCP. It is not coincidental that those who refuse to defend the workers states are the same ones who have a program of reforming capitalism.

As the American section of the International Communist League, we are trying to build a revolutionary party, based on the multiracial working class and the black, Latino and other oppressed sections of American society. The goal of such a party is to shatter U.S. imperialism from within, and in so doing open the road to communism around the world. ■

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CLASS-STRUGGLE DEFENSE NOTES

Number 31 50¢ Summer 2003

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AND GRANTING HIS WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS

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DONALD RUMSFELD,
Respondent-Appellant-cross-Appellee.

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

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WORKERS VANGUARD

New Papers Filed in U.S. Supreme Court

Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!

On March 8, death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal filed a petition for a writ of *certiorari* (review) with the U.S. Supreme Court. Robert Bryan, attorney for Jamal, seeks to overturn last October's Pennsylvania Supreme Court decision upholding Jamal's conviction and death sentence. Jamal's petition cites the overt racial bias of the trial and appellate courts in whose hands Jamal's life has rested. These papers describe courts where even the formal distinction between judge and prosecutor is totally obliterated; where the trial judge blithely pronounces his racist animus toward Jamal; where one of Jamal's key prosecutors becomes one of the appellate judges who rules on whether Mumia is to live or die. They paint a picture of courts more commonly associated with those of the Deep South of the Jim Crow era.

The case of Mumia Abu-Jamal is a textbook example of a classic racist political frame-up. An outspoken champion of the oppressed, Jamal was a target of the

Philadelphia police and J. Edgar Hoover's FBI from the time he was a Black Panther Party (BPP) spokesman at the age of 15. An award-winning journalist known as the "voice of the voiceless" and a supporter of the predominantly black, back-to-nature MOVE organization, Jamal continues to speak out from death row in commentaries carried in *Workers Vanguard* and other papers across the country, condemning racist cop atrocities, denouncing imperialist war and voicing his support for the battles of striking workers.

In recent years, numerous death row prisoners have had their convictions tossed out due to DNA evidence, eyewitness testimony of innocence, recantation of prosecution witnesses who originally testified under police coercion, and other forms of prosecutorial misconduct. *Not Jamal*. Despite conclusive evidence that he is innocent, Mumia still sits in a six by nine foot cell on death row.

For over two years, both Pennsylvania state courts and federal courts have

refused to even consider testimony from Arnold Beverly that he, not Jamal, shot and killed Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner. Beverly's confession, which he has allowed to be recorded on video, is supported by a series of affidavits and hundreds of pages of memoranda prepared by Partisan Defense Committee counsel Rachel Wolkenstein and Jonathan Piper, another attorney associated with the PDC. Jamal was convicted in 1982 on frame-up charges of killing Faulkner on 9 December 1981, at a time when the Feds were conducting at least three investigations of corruption in the Philadelphia Police Department. Beverly's confession states he was "hired, along with another guy, and paid to shoot and kill Faulkner" because Faulkner had reportedly been "a problem for the mob and corrupt policemen." Beverly added, "Faulkner was shot in the back and then in the face before Jamal came on the scene." When Jamal arrived, he was shot in the chest and nearly bled to death.



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Jamal's innocence has been evident from the outset. The PDC and the Spartacist League have repeatedly exposed the D.A.'s case, which rested on three legs: eyewitness accounts that were secured through police manipulation, coercion and outright terror; a purported "confession" by Jamal while he was lying near death in the hospital, which didn't surface until two months after the killing; ballistics "evidence" concocted by the police that the bullets that killed Faulkner were fired from Jamal's gun. But Jamal was saddled at trial with a lawyer he didn't want—and who did not want Mumia's case; a judge, Albert Sabo, known as the "king of death row"; an overwhelmingly white jury; a prosecutor's office that concealed and fabricated evidence and threatened witnesses.

Also pending in the federal courts is Jamal's application for *habeas corpus* relief. Two years ago federal district court judge William Yohn overturned

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SYC Mobilizes Protest at Columbia U.

NEW YORK—Chanting "Defend affirmative action! Down with racist reaction!" and "1,2,3,4—time to finish the Civil War! 5,6,7,8—forward to a workers state!" the Spartacus Youth Club held a spirited speakout at Columbia University on March 9 against the series of recent racist provocations on campus. Attacks on affirmative action like the Columbia College Conservative Club's bigoted anti-affirmative action "bake sale" come in the

Young Spartacus

context of the bosses' wholesale assault on democratic rights under the rubric of the bipartisan "war on terror." SYC speaker Erica Jones said, "The same imperialist rulers who are colonizing and dropping bombs on Iraq have been waging war against black people, immigrants and labor here at home." We pointed out that racial oppression can only be eradicated by getting rid of the capitalist system, and carried signs stating: "For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!"

Several students, professors and union workers endorsed the SYC-initiated united-front protest called under the slogans "Down With Racist Provocations on Campus!" and "Defend Affirmative Action!" However, the leadership of the Columbia University Concerned Students of Color (CUCSC) refused to endorse the protest. While the CUCSC held several silent vigils and a speakout of their own, they wanted to be as far away from our politics as possible. In particular, our sign "Abolish the Administration! For Student/Faculty/Worker Con-



Young Spartacus

SYC-initiated protest against racist provocations at Columbia, March 9.

Down With the Racist Provocations! Defend Affirmative Action!

trol of the Universities!" irritated them at their first silent vigil. Carrying out their role as water boys to the liberals, the reformist International Socialist Organization (ISO) refused to endorse the March 9 protest, as is their habit when

communists motivate necessary struggle. The only sign of the ISO at—or more properly *near*—the protest was a lone member scurrying by.

The "bake sale" is part of a crusade by the right wing to roll back what gains

remain of the civil rights movement. As we said in WV No. 821 (5 March):

"There has been a right-wing onslaught on campuses nationwide, both at state schools and elite private ones. Since the beginning of 2003, College Republicans and other conservative groups have held racist anti-affirmative action 'bake sales' at schools across the country.... The 'bake sales' have grown in number following the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling last year, which did not go far enough for right-wingers in gutting such affirmative action programs as still exist."

We reprint below a March 8 SYC statement circulated with our call for the March 9 united-front protest.

* * *

On February 5, during Black History Month, the disgusting bigots in the Columbia College Conservative Club (CCCC) launched a racist provocation against affirmative action at Alfred Lerner Hall. In an action that was anti-black, anti-immigrant, anti-Semitic and sexist, the CCCC held a so-called "affirmative action bake sale" that grotesquely sold baked goods to Jewish and Asian males at higher prices than to white males; black, Latino and female students were charged even less. Students have been justifiably outraged at the CCCC's blatant provocation. The "bake sale" has been only one among a slew of racist incidents on campus which include a vile cartoon in the *Fed's* most recent issue that mocked the oppression of black people and the Columbia University Marching Band's racist and sexist insults at its "Orgo Night" in December. We call on all anti-racist students and workers to come

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