

U.S. Out Now!



AP



Reuters

Imperialists Carry Out Massacre in Falluja

APRIL 12—In the aftermath of the uprisings centered in the Arab Sunni city of Falluja, in the slums of Baghdad, and in Kut, Najaf and other cities in the Shi'ite south of Iraq, George W. Bush, from an unspecified location in Arkansas, said of his colonial subjects in Iraq: "It's going to take awhile for them to understand what freedom is all about" (*Chicago Tribune*, 7 April). The language of this "educational" experience has been a constant barrage of lies about self-rule and freedom. Its arithmetic has been in the thousands of deaths—over 600 in Falluja alone. The siege of Falluja is the bloody price that the Americans have exacted in retaliation for the killings of four mercenaries ("civilian contractors" in Bushspeak).

The savage U.S. occupation has not endeared the 70 percent of Iraq's population that remains unemployed and mired in abject poverty to their newly won "freedom." Scenes from the last week: AC-130 gunships and attack helicopters firing on heavily populated urban centers; the bombing of mosques during afternoon prayers; missiles fired into residential buildings; tanks mowing down unarmed civilians; bodies littered the streets as Marines rampaged house to house. Marine commander Lt. Col. Brennan Byrne put it right on the line: "Their only choices are to submit or die" (*Newsday*, 11 April). The "liberators" have sparked a widespread struggle against the occupation. The brutal British occupation of Iraq at the conclusion of World War I took three years to accomplish what the U.S. has in months: the

Brutal Occupation Enrages Iraqi Masses



Sahim/AFP

Insurgents celebrate attack on American military convoy outside Falluja. Top: U.S. bomb hits Falluja, April 8. Mosque fills with bodies of victims of U.S. massacre.

unity of Sunni and Shi'ite against the imperialist occupiers—for the moment.

The colonial carnage will not end as long as the U.S. imperialist forces, from the "coalition" allies to the 15,000 mercenaries and CIA agents, are in Iraq. They must get out, *now!* But the imperialists will not give up their domination of the region until they are forced to by working-class struggle, both at home in the imperialist centers and in the Near East. Bush & Co. have no plan, and have never had any plan, to militarily vacate

Iraq. Reportedly the CIA anticipated a Sunni/Shi'ite uprising since January of this year. Subsequently, U.S. occupation chief Paul Bremer's aggressive actions against Falluja and Shi'ite cleric Moktada al-Sadr provoked the uprising. In the weeks before the deaths of the four mercenaries in Falluja, construction began on 14 "enduring" bases for the 110,000 U.S. soldiers scheduled to remain in Iraq for "years." Bremer issued an order placing the Iraqi army under the direct command of U.S. Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez,

while the puppet Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) announced that a U.S.-appointed security adviser would stay in office for five years after the supposed transfer of power to the Iraqi Governing Council on June 30.

Simultaneously, Bremer moved to establish "independent" regulators with essential veto power over Iraqi government ministries while passing a law, unchangeable under the terms of the interim constitution, opening Iraq's economy to foreign ownership—this as the CPA announced that funds for reconstructing Iraq would be administered by the U.S. embassy, the largest in the world, appropriately lodged in Saddam Hussein's presidential palace. What was to be left under the control of the stooge government was the decrepit hospital system, devastated during the more than 12-year-long UN-sponsored blockade that preceded the 2003 U.S. attack. U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson, who pioneered throwing poor people off welfare when he was governor of Wisconsin, said that the system could be rehabilitated if they "just washed their hands and cleaned the crap off the walls" (Naomi Klein, *Nation*, 19 April).

Bremer shut down Sadr's Baghdad newspaper, leveled his *sharia* court in Sadr City and arrested one of his leading aides. Not surprisingly, Sadr's photo is displayed in every part of Iraq south of the Kurdish area, including in sectors where the population is both prosperous and Arab Sunni, as well as on the plinth of the statue of Saddam Hussein dragged down by the American military just a year ago.

Perhaps Bremer's thought, if he had one, was to clear the existing obstacles to installation of the provisional government at the end of June. What has been accomplished is that Sunnis, who currently fear a reversal of the terms of

continued on page 10



On Big Brother in the Skies

24 February 2004

Dear WV:

In your otherwise excellent article “Big Brother in the Skies” (23 January) you give the government too much credit when you state that the Orwellian “Total Information Awareness” program was “scuttled amid a huge public outcry.” Actually, Congress merely went through the pretense of cutting off funding in order to posture as defenders of civil liberties but allowed the program to continue with a wink and a nod. As the Department of Defense’s Inspector General admitted in his report on TIA (12 December 2003), Congress allowed several “components” of TIA to continue.

And now it’s been revealed in an AP wire story (23 February) that the government merely shifted the TIA work to other agencies, notably an obscure office “called the Advanced Research and Development Activity (ARDA) that has used some of the same researchers as Poindexter’s program.”

Their cynicism knows no bounds, and they respect no law which seeks to restrain their power. That is why reformism is hopeless and revolution is necessary.

Mark K.

29 March 2004

To the Editor:

As an airline worker, I very much appreciated your fine article in *Workers Vanguard* No. 818 (23 January) entitled “Big Brother in the Skies.” I wanted to add a couple of related points for your readers on how the “war on terror” affects airline workers as well as the flying public.

Since January 2003, a new Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulation has allowed the FAA to suspend, without a trial, a worker’s license based only on the suspicion of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) that the worker “poses, or is suspected of posing, a risk of air piracy or terrorism or a threat to airline or passenger safety.” After protest from various airline mechanics organizations

and union groups, this regulation was recently amended by the FAA reauthorization bill of December 2003 to provide “U.S. citizens affected by the FAA/TSA airman revocation rules a hearing [that] is conducted before an administrative law judge whose decision can be appealed to the Transportation Security Oversight Board.” Underlining the racist, anti-immigrant nature of the “war on terror,” non-U.S. citizens are still subject to the earlier regulation, giving the government the ability to destroy the livelihood of an airline worker without a hearing, an appeal or without even producing evidence to substantiate the allegations. The earlier regulation allows the Feds to label airline workers as “security threats” while giving no due process rights.

Despite the “safety first” rhetoric, this industry puts the lives of airline workers and the flying public at great risk for the bosses’ unquenchable thirst for profits. According to a *USA Today* article (1 March), “Airlines face the most severe economic downturn in aviation history.” The airlines have responded not just by forcing concessions and gutting the pensions of the workers, but also by attempting to weaken or destroy the unions. Airline workers have a lot of social power, and some sectors have shown militancy like the mechanics at United who repeatedly rejected contracts. That militancy is throttled by the trade-union bureaucracy, which keeps the workers from fighting by supporting the capitalist Democratic Party, pushing national chauvinism, ramming through rotten contracts, bowing before the anti-strike Railway Labor Act and supporting aspects of the “war on terror” such as CAPPS II, which your article underlines.

One of the ways companies try to bust unions is by increasing the “outsourcing” (subcontracting) of maintenance work,

especially labor-intensive heavy maintenance, to outside companies both domestically and internationally. These outside companies often hire inexperienced, underpaid or even unlicensed mechanics who don’t have the union protection that is needed to stand up to the bosses who try to cut corners. The labor tops place the most emphasis on criticism of “outsourced” maintenance to “foreign” maintenance facilities. This is a convenient way to push national chauvinism and deflect the fact that there are plenty of such facilities in the U.S., and there needs to be a fight for the unions to organize the unorganized workers both domestically and in other countries.

The FAA, which coddles and caters to the bosses, provides even weaker oversight to the “outsourced” maintenance sites. At the same time, airline bosses have resisted tougher maintenance programs such as recurrent training because of cost. According to another *USA Today* article (5 March), there have been “three major airline crashes since 2000 blamed in large part on poor maintenance. In all, 112 passengers and crew members died in the crashes.” For the uncrowned kings who run the airline industry, this is a small price to pay.

One of the reasons the bosses are having so much success in attacking the unions is that airline workers are so divided. Those workers fortunate enough to be in a union are organized into different unions depending on their field or company. Also, within the unions there are often tiers, where more recently hired workers get a lower wage scale. There needs to be a fighting union leadership which fights for equal pay for equal work. There needs to be a single industrial union of all workers at all airline companies, from baggage handlers to pilots. The unions must fight to organize non-union workers into the unions. Airline workers should rip up the anti-strike Railway Labor Act that hamstring the unions.

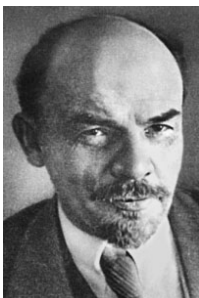
T. H.



TROTSKY

Morals and Class Society

The bourgeoisie and its ideologues, religious as well as secular, teach that morality is based on an immutable set of values. As materialists, Marxists understand that morality, like all ideology, is a product of social development and serves class interests. Bourgeois morality is an essential ideological prop serving to justify capitalist rule. Russian revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky explained how proletarian socialist revolution lays the basis for the rational transformation of society and its moral code.



LENIN

In order to reach a higher stage of culture, the working class—and above all its vanguard—must consciously study its life. To do this, it must know this life. Before the bourgeoisie came to power, it had fulfilled this task to a wide extent through its intellectuals. When the bourgeoisie was still an oppositional class, there were poets, painters, and writers already thinking for it....

But all the efforts made by the eighteenth century philosophers towards subordinating social and private relations to the rule of reason were wrecked on one fact—the fact that the means of production were in private hands, and that this was the basis upon which society was to be built up according to the tenets of reason. For private property signifies free play to economic forces which are by no means controlled by reason. These economic conditions determine morals, and so long as the needs of the commodity market rule society, so long is it impossible to subordinate popular morals to reason. This explains the very slight practical results yielded by the ideas of the eighteenth century philosophers, despite the ingenuity and boldness of their conclusions....

It is only the seizure of power by the working class which creates the premises for a complete transformation of morals. Morals cannot be rationalized—that is, made congruous with the demands of reason—unless production is rationalized at the same time, for the roots of morals lie in production. Socialism aims at subordinating all production to human reason. But even the most advanced bourgeois thinkers have confined themselves to the ideas of rationalizing technique on the one hand (by the application of natural science, technology, chemistry, invention, machines), and politics on the other (by parliamentarism); but they have not sought to rationalize economics, which has remained the prey of blind competition. Thus the morals of bourgeois society remain dependent on a blind and non-rational element. When the working class takes power, it sets itself the task of subordinating the economic principles of social conditions to a control and to a conscious order. By this means, and only by this means, is there a possibility of consciously transforming morals.

—Leon Trotsky, “Habit and Custom” (July 1923) in *Problems of Everyday Life* (Pathfinder Press, 1973)

The “Anarchist” Professor and the Imperialist Stooge

25 March 2004

Comrades:

I have one point to add to the very fine article, “Noam Chomsky: Radical Poseur,” reprinted from *Spartacist Canada* in *Workers Vanguard* No. 822, 19 March. As the article points out, for years Chomsky had “been prettifying as an ‘alternative’ one Ahmed Chalabi, head of what he claims was Iraq’s ‘democratic opposition’.”

Chomsky’s Chalabi played a key role in helping make the administration’s case for the invasion of Iraq. He introduced Iraqi defectors to American intelligence, portraying them as persons with direct knowledge of the Iraqi government and its programs to build

“weapons of mass destruction” (WMD). One of them claimed that the Iraqis hid such programs in “mobile weapons labs,” which have turned out to produce nothing but hydrogen for weather balloons. Knowing full well that these turncoats were totally lacking in credibility, Secretary of State Colin Powell, among others, repeatedly cited their assertions as proof that Hussein was concealing his WMD as a pretext for the devastating invasion. In championing the pro-imperialist Chalabi, Chomsky played his role in “manufacturing consent” for the imperialist rape and occupation of Iraq.

Comradely,
Paul C.

WORKERS VANGUARD

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The closing date for news in this issue is 13 April.

No. 824

16 April 2004

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

BAY AREA

Thursday, 5 p.m.

April 22: **The Green Party: No Alternative to Capitalist Oppression**

San Francisco State University
Cesar Chavez Student Center
Room C-114, Downstairs
Information and readings: (510) 839-0851
or e-mail: sfsyc@sfsu.edu

LOS ANGELES

Saturday, 2 p.m.

April 24: **Labor, Latinos and the Fight for Immigrant Rights**
3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215
(Corner of Beverly Blvd. and Vermont Ave.)
Information and readings: (213) 380-8239
or e-mail: slsycla@sbcglobal.net

NEW YORK CITY

Tuesday, 8 p.m.

April 27: **China: Defend, Extend the Gains of the 1949 Revolution! For Workers Political Revolution to Oust the Stalinist Bureaucracy!**

Columbia University
116th St. and Broadway
Fayerweather Hall, Room 302
Information and readings: (212) 267-1025
or e-mail: nysl@compuserve.com

Visit the ICL Web Site:

www.icl-fi.org

Protest Cop Roundup of Turkish Leftists in Europe!

The following protest statement was issued jointly on April 13 by the *Comitato di difesa sociale e proletaria (Codispro)* in Italy and the *Komitee für soziale Verteidigung (KfsV)* in Germany, legal and social defense organizations affiliated with the *Lega Trotskista d'Italia* and *Spartakist Arbeiterpartei Deutschlands*, respectively. It has been sent to Italy's minister of the interior, Giuseppe Pisanu, and Prosecutor Antonio Miriano of the Perugia prosecutor's office; to German minister of the interior Otto Schily; and to Turkey's minister of the interior, Abdulkadir Aksu, and Prime Minister Erdogan.

We protest the raid and arrests of supporters of the DHKP-C and of the Anti-Imperialist Camp! In coordinated dawn raids on April 1, part of "Operation Thrace" conducted by paramilitary police squads in five European countries and in Turkey, dozens of leftist militants (57 according to *La Repubblica*), most of them Turkish, were rounded up and thrown in jail. They are accused of supporting the DHKP-C (Devrimci Halk Kurtulus Partisi-Cephesi), the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party-Front.

There have been reports of 37 arrests in Istanbul, but persecutions and arrests have also occurred in Greece, Germany and Holland. Feriye Erdal, a DHKP-C militant whose extradition the Turkish government has been seeking for years, has been arrested in Belgium and risks ending up in the hell of the Turkish jails. Er Avni and Kilic Zeynep were arrested in Italy, together with three militants of the Anti-Imperialist Camp based in Perugia: Moreno Pasquinnelli, Maria Grazia Ardizzone (Er Avni's wife) and Alessia Monteverdi. Since their arrests, these militants have been confined in isolation, denied access to lawyers, and are accused of "association for terrorist aims" and of "subversion against the democratic order," under the infamous Article 270 TER that originated in the fascist "Rocco Code" and which was strengthened after September 11.

And what are their "crimes"? To have provided lodging, support and assistance to Turkish political refugees (and even to have married or been witness to a refugee's wedding!). As their defense lawyer, Giuseppe Pelazza, said, "At this point, to be incriminated all that is required is to have aided any militant who has problems in his country. It could also be sufficient to have organized a series of conferences with a spokesman of the Colombian FARC, or of the Kurdish PKK, or of [Basque political party] Batasuna." *We demand the immediate release of all the arrested and that all charges be dropped! Freedom for all leftist prisoners! No to*

the special emergency "anti-terrorist" laws! No to the deportations!

This continent-wide raid against the Turkish left and its supporters occurs amid a hysterical climate whipped up against Arabs and immigrants by the European bourgeoisies and intensified following the criminal terrorist attacks in Madrid on March 11. It represents a



Reuters

Italian prosecutor announces April 1 arrests as part of international crack-down on Turkish leftists and their supporters.

dangerous escalation in anti-left, anti-immigrant state terror. In Italy, Interior Minister Pisanu and the bourgeois press have leapt at the opportunity to insinuate "collaboration" between "groups and individuals" on the Italian left and "international terrorist organizations." On April 2, without any judicial authorization, the police launched a huge "preventative" dragnet to capture 161 North African immigrants who were accused of being "Islamic fundamentalists," most of whom were later released for lack of evidence or thrown into the CPT [special prisons for immigrants] and then deported as "illegal aliens."

The godfathers of the repressive Turkish regime are the imperialist governments of Europe and the United States, who for decades have financed the war against Turkish leftists and the Kurdish people. German imperialism delivered the arms that the Turkish state uses for the suppression of the Kurds. In Europe, the persecution of the DHKP-C is an old story. The Italian Digos [political police] and German secret services collaborated with the Turkish police in hunting down the DHKP-C; Turkish left group Devrimci Sol and the PKK were outlawed in Germany in the early '90s; PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan was first arrested in

Italy and then delivered by the Greek authorities to the Turkish secret services; not to mention the countless raids and deportations of Kurdish refugees back to torture and death: this is the bloody contribution of "Fortress Europe."

Behind the facade of "democratization," Turkish prime minister Erdogan's "moderate" Islamic government contin-

ues its systematic terror against the 15 million Kurds in Turkey that has resulted in nearly two million refugees. Since 1999, 37,000 Kurds have been killed by the Turkish military! Besides being outlawed in Turkey, where dozens of its militants are among the 110 who died during the heroic hunger strikes against the chilling conditions of the Turkish state jails, in May 2002 the DHKP-C was placed on

the "blacklist" of organizations deemed by the European Union to be "terrorist," along with the ETA Basque nationalists and the Palestinian PFLP. The "blacklist" is a license for the European police to persecute, arrest and deport supporters of these groups.

Those arrested in Italy have openly carried out their political activity for years. They are victims of a huge espionage operation: *56,000 hours of phone interceptions, 10,000 hours of Internet interceptions, 5,000 hours of bugging, 2,500 hours of shadowing and "intrusions" into private homes!* As *Libera-zione* commented (2 April), this was more than the NSA [National Security Agency], "the CIA's big brother," did in order to intercept Soviet communications in the Arctic! Last March in Britain, the government spent some £1 million on an operation to frame up six militants of the DHKC (Devrimci Halk Kurtulus Cephesi—Revolutionary People's Liberation Front), a group which has for some years been actively organizing defense of Turkish political prisoners against the brutal "F-type" prisons and isolation torture. This frame-up failed miserably when the court was forced to recognize the group's legality.

The aim of "Operation Thrace" is clear: to reinforce racist terror against the immigrant communities in Europe, to label as "terrorist" anyone who opposes the colonial occupation of Iraq or who defends the Palestinian people against Zionist terror. Above all, they want to prepare the ground for smothering and repressing working-class struggle against rising poverty, insecurity and unemployment. Despite huge political differences with the organizations that have been targeted, we know that *an attack against one is an attack against all! Freedom for the political prisoners of the Anti-Imperialist Camp and of the DHKP-C! Down with the ban on the DHKP-C! Down with the colonial occupation of Iraq! All imperialist troops out now! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!*

The Codispro and KfsV will strive to make this case known in the workers movement and we call on the trade unions of Europe and Turkey to mobilize in defense of immigrants and for the freedom of leftist political prisoners. ■

Spartacist League/SYC Forums

How the Liberals and Reformists Derailed the Struggle for Integration: For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

Wednesday, April 21, 7 p.m.

First Parish Church, 3 Church St., Harvard Square, Cambridge

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

BOSTON

Stop Bipartisan Attacks on Women's Rights! Free Abortion on Demand!

Saturday, April 17, 4 p.m.

University of Chicago, Bartlett Gymnasium—Student Lounge
57th and University Ave.

CHICAGO

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

Revolution vs. Reform U.S. Out of Iraq! UN Stay Out! For a Revolutionary Workers Party that Fights for All the Oppressed!

Thursday, April 22, 12 noon
Pasadena City College, Room R218

For more information: (213) 380-8239
e-mail: slsycla@sbcglobal.net

LOS ANGELES

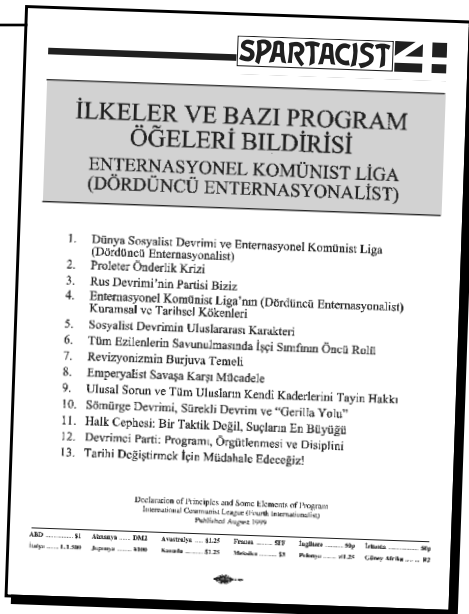
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For the Right of Gay Marriage...and Divorce!

Marriage and the Capitalist State

"Abolition of the family! Even the most radical flare up at this infamous proposal of the Communists.

"On what foundation is the present family, the bourgeois family, based? On capital, on private gain. In its completely developed form this family exists only among the bourgeoisie. But this state of things finds its complement in the practical absence of the family among the proletarians, and in public prostitution.

"The bourgeois family will vanish as a matter of course when its complement vanishes, and both will vanish with the vanishing of capital."

— *Communist Manifesto* (1848)

Until the welcome day capitalism *does* vanish, the monogamous family remains the legally enforced social model, at least in Western societies, for the organization of private life in its most intimate aspects: love, sex, bearing and raising children. It is the central social institution oppressing women; anti-gay bigotry flows from the need to punish any "deviations" from this patriarchal structure. Why anyone not under social pressure or economic duress would voluntarily enter the bonds of matrimony is, of course, one of life's mysteries. Nonetheless, it appears that these days the only people who actually want to get married are the only ones President Bush wants to stop: gays and lesbians.

Absolutely, they ought to have the right to marry. And just as absolutely, we socialists fight for a society in which no one needs to be forced into a legal strait-jacket in order to get medical benefits, visitation rights, custody of children, immigration rights, or any of the many privileges this capitalist society grants to those, and only those, who are embedded in the traditional "one man on one woman for life" legal mold.

Controversy over "gay marriage" has roiled the U.S. since last November, when the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court ruled that permitting only "civil unions" for gay couples was unconstitutional, thus establishing the right to gay marriage in Massachusetts. In February the San Francisco mayor ordered same-sex marriage licenses issued, and 4,037 gay and lesbian couples from 46 states and eight countries got hitched before ceremonies were ordered halted on March 11. The Green Party mayor of New Paltz, New York, jumped into the fray, officiating at 25 same-sex marriages.

When he was barred by court order from continuing, two local Unitarian ministers took over, only to have criminal charges filed against them by the Ulster County D.A. for solemnizing "unlicensed marriages" in March.

In 1996, Clinton signed the Defense of Marriage Act which pronounced, "the

by every religious faith," complaining that "After...millennia of human experience, a few judges and local authorities are presuming to change the most fundamental institution of civilization." Meanwhile, the *Wall Street Journal*, beady profit-making eye on the bottom line, featured a piece on "Cashing In on Gay

tion. As Lenin pointed out in his 1902 work *What Is To Be Done?*:

"Working class consciousness cannot be genuinely political consciousness unless the workers are trained to respond to *all* cases of tyranny, oppression, violence and abuse, no matter *what class* is affected....Why is it that the Russian workers as yet display so little revolutionary activity in connection with the brutal way in which the police maltreat the people, in connection with the persecution of the religious sects, with the flogging of the peasantry, with the outrageous censorship, with the torture of soldiers, with the persecution of the most innocent cultural enterprises, etc.?... We must blame ourselves for being unable as yet to organize a sufficiently wide, striking and rapid exposure of these despicable outrages. When we do that (and we must and can do it), the most backward worker will understand, *or will feel*, that the students and religious sects, the muzhiks and the authors are being abused and outraged by the very same dark forces that are oppressing and crushing him at every step of his life."

Here in the United States, one of the most politically backward "advanced" capitalist countries on earth, saddled with a huge burden of puritanism and religious fundamentalism to boot, there is a lot of backwardness on the gay question.

Even among black workers, historically among the most militant in the proletariat and in general those with the fewest illusions in the "good nature" of this rotten capitalist social order, there is a significant amount of anti-gay prejudice. Much of it is pushed by conservative forces in the black church, although even the black churches are deeply split on this question. As we wrote in our article, "For the Right to Gay Marriage!": "In its extreme, one gets the phenomenon of a black Baptist minister, the Rev. Gregory Daniels, who declared, 'If the K.K.K. opposes gay marriage, I would ride with them' (*New York Times*, 1 March). He might saddle up, but it will be a short ride—the first target of this motley collection of nativist, anti-labor fascists is black people" (WV No. 821, 5 March).

In contrast to this myopic anti-gay prejudice is the compassion so many black people feel because they know firsthand the torment and danger of oppression and discrimination. A Massachusetts State Senator from Roxbury put it well: "I know the pain of being less than equal, and I cannot and will not impose that status on anyone else. I was but one generation removed from an existence in slavery. I could not in good conscience ever vote to send anyone to that place from which my family fled." Others can't see that an injury to one is an injury to all, and so in a backhanded way end up in the camp of the racist anti-gay bigots. Black columnist Adrian Walker, writing in the *Boston Globe* (12 February), quoted one clergyman: "Think about Emmett Till, the Scottsboro Boys, and those police dogs in Birmingham—and then tell me they've faced what we've faced. This has nothing to do with civil rights." This reflects in part the pernicious influence of Democratic Party "constituency" politics, where one sector of the oppressed is pitted against another in the scramble for aid from a state which defends capitalist rule.

Of course there are many, and qualita-



Mata/AFP

Lesbian newlyweds in San Francisco embrace as religious bigots invoke wrath of god.

word 'marriage' means only a legal union between one man and one woman as husband and wife." With unholy glee, Christian fundamentalists of all sorts are now pushing an amendment to the U.S. Constitution banning states from recognizing gay marriage (39 states already refuse to countenance it). Others warn direly that the floodgates of unspeakable immorality are now open. Polygamy is the least of it; Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, dissenting from last year's Supreme Court decision overturning Texas sodomy laws, claimed that decision could abolish bans not only on same-sex marriage, but also "adult incest, prostitution, masturbation, adultery, fornication, bestiality, and obscenity."

President Bush, supporting the anti-gay constitutional amendment, intoned: "The union of a man and a woman is the most enduring human institution, honored and encouraged in all cultures and

Marriage" (March 11), while vendors presented "Loveland," a "Same-Sex Wedding Expo" at New York's Jacob Javits convention center.

All this sudden churning of the crazed, hypocritical witches' brew that passes for American political discourse these days, especially on questions involving sex, certainly has its darkly humorous and bizarre side. Partly that's because the messy reality most people actually live in bears little resemblance to the rigid official portraits of Christian moral rectitude this government claims as models of social behavior. But the deeper social issues involved are deadly serious, ranging from the most intimate personal questions to broad areas of responsibility for raising new generations, and how to care for others, whether family, friends or lovers; in short, how "private life" in its entirety is defined and organized.

Workers Must Fight for Democratic Rights for Gays!

Apocalyptic predictions of the end of civilization if gays are allowed to marry are obviously hysterical fantasies; at the same time, gay marriage in itself will not end the often deadly prejudice and pain gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people encounter every day in this homophobic, anti-sex society. But that pain makes it even more important to fight for every possible democratic right, every form of social and political equality that can be wrested from this society.

It is a vital task of the workers revolutionary vanguard to fight for full democratic rights for gays—including, today, marriage rights—and to fight to win the working class to this cause. The Spartacist League has done this since its incep-



Michael Shaw

tive, differences between black oppression and gay oppression in this society. Racism is the bedrock of American capitalism, the great fault line in American politics since the founding of the nation on the backs of black slaves. The ruling class consciously manipulates racism to weaken the proletariat. The fight for black freedom will be central to the proletarian revolution in the U.S. For that revolution to succeed, the working class, including its strategic black component, must understand its historic task is to abolish class society in order to open the road to human freedom for *everyone*. And that most certainly includes gays—and everyone else who, however self-defined, rebels against the straitjacket social roles imposed by the capitalist ruling class.

Further, violence against gays, lesbians and, increasingly, transgendered people is a deadly constant on America's mean streets and in the repressive holding pens known as public schools. The grisly 1998 murder in Laramie of Matthew Shepard, a 21-year-old gay Wyoming student who was kidnapped, beaten, burnt and then left tied to a fence to die, shocked the nation. Though accurate statistics are almost impossible to come by, given that many victims don't come forward because they rightly fear more harassment from cops, school authorities or parents, and because official statistics don't always accurately list "hate crimes," there are still well over 1,000 reported cases a year of violence, sometimes fatal, against gays and lesbians and others deemed sexually "deviant."

A recent Internet search uncovered an article from the Arizona *Tucson Citizen* (23 February) titled "Gays, Jews Top Targets of Hate Crimes Here," which described the June 2002 beating to death of 24-year-old Philip Walsted, who was gay. It was a hate crime, according to police. In January of this year another gay man was found lying on the street, badly beaten, near a gay bar in Tucson, while a gay University of Arizona student was stabbed in 2000. That's just a few stories



Fred W. McDarrah

New York City, June 1969: Young gay activists gather outside Stonewall bar after brutal cop attack which triggered "Stonewall Rebellion."

from one city. According to the Winter 2003 Southern Poverty Law Center's Intelligence Report, there were 27 murders of transgendered people in a 21-month period (2002-2003) in the United States. The point of these few examples is not to "prove" that any social group is more or less hurt than any other, but to indicate that moral regimentation is part of what keeps this unjust society running the way it does.

It was a good thing that the U.S. Supreme Court struck down sodomy statutes in its 2003 *Lawrence v. Texas* ruling, because it explicitly overturned the Court's infamously reactionary 1986 decision in *Bowers v. Hardwick* that upheld states' anti-sodomy laws. That decision castigated gays with statements like "proscriptions against sodomy have ancient roots." Chief Justice Warren Burger practically called for a holy war

Spartacists at 1999 NYC one-year anniversary memorial rally for Matthew Shepard (inset), murdered by anti-gay bigots in Wyoming.

WV Photo



AP

against homosexuals, writing approvingly in his concurrence that "Blackstone described 'the infamous crime against nature' as an offense of 'deeper malignity' than rape, a heinous act 'the very mention of which is a disgrace to human nature,' and 'a crime not fit to be named'." This is the legal language that gives cover to gay-bashing.

Gays still don't have full civil rights: they aren't allowed to serve openly in the U.S. military, for example. According to the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, a gay rights group, in the ten years since Democratic president Bill Clinton adopted the infamous "don't ask, don't tell" policy, around 10,000 service members have been discharged for being openly gay. As we stated when that policy was raised: "Open gays and lesbians have just as much right as anyone else to participate in the armed forces," while raising the classic Marxist slogan of "Not one man, not one penny" for the military ("Gays in the Military," WV No. 569, 12 February 1993). This is the tradition of militant Marxism in opposition to imperialist war. At the same time, the military is a microcosm of society as a whole, and so we fight against racist atrocities and discrimination in the armed forces just as we do in the rest of society. The fight to integrate black soldiers fully into the armed forces toward the end of World War II created a potentially powerful base for struggles for black emancipation—and in fact black civil rights activists also fought for homosexual rights in the armed forces then.

Government and Social Control of Women

Many people still would argue, gays should have democratic rights, but why marriage? The capitalist politicians running for president are all dancing around the pretty meaningless "civil union" cop-out, basically catering to religious reactionaries with votes. But isn't marriage in some sense "special," more private, more "sacred" somehow? Not at all. Monogamous marriage is a creation of society, not god (since there isn't one), and it has been used historically as a means of reactionary social control by the ruling class.

We advocate effective consent in all sexual relations and think that what any combination of individuals do in bed is nobody's business but the participants themselves, as long as it's consensual. While defending the right to gay marriage, we also argue that the "marriage mania" represents a fundamentally conservative thrust by the well-to-do petty-bourgeois gay milieu. It's a far cry from "free love" and the Stonewall Rebellion of 1969 to today's marriage ceremonies, PTA meetings and Democratic and Republican Party fund-raisers. In the quest for bourgeois "respectability," gay pride day organizers have viciously banned NAMBLA (North American Man-Boy Love Association) from their marches (thereby fueling the "anti-pedophilia"

hysteria which targets all gays) and welcomed contingents of gay cops who spend a good part of their time busting "sex offenders."

Nonetheless, by analogy to our position on the armed forces, we oppose excluding any category of people from access to the privileges and benefits such institutions offer in this society. At the same time, in the course of fighting for these rights, we seek to convince activists that to really resolve women's and gay oppression it is necessary to create a socialist society, in which the current functions of the bourgeois family are socialized: communal childcare; communal kitchens; free, quality health care; and in all ways freeing women from the burden of child rearing and household slavery.

A look at the history of monogamous marriage in the United States reveals its use as a tool of governmental control. A valuable book on this subject, Nancy F. Cott's *Public Vows: A History of Marriage and the Nation* (Harvard University Press, 2000), states: "The structure of marriage...facilitates the government's grasp on the populace.... In the form of the law and state enforcement, the public sets the terms of marriage, says who can and cannot marry, who can officiate, what obligations and rights the agreement involves, whether it can be ended and if so, why and how." The following history is largely drawn from that book; quotations from other sources are noted.

One of the book's central themes is how entire categories of people, especially those deemed "inferior," were denied the legal right to marry in many states. This included, most notoriously, black slaves, who of course had no rights whatsoever. And for decades after the Civil War, blacks and Asians were banned

from marrying whites. Additionally, as Cott writes, "Prohibiting divergent marriages has been as important in public policy as sustaining the chosen model." Thus polygamous Mormons and Native Americans were forbidden to practice their own forms of "marriage," while attempts at utopian communes made in the years before the Civil War came under massive assault following the North's victory and the consolidation of the American nation under the strengthening grip of industrial capitalism.

In America from the beginning, marriage, though infused with Christian doctrine, was a matter of governmental control, not primarily a religious institution, because the U.S. was established on the formal basis of separation of church and state. In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, marriage itself, based on older common law, was seen as "a form of governance.... A man's headship of a family, his taking the responsibility for dependent wife and children, qualified him to be a participating member of a state.... Under the common law, a woman was absorbed into her husband's legal and economic persona upon marrying, and her husband gained the civic presence she lost." This concept in fact continued right up through the 20th century, and was really only dealt a decisive blow, in terms of public civil rights at least, with women getting the right to vote nationally in 1920. However, Congress determined in 1922 that a wife would lose her citizenship if she married a foreigner and stayed in his country for two years; other grounds for female loss of citizenship included marriage to an Asian, a polygamist—or an anarchist!

Within the strict confines of the marriage relationship, male supremacy remained largely intact. Cott describes three U.S. Supreme Court cases, in 1904, 1908 and 1911, all of which essentially upheld the husband's right to control of his wife's body. The 1904 case determined a husband's right to collect "damages" from his wife's lover in a case of adultery, even asserting that the husband's right to "exclusive" sexual intercourse was "a right of the highest kind, upon...which the whole social order rests" (rhetorical excess, to be sure; were this literally true, civilization would have collapsed long ago). The 1908 case justified Congress's ban on bringing women to the U.S. for an "immoral purpose," thus keeping out a man and his mistress and upholding the government's authority to legislate monogamy and punish women who transgressed. The 1911 case involved a woman's attempt to sue her husband for assault and battery. The Supreme Court refused to interfere between man and wife, rejecting the "radical and far-reaching" belief that a wife could sue her husband for injuries "as though they were strangers," and that it was "better to draw the curtain, shut out the public

continued on page 9

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

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

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

Boston

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

Chicago

Box 6441, Main PO
Chicago, IL 60680
(312) 563-0441
Public Office:
Sat. 2-5 p.m.
222 S. Morgan
(Buzzer 23)

Los Angeles

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

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

New York

Box 3381, Church St. Sta.
New York, NY 10008
(212) 267-1025
Public Office:
Sat. 1-4 p.m.
299 Broadway, Suite 318

Oakland

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

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

San Francisco

Box 77494
San Francisco
CA 94107

TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA/LIGUE TROTSKYSTE DU CANADA

Toronto

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

Vancouver

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

Abortion...

(continued from page 12)

form of consensual sex, as well as gambling, drug use and pornography. Our youth group program back in 1971 said: “Laws against gambling and various sexual practices reflect official puritanism allied to organized religion, which acts as an important ideological pillar of capitalism, convincing the masses there can be no happiness this side of the grave.” We say that the government should get out of the bedrooms. As a general framework, people should be allowed to make their own decisions about what they do with their bodies, as long as it is consensual, and we don’t make judgments on their morals for doing so. Just about everything to do with sex is stifled, perverted and degraded in the name of bourgeois morality and religion.

Democratic rights are indivisible; you can’t defend one without defending them all. But such rights are always limited, temporary and reversible under capitalism and can only be secured through determined class struggle and, finally, through working-class state power. By appealing to and relying on the reactionary bourgeois state in the name of the Democratic Party, the liberals and feminists and the various reformists who claim to support legal abortion, in fact, have paved the way to defeat after defeat. Every struggle for democratic rights, if it is to lead to the liberation of all the oppressed, must be linked to the struggle for *full independence of the working class from the capitalist state* and the destruction of capitalist class rule. This means we fight for every genuine reform possible by using the methods of class struggle that will transform the working class into a class conscious of its historic mission to liberate humanity.

I want to make this point about the centrality of the working class very concrete. For the last five months, upwards of 60,000 members of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union were on strike or locked out in Southern California, fighting to defend their benefits and wages and against multi-tier pay schemes. The right to health care was a central issue in this strike and one of the reasons this strike was popular and supported by broad sectors of the population.

Women, men, black, white, Latino and Asian workers were determined to hold out and walked picket lines together, fought off scabs and sacrificed their personal well-being to struggle for a decent life. Standing side by side on a picket line in joint action lays the basis for transcending the divisions and prejudices that the ruling class foments every day. The workers were not lacking in determination. Nonetheless, a losing contract was shoved down their throats a couple of weeks ago by the treacherous, pro-capitalist union leadership which played by the bosses’ rules.

In fear of the class struggle that would sweep them away in its wake, the union leadership in this country has, for the last several decades, derailed militant strikes with “corporate campaigns” and lawsuits. The workers are disarmed by their misleaders’ acceptance of the capitalist system of profit, their acceptance of the labor laws issued by the bosses’ government and courts and by their program of class collaboration with the capitalists, expressed chiefly through political support for the Democratic Party. If the UFCW strike had been won by the workers exercising their power to shut down all business as usual, and if broad sections of the multiracial working class had been mobilized to come out in solidarity, then that victory would have done more for the fight for health care, for abortion rights, for gay rights, black and immigrant workers’ rights and women’s rights than a dozen Democratic Party-dominated rallies in Washington.

Our task is to build the revolutionary anti-capitalist leadership that is so desperately needed. In 1902 the Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin explained in *What Is To Be Done?* that a revolutionary party that



Reuters

can lead the working class to victory must be “the tribune of the people...able to react to every manifestation of tyranny and oppression, no matter where it appears, no matter what stratum or class of the people it affects...able to take advantage of every event, however small, in order to set forth *before all* his socialist convictions and his democratic demands, in order to clarify for *all* and everyone the world-historic significance of the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat.”

Racism, Class Oppression and “Family Values”

Let’s go back to the time of the passage of *Roe v. Wade* in 1973. It did not come out of the blue. The upsurge in social struggle in America in the 1950s and ’60s cracked the reactionary domestic climate of the 1940s and ’50s. In the Cold War period, Jim Crow segregation reigned in the South, while hardened segregation in jobs, housing and education existed North and South. Women were forced out of the wartime factories back into a very romanticized, but in reality isolated, existence of home and



Lehman/SABA

Democratic president Bill Clinton signs bill gutting welfare in 1996, starving millions of single mothers and their children.

Rickie Solinger, a feminist historian, makes the point in *Wake Up Little Susie* that the Supreme Court of 1973 that ruled on *Roe v. Wade* (which at the time was two-thirds Republican appointees) was already predisposed to legalizing abortion because of the fabricated hysteria about “the population bomb,” which really translated into fear of overpopulation of the non-white peoples of the globe. After the uprising in Watts in Los Angeles in August 1965, government hearings claimed that supposed overpopulation would “worsen the United States unemployment problem, greatly increase the magnitude of juvenile delinquency, exacerbate already dangerous race tensions...and further subvert the traditional American governmental system.”

Solinger also makes the point that the liberals’ appeal for abortion rights based solely on the harm done by “back-alley butchers” fed into the established notion that women are helpless victims who must be saved by the benevolent state. So from the get-go, the official leadership of the mass struggle for the basic democratic right of abortion posed their

and today is the capitalist state. That’s what kills poor women. Transforming the fight for abortion rights into a sanitized “pro-choice” movement with the catch phrase “Who decides?” represented a denial of the class and race oppression that makes “choice” meaningless for the masses of impoverished women and youth. NARAL Pro-Choice America, at one time known as the National Abortion Rights Action League, has gone through multiple name changes over the years, and they have consciously deep-sexed the word “abortion” to appease the right-wingers, operating on their terrain and seeking to be as acceptable as possible.

William Saletan’s recent book, *Bearing Right*, documents how the liberals and bourgeois feminists of NARAL, NOW [National Organization for Women] and Planned Parenthood have spent 20 years accommodating and backtracking on full abortion rights, lobbying and campaigning, paving the way for one defeat after another. The book, however, buries among the details of failed campaigns the fact that from the beginning the liberals and reformists narrowed their demand to solely *legalizing* abortion in order to preserve access to abortion for *white, middle-class women*. They dumped poor women, and the immediate fruit of this was the 1976 Hyde amendment, supported by Democrats, that denied federal funds for abortions.

Planned Parenthood appealed to the anti-abortion and anti-welfare bigots by raising the argument that it was more expensive for the state to raise an unwanted child than to pay for an abortion. They still lost. Their slavish accommodation to the right wing parallels an equally despicable and racist argument that you see in liberal anti-death penalty literature: that it is more expensive to execute a criminal than to give him a life sentence. In America, where racism underpins capitalist rule, the death penalty is a legacy of slavery and represents a genocidal impulse toward the black population. In liberal pro-choice parlance, an “unwanted child” is a code word for “future black criminal.”

Since the legalization of abortion, the religious fanatics have only been emboldened by the liberals’ embrace of reactionary “family values.” In 1992, the media welcomed the ruling in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* because it *didn’t* overturn *Roe v. Wade*. What it did do is legalize waiting periods and parental consent laws and opened the floodgates to restricting abortion rights. Rehnquist said: “*Roe* continues to exist, but only in the way a storefront on a western movie set exists: a mere façade to give the illusion of reality.... *Roe v. Wade* stands as a sort of judicial Potemkin Village.” We wrote at the time (Saletan mentions this as well) that Planned Parenthood and the ACLU criminally launched the *Casey* suit as a political maneuver calculated to bring on a reactionary decision. The liberals hoped this would heat up the abortion issue and help elect a Democrat. The winner that time was Death Penalty Clinton.

Saletan documents the defeats of the strategy of attempting to elect supposedly



Indymedia

January 31 rally in support of UFCW grocery workers strike, Inglewood, California. Defense of health benefits was central goal of five-month strike.

housework. “Rosie the Riveter,” the icon of the women drawn into the wartime factories, received a lot of backlash even during the war, as an example one magazine wrote at that time that working women “are rejecting their feminine roles. They wish to control their own fertility in marriage, and say they never wanted the children they had.” Black women continued to work as they always had in the lowest-paid menial jobs.

The workers and youth who made up the foot soldiers of the civil rights movement challenged legal segregation at the same time that the U.S. imperialists were trying to put on a “free world” face to counter the influence of the Soviet Union and to posture before the rest of the world to cover for the racist oppression of American capitalism. The ruling-class rhetoric against “godless communism” was also used to label the proverbial unwed mother as “immoral” and black pregnancy as “uncivilized.”

demand in the context of begging the state to be the protector.

In many ways, access to a safe abortion was most often an economic issue, not a legal issue. One abortion provider wrote about that period: “It had to do with economics...those who could afford it would be off to London or Puerto Rico or Mexico, although even there they’d sometimes run into shabby practices.... Or sometimes another out would be finding and paying psychiatrists to swear she was suicidal; she would jump out the window if the pregnancy continued. And of course in some instances that was absolutely true, and in some instances it wasn’t...it was very soon obvious to me that the fundamental issue here about abortion was never legality or illegality but basically whom you knew and how much you could pay” (quoted in Shirley L. Radl, *Over Our Live Bodies*, 1989).

What the liberals have never and will never raise is that the real butcher then

Labor Black League Protests “Sex Offender” Witchhunt

Oakland, California

We reprint below a letter submitted by the Bay Area Labor Black League for Social Defense to the Oakland Tribune on April 6. Father Weeks was released from jail on \$50,000 bail on April 8 and still faces frame-up charges.

The Labor Black League for Social Defense, a fraternal organization of the Marxist Spartacist League, protests the continuing vigilante harassment of Cary Verse, who has now been hounded through three counties, and Father Donald Weeks, jailed for daring to shelter him. From the start of the anti-Verse campaign there was collusion between law enforcement officials, the capitalist-owned news media and vigilante elements. We condemn the *Oakland Tribune* for inciting and City Council President Ignacio De la Fuente for leading vigilante action against Verse. Verse is a black con-

victed rapist who after serving his full prison sentence was then imprisoned in a state mental hospital, and finally released after he underwent barbaric chemical castration—a throwback to Jim Crow lynch rope justice. This is the strange fruit of California’s “Megan’s Law” mandating the registration and publication of the names of all “sex offenders” setting up their extra-legal persecution.

Since Father Weeks of St. Patrick’s Abbey in Oakland had the courage and decency to provide refuge for this harassed man, De la Fuente and the repressive agencies of the government have spared no effort to discredit and in fact ruin him. De la Fuente sicced the building inspectors on the church, resulting in its eviction. He used a public school and its staff to organize a “protest,” including elementary schoolchildren—manipulating fears and prejudices among Latino families against a black ex-con who has never been convicted of molesting children.

Then the Oakland Police Department staged a Gestapo-style raid (20 cops, drawn guns) to arrest 60-year-old Weeks, framing him for “sex offenses” 10 years ago, based on the sudden and dubious accusation of a man now 26. Hands off St. Patrick’s Abbey and Father Weeks!

We oppose “age of consent” laws, and believe the only guideline that ought to exist in sexual relations is the rule of effective consent, that is, as long as both parties are consenting to the act at the time, nobody, least of all the government, has any right to say they can’t do it. These laws aren’t to protect children (or anyone else) but to expand the repressive powers of the government. The persecution of “sexual predators” is part of a broader campaign of anti-sex hysteria targeting everyone from gays to minority women to Michael and Janet Jackson.

Blatant collusion between the cops, the media and would-be vigilantes is an integral part of the American injustice system

which systematically denies legal rights to whole sectors of the population. Through the racist “war on drugs” a huge proportion of the black American population is incarcerated, often under arbitrarily vindictive “Three Strikes” laws and when released denied voting rights. Jeb Bush’s Florida is not the first or only case where an election was won based on disenfranchising black voters!

The anti-Verse witchhunt is of a piece with the massive assault on democratic rights and civil liberties spelled out by the USA-Patriot Act. America’s racist rulers aim to condition the population, through the unbridled persecution of those few they label “predators,” “sex offenders” or “terrorists” to accept the victimization of anyone the government doesn’t like. The so-called “war on terror” is really a war on labor, blacks and immigrants. Democratic rights are indivisible. *Stop the persecution of Cary Verse! Drop the charges, free Father Weeks!* ■

“pro-choice” candidates—the fruitless lobbying using PR consultants as if they could somehow hoodwink the right-wing bigots into supporting women’s rights. However, he can only posit that the problem with liberals has something to do with bad tactical choices. *Socialist Worker*, the paper of the International Socialist Organization, reviewed the book (27 February), and their main conclusions regarding the feminists are that “we have to stop apologizing for abortion rights and take our movement into the streets.” First of all, who’s been apologizing? Only the liberal feminists who hold the same guilt-ridden religious ideology as the right-wingers of blame and sin. What is clouded over is that the liberals and their reformist hangers-on all embrace a common viewpoint—that whether lobbying in Congress or marching in the streets, they can win the capitalist state over to the side of the oppressed.

Saletan’s story of the legal battles around abortion in 1990 in Louisiana captures the racism of American liberalism. In the midst of a furious controversy over proposed laws to ban abortion, the state executed Dalton Prejean, a black youth who had spent ten years on death row for killing two people when he was 17 years old. He was brain-damaged and retarded. The barbaric death penalty in the U.S. certainly gives the lie to all the “sanctity of human life” rhetoric that comes up around abortion. Since 1985 half of those executed for killings committed when they were minors have been black.

Saletan makes the point that what resounded on both sides of the abortion issue was the image of Dalton Prejean—the black criminal. Here the bourgeois feminists’ resort to reactionary stereotypes of women as helpless victims to sell abortion rights sharply intersected the right-wing anti-abortion forces’ defense



Victoria Hellman

KKK terrorist brandishes coat hanger outside Dallas abortion clinic.

16 APRIL 2004



Portland newspaper trumpets 1951 police raids against abortion providers.

of “sacred Southern womanhood.” “Pro-choice” advocates’ focus on the “vulnerable, desperate victims of rape and incest” fed into the racist argument by saying that abortion was the only way to “restore the honor” of women made pregnant by rape.

Everyone knew that raising rape in the South was always used to resurrect the racist myth of the white woman defiled by the black rapist. Saletan writes that even the abortion proponents “detected... the odor of the Scottsboro Boys.” While the hardcore “pro-life” fanatics who sought a total ban responded that the so-called “rape” of abortion was as bad or worse than rape by a man, other anti-abortion forces balked at forcing raped women to bear the “stain of their defilement.” Governor Buddy Roemer vetoed one bill against abortion because it made no exception for rape and incest and another because it did not adequately “protect” raped women. Nevertheless, feminists portrayed Roemer as a hero for holding out on the rape exception.

For Free Abortion on Demand!

From the inception of our organization, leading up to the *Roe v. Wade* decision and since then, the Spartacist League has actively campaigned for free abortion on demand; free, quality health care for all; equal pay for equal work; 24-hour childcare and for women’s liberation through socialist revolution. We have also fought against forced sterilizations. At the same time, we have insisted on the necessity for the working class through the unions to take up the fight for women’s rights. We said that legal abortion was not enough to address the oppression of poor working women.

In the early ’70s before the passage of *Roe*, the Socialist Workers Party was the main left group trying to keep the protests for abortion rights within the limits of bourgeois capitalism. Operating through their front group WONAAC (Women’s National Abortion Action Coalition), they limited their demands and anybody else’s who wanted to work with them to a sin-

gle slogan, “repeal of all abortion laws.” The SWP physically excluded us communists from their self-described non-exclusionary mass actions because to them, the word “unity” really meant an alliance with bourgeois feminists, i.e., the Democratic Party. We fought for a revolutionary working-class program that spoke to the deeply felt *objective* needs of the most oppressed women.

The SWP, like the International Socialist Organization of today (and the ISO’s predecessors then, too), had occasional socialist speechifying, while on the ground they built “broad coalitions” (another buzzword for “Welcome all Democrats”) so as not to frighten away the state Senators and Congressional representatives—but who was fooling whom? Or, as the saying goes, who is the horse and who is the rider? By 1976, the SWP’s women leaders had become organizers for NOW.

Throughout the 1980s and the 1990s, we actively participated in defense of abortion clinics that were under attack by the fascistic shock troops of the ruling class. As we locked arms with other pro-abortion defenders around the clinics and sometimes took arrests for simply defending a clinic’s right to exist, we argued that you have to organize the social force of labor to defeat the entrenched reactionaries—and all their institutions—from the church to the American Medical Association.

The feminists’ strategy of begging the capitalist state has *demobilized* mass militant actions in favor of mass *crawls* to Washington to beg the Democrats for crumbs. To this day, if you can find a clinic, you still have to run the gauntlet of religious hate literature thrown at you. It’s always been a sign of the degradation of women’s rights that clinics performing abortions, a medical procedure, exist as separate physical facilities apart from hospitals—like having separate clinics for hernia operations. The number of abortion providers in the nation has declined steeply in the last two decades, and the number of hospitals providing

abortions has plummeted. Fewer than 2,000 physicians offer abortions; nearly 90 percent of counties in the U.S. have no provider.

Black Women Workers Fight Triple Oppression

I want to make another point about being a tribune of the people. We are not sectoralists who think every oppressed group should organize independently, as if only women should fight for women’s issues or whatever group you may name. As a result of the SL-initiated, 5,000-strong labor/black mobilization that stopped the KKK from marching in Washington, D.C. in 1982, we initiated a transitional organization linked to our revolutionary organization, the Labor Black Leagues. There will be no socialist revolution in America unless the working class takes up the rights of black people, and our task is to build a bridge from the organized working class to the ghettos.

The program of the Labor Black Leagues includes our demands for free abortion, defense of abortion clinics, down with all anti-gay laws, full citizenship rights for all immigrants, as well as defense of the remaining deformed workers states—China, Vietnam, Cuba and North Korea—against capitalist restoration and imperialist attack. The LBLs organize to stop racist cop brutality, like the cop killings of Alberta Spruill and Timothy Stansbury Jr. and are in the forefront of fighting for the freedom of death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. We participate in and bring to protests a revolutionary program for *all* the oppressed.

It’s no surprise that black women would be wary of any kind of feminist-dominated birth control movement given the liberal feminists’ confidence in the racist capitalist state. The conservative black church, which provides fake comfort in a brutal racist world, also weighs heavily in steering black women away from birth control. The history of racist eugenics theories intertwining with the early birth control movement of Margaret Sanger, continuing through forced sterilizations in the ’60s and ’70s (horrifically known as “Mississippi appendectomies”) demonstrates that the experience for poor women, particularly black women, has been a history of all-sided repression.

Scientific research has been applied to increasing the ease and safety of birth control methods, but who benefits from these advances also tells another story about medical technology and capitalism. By 1939 Tennessee, North and South Carolina were funding birth control clinics geared toward coercing poor black women to not have children, while

continued on page 8

(continued from page 7)

Depo-Provera injections, another more short-term form of birth control that was often forced on black women in apartheid South Africa as a condition for employment, has also been forced on poor women here. These coerced birth control measures have been introduced for black women at the same time that welfare caps have been initiated—denying benefits for any additional children born while receiving welfare. Mind you, there's a five-year time limit for welfare benefits already.

Religion and Reaction

“Crack babies” became the centerpiece of the racist “war on drugs” which escalated under Clinton. In fact, much of the evidence around crack’s effects on

I just want to touch on one other aspect of "fetal rights" that exposes how capitalism in its decay can truly be a brake on the development of science and progress in general. That is the controversy around stem cell research, a promising area of

**Spartacists at
1992 May Day
march in
Warsaw,
Poland called
for workers
to fight anti-
Semitism and
attacks on
abortion rights.**



Religion is not only a set of backward ideas to comfort people in a cruel world and encourage ignorance, but a ruling-class ideology which kills people. AIDS research was set back for years because of anti-gay prejudices, and this contributed to the worldwide explosion of AIDS. We are for the separation of church and state. We reject *any* notion—and they *all* ultimately derive from religion or spiritualism—that a fetus is a human with a “soul.”

You might expect in rural backwaters of the country where evolution, the foundation of modern biology, can only be taught as an “option” that youth would be

forcibly made ignorant. But here in New York City, where the rate of HIV infection has recently been compared to Third World rates, the schools' sex education courses have not been updated for 20 years and the AIDS curriculum has not been updated in 10 years. The same people who oppose funding public health care, welfare and education simply want to tell youth that sex equals death. The AIDS curriculum still states that gay, white men account for the "overwhelming majority" of AIDS cases, despite the fact that blacks and Latinos account for **82 percent** of new HIV/AIDS cases among teenagers. The sex education curriculum was frozen after the hysterical reaction to the "Rainbow" curriculum that included the book, *Heather Has Two Mommies*.

In 2002 Judith Levine finally got her book *Harmful to Minors* published after years of rejections. Her simple premise is that sex for minors is not only normal but also positive; that there is a manufactured panic about pedophilia, kidnapping and child abuse and that the state's attempts to protect youth from sex are actually harmful. She points out that "family planning" and "birth control" used to be polite, euphemistic terms referring to making available means to prevent unplanned pregnancies. For the last couple of decades, the terminology has been transformed into prevention of sex *altogether* for youth. There have been tremendous strides in research into less burdensome and safer birth control techniques. At the same time, the government has distributed warnings about condoms' "failure rates" and total fabrications linking abortion to breast cancer. So who will ever see these improvements in an era of virginity pledges?

The programmatic statement of the Spartacist League/U.S. points out that American feminism was born as a consciously separate movement and split from post-Civil War abolitionists. Its founders embraced white supremacy and campaigned against voting rights for black freedmen. Feminism and all forms of sectoralism share the outlook that the capitalist state can be pressured and shaped to fit the interests of the oppressed; that it's just a matter of re-organizing priorities, or getting more women elected into office. But it's the bourgeois feminists' ruling-class viewpoint that seeks to make capitalism, a brutal system of exploitation, work for them and their privileged position.

The emancipation of women requires a socialist revolution to begin to use the sci-

The Bolsheviks abolished all laws against homosexuality and abortion and all laws regulating people's private sexual lives. They made marriage and divorce simple civil acts, and abolished the concept of illegitimacy. They opened the private hospitals to the masses and built public kitchens and laundries. They created residential kindergartens and "children's colonies, where the children either live permanently, or for a considerable period, away from the parents." This last advance is described in *The ABC of Communism*, which was used by the Bolsheviks as a primer for workers and peasants. As they wrote, "Hundreds and thousands, millions of mothers will thereby be freed for productive work and for self-culture. They will be freed from the soul-destroying routine of housework, and from the endless round of petty duties which are involved in the education of children in their own homes."

They had this vision in a largely backward priest-ridden peasant country. The Bolshevik Party under Lenin and Trotsky knew that the only way forward to raising the material conditions of the masses was by extending the revolution internationally so that the most advanced industry could alleviate poverty and liberate mankind. The ensuing isolation of the first workers republic paved the way for the rise of the conservative and repressive Stalinist bureaucracy, which reversed many of the liberating advances the October Revolution had achieved for women and reinforced the backward ideal of the family to inculcate subservience to authority and social conformity.

The 1991-92 capitalist counterrevolution threw back living conditions in the former Soviet Union to a level comparable to the time of the tsars. In Eastern Europe, one of the first measures of the restoration of capitalism was the reinstatement of anti-abortion laws. I was in East Berlin just before the capitalist reunification of Germany where the International Communist League was fighting to defend the workers state, and I saw banners protesting the closing of public kindergartens. Today the Russian population is devastated, infant mortality has soared and life expectancy rates have plummeted, and women who used to be technicians and teachers now have nothing. Today we defend the gains of the 1949 Chinese Revolution which ended the hideous practice of binding women's feet. The Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky led the October 1917 Revolution and inspired the world working class, and our task is to fight for new October Revolutions here and everywhere.

I started with a quote on the significance of having a historical materialist worldview. It's not just a tool for historical analysis, but it was developed as a weapon for action, to arm the working class to take power. In 1899 Lenin wrote at the beginning of "Our Programme," referring to the lessons of Marx and Engels:

“It taught us how to discern, beneath the pall of rooted customs, political intrigues, abstruse laws, and intricate doctrines—the class struggle, the struggle between the propertied classes in all their variety and the propertyless mass, the *proletariat*, which is at the head of all the propertyless. It made clear the real task of a revolutionary socialist party: not to draw up plans for refashioning society, not to preach to the capitalists and their hangers-on about improving the lot of the workers, not to hatch conspiracies, *but to organise the class struggle of the proletariat and to lead this struggle, the ultimate aim of which is the conquest of political power by the proletariat and the organisation of a socialist society.*” ■

SPARTACIST

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WINTER 2002-03

Statement of the International Communist League Down With the UN Starvation Blockade! Defend Iraq Against U.S. and Allied Imperialist Attack!

PAGE 4

Prometheus Research Library Book

Dog Days

James P. Cannon vs. Max Shachtman
in the Communist League of America, 1931-1933

PAGE 20

Racism, Sexism, Religion and Anti-Muslim Bigotry Women and Immigration in France

PAGE 40

Spartacist South Africa Comrades Address ICL Gathering

The Anti-Apartheid Struggle and the Need for a Leninist Vanguard Party

PAGE 12

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50

SPARTACIST English edition

WINTER 2002-03

Women and Revolution

Racism, Sexism, Religion and Anti-Muslim Bigotry

Women and Immigration in France

This article is reprinted and expanded from a talk by comrades Ahmed Benayes and David Spector at a public education of the Ligue Française de l'Enseignement de la Ville de Paris, also presented at the educational seminar on "Feminism, What Is It and What Not" (published in La Solidarité, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605

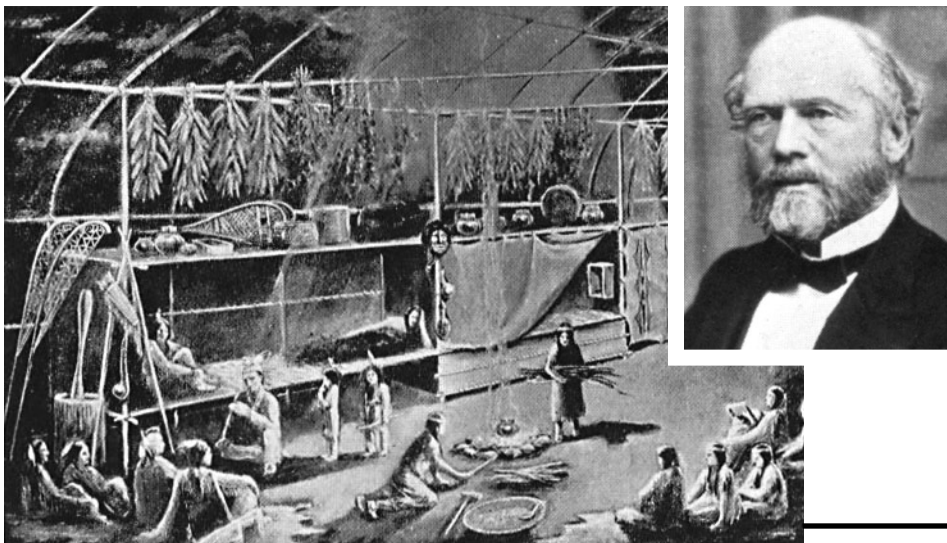
Marriage...

(continued from page 5)

gaze,” as an earlier North Carolina court decision put it, on the prerogatives of male brutality within the family circle. It took massive social upheaval and a wave of New Left-derived feminist activism in the 1970s to finally breach what was in fact the husband’s right to rape his wife; only in 1984 did a New York court finally overturn that state’s marital rape exemption, then followed by others.

Native Americans, Blacks, Asians, Immigrants: Forced or Banned Marriages

The creation of the American nation rested on the backs of black slaves—and on the virtual obliteration of the native Indian population of tribal hunter-gatherers and agriculturalists—resulting in the creation of a bourgeois democracy for white, male property owners. How much more we could have learned about the early history of our species from these indigenous peoples, relentlessly slaughtered and driven onto “reservations,” is a question American Marxists must feel keenly. Friedrich Engels’ work, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* (1884), was after all inspired by American anthropologist Lewis H. Morgan’s pioneering research into the family patterns of North American tribes. It was this research, in good part, that led to the Marxist understanding that in fact human beings have lived “for millennia” in *non-patriarchal* relationships, in tribal, matri-



Municipal Museum, Rochester; Morgan Papers, University of Rochester (inset)

Interior of an Iroquois long house. Research by anthropologist Lewis Henry Morgan (inset) on pre-capitalist societies informed Friedrich Engels’ *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*.

farmer.” Cott writes: “Like ex-slaves and ex-polygamists, Indians were required by the federal government to adopt monogamy as ‘the law of social life’ to become citizens.”

On the other hand, for black slaves in America, legal marriage was out of the question, though slaveholders did encourage childbearing to reproduce and expand the slave population, especially after 1808 when importation of slaves was banned. “Concubinage, which is voluntary on the part of the slaves, and permissive on that of the master...in reality, is the relation, to which these people have ever been practically restricted,” wrote the Chief Justice of the North Carolina

the Bible; a typical claim was that god “included slavery as an organizing element in that family order which lies at the very foundation of Church and State.” On the other side, those among the anti-slavery abolitionists and early women’s rights advocates who shared the liberal ideals of individual freedom and the view that “self-ownership” was a natural right, saw that both slaves and married women lacked this basic right. As Lucy Stone put it, “Marriage is to woman a state of slavery. It takes from her the right to her own property, and makes her submissive in all things to her husband.”

Following the Civil War, successive stages of immigration fed the fires of growing industrialization in the U.S. Here too the government’s marriage policies were aimed at social control. Chinese immigrants on the West Coast, who first came in the gold rush, were in demand for mining and railroad-building, but when the transcontinental railroad was completed in 1869, an explosion of anti-Chinese racism was unleashed. The first federal step to restrict immigration, the Page Act of 1875, was aimed at Asian women, who were supposedly all prostitutes, and required “the U.S. consul to make sure that any immigrant debarking from an Asian country was not under contract for ‘lewd and immoral purposes’.” By 1913 eight states had laws against whites marrying Japanese or Chinese people.

“Free Love” Utopias and Polygamy

In the stormy years leading up to the great social explosion that was the American Civil War, the last progressive gasp of the bourgeoisie (like the 1848 Revolutions in Europe) in North America, many experimental utopian socialist alternatives to monogamous marriage flowered. There were many “free love” communities established in the U.S., inspired by such utopian visionaries as Robert Owen, Claude Saint-Simon and Charles Fourier, whose profound insight that the status of women is the decisive indicator of social progress inspired further Marxist theory on the subject. The New York Oneida community, founded in 1849 with a pamphlet called *Slavery and Marriage: A Dialogue*, did away with the exclusive pairing of couples, though within a rather formal structure. These groups, though ridiculed and condemned, were not by and large prosecuted before the Civil War, but afterward, when in the name of “consolidating” the nation, a crackdown on most forms of “social deviation” began.

One interesting—and still contemporary—group stands out in all this: the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, or Mormons, one of whose founding tenets is the right of men to polygamy, or multiple marriage to many women at once. Right-wingers today throw up their hands in horror at gay marriage, breathlessly bemoaning that polygamy will be next. Well, guess what, it’s already here, and has been for over a hundred years, out in Utah and other Western states, where an estimated 30,000 old-style Mormons still practice the sect’s early preaching, though the “official” church formally

renounced it a long time ago. We believe the Mormons have the right to be left alone, to practice their religion and live their private lives however they see fit. Our position for the right of gay marriage, like the right of Mormons to practice polygamy, stems from our opposition to government interference with the rights of individuals to effect whatever consensual arrangements they wish. We pointed out that American Mormons, including the women, essentially freely choose their practice, unlike in countries without bourgeois revolutions, where women are still little more than property of their patriarchal masters and where polygamous social systems must be relentlessly opposed. As we wrote in “Free Tom Green! Mormon Polygamists: Leave Them Alone!” (WV No. 764, 14 September 2001), defending a man convicted of felony bigamy charges:

“The family structure—whether monogamous or polygamous—necessarily oppresses women. However, not everybody understands the source of their oppression, and people do all sorts of things that are undoubtedly bad for them that the state still has no business throwing them in prison for. As Marxists we understand that the family serves a real social purpose and cannot simply be ‘abolished,’ even in a workers state, but must be replaced with alternate social institutions.”

Women’s Liberation, Individual Freedoms and the Fight for Socialism

So, as radical columnist Alexander Cockburn put it, “Why rejoice when state and church extend their grip, which is what marriage is all about” (“Sidestep on Freedom’s Path,” *CounterPunch*, 20/21 March). Cockburn quotes early ACT UP activist Jim Eigo on the question: “Why are current mainstream gay organizations working to strike a bargain with straight society that will make some queers less equal than others?... Marriage has no more place in efforts to achieve equality than slavery or the divine right of kings. At this juncture in history, wouldn’t it make more sense for us to try to figure out how to relieve heterosexuals of the outdated shackles of matrimony?”

It certainly would. And it is the modern Marxist movement which has figured out how to break those shackles, through abolishing the system of private property in the means of production, thus abolishing the need for the bourgeois family structure to pass on such private wealth. As Leon Trotsky, co-leader with Lenin of the 1917 Russian Revolution, wrote in response to the magazine *Liberty* (14 January 1933) which asked, “Is Bolshevism deliberately destroying the family?”:

“If one understands by ‘family’ a compulsory union based on the marriage contract, the blessing of the church, property rights, and the single passport, then Bolshevism has destroyed this policed family from the roots up. “If one understands by ‘family’ the unbounded domination of parents over children, and absence of legal rights for the wife, then Bolshevism has, unfortunately, not yet completely destroyed this carryover of society’s old barbarism. “If one understands by ‘family’ ideal monogamy—not in the legal but in the actual sense—then the Bolsheviks could not destroy what never was nor is on earth, barring fortunate exceptions.” ■



Oneida Community Mansion House

Oneida community, one of many 19th-century U.S. communes inspired by utopian socialists that practiced alternatives to monogamous marriage.

lineal societies in which women were not enslaved within the straitjacket of monogamous marriage, in which children were the responsibility of both men and women. Monogamous marriage is a social invention brought to North America by the colonizers, along with their diseases, their “sacred family” and their slaves.

So the Native American population, when not simply killed, was offered an “enlightened” choice by their overseers: rot on the reservation or give up your “heathen” ways. As Cott puts it, “Most groups—notably the Iroquois, who dominated the eastern part of North America—did not make the nuclear family so fundamental an economic and psychological unit as Protestants did, nor did they generally recognize private property as such.... The federal government consistently encouraged or forced Indians to adopt Christian-model monogamy as the *sine qua non* of civilization and morality.” In some cases it was considered that Indians could be “civilized” by converting to Christianity, and marriage of an Indian woman to a white male was tolerated, though in some dozen states marriages between Indians and whites were declared non-valid. The 1887 Dawes Act stole Indians’ communal land and undermined their tribal way of life, assigning male family “last names” to Indians (against native cultural tradition), and establishing “individual property-ownership, and further subverted native American women’s roles as agriculturists by presuming the Indian male should be the landowner and

Supreme Court in 1838. Thus the fight for the right to marriage, as an assertion of the right to control one’s own body and make a free contract with another human being, was seen as an important aspect of the fight for black freedom.

As it is with just about everything else in America, racism is deeply intertwined with marriage law. Attempts to keep the “white race” “unmixed” were a unique feature of the American colonies since their inception (with the peculiar result that people of all different skin tones and ancestral background are automatically considered “black” if there is even a hint of a black ancestor somewhere). Ever since the inception of monogamous marriage and the family, from ancient times on, laws against intermarriage between different classes aimed to preserve ruling-class privileges. Spain in 1776 had such laws, as did the British imperialists in Ireland in the 14th century, for example. But America uniquely developed the illogic of racism, due to its slaveholding history, to such an extent that even after the victorious Civil War that freed the slaves, many states still banned black-white marriage; in Mississippi the penalty was life imprisonment. The miscegenation law was not repealed in Alabama until 2000!

The relationship between slavery and women’s subordinate position in marriage was widely noted and utilized by those on both sides of the issues. Southern evangelical Protestant ministers, who published more than half of pre-Civil War pro-slavery tracts, regularly quoted

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Women and Revolution

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Iraq...

(continued from page 1)

oppression under Shi'ite-majority rule, and Shi'ites, who were dominated by the Sunnis under the regime of Saddam Hussein, today are uniting. The *Wall Street Journal* (12 April) reports: "Residents in many Baghdad neighborhoods signed up to host displaced families from Fallujah and banners and signs are posted at every corner declaring that the Sunni and Shi'ite forces are now unified." Thousands of Shi'ites joined a protest at a Sunni mosque against the American attacks; Shi'ites have donated blood for wounded Sunnis; Shi'ites organized to provide food for Sunni civilians trapped in the sealed city of Falluja without food, water or electricity.

With the evaporation of the Iraqi police and U.S.-trained Iraqi army—one of its four battalions refused to fight in Falluja and returned to the barracks—and with the fig leaf of Iraqi self-rule taking on the transparent qualities of cellophane, two Iraqi officials in the Governing Council have withdrawn in protest. The former Iraqi foreign minister, Adnan Pachachi, a member of the Governing Council and considered by the Americans one of their most trusted allies, denounced the sacking of Falluja. He described the American offensive as "mass punishment.... We consider these operations by the Americans to be unacceptable and illegal" (*New York Times*, 10 April).

It matters not at all what transpires on June 30. The American imperialists will perforce need to tighten their control over Iraq, which will likely promote future uprisings and an increasingly brutal response by its military. In 2002 Israel's Zionist rulers carried out a bloodbath of Palestinians in the West Bank town of Jenin; the Americans have carried out destruction equivalent to several Jenin massacres in Falluja alone, and that comparison is not gratuitous. Writing in the London *Guardian* (9 April), Sami Ramadani reports on "the Pentagon's Israeli-trained special assassination squads" and notes, "the streets of Baghdad, Falluja and the southern cities resemble those of occupied Palestine. Sharon-style tactics and brutality are now the favoured methods of the US-led occupation forces—including the torture of prisoners, who now number well over 10,000."

Democrats Promise a Prolonged Occupation

In the U.S., people are increasingly disturbed by the returning body bags and disenchanted with the repeated bland retailing of only slightly repackaged old lies by Bush, Rumsfeld and Rice in response to the pervasive evidence that the invasion of Iraq had nothing at all to do with terrorism or "weapons of mass destruction," just as the subsequent occupation has nothing at all to do with democracy. This has an impact especially on working people faced with a jobless recovery and attendant attacks on their living standards. Bush and the neocons' delusional projections of an effortless installation of a puppet regime, as simple as opening a McDonald's franchise, are now shattered and the U.S. is in for a



WV Photo

Military families and veterans joined March 20 anti-occupation rally, New York City. Right: U.S. soldier Camilo Mejia courageously opposes occupation, refuses to return to Iraq.



AP

of military personnel have demonstrated in opposition to the war.

Moreover, the combination of the criminal bombing in Madrid, evidently perpetrated by Islamic reactionaries, and the more than justified uprising against the American colonial presence in Iraq have reverberated through those countries that constitute the "Coalition of the Willing." The Ukrainian troops in Kut abandoned the city. With the exception of the British component, the forces sent by other U.S. allies are militarily insignificant (and, thus, extremely vulnerable to attack). Several of the countries involved have lent their support to American imperialism in the face of considerable domestic opposition to the war. The pro-Bush government in Spain was thrown out in the recent elections and Blair in Britain, Berlusconi in Italy and Koizumi in Japan are increasingly challenged over an occupation few see in the interest of their respective countries. The continued unraveling of backing by these countries would certainly fuel increasing disenchantment with the occupation in the U.S. Colin Powell has been given the unhappy assignment of trying to mobilize UN and NATO support for the occupation. But unless the U.S. bends to French, German and Russian aspirations to partake in the spoils, such support will not be forthcoming.

For Workers Rule in the Near East and the U.S.!

Iraq is not Vietnam, where resistance to foreign domination combined with an uprising of workers and peasants succeeded in overthrowing capitalism. Iraq is not a nation, but an artificial state created by the British imperialists, its boundaries drawn up on a piece of paper in the aftermath of World War I. Decades ago in Iraq, the principal force for an anti-sectarian solution, the Communist Party, was devastated through the treachery of Stalinism and butchery of imperialist-backed Ba'athist regimes. Today, the Communist Party sits in the U.S. puppet Governing Council. With the Communist Party effectively destroyed, what was left behind was increasingly discredited Third World nationalism and reactionary Islamic fundamentalism.

The current resistance is mainly organized by Arab Sunni and Shi'ite tribal and religious leaders, elements that have not the least appetite to overturn existing social relations and that, absent the occupation, would seek to dominate each other as well as the Kurdish north. Kurds as a people constitute a nation that extends into Iran, Syria and Turkey as well as Iraq, and whose desire for national self-determination is just. The ICL stands for a Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan. Many Iraqi Kurds currently look with favor on the American occupation, as a guarantor against Arab reconquest. This sentiment has spread to Kurds in Syria, who demanded citizenship rights in a recent protest where many demonstrators chanted pro-American slogans. The Syrian regime responded with lethal force, killing at least eleven Kurds.

In Iraq today, the right of Kurdish self-determination cannot be addressed as long as it is subordinated to the U.S. occupation. The struggle for Kurdish independence can only go forward through intransigent opposition to the occupation. This necessarily means confrontation with the Kurdish nationalists of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan and the Kurdistan Democratic Party, who collaborate with U.S. imperialism. History has never been kind to the Kurds when their leaders sell out to imperialism. The U.S. is opposed to even a semblance of self-determination

long, bloody occupation, moreover with the U.S. Armed Forces seriously undermanned. Given the continued unemployment on the home front, Bush can run for re-election only as a stern and righteous (if slightly stupid) god, a posture that appeals to the reborn Christian right in the Republican Party.

In this context, one would think that Democratic presidential candidate Senator John Kerry would be a shoo-in in November. The Iraq war and occupation have been so closely identified in the public mind with the Bush regime that increasing numbers of Americans now distrust anything that comes out of the government's mouth, and many of those opposed to the occupation have turned to the Democrats. Kerry is in effect now running as a war candidate. In a February 27 address at UCLA, Kerry said, "And to replenish our overextended military, as President, I will add 40,000 active-duty Army troops, a temporary increase likely to last the remainder of the decade." In an interview with *Time* magazine, (7 March press release), Kerry

of war because they feign to speak for the interests of working people.

In the aftermath of the 1991-92 destruction of the bureaucratically degenerated workers state in the USSR, the American imperialist rulers, whether of Democratic or Republican persuasion, moved to realize their aspirations to tighten control of the Near East. At the expense of their imperialist rivals, the U.S. rulers seek to control the bulk of the world's oil reserves and to project power throughout the region. Not surprisingly, France and Germany oppose Washington's play for increasing dominance. Also of concern to the U.S. is Russia, which retains its nuclear capacity. Ultimately, however, the imperialists have their sights set on China, intent on the overturn of the strongest of the remaining societies in which capitalism has been expropriated.

"Coalition of the Willing"... Less So

The American military forces have been stretched quite thin, as witnessed by the recent extension of tours of duty



WV Photo

ILWU Local 10 longshore union held stop-work meeting in opposition to occupation of Iraq, joining March 20 rally in San Francisco.

pledged that as president he would stay the course in Iraq. The Democrats, both in the primaries and in the current hearings on September 11, attack Bush for failing to prosecute the "war on terror" with sufficient vigor. This so-called "war" in fact has as its primary thrust an attack on the rights of all—from immigrants to those who would protest the war to workers whose right to strike is under attack. In fact, historically, the Democrats have been the preferred party

there and by the continuing use, for prolonged periods, of National Guardsmen in their 30s and 40s, as well as the increasing use of mercenary forces, now estimated to constitute 10 percent of the armed American/British presence. A recent army survey states that 72 percent of the soldiers report that morale in their unit is now low, as suicide rates among those in active duty are at an all-time high.

Last year there were almost 30,000 calls to the GI Rights Hotline, which provides information on getting out of the armed forces, and it has been estimated that between 600 and 1,700 soldiers have gone AWOL to avoid active duty. Two U.S. servicemen, Brandon Hughey and Jeremy Hinzman, have openly deserted, applying for refugee status in Canada, knowing full well that if they are turned down, in the context of the attack on the rights of all citizens under the auspices of the "war on terror," they could face execution (*Village Voice*, 7 April). In this context, the decision of Staff Sergeant Camilo Mejia to turn himself in to U.S. military authorities as a conscientious objector is more than courageous. Mejia stated, "I did not sign up for the military to go halfway around the world to be an instrument of oppression." In recent weeks, hundreds of veterans and family members

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WORKERS VANGUARD

International Communist League in Worldwide Protests

On March 20, millions rallied worldwide to oppose the bloody and brutal U.S. occupation of Iraq. Sections of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) intervened in these demonstrations to win workers and youth to the program of international working-class socialist revolution.

The Spartacist League/U.S. and Spartacus Youth Clubs in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and San Francisco marched under the banner: “U.S. Out of Iraq! Israel Out of the Occupied Territories! Break with the Democratic Party of War and Racism—For a Workers Party That Fights for Socialist Revolution!” In Toronto, Trotskyist League of Canada banners proclaimed: “U.S. Out of Iraq! Canada Out of Afghanistan! For Class Struggle Against Canadian Capitalism! Israel Out of the Occupied Territories!” and “National Chauvinism Is Poison to Class Struggle—Independence for Quebec!” The ICL intervened as well in Tokyo, Paris, Rome, London, Dublin, Athens, Sydney, Melbourne, Vancouver and Johannesburg.

The Spartacist Group Japan distributed a leaflet opposing the occupation and declaring: “Japanese imperialist military out of Iraq and Near East, now! Hands off North Korea—Down with the starvation sanctions.” The Tokyo rally, organized by the Social Democratic Party’s “World Peace Now” coalition, focused on pacifist opposition to the *U.S./British* occupation and called for the UN imperialist den of thieves to intervene. The Japanese Spartacists’ placard defending the right of the North Korean deformed workers state to possess nuclear weapons created the most controversy. The U.S./UN disarmament and devastation of Iraq has made very clear that nuclear weapons are vital for North Korea’s defense against imperialist attack. Several people told our comrades that when they first saw the placard last year they hated it, but now they are wondering if we have a point.

In London’s Trafalgar Square, Labour “left” Jeremy Corbyn said that Labour prime minister Tony Blair’s right-wing domestic agenda was dictated by the U.S., underlining the dominant theme of English nationalism. The surprise electoral

victory of the Spanish PSOE (Socialist Workers Party) in the wake of the Madrid bombings has whetted the appetite of other European social-democratic parties to exploit antiwar sentiment for their parliamentary ambitions. The French Communist Party shamefully promoted the capitalists’ “war on terror” by insisting that the lead banner be changed to read, “No to War, No to Terrorist Attacks.” Europe’s capitalist rulers have seized on



WV Photo

Chicago SL/SYC contingent at March 20 anti-occupation rally.

the heinous Madrid bombings to promote their own terror against the workers, immigrants and national minorities. The French CP was part of the previous government which launched “Vigipirate” police-state repression against immigrants and especially youth of North African descent.

In Paris, the Ligue Trotskyste de France energetically opposed the racist anti-immigrant government exclusion of girls wearing the *hijab* (headscarf) in public schools and raised demands for full citizenship rights for immigrants, defense of the Palestinian people and French troops out of Haiti, the Ivory Coast and Kosovo. Our comrades distributed a leaflet explaining their critical support to the Rouen candidate of Gauche Révolutionnaire (Taaffeites) because “GR has the correct line of opposing the racist exclu-

sions” and exposed the larger “far left” groups, Lutte Ouvrière and the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR) for being “the spearhead of the campaign for the racist exclusion of young women who wear the headscarf.” Although the LCR opposed the government ban, LCR professors voted to expel the young women from the Paris-area school which sparked the national controversy.

In the U.S., the main organizers—from

Workers World Party’s ANSWER coalition to United for Peace and Justice and the Revolutionary Communist Party-backed Not In Our Name (NION)—corralled antiwar protest into the “anybody but Bush” pro-Democratic Party campaign. With Kerry calling for a larger U.S. military, who better to prettify the historic party of racism and war than so-called “peace” candidate Dennis Kucinich, whose supporters were all over the New York demo and who was a featured, and heavily applauded, speaker. In Chicago, black Democratic Party front man Jesse Jackson spoke twice, repeating his mantra “remember in November” (i.e., vote Democrat) and scandalously said the money going to Iraq should be going to the police—the thugs in charge of enforcing racist capitalist rule, not least in

for the Kurdish people. The imperialist carve-up of Kurdistan has served not only to dismember the Kurdish nation but to weaken those neocolonial states that got a share of the booty. And Washington intends to keep it that way.

The American colonial presence has and will continue to exacerbate and inflame the grievances among differing peoples and tribes and can lead only to internecine conflicts and bloodshed. Kurdish self-determination can only be effected through the agency of a working-class revolution, led by internationalist, Trotskyist, proletarian parties, that overturns all four of these capitalist regimes, unfurling the banner of liberation and freedom from nationalist oppression for the myriad peoples that make up the Near East. This, and our fight for emancipation of all the peoples of the region, is an application of the Trotskyist theory of permanent revolution which illustrates that in countries of belated capitalist development, genuine national liberation and other basic democratic rights can be achieved only through the victorious proletarian socialist revolution.

When the U.S. first captured Baghdad, the American media reveled in running film clips of impoverished Shi’ites in the ghetto of Saddam City welcoming Americans, reflecting illusions that U.S. troops would undo the repression the majority

Shi’ites had suffered under Hussein’s rule. Saddam City was renamed Sadr City and soon became a center of opposition to the American occupation. But under clerical domination the Shi’ites can only reverse the terms of oppression they experienced under Sunni domination. There will be no reconciliation of the ethnic, religious and national antagonisms short of proletarian socialist rule.

Shi’ite forces recently kidnapped and threatened to execute three Japanese civilians, one of whom is a young antiwar student researching the effects of depleted uranium on the population of Iraq. This hostage-taking in the supposed service of securing the departure of Japan’s 500-plus troops from Iraq testifies to the desperation of the reactionary Islamist leadership. It also mimics the mindset of the American imperialist rulers who collectively punish the peoples of Iraq. The razing to the ground of the gypsy village of Kawlia by Moktada al-Sadr’s Mahdi Army, supposedly undertaken because of that hamlet’s notoriety as a haven for dancing and “loose” women, not only provides further testimony to such hostility to “outsiders” but stands as a warning to Iraqi women as to their fate under Shi’ite clerical rule.

Thus, while we of the International Communist League defend each and every blow against the imperialist occu-

piers of Iraq, we give no political support to reactionary clerical forces and warn against illusions that the victory of one or another of these elements could result in anything but further bloodshed and repression. Indeed, victorious proletarian revolution throughout the Near East requires a struggle to defeat religious fundamentalism of all stripes as well as the overthrow of the monarchs, generals, Zionist butchers, and other capitalist rulers. Marxists seek to mobilize the oppressed masses behind the power of the *proletariat* in struggle against colonial occupations, using workers mobilizations (strikes, hot-cargoing of military goods and troop transports) in the service of a revolutionary perspective against both the imperialist occupying forces and the domestic bourgeoisie. We are politically hostile to any other strategy as alien to our proletarian purpose.

American imperialism’s drive for world domination is not the product of bad policies but of the inevitable thrust of the U.S. capitalist rulers to seek new sources for current and future profit. Their parties, the Democrats and Republicans, are united in this quest as they are in supporting America’s capitalist rulers’ “right” to further fatten their purses at whatever cost to working people here. To be sure, the Democrats are more prone to offer their sympathies as well as false promises

Chicago’s ghettos. Our Chicago contingent’s opposition to the Democrats sparked a lot of interest (and some hecklers), and we put the International Socialist Organization (ISO) on the spot. On paper, the ISO opposes the Democrats as a capitalist party, yet in 2000 they voted for the bourgeois Green candidate Ralph Nader. Currently the ISO is divided over whether to support Nader, which doubtless reflects their unease with distancing themselves from the “stop Bush at all costs” liberals they cater to.

The heavily black longshore union ILWU Local 10 in the San Francisco Bay Area held its monthly stop-work meeting to coincide with the demonstration as an act of solidarity. They stopped work for the shift and carried a banner in the march declaring: “Down With the Patriot Act! Uphold the Bill of Rights! Defend Immigrant Workers Rights/Bush’s ‘War on Terror’=War on Workers.” At the same time, the union’s officials are mobilizing to get out the vote for the Democrats, chaining the union to the class enemy. WV salesmen argued about this with longshoremen outside the stop-work meeting and at the rally.

The RCP/NION claims to oppose the “electoral black hole,” yet as the Spartacus Youth Club pointed out in a polemical leaflet directed to the RCP at March 20 protests, they call for “more than a million people in the streets of NYC at the time of the Republican National Convention to say NO to the whole Bush agenda!” (See “Revolutionary Communist Party: Revolutionary in Name Only,” WV No. 823, 2 April.)

In San Francisco, a breakaway march of some 1,000 was quickly surrounded by cops in full riot gear who brutally beat demonstrators trying to escape and arrested 87. The Partisan Defense Committee sent a letter to the San Francisco District Attorney demanding all charges be dropped. In Los Angeles the notorious LAPD targeted the anarchist contingent, arresting and beating protesters. The SL/SYC contingent marching behind them chanted: “No repression of antiwar protesters, leave the anarchists alone!” Earlier, the anarchist “anti-capitalist” contingent chanted with us for the UN to stay out of Iraq but did not like our chants calling for a workers party. However, to end war, we have to end the capitalist system which breeds it, and this requires forging the revolutionary workers party capable of leading the proletariat to its own class rule, a workers state. As New York’s SL/SYC contingent chanted, “1,2,3,4 capitalism means racism and war! 5,6,7,8 forward to a workers state!” Join us!■

to the unfortunate; but the erosion of incomes, of pensions, of health care and of employment has continued for the past several decades irrespective of which party was in power.

It is the working class that has the social cohesion and power to lead all the exploited and oppressed against the depredations of the capitalist rulers. But the union misleadership would rather surrender ground than launch a fight that might threaten the rule of capital to which they are committed. And this commitment is maintained primarily through the agency of the Democratic Party. Next to Bush, it doesn’t take much to look like a “lesser evil.” But support for the equally capitalist Democratic Party “lesser evil” is precisely what *prevents* workers from organizing to do what they need to in order to defend themselves and all the oppressed: mobilize their own strength independently of the capitalists. To that end the proletariat needs to forge its own party—an internationalist proletarian party that fights each and every one of the efforts of America’s imperialist rulers to expand their domination, a fight that, for its victory, requires a socialist revolution. The Spartacist League devotes all its efforts to educating the working class in the necessity of the above tasks and struggling to forge the revolutionary party capable of leading socialist revolution.■

WORKERS VANGUARD

Racism and Anti-Woman Bigotry For Free Abortion on Demand!

We print below a forum given by comrade Karen Cole at Columbia University on March 9, slightly edited for publication.

The right to an abortion is no more than a democratic right to a simple and safe medical procedure. We say it should be free on demand as part of free, quality health care. Providing women with the means for deciding when and if they want to have children is basic to the fight for women's equality. Why is such an issue so explosive in the U.S. today? Allowing women sexual freedom, just like legitimizing homosexual relations and allowing independence to youth in their sexual relations, is a threat to the institution of the family, a bastion of social reaction which, along with organized religion, reinforces authority and conservatism and props up the capitalist system. Any question relating to sex—particularly sex and race—instantly inflames social reaction.

You have to step back and have a historical materialist view to understand how we got here. Otherwise, you are not politically armed to fight against the pseudo-intellectual babble you hear every day in the classroom and from the capitalist media that the cruelties and injustices of society are “inevitable,” that you are inherently at fault for being poor, that competition and war are a given. When you touch the issue of the special oppression of women, you get heavy doses of religious claptrap with words like “morality” and “tradition,” “natural instincts,” and, of course, “family values.” Historical materialism must be studied. Friedrich Engels explained the concept succinctly:

“Marx discovered the law of development of human history: the simple fact, hitherto concealed by an overgrowth of ideology, that mankind must first of all eat, drink, have shelter and clothing, before it can pursue politics, science, art, religion, etc.; that therefore the production of the immediate material means of subsistence and consequently the degree of economic development attained by a given people or during a given epoch form the foundation upon which the state institutions, the legal conceptions, art, and even the ideas on religion, of the people concerned have been evolved, and in the light of which they must, therefore, be explained, instead of *vice versa*, as had hitherto been the case.”

—“Speech at the Graveside of Karl Marx” (17 March 1883)

Today, marriage, the family and the social roles defined therein of men, women and children are not *preordained*

Stop Bipartisan Attack on Women's Rights!



WV Photo

Spartacist contingent at March 20 demonstration, San Francisco.

but must be studied in their *manmade* historical context. Everything about marriage in capitalist class society has to do with “state institutions” and “legal conceptions”—access to health insurance, inheritance, visitation rights, custody rights, Social Security, immigration rights and property ownership rights in general. We live in the epoch of imperialist decay where in America, alongside unprecedented wealth for a few, there is mass unemployment, exploding prison populations, deteriorating health care, evaporating pensions and Social Security and the slashing of social welfare services. Therefore, we welcome any gains that can be won from this cruelly bigoted system.

Almost every day in the news, another front is opened to challenge women's basic rights. When in October the House passed the ban on a seldom-used abortion procedure, grotesquely dubbed “partial-birth abortion” by the anti-abortion bigots, there was a dearth of organized demonstrations by the “pro-choice” feminists and liberals. Predictably, the “pro-choice” liberals launched a court suit, playing into the right-wing's logic by basing the suit

solely on the fact that there is no exception made for saving the life of the mother, which was Clinton's position.

John Ashcroft's Justice Department took the cue and has ominously subpoenaed hundreds of private medical records of legal abortions from hospitals and Planned Parenthood clinics. Not only do they want records of any second-trimester abortion that may have had medical complications, but they want the names of doctors who have performed *any* type of abortions in order to further the goal of banning *all* abortions—as part of an unrelenting campaign to roll back the hard-fought gains of labor, women and black people that sprang not only from the civil rights movement, but go back to the union struggles of the 1930s.

Doctors and nurses who have bravely provided abortion services face murderous attacks from the woman-hating bigots all over the country. In Wichita, Kansas, Dr. George Tiller has been providing abortions for 31 years. Tiller is one of just *four or five* physicians in the *entire* U.S. to offer late-term abortions of “viable” fetuses (however brief and mal-

formed their lives might be) if it will save the life or protect the health of the mother. Such late-term abortions are still legal on the books in most states, but even where it is legal, doctors often won't perform them. Women fly in from all over to see Tiller. In 1986, a pipe bomb exploded at his clinic. In 1993, Tiller was shot through both arms. His life and the lives of his clinic staff have now been chosen as priority targets by the “right to life” bigots of Operation Rescue, and his clinic is ringed by right-wing fanatics who go through the trash to find personal information about his staff so they can stalk, picket and threaten them. While Clinton was president, seven abortion providers and staff members were assassinated.

The Working Class Must Lead the Fight for Women's Rights

Not only are abortion rights besieged, but also the remnants of affirmative action, desegregation of schools and access to welfare. The imperialists' “war on terror,” which has meant the slaughter of thousands of Iraqis, has also been a war on immigrants, blacks, labor and *anybody* standing up against the status quo. Rod Paige, the Secretary of Education, just called the National Education Association teachers union a “terrorist organization” for not going along with the Bush administration's assault on public education.

This so-called “war on terror” that is wielded to roll back civil liberties has also targeted women. For example, recently there has been a hue and cry raised over “international sex-trafficking.” The anti-immigrant USA-Patriot Act now sets new penalties for those convicted of “trafficking,” augmenting anti-immigrant legislation and expanding punitive measures set by the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000. These laws increase the already massive immigration-control police apparatus in order to go after anybody deemed deviant. The prostitutes rounded up must arduously prove they are really “victims”—otherwise, they face jail and deportation—and must fink on others to attain asylum.

We're for decriminalizing prostitution because we're against all “crimes without victims,” like laws against every other

continued on page 6



McCracken/Pensacola News-Journal

Left: Charred remains of Pensacola, Florida clinic bombed in 1984 by deadly “right to lifers.” Right: Amherst, New York clinic of Dr. Barnett Slepian, murdered for his courageous commitment to women's right to abortion.

