

9/11 Commission: Democrats Seek to Out-Bush Bush Lies, Repression and Imperialist War

U.S. Out of Iraq Now!

APRIL 25—Morning newspaper accounts of the September 11 Commission hearings revive the horror of the day thousands of innocent people lost their lives in the attacks on the World Trade Center, while nightly news broadcasts show the exploitation of that tragedy for more terror and destruction by U.S. imperialism in Iraq and repression at home. As we go to press, the U.S. military is moving in on Najaf and threatening to flatten Falluja. We have made clear from the beginning of the Iraq war that every blow struck against the imperialist occupiers is a blow struck against the enemy of workers and the oppressed all over the world. We take a side against the U.S. imperialist occupation without giving an ounce of political support to the reactionary clerics who appear to be leading much of the resistance. We fight for a perspective of militant class struggle on the home front against the imperialist rulers who oppress workers here and abroad.

The Bush administration has been dragged kicking and screaming to the September 11 Commission by families who are grief-stricken and demanding answers about why their loved ones died.



AP
National Security Council meeting September 12, 2001. Right: March 2003 U.S. bombing of Baghdad. Bush cabal manipulated September 11 attack to justify war against Iraq.

But this commission has little to do with “revealing the truth” and everything to do with misdirecting anger with the U.S. ruling class into enhancing the repressive powers of the capitalist state. These hearings also reflect frictions within the U.S. ruling class, which are heightened now that the U.S. war in Iraq has become troublesome. The real purpose of the commission is to resolve differences within the ruling class in order to better manage

domestic and foreign exploitation. How fitting that Democrat Bob Kerrey, a Navy SEAL, Vietnam veteran and certifiable war criminal responsible for the assassination of (at least) 21 Vietnamese civilians, takes center stage at the commission to thunder about “truth” and “justice.” The Democrats seek to exploit the hearings for their advantage in the upcoming presidential elections, but what the real story of September 11 and the Iraq

war reveals is that the Democrats and Republicans are *partner parties of capitalist rule*.

Some secrets have come out, like the 6 August 2001 “Presidential Briefing Memo” titled “Bin Laden Determined to Attack Inside the United States.” Condoleezza Rice claims this was “no silver bullet.” Right, they knew merely that Osama bin Laden was planning an attack

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AFF

Mordechai Vanunu Released After 18 Years in Prison Walled In by Zionist State

APRIL 24—On April 21, Mordechai Vanunu finally walked out of the Ashkelon prison hell which has been his home for nearly two decades. But a free man he is not. Instead, he is to be given the treatment well known to political dissidents released from torture chambers in Syria, Libya and countless dictatorships propped up by U.S. imperialism, such as Saudi Arabia. Who he talks to, where he

stays, whether he can travel is totally at the whim of the Zionist butchers, and the threat of renewed imprisonment—or worse—hangs over his head. The unending Zionist vendetta against Vanunu is retribution for his service to humanity in exposing the extent of Israel’s nuclear arsenal.

Immediately upon his release from prison, Vanunu defied Israel’s rulers and held an impromptu press conference in English before 200 supporters and the international media. Long a defender of Palestinian rights, Vanunu reiterated his opposition to Israel’s policies and the Zionist doomsday machine. Meanwhile, Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon

escalated measures to decapitate and dismember the Palestinian people. In an April 23 television interview, Sharon admitted he personally told George Bush on his recent visit to Washington that Israel is no longer bound by its pledge not to harm Yasir Arafat. This is no idle threat.

For over two years, Arafat has been a virtual prisoner in his Ramallah compound, which Israeli tanks and missiles have reduced to little more than rubble. On March 22, Israel fired missiles from helicopters and blew away Hamas’ “spiritual leader” Ahmed Yassin, a partially blind 67-year-old quadriplegic in a

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Reuters

Defiant Mordechai Vanunu leaves prison, April 21.



Honor Lucy Parsons!

CHICAGO—In March, when the Chicago Park District announced plans to name a small park on the city’s Northwest Side after the labor agitator and anti-racist fighter, Lucy Parsons, howls of protest were heard from the Fraternal Order of Police (F.O.P.). Raising the same timeworn slanders that were used to frame up and hang her husband, Haymarket martyr Albert Parsons, in 1887, F.O.P. head Mark Donahue said: “The woman was an anarchist. She promoted the overthrow of the government and the use of dynamite in getting their way, [including] a dynamite bomb thrown into the midst of

police officers at the scene” of the demonstration at Haymarket (*Chicago Sun-Times*, 24 March).

Chicago mayor Richard Daley, embarrassed that only 27 of the city’s 555 parks are named after women, has defended the choice of the name. While not objecting to the cops’ slanders directed at Albert Parsons, Daley said, “Please don’t blame the wife because of her husband’s actions. That’s sexist.” Parsons probably would not consider it much of an honor to be recognized by the cabal that runs City Hall today, but we welcome the naming of a park after a partisan of the working class!



Lucy Parsons Project

Labor agitator Lucy Parsons

(ILD) on the cases of Tom Mooney, Angelo Herndon, Sacco and Vanzetti and the Scottsboro Boys. She joined the by then Stalinized CP in 1939, toward the end of her life.

The Chicago bosses have a long and bloody history of violence against working people, minorities and political opponents, from the Haymarket martyrs to the Memorial Day massacre of ten steel workers in 1937 to the shoot-to-kill orders during the ghetto uprising of 1968 to the killings of Black Panthers Fred Hampton and Mark Clark by the Chicago cops in 1969. Today, the capitalists and their cops (“minions of the oppressing class,” as Parsons characterized them) would like to smear all opponents of the racist status quo as terrorists and “bomb throwers.” Antiwar and “anti-globalization” protesters, particularly anarchists, have been targeted by the recently reconstituted Red Squad.

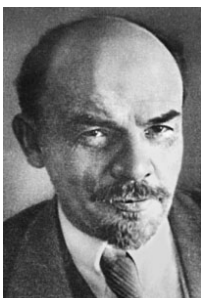
Haymarket is very much a living memory in Chicago, where trade unionists and leftists pay annual tribute to the martyrs at their monument in Forest Home Cemetery. But the memory also still burns for the Chicago police, who have a memorial to the cops killed at Haymarket at their police academy, where it had to be moved after angry workers and militants repeatedly tried to destroy it in Haymarket Square. The workers of Chicago and the world will show Lucy Parsons and the Haymarket martyrs the greatest honor when they, building on the groundwork laid by her and all of the other great working-class leaders, take the means of production out of the hands of the capitalist exploiters in the course of the international socialist revolution! ■



TROTSKY

The Workers State in a World Capitalist Economy

The pro-market economic policies of China’s ruling Stalinist bureaucracy—including maintaining Hong Kong as a capitalist enclave and abandoning the strict state monopoly of foreign trade—are undermining defense of the deformed workers state created through the 1949 Revolution. In 1927, the United Opposition of Trotsky and Zinoviev opposed the nationalistic economic policies carried out by the Soviet bureauc-



LENIN

racy under Stalin and Bukharin, which included major economic and political concessions to the rich peasants and other pro-capitalist forces. The Opposition warned against the anti-Marxist idea that the USSR could achieve socialism—a classless, egalitarian society based on material abundance—in a single country. While laying out a series of economic measures to strengthen the proletarian dictatorship, it emphasized above all the need to return to the perspective of proletarian internationalism that animated the 1917 October Revolution.

In the long struggle between two irreconcilably hostile social systems—capitalism and socialism—the outcome will be determined *in the last analysis* by the relative productivity of labor under each system. And this, under market conditions, is measured by the relation between domestic prices and world prices. It was this fundamental fact that Lenin had in mind when in one of his last speeches he warned the party of the “test” that would be imposed “by the Russian and international market, to which we are subordinated, with which we are connected, and from which we cannot isolate ourselves.” For that reason, Bukharin’s notion that we proceed toward socialism at any pace, even a “snail’s pace,” is a banal and vapid petty-bourgeois fantasy.

We cannot escape from capitalist encirclement by retreating into a nationally exclusive economy. Just because of its exclusiveness, such an economy would be compelled to advance at an extremely slow pace, and in consequence would encounter not weaker, but stronger pressure, not only from the capitalist armies and navies (“intervention”), but above all from cheap capitalist commodities.

The monopoly of foreign trade is a vitally necessary instrument for socialist construction, under the circumstances of a higher technological level in the capitalist countries. But the socialist economy now under construction can be defended by this monopoly only if it continually comes closer to the prevailing levels of technology, production costs, quality, and price in the world economy....

No domestic policy can by itself deliver us from the economic, political, and military dangers of the capitalist encirclement. The task at home is to move forward as far as possible on the road of socialist construction by strengthening ourselves with a proper class policy, by proper relations between the working class and the peasantry. The internal resources of the Soviet Union are enormous and make this entirely possible. While we make use of the world capitalist market for this purpose, our fundamental historical expectations continue to be linked with the further development of the world proletarian revolution. Its victory in the advanced countries will break the ring of capitalist encirclement, deliver us from our heavy military burden, enormously strengthen us technologically, accelerate our entire development—in town and countryside, in factory and school—and give us the possibility of really building socialism—that is, a classless society, based on the highest level of technology and real equality among all its members both at work and in the enjoyment of the fruits of their labor.

—“The Platform of the Opposition: The Party Crisis and How to Overcome It” (September 1927), reprinted in *The Challenge of the Left Opposition (1926-27)* (1980)

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v.

DONALD RUMSFELD,
Respondent-Appellant-cross-Appellee.

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

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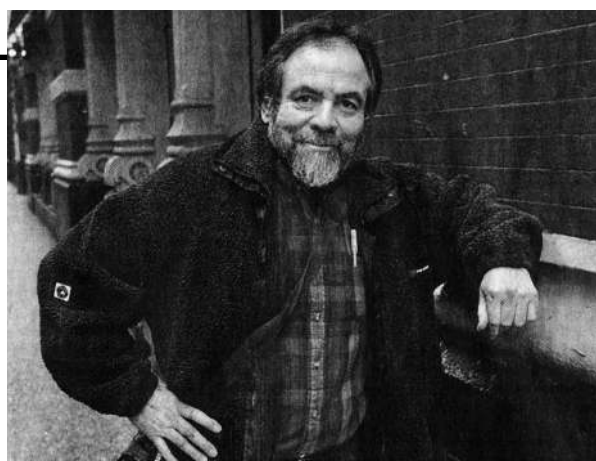
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Marxists defend citizenship rights!
Class-Struggle Defense Notes No. 31
reprints in its entirety the *amici curiae*
(friends of the court) brief filed in the
U.S. Court of Appeals by the PDC
and the Spartacist League in defense
of Jose Padilla.

Palestinian Militant Farouk Abdel-Muhti Freed!



Estrin/NY Times

When the plane bearing political prisoner Farouk Abdel-Muhti touched down at New York's La Guardia airport on April 12, a long nightmare of torturous detention had come to an end. In a victory for workers, immigrants and all the oppressed, a federal judge felt compelled to order the Palestinian leftist's release from a penitentiary in Atlanta, where he had been spirited away by Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (BICE, formerly the INS) officials just days before.

Abdel-Muhti spent 718 days in the clutches of the Feds after being seized by a joint task force of INS agents and NYC cops on April 26, 2002. The pretext was a Clinton-era 1995 deportation order—an order that had never been enforced primarily because, as a stateless Palestinian, there was no territory to deport him to and no government to accept him. Abdel-Muhti was in fact arrested for his long-standing struggle for national rights for the Palestinian people. As an activist for the Palestine Aid Society, he spoke at the Partisan Defense Committee-initiated labor/black mobilization that rode the Ku Klux Klan out of New York City on 23 October 1999. In the weeks before his abduction, he arranged radio interviews with Palestinian spokesmen as the Israeli army invaded the West Bank and perpetrated the notorious Jenin massacre. Like other Palestinian activists, Abdel-Muhti was targeted in the bipartisan “war on terror,” which has produced a severe diminution of the rights of all workers and the oppressed, especially immigrants.

Calling him a “terrorist,” FBI agents tried to coerce Abdel-Muhti into informing on supporters of Palestinian organizations. After his refusal, he was knocked to the floor and methodically beaten by agents. Abdel-Muhti said later, “They told me, ‘If you don’t cooperate, we’re going to send you to Israel, to the Mossad.’” Indeed, the deportation of this prominent Palestinian activist to Israel would likely mean torture or worse at the hands of the Zionist authorities.

During the nearly two years of his detention, Abdel-Muhti was viciously beaten twice and had leftist literature (including the PDC’s *Class-Struggle Defense Notes*) seized by prison guards. He was shunted to more than half a dozen prisons, including an eight-month stay in solitary confinement in York, Pennsylvania, far from his family, supporters and legal counsel in New York City. Throughout this ordeal, Farouk remained steadfast, fighting for his rights and those of all the detainees. Last year, he participated in a hunger strike to call attention to the onerous conditions he and others faced in the Passaic County Jail in New Jersey. He recently sent a statement of support to the March 20 actions against the U.S. occupation of Iraq and the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza.

Farouk had challenged his detention in a federal *habeas corpus* petition that stipulated that his ongoing incarceration was illegal. Indeed, Abdel-Muhti’s continued imprisonment was a clear violation of the bourgeoisie’s already repressive legal

standards. In the 2001 case *Zadvydas v. Davis*, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that immigrants facing imminent deportation could only be detained for a maximum of six months. This is a standard more honored in the breach than in the observance by America’s racist rulers, as shown by the untold hundreds of immigrants detained for years on the flimsiest of charges or even without charges.

On March 30, after a delay of over 16 months, Abdel-Muhti was finally allowed a hearing on his petition for release. But, in a pattern established throughout his detention, the government filed new material just 37 minutes before the hearing was to begin. This time the legal maneuver was quite sinister. The Feds filed a declaration from the Acting Chief for Removals Support and Coordination, Lisa Hoechst, concerning a new procedure the U.S. and Israeli governments negotiated in March for Palestinians to be repatriated through Israel. In the words of BICE minion Hoechst, “This new procedure alters the previously problematic process in which Palestinians could not be removed in the absence of an original Israeli or Palestinian travel document.”

Already, at least three planeloads of stateless Palestinians have been sent to the West Bank and Gaza via Jordan and Egypt. This policy, no doubt carried out with the full knowledge of Israeli intelligence, was first announced in papers filed in Abdel-Muhti’s case in December 2002. The new U.S.-Israel agreement, if implemented, would be a further escala-

tion in the U.S. authorities’ drive to deport Palestinians.

Farouk’s supporters and even the Associated Press have used the term “emblematic” to describe his fate. Abdel-Muhti does indeed symbolize countless victims of BICE terror against immigrants all over the country. As a political prisoner, he put a defiant face on the detainees facing wholesale violations of civil liberties, not to mention norms of human decency. Only days after Abdel-Muhti’s abduction, the PDC wrote: “The arrest and virtual kidnapping of this well-known and respected political activist in New York City will not go unopposed!” We said the workers movement and all defenders of democratic rights had to take up the cause of his freedom. Just weeks before his hearing, Abdel-Muhti had agreed to become a recipient of the PDC’s class-war prisoner stipend program. We are happy to report that he was not long in our program.

After an ordeal that even a federal judge called “Kafkaesque,” Abdel-Muhti is still without official “status” as an immigrant. Yet he remains unbowed. “We won a victory,” he said, “but still we have to win the war for justice, equality and rights, for both immigrants and all the people in the nation who are fighting for democratic rights and social justice.” Ultimately, that struggle requires the forging of an intransigent workers party to lead the proletariat in sweeping away the capitalist system. ***No deportations! Free all the detainees!*** ■

Australia: A Victory for Workers and Aboriginal People

Trades Hall Ban Beaten Back

We reprint below an abridged and edited version of a statement issued by the Spartacist League of Australia, section of the International Communist League, on April 15.

In a small but important victory for all those fighting against the intense racist oppression of the Aboriginal peoples, and for the entire left, the Police Association was recently defeated in its manoeuvres against a Spartacist League 31 March public meeting in Melbourne opposing racist cop terror. We successfully held our forum, “Defend Redfern Aborigines—Mobilise Union Power!”, at Trades Hall after the Victorian Trades Hall Council (VTHC), which had reportedly been acting at the behest of the VTHC-affiliated Police Association, retreated from attempts to have our room bookings cancelled.

Earlier we were told that the Police Association’s diktat was in response to our position on recent events in Redfern where we called for solidarity with militant Aboriginal youth against racist state terror. We were also told that it was Laborite VTHC Secretary, Leigh Hubbard, brandishing a letter from the Police Association, who had originally demanded our room bookings be cancelled. However, angered unionists and leftists pressured Trades Hall to reverse its ban. The rebuff of the Police Association’s anti-communist manoeuvres is a blow

against the increasing intrusion of the bosses’ state into the workers movement.

Our forum addressed the 15 February events in Redfern, when the seething anger of the Aboriginal community at racist state terror erupted after police chased popular 17-year-old Kamilaroi Murri youth Thomas “TJ” Hickey to his death. Following a series of provocations by the NSW [New South Wales] Carr Labor government’s cops, Aboriginal youth organised to effectively defend themselves and courageously fought back against phalanxes of police “stormtroops” in a nine-hour pitched battle.

An Injury to One Is an Injury to All!

Upon hearing of the outrageous attempt to silence our defence of the Aboriginal population in Redfern, we immediately alerted the left and workers movement and called for protest letters to be sent to the VTHC. A 20 March SL statement argued:

“As part of the armed fist of the capitalist state, which exists to defend the rule of the capitalist exploiters, the police are the deadly class enemies of the workers movement and oppressed minorities.... For the leader of the peak union body in Victoria to bow to the diktats of this police body against an organisation in the workers movement is a gross travesty.”

We noted that the “interests of Aborigines, immigrant minorities and those of the working people will go forward

Sydney, 24 February: Spartacus Youth Club supporters join Redfern march in memory of Aboriginal youth, Thomas Hickey, killed while fleeing cops.

Australasian Spartacist



together or fall back separately.”

In response to our statement and discussions with unionists and leftists, opposition to the pro-cop censorship increasingly bore down on Hubbard and Trades Hall. Reportedly at a meeting of union officials, Hubbard conceded, saying that a space would be made available for the SL forum. On the day of our forum, the left social-democratic Socialist Alliance group came out with a letter which urged “the VTHC executive to reverse this ban, and guarantee that freedom of speech that the democratic workers’ movement values so highly.”

All those who acted to overturn the ban on the 31 March forum should be congratulated. We call on those who participated in defeating this attempt to silence opponents of racist repression, and indeed all those who oppose the brutal oppression of the Aboriginal people, to take up the defence of the more than two dozen heroic militants who have been arrested over the 15 February upheaval. Class-conscious workers, leftists, Aboriginal activists and Asian and Arab youth, who are also under siege from the cops, must mobilise in united-front

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Expropriate the Hong Kong Capitalists!

Chris Patten's Cuckoo's Egg Hatches



South China Morning Post



Economist

In a blow against Hong Kong's imperialist-backed "democracy" movement, the government of the People's Republic of China (PRC) declared on April 6 that any move toward "free elections" in that city would first have to meet with Beijing's approval. In response, some 20,000 marched in Hong Kong on April 11, the most recent in a series of protests against the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) regime and its local executive.

Last December, the U.S. Consul General in Hong Kong, James Keith, issued a call for "universal suffrage" and for a debate on "constitutional change" in a clear attempt to weaken Beijing's hold over the city just seven years after its rightful return to China following 150-plus years of British colonial rule. For maximum impact, Keith issued this demand as talks were being held in Washington between Chinese premier Wen Jiabao and George W. Bush. On January 1, some 100,000 marched in a demonstration led chiefly by Hong Kong's anti-Communist, pro-Western Democratic Party under the banner of—you guessed it—"universal suffrage" and the right to choose their own chief executive (currently appointed by Beijing). On March 4, the founding chairman of the Democratic Party, Martin Lee, arrived in Washington for briefings with the U.S. Senate and Secretary of State Colin Powell. No curtains necessary for the American imperialist puppet-masters.

Ever since the 1949 Chinese Revolution, the U.S. has had one and only one aim toward the People's Republic—to reverse the expropriation of the imperialists and their Chinese comprador-bourgeois and landlord lackeys. That expropriation is now jeopardized by the policies of the bureaucratic caste that has ruled over the Chinese deformed workers state since Chiang Kai-shek fled to Taiwan with his Guomindang army remnants. In pursuit of capitalist restoration on the Chinese mainland, the U.S. imperialists have maintained Taiwan as a well-armed camp, recently giving billions to the regime there as part of building a "theater missile defense" directed against China. During the 1950-53 Korean War, the U.S. hoped to cross the Yalu River into China, an aspiration happily quashed by the intervention of up to two million Chinese troops. In Hong Kong today, the U.S. seeks to reinforce the position of the city's wealthy financiers and other businessmen and to encourage a counterrevolutionary "democracy" move-

ment spreading to the mainland.

The International Communist League stands opposed to this campaign, however gussied up in the trappings of "universal suffrage" and "free elections," as an elementary defense of the Chinese deformed workers state against imperialist-sponsored capitalist counterrevolution. A glimpse of what awaits China's toiling masses if the 1949 Revolution were to be overturned can be seen today in East Europe and the ex-Soviet Union, where most find their very ability to survive in question and where such "democracy" as exists is solely for the newly minted capitalist class, which is rather sleazy even by robber baron standards. The turnover of Hong Kong to China took place under the rubric of Deng Xiaoping's "one country, two systems" formula, which guaranteed bourgeois property rights in Hong Kong. Leading up to the handover, Britain's final colonial governor, Chris Patten, added a few "democratic" trappings to the draconian British regime and actively promoted the formation of the Democratic Party, while Beijing agreed to uphold autonomy for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR) for the foreseeable future.

The ICL joined in cheering as the last major colonial holding of the rotted British Empire reverted to China. But we warned that with the venal Stalinist bureaucracy's pledge to maintain Hong Kong's capitalist system, the takeover "is a dagger aimed at the remaining gains of the 1949 Chinese Revolution" (WV No. 671, 11 July 1997).



2002: Unemployed factory workers protest in city of Liaoyang in northeast China, site of mass labor unrest.

Months before restoration of Hong Kong to Chinese rule, last British colonial governor Chris Patten joins Chinese official in toast (left). Hong Kong, 1 July 2003: Anti-Communist protest by 500,000 against proposed "security" law. Demonstrators burn communist flag (right).



Reuters

Indeed, since 1997 Hong Kong's capitalists have increasingly concentrated industrial investment on the mainland, as have investors from Taiwan, taking advantage of cheaper labor costs to operate thousands of sweatshop-grade factories. The main section of Hong Kong's bourgeoisie, primarily represented by the Liberal Party, opted to collaborate with Beijing. As we stated in response to last summer's "democracy" protests (WV No. 814, 21 November 2003): "As part of our struggle to defend and extend the gains of the 1949 Revolution, we call for the expropriation of the Hong Kong bourgeoisie, including their holdings on the Chinese mainland. But to carry out this task poses the need to sweep away the Beijing bureaucracy, which by its policies is undermining the defense of the Chinese workers state, through workers political revolution."

Who Will Prevail?

Deng's unhappy foray into theory set only one condition for the hybrid union of capitalist Hong Kong with the PRC:

"that patriots form the main body of administrators, that is, of the future government of the Hong Kong special region" ("One Country, Two Systems," 22-23 June 1984). A patriot, according to Deng, "is one who respects the Chinese nation, sincerely supports the motherland's resumption of sovereignty over Hong Kong and wishes not to impair Hong Kong's prosperity and stability. Those who meet these requirements are patriots, whether they believe in capitalism or feudalism or even slavery." Louis XVI and Robespierre, Abe Lincoln and Jefferson Davis—happily together at last.

For Deng and his epigones, the peaceful coexistence of counterposed social classes poses no problems. Such illusions were not entertained by Patten and his Anglo-American masters. Last summer the cuckoo's egg Patten laid in the nest of the Chinese deformed workers state began to stir. In response to the CCP-sponsored Article 23 of the Hong Kong Basic Law—legislation that would have allowed Hong Kong's chief executive to more easily suppress putatively seditious groups—Patten's Democratic Party and the Hong Kong branch of the Roman Catholic church led hundreds of thousands in protest.

The ICL opposed Article 23, recognizing that it would be used a hundred times against militant workers, the unemployed and leftists before being used once against counterrevolutionaries. At the same time, it was not difficult for us, given the effusive support by the British and American imperialists for the demonstrations, to recognize these demos as serving the purpose of establishing Hong Kong as a bastion of counterrevolution in China. In the face of the protests, the CCP quietly withdrew Article 23 from consideration, supposedly to be reconsidered at a later date. The Democratic Party went on to make substantial gains in December's district council elections, routing the pro-Beijing allies of the current Hong Kong chief executive, Tung Chee-hwa.

Recently, however, Beijing has questioned the “patriotism” of those involved in the demonstrations. This has unnerved not a few in that city’s middle and upper classes who are well aware that, in the final analysis, the state power in Hong Kong is the People’s Liberation Army, period. In the unlikely event that the CCP, to shore up its bureaucratic caste dominance, felt obliged to quash the counter-revolutionary political parties in Hong Kong, we would defend such action against the inevitable imperialist hue and cry.

But the Beijing bureaucracy’s preservation of Hong Kong as a capitalist enclave within the PRC is in keeping with its 25-year-long policy of opening whole areas of China to investment by the off-shore Chinese bourgeoisie and by the U.S., Japanese and European imperialists, while maintaining state-controlled production in large-scale industry. Mao’s CCP bureaucracy, which spawned today’s leadership of Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao, subscribed to the Stalinist pipe dream that China was “building socialism”—a classless society based on material abundance—with its own unaided efforts. The present CCP leaders believe that they can modernize China, transforming it into the world’s next superpower, through ever greater integration into the world capitalist economy.

The proliferation of capitalist market forces, within the framework of the Chinese workers state, bears resemblance to Soviet Russia under the New Economic Policy (NEP). The NEP, launched in 1921, was a series of concessions to market forces, including letting peasants market some of their produce, encouraging small-scale private industry and allowing a certain leeway for foreign investment. By such measures, the Bolshevik regime of V. I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky sought to restart the economy that had been devastated over the years of World War I and the Civil War that followed the 1917 October Revolution. For Lenin and Trotsky, the NEP was intended as a temporary retreat. Severe restrictions were placed on the hiring and acquisition of land; crucially Lenin emphasized the need to maintain the state monopoly on foreign trade.

In *Whither Russia?* (1925), Trotsky analyzed the contradictions produced by the NEP under the conditions of a world economy dominated by advanced capitalist countries. Trotsky noted that these contradictions “constitute a struggle between two mutually exclusive systems—socialism and capitalism.” He pointedly cited Lenin’s formulation of the problem at the onset of the NEP: “Who beats whom?” Trotsky stressed that the outcome depended not only on the rate of growth of the Soviet economy, but on two other factors: the relative strength of the capitalist and socialist sectors of the Soviet economy, and the relative growth of the Soviet economy compared to that of the capitalist world economy.

By January 1924 political power had been usurped from the Bolshevik vanguard by an emerging bureaucratic caste. In late 1924 Stalin proclaimed the possibility of “building socialism in one country.” Initially developed as a rationale for economic autarky, this anti-Marxist dogma later served as the bureaucracy’s ideological justification for forfeiting the cause of proletarian revolution internationally in a futile effort to appease world imperialism. Coming to the fore as a leading theoretician for Stalin, Bukharin argued to “build socialism even on a pauper technical basis” and made greater concessions to the wealthy peasants (kulaks) and private traders (NEPmen). These forces threatened to strangle the young Soviet workers state. With the kulaks withholding grain from the market and the country driven to the brink of disaster, Stalin broke with Bukharin in 1928 and implemented—albeit with adventurist and brutal methods—key policies advocated by Trotsky’s Left Opposition, including the collectivization of agriculture and greatly speeding up the tempo of industrialization.

While Stalin’s about-face staved off the immediate threat of capitalist counterrev-

Tiananmen Square, 1989: Student-centered protests sparked broader social upheaval, leading to workers revolt which was brutally suppressed by CCP bureaucracy.

olution, Stalin and his heirs rejected the Bolshevik understanding that a successful resolution to Lenin’s question of “who beats whom” could ultimately only be realized on a world scale. Even as the NEP was instituted domestically, the Soviet regime of Lenin and Trotsky fought for the *international extension* of the revolution and the overthrow of imperialism worldwide, the prerequisite to building an international planned economy and establishing a socialist society of plenty. The nationalist betrayals by the Soviet bureaucracy under Stalin and his heirs ultimately led to the final undoing of the October Revolution in 1991-92.

Stalinist Gravediggers of Revolution

Beijing’s “market reforms,” which can be described as the NEP run amok, have greatly encouraged not only the offshore Chinese bourgeoisie and imperialists but domestic capitalist-restorationist forces as well. There is only one social force in China with the unmitigated interest to defeat these forces and expropriate the offshore bourgeoisie’s holdings: the proletariat, sections of which, unlike its counterparts in East Europe and the USSR prior to counterrevolution, have already experienced the depredations of capitalist exploitation and attacks on state property. Fearful of the combative proletariat, the CCP regime dares not offer a glimmer of the political openness that accompanied the final demise of Gorbachev’s Moscow Stalinist regime.

It is the Chinese working class that during the 1989 Tiananmen uprising displayed the awareness that bureaucratic caste rule was undermining the gains of the 1949 Revolution and that has the coherent social power to sweep away the CCP bureaucracy through proletarian political revolution. Such a revolution would have enormous effects throughout the region. It could evoke a working-class socialist overturn in Taiwan and encourage the proletariat of Japan, Asia’s industrial powerhouse, and South Korea to overthrow their capitalist rulers. It would invigorate the worker and peasant masses of Vietnam and North Korea to cast off the Stalinist bureaucratic castes there. It would encourage as well the impoverished masses of the former Soviet Union to enter the road of proletarian revolution against their new capitalist rulers. The impact of a proletarian political revolution in the most populous country on earth would be worldwide, for example in South Africa, where smashing apartheid and instituting bourgeois “democracy” has manifestly not satisfied the aspirations of the masses.

The Chinese working class, before and since the Tiananmen upheaval, has engaged in thousands of local and regional strikes—in recent years, to the point of virtual insurrection against individual exploiters or the CCP betrayers. But without revolutionary leadership, that is, lacking a party based on the Leninist-

Peter Turnley



Trotskyist program, the working class will not find the road to consummating proletarian political revolution. Unlike the *social* revolutions needed to overthrow the rule of the capitalist class in the U.S., Japan, etc. and institute a nationalized, planned economy, proletarian *political* revolution in China would be based on defense of nationalized property. The task of such a revolution would be to dismantle the bureaucratic CCP state apparatus and replace it with organs of proletarian class rule, that is, soviets (councils) of workers and peasants such as those that formed the basis of proletarian state power in the 1917 Bolshevik-led social revolution in Russia.

The Chinese working class must be broken from the nationalism preached by the CCP, becoming a rallying point for international proletarian revolution in the advanced countries. This is the only solution to the backwardness of their country which is starkly revealed by the overwhelming weight and wretchedness of peasant China. It is the rejection of such internationalism that links the leadership of Mao Zedong and his protégés to that of Deng Xiaoping and his followers.

Mao set the utopian goal of China going it alone without the vitally necessary access to advanced technique and methods that could be provided by socialist revolution in an advanced society. Mao’s anti-internationalism eventually led him to side with the imperialists in their efforts to undermine the USSR. The current CCP leadership, following in Deng’s wake, looks to the imperialist entrepreneurs and the reactionary off-shore Chinese capitalists as the answer to China’s backwardness—i.e., to those who would bury the 1949 Revolution—rather than to the *class* allies of the Chinese working class throughout the world, while continuing Mao’s policy of con-

sorting with the imperialists. To defend the gains of 1949, it is urgently necessary to assemble the cadres committed to building the revolutionary party of the Chinese working class as a section of a reformed Trotskyist Fourth International.

“Left” Apostles of Social Counterrevolution

This necessity of cohering a genuine Trotskyist nucleus is underscored by the fact that the self-described Trotskyists in Hong Kong march under the banner of bourgeois democracy, gilding the counterrevolutionary mobilizations in that city with the fool’s gold of “self-determination” and people’s “democracy.” This is not surprising given that these groups, *October Review* and Pioneer, are supporters of the fake-Trotskyist United Secretariat, which hailed Polish Solidarność, the company union of Wall Street and the Vatican, as it led the first of the capitalist counterrevolutions in East Europe. The United Secretariat went on to cheer the overturn of the October Revolution led by Yeltsin and George Bush Sr.

On the very eve of Hong Kong’s return to China, *October Review* (30 June 1997) offered the following: “We propose that the focal theme for the fights for political and economic rights can revolve around the demand for a democratic election of a Hong Kong People’s Congress which makes major decisions relating to self-rule of Hong Kong by the people. In this struggle for political and social rights, the people of Hong Kong are now much more linked to the people of the mainland.” That this statement amounted to a call for Hong Kong to act as a “democratic” spearhead for counterrevolution on the mainland was made clear by the fact that it made no mention of defense of the gains of the 1949 Revolution. Nor did it so much as mention the Hong Kong proletariat, doubtless because those workers are organized mostly in a trade-union federation linked to the Democratic Association for the Betterment of Hong Kong, which politically supports the CCP central government in Beijing.

Somewhat slicker, the Pioneer group (formerly New Sprouts Society) allows that a struggle under the bourgeois slogans of democracy and freedom could “only create conditions prevalent in today’s Russia and East Europe” and that “The collapse of the Soviet workers states is objectively certainly a great defeat for the working class.” But this is just so much cynicism, as Pioneer simultaneously claims that since the workers of the former Soviet bloc had been subjected to reactionary bureaucratic rule, the collapse of the Communist Party governments was “not a direct defeat of the working class: the worker masses do not feel that they have been defeated, and as a result do not suffer from deep depression and pessimism. On the contrary they feel on some level that it is the beginning of liberation” (“Fight for People’s Socialism,”

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Charter Schools: An Attack on Public Education

Letter

21 April 2003

dear comrades;

hi. my name is harmony. i am a subscriber to workers vanguard, a leftwinger, and a budding activist. the reason i am telling you all this is because i am about to criticize something i read in your paper under the spartacus youth club section, but first i want to establish that i am on your side. we share many political and moral views. so please don't take any of this as an attack.

my criticism is about charter schools. on page four of the march 28th, 2003 issue of workers vanguard, there is the "spartacus youth club ten points program". point number seven is about the separation of the church and the state (which i agree with) ... but it also says that there should be no government funding for charter schools.

this really upset me because certain charter schools have been very effective and helpful in communities where the regular public school system has failed in the past. for example, there is a branch of charter schools called KIPP (Knowledge Is Power Programs) which only sets up its schools in ghettos where the populations are mostly black and hispanic. these are kids who are more likely to 'fail' than their white peers ... but it is my opinion that it is the public school system that fails them. KIPP, on the other hand, has been very successful. for example, in one of their schools, only 3% of the school population was reading at grade level the first year it opened. by the very next year, 24% of the kids were reading at grade level. in another school, its students scored among the top 2% in some state-test that measures academic ability. this was in an area where many kids in other public schools were dropping out or failing.

i actually have ambitions to open up my own charter school after graduating university. these schools shall, among other things, give a more ethnically diverse perspective in history/literature/social studies classes.

i don't see why there is anything wrong with charter schools. they are publicly funded. the only difference is that they are run by members of the community, instead of 'the board' who might as well be a bunch of corporate robots, faceless people behind desks who know very little and care even less about the challenges and needs of today's inner-city youth. a school run by community members is a good thing, because every community has its own unique set of challenges and needs, and thus, it should be allowed to have schools with a curriculum and philosophy that meets these challenges and needs.

like i said, i don't see why there is anything wrong with charter schools ... but maybe i am missing something. if there IS something wrong with them, PLEASE LET ME KNOW WHAT IT IS because i plan to devote most of my life to this, and

if i am going to be wasting my life, i want to know now. this is a genuine and sincere question. please list all the reasons why you are against charter schools, both personally and as a representative of your organization. i will consider your side of the argument with an eager and open mind, just as i hope you have done the same for me and mine.

Peace, Love, & Light;
—harmony.

Young Spartacus Replies:

Many young activists, eager to make their own individual impact to better society, find much attractive in small-scale charter schools run by "members of the community." But this is an illusion and a misrepresentation of the real motives behind charter schools. We oppose charter schools because they are an attack on the democratic right of public education

SYC at Berkeley demo in defense of affirmative action, October 1997.

The capitalist system utilizes racial oppression to keep the working class divided and wages down. Furthermore, the ruling class intentionally maintains a reserve pool of unemployed labor in order to keep wages across the board lower. While historically the black population filled that role—the last hired, first fired—increasingly, black youth are treated more as an expendable population, granted few choices in life: incarceration in prisons or schools built to resemble them, "McJobs" at miserable wages, or joining the military to kill and die for U.S. imperialism. Under capitalism, workers and the oppressed will never get the full education they deserve because the bourgeoisie desires to spend on edu-



Rethinking Schools Online

Community protest against Edison charter schools. Charter school programs have sparked public outcry from San Francisco to Philadelphia.

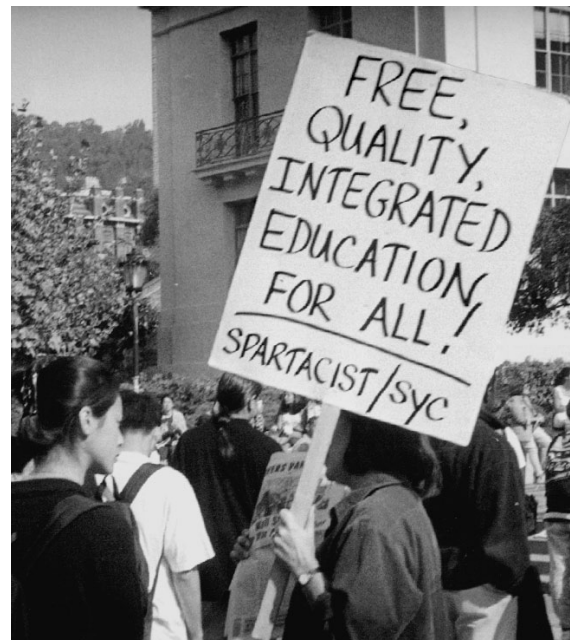
and the separation of church and state; they increase racial segregation and class inequality in education and are utilized as a tool to smash the teachers unions.

As a corollary to the American Dream, it is often asserted that all one needs to achieve the good life is a good education and a good "work ethic." Put plainly, this is false. We live in a fundamentally class-divided society predicated on an enforced social inequality; most people are seen by the ruling class as having no value except to make profits for the benefit of a tiny minority. All the "rules" and institutions are rigged to serve the powerful few, and oppression is built into the system and is daily reinforced in multiple ways. Social mobility is only possible for a very few exceptional individuals with extraordinary talent and plenty of luck since the existence of a thin layer of upper petty-bourgeois minorities assists the ruling class in keeping the rest of the oppressed quiescent. However, there is no way the working class as a whole or an oppressed race-color caste like black people can move "up" without shattering the entire social order—that is, by a social revolution.

cation only what it will see back in profits. To make profit for the capitalists, workers should be able to read, but they don't need to be scientists or artists. However, black workers remain integrated into strategic industries in the U.S. and are the most unionized section of the proletariat. They will play a key role in the social revolution and the formation of a revolutionary government which uniquely can administer an education system that genuinely serves its students.

As Marxists, we defend universal public education as a democratic right gained, in this country, through the Civil War and the civil rights movement—that is, through hard struggle. To attempt to better education for blacks and minorities while maintaining and enforcing their segregation can only further undermine their right to decent education; in this racist capitalist system, separate can *never* be equal. Rather, as we say in our Ten Point Program, we are "For free, quality, integrated public education for all!"

Fifty years after *Brown v. Board of Education* ended legally sanctioned segregation, schools are in fact more segre-



Young Spartacus

gated than before the civil rights programs were implemented. Generally, public schools in the U.S. are funded primarily by local property taxes, allowing those schools in affluent suburbs to provide much better education than those near the projects, where some have one book for every five students. Furthermore, students are "tracked" into a particular educational program from early on in life, a system designed to determine their future position in class society.

Students in inner-city schools confront conditions more suitable for a police state than for a place of study: metal detectors, video surveillance, strict hall and truancy monitoring by security guards, drug testing, locker searches. Recently, the mayor of New York City, Michael Bloomberg, declared that, "If I have to put a police officer next to every kid, we will do it," (*Newsday*, 6 January) and the executive director of the National Association of School Resource Officers stated that school safety is the fastest growing area of law enforcement in the country (*New York Times*, 9 January). In one small example of this outrageous crack-down on students, a 14-year-old girl in Toledo, Ohio was handcuffed, arrested and booked on a misdemeanor for wearing a low-cut midriff top and refusing to cover it. In New Jersey, two elementary school boys were arrested and charged with terrorism for playing cops and robbers with paper guns. Given that 28 percent of all black men are destined in the capitalist U.S. to spend some time behind bars, it is clear that schools in the ghettos are increasingly becoming little more than preparatory schools for prisons.

The fact is that charter school "reform" does not alleviate any of these problems. Rather, charter schools have *increased* racial segregation and class inequality, *increased* the gap between the education available to inner-city black youth and that available to white suburban youth, and have gone a long way in destroying the separation of church and state. In fact, in 2003, three-quarters of black charter school students were enrolled in 27 percent of charter schools, and these schools were, on average, 80 percent black, as opposed to 54 percent black for public schools. A difference of lesser magnitude holds for Latino charter students. Given the fact that, in racist capitalist America, a mostly poor, black and minority school can never have the resources to give the same level of education as what white children in posh suburbs can get, one can only imagine the poor level of education provided by those predominantly minority schools.

While technically most charter schools are not allowed to be associated with religious institutions, the two are allowed to "enter into partnerships," according to the stipulations for funding set in the

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ISO Excludes Black Spartacists to Avoid Debate

What Strategy for Black Liberation?

We print below a leaflet which was issued by the Bay Area Spartacus Youth Club on April 11.

On Thursday, April 1, the International Socialist Organization (ISO) held a discussion at San Francisco State titled “The Fight for Black Liberation Must Continue Today.” A team of ISOers barred the way and shut the door on two black women communists, Carla and Wyollette, Spartacist comrades who came to engage them on the topic. An ISO member at SF State, Suzie, threatened to call the campus security guards, claiming the two women comrades were “violent,” “disruptive” and there to “break legs and destroy our meeting.” This is the kind of profiling of black people the campus security cops groove on, but the ISO is—at best—indifferent to the consequences of calling cops against black leftists in this profoundly racist society.

Naturally our comrades objected. The ISO woman promptly responded that campus security guards are “not cops, but workers.” Security guards may be hired by private companies, but they are just as much a part of the “armed bodies of men” (to quote Engels) who defend private capitalist property as are the gun-toting cops directly employed by the state. What do they think those private security outfits are doing now in Iraq? Hostility to the hired guns of capital is ABC for Marxists, but not for the ISO.

The ISO has supported work actions by security guards in New York City, while its former Canadian affiliate supported a “strike” by jail guards in Toronto, even hailing the “militant reputation” of “correctional workers” (*Socialist Worker* [Canada], 6 March 1996). Does the ISO really think that death row prisoners like Kevin Cooper and Mumia Abu-Jamal should support better wages and working conditions for those who incarcerate them? Better conditions mean more and better guns and more leeway for guards to terrorize and kill prisoners! We in the Spartacus Youth Club (SYC) are opposed to organizing the racist strikebreaking cops and prison guards as part of the labor movement. **Cops and prison guards out of the trade unions!**

Our comrades were kept out of the ISO’s meeting because as revolutionary communists we threatened to expose the ISO’s reformism. While the ISO can pay lip service to the fight for black liberation, in practice all they do is build illusions in the reformability of the capitalist system. The ISO sees racism as just one of many social ills produced by capitalism. In contrast the revolutionaries of the Spartacus Youth Club understand that the fight for black liberation is a key, strategic task of the American socialist revolution.

Without a correct approach to the struggle for black liberation, it is simply impossible to even talk of bringing the working class to the consciousness that it must make a revolution here in the most powerful imperialist country on earth. Every aspect of social reality in the United States is shaped by the legacy of black chattel slavery on which American capitalism was founded. It took a Civil War—which was also a social revolution—to get rid of black slavery. The post-war Reconstruction period was the



New York City, October 1999: LBL banner at thousands-strong demonstration to stop the Klan. Labor’s power can and must be mobilized in struggle against black oppression.

most democratic period of American history. But the promise of black freedom was betrayed when the federal government withdrew the Union Army from the South in the Compromise of 1877, laying the basis for the reign of Jim Crow segregation across the South, enforced by the racist terror of the Ku Klux Klan.

The civil rights movement in the 1950s and ’60s succeeded in eliminating legal segregation and won a few spots for blacks in universities like SF State so they could make it into the middle class. But the civil rights movement foundered when it came North and encountered the de facto segregation that is the reality for the majority of American blacks to this day. The forced segregation of blacks into a race-color caste at the bottom of society is the bedrock of American capitalism. Blacks are the last hired, first fired—and increasingly they are not even hired, while token gains like affirmative action programs are under attack. The SL and SYC defend affirmative action and fight for open admissions and free tuition to make higher education more of a reality for black and working-class youth. But the racist rulers regard the black masses as an expendable surplus population, left to rot in the inner cities, subject to high rates of diseases like AIDS and terrorized by the so-called “war on drugs.” One in eight black men between the ages of 20 and 34 is currently behind bars, and 28 percent of all black men can expect to be imprisoned some time in their lives.

The ISO pushes the strategy of building “mass movements” to pressure the U.S. government and its cops, courts and prisons to be different. But this is precisely the strategy that derailed the civil rights movement—the attempt to pressure a wing of the racist American rulers (e.g. the Democratic Party) to change their priorities and make jobs, housing and equal rights available to all in this country. It is a pipe dream to think that “mass demonstrations” can pressure the capitalist rulers to fundamentally change the institutions on which their rule depends.

Blacks are a key and vital component of the working class in this country—just look at the powerful International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) here in the Bay Area. We seek to make the working class as a whole conscious that it must take up the fight against black oppression as part of the fight to liberate itself from capitalist exploitation. The Spartacist League initiated the Labor Black League, with which it

people, fight for the abolition of the racist death penalty. We make a point of opposing the death penalty for the guilty as well as the innocent; we do not accord the state the right to decide who lives and who dies.

In the 5 March 2004 issue of *Socialist Worker*, the ISO uncritically ran an article that states that the Free Kevin Cooper Committee for a California Moratorium “is bringing together the activists, community members, and people of faith who fought to stop Cooper’s execution. The aim is to link that struggle with other cases on California’s death row, and push politicians and legislators to win real justice for Kevin Cooper—and end all executions in California.” Contrast this moral and liberal appeal to the capitalist state with the work of the Spartacist League, LBL and PDC around the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal, America’s foremost death row political prisoner. We concentrate on mobilizing the power of the working class, getting unions around the country to take up his case and contribute money to his defense. For example, the ILWU here took up Jamal’s case as a result of the PDC’s work.

An outspoken champion of the oppressed, Jamal was a target of the Philadelphia police and the FBI from the time he was a Black Panther Party spokesman at the age of 15, because they saw in him the spectre of black revolution and defiant opposition to their system of racist oppression. The state seeks to execute Jamal in order to send a chilling message to all those who challenge vicious cop repression in the ghettos, who stand up for labor’s rights on the picket lines, who protest imperialist mass murder from the Balkans to Iraq. We have always insisted that Jamal’s case, far from being an aberration, throws a spotlight on the racist death penalty—today’s legal lynching which descends from the system of black chattel slavery.

The difference between our strategy and the ISO’s on black liberation was made crystal clear when in 1999 the murderous KKK planned to appear in New York City. We initiated a mass labor/black mobilization to stop the Klan. In contrast, the ISO

ISO shared platform with cops at Democrats’ rally for “tolerance” for KKK in NYC, October 1999.



works in fraternal alliance in the fight against black oppression. We fight for a multiracial revolutionary workers party that will emblazon on its banner the fight for black liberation as part of the fight for socialist revolution.

What about the ISO? Recently, they have tried to claim they have a strategy for black liberation by boasting of their work to save Kevin Cooper from the death penalty. It was certainly a good thing to fight against the execution of Kevin Cooper, a black man who was framed up and remains incarcerated even now. We joined in the protests, demanding Free Kevin Cooper Now! The Spartacist League and the Partisan Defense Committee (PDC), a legal and social defense organization that takes up cases and causes in the interests of all working

sat on their hands until Democratic politicians like Al Sharpton moved to spike the labor-centered demonstration with a diversionary rally elsewhere that *offered to share a sound permit with the Klan*. Then the ISO joined the Democrats’ “tolerance” rally for the KKK, sharing a platform with NYPD cops! This was not a question of “free speech” but the Klan’s “right” to organize for murder. Some 8,000 trade unionists, blacks, immigrants and youth agreed with us and drove out the KKK murderers, despite the efforts of the Democrats and groups like the ISO to disarm the Klan’s intended victims. In building this demo, we worked to win the proletariat to an understanding of its role as the gravedigger of the capitalist system and defender of the rights of black people

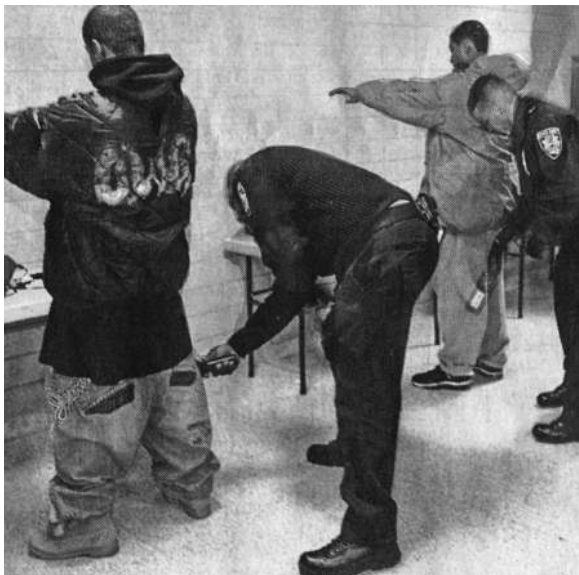
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Charter Schools...

(continued from page 6)

national No Child Left Behind Act. Many charter schools are clearly run by religious organizations—from Protestant churches to the Nation of Islam—and are at times housed in the “partnering” church. Some charters include texts like “Children’s Bible Handbook” and “Exploring God’s World: Science,” and one school was even exempted from having to teach sex education because of religious reasons. The proponents of the charter school movement defend this practice as promoting “local values.” Marxists oppose any and every move in the direction of official state religion; we oppose state persecution of or support for any religion and call for complete separation of church and state.

Many charter schools are now being run for profit by various corporations who make money by taking “administrative fees” from state or local governments. Edison Schools, who in spring 2002 was given charge of a huge portion of the Philadelphia school system, has become the most infamous, running schools so expensively, while at the same time creating such miserable schools, as to cause real public outcry. They cut every corner—in late 2002, Edison’s CEO Chris Whittle even proposed using students as workers to cut costs; according to Philadelphians United to Support Public Schools, he commented that “600 pupils working one hour a day was the equivalent of 75 full-time adult staff” and suggested putting such a program in place by 2004. Even though they were technically not allowed to accept students based on anything other than age, in an attempt to pad their performance statistics, it was a detestable common practice for Edison to meet personally



Kamber/NY Times

NY high school students face enhanced “security” crackdown (left). Caged minors being schooled in California juvenile detention facility. Contempt for black youth is a hallmark of racist American capitalism.



L.A. Times

with the parents of special education kids and many blacks and Latinos to urge them to send their kids elsewhere.

One of the main attractions of charter schools to bourgeois politicians like George W. Bush and Democrat Bill Clinton, while he was president, is that they are economical, i.e., they save money for the capitalists. But how, exactly, do charter schools save money over conventional schools? One is cutting corners, but many “conventional” public schools in the ghettos already do that. Mainly, it is by busting the teachers unions and thereby lowering teachers’ wages and benefits. As a black Wisconsin Congresswoman who helped start the Milwaukee voucher program explained, “The main motivation of some of the choice [charter and voucher program] supporters was to weaken public education unions” (*Progressive*, January 2004). By opening up a new (or converting an old) shop, the vast majority of charter schools have gone around the unions, as well as standards for teachers’ qualifications. In New York state, a 1998

law allows start-up charter schools that begin with less than 250 students (which most do since they usually only start with a grade or two) to be exempted from “collective-bargaining agreements” for as long as they exist, even when they grow beyond that size. In Michigan in 1999, for example, while all of the “conventional” public school districts had union representation, only 3.6 percent of charter schools were unionized. Because of this, many teachers unions have a stated position opposed to the charter movement and have, at the same time, attempted to unionize charter schools.

The state exists to defend the interests of the ruling class. In the arena of education, that means that it sides with the

tion is shortened by one month; there is a dress code; homework must be at least two hours every night by regulation, and parents must sign contracts saying they will supervise their children every night as they do their homework. Teachers are forced to be on call 24 hours a day, by cell phone, to respond to children’s questions. A system of “incentives and disincentives” is set up for the students and their teachers in order to foster what must be an insane amount of competition. For students, these include granting “KIPP dollars” to students based on how well they do, which must be signed off by their parents weekly. At one of their founding schools, one rule states: “At KIPP-Houston, students who break the rules—by failing to do the homework, showing disrespect toward an adult, visiting the bathroom without permission—go to ‘the porch’; they go to classes, but they wear their KIPP shirts inside out and cannot talk or eat with their classmates.” That KIPP is “monetarily competitive”—a fact which landed George W. Bush as a public supporter of the organization—can fundamentally only be due to the anti-union character of charter schools in general.

Charter school programs have sparked public protest. Best known were the protests against the Edison school takeover in Philadelphia, but that isn’t the only place. Protest at some charter schools in St. Louis, for example, first began when they were converted and put under private company management last September, with a demonstration of students carrying the gravestones of closed buildings. Within a month, school engineers held a two-day sick-out, leaving four schools without power, and then in November two hundred teachers followed suit with their own two-day sick-out. In Detroit last year, school was canceled for a day as thousands of teachers planned to protest the legislation that would allow 150 new charter schools to open in Michigan over ten years, and before the protest happened, the plan was abandoned.

We, as revolutionaries, stand against every instance of injustice and discrimination; we fight for free public education through the university level for everyone who wants it, for open admissions with a living stipend so that kids from poor families can go to school, for school busing programs to achieve racial integration. Charter schools are a step in the wrong direction—every attack on public education and every relaxation of uniform educational standards is a device to increase racial segregation and inequality between schools and between students.

Point seven of the SYC Ten Point Program reads, in full, “Defend separation of church and state! Defend science against superstition and mysticism! Keep religion out of the schools! No prayer in the schools! Down with the teaching of creationism! For the teaching of evolution! No government funding for religious, private or ‘charter’ schools!” See WV No. 800, 28 March 2003, for the full Ten Point Program of the SYC. ■

Black Liberation...

(continued from page 7)

and all the oppressed. The ISO’s unity with the Democrats in building “tolerance” for the Klan shows how the ISO acts as an obstacle to the fight for the independent mobilization of the working class in its own interests against the entire racist system of capitalism.

Although the ISO does not today call for a vote for the Democratic Party, it has supported the “third” capitalist party, the Greens, like Ralph Nader in the 2000 presidential election and Matt Gonzalez in his recent campaign for SF mayor. They are currently debating whether or not to support Nader in this year’s presidential election. Some ISOers are arguing that, unlike in 2000, Nader is not supportable this time around. What has changed? Nader was then, as he is now, a capitalist politician and shill for the Democratic Party. The SYC understands that capitalist politicians, be they black, white, Green, Democrat or Republican, cannot be fighters for black rights because they uphold and defend the system responsible for black oppression—capitalism.

In fact, Nader scarcely ever mentioned black oppression, giving even less lip service to black rights than your average Democratic Party politician. Nader’s avoidance of black oppression stems from his promotion of American capitalist “democracy” as a force for progress in the U.S. and abroad. On the campaign trail, when questioned by a black community activist in Seattle about his chronic inability to reach out to black people, Nader replied: “You ask what I have done to reach out to the black community and address racial issues and I ask you, how many black people did you bring here

today to hear me and support this campaign?” (*ColorLines*, “Ralph Nader’s Racial Blindspot,” 17 August 2000). Here is a politician who treats black people as voting cattle, yet in their articles at the time, the ISO in effect dismissed Nader’s evasion on the black question—the question of the American revolution—as a mere character flaw.

Central to the fight for a multiracial revolutionary workers party is the struggle against the bureaucrats in the trade unions who keep labor tied to their enemies in the capitalist parties. The ISO, however, *supports* pro-Democratic Party labor bureaucrats, so long as they talk out of the left side of the mouth. The ISO poses an *obstacle* to building a revolutionary party by polishing the chains that bind the oppressed to their capitalist exploiters. What else could you expect from an organization that from its inception has refused to defend the Soviet Union when it existed and China, North Korea, Cuba and Vietnam today? The revolutions in these countries overthrew the exploitative system of capitalism, serving as inspiration to those fighting in America against black oppression. The Spartacists, as genuine Trotskyists, have always fought for the *unconditional defense* of workers states where capitalism has been overthrown and for political revolution to oust the Stalinist parasitic castes, as part of the struggle for world revolution. As Leon Trotsky said in one of his documents on the defense of the Soviet Union in 1940, “Those who cannot defend old positions will never conquer new ones” (“Balance Sheet of the Finnish Events,” 1940, *In Defense of Marxism*).

Those interested in the fight for black liberation and for workers revolution should check out the SYC. Stop by our literature tables at noon every Thursday, and come to our public classes on Marxism! ■



Anness/Record

228 New Jersey teachers were jailed for striking, late 2001. The capitalist state, school administrations seek to bust the unions.

interests of the school administration and management, whether or not the school is a “conventional” public school. More than anything thing else, this concretely means that the state stands foursquare against the unions. If the fascination of the last two presidents for the union-busting charter school program didn’t make this fact obvious enough, then the Secretary of Education’s statement that the National Education Association, one of the largest unions in the country, was like “a terrorist organization” should make it crystal clear. (That he later modified his comments, calling them instead a group of obstructionists, should fool no one.)

It is conceivable that a particular charter school might perform better than the horrible standards set by “conventional” capitalist education, though the very limited statistics now available don’t lead to that conclusion. Our young correspondent holds up as an example the KIPP program, but their program in fact seems to be exorbitantly authoritarian and oppressive to both students and teachers. KIPP’s program is extremely burdensome: school hours run from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. most of the week with an additional four hours on Saturdays; summer vaca-

Columbia...

(continued from page 12)

Congress or at labor board hearings, that the decisive gains of the labor movement are won. The leadership of the GSEU is undercutting the strike by telling students that crossing picket lines to attend class is fine. UPS Teamsters, whose hard-fought 1997 strike was a victory, have pledged to honor the GSEU pickets, and other strike supporters should follow suit. Yesterday, after an SYC member informed UPS workers of the strike, they refused to cross the picket line in order to make scheduled deliveries on campus.

Some professors are trying to move classes off campus. Even if well-intentioned, moving classes off campus actually helps the university keep functioning and is counterposed to shutting Columbia down. This gesture, facilitated by the provost, simply saves the university electricity and at bottom constitutes strike-breaking by allowing the business of the university to continue with a minimum of disruption. Instead, professors and graduate students should bring out classes to **build** the picket lines. Thousands of students and workers at Columbia's gates would help pave the way to victory.

The fight for union rights is a fight against the administration. The administration's hostility toward the unions on campus reflects its class allegiance—it runs Columbia on behalf of the Board of Trustees, a group of capitalist magnates such as the vice chair of J.P. Morgan Chase and an executive director at Morgan Stanley. This university is a chief think tank for the U.S. ruling class, a training ground for future imperialist warmongers

March 9: SYC speakout against racist provocations at Columbia.

Young Spartacus



and anti-union lawyers and a notorious racist slumlord. As well, the administration has aided and abetted the government's anti-immigrant witchhunt by turning over immigrant students' names to the federal government in 2001 in the wake of Bush's declaring his anti-immigrant, anti-labor "war on terror." **Abolish the administration!**

Private universities like Columbia should be nationalized and run by those who work, teach and study there. Against the race and class bias that permeates higher education under capitalism, we demand open admissions and no tuition for all with a paid living stipend, posing the fight for the universal right to free, quality, integrated education. Columbia's gates should be thrown open—including to those who work there, their children and residents of neighboring Harlem. **For student/faculty/worker control of the universities!**

The SYC seeks to link the struggles of students with the social power of labor.

Campus workers were among those who endorsed the SYC-initiated united-front protest on March 9 against the recent series of racist provocations on campus. Our argument against appealing to the administration to act on behalf of minority students at that time is borne out by the example of its aggressive opposition to a graduate student union. The campus branch of the International Socialist Organization (ISO) opposes our position and did not endorse, as it instinctively follows behind the prevailing sentiment among campus liberals. The first day of the GSEU strike, some members of the ISO walked the picket line—but others crossed it to set up a lit table on campus **behind the picket lines**, which goes against even elementary trade-union consciousness. Honoring picket lines for the ISO is strictly a matter of personal convenience.

As one campus maintenance worker remarked to a *Workers Vanguard* salesman during our campaign to build the March 9 rally, Columbia is run by a gang of union-

busters. In 2002, the provost docked those clerical workers who did not report to work in solidarity with the GSEU a day's pay. Pro-union students and workers must demand: **No reprisals against striking students and their supporters!** All workers at Columbia, whether graduate students, maintenance technicians or support staff, have common interests best served by organizing into one campus union. The current division of the workforce into multiple unions dilutes the potential power of labor on campus.

The battle by the graduate students for their union comes in the context of the U.S. imperialist ruling class's general onslaught against working people and the oppressed at home and abroad. The union movement as a whole is hamstrung by its leaders who preach reliance on the Democratic Party as the presidential elections draw nearer and nearer. Showing that the Democrats are no less a party of war and racism than the Republicans, John Kerry backed the U.S. colonial conquest of Iraq and wants to send in more troops; at the same time, he stands behind the array of reactionary "war on terror" laws. Successful class struggle requires the complete independence of the working class from all parties and agencies of the capitalists. Working people need their own party that fights for the rule of labor. The SYC intervenes on campus as partisans of the working class in its historic mission to sweep away the capitalist system that is based on exploitation, racist repression and imperialist war and seeks to win students and youth to a revolutionary class-struggle perspective. **Build picket lines—don't cross them! Boycott classes! Shut down Columbia! Victory to the GSEU strike!** ■

Hong Kong...

(continued from page 5)

resolution passed at the 1993 New Sprouts Society conference).

While Pioneer likes to put forward a "proletarian" face by lacing its statements with elementary economic demands, such as a minimum wage, and calls to "tax the corporations," it brazenly supports the anti-Communist protests in Hong Kong. In a New Year's Day 2004 statement, Pioneer proclaims: "The Great July First Demonstration and the defeat of the Loyalists in the District Council Elections have expanded the people's aspirations and destroyed the prestige of the SAR government." Leaving no doubt as to what piper calls its tune, Pioneer blazoned in the headline of its statement: "For General Elections Through Universal Franchise and Free Nominations!"—a call virtually identical to the demand issued by U.S. imperialism's representa-

tive in Hong Kong the month before.

For all the hemming and hawing about the pluses and minuses of the workers states under bureaucratic caste rule, Pioneer's real message is that "democracy is a very urgent need in China and it would indeed be a gigantic step forward if bourgeois democracy is realized there" ("Fight for People's Socialism"). But capitalist restoration in China would be a brutal process that would subject the masses to immense social dislocation, providing no basis for bourgeois democracy. In East Europe and Russia the only "liberation" experienced by the workers has been from the burden of living a too-long life, their now-earlier demise hastened by the joblessness, poor health care and hopelessness they face in the aftermath of capitalist counterrevolution.

In his 1918 polemic *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, Lenin answered those who brandish bourgeois "democracy" in order to attack the revolutionary overthrow of capital-

ist rule, counterposing the **proletarian** democracy of workers soviets:

"[Kautsky] fails to see the **class** nature of the state apparatus, of the machinery of state. Under bourgeois democracy the capitalists, by thousands of tricks—which are the more artful and effective the more 'pure' democracy is developed—**drive** the people away from administrative work, from freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, etc. The Soviet government is the **first** in the world (or strictly speaking, the second, because the Paris Commune began to do the same thing) to **enlist** the people, specifically the **exploited** people, in the work of administration. The working people are **barred** from participation in bourgeois parliaments (they **never decide** important questions under bourgeois democracy, which are decided by the stock exchange and the banks) by thousands of obstacles, and the workers know and feel, see and realise perfectly well that the bourgeois parliaments are institutions **alien** to them, **instruments for the oppression** of the workers by the bourgeoisie, institutions of a hostile class, of the exploiting minority. "The Soviets are the direct organisation of the working and exploited people themselves, which helps them to organise and administer their own state in every possible way."

In embryo, the various workers organizations that arose in China during the Tiananmen upheaval, an incipient political revolution, displayed not a few of the characteristics described by Lenin. It was these groups that helped organize resistance to the declaration of martial law on 20 May 1989, forming a "workers picket corps" and "dare to die" teams to protect protesting students against repression. Workers groups began to take on responsibility for public safety after governmental authority in Beijing evaporated in the face of the mass protests and the police vanished from the streets. And it was the organized workers who prepared for the tasks of transporting food and other vital necessities, preparations cut short by the June 3-4 massacre. It was during the period immediately before the massacre and under the protection of the workers groups that the streets of Beijing were crowded with ordinary people arguing about politics, expressing their opinions on the way forward and appealing

to troops sent to crush the protests. In short, during the Tiananmen upheaval it was the workers groups that, in deed, defended and oversaw this blossoming of freedom and prepared to take the functions of society in hand.

But even during these events, the workers groups on their own did not go beyond upholding "democracy" as freedom from bureaucratic constraint and not as the product of rule by workers soviets. Not infrequently, the workers looked to supposedly sympathetic elements of the bureaucracy for guidance. Moved to rebel by the bureaucracy's attack on the "iron rice bowl" of guaranteed jobs, housing and other benefits, the workers did not arrive at the understanding that they needed to effect a proletarian political overturn to preserve and extend the gains of the 1949 Revolution.

What was crucially missing in China in 1989 was a revolutionary party—or even the nucleus of such a party—representing the interests of the proletariat, to provide the necessary leadership to the workers in struggle. Since that time, some of the workers leaders, notably Han Dongfang, have become advocates of a "democratization" in China such as was visited on the proletariat in the aftermath of the counterrevolution in East Europe and the USSR. The Chinese working class has demonstrated its valor and, if necessary, willingness to die to preserve the gains of the 1949 Revolution. But without a party committed to defending the existing gains of the working class—for example, the overturns of the capitalist order in Cuba, Vietnam and North Korea as well as China—without an international party committed to forging links between the Chinese working class and the powerful Japanese proletariat, without a party that is a tribune for all those wronged by the imperialists and by bureaucratic caste rule, it cannot triumph. It is only revolutionary Trotskyism that provides the program necessary to build such a party. And it is the International Communist League that has fought for that program against those who sing hymns of praise to bourgeois democracy and counterrevolution. ■

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War...

(continued from page 1)

with hijacked aircraft in New York City! But their attention was focused on their main obsessions: capitalist counterrevolution in China and “regime change” in Iraq. Moreover, Osama bin Laden had been America’s creature, armed and equipped along with the Taliban to fight U.S. imperialism’s “holy war,” launched under Democrat Jimmy Carter against the Soviet Red Army in Afghanistan. Like Dr. Frankenstein, the U.S. rulers didn’t calculate that their monster, bin Laden, would get up and turn on his creator.

As we wrote in a prescient statement by the Political Bureau of the Spartacist League, just the day after the destruction of the World Trade Center:

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

“In the aftermath of capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union, the American imperialist rulers have sought to find a surrogate for the war against ‘godless Communism’ in the spectre of ‘Islamic terrorism.’ This is the new external enemy against which they have sought to rally the population, and they aim to use the attack on the World Trade Center for furthering public support for their imperialist terror abroad, fostering the lie that the working people of the U.S. have a common interest with their capitalist exploiters.”

—WV No. 764, 14 September 2001

Dual Parties of Evil at Home and Abroad

While the World Trade Center smoldered, Condoleezza Rice convened a high-level meeting of Bush aides to “think about how do you capitalize on these opportunities to fundamentally change American doctrine, and the shape of the world, in the wake of September 11th” (*Asia Times*, 30 March 2003). Two damaging exposés by Washington insiders, *Against All Enemies* by Richard Clarke and *Plan of Attack* by Bob Woodward, reveal the White House’s cynical and murderous opportunism. Clarke, the counterterrorism expert appointed by Clinton and kept on by Bush, managed the September 11 crisis for the White House. He sent Vice President Cheney and aides to a bunker in the East Wing, and then set off to join them. Fuming that his warnings about Al Qaeda had been ignored, he recounts: “I turned the corner and found a machine gun in my face. Cheney’s security detail had set up outside the vault doors, with body armor, shotguns, and MP5 machine guns. Although they knew me, they were not about to open the vault door.” Clarke pleaded, “*Hey guys, it’s me!*” In a September 11 meeting with Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and his deputy Paul Wolfowitz, Clarke claims surprise that they “were going to take advantage of this national tragedy to promote their agenda about Iraq.”

Woodward spells out that “regime change” in Iraq “was the standing policy inherited from the Clinton administra-

Racist Roundup of Immigrants at Newark Airport

The Department of Homeland Security has been conducting racist dragnets of Latino people traveling by air and subjecting them to arrest, jail and deportation. Between April 8 and 13, passengers on four separate flights arriving from Los Angeles at Newark airport were confronted by federal agents. A total of 158 people, undocumented Latino immigrants and those who came to meet their flights, were hauled off to detention centers. Most, if not all, now face deportation proceedings.

This is a flagrant example of racial profiling by the cops and an escalation of the government’s all-sided attack on civil rights. Passengers on domestic flights are not required to carry a passport or show immigration documents. So how did the Feds decide who was an “illegal” immigrant? “Did they ask only people who looked Latino?” asked one immigrant rights advocate (*New York Times*, 10 April). After Latinos, who’s next to be screened by the cops as they step off

a plane? People with Arab-sounding names? Black people? Youth with anti-war buttons on their backpacks?

Speaking of the Newark detentions, a representative of the National Council of La Raza declared, “We haven’t heard anything like this before.” But if large-scale arrests of airline passengers on immigration charges is something new, raids on work locations and mass roundups of undocumented workers are a customary part of the racist abuse the capitalists inflict on immigrants. On April 8, federal agents in San Diego arrested 31 Latino shipyard workers who worked for Continental Maritime, a division of the defense contractor Northrop Grumman, along with an additional 12 people who were found in their homes. Three face criminal charges of re-entering the country after being deported; the others face deportation.

Under cover of the “war against terror,” the government has greatly escalated its witchhunt of immigrants. Now

the Department of Homeland Security is pushing a plan to “deputize” local and state police to arrest immigrants on the basis of federal immigration statutes, even if they are not accused of breaking a state law. Alabama and Florida are already participating in the program—which is based on a 1996 law signed by President Bill Clinton—while Virginia, Colorado and Idaho are considering signing up. In Los Angeles County, the sheriff’s office is reportedly close to an agreement to allow booking officers to seek out undocumented immigrants in county jails for deportation.

It is vitally necessary for the entire working class to defend the victims of the government’s racist anti-immigrant roundups. We fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants; all those who arrive here, by whatever means, should have the full rights available to all Americans. We say: **Free all the detainees! Drop the charges! Stop the racist anti-immigrant dragnets!**

tion.... A 1998 law passed by Congress and signed by President Bill Clinton authorized up to \$97 million in military assistance to Iraqi opposition forces ‘to remove the regime headed by Saddam Hussein’ and ‘promote the emergence of a democratic government’.” Clinton began the pipeline of money to the embezzler Ahmed Chalabi, now a prominent figure in the U.S.-installed Iraqi stooge “Governing Council.” (Chalabi also had a fan in “anarchist” professor Noam Chomsky [see WV No. 822, 19 March].) Secretary

Powell who held up the vial of imitation anthrax in a stage-managed moment at the United Nations to beat the drums for war, on the lying pretext that Iraq had “weapons of mass destruction.” For all the differences in style, Powell and the neocons push the same policy, just as the Democrats and the Republicans do. The difference is the packaging. The Democrats would prefer to camouflage U.S. imperialist war with the backing of the UN, while the “Bush doctrine” is one of preemptive strike and allies be damned.



Steven Rubin

Protest outside Brooklyn detention center calling to free immigrant detainees, 2003.

of State Colin Powell and his aide Richard Armitage told Woodward, “most Iraqis thought Chalabi was a knucklehead.” Per Woodward, animosities between the State Department and the Pentagon are such that “knucklehead” would be almost a term of endearment.

Pentagon neocons Wolfowitz and Douglas Feith “chicken-baited” Powell, the butcher of the first Gulf War, as representing the “Department of Nice” for his hesitations about invading Iraq this time. According to Woodward, Powell kept shaking his head and saying, “This is lunacy” and cursed the Pentagon brass as “Feith’s Gestapo office.” Yet it was

The Clinton administration waged a ruthless war against Iraq, including thousands of bombing sorties and the UN starvation blockade which killed **one and a half million people**, particularly children and the elderly. When Clinton’s Secretary of State Madeleine Albright was asked about this monstrous crime, she serenely opined: “We think the price was worth it.” The UN weapons inspections and disarmament which took place during the Clinton administration ensured that Iraq would be defenseless when the time came for the Bush administration to launch an open war on Iraq. Bush went into Iraq because it was easy, but not North Korea because it has nukes. Now as the presidential race heats up, Democratic contender and U.S. Senator John Kerry is running as a more responsible war candidate than Bush, pledging to increase the number of troops and to stay the course in Iraq. Kerry immediately chastised Spain’s new prime minister Zapatero for vowing to pull Spanish troops from Iraq. So much for the Democratic Party “lesser evil!”

No to the Draft! U.S. Troops Out of Iraq!

Fear of lingering “Vietnam syndrome,” i.e., the unwillingness of the American population to shed blood in another losing venture for U.S. imperialism, has cynically prompted the rulers to bigger and bigger lies. Since the 1991 Gulf War, it has been Pentagon policy to limit photographs of body bags and coffins return-

ing home for burial. A woman and her husband were fired by a Pentagon contractor for violating policy by snapping a picture of flag-draped coffins in a transport plane being loaded in Kuwait. With their racist disregard for Iraqi life, the American military occupiers destroy hospitals to treat the wounded and barely report the huge numbers of Iraqi dead. And Bush is so determined to “disappear” the American dead that he hasn’t turned up at one funeral for a soldier killed in Iraq.

With its pretensions to be the friend of the worker and the oppressed, the Democratic Party is the historic party of big war mobilizations. The Democrats have the popularity not to have to resort to privatized mercenaries, unlike the Republican gang in the White House. Black Democratic Party Congressmen Charles Rangel and John Conyers are pushing to reinstitute the draft. In remarks delivered to the Washington press club on April 15, Rangel motivated conscripting men and women, stating, “how proud all of them should be during the time of national emergency that they will be able to serve our great country.” Tell it to former soldier Nicole Goodwin, a black woman who returned from Iraq to a cot in a homeless shelter with her one-year-old baby! The real national emergency is brutal capitalist exploitation, union-busting, poverty, homelessness, unemployment, systematic racial oppression, murderous police violence and increased segregation. These are the issues that no Democrat or Republican will address except in empty electioneering speeches to be honored in the breach, because the solution requires a thoroughgoing socialist revolution to reorder the priorities according to the needs of working people, not the profits of the ruling class.

The race and class bias inherent in who dies for U.S. imperialism will not be redressed by reinstituting the draft. The sons and daughters of the ruling class, like George Bush, can always find a way to stay stateside while the sons and daughters of the working class are sent to die. The excruciating contradiction of being sent to fight for a country that promises you nothing but inequality, and a welcome mat nowhere but prison and the army, sparked black veterans to lead social struggles upon their return home from both world wars, Korea and Vietnam. Rangel and Conyers seek to dissipate the anger that already seethes in the ghettos and barrios of this country, where more black youth end up in prison than in college. Their push for the draft back in January 2003 merely paved the way for Republican Senator Hagel and Democratic Senator Biden, influential members of the Foreign Rela-

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tions Committee, to float the question now, blathering about “shared sacrifice.” Legislation has been introduced in both chambers to revive the draft, although no action has been scheduled on either measure. We say, not a penny or a man (or a woman) for U.S. imperialism!

The Domestic Face of the “War on Terror”

Bloody imperialist war has been accompanied by a devastating assault on civil liberties. The USA-Patriot Act, adopted with overwhelming support of the Democrats (including John Kerry) has shredded the civil rights of labor, the left, immigrants, and everybody else. Bush and the Democrats are trying to outdo one another in the “war on terror” in the run-up to the elections. In the immediate aftermath of September 11, striking schoolteachers in New Jersey were pilloried as Taliban for breaking the reactionary “national unity” crusade. Tom Ridge of the Department of Homeland Security personally intervened to threaten long-shoremen organized by the ILWU on the West Coast that any strike action by them would be against the interests of national security.

Bush wants an early renewal of the Patriot Act. The Democrats, mindful of protests by civil libertarians, now back-pedal on their support for this, but they brag about other “get tough on terror” schemes they have instituted and more they will institute if they get the chance. The Homeland Security Act originated in concept as the “Lieberman bill,” introduced by the Democrats’ last vice presidential candidate. John Kerry and the Democrats support a version of legislation for a new sweeping domestic intelligence agency and the creation of a “national intelligence director.” As the ACLU’s executive director said in a press release, such an agency “could easily employ the same kind of dirty tricks the CIA uses overseas here in the United States against American citizens.”

These days citizenship is already no pro-

tection against the ravages of the U.S. government. U.S. citizen Jose Padilla, arrested in Chicago, was deemed by Ashcroft’s “Justice” Department an “enemy combatant” and dumped in a military brig in South Carolina. An *amicus* brief filed by the Spartacist League and the Partisan Defense Committee on behalf of Padilla states:

“The ‘war against terrorism’ is a fiction, a political construct, not a military reality. It is a political crusade conducted in the name of ridding society of a perceived evil. It is no more a ‘war’ in a military sense than ‘war against cancer,’ ‘war against obesity’ or a ‘war against immorality.’ Like the ‘war against communism’ and the ‘war against drugs,’ this ‘war’ is a pretext to increase the state’s police powers and repressive apparatus, constricting the democratic rights of the population. The Executive’s declaration that its ‘war against terrorism’ forfeits constitutional protections for designated individuals, echoes the regimes of shahs and colonels and presidents ‘for life’ from the Near East to Africa to Latin America, to justify the mass imprisonment and unmarked graves of political dissidents. Like them, the Executive is proclaiming the *right to disappear* citizens of its choosing.”

Indeed, America’s founding fathers would be jailed under the Patriot Act today for defending the right to resistance to oppression! Patrick Henry intoned, “Guard with jealous attention the public liberty. Suspect every one who approaches that jewel. Unfortunately, nothing will preserve it but downright force. Whenever you give up that force, you are ruined.” It doesn’t take a Marxist or even a civil libertarian to find the assaults on civil liberties today disturbing. But this anger is getting channeled into the “anybody but Bush” campaign.

The preceding eight years of the Democratic Clinton administration provided Bush more than fertile ground for the assault on civil liberties. After the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing, for example, the Clinton administration enacted the “Omnibus Counterterrorism Act,” under which immigrants and all “aliens” can be subjected to secret trials without any charges being presented. *Habeas* petitions were virtually eliminated for death

row prisoners under the 1996 Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, which vastly increased the number of crimes for which the state could apply the death penalty. Most of the immigrants who were rounded up by the Bush administration after September 11 as potential “terrorists” and held for months without any charges being presented were targeted not under Bush’s Patriot Act, but under Clinton’s 1996 Immigration Act. Besides vastly stepping up state repression, the other hallmark of the Clinton years was his fulfillment of his vow to “end welfare as we know it,” throwing poor, single black mothers into union-busting “workfare” jobs, or terminating welfare benefits.

Break with the Democrats, Build a Workers Party!

With the collapse of the Soviet Union and deformed workers states in East Europe in 1991-92, the workers and oppressed internationally suffered a world-historic defeat. The “death of communism” heralded by the U.S. imperialists was the basis on which U.S. imperialism has launched increasingly frequent, bloody and aggressive wars, beginning with the first Persian Gulf War under George Bush Sr.; continuing with wars and occupations in the Balkans, Haiti, Somalia and Iraq as well as the bombing of Afghanistan and Sudan under Clinton; and culminating (so far) in George Bush Jr.’s “war without end.” These were preceded by the U.S. invasions of Panama and Grenada, which had a gratuitous quality, but set the pattern for imperialist invasions as allegedly bloodless operations. At the same time, the widely accepted belief that “communism is dead” has resulted in an international retrogression of consciousness so that workers in general do not identify their struggles with the liberating goals of Marxism. The forces most prominently seen as opposing U.S. imperialism are reactionary Islamic fundamentalists that were given birth by, particularly, the

Vanunu...

(continued from page 1)

wheelchair. Three weeks later they killed his successor, Dr. Abdel Aziz Rantisi, in another missile strike. The threat against Arafat is but the latest installment of the Zionist rulers’ long history of *assassination as policy*. As we wrote following Yassin’s assassination, “The Israeli ruling class is sending a message to the Palestinian masses—to those imprisoned in Gaza by an electric fence and those trapped in the West Bank by concrete walls—that it has license to obliterate every Palestinian leader of any stripe” (WV No. 823, 2 April).

When Bush endorsed Sharon’s plan to “withdraw” from the Gaza Strip while building up Israeli settlements in the West Bank, he reversed nearly four decades of formal U.S. policy with a wave of his hand. Rantisi’s assassination immediately followed. At least 25 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli troops in the past week. Sharon’s proposed “withdrawal” from Gaza is a ploy to reinforce Israeli control of the West Bank and destroy any vestige of Palestinian resistance. *Hands off Arafat! Defend the Palestinian people! All Israeli troops and settlers out of the Occupied Territories now!*

Vanunu: a Truthteller the Zionists Fear

In 1986, Vanunu, a former technician at the Israeli nuclear weapons facility in Dimona, was kidnapped by the secret police (Mossad), thrown into a desert prison in Ashkelon and sentenced to 18 years by a secret military court for revealing to the London *Sunday Times* that Israel had amassed upwards of 200 nuclear warheads. Vanunu’s disclosures were a great service to all humanity. When he was sentenced on charges of aiding and abetting “the enemy in time of war,” we wrote, “Who is the enemy? What war? To the Zionist nuclear madmen, it doesn’t

matter—they are at war with the whole world, everybody is the enemy” (WV No. 450, 8 April 1988). Vanunu’s revelations made clear that Israel’s capitalist rulers had enough nuclear weapons not only to incinerate every Arab capital, but to bomb major cities in the Soviet Union as well. Israel’s nuclear arsenal was built up with the active support of the U.S., France and other imperialist powers, as part of their war drive against the then-existing Soviet degenerated workers state and to reinforce the Israeli garrison state as their gendarme in the region.

The Zionist butchers are putting around Vanunu a small replica of the wall they are constructing to confine and strangle the Palestinian people in the West Bank. Under emergency laws enacted in 1945 under the British Mandate, Vanunu is now prohibited from leaving Israel for at least a year, visiting foreign embassies or approaching borders, ports or airports, and even having any contact with foreigners—either in person or through correspondence. He is forbidden to give interviews about his work at Dimona and is required to inform the cops if approached for this purpose. Vanunu will be under 24-hour surveillance and as the *Financial Times* (20 April) reports, his phone will be tapped. Vanunu will require police permission in order to leave Jaffa, where he will be living, and must advise authorities 24 hours in advance if he plans to sleep at another address.

Many people around the world revere Vanunu as a hero. Upon his release Vanunu announced, “I am proud and happy to do what I did.” Having spent more than eleven years in solitary confinement, Vanunu denounced the “very cruel and barbaric treatment” meted out by Israeli security services, and promised, “You didn’t succeed to break me, you didn’t succeed to make me crazy.”

As a Sephardic Jew whose family had emigrated from Morocco, it was Vanunu’s own experience of discrimination at the hands of the European-derived

Ashkenazi establishment that led to his active alienation from Zionism. He took up the cause of Palestinian rights as a student at Beersheba’s Ben-Gurion University, where he befriended Bedouin and Palestinian students and participated in protests for Palestinian equality and against the 1982 Lebanon war.

The ICL and the Partisan Defense Committee have actively fought for Vanunu’s freedom for 18 years. In June 1987, Vanunu’s former companion and spokesman Judy Zimmet, joined Mumia Abu-Jamal’s wife Wadiya in speaking from the platform of an SL forum in New York City devoted to class-struggle defense. On April 20, the PDC wrote the Israeli embassy: “We vehemently protest the continued attack on Mordechai Vanunu. For his courageous action 18 years ago the working people, indeed all of humanity, owe Vanunu a tremendous debt of gratitude.” End all restrictions on Vanunu!■

Australia...

(continued from page 3)

action to demand: *Free the arrested 15 February Redfern militants! Drop all the charges now!*

For a Class-Struggle Fight for Aboriginal Rights!

To prevail against the might of the capitalist state, it is necessary to mobilise the social power of the organised working class. Central to the SL forum was our program for union/minority/black mobilisations against racist state terror. This program contrasts with calls promoted by groups such as Socialist Alliance for a “full independent inquiry” or for a royal commission to investigate police actions. Referring to the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, concluded in 1991, which exonerated the cops in all 99 cases it reviewed, our forum presenter noted that any inquiry set up by the capitalist state would only be a whitewash.

CIA—forces violently antithetical to Marxism and the genuine interests of the oppressed.

Today many people on the supposedly “socialist” left accept the ruling class’ assertion that “communism is dead” and that there is no longer any point in fighting to destroy capitalism and establish a socialist society that has no need of war or racism. In this they echo the ruling class which would have you believe that the interests of the working class are identical with those of the exploiters. These reformists would have you believe that the only task ahead for the working class and oppressed is to “dump Bush” in favor of bringing in whatever “lesser evil” the capitalists might offer in his place.

At the conclusion of his book, Bob Woodward cites a conversation he had with Bush in the Oval Office. “The upcoming presidential election would perhaps be the most immediate judgment on the war, but certainly not the last. How would history judge his Iraq War? I asked.” Woodward notes, “Bush smiled. ‘History,’ he said, shrugging, taking his hands out of his pockets, extending his arms out and suggesting with his body language that it was so far off. ‘We won’t know. We’ll all be dead.’” As Chris Floyd commented in the *Moscow Times* (April 23-29), “No fine, faith-filled talk here about God and Jesus and the immortal soul responsible for its actions throughout all eternity—the kind of zealous patter Bush favors in public statements. This was just the cold, rotten, meaningless core of his grand vision—‘we’ll all be dead.’ So who cares? *Après moi, le déluge.*”

Today’s world confirms more acutely than ever the words of Rosa Luxemburg nearly one hundred years ago, that the choices ahead for humanity are socialism or barbarism. We aim to build a party that mobilizes the tremendous social power that exists in the proletariat, fighting in defense of the oppressed internationally to bring down U.S. and all imperialism through workers revolution.■

The “legal system” that would conduct or oversee such an “inquiry” is fresh from the union-busting Cole Royal Commission, which targeted the CFMEU construction union, and is currently prosecuting and viciously denying bail to the Redfern militants! No “independence” can be expected from this state whose army is part of the U.S.-led Coalition that is brutally occupying Iraq, imprisoning whole cities, like Falluja, and gunning down dark-skinned residents from tanks and helicopters.

Calls for a royal commission are indeed *counterposed* to the necessary proletarian-centred defence of Aboriginal people. Such calls *demobilise* struggle *against* the brutalities of the capitalist state by promoting illusions that the latter can be pressured to be more partisan towards Aboriginal people. Pleas for the state to set up an inquiry give authority and therefore added strength to the same force that would try and crush any struggle against racist repression and capitalist exploitation.

In a small way, the Police Association’s diktat to Trades Hall to ban a leftist meeting in defence of Aborigines shows clearly why the cops have no place in the workers movement. Imagine trying to prepare a mass picket line or a union-centred action defending Aborigines when the very police force that is organised precisely for the purpose of violently attacking such struggles is part of the meeting where these campaigns are organised! We say: *Cops, prison guards out of the unions!*

The VTHC leadership’s embrace of the cops reflects their subservience to the capitalist state. Indeed, the union tops’ program is to get their Labor Party parliamentary mates elected to government to administer the bourgeois state. A class-struggle leadership of the unions must be built in a political struggle against the Laborite misleaders. Such a leadership would be linked to a Leninist party that would lead the revolutionary fight to sweep away the entire racist capitalist system.■

WORKERS VANGUARD

Shut Down the Campus! Boycott Classes!

Victory to Columbia Graduate Student Employees Strike!

APRIL 26—Hundreds of graduate students—instructors, research assistants and teaching assistants—organized by the Graduate Student Employees United/United Auto Workers Local 2110 (GSEU) walked out on strike at Columbia on April 19 in the face of the campus administration's unyielding opposition to their

Young Spartacus

attempts to unionize. Last week, there were daily pickets at various university locations, including a day of picketing at the Health Sciences campus some 50 blocks north, where a significant minority of GSEU members work and study.

The Columbia Spartacus Youth Club has been actively participating in the strike, joining the picket lines and urging students to help the strike win. The strike has found considerable support. Instructors from Rutgers, Professional Staff Congress members from the City University of New York system and unionized TAs and adjunct faculty from New York University have helped man the picket lines. Graduate student unions fighting for recognition at other campuses, such as Yale and the University of Pennsylvania, are watching this strike closely. Members of other campus unions have individually expressed sympathy. Many students have shown their support for the strike, including at a walkout and rally on April 21 led by a Students for Economic and Environmental Justice-organized undergraduate support committee.

The administration, which runs the university in the service of the capitalist class (a class amply represented on its Board of Trustees), has made it clear that this is a battle between two irreconcilably opposed sides. Liberal provost Alan Brinkley stated baldly: "There's no middle ground between these positions [of the administration and the union]" (*Columbia Spectator*, 20 April). This administration is impervious to attempts to embarrass it, shame it or appeal to a sense of decency that it doesn't have. In addition to being



Young Spartacus

GSEU strike picket marches onto campus to join undergraduate walkout and support rally, April 21.

a racist slumlord, Columbia has a long history of battling union organizing drives. The university refused to recognize Transport Workers Union Local 241 representing campus maintenance workers until a two-day strike in 1945, two years after the union was formed. In its fight against the GSEU, Columbia has hired the notorious Proskauer Rose law firm, which specializes in union-busting.

The campus must be *shut down* for the strike to win. The union leadership has yet to build picket lines for the explicit purpose of stopping all business on the campus. Despite the cancellation of many classes, labs and discussion sections taught by graduate students, others continue to meet under scab instructors, although some of these scabs have faced class walkouts by irate undergraduates. The union has taken the crucial step of seeking to stop deliveries to campus, albeit sporadically.

We have argued from the strike's beginning for all groups sympathetic to the

GSEU to hold their meetings off campus. The GSEU is now taking this up. However, the undergraduate strike support group has met on campus during the strike. Although well-meaning, such "solidarity" meetings undermine the strike by using a struck facility when strike supporters should instead help shut the campus down.

The SYC has argued for a general boycott of classes and for all workers on campus to stop working. Due to their sheer numbers on campus, students have some social weight and can affect the outcome of this strike. A real show of student solidarity would significantly disrupt the "normal workings" of the university. Many have said they agree with our arguments; however, the union leadership rejects a strategy that could bring the administration to its knees. Some claim that a boycott is unrealistic and would lead to reprisals. If the *union* were to call a student boycott of classes and if campus workers and students respected the picket lines, it would provide students and workers supporting the strike some protection against academic penalties and reprisals.

In contrast to the SYC, much of the campus left has conducted themselves dreadfully in the strike. Some "radical" professors like History's Barbara Fields oppose the strike, while others like Eric Foner have declared themselves "neutral." Many strikers are rightfully furious with these academics, who effectively undermine the strike by continuing to hold classes and stating their intention to grade papers, who in short are *scabbing*. Foner and Fields have written eloquently about the struggles of black slaves against the racist Southern slavery during the Civil War. But when class struggle threatens to disrupt their comfortable, tenured careers, they tell a different tale. The record of the International Socialist Organization (ISO) is only fractionally better. Although they massed their forces

for the April 21 student rally, they have more frequently been spotted hawking the *Socialist Worker* at literature tables *behind* the picket lines. At bottom, the ISO rejects the fight to mobilize the workers and their allies independently of the bosses, and honoring the picket line is not a matter of principle for them. The ISO only moved its meetings off the main campus after the union leadership explicitly asked them to.

We print below an April 21 New York SYC leaflet widely distributed on the picket lines.

* * *

Columbia University graduate students walked out on strike Monday, rightly fed up with more than two years of attempts by the administration to stop their unionization. Members of the campus Graduate Student Employees United (GSEU), which represents a majority of teaching and research assistants, overwhelmingly authorized the strike. Graduate students play an integral role at the university. TAs carry the burdens of teaching, conducting discussions and grading course papers; RAs typically perform experiments and help maintain labs. Other graduate students teach courses in the core curriculum, the Undergraduate Writing Program and many language classes. Yet these students receive only a pittance compared to what a tenure-track professor receives and can barely live off what they earn. On the first day of the strike, the Spartacus Youth Club joined five hundred striking students and their supporters on the picket lines, where popular chants were "If we're not workers, then we're not 'not working'!" and "Union, now!" Students from other area schools came out, including representatives of the graduate student union at New York University. We say: **Victory to the GSEU strike!**

Shutting down the university is crucial to winning this struggle. The SYC calls on all students, workers and faculty to mobilize in solidarity. We say that there should be a boycott of *all* classes, both on and off campus, and united action to build picket lines that nobody crosses. Students must forge an alliance with campus workers, from maintenance workers in TWU 241 to cafeteria workers in SEIU 1199, to extend the strike campus-wide as well as with UPS and postal service workers to stop deliveries. One small example of such labor solidarity was the sympathy strike by clerical workers in UAW 2110 during the GSEU one-day strike in 2002.

While there is significant support for the strike on campus, this support must be translated into an understanding of the elementary principle that *picket lines mean don't cross*. Picket lines are the fundamental battle lines of the class struggle. By withholding their labor power, striking workers can bring all activity at a location to a halt, whether at a campus or factory, but not without solid picket lines. It is on the picket line, not in the halls of

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Columbia Spectator

GSEU members and supporters on first day of strike, April 19. SYC has walked picket lines, argued for shutting down campus as strategy to win.