

Break with the Democrats! For a Workers Party!

Bush, Kerry Push “Anti-Terror” Hysteria



DeCrow/Newsday

This summer’s cynical media circuses, the Democratic and Republican national presidential conventions, have a sinister overlay, as the Homeland Security department decreed both “special security events.” These red-white-and-blue capitalist spectacles—whose platforms are non-binding, whose delegates decide nothing, and whose nominees, John Kerry and George Bush, are predetermined—are surrounded by massive state surveillance. Inside the Democratic National Convention (DNC), it looked a lot like a Republican rally, as after the liberals pushed the “anybody but Bush” line all year, what they got was a candidate trying to out-Bush Bush in flag-waving tough-cop rhetoric. John Kerry promptly embraced the 9/11 Commission Report, with its appalling bipartisan proposals to ratchet up state repression, stating on July 27, “I will and I can wage a more effective war on terror than George Bush.”

As U.S. forces continue their cruel and ruthless occupation of Iraq, the Democrats call only for more domestic repression and a stronger military. They are no “lesser evil,” but the partner party of the Republicans in administering capitalism, only with a facade of being “uniters” of all Americans. They just lie through their teeth about caring for blacks, women and working people, then they stick the knife into them. We working-class socialists say: U.S. out of Iraq now! Break with the Democrats! Build a workers party to fight for socialist revolution!

For the DNC in Boston, armed Coast Guard boats patrolled the harbor and 40 miles of road were shut down, while a *Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome* razor-wire steel cage outside the Fleet Center—the “free speech zone”—was sensibly ignored by most protesters. In New York City, elderly residents near Madison Square Garden are being warned to stay indoors and stock up on supplies for the duration of the Republican invasion, while organizers of the main protest are

9/11 Commission Report: Blueprint for State Repression

being shunted to the shadeless and barren West Side Highway, ordered to stay off the grass in Central Park. Sheepishly, United for Peace and Justice leaders are not fighting this, not even going to court, though the right to free speech and political protest in Manhattan’s largest public park is a basic First Amendment right.

Repeatedly pumping the fear factor of another terrorist attack, as the Bush administration does every time it feels a political threat, the Homeland Security department even toyed with postponing the entire election! *Newsweek* (19 July) exposed Homeland Security head Tom Ridge’s crass ploy, reporting that he asked the Justice Department’s Office of Legal Counsel (the same crew advising Bush he could torture at will) to look into shutting down the elections in case of a terrorist attack. A strange new agency, the “U.S. Election Assistance Commission,” asked Ridge to seek emergency legislation from Congress empowering Homeland Security to postpone the election in order to “secure the election” in the words of a Homeland spokesman—like “burning the village in order to save it” during the Vietnam War.

As for the Democrats, their national convention was an orgy of flag-waving patriotism showcasing veterans of past U.S. wars, with Kerry’s Vietnam combat role being played to the max. His subsequent involvement in antiwar protests was carefully obscured. “We are a nation at war,” Kerry said in his address, prom-

ising, “I will build a stronger American military.” Watching Kerry’s publicity film with its mawkish sentimentality, mesmerizing Spielberg Hollywood touches, and the glittering river wake of Kerry’s patrol boat, you’d have thought the Mekong Delta was in the “American heartland.” We say that it was a very good thing for the workers of the world that the U.S. was *defeated* in its dirty imperialist war in Vietnam by the heroic Vietnamese workers and peasants! Today we defend Vietnam, as well as Cuba, North Korea and China, against U.S. imperialist threats, as workers states ripped out of the hands of capitalism, despite their bureaucratic deformations.

The “anybody but Bush” sentiment pushed by liberals, and pandered to by the reformist left, means that working people and young activists opposed to the war and occupation of Iraq and the diminution of democratic rights carried out in the name of the “war on terror” are being told to vote for Kerry. The Bush administration has seized on the September 11 attacks to ratchet up repression at home and abroad. But in this they are not in any way challenged by the Democrats, who are merely trying to sell themselves to the bourgeoisie as more effective implementers of Bush’s policies. The only road forward for working people is the struggle to build a workers party to get what they need, a workers government.

The mass media as well as Republicans depict the DNC’s militarist theme

New York City cop from the heavily armed Hercules “anti-terrorism” unit stakes out Wall Street.

as so much electoral rhetoric. But the notion that Kerry is actually a sheep who has temporarily donned wolf’s clothing—a view pushed by both Democratic Party liberals and Republican rightists—is profoundly wrong. As a representative of the American capitalist class, Kerry is sincere in maintaining that he could direct the U.S. armed forces more effectively than his Republican rival. Kerry calls for upping total U.S. troop strength by 40,000 men, and not just because he thinks saying that will help win the election. Significant elements of the American ruling class (including within the Pentagon) now view the takeover of Iraq as a very costly mistake for which they blame Bush. *Their* problem is that to just pull out would be seen as a humiliating defeat for the self-proclaimed “world’s only superpower.”

Down With the Neocolonial Occupation of Iraq!

On July 9, the Senate Intelligence Committee released a 511-page “Report on the U.S. Intelligence Community’s Prewar Intelligence Assessments on Iraq.” Even with some 20 percent blacked out by censors, the report thoroughly refutes the shoddy, outrageous official rationales given for the Iraq invasion and occupation, which have slaughtered an estimated 13,000 Iraqis in an already devastated land. The U.S. death toll has risen to over 900. The bipartisan report confirmed once again what has been well known: Saddam Hussein was *not* an imminent threat, Iraq did *not* have chemical and biological weapons, Iraq was

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How the Liberals and Reformists Derailed the Struggle for Integration

For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!...4



Philippines: Racist American Imperialism Forged through Blood and Torture

3 June 2004

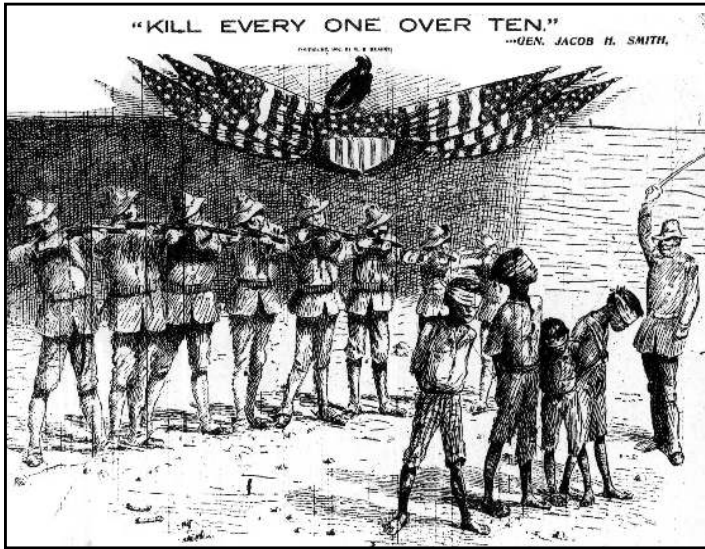
Dear Editor,

While George Bush feigns shock and sheds crocodile tears over the torture of prisoners in Abu Ghraib, deeming it an “abhorrent” and an “un-American” deed of a few “rogue” soldiers, the fact is that torture and other atrocities inflicted on nations worldwide, to better subjugate them, are inherent traits of American imperialism since its emergence as a contender for world domination toward the end of the 19th century. In its swift and easy victory in the Spanish-American War in 1898 the U.S. seized Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines, ushering in more than a century of imperialist plunder and freebooting.

The conquest of the Philippines was not as rapid as the defeat of the Spanish forces. It took a three-year war of ruthless and racist extermination by 126,000 U.S. troops to crush the Filipino nationalist fighters led by Emilio Aguinaldo. Up to a million people were massacred in a heroic uprising that fueled anti-colonial sentiments in the region. Whole villages

were burned down. Men, women and children were herded into concentration camps where many perished of hunger and disease. Women and girls were systematically raped. General Jacob Smith, butcher of the Native Americans massacred at Wounded Knee, ordered his troops to turn the island of Samar into a “howling wilderness.” “I want no prisoners. I wish you to kill and burn, the more you kill and burn the better you please me.” Colonel Arthur Lockwood cited the bible as a justification for extermination: “The Almighty destroyed Sodom,” he declared, “notwithstanding the fact that there were a few just people in that community.” A correspondent covering the war wrote that American soldiers killed “men, women, children, prisoners and captives, active insurgents and suspected people, from lads of ten and up...an idea prevailing that the Filipino was little better than a dog” who belonged on “the rubbish heap.” Torture of captives was rampant. The most infamous torture technique was the so-called “water cure.” Vast quantities of seawater were forced down

Drawing conveys barbarism and savagery of U.S. occupation forces in the Philippines following 1898 Spanish-American War.



NY Public Library

the throat of a prisoner. His stomach was then stepped on so that water shot out three feet in the air. Most victims did not live long afterwards. This and other brutal techniques would later be applied by Washington’s death squad regimes in Latin America, passed on at the notorious School of the Americas—more aptly known as the School of the Assassins—in Fort Benning, Georgia.

In the southern islands of the Philippines the colonial army was met by a fierce resistance from the Moro Muslims. In 1906 U.S. troops carried out what came to be known as the Moro Massacre, where at least nine hundred Filipinos, including women and children, were trapped in a volcanic crater on the island of Jolo and shot at and bombarded for days. Viewing a widely distributed photo that showed U.S. soldiers overlooking piles of Filipino dead in the crater, W.E.B. Du Bois declared in a letter to Moorfield Storey, president of the Anti-Imperialist League (and later first president of the NAACP), that it was “the most illuminating thing I have ever seen. I want especially to have it framed and put upon the walls of my recitation room to impress upon the students what wars and especially Wars of Conquest really mean.” Commending Leonard Wood, the general who had carried out the massacre, Theodore Roosevelt wrote him, “I congratulate you and the officers and men of your command upon the brilliant feat of arms wherein you and they so well upheld the honor of the American flag.”

It was in reference to the Philippines that Rudyard Kipling coined the racist-imperialist catchword of the “white man’s burden.” The U.S. imperial trampling over the dark-skinned peoples of the Pacific was justified with an outpouring of vile racist trash. The *Nation* railed in 1899 that the annexation of the Philippines, Hawaii and Guam brought under U.S. jurisdiction a “varied assortment of inferior races which, of course, could not be allowed to vote.” Military commanders incited their troops for the slaughter with lynch mob tirades against the “n-----s.” Racism was rampant within the army as Jim Crow laws, codified by the Supreme Court with the *Plessy* decision two years before the war, were enforced. Four black regiments stationed in the Philippines were segregated and black soldiers were barred from “whites only” restaurants, barbershops and brothels. Not surprisingly many black soldiers solidarized with the embattled Filipino nationalist fighters. William Simms, a black soldier, recalled how he was reproached by a young Filipino boy who challenged him: “Why don’t you fight those people in America who burn Negroes, that make a beast of you?” A

large number of black soldiers deserted. Many went over to join the Filipino side. Famous among them was private David Fagen, who for two years wreaked havoc upon the occupying American army.

The reconquest of the Philippines during World War II was a bloody affair in which whole cities were razed to the ground and tens of thousands of civilians died. As soon as Japan had been dislodged from the islands, the U.S. occupiers disarmed and crushed the Stalinist-led Hukbalahap guerrillas who were a major force in the fight against Japan.

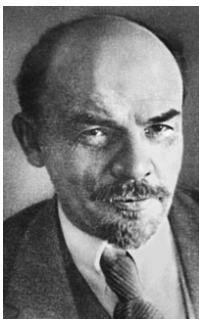
The Philippines was granted formal independence in 1946. Despite more than a half century of nominal independence, the archipelago remains an impoverished semicolonial vassal of the U.S.

Addressing the Philippines Congress in October 2003, George Bush, in an ominous warning to the peoples of Iraq, invoked the Philippines as a model of U.S.-sponsored “democracy.” True to his words, Bush appointed John Negroponte as the new sheriff of Baghdad as of June 30, sending a clear message on how he intends to run the country. From his days as a political officer (code name for CIA agent) in the American embassy in Saigon in the early 1960s to the early 1980s in Honduras, Negroponte left a trail of blood, assassinations, kidnappings, tortures and disappearances. “In Honduras Negroponte exercised U.S. power in ways that still reverberate throughout that small country,” wrote Stephen Kinzer. “Most people who lived or worked in Honduras during the 1980s saw a nation spiraling into violence and infested by paramilitary gangs that kidnapped and killed with impunity” (*New York Review of Books*, 20 September 2001). Negroponte was appointed by the Reagan administration to turn Honduras into a staging area for the contra war and a platform for American military maneuvers, to preside over CIA operations in the region and to shore up the military dictatorship of general Gustavo Martinez. In a 1995 four-part series the *Baltimore Sun* detailed the activities of the notorious CIA-trained and -supported army unit, Battalion 316, that kidnapped, tortured and killed hundreds of citizens. Its victims include students, union leaders, journalists and college professors. Shock and suffocation devices were used in interrogation. “Prisoners often were kept naked and, when no longer useful, killed and buried in unmarked graves.”

Comradely,
Salah Shami

Capitalism and the Concept of Race

A materialist approach to the question of racial oppression begins with the understanding that race is a socially determined category with no basis in science. Writing in the early 1950s, veteran Trotskyist Richard Fraser underlined how racial oppression is an inherent feature of U.S. capitalism, inherited from the system of chattel slavery. The forced segregation of black people at the bottom of American capitalist society can be ended only through a workers revolution that establishes an egalitarian, socialist society.



LENIN



TROTSKY

The revolutions in Britain, America and France stripped away the veil of religion from knowledge and initiated the age of science and rationalism. Social relations could no longer be explained by reference to God. So a fake “scientific” explanation of the social relations of slavery grew up to justify them. This is the actual foundation of the science of physical anthropology.

Slavery itself was overthrown in the Civil War and Reconstruction. But the needs of the American capitalists for compulsory agricultural labor in the South remained. A new semi-capitalistic mode of agriculture grew up in which the semi-slave condition of the freed Negroes was made permanent by the re-establishment of the social relations of slavery: color discrimination buttressed by segregation and race prejudice.

Race thus became a fetish of American capitalism, a system of special exploitation based upon the social relations and customs of a previous mode of production, which had itself been an abomination to society. Stripped of scientific justification, what then remains of *race*? Race is a relation between people based upon the needs of capitalist exploitation. The race concept in anthropology grew out of the social relations of slavery. It was congealed by the adaptation of these obsolete social relations to the needs of capitalist production.

The concept of race has now been overthrown in biological science. But *race* as the keystone of exploitation remains. Race is a social relation and has only a social reality.

—Richard Fraser, “The Negro Struggle and the Proletarian Revolution” (November 1953), reprinted in *Prometheus Research Series* No. 3, “In Memoriam Richard S. Fraser” (1990)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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The closing date for news in this issue is 3 August.

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6 August 2004

NOTICE

Workers Vanguard skips alternate issues in June, July and August.

Our next issue will be dated September 3.

CORRECTION

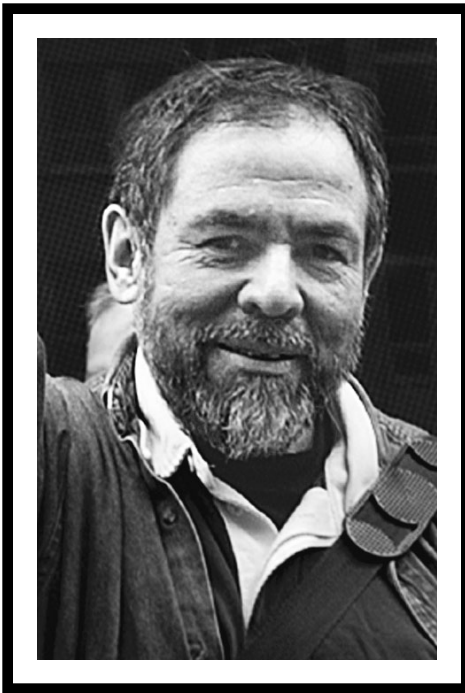
The Chicago Labor Black Struggle League leaflet, “Protest Chicago Cop Killing of Activist May Molina!”, reprinted in WV No. 828 (11 June), mistakenly stated that Aaron Paterson “spent 17 years on death row.” Paterson was actually imprisoned for nearly 17 years, and he spent more than 13 years on death row.

Farouk Abdel-Muhti: 1947-2004

On July 21, Palestinian activist Farouk Abdel-Muhti died of a heart attack. Detained for nearly two years as a result of his political activities, during which time he was beaten and denied essential medication, Farouk had many years, if not decades, stolen from his life by the U.S. government. Abdel-Muhti was speaking at a panel discussion entitled “Detentions and Torture: Building Resistance” at the Philadelphia Ethical Society. His speech was part of a nationwide tour highlighting his torturous detention, which ended only months before on April 12. Abdel-Muhti thanked his supporters for standing by him throughout his ordeal and advocated continued resistance to imperialism as a clear enemy of humanity. After he finished, he slumped over until his head touched the table. He never regained consciousness. He was three weeks shy of his 57th birthday.

Born in the Ramallah district of Palestine in 1947 and forced into the role of refugee, Farouk arrived in the Western Hemisphere in the early 1960s, living at various times in the U.S. and several Latin American countries, including Honduras. In the early 1970s he settled in the New York City area, where he lived until his abduction by a task force of INS/NYPD marauders in April 2002—the beginning of his brutally nightmarish detention. Abdel-Muhti had come to the attention of racist immigration authorities in 1975 and 1995, but they were unable to deport him, since, as a stateless Palestinian, there was no government that would accept him.

The actual reason for his detention was his anti-imperialist activism, especially his history of advocacy for the national cause of the Palestinians and his opposition to U.S. depredations in El Salvador and Nicaragua. In October of 1999 he had participated in a labor/black mobilization, initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee, that drove the Ku Klux Klan out of New York. In the immediate month before his abduction, Farouk had been instrumental in getting the voices of besieged Palestinians on the airwaves of



Fred Askeew

WBAI, the local Pacifica radio station.

Farouk’s detention was 718 days of ghoulish torture. In an interview with *Workers Vanguard* after his release, he described the nine different cockroach- and rat-infested facilities he was shunted to and from, one of which was nicknamed “the doghouse” for its unsanitary conditions. He talked about the openly fascist prison administrators and sadistic guards who beat him while his hands and legs were pinned to a wall. He was beaten twice, thrown into solitary confinement for over eight months and, in January 2003, felt compelled to participate in a hunger strike calling attention to the onerous conditions in the Passaic County Jail in New Jersey. When his leftist literature (including the PDC’s brief in defense of Jose Padilla) was confiscated in

November 2003, the brutal prison thugs also seized his prescription medicine for hypertension, arthritis and a thyroid condition. There can be no doubt that these hellish conditions criminally undermined Farouk Abdel-Muhti’s health.

Our first response to the news of Farouk’s death was shock and grief. We first met Farouk in July of 1999, when we joined forces to demand the freeing of Kurdish Workers Party leader Abdullah Öcalan. Despite our political differences, we respected Farouk as a man of principle and integrity. We were honored when, in the months prior to his long-overdue release, Farouk agreed to become a recipient of the Partisan Defense Committee’s class-war prisoner defense fund. Our condolences go out to Farouk’s fiancée and companion, Sharin Chiorazzo, his son, Tariq Abdel-Muhti, and his close supporters and comrades.

Our second response, of course, is extreme bitterness toward his ruling-class jailers who targeted this courageous man in their bipartisan, ongoing and never-ending “war on terror.” In a letter from prison to the PDC on 12 January 2004, Farouk said, “Continue with that policy of support to freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal and all of us prisoners, victims of the dirty racist conspiracy that the U.S. government is carrying out, using a brutal police machinery, adopting the same methods and tactics as the Nazis” (our translation from the Spanish).

Our final response is one of homage and respect. Farouk Abdel-Muhti’s struggle forced a federal judge to agree to his release, calling his situation “Kafkaesque.” This has made it a little harder for the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement to indefinitely detain immigrants. Farouk never lost sight that his struggle was tied to the fate of all the detainees. And his last breaths were spent urging renewed struggle against imperialism, the scourge of workers and the oppressed worldwide. While we mourn his death, we honor the life of Farouk Abdel-Muhti. Free all the detainees!

Letters

On the Indian Elections

May 21, 2004

To *Workers Vanguard*:

The victory of the Congress Party last week has been widely seen within India as a “second independence” for the country—a defeat for the forces of communalist hate and economic liberalization. The ruling Hindu-nationalist BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party) and its NDA (National Democratic Alliance) coalition partners were decisively trounced, especially in the states of Andhra and Tamilnadu. But Congress prepared the way for the rise of the fascists and now promises to continue their policies “with a human face.”

The BJP is the political wing of the Hindu fascist fraternity called the Sangha Parivar (Family of Organizations), which includes, besides the BJP, Bhajarang Dal (the military wing), Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh (RSS, the ideological wing), Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP, the cultural wing), and Akhila Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP, the student wing). The Sangha Parivar openly preaches hatred of non-Hindus. In practice it targets Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, and tribals, but never the Jains or the Parsees who, along with the Hindu merchant caste of Marwaris, make up a large percentage of the Indian big bourgeoisie. And the Christians it goes after are untouchables and tribals who converted in the hope of escaping caste oppression, not the wealthy Syrian Christians of Kerala who are supposed to have been brahmins before they took Christianity.

The Hindu fascists seek to artificially cohere a national Hindu identity from India’s prison-house of nations. In power they pushed Hindu patriotism as they sold off the country’s state-owned industry to foreign corporations, busted unions, dismantled what meager government-run healthcare there had been, and privatized

education. Founded out of the fanatical movement to demolish the Babri mosque in 1992, the BJP’s career has been one long incitement to murder and rape. Two thousand Muslims were massacred by Hindu gangs between December 1992 and January 1993 in the aftermath of the Babri mosque demolition. Again in March 2002 more than 2000 Muslims were killed in state-organized pogroms in Gujarat. In 1998 alone, twenty-five priests, pastors, and nuns were murdered, twenty-five nuns raped, and eleven churches or chapels destroyed by the Bhajarang Dal in their campaign of terror against Christians (*Frontline* magazine,

January 1999). In 1999 they locked the Christian missionary Graham Stein and his two young sons in their jeep and set fire to it, roasting them alive in broad daylight. In 2002, in the name of the BJP’s anti-untouchable and anti-Muslim “cow protection” campaign, a Hindu mob lynched five untouchables in the presence of police for skinning a dead cow scavenged from the roadside. And in Kashmir the BJP carried on the Indian government’s policy of atrocities against the Muslim population: last year alone more than 2500 Kashmiris were killed by Indian security forces. In 1998 the BJP government provoked Pakistan by con-

ducting nuclear tests, declaring, “India now has the Hindu bomb.”

Until 1991 India relied on aid from the Soviet Union to maintain a large public sector. This is why some people thought of India as socialist. In truth there was as much socialism in Nehru and his Congress as there is butter in butternut squash. Since the capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union, the Indian bourgeoisie has been forced to open the country to all-out imperialist exploitation.

In the forefront of the drive to privatize the Indian economy has been N. Chandra Babu Naidu, who until last week was chief minister of the state of Andhra Pradesh (although he preferred to be called its “CEO”). Naidu, an important coalition partner of the BJP, assiduously

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Workers Hated Ronald Reagan

8 July 2004

Dear *Workers Vanguard*,

I am writing a short letter on the national hoopla over Reagan’s death.

On June 10, the day before Reagan was interred after the orgy of mourning, I attended a shop gate meeting at my work location. Most of my workmates attended the meeting. An announcement was read about a day of mourning for Reagan on the following day, Friday, June 11. Workmates were given a compensatory day which they can take up until April 30, 2005. In my department, which is essential and geared towards serving the public, most workers went to work on the day Reagan was interred.

The union shop chairman asked for questions and I raised my hand. I said that many workmates remember that Reagan was no hero of the working class. He was a union-buster. A white old-timer

yelled “PATCO!” I continued that it was Reagan who “changed welfare as we know it” and that it was the Democrat Clinton who signed these changes into law. A female worker yelled, “That’s right, brother!” I continued that Reagan was an enemy of working people around the world and talked about the invasion by American forces into tiny Grenada. Lastly I mentioned that it took Reagan seven and one half years into his presidency to mention the word AIDS after so much cruel devastation in the community.

After the meeting one worker asked me if I was opposed to the Reagan holiday. My initial impulse was to go to work on “Reagan Day” as an act of defiance. After consideration, I realized that this was wrong. I replied “Absolutely not! As a matter of fact, we need more holidays!”

Several others approached me to talk about the invasion of Grenada, the ruin

and suicides of farmers because of Reagan’s policies on agriculture. A workmate talked about Reagan’s racist code words, for example “states’ rights” and about the federal government saying to the racist reactionaries that they can ride roughshod over blacks.

A female worker mentioned that the welfare changes wreaked havoc in the inner cities, putting many single mothers and their children among the homeless population. She also contrasted the company’s quick approval of the Reagan day as a holiday with their intransigence regarding MLK Day. The discussions after the meeting also revolved around the anti-Sovietism of Reagan, the Cold War, the Iran-Contra scandal and the colonial occupation of Iraq.

All of the conversations showed the palpable disdain that workers had for Reagan and his policies.

A Transit Worker

For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

We print below a forum, slightly edited for publication, given by comrade Don Alexander of the Spartacist League/U.S. Central Committee at a regional educational in New York City on April 3.

PART ONE

I had to take a little time off in preparing this talk to keep from getting too involved in it, and comrade Karen and I went to hear a Southern liberal academic, who had written a book on the history of intermarriage in the U.S., particularly the striking down of the laws on the books that culminated in the 1967 *Loving* case. It was a quite interesting talk, a lot of anecdotes. In listening to his presentation, I noticed that the words “slavery,” “segregation,” “racism” weren’t mentioned once. That’s a pretty tall task in America, especially when you’re talking about black-white intermarriage, because it’s really the question of the persistence of caste. They can’t deal with it. It really goes to the heart of this racist capitalist system. He was a rather charming gentleman, as they say.

There is a lot of talk today about multiculturalism, diversity, whiteness and “racialized subjects” and other liberal jargon that essentially attempts to erase the centrality of anti-black racism and black oppression in racist capitalist America. Recently, in preparing this talk, I read something professor Barbara Fields of Columbia University wrote. She was one of the few professors who endorsed our rally at Columbia against the Conservative Club’s anti-affirmative action “bake sale.” She made the point that all of these academic types are talking about “whiteness” and all this stuff—how the Irish became white—but they never talk about how “African and African-Caribbean immigrants became black.” I thought that was a very interesting comment.

The Spartacist League has consistently, over the years, fought for a class-struggle program for black liberation as an inseparable part of the fight for the emancipation of labor from capitalist exploitation. Our program flows from a Marxist understanding of the nature of class society, of the role of class struggle as a motor force of history and the necessity of working-class rule. Capitalists like to dress up



Spartacist banner at rally in support of busing and school integration, Boston Common, 1974.

their rule in terms of general abstract slogans, pretending that they represent the “general will,” the “people” and the like. But in fact, they have an executive committee that runs their affairs to perpetuate their brutal class rule, and that’s called the state. This hideously oppressive and unequal society has perfected the machin-

have leveled the playing field. I know that if I keep on going in this vein you’ll run me out of here, because it does make your blood boil.

If you read our publications, *Workers Vanguard*, *Black History*, *Women and Revolution* (which continues to be incorporated in *Workers Vanguard* and *Sparta-*

How the Liberals and Reformists Derailed the Struggle for Integration

ery of deception and repression. There’s a huge mountain of lies claiming that the U.S. is an “open society,” a shining beacon of democracy where there are no classes and everybody is either in the middle class or becoming middle class, and where racism has largely been eliminated through civil rights laws, which

cist), you’ll see that we apply a revolutionary program to fight against national, sexual, racial and all oppression because that is part of our fight for world socialist revolution. In particular, when we raise the slogan for black liberation through socialist revolution, it sums up our strategic tasks. It encapsulates our fight for a third American revolution, a workers revolution that will put an end to this very brutal, decadent and violent ruling class. The realization of the age-long dream of black freedom, that is, the complete smashing of the color bar, can only occur through the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism. This means confronting the unfinished business of the Civil War—finishing the Civil War, which was a social revolution that destroyed slavery; but the social relations of anti-black racism were incorporated into the capitalist mode of production.

I want to cite part of what the veteran Trotskyist Richard Fraser wrote, in particular in his lectures of November 1953, “The Negro Struggle and the Proletarian Revolution.” We had a comment about comrade Fraser when we put out the bulletin, “In Memoriam Richard S. Fraser” (*Prometheus Research Series* No.3 [1990]).

We wrote that

“Although he was hampered by little formal scholarly training, his Marxist understanding and his broad experience in militant struggles with black workers sharpened his insight into the lessons of history. His dedicated study sprang from his conviction that in order to forge a program for black liberation, it is necessary to study the social forces that created the American institution of racial oppression.... To Fraser, understanding the roots of black oppression in the United States was no armchair activity; he carried his theory of Revolutionary Integration into struggle.”

And that’s really a very appropriate introduction to what I have to say.

We often quote Karl Marx’s statement that “Labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the black it is branded.” Fraser argued against the prevailing liberal ideology of his day that “prejudice” is the root of black oppression. He said:

“The racial division of society was born with capitalism and will die only with the death of this last system of exploitation. Before capitalism there was no race concept. There was no skin color exploitation, there was no race prejudice, there was no idea of superiority and inferiority based upon physical characteristics.

“It was the advent of Negro chattel slavery in the western hemisphere which first divided society into races. In a measure the whole supremacy of western capitalism is founded upon this modern chattel slavery. The primary accumulation of capital which was the foundation of the industrial revolution was accrued largely from the slave trade.”

This was written in 1953 and is a powerful scientific, materialist analysis that has stood the test of time. It is particularly important because we hear this new-fangled stuff about how race is somehow a “socially constructed category.” Fraser also talked about how race was “socially constructed” and noted that as a biological category, race doesn’t exist. But he emphasized the unique racial oppression of the American black population, the stigmatization of skin color, which was a product of the system of chattel slavery and was grafted onto the subsequent capitalist system.

Black Oppression and Capitalist Society

What are we fighting for? You have to look at the situation in this country where there is not a class-conscious proletariat today. The proletariat has yet to declare its political independence from the parties of the capitalist ruling class, thanks to the multiple betrayals of the reformists in this country, the petty-bourgeois liberal spokesmen for the black masses and, especially, the pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucracy, which works overtime to derail any serious struggle.

It was over one hundred years after the Civil War that black people got the right to vote, and today black former prisoners have to fall on their knees before Florida governor Jeb Bush to beg for their rights back. This is a reflection of the fact that under capitalism, democratic rights are reversible and that every step of the way we have to fight.

The class divisions in this society are increasingly sharp and hard to paper over. Therefore, the lies become more brazen and the repression more severe. The U.S.

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imperialists say that those who are resisting the imperialist occupation of Iraq simply don't want to see that freedom has taken root. If you're standing in an employment line here with no prospects for a job in sight—which is the fate of millions—this will sound pretty hollow because these sweet-sounding words of “freedom,” “equality” and “democracy” are coming out of mouths of the parasitic ruling class of the most brutal imperialist murderers in history. No, what they mean by “freedom” is the right to starve and to have their boots ground into your face. We hear a lot today about how opportunities are there if you just have the pluck and the patience to grasp them instead of whining for a handout. You hear a kinder, gentler version of this coming from black capitalist politicians and their mouth-pieces, who complain that black people don't stick together like other races, they engage in “self-sabotage,” and they hold each other back. You also hear the N-word, which lends legitimacy to this lie of black inferiority and is a reflection of its internalization. This scapegoating of the oppressed black masses in the name of “black power” or “black pride” is a reflection of petty-bourgeois contempt for the poor and oppressed. It is also an expression of the fact that today the black population, no less than the white population, is increasingly class-divided—in fact, even more so in terms of income and other inequalities within the black population.

Recently, I read a comment made by a Howard University black student who attended the commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the March on Washington where Martin Luther King Jr. gave his “I Have a Dream” speech—an event that Malcolm X correctly dubbed the “farce on Washington.” What she had to say was, perhaps, typical of a certain train of thought: “We are tired of the struggle for equality and we are tired of the struggle for integration.... If the response is positive, we must organize. If the response is negative, we must organize.”

This despairing tone is a product of the utter absence of any militant black leadership today and the failure of liberal integrationist programs. It is understandable, but it must be combatted. Consider who spoke at the rally, and you can understand this. Among others, there was the quintessential political hustler, black Democrat Al Sharpton. He railed against the Bush administration, saying that the checks sent to black America have bounced and are coming back marked “insufficient funds.” You also had Martin Luther King III preaching a “revolution at the ballot box” in 2004—in other words, vote Democrat. These pro-capitalist hustlers have time and again led anti-racist struggles into the pigsty of bourgeois electoralism and lesser-evilism precisely at the moment when record numbers of black and Latino youth are in jail—when, as one writer describes it, the ghetto and the prisons are on a continuum. In sharp counterposition, we fight to



WV Photo

Spartacist supporter tore down Confederate flag of slavery and Klan terror at San Francisco Civic Center, 1984. Right: Up to 50,000 demonstrators turned out in January 2000 to demand removal of Confederate flag from Columbia, South Carolina statehouse.



AP

mobilize the power of the multiracial working class—the only class in society which, because of its unique, strategic role in production, can smash this racist capitalist system and establish in its place a collectivized, planned socialist economy that produces for human need and not for profit. This will take a fight to forge a revolutionary leadership of the working class that stands at the head of the struggles of all the oppressed and exploited.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, in the post-Civil War post-Reconstruction period, you had a certain conservative black leader, Booker T. Washington, who came out openly for segregation, abandoning the fight for social equality. His rise to national prominence came in September 1895 when he delivered a speech at Atlanta's Cotton States and International Exposition. Basically, his speech told black people to stay “in their place.” Here is what Washington asserted that black people are:

“The most patient, faithful, law-abiding, and unresentful people that the world has seen.... In all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress.... The wisest among my race understand that the agitation of questions of social equality is the extremest folly....”

Now, the black nationalists today are cut out of the same cloth. Their bankrupt, petty-bourgeois program of “self-help” and black capitalism is pushed to line their own pockets and defend their own class interests against the ghetto poor. It tells the masses to accept the racist status quo, a product of centuries of racist oppression, and to stay in their so-called place. The Million Man March, organized in 1995 by the black-separatist, anti-woman, anti-Semitic bigot Louis Farrakhan and the Nation of Islam, stood in

this retrograde tradition. No wonder that march met with favor from Bill Clinton's White House. It was an appeasement of the capitalist exploiters. Meanwhile, the jails are filled with American capitalism's victims, the so-called “surplus population” of black and Latino youth. In New York City alone, nearly one out of two black men is unemployed. In the entire country, 40 percent of black children live in poverty. Black women are the fastest-growing victims of the AIDS epidemic. This is a society characterized by unprecedented, truly monstrous class divisions. This is the reality of color-caste oppres-

sembolden world history's most monstrous imperialist power.

The Class-Struggle Road to Black Freedom

Under capitalism—the system of private ownership of the means of production, in which the workers have only their labor power to sell as a commodity—a handful of capitalists are the dominant economic class. So it's futile to appeal to the nonexistent conscience and morality of the ruling class. It is not now and never has been in their interests to have a society based upon genuine peace, plenty and



Stefan Zaklin

Tallahassee, Florida: Black voters protest disenfranchisement in 2000 presidential election.

sion. It is not negated by the partial reconfiguration of this caste with the growth of a black middle class, which finds out very quickly that there is an invisible, but very real, glass ceiling.

It is sickening to hear Colin Powell and other representatives of the U.S. imperialist military, which is soaked from head to foot in the blood of the oppressed around the world, talk about how integrated their killing machine is. This was one of the themes of General Wesley Clark on the campaign trail—especially in front of black audiences. Clark even had the nerve to say that the U.S. Army integrated the Little Rock, Arkansas high school in the bloody battle there in 1957. The truth is otherwise. Dwight D. Eisenhower, who was president at the time, had opposed the desegregation of the armed forces in 1948. His whole attitude toward the *Brown* decision was to never publicly support it. He made some really gross comments about overgrown black males sitting alongside white girls. He sent the troops into Little Rock to prevent the black masses from *fighting back* against the rampaging white racist mobs.

Right now, it is this same supposedly integrated imperialist army that has invaded Iraq and Afghanistan. Its racist, colonial occupation has spilled the blood of thousands of Iraqis and Afghans, along with increasing numbers of Haitians. We demand that the imperialist troops get out—and that the UN stay out. The working class and oppressed here have a very direct stake in opposing this colonialist occupation which can only further

equality. Theirs is a system of production for profit and of anarchy resulting in inevitably recurring economic crises—a boom-bust cycle of overproduction of commodities giving rise to cyclical and structural unemployment and generalized impoverishment. Ending this requires a fight for the abolition of U.S. and world capitalism through international proletarian revolution.

Our interests lie in common, integrated class struggle against the racist capitalist rulers. The Spartacist League stands in the tradition of the early Communist International, the Comintern, under Lenin and Trotsky. Through insistent prodding, they reoriented the American Communist Party by uprooting the colorblindness characteristic of the early socialist movement. That movement had said that it had “nothing special” to offer to blacks and that their oppression was an economic problem. The Bolshevik Party under Lenin and Trotsky fought tooth and nail against this position, and actually

continued on page 6



WV Photo

Norfolk, Virginia longshoremen march against segregation, for school busing in 1983. Labor movement must champion black rights.

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Black Liberation...

(continued from page 5)

laid the basis for the American Communist Party to lead an aggressive fight for black equality in the late 1920s and early 1930s. James P. Cannon—a founder of the Communist Party and early leader of American Trotskyism—wrote his seminal essay “The Russian Revolution and the American Negro Movement” in 1959, five years after the Supreme Court *Brown* decision, as that movement was unfolding. He pointed out:

“It is customary to attribute the progress of the Negro movement, and the shift of public opinion in favor of its claims, to the changes brought about by the First World War. But the biggest thing that came out of the First World War, the event that changed everything, including the prospects of the American Negro, was the Russian Revolution. The influence of Lenin and the Russian Revolution, even debased and distorted as it later was by Stalin, and then filtered through the activities of the Communist Party in the United States, *contributed more than any other influence from any source* to the recognition, and more or less general acceptance, of the Negro question as a *special* problem of American society—a problem which cannot simply be subsumed under the general heading of the conflict between capital and labor, as it was in the pre-Communist radical movement.”

—*The First Ten Years of American Communism* (1962)

The Spartacist League’s several decades of efforts and principled struggle to mobilize the working class in the fight for black freedom and in the liberation of the working class as a whole stands in this tradition and is unique.

As a consequence of the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union, which was a gigantic defeat for workers and oppressed around the world, the capitalists have been emboldened to intensify their attacks against hard-won gains. It is no mere coincidence that, beginning in 1991, they have more energetically pushed for the resegregation of the school system—not that they began then, but they stepped on the pedal. There is no Soviet Union today to embarrass U.S. imperialism about the endemic racism which is inherent to this system.

Because of the counterrevolution in the Soviet Union, consciousness has been thrown back. And this has been in the making for a while. In 1983, Jesse Jackson, a former leader in King’s Southern Christian Leadership Conference, helped knife protests in defense of busing in Norfolk, Virginia. Coleman Young denounced busing in Detroit when he was the black Democratic mayor there in 1974, agreeing with the Supreme Court decision that struck down cross-district busing of black schoolchildren from the inner city to the white suburbs. In 1997,



Muhammad Speaks

the historically integrationist NAACP held a debate that called into question integration.

Furthermore, this retrogression in consciousness has also affected the so-called “progressive,” radical black intellectuals such as Robin Kelley and bell hooks, along with outright pro-Democratic Party hip-hop capitalists such as Russell Simmons. Simmons, who slams integration and also pushes black capitalism, helped organize a massive rally at City Hall in June 2003 (some of us sold *Workers Vanguard* at it) which was joined by Democrat Andrew Cuomo to call for not ending, but reducing the sentences of the draconian Rockefeller-era anti-drug laws. This is the same Cuomo who in the Clinton administration, in the Department of Housing, actually used the money that was supposed to go to building new housing to build prisons in upstate New York. So they were down there at City Hall supposedly trying to reform these drug laws. We say: Down with the racist war on drugs! We are for the decriminalization of drugs. The so-called New Democrat Clinton escalated the bourgeoisie’s attacks on the ghettos and barrios “to end welfare as we know it,” expanding the racist death penalty, and putting about 100,000 more cops on the streets.

In a recent interview, Simmons spelled out his program. He said his program is 40 acres and a Bentley. His undisguised hostility to integration is quite understandable in that light. This is what he said:

“Economically, some families in our community had more financial stability during segregation. We had the black dentist, the black lawyer, the black teacher. We had jobs. We had things we had to do for our community and services to provide. Integration tore that down. It damaged our economic stability in our little communities.... They took all of our business.”

—Henry Louis Gates, *America Behind the Color Line* (2004)

Well, first, what jobs? Ghettos are impoverished hell holes, and in periods of



Adelman/Magnum

Cartoon captures Martin Luther King’s cringing pacifism that supported brutal repression of 1960s ghetto explosions. Right: Malcolm X, June 1963.

labor shortage, they *used to be* some kind of reserve army of the unemployed—and I stress *used to be*. These people are pushing black capitalism, which is really about feathering their own nests and flipping a bone to the rest of us.

The so-called “left” black feminist, bell hooks, harking back to a mythical golden era of cross-class black unity, argued:

“That sense of solidarity was altered by a class-based civil rights struggle whose ultimate goal was to acquire more freedom for those black folks who already had a degree of class privilege however relative. By the late 1960s class-based racial integration disrupted the racial solidarity that often held black folks together despite class difference. Pressured to assimilate into mainstream white culture to increase their class power and status, privileged black individuals began to leave the underprivileged behind, moving into predominantly white neighborhoods, taking their money and their industry out of the segregated black world.”

—*Where We Stand: Class Matters* (2000)

Well, this is an utterly fantastic description of what actually happened. Some of what she points out, such as who benefited from the civil rights movement, is true. But the notion that there was ever in the past, or that there ever will be in the future, a significant black capitalist class along the lines of the Carnegies, the Mellons and the Rockefellers is utterly fantastic and utopian. Moreover, there is no such thing as “separate but equal.” And that’s the point: they have capitulated to that.

Now, there’s the very voluble left-nationalist academic Robin Kelley. He rhetorically asks, “Integration: What’s Left?” (*Nation*, 14 December 1998). He deliberately conflates the struggle for racial integration with *liberal* integrationism and submission to white liberal gradualism:

“Although black civil rights activists had always emphasized ‘desegregation’—the removal of all barriers that kept black people from enjoying full access to public facilities, decent housing, education and so on—in most white liberal circles racial integration came to mean solving the ‘Negro problem’ by bringing black people into formerly all-white institutions.... The goal was to produce fully assimilated black people devoted to the American dream. Sharing power was rarely part of the equation.”

And what is his program?

“Rather than a new integrationist movement under a left-wing banner, I would like to see a new, revitalized left launching a full-scale assault on white privilege—a new divestment campaign in which white people refuse the benefits of a racist society.”

In particular, what Kelley is saying to the mass of white workers, which of course happens to be the most numerous class in this society, is: Prove your commitment for the poor and the oppressed by voluntarily impoverishing yourself. This can only reinforce the hold of the white ruling class upon white workers. Moreover, if he took that to any picket line they’d run him out on a rail.

The League of Revolutionary Black Workers, which was a radical-nationalist organization in Detroit in the ’70s, had the opportunity to actually make common cause with white workers. They refused to pass out their leaflets to them. Their program was for more black foremen, for blacks on the board of General Motors and the like. Our program of revolutionary integration, of class struggle, cuts across these kinds of divisive schemes. Our program is to get rid of class exploitation and the brutal racial oppression that props it up, not to pit sections of the oppressed and exploited against each other so that both can be conquered. The depth of the political bankruptcy is astounding, but not surprising.

From our inception in the early 1960s inside the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) as the Revolutionary Tendency, a left-wing opposition that fought against that party’s abandonment of a revolutionary working-class program, we have emphasized common class struggle against a common class enemy. We say that there is an alternative to liberal integrationism—which favors the gradual absorption of “deserving blacks,” one by one, into this system—and pro-Democratic Party capitalist politics. And that’s the program of revolutionary integrationism, the struggle for black liberation through overturning this racist capitalist system by linking the struggles of the ghettos to the organized labor movement under a class-struggle leadership.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

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Berlin: Racist “Anti-Germans” Attack Mumia Supporters, Immigrants

We print below the translation of a leaflet issued July 8 by the Spartakist-Jugend, youth group of the Spartakist Workers Party (SpAD), German section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist), against the anti-immigrant provocation threatened by the sinister so-called “anti-Germans.” On July 10, the leaflet was distributed among the over 200 counterdemonstrators who mobilized in defense of the minority and immigrant residents of Berlin’s Neukölln and Kreuzberg districts, outnumbering the pro-Israel, anti-immigrant “anti-Germans.”

Under the slogan “Against the anti-Zionist consensus,” the so-called “anti-Germans” intend to carry out a racist provocation on July 10 in Hermannplatz, in the center of Berlin’s Neukölln immigrant district. Led by the openly pro-imperialist racists of the “Bahamas Editorial Board,” they aim to deliver ammunition to the racist German capitalist state and SPD [Social Democratic Party] bloodhound [Interior Minister] Schily for the anti-immigrant “war on terror.” The Bahamas Internet call, signed among others by the misnamed “Antifa [anti-fascist] Northeast Berlin,” employs every racist code word conceivable. The talk there is of “hate preachers” [*Hassprediger*], a term straight out of the new so-called “immigration law” [*Zuwanderungsgesetz*] sponsored by the “Red”/Green [SPD/Green Party coalition government] and the CDU [Christian Democrats], under which non-Germans can be deported based on verbal statements. They fantasize about a “district militia” in Neukölln and Kreuzberg, which is supposed to have cleared “Zionist-free zones”—a vile equation of immigrant neighborhoods with the “nationally liberated zones,” that is, areas in which no leftist or immigrant sets foot out of fear of Nazi terror.

Neukölln and Kreuzberg are the areas in Berlin that are labeled so-called “problem districts” by the capitalist SPD/PDS [Party of Democratic Socialism] Senate [local government] because that’s where many Turks, Kurds, Arabs and other ethnic minorities live who are especially hard hit by massive unemployment and social cuts. They are precisely the target of the “anti-Germans,” who advise the cops how to spot Palestinians, for example. Arab immigrants in particular were also the victims of the racist *Rasterfahndung* [profiling of immigrants] after September 11, 2001 carried out by the Berlin Senate. To stop such walking police traps as the Bahamas march on July 10, what is necessary is an integrated mobilization of trade unionists and immigrants. The whole point of this march is to mobilize a much greater threat to the immigrant community of Berlin than the “anti-Germans” themselves—the racist German state. The “anti-Germans” carry out these provocations precisely in the hope of inciting justified anger from immigrants and leftists, and thus giving the cops another pretext to beat and jail them.

It was just this method that resulted in one of the incidents that Bahamas gives as a reason for their march. We did not witness the incident and must therefore rely on the statements of those involved. At the Carnival of Cultures on May 30, the Action Coalition for Mumia Abu-Jamal, which is supported by the Revolutionary Communists (RK), took part with a float. A young man of immigrant background was walking next to this float wearing a T-shirt with a Palestinian flag and red flag, and the words “Anti-Zionist Action,” an adaptation of the symbol of



Krasse-Zeiten

July 10, Berlin: “Anti-Germans” stage racist provocation in Neukölln immigrant district, carrying Israeli and American flags.

the German Communist Party’s “anti-fascist action” from the early 1930s. For this, he was heckled and physically attacked as an “anti-Semite” by several “anti-Germans” from the group “Kritik & Praxis” [K&P].

“Outnumbering him, they attacked the wearer of said T-shirt first verbally and then bodily. After he had repeatedly demanded that they refrain, and they however continued the attack, he called for support. At which point four to five people, all of non-German background, rushed to his aid and successfully fended off the attack.”

—Statement of the persons affected by the reactionary/Zionist assault at the Carnival of Cultures, June 2004

The “anti-Germans” did what they do best and called the cops. The victim (!) of the attack was brutally arrested—he was beaten and choked. “After many hours, the arrested man was released from police custody with a court proceeding for dangerous bodily harm” (ibid.). ***Down with the charges! Self-defense is no crime!***

With their charges of anti-Semitism, the “anti-Germans” seek to portray all critics of the Zionist Israeli state as tending toward fascism, in order to provoke further assaults on them. It wasn’t the first time that the T-shirt wearer has been in the cross hairs of the “anti-Germans.” At the Day X student demo against the Iraq war last year, he had half a tooth knocked out, and at an anti-fascist demo in Köpenick on March 13 he was harassed and threatened by a mob of some 20 “anti-Germans” because of the same T-shirt, as reported on Indymedia (14 March): “Go back to Kreuzberg, where you come from!” Now K&P complains that this time their victim didn’t wait for them to knock the rest of his teeth out, but called for help!

A statement issued shortly afterward by the “anti-Germans” on the events at the Carnival began a campaign to isolate the RK, smearing them as “violent anti-Semites” and calling to drive them out of “left structures.” There have already been attempts to exclude the RK from left demos on the basis of this “anti-German” smear sheet. The defenders of the T-shirt wearer have issued a statement denouncing this as lies and distortion, and making clear it was their comrade who was attacked. Now Bahamas gives the events at the Carnival as pretext for their July 10 provocation. They grossly lump it together with a recent, *actual*, anti-Semitic assault on an Israeli Jew—equating anti-Semitism with anti-Zionism, just as [Foreign Minister] Joschka Fischer does, in this way whitewashing the bourgeoisie

of Auschwitz in the eyes of “democratic” public opinion! (On anti-Semitism and Zionism, see “Holocaust, ‘Collective Guilt’ and German imperialism,” *Spartacist* [German-language edition] No. 20, Summer 1998.)

K&P has provided Bahamas with the “through ball” [like in soccer] for the July 10 march, even if they’re not officially endorsing the call. In the same way, K&P and Bahamas worked together in a provocation against an antifa demo in Hamburg on January 31 (see *Spartacist* No. 154). The Bahamas statement is further marked by a racist tirade against Mumia Abu-Jamal, whom they slander as an “anti-Semite” who calls for the “murder of Jews.” This attack on Mumia, a black journalist who remains framed up on death row in the U.S., makes disgustingly clear that the “anti-Germans” like Bahamas have nothing to do with the left. It is the sort of garbage you’d expect from the Fraternal Order of Police, the racist cop brotherhood in Pennsylvania that wants to see Mumia dead! Bahamas’ hatred for Mumia reflects the hatred of the American bourgeoisie toward the black population of the U.S.

The “anti-German” campaign against the RK and Mumia’s supporters finds disturbing acceptance and support (implicit and explicit) among sections of the Autonomes, including those who reject the open racism and pro-imperialism of Bahamas. In a disgusting capitulation before the racist campaign, the (ex-?) antifa club Köpi canceled a solidarity concert for Mumia on June 11 because the Action Coalition for Mumia refused to distance itself from the “Anti-Zionist Action” T-shirt. In a statement on the cancellation, Köpi goes so far as to justify the “anti-German” assault, saying “Whoever wears such a symbol, simply risks getting a beating!”

That leftists would sabotage the defense and solidarity efforts for Mumia is indeed despicable. He is a courageous and outspoken opponent of racist and imperialist oppression. We Spartacists have actively fought for some 15 years to make his case known internationally, above all to mobilize the power of the working class to demand his freedom. For background information, see *Mumia Abu-Jamal Is an Innocent Man!* (September 2001), which documents his innocence. ***Free Mumia! Down with the racist death penalty!***

Other Autonomie groups support the witchhunt against the RK through helping exclude the RK from antifa and other coalitions, adding their signatures to

the “anti-German” statement, or simply through shamefaced silence. In particular, the Autonomes and leftists who capitulate before the “anti-German” campaign are in hysterics over the “anti-German” portrayal of the RK as violent “anti-Semites” and “knifers.” This is because they still see the “anti-Germans” as part of the antifa left, and not as what they are—violent racists in the service of the bourgeoisie of Auschwitz. The “anti-German” campaign is a perfidiously crafted appeal to racist prejudices. Like the state and the [right-wing] Springer Press, the “anti-Germans” rail against Arab and Turkish “street gangs.” We have only contempt for those who spinelessly capitulate to such racist demagoguery!

As already noted, we don’t know all the details of the events at the Carnival of Cultures. But we don’t need to know every detail to know what the “anti-Germans” are, and what their history is! The “anti-Germans” are no leftists; they are supporters of the U.S.-led colonial occupation of Iraq and of Israeli state terror against the Palestinians. They are racist handmaidens for the “war on terror” against the Muslim minority and all immigrants pursued by the SPD/Green government. As we exposed in *Spartacist*, “anti-German” groups rake in the cash from the German capitalist state (“‘Anti-nationals/Anti-Germans’: Goons for the SPD/Green Government,” *Spartacist* No. 152, Fall 2003). They have repeatedly attacked leftist opponents of Zionist state terror. We ourselves were the target of physical attacks, as “anti-German” goons attacked two of our events at Humboldt University a year ago and slandered us as “anti-Semites.” The Zionists claim that defending the Palestinians against Israeli state terror is “anti-Semitic.” What they particularly hate about us is that our internationalist position destroys this lie: we fight for the perspective of Arab-Hebrew workers revolution against Israel’s capitalist rulers. In the framework of capitalism, there is no just solution when two nations, as in Israel/Palestine, lay claim to one and the same territory. Either the Zionist bourgeoisie oppresses the Palestinians, or the terms of oppression reverse. On 3 July 2003 we had to interrupt and move our event because they ignited a smoke bomb and called the cops. In response, we campaigned for our self-defense and for the defense of the left, appealing to other leftists to oppose such attacks, and we aggressively exposed the true character of the “anti-Germans” to politically isolate them.

As Trotskyists, we have principled political differences with the Maoist/Guevarist RK, but we stand for the principle of non-sectarian defense within the left and labor movement. An injury to one is an injury to all! The “anti-Germans” are a real threat to leftists and immigrants, and we stand for the right of the RK and others to defend themselves against attacks by the “anti-Germans.” As can be seen by their pogrom-style call for the July 10 rally, every time the “anti-Germans” are successful in pulling off a provocation, the scope of their targets broadens: along with immigrants and leftists in Neukölln and Kreuzberg, they also direct their attacks against the reformist daily *junge Welt* and the liberal Green MP Ströbele. ***Down with “anti-German” attacks against leftists and immigrants! Stop the witchhunt against RK and supporters of Mumia! Down with the racist “war on terror”! Full citizenship rights for all who live here! Defend the Palestinians against Israeli state terror! ■***

DNC Protests Tailored for Democrats

The Democratic National Convention (DNC) served as a publicity blitz and party for party functionaries, with scripted-to-the-minute speeches delivered to scripted applause over the strains of lite-rock, with intermissions for cocktails and hobnobbing with Hollywood stars. For the Democrats, one of the two central ruling parties of American capitalism, the convention authorized their candidate of choice to command the bloody U.S. state for the next four years. For various unsavory and reactionary groups, from the Scientologists to Falun Gong to crazed anti-abortionists, it was an opportunity to present their cause to the media zoo. But for those intrepid leftist protesters who came to Boston, there were random bag checks, Military Police manning subway stations, police clad in riot gear swarming thick as beetles and a barbed-wire-ringed police pen masquerading as a “free speech zone”—all under the guise of “public safety” and a manufactured “terror” hysteria.

The liberal and reformist outfits behind the DNC protests tried to organize the relatively small “actions” so as to pose no real challenge to or break from the Democrats in keeping with the “Anybody but Bush” sentiment. In fact, the protests were largely designed as attempts to channel outrage at the repressive imperialist policies of American capitalism into lowest-common-denominator pro-Democratic Party politics.

Democratic Party Congresswoman Maxine Waters was scheduled to speak to Sunday’s ANSWER rally against the U.S. occupation of Iraq. On Tuesday, the second day of the convention, “Billionaires for Bush” led a march to the Republican headquarters. Dennis Kucinich, who had endorsed Kerry the previous week, appeared back outside the convention to rally against the destruction of civil liberties on Wednesday. By Thursday, Waters and Kucinich were slated to be in the midst of cheering crowds at the Fleet Center as John Kerry invoked his military past and promised the recruitment of 40,000 more U.S. troops.

Nader to the Socialist Movement: Drop Dead

The Friday before the DNC, Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Club comrades swung by a Ralph Nader campaign stop at Harvard University. In a halting introduction to Nader, a Socialist Alternative (SAlt) member expressed great hope in a “movement” surrounding this capitalist politician and almost apologetically managed to tack on a brief addendum that, in his, y’know, *personal*

Reporter’s Notebook from Boston by Gershon Brown

opinion, he’d like to see a movement against capitalism emerge from the campaign. Fat chance! Behind typical “we the people” rhetoric, Nader has courted “disaffected” Republicans and selected stockbroker (and onetime cadre of the reformist Socialist Workers Party) Peter Camejo as a running mate—a choice making Nader’s candidacy more palatable to leftist groups like the Inter-

oppressed peoples of the region.

Nader mostly gave me a straight answer, too. He said he is for small-scale capitalism, governed by producers and consumers alike, and argued that socialism won’t work because people don’t want to take enough responsibility for their own lives. Furthermore, he assured me that the “Iraqi people” wanted to keep the U.S. troops in place. But when it



July 29: Boston police push back demonstrators who moved out of the official “protest zone” toward the DNC site.

national Socialist Organization (ISO). Nader made absolutely clear that his candidacy was intended to pull the Democrats toward the left and away from “corporate” influence. He was so proud of this image that he repeatedly mimed pulling a rope.

I got up and told him straight out that I wasn’t voting for Bush, Kerry or him. I raised his unwavering commitment to capitalism; his anti-immigration positions, which he expressed in an interview with Pat Buchanan by saying, “I don’t like the idea of legalization because then the question is how do you prevent the next wave and the next?” (*American Conservative*, 21 June); and his opposition to an immediate, unconditional withdrawal of troops from Iraq. For us, the withdrawal of troops from Iraq is the first step to opening the way to revolutionary class struggle by the working and

came to the issue of immigration, he told me to “go ask Peter Camejo,” before snapping that socialists can’t think for themselves. Later in the discussion, he told a supporter of American Indian activist and political prisoner Leonard Peltier that he wasn’t for freedom or clemency but only a “new trial.”

Organic Lawns and Democratic Pawns

Across town, thousands of liberal social activists gathered at the University of Massachusetts at Boston for the weekend to attend the Boston Social Forum (BSF)—purposefully organized before but not during the DNC so as not to rile pro-Democrat feathers. Despite its overwhelmingly liberal politics, the BSF gave us an opportunity to present our revolutionary program to a range of social activists and engage in debate with other leftist organizations.

SAlt spent their “Is a Socialist World Possible?” workshop explaining that they didn’t want to be seen as “groupies for Nader.” But it is this role that SAlt has played for months (see “Ralph Nader, ISO and Socialist Alternative: Unsavory at Any Speed,” WV No. 827, 28 May), including at the Harvard rally. SAlt was in a hurry to leave their workshop for Nader’s Harvard appearance particularly after we put to them questions about the track record of the Committee for a Workers’ International (CWI), to which SAlt is affiliated. Among other issues, we spoke to the London-based CWI’s failure to make the elementary call for British troops out of Northern Ireland and its shady dealings with fascist elements in Russia (see “Taaffeite CWI: From Yeltsin’s Barricades to the Augean Stables,” WV No. 828, 11 June).

At the BSF we had numerous discussions with youthful supporters of the ISO

who considered a vote to Nader to be a step toward breaking from the Democratic Party. When presented with Nader’s actual positions, which differ only slightly from Kerry’s on issues like the occupation of Iraq, some ISOers would revert to defending the merits of Nader’s vision of small-scale as against “big” capitalism. But there is absolutely nothing progressive about “small” capitalism—the goal of socialists is to vastly expand production through a proletarian revolution that expropriates the ruling class and abolishes private ownership and the market economy so as to eliminate material scarcity on a global scale. As we pointed out to ISO supporters, the ISO’s hostility to the perspective of independent proletarian struggle to rip industry out of the hands of the capitalists is integrally linked to its refusal to defend against U.S. imperialism the gains of those revolutions that succeeded in this task, above all the former USSR, product of the Bolshevik-led 1917 Russian Revolution.

Searching through workshops on “Organic Care of Lawns and Landscapes” and “Psychodynamics of Empire,” the BSF began to feel a bit like cable television—500 channels with nothing on. But our comrades found more events to attend. The workshop by the Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism (CoC) on “The Domestic Effects of Corporate Globalization,” featuring among others Angela Davis and Manning Marable, was one of the more well-attended BSF events.

This workshop made clear how “Anybody but Bush” means “Anything but Revolution.” Davis and Marable addressed some of the conditions of black oppression, describing the massive number of unemployed, incarcerated and disenfranchised black people in the U.S. But black “radicals” like Davis and Marable cynically use their authority as civil rights movement veterans and ostensible socialists to head off any challenge to racist American capitalism. Our intervention broke through the unity-mongering, resign-yourself-to-the-Democrats consensus of the speakers. It unmasked the reformists’ classless rhetoric, which is meant to obscure how it is going to take a socialist revolution to achieve black liberation.

In response, Davis and Marable were compelled to defend their reformist politics. According to Marable, one of the goals of the broad democratic “movement” is to find methods to reach people, and they’re not going to be socialists, so if it gets them out to the polls, if it gets them to recognize that actions must be taken.... In other words, all “the people” can understand is to vote for the Democrats, which fits with Marable’s overall do-nothing, dead-end strategy.

Our own workshop at the BSF, calling to “Unchain Labor/Black Power” and “Break with the Democratic Party of War and Racism” to build a fighting workers party, stuck out like a bright red thumb. Our comrade’s presentation put the current elections in some historic perspective and tore through the myth of the good old Democratic Party that has been “lost.” From “pacifist” Woodrow Wilson’s entry into the bloody WWI to FDR’s crushing of labor under the WWII wage freeze to the story of how the radical wing of the civil rights movement broke free from Martin Luther King’s liberal pacifism, the presentation laid out the history of social progress in America as one of struggle *against both ruling parties*. At each step, the Democrats

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SL/SYC table at the July 25 ANSWER demo. Throughout the week, we raised the call for a break with the Democratic Party of war and racism.

Really, REALLY Authoritarian “Anti-Authoritarians” Boston SL/SYC Statement: Protest Bl(A)ck Tea Society Anti-Communist Exclusion!

We reprint below a Boston Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth Club leaflet from July 22 protesting the anarchist Bl(A)ck Tea Society’s plan to exclude us from their “Really, REALLY Democratic Bazaar” on July 27. We distributed the leaflet widely at the Boston Social Forum and at protests against the Democratic National Convention before the “Bazaar.” In the end we were not excluded from the event, where we set up a literature table.

The self-proclaimed “anti-authoritarian” Bl(A)ck Tea Society (BTS) has banned the revolutionary communist Spartacist League from having a booth at its “Really, REALLY Democratic Bazaar.” The BTS advertised the bazaar, held in conjunction with the Democratic National Convention protests, as an event where “Everyone is invited and encouraged to come set up a ‘booth’ at the Bazaar that expresses their visions and practices of a better world” (BTS Web site, undated). Not quite. A featured speaker at the BTS bazaar is Green-Rainbow Party activist Dan “The Bagel Man” Kontoff, who ran for City Council last year and supports such capitalist politicians as Felix “friend of the Democrats” Arroyo (former policy advisor to Kerry, no less) and Chuck Turner. Along with Kontoff and his ilk, Buddhists and advocates of running a diesel car on waste vegetable oil are more than welcome; revolutionary communists however are banned in BTS-land.

We learned of this from the BTS July 8 organizing meeting minutes on its Web site, which read in part: “If a group or organization with a history of creating disruptions (sic) at events would like to sign up, or if a group holds principles and intentions that are not respectful or compatible (sic) with the bazaar and want to sign up, they will be contacted and told why they are not welcome. This applies to folks like the SPARTS, World Church of the Creator and so on.” To cover for its allegiance to “lesser evil” capitalist politics, the BTS has borrowed from garden variety liberal anti-communism here, outrageously lumping communists with a fascist outfit. Unfortunately for the BTS, this particular slander flies in the face of such facts as the 200-strong united-front demonstration initiated by our comrades in Chicago that



Anarchist-organized “Really, REALLY Democratic Bazaar,” July 27. Threatened exclusion of SL/SYC exposes undemocratic core of “anti-authoritarian” ideology.

drove the head World Church fascist, Matthew Hale, off Northwestern University campus. As comrade Trotsky noted, even slander should make some sense!

The BTS’ anti-communist exclusion is motivated by its deeply ingrained hostility to revolutionary, proletarian politics. For our part, we fight for a communist egalitarian society of material abundance, achieved through the victory of socialist revolutions across the planet. Our model is the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky that led the Russian workers to power in October 1917 and established the Soviet Union, the first *workers state*, as a beacon for the struggles of workers and oppressed internationally. The BTS follows in the worst of the anarchist tradition, from Prince Kropotkin who preferred the hapless bourgeois politician Kerensky to the Bolsheviks, to the counterrevolutionary exploits of Makhno and others who sided with the imperialist-allied White Guards against the Soviet workers state. At bottom, there isn’t much to distinguish the BTS from social democrats and liberals who have and will resort to any means to smear communists as “authoritarian,” denouncing the “extremism” of right and left, giving oh-so-“democratic” aid and comfort to the forces of bourgeois repression.

For all its “direct action” posturing, when last seen the BTS was, according to a report on Boston Indymedia (19 May)—a report not refuted by the BTS—an early member of the Boston Democratic National Convention Coalition, along with city councilors and pro-capitalist liberals such as the American Friends Service Committee and United for Justice with Peace. We say clearly: the Democratic Party, like the Republicans, represents the class interests of the capitalists and therefore carries out imperialist war abroad, metes out racist oppression and executes other repressive measures at home, all in order to further the exploitation of labor in the interest of profit. It cannot be pressured to act in the interests of the workers and oppressed. The working class needs its own party to lead the fight for the revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist system and the establishment of workers rule. While the BTS whines about “corporate parties,” we pose a proletarian perspective—*class against class*—and a political struggle against the reformist misleaders of the liberal “anybody but Bush” crowd.

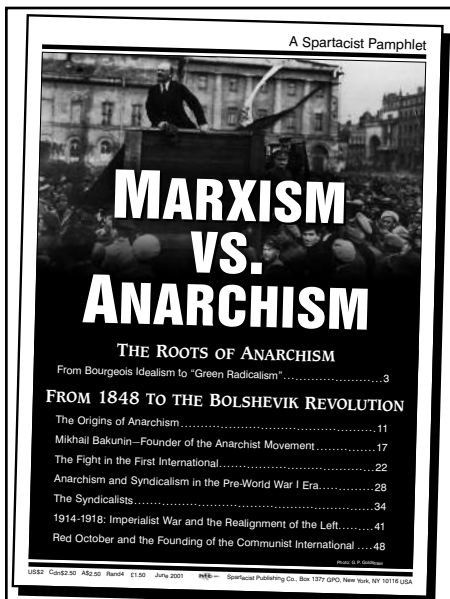
Activists coming to Boston who were arrested at the RNC and DNC in 2000 or at last year’s FTAA protests in Miami will be interested to learn that the BTS recently joined picket lines organized by the Boston police. The BTS announced this at its July 13 meeting at Lucy Parsons Bookstore. As communists, we know that the cops are not part of the working class, but are an integral part of the repressive apparatus of the racist ruling class, i.e., of the *bourgeois state*. The BTS received its own object lesson in this fact when the cops kicked BTSers off the picket lines after they found out who they were. As opposed to opportunist “anarchists” who solidarize with striking police whose demands are for better compensation for and means to break strikes, terrorize black people and repress all those who would protest the racist, capitalist status quo, revolutionaries fight within the working class to bring to it the understanding that cops are not part of the working class but rather its armed enemy.

The BTS also made clear at its July 13 meeting that its political differences with our Trotskyist politics motivated its exclusion of the Spartacists from the woefully misnamed bazaar. Thus, in response to our protest of this exclusion at that meeting, the BTS responded that it was horrified that we hailed the Soviet Red Army intervention into Afghanistan in 1979 against the CIA-backed *mujahedin* reactionaries. Indeed we did! The only force to defend the rights of women in Afghanistan was the Red Army, while on the other side were Islamic fundamentalists who shot teachers for teaching girls to read, who threw acid in the faces of

women who refused to wear a veil. Sundry anarchists, “anti-authoritarians” and run-of-the-mill liberals, hostile to the Soviet Union, sided with the imperialist-backed forces in Afghanistan. We unconditionally militarily defended the Soviet Union against imperialism and internal counterrevolution and hailed the unquestionably progressive intervention into Afghanistan. The Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan—a treacherous capitulation to U.S. imperialism—was the prelude to the counterrevolutionary destruction of the USSR in 1991-92. That defeat has meant untold misery for the peoples of the former Soviet Union, for the women of Afghanistan and the world’s workers and oppressed. The *mujahedin* victory ultimately led U.S. imperialism’s Frankenstein’s monster—reactionary Islamic fundamentalism à la Osama bin Laden—to turn against its master. That in turn was an opportunity for the U.S. rulers—now unfettered by the USSR, the industrial-military powerhouse of the non-capitalist world—to unleash their endless “war on terror” at home and abroad, slaughtering untold thousands in Iraq.

No doubt the BTS is just as horrified by our unconditional military defense of the Chinese, Cuban, North Korean and Vietnamese deformed workers states against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution and our call for proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracies. Such revolutionary proletarian politics could, after all, disturb the BTS’ media-friendly bazaar celebrating “our diversity and our autonomy, our love and our freedom.”

In spite of the BTS’ wretched politics, we defended them against the MIT administration’s attempts to censor them in May, and we will continue to defend them against such attempts and state repression, because we are consistent defenders of workers democracy. As the Wobblies (Industrial Workers of the World) put it: an injury to one is an injury to all! We call on all those within the left and workers movement to protest the BTS exclusion of the Spartacist League from the “Really, REALLY Democratic Bazaar.” And if you are interested in building a revolutionary workers party that fights for all the oppressed, that aims to get rid of the capitalist system and its state (cops, courts, prisons, military) through socialist revolution, then subscribe to *Workers Vanguard*, the newspaper of the Spartacist League, and find out what the Bl(A)ck Tea Society doesn’t want you to know. As Marx said, ignorance never did anybody any good! ■



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NEW YORK CITY

Anti-Abortion Bigot Driven Out; Fascist Provocation Spiked

Boston

Some 2,000 demonstrators turned out on the Boston Common on Sunday, July 25 for a rally and “National March on the Democratic Convention/Bring the Troops Home Now!” called by the Workers World Party-initiated ANSWER coalition. Notwithstanding some lip service to opposing the twin parties of capitalism, the ANSWER demo’s demands were directed at pressuring the capitalist Democratic Party, whose national convention began the next day in Boston. Thus, one of the featured invited speakers was prominent Democratic Party pol Maxine Waters—a no-show on the day. Comrades of the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Clubs intervened in the ANSWER demonstration with sales of our revolutionary Marxist newspaper and pamphlets, seeking to win youth and others to the

perspective of working-class opposition to both parties of capitalism and the fight for the construction of a revolutionary workers party. At our literature table, a Spartacist banner read: “Break with the Democrats! Build a Workers Party to Fight for Socialist Revolution!”

As protesters converged on the Boston Common, a viciously bigoted opponent of abortion rights and rights for homosexuals raised a provocative sign with a graphic photo of a fetus on one side and an anti-gay slogan on the other. This individual, one Leonard Gendron, is a pastor based in Lawrence, Massachusetts and a prominent reactionary opponent of gay marriage. According to the *Village Voice* Web site (26 July) Gendron “favors an American theocracy.” The anti-abortion, anti-gay bigot staged his provocation near our literature table. Comrades from the Spartacist League approached other leftists at the demonstration and joined with them to con-

front Gendron, expose him and drive him away from the demonstration site. Our chants of “Free abortion on demand!” and “Full democratic rights for gays!” were picked up by many as a crowd of protesters surrounded the bigot. A fascist skinhead, earlier seen lurking in the vicinity, rushed to Gendron’s defense. While the anti-gay bigot was escorted from the area by ANSWER marshals, the fascist skinhead received a torn T-shirt and was correctly repelled.

Fascists are deadly enemies of black people, the left, the workers movement, gays and all minorities, a physical threat from which the demonstration had to be defended. In Boston, as elsewhere, these scum have a symbiotic relationship with the crazed religious right who seek to deny women and homosexuals basic rights, who have engaged in the murder of abortion clinic workers and doctors, who have whipped up a climate wherein gay peo-

ple have been brutally murdered. Gendron’s repulsive provocation was met appropriately with protest and exposure. However, outright race-terrorists, i.e., fascists, are not only race-hating ideologues, but are *organized for action against the entire workers movement and must be dealt with as such*.

The fact that skinhead fascists in Boston feel emboldened to openly emerge from their rat holes to stage provocations at largely leftist demonstrations is ominous. This is due in no small part to the fact that at past events sponsored by ANSWER, most recently at demonstrations in support of gay marriage rights, fascist scum have been largely ignored by the demo organizers. Urgently necessary are united-front actions by the integrated workers movement and all of the fascists’ intended victims to defend leftist, workers and minority meetings and protests from the fascists’ provocations and attacks. The political obstacles to such mobilizations are pro-Democratic Party liberals and trade-union misleaders, as well as their reformist hangers-on, who preach reliance on the capitalist state to keep the fascists at bay. The left and workers movement can and must rely on its own strength to stop these provocations and send the fascists packing!

DNC...

(continued from page 8)

were not the friends of the oppressed but the primary ideological and political obstacle to their liberation. In contrast, we want a workers party based in class and social struggle, fighting for the interests of all the oppressed and stopping short at nothing but socialist revolution.

How “Communist” Progressive Labor Caves In to Bosses

Standing to the left with its “communist” rhetoric and “It’s Not Just Bush—It’s Capitalism” buttons was Progressive Labor (PL). But, as has been the case with PL for decades, its calls to “Shoot the Profit System Down” stood in flat contrast to its own rotten positions. For example, PL refuses to militarily defend the Iraqi and Palestinian populations against the U.S. imperialist behemoth and Zionist state repression, under the “logic” of denouncing both sides in the respective conflicts as equally reactionary.

When it mattered during the U.S. imperialist Cold War II onslaught of the 1980s, the Stalinist PL programmatically sided with its own bourgeoisie and refused to defend the remaining gains of the Russian Revolution, having long before proclaimed the Soviet Union “capitalist.” PLers at the BSF were unable to explain what happened to the USSR in 1991-92, when counterrevolution opened the door to the return of capitalist misery to the homeland of October. Today, defense of China and the fight for proletarian political revolution there to oust its treacherous Stalinist bureaucratic misleaders is posed for all serious revolutionaries. But PL again puts itself on the same side as its imperialist masters by vituperating against “fascist” China. Meanwhile, PL has tried to cover its tracks by publishing an updated version of the old Stalinist hack job titled “Why Trotskyism Is Reactionary” in the Spring 2004 issue of its magazine *Communist*. (For more on Trotskyism vs. Stalinism, see the SYL pamphlet “The Stalin School of Falsification Revisited,” 1985).

Young PLers also had a big problem dealing with PL’s position on gay oppression, where it buys into the backward consciousness of bourgeois society. At one workshop, an SL comrade read a quote from their article “Lynching of Gay Student Reveals Two Sides of Rulers’ Fascist Coin” (*Challenge*, 4 November

1998) that stated: “The torture-murder of Matthew Shepard, an openly homosexual Wyoming student, has thrown a spotlight on two apparently opposing movements—gaybashing and gay rights. Both movements are growing with the encouragement and support of conflicting sections of the U.S. capitalist class. And both movements are dangerous to the working class.” PLers asserted their own individual support for gay rights, but none could show us where the line of that article was disavowed in print. Its bigoted position on gays, a betrayal of the liberating goals of communism, is derived from the Stalinist glorification of the family as a fighting unit for socialism.

At Sunday’s ANSWER demonstration, Spartacist comrades took the lead in organizing opposition to an anti-gay provocateur who turned out to have fascist buddies (see “Anti-Abortion Bigot Driven Out; Fascist Provocation Spiked,” above). Would PL see both the anti-gay provocateur and the outraged crowd who chanted, “Full democratic rights for gays!” as “two sides of the same fascist coin”? Using the incident that had just occurred, Spartacist comrades explained to the late-arriving PL contingent that, as Lenin taught us, real communists need to fight for the rights of *all* the oppressed.

New “Socialist” Parties, Same Reformist ANSWER

Aside from the drama with the provocateurs early on, the ANSWER rally to “Bring the Troops Home Now” proved to be an uneventful peace crawl of 2,000 dominated by signs proclaiming “Peace Is Patriotic.” It was seen by many there as a venue at which to beg the Democrats to strike at least an antiwar *pose*. This timidity didn’t stop the police from sweeping in and detaining one “Mid-Eastern looking” marcher, later released, for “looking around,” sparking the crowd to chant, “This is racial profiling!” (Boston Indy-media, 25 July).

Protesters of all stripes, from liberals to anarchists, told us they’d be holding their nose and voting Kerry. Many told me they saw the last remaining difference between the Republicans and Democrats as a respect for civil liberties. But a Democratic city administration built the barbed-wire-enclosed “free speech zone” at the DNC, and a vast majority of Democrats in Congress voted for the Patriot Act. One woman organizing “swing state” campaigning said she opposed the Democrats, but went on to argue that if

Bush was re-elected it might be the last election America has. Her view, shared by many liberals, was that civil liberties are rights “granted” by the capitalist state. In fact, civil liberties are won and defended in the course of social struggle.

Even as they organized liberals to beg the Democrats for peace, leading ANSWER organizers in the reformist Workers World Party (WWP) paid lip service to the ideas of socialism and workers’ political independence, ideas belied by the WWP’s constant courting of bourgeois politicians. Also in Boston was the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL), a recent split from the WWP. PSLers told us they have no political differences with the WWP. The PSL’s founding statement in *Socialism and Liberation Magazine* (August 2004), which we picked up there, argues:

“Pacifist appeals to the ruling class for a ‘peaceful’ or ‘kinder, gentler’ foreign policy is the worst kind of deceit offered up by social democrats and opportunists. Working to elect a new leader to preside over the affairs of the warfare state will have zero impact in reducing the threat of war. As Lenin wrote in 1916, under the system of imperialism peace is merely a prelude to the next war.”

This shows real chutzpah. The PSL is not only associated with ANSWER but also proudly hails ANSWER’s work during the antiwar protests. The entire strategy of ANSWER in the antiwar movement (led by those now in both the WWP and the PSL) was to play a key role in maintaining and breeding illusions in the Democratic Party. While various reformists crowed over the “success” of the antiwar movement, many youth we spoke to were rather depressed by the realization that mass protests alone could not and did not stop the bipartisan drive to war against Iraq.

Black America Betrayed by Democratic Party Misleaders

On Monday, the Socialist Party (SP) held the only rally during the DNC actually *against* the Democrats. One of our comrades spoke at it, underlining our revolutionary integrationist program:

“America is not and has not been the land of the free. It’s built on exploitation, it’s built on oppression, and structurally founded on the special oppression of black people at the bottom of society—from slavery to Jim Crow to what people call the ‘Prison-Industrial Complex’ today. And this city itself is built on racial oppression. This city is the city where busing was defeated in the streets.”

Our comrade referred to the infamous

1976 attack on a black lawyer by flag-wielding racist white youths and continued that this is “the same American flag that the Democrats are rallying behind today and rallying under in their convention. The same American flag that Ralph Nader says he wants to cleanse.”

The much-vaunted wave of “hip-hop activism” played out as crass commercial hustling at Russell Simmons’ Hip-Hop Summit that same day. We were planning to attend until we discovered that getting in meant joining Simmons’ “Hip-Hop Team Vote.” Which is to say, for the privilege of hearing the penetrating social insights of Ma\$e and the Ying Yang Twins and “special discounts on the latest new clothing, shoe wear & gear,” we too could have signed on to line up earnest and political minority youth to be voting cattle for the Democrats. No thanks.

On Tuesday, speaking at the convention, Democratic Party politico Al Sharpton claimed that black voters, having failed to procure 40 acres and a mule from the Republicans following the Civil War, “decided we’d ride this donkey as far as it would take us.” But that donkey’s been walking all over black people for years. Black oppression, the bedrock of American capitalism, can only be eliminated through the victorious conquest of power by the U.S. proletariat. Just look at how mainstream Democrats treated even former FBI fink Sharpton for bringing up issues like racist cop murders in his presidential campaign and for going outside the script at the DNC (see “Al Sharpton: Political Hustler for Hire,” WV No. 822, 19 March)! There will be no social revolution here without the united struggle of black and white workers led by their multiracial vanguard.

Bizarre Behavior

The nominally more militant and leftist Northeastern Federation of Anarcho-Communists (NEFAC), in a concession to “Anybody but Bush” sentiment, made a “commitment” to participate in protests against the Republican National Convention in New York, where they have one “collective,” but not the DNC in Boston, where they have five (*Strike!*, June/July 2004). This left the “anti-authoritarian” organizing banner to the action-factionistas of the BI(A)ck Tea Society (BTS), who basked in the media limelight but delivered very little in the way of actual protest.

Throughout the week, we distributed our flier on how their one serious public

Abu-Jamal...
(continued from page 16)

Pennsylvania state courts. But within days of the Beard decision, the Third Circuit Court of Appeals lifted the stay, ordering Jamal (and other Pennsylvania death row inmates) to file briefs on whether or not the Beard decision applies to his case. A legal memorandum submitted to the court by Robert Bryan, Jamal's lead attorney, points out that the Beard decision has no relevance to Jamal's case. The brief cites Judge Yohn's ruling: "Although Mills, handed down on June 6, 1988, was decided after petitioner was sentenced to death, it nonetheless ante-dated the finality of petitioner's conviction, which was registered on October 1, 1990, when the United States Supreme Court denied his petition for a writ of certiorari."

This is a clear statement of fact that the Beard case should have no effect on Jamal. But the entire history of Jamal's case shows that a fighter for black freedom like Mumia has no rights which the capitalist courts are bound to respect. An outspoken champion of the oppressed, Jamal was a target of the Philadelphia police and of J. Edgar Hoover's FBI from the time he was a Black Panther Party spokesman at the age of 15. For over 22, years Democratic and Republican prosecutors, governors and state and federal legislators have run the truth about this fighter for black freedom through a wringer of lies that would make even Bush and Cheney blush with pride. And for 22 years, court after court has ignored not only overwhelming evidence of Jamal's innocence but also the legal precedents and constitutional strictures demanding his freedom which purportedly guide them.

The D.A. in Jamal's case won a death sentence by assuring the jury the sentence was merely symbolic, that Jamal would never die because he would have "appeal after appeal after appeal." Although three years earlier the Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruled that such language required automatic reversal, in 1989 they affirmed Jamal's death sentence. In 1991, the Supreme Court reversed the death sentence of David Dawson on the grounds that the prosecution improperly used his political affiliation as a member of the racist White Aryan Brotherhood to prejudice the jury. When Mumia sought a reversal on the grounds that the prosecution used his past membership in the Black Panther

Party in securing the death sentence, the Supreme Court refused to even consider his case.

There Is No Justice in the Capitalist Courts!

The capitalist rulers want to see Mumia dead because they see in this eloquent journalist, MOVE supporter and former Panther spokesman the spectre of black revolution, defiant opposition to their system of racist oppression. They seek to execute Jamal in order to send a chilling message to all those who challenge vicious cop repression in the ghettos, who stand up for labor's rights on the picket lines, who protest imperialist mass murder from the Balkans to Iraq, who demand an end to the anti-immigrant

tion in July. Though support for the resolution was widespread, NAACP leaders did all they could to prevent it from coming to the floor: delegates who planned to present the motion were decertified and barred from the convention; a planned panel discussion on the death penalty at which Mumia's case would be raised was abruptly cancelled. Only when Pam Africa of the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal and others threatened to picket the NAACP convention the same day Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry was to speak there did the NAACP tops relent and let the resolution be voted.

In reporting on the NAACP vote in a recent article (CounterPunch, 16 July) liberal journalist Dave Lindorff notes



San Francisco, May 2000: Revolutionary Contingent built by SL, SYC and Labor Black League called for mobilizing labor's social power in fight to free Mumia.

witchhunt and attacks on civil liberties in the name of the never-ending "war on terrorism." Jamal's case throws a spotlight on the barbaric, racist death penalty, a form of institutionalized state terror directly descended in the U.S. from the system of black chattel slavery. Seeing in his fight for freedom a reflection of their own struggles against oppression and exploitation, trade unionists and fighters for the oppressed in countries spanning the globe have rallied to Jamal's case. After years of evasion, the NAACP finally adopted a resolution calling for a new trial for Jamal at its annual conven-

the erosion of public support for Jamal, claiming, "The throngs of people who used to come out to demand a new trial for Abu-Jamal have faded away as his case, over the past several years, was taken over by ideological lawyers and others who managed to convince Abu-Jamal to make his case a political attack on the entire legal system, instead of dealing with the key issues in his trial that offered the best chance to get him a new hearing." The "key issues"—racist jury-rigging, suppression of evidence, prosecutorial terrorization of witnesses, overt racial and pro-prosecutorial bias of the trial

event—the "Really, REALLY Democratic Bazaar"—wasn't all that democratic after all (see "Boston SL/SYC Statement: Protest Bl(A)ck Tea Society Anti-Communist Exclusion!", page 9). Responses to our threatened exclusion ranged from sympathy from those anarchists who take talk of autonomy, openness and respect seriously, to nasty redbaiting from more hardened BTS and NEFAC members alike. The BTS case wasn't helped any when an article written by BTS supporter Brian Basgen in Industrial Worker (July/August 2004) not only glowingly reported on their "anti-authoritarian" attempt to join cop "picket lines" at the Fleet Center prior to the DNC, but went on to militancy-bait the cops, whining, "It had become clear that the cops were playing dress-up, not having a picket." Cops are not workers but the front line of the capitalist state, whose job is to enforce the bloody rule of the bosses, as brought home by the separate killings of a Latino and a black man by Boston police in late June. More attuned to this reality than these "anarchists," the cops, as reported in IW, expelled them from the "picket line" with the sendoff: "Thanks for coming, you are not wanted, now get the f[---] out of here."

Come Tuesday, we decided to assert our democratic rights and set up our table at the Bazaar. For roughly two hours, it was a day of sunshine, tolerable and

sometimes talented folk and punk performances and serious political discussion. Then, a young woman with the BTS approached us to ask our aid in expelling a Kerry supporter from the Bazaar! The hapless Democrat was offering "Kerry-catures," where passers-by could get their portrait drawn next to the venerable imperialist pig. We refused, telling the BTS that the man was a liberal in a bazaar full of them and did not pose a physical threat as a fascist would. To try to win youth, minorities and workers to a revolutionary program, bourgeois politics should be exposed in open political debate. Displaying both faith in the capitalist state and mindless legalism, one BTS member denounced the Kerry supporter to the Park Authority with the complaint that the man had no permit. The attempt by the BTS to censor this man was merely a cover for their own accommodation of the "Anybody but Bush" sentiment on more muted display throughout the Bazaar. Later that day, a BTS leader tried repeatedly to chalk smears against us on the sidewalk. The initial BTS exclusion was a sharp expression of the undemocratic core of much "anti-authoritarian" ideology. Everything is "decentralized," "free" and "spontaneous" until anything controversial arises. Then—oops! You've just been "voluntarily disassociated"! What all of this translates into is a political movement based not on political debate

among its constituents but on the personal whims and prejudices of its self-concealed leadership.

Not with a Bang

Not much came from the vaunted "day of action" on Thursday. If you read the papers closely, you might have noticed that an "affinity group" defaced some mannequins at a Gap store and another pulled off a brief banner-drop on the convention floor. Meanwhile, the main march was descended on by cops likely itching for some action after a quiet week, and three demonstrators were arrested over a so-called fake "Molotov cocktail" which was in reality a papier-mâché pirate hook. Drop the charges against all arrested protesters!

It's one thing to describe the Democrats as the dead end of social struggle, but it was very different to see this graphically demonstrated over the course of the week. The much vaunted "decentralized" organizing of the anti-globalization protests only served to ensure a tacit unity over the politics of lesser-evil reformism, now cast into sharp relief by the impending election. Meanwhile, America's ruling parties stand ever more united in seeking to bolster U.S. imperial might. While discontent against the policies of America's rulers has drastically increased over the past few years, the situation cries out for a break with the bourgeois electoral framework and a fight for the

political independence of the working class. As our speaker said at the SP rally: "We say we need a fighting workers party to take up the cause of the oppressed, to take up the cause of the labor movement. A party which does not say we want to administer this bloodsoaked capitalist state, but that we want to get rid of it. We want to tear it up! We want a different system, a socialist system. We want a revolutionary workers party!"

judge, denial of Jamal's constitutional right to self-representation and so much more—precisely point to the whole racist capitalist "justice" system. And every one of these key issues has been turned down by every court—from the Pennsylvania Court of Common Pleas to the U.S. Supreme Court.

What has driven Jamal's supporters from the streets are illusions in the capitalist courts promoted by reformist protest organizers, like Workers World Party and Socialist Action. These illusions have been embodied in the subordination of the call to free Mumia to the demand for a "new trial," consciously geared to appeal to liberals like Lindorff and the NAACP, to whom the antics of Judge Sabo were an aberration rather than the regular workings of the capitalist courts. Why mobilize in the unions and streets if the courts can be relied on to ultimately do the right thing?

The courts, including the Supreme Court, together with the cops, military and prisons, are part of the capitalist state, an instrumentality for organized violence by one class, the capitalist rulers, against the working class and all those at the bottom of this society. From the time the Partisan Defense Committee took up Jamal's case in 1987, we have sought to ensure that every legal avenue was pursued to free him while fighting against illusions in the capitalist state. We have publicized Jamal's case, raised critically needed funds for his legal battles and fought particularly to mobilize the social power of the multiracial labor movement in his defense, including through labor-centered united-front protests demanding Mumia's freedom and the abolition of the racist death penalty. Through these and other means, we have brought his case to trade unions representing millions around the world.

Our fight to free Jamal and abolish the racist death penalty is part of our perspective of winning workers to the understanding that the bourgeois state is not some "neutral" agency that serves society, but exists to defend the class rule and profits of the capitalists against those they exploit. This fight is rooted in the struggle to make the multiracial proletariat conscious of its historic class interests in the fight against the entire capitalist system, particularly the understanding that in this country the struggle for black freedom is central to the struggle for the emancipation of labor itself. Mobilize labor/black power to fight for Mumia's freedom! Abolish the racist death penalty!

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Bush, Kerry...

(continued from page 1)

not developing nuclear arms, and there was *not* a link between Hussein and Osama bin Laden. As the *New York Times* (10 July) editorialized, “Put simply, the Bush administration’s intelligence analysts cooked the books.”

Why? The Senate committee politely evaded that question, postponing investigation of the uses the administration made of the CIA’s disinformation until after the election. Veteran CIA director George Tenet, who also served under Clinton, resigned to take the heat off, while “groupthink” mentality at the CIA, rather than pressure from the White House, was blamed for the rush to justify the impending war. The Butler report in Britain used the exact same “groupthink” phrase to cover up for British prime minister Tony Blair’s eager and slavish commitment of British troops to the U.S.’s Iraq war.

The war was launched to reassert U.S. imperialist domination over its rivals, and over the oil-rich Near East. Democrats overwhelmingly rallied to support the

Africa. We say: U.S. hands off Sudan!

Whatever their differences, at bottom all bourgeois factions will unite against their perceived foreign and domestic opponents, most fundamentally the American working class, in defense of *their* state and its prerogatives. How many lies have both Democratic and Republican administrations told in advancing their imperial ambitions? Ask yourself, how many wars have there been? “Remember the Maine!” was the lying slogan launching America’s first imperialist war against Spain in 1898, aimed at taking over Cuba and the Philippines. Democratic president Woodrow Wilson lied that World War I was to make the world “safe for democracy” when in fact it was a war to redive up the spoils of the world. The U.S. entry into World War II, supposedly a war against fascism, was intended to establish American domination in Europe and East Asia. The Democratic Roosevelt administration provoked the Japanese to attack to justify an American declaration of war. In 1964, the Democratic Johnson administration fabricated the Gulf of Tonkin incident as a pretext to massively escalate the

political activists or labor militants, and indiscriminately round up and detain non-citizens” (WV No. 767, 26 October 2001). At the same time, the U.S. invaded and occupied Afghanistan and, in 2003, Iraq. Thousands and thousands of victims of U.S. aggression are dead, dying, mutilated, tortured, imprisoned.

If the Bush administration had had its way, there would have been no 9/11 Commission, whose report was an overnight best seller. However, the families of those killed in the World Trade Center attack rightly wanted and demanded answers: Why had their loved ones perished? Could the government have prevented the terrorist attack? But in the 9/11 Commission Report they got a continued cover-up, because the bitter and horrible truth is that the fanatics whom the government charges with the attack, Osama bin Laden and his Al Qaeda network, were in fact *the creation of U.S. imperialism itself*. The report focuses on bin Laden’s career *after* he turned on the U.S., claiming that earlier in Afghanistan “Bin Ladin and his comrades had their own sources of support and training, and they received little or no assistance from the United States.”

ber Revolution to the Afghan peoples!

Besides covering up the CIA-bin Laden connection, the 9/11 Commission Report proposes a truly outrageous set of “security” measures. You know it’s bad when a right-wing columnist like former Nixon speechwriter William Safire (who is also something of a social libertarian) denounces “fear-driven new groupthink” and writes: “With great fanfare, the 9/11 commission amplified that call for a super-spy-master. This rush to ‘reform’ is stampeding otherwise sensible senators into writing a czarist bill to combine the spying techniques of secret surveillance with the law-enforcement power of the F.B.I., invading the unsuspected citizen’s privacy under the rubric of fighting terrorism” (*New York Times*, 26 July).

Among the Senate proposals are “biometric” identity cards not just for foreigners but for all Americans, abolishing restrictions against CIA and military spying and operations within the U.S., and establishing a single, unified intelligence/police/spying apparatus which can run unchecked at home and abroad. The report complains that airport security didn’t use a list (called TIPOFF), which the State Department already had before the September 11 attacks, of some “known and suspected terrorists” which comprises 60,000 names! In the name of “pre-emptive” strikes, what’s to stop the state from rounding up all those names, even if they haven’t actually done anything? Actually, to qualify for “pre-emptive” detention, by definition you’d *have* to be innocent to be grabbed *in advance* of doing anything. This is no paranoid sci-fi Philip K. Dick fantasy, but the mindset of the American imperial police today.

For Class Struggle at Home!

When Kerry says he’d be a better commander in chief of the U.S. armed forces than Bush, he means better for the men (and a few women) who run Wall Street and the Fortune 500. Historically, the Democrats have been the preferred war party of American imperialism because of their broader base of support among workers, black people and ethnic minorities. Precisely because the Democrats are seen as a “friend” of labor and blacks, they can be a more effective political instrument for carrying out the bloody-handed crimes of American imperialism. The key to defeating the U.S. occupation of Iraq is class struggle at home, but this is impeded by the Democratic Party-loyal labor leadership, who are opposed to militant struggle that could break the chains tying workers to their exploiters in the ruling class.

For all the bourgeoisie’s bombast about stopping terrorism, in fact the *only* people who actually stopped terrorists on September 11, 2001, were the heroic passengers and crew of United Airlines Flight 93. They voted to rush the cockpit, diverting the plane from its suicide bombing run and forcing it to crash into a field in Pennsylvania, killing all aboard. There were other heroes, overwhelmingly working men and women. The firefighters at the World Trade Center gave up hundreds of their own lives to save thousands. And the air traffic controllers across the country performed brilliantly on a nationwide coordinated scale, bringing 4,500 commercial and general aviation aircraft safely onto the ground without incident. Ronald Reagan and *his* class fired the whole PATCO air traffic controllers union in the 1980s, expressing their utter contempt for working people.

If there is to be an end to this system of imperialist war, racist oppression and all-sided grinding misery, the multiracial U.S. working class must be won, through Marxist education and its own experience in struggle, to the perspective of building a workers party that fights for a socialist revolution. The capitalist system must be overturned and replaced by the rule of the working class, a workers government that will seize the means of production and establish a planned, collectivized economy as part of an egalitarian, socialist society on an international scale. ■

WORKERS VANGUARD



UPI



Friends of Afghanistan Society

Ronald Reagan hosted reactionary Afghan *mujahedin* in 1983 at White House. During Soviet intervention in 1980s, Afghan militiawomen took up arms against CIA-backed Islamic cutthroats.

invasion at the time. From the get-go, and in fact, facts were irrelevant. One example: the bizarre tale of Iraq mobile biological weapons factories, from a source code-named “Curveball,” was used by Secretary of State Colin Powell—reputedly the leading “moderate” in the Bush administration—at the United Nations in 2003. Responding to an analyst who questioned this fairy tale before the speech, the deputy director of the CIA’s task force on “weapons of mass destruction” wrote: “Let’s keep in mind the fact that this war’s going to happen regardless of what Curveball said or didn’t say, and the powers that be probably aren’t terribly interested in whether Curveball knows what he’s talking about” (cited in *CounterPunch*, 13 July). In short, the U.S. went to war, sending mainly working-class, black and Latino soldiers to slaughter thousands of Iraqis for a complete pack of lies.

But when CIA spies and blue-blooded representatives of the ruling class like the vice chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, Democratic Senator John D. Rockefeller IV, question administration policy, you can be sure it’s not in the interests of the working class. There are factional differences in bourgeois circles, especially as the occupation of Iraq isn’t going well, as to how the U.S. can more *effectively* pursue American imperialism’s interests—i.e., how to fatten their profit margins by increasing the exploitation and oppression of the world’s peoples. Some bourgeois ideologues feel the Iraq adventure was a wasteful diversion from other U.S. strategic goals, like overturning the 1949 Chinese Revolution, or crushing North Korea. Then there are long-term interimperialist rivalries between the U.S. and its two strongest competitors, Japan and Germany. Now some liberals, including many black Democrats like Jesse Jackson Jr., call for a U.S. “intervention” into Sudan, using the horrible warfare in Darfur as an excuse to insert a heavy U.S. military presence in northern

U.S.’s dirty colonial war against Vietnam’s workers and peasants.

Covering Up the CIA-Bin Laden Connection

On the warm and clear morning of September 11, 2001, a massive terrorist attack was unleashed over the American northeast, as four commercial airliners were seized and turned into mammoth flying bombs by Islamic fundamentalists, killing some 3,000 people. Two crashed into the World Trade Center, and today, a huge and achingly empty concrete pit is all that remains where the twin towers once stood in lower Manhattan. One plane was forced down by the crew and passengers in Pennsylvania, and one hit the Pentagon. Unlike the World Trade Center, the Pentagon is the command and administrative center of the U.S. imperialist military, and being a military installation the possibility of getting hit comes with the territory. That recognition does not make the attack an “anti-imperialist” act, nor does it change the fact that terrorism almost always gets innocent people—in this case, the passengers on the plane as well as the maintenance workers, janitors and secretaries at the Pentagon.

The next day we of the Spartacist League issued a statement denouncing the attack on the World Trade Center as an indefensible act of criminal terror, writing: “Those who perpetrated this horrific attack (and there is no evidence at all as to who that was) *embrace the same mentality as the racist rulers of America—identifying the working masses with their capitalist exploiters and oppressors!*” We warned that the American ruling class would respond with repression at home and imperialist “retaliation” abroad.

The following month Congress passed the USA-Patriot Act with Kerry and most Democratic Senators and Congressmen voting for it. We wrote at the time: “These measures seek to eliminate many existing legal restraints on the government’s power to spy on the population, imprison

(continued from page 3)

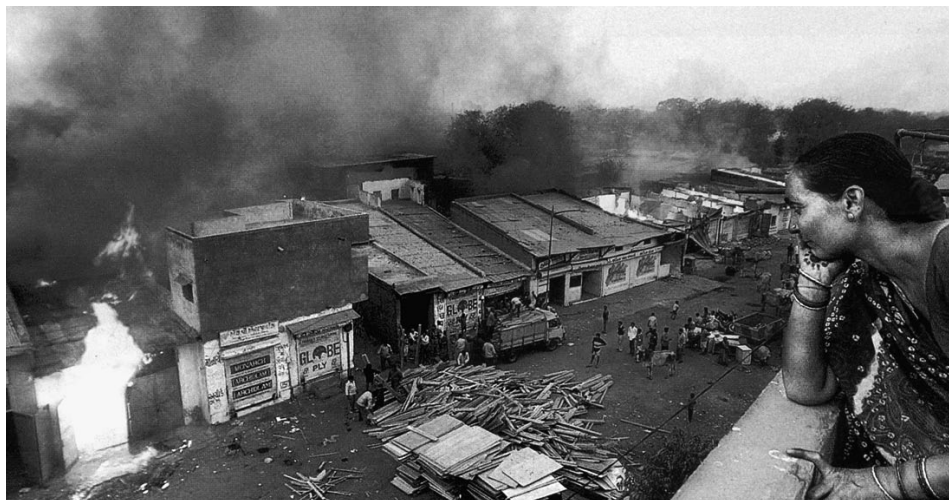
wooded the “three Bills” (Gates, Clinton, dollar). He prided himself as the “architect of the high-tech revolution” that has made Andhra a leading exporter of software. He renamed a portion of the capital city Hyderabad “Cyberabad” and gave a Rs. [rupees] 20,000 government subsidy to foreign investors for each job created there. He set up a 9000-acre, duty-free commercial enclave called Andhra Pradesh Special Economic Zone (APSEZ) modeled on Shenzhen City in China. When Clinton came to Hyderabad in March 2000, spending a total of five hours there, the jails brimmed with beggars and street vendors rounded up for the duration of his visit. Naidu cleared the streets of stalls, pushcarts, and rickshaws, and had thirty grand old trees from different parts of the city chopped down and propped up along the route to be taken by Clinton’s convoy from Air Force One.

The early news of Naidu's defeat in the recent elections was the first shock for the BJP, whose coalition government relied on the support of regional parties like Naidu's TDP (Telugu Desam Party) and Jayalalitha's AIADMK (All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam) in Tamilnadu. The extravagantly corrupt Jayalalitha was notorious for policies leading to the immiseration of small peasants, driving them to mass suicides. In addition, she was known for putting in place anti-conversion laws designed to prevent untouchables and tribals from leaving Hinduism. Jayalalitha topped her own notoriety with her use of the BJP's PoTO (Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance), India's equivalent of the Patriot Act, and her own TESMA (Tamilnadu Essential Services Maintenance Act). When 1.1 million government employees went on strike in June last year, her government, armed with PoTO and TESMA, did something unprecedented in the history of India. It summarily dismissed 200,000 strikers and arrested 2200. Midnight arrests and police raids on union offices and houses of striking workers continued for days. Now Jayalalitha is gone too.

Last week's elections results were a startling demonstration of the backlash among Indian workers and poor peasants to India's so-called economic reforms. Publicly owned industries, or PSUs (Public Sector Units), in steel, electricity, petrochemicals, communications, railways, and the like are in the process of being sold off. Government-run healthcare and education has been cut. There are no more subsidies for small farmers, seeds are more and more expensive, and electricity for irrigation is unavailable. Naidu admitted his agenda was to make it so impossible for small farmers that they would voluntarily leave their land and go away, paving the way for big agribusiness. Since the beginning of reforms 2 million peasants have been displaced and in recent years it's been common to hear of whole peasant families drinking poison or hanging themselves from trees after they lose their land—in part due to their own feudal, uppercaste pride of land ownership which prevents them from thinking of seeking any other means of living.

The victory of Congress has been wel-

comed with great enthusiasm and its leader Sonia Gandhi is seen as a savior of peasants, workers, and minorities. Congress says it wants to put a “human face” on the economic reforms and it immediately promised free electricity to peasants. Novelist and activist Arundhati Roy (currently a favorite among American left-liberals) spoke for many on the Indian left when, in an article titled “Let Us Hope the Darkness Has Passed,” she wrote, “For many of us who feel estranged from mainstream politics, there are rare, ephemeral moments of celebration. Today is one of them” (*Guardian*, May 14, 2004).



India, 2002: After train carrying Hindu fundamentalists was criminally torched by Muslim fanatics, Hindu mobs burned down homes in the state of Gujarat, killing hundreds in anti-Muslim pogroms.

But Congress, as its history shows, is no alternative. Though not as openly chauvinist as the BJP, Congress has always served the interests of the Hindu majority. Ever since Independence the party has been led by the despicable dynasty of the high Brahmin Nehru-Gandhi family. M. K. Gandhi (no relation to Indira and Rajiv, who descend from Nehru) was recorded by Mahadev Desai as saying that his opposition to separate electorates for the hideously oppressed untouchables was based on the fear that “[u]ntouchable’ hooligans will make common cause with Muslim hooligans and kill caste-Hindus” (cited in *From Untouchable to Dalit*, Eleanor Zelliot, page 167). In no small measure Gandhi and the Congress were responsible for the bloodbath following the India-Pakistan partition. Before the BJP, it was Congress who used communal tensions to divide and rule, leading to frequent pogroms against Muslims. During the Congress regime in Andhra, there was not a single year without communal riots in Hyderabad. Congress has been praised for putting forward a Sikh prime minister, but it was Indira’s Congress who ordered Operation Blue Star in which 600 Sikhs were killed inside the Golden Temple, and 3000 more were massacred after Indira was assassinated, in retaliation, by her own Sikh bodyguards. In Kashmir the BJP is only carrying on the policy established by Congress. In Sri Lanka Rajiv Gandhi’s IPKF (Indian Peace Keeping Force) was so notorious for its atrocities against ethnic Tamils that it led to his getting blown into very small pieces by a suicide bomber. When it comes to political repression, one has only to remember the dark days of the Emergency in the mid-1970s. In 1985 Congress introduced

the TADA (Terrorist and Disruptive Activities) Act, which allowed the police to arrest and detain a person without charge merely for suspicion of having knowledge of an alleged terrorist group. These suspects were usually killed in “encounters” with police, making the act essentially a license to kill. Sonia’s right-hand man and new PM Manmohan Singh is known as the architect of the economic reforms that Congress is now promising the national and international bourgeoisie to continue (but with a human face).

Congress now has to depend, as did the BJP, on other parties to form a coali-

In these three strongholds they introduced limited land reforms, suppressed communalism, and expanded free education—in Kerala, as a result, there is now almost 100 percent literacy. In other states and in the center, the Stalinists supported whichever bourgeois party appeared to be the lesser evil at the moment. In Andhra, for example, the same Stalinists now supporting Congress had previously supported Naidu's TDP—whose leadership has a social composition very similar to their own—against Congress. Their own leader Puchalapalli Sundarayya admitted at that time that he couldn't tell his own party's publication *Prajasakthi* (People's Power) from TDP propaganda. There is a widespread hatred among workers for the leaders of the CPI-M-affiliated CITU (Center for Indian Trade Unions), which not infrequently boils over into physical reprisals. In 2001, 200 Dunlop tire factory workers and their families, feeling betrayed when the factory closed and their long-due wages were withheld, attacked the president of the Dunlop unit of CITU and beat him up.

Although the Stalinists have made some noises that their support of Congress will be conditional on its stopping disinvestment in the public sector, their opposition to liberalization is fast dwindling in the heat. The CPI-M declared that they “welcome foreign investment and realize that no country could quarantine itself from globalization” (*Daily Times*, May 21, 2004). Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee, the CM [Chief Minister] of West Bengal’s CPI-M government, is openly promising foreign investors (with a portrait of Lenin hanging behind him) that he will cut regulations, rein in labor unions, rid Calcutta of the plague of constant strikes, and shut down “sick” state-run industries. Even before the drafting of the common minimum program for the new coalition, the CPI-M party spokesman announced that partial disinvestment “could be discussed” (*Outlook India*, May 15). The common minimum program itself calls for encouraging foreign investment, slowing down—not stopping—privatization, and deeper ties with the United States.

At most, these Stalinists want a return to pre-BJP times. But what India needs is a socialist revolution. To make one it will take a Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party that will organize workers across communal, national, and caste lines—rallying the poor peasants behind them—and link their struggle to those of workers in the imperialist countries.

Comradely greetings,
Sarah

1 July 2004

Dear editor,

I appreciated your article on Hong Kong published in *Workers Vanguard* No. 825 (30 April). You point out the fake Trotskyists' support to counterrevolutionary mobilizations in Hong Kong under the motto of "self-determination" and "democracy." You then proceed to say: "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."

What are you talking about here, 1981 or 1989? This is important because the pseudo Trotskyists sometimes pretend they were correct to support Solidarność in the beginning (1981), when according to them Solidarność was still a bonafide workers organization fighting against Stalinist “totalitarianism,” but which degenerated some time in the mid ’80s, after which the fake Trotskyists stopped supporting them (1989). They try thus to wash their hands of their responsibility in supporting this motor force for counter-revolution in Poland.

The United Secretariat (USec) cer-

CLASS-STRUGGLE DEFENSE NOTES

No. 31, Summer 2003

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CLASS-STRUGGLE DEFENSE NOTES

Number 31 50¢ Summer 2003

**BRIEF OF AMICI CURIAE SPARTACIST LEAGUE
AND PARTISAN DEFENSE COMMITTEE
ON BEHALF OF JOSE PADILLA
AND GRANTING HIS WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS**

In The
UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
For The Second Circuit
Docket No. 03-2235
03/24/08

JOSE PADILLA, Donna R. Newman,
as Next Friend of Jose Padilla,
Petitioner-Appellee-cross-Appellant,
v.
DONALD RUMSFELD,
Respondent-Appellant-cross-Appellee.

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

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"Anti-Terror" Dragnet Threatens 13,000 with Expulsions
Stop the Deportations! 22

Iraq and Left...

(continued from page 16)

U.S. imperialism. Every blow struck against the imperialist occupiers is a blow struck against the enemy of workers and the oppressed all over the world.

But we do not imbue the forces presently organizing guerrilla attacks on U.S. forces with “anti-imperialist” credentials and warn that in the absence of working-class struggle in Iraq and internationally against the occupation, the victory of one or another of the reactionary clerical forces is more likely to come about through an alliance with U.S. imperialism. We are intransigent opponents of the murderous communal violence against other ethnic, religious and national populations oftentimes carried out by the very same forces fighting the occupation armies. And we condemn the kidnappings and executions of foreign civilian workers in Iraq.

We are external to the situation inside

who smash their unions, drive down wages, destroy health care and education, massacre the workers of Iraq in the interest of capital. This requires a tenacious struggle to swim against the tide of reactionary “national unity” which has been cynically whipped up and manipulated by the Bush gang, the Democrats and the AFL-CIO labor tops since September 11, 2001.

This is the perspective that the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Clubs fought for in the Iraq antiwar movement against the reformist pressure politics of United for Peace and Justice, Workers World Party (WWP)—which recently underwent a split—and its ANSWER coalition, the Revolutionary Communist Party and its Not In Our Name coalition, and the International Socialist Organization (ISO) and its various campus coalitions.

While occasionally spouting home truths about the nature of the profit-driven capitalist system and its inherent drive to war in the pages of their newspapers,

World endorses the campaign of black Atlanta Democrat Cynthia McKinney, calling her “Unbossed & Unbought.” As for the ISO, they’re torn over whether to support capitalist politician Ralph Nader, as they did in 2000, despite the fact that he has made it clear that the purpose of his campaign is to push the Democratic Party in a more “progressive” direction.

You can’t raise political consciousness and struggle against war while subordinated to representatives of the capitalist class waging the war! Coalitions based on this kind of class collaboration are an obstacle because they shackle antiwar workers and youth to their class enemy and promote the illusion that the priorities of the American ruling class can be shifted in the interest of working people through peace crawls. The truth is that imperialist war is not merely a policy, but the inexorable product of the drive to conquer new markets for exploitation and export of capital. That’s why only a series of socialist revolutions to over-

fiefdoms of the mullahs. These *mujaheddin* cutthroats threw acid in the faces of unveiled women and skinned Communist schoolteachers alive for the “crime” of teaching women how to read. They were armed, financed and trained by U.S. imperialism. We Trotskyists hailed the Red Army intervention in Afghanistan and called to extend the gains of the Russian Revolution to the Afghan peoples. But the Kremlin criminally withdrew the Red Army from Afghanistan in an effort to appease U.S. imperialism. This marked the beginning of the end for the Soviet Union, as religious reaction and nationalism fueled anti-Communist rollback across East Europe and to the homeland of the October Revolution.

An informative article by Juan Cole, “The Iraqi Shiites—On the History of America’s Would-Be Allies” (*Boston Review*, October-November 2003), notes, “Once the Soviets had fallen the Sunni radicals abandoned their alliance of convenience with Washington and turned against the United States, which they now saw as a bulwark of the secular governments that they were trying to overthrow, in addition to resenting its role in supporting Israeli expansionism. The more radical of these groups coalesced into al Qaeda and decided to hit the ‘far’ enemy rather than only the ‘near’ one.”

This history is essential in evaluating the American left and the Iraq occupation today. Claiming a “third camp” of neither Washington nor Moscow, the ISO sided with their “own” bourgeoisie by serving as the left cover for “democratic” imperialism against the Soviet Union in every conflict of the Cold War. The ISO’s *Socialist Worker* (May 1988) cheered: “We welcome the defeat of the Russians in Afghanistan. It will give heart to all those inside the USSR and in East Europe who want to break the rule of Stalin’s heirs.” With galloping cynicism, groups like the ISO, which howled against “Soviet imperialism” in Afghanistan and supported the counterrevolutionary *jihad*, now oppose the Iraq war they helped bring about in their own small way through their craven anti-Communism.

The Myth of the “National Resistance”

Cheerleaders for Third World nationalism, Saddam Hussein and the Ba’athist Party, WWP peddles the myth of an “Iraqi revolution” which they cite as a continuous process since 1958! A 5 February article by Fred Goldstein states, “The invasion to recolonize Iraq is a new development in the history of imperialism. It is an attempt to destroy the independence of a people who have already carried out a great anti-imperialist revolution—the revolution of 1958.” Later in the article, Goldstein informs us, “In Iraq, because of the nature of the Iraqi Revolution and what it achieved for the masses, there was no such counter-revolutionary internal base for the CIA and Pentagon to work with.”

This is an outright lie. Saddam Hussein and the Ba’ath Party were the counterrevolutionary oppressors of Iraq’s workers, Kurds, Shi’ites and other peoples, and as such were close allies of U.S. imperialism until Hussein invaded Kuwait in 1990. In 1958, there was indeed a revolutionary upheaval that overthrew the pro-British monarchy. There was also a mass Iraqi Communist Party (ICP) that united Kurds and Arabs as well as Sunnis, Shi’ites, Jews and Christians. It was a party with good human material but a rotten Stalinist program of class collaboration. The events of 1958 did not end in victory, but a defeat from which the working class has yet to recover, because the opportunity for socialist revolution was sacrificed by the Kremlin Stalinists and the ICP on the altar of “peaceful coexistence” with imperialism and alliance with a mythical “progressive” bourgeoisie in Iraq. When the Ba’athists took power in the 1960s, they, in cahoots with the CIA, outlawed and shattered the ICP, killing and imprisoning thousands of Communists and trade unionists.

To understand what is happening in Iraq today, including the communalist



Left: Workers World Party’s ANSWER coalition at 30 March 2003 protest in L.A. promotes pro-imperialist lie that American occupation forces are “our troops.” Right: Al Sharpton speaking at 26 October 2002 antiwar rally. ANSWER built platforms for capitalist politicians during antiwar movement, serving to bolster illusions in Democratic Party.

Iraq and our task at this point in time is therefore necessarily largely propagandistic, but no less crucial. While making clear that the main enemy is U.S. imperialism, a revolutionary party with roots and influence in Iraq today would mobilize against the reimposition of *sharia*, against communalist sectarian attacks, for organizing the vestiges of the workers movement and the legions of the unemployed on a class basis through strikes and workplace occupations against the thieving imperialist occupiers and parasitic clerics.

Equitable resolution of the democratic rights of all the peoples of Iraq, and the Near East more broadly, cannot be achieved under capitalism but only with the overthrow of bourgeois rule in the region and the establishment of a socialist federation of the Near East. This is the Trotskyist program of permanent revolution. This means combining the struggle against the occupation with a struggle against all manner of bourgeois nationalism and religious fundamentalism, and poses the urgent need to forge Marxist parties to lead the struggles for the working people to come to power throughout the region. International extension of the revolution to the rich centers of imperialism—the United States, Germany, Japan—is vital, or, as Marx noted, “all the old crap” will return.

Revolutionaries vs. Reformists in the Antiwar Movement

We oppose calls to cloak an American imperialist occupation in “humanitarian” United Nations garb. We oppose the liberals and ostensible leftists who argue that the way out of the Iraq occupation is “regime change” in Washington in November. The rape of Iraq was prepared by 14 years of crippling United Nations sanctions and thousands of murderous bombing sorties ordered by Democratic president Clinton. John Kerry aims to reclaim the White House for the Democrats this fall by outflanking Bush as a war candidate. A solution to the suffering of the peoples in Iraq depends heavily on *class struggle at home against U.S. imperialism*. We fight to instill in the American proletariat the consciousness that the same profit-lusting rulers

these groups actively limited antiwar protests to the confines of the Democratic Party and built the rallies as platforms for the Democrats. Sure, they featured more left-talking Democrats like Jesse Jackson Sr., Al Sharpton and Barbara Lee rather than John Kerry or Edwards. But these politicians merely cover the left flank of the same party of capitalist class rule. Thus, while we forthrightly raised the call to defend Iraq—i.e., that workers and antiwar activists had to take a side against the U.S.—the antiwar coalitions refused to raise such calls, limiting their slogans to pacifist demands like “No to War” or “Stop the War,” pandering to the “peace is patriotic” Democratic Party politicians.

Today, these same reformist groups espouse a seemingly more left-wing posture of cheering resistance to the occupation. A 5 February *Workers World* article headlines, “Mass Resistance Hinders Neocolonial Plans,” while a 22 July article enthuses, “The Iraqi resistance is so large and has so much popular support among nationalist Iraqis angered by the presence of U.S. troops that it cannot be defeated militarily.” Under the headline, “The Right to Resist—Why You Should Support the Opposition to the U.S. Occupation of Iraq” (*Socialist Worker*, 2 July), the ISO writes, “If the Iraqi resistance drives the U.S. out of Iraq, it would be a major setback for Bush’s agenda and the agenda of U.S. imperialism. This would be a tremendous victory for our side—making it much more difficult for the U.S. to choose a new target in the Middle East or elsewhere in trying to impose its will.” If the U.S. were driven out of Iraq, this would certainly be a victory.

But why is it that groups that refused to side with Iraq in the lead-up to and during the war now cheer on acts of resistance against the occupation? Because every blow against the U.S. in Iraq rebounds against Bush in the run-up to the November election and plays to the Democrats’ advantage. While the ISO and WWP write articles denouncing the Democrats, and in the case of WWP are running their own candidates for the presidential election, in practice they work for candidates whose purpose is to refurbish the tarnished image of the Democratic Party. Thus a 22 July editorial in *Workers*

throw capitalist rule can create a world planned economy that will put a stop to imperialist war. This is the only solution, and to achieve it requires a fight for the political independence of the workers movement and the forging of a workers party. Break with the Democrats!

Frankenstein’s Monster, the Antiwar Movement and the “Resistance”

The imperialist war against and occupation of Iraq are a direct consequence of the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92. Although bureaucratically deformed and degenerated by Stalinist misrule, the Soviet Union was still a workers state with a planned economy and collectivized property, if not the beacon of liberation created by the October 1917 socialist revolution. We fought to defend the Soviet Union—just as we do China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba today—against any external attack by imperialism, without any a priori conditions, and against internal attempts at capitalist restoration. At the same time, we fight to oust the parasitic Stalinist bureaucracies and to implant the revolutionary internationalist and socialist program of Lenin and Trotsky’s Bolsheviks, as we did in the former USSR, East Germany and elsewhere. Without the Soviet Union to stay the hand of U.S. imperialism, the world has become a more dangerous place of unbridled American military intervention and increased rivalries among capitalist powers, which threaten wider conflicts, perhaps, and surely, ultimately including with nuclear weapons.

From the beginning of the Cold War, U.S. policy under Democrats and Republicans was to bolster Islamic fundamentalism and murderous, authoritarian regimes (like Hussein in Iraq and the Shah in Iran) as bulwarks against “godless communism” in the region and to ensure access to petroleum reserves. In 1979, the Soviet Red Army intervened in Afghanistan at the request of the modernizing bourgeois-nationalist government which was besieged by Islamic fundamentalists opposed to elementary democratic rights for women and reforms that infringed on the economic and political

Oakland: Black Union Militant Fired

27 July 2004

To the Editor:

I and other members of AFSCME Locals 444 and 2019 in Oakland, California greatly appreciated your coverage of our joint rally last September 17 to defend Charles DuBois, a black Local 444 member fired using the pretext of bogus “workplace violence” policies last year by the East Bay Municipal Utility District (or EBMUD) after 18 years as a union activist. The company moved to fire him after it succeeded in splitting the unions during contract negotiations, enabling the company to get increased worker contributions for pensions and health care and increased speedup. His firing was an attempt to intimidate all union members. The recent article I read in *Workers Vanguard* on the “workplace violence” witchhunting of Carlos Blackman, a black union shop chairman in New York City Transit, makes clear how these union-busting policies are being used nationally.

Many members of both our locals—the two main unions at EBMUD—took up brother DuBois’ defense because we understood that by defending brother DuBois we were at the same time defending the rights of our unions as a whole. The two unions jointly organized the rally of over 100 union members and supporters outside company headquarters in downtown Oakland demanding: “Defend Union Rights! Defend Charles DuBois! An Injury to One Is an Injury to All!” This was the first time the two locals had joined in such an independent action, for

once not aimed at pressuring the politicians on EBMUD’s Board of Directors. I thought your readers would be interested in what has happened with this case. I am attaching an article I wrote which was published in the June 22 issue of Local 444’s newsletter, *Mainline*.

Gregg Best

* * *

Arbitrator Rules Against DuBois

On Thursday May 20, the so-called neutral arbitrator handed down a “binding” ruling against Charles DuBois, upholding every one of EBMUD’s frame-up allegations and actions taken against him (except one minor issue). Arbitrators overwhelmingly rule in favor of management. This ruling against Charles is an attack on our ability to defend our union and ourselves.

This is a bitter and infuriating outcome of the long struggle by members of both Local 444 and our sister Local 2019 to defend Charles DuBois and defend our unions. His case and the issues it raised resonated broadly with the members of both locals, fed up with management’s unchecked abuse and speedup. As most members probably know, I was one of the members of the joint union committee to defend brother DuBois along with the president of 2019, three 444 Executive Board members and about a half dozen members from both locals who were the hard core that began the fight to defend

Charles last summer. This committee was crucial in organizing the joint union rally last September 17th in his defense, as well as organizing members to come to Charles’ Board of Adjustment and arbitration hearings. So I want to take up what I believe are the two main reasons that enabled management to fire Charles, namely, the “Workplace Violence” policy and the question of binding arbitration.

To my knowledge, Charles is the second member of Local 444 to be framed up and fired by EBMUD using the anti-union “Workplace Violence” rules. The first was Randy Kim, a well-liked, high seniority, Asian American member and ex-officer of Local 444 who was fired in 1998. Randy was subject to outrageous charges, a police invasion of his home, and branded as “violent.” The defense of Randy was undermined by the leadership’s support for the “Workplace Violence” clause, allowing management to target other members.

For union-hating management, Charles had three strikes against him. First of all he is black. He is also an outspoken union militant, former steward and union officer. And he has always been an opponent of all instances of injustice against working people—like the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal—that he thought the membership needed to know about. Black and other minority workers in particular aren’t supposed to be outspoken. We have to get rid of this “Workplace Violence” policy, which is an all-purpose weapon used by EBMUD management and across the country to target any union member

management doesn’t like, especially union militants and minority workers.

The second reason Charles (and Randy Kim) were fired is because the labor leadership, from the AFL-CIO bureaucrats on down, have voluntarily *given away* the contractual right to strike over grievances! Instead every union contract that I know of now has a truncated grievance procedure topped off with binding arbitration. The union leaderships think this is the only way to “bind” management. In reality it is the unions that have been bound. Binding arbitration deliberately takes a grievance out of the hands of the union membership. It demobilizes the union.

The strike is the main weapon that a union has to defend itself and fight for what it wants against management, here or anywhere. There is no law that guarantees workers the right to strike. It has to be constantly fought for. If it weren’t for the determination of so many union members, *none* of the actions we engaged in to defend Charles would have happened. We cannot rely on binding arbitration. It gives up the independence of the union. Neither arbitrators nor the government are neutral. We must have the ability to mobilize the memberships of both locals in joint action to defend the union and its members. The September 17th joint rally was a step in that direction and cut across EBMUD’s divide and rule strategy that resulted in last year’s contract debacle. Despite this setback of Charles’s firing, joint union action must become the rule until we have one local.

Oakland, California

violence, you have to understand what Iraq is. Iraq is not a nation, but a patchwork of different peoples and ethnicities carved up by the British imperialists out of the old Turkish Ottoman Empire at the end of the First World War. There are three main populations within Iraq’s borders: a portion of the Kurdish nation (a nation that also spans parts of Iran, Turkey and Syria); an Arab Shi’ite majority; and the historically dominant Arab Sunni minority. Absent the working class emerging as an independent political force in a struggle against neocolonial rule, each of these populations can only come to power by oppressing the others and in alliance with U.S. imperialism. What “resistance forces” like Moktada al-Sadr’s Shi’ite Mahdi Army are after is to rule Iraq as the local satraps for imperialism if the U.S. forces would just get out.

The struggle of the Kurdish people explodes the myth of a unitary Iraqi nation. Their fight for self-determination is a just struggle, requiring the overthrow of four capitalist states. We call for a Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan! But in Iraq today—and only in Iraq—the Kurdish question has become decisively subordinated to the occupation, in the sense that the Kurdish political parties and their military forces are an integral part of the occupation forces. In fact, many Iraqi Kurds mistakenly look with favor on the American occupation as a guarantor against Arab reconquest. The struggle for Kurdish independence can only go forward through intransigent opposition to the occupation and the Kurdish nationalists who collaborate with U.S. imperialism.

The so-called “national resistance” in Iraq is a myth promoted by U.S. and Western imperialism and cynical leftists. When the American military bombed the Sunni town of Falluja and simultaneously went after Shi’ite cleric Moktada al-Sadr, there were temporary instances of unity against the foreign occupier. But resistance forces led by religious clerics are by definition sectarian. There isn’t a unitary “resistance” force in Iraq but rather disparate groupings organizing guerrilla attacks on U.S. forces—and often against



Iraqi women protest last January against decision by Washington’s hand-picked Governing Council to replace Hussein-era civil codes protecting women with Islamic *sharia* law.

rival groupings and random civilians. In the present context, an award for the most asinine analysis should go to Nat Weinstein’s *Socialist Viewpoint* (a split from Socialist Action) whose front page in April cheered, “Iraq: The People United Can Never Be Defeated.”

Defeat U.S. Imperialism Through Workers Revolution!

The flip side of the reformist left’s pandering to liberal Democrats is the dim and pseudo-revolutionary rhetoric of Jan Norden’s tiny “Internationalist Group.” (For an exposé of their three-card-monte organization, see “IG’s Potemkin Village Idiocy *Ad Absurdum*,” WV No. 828, 11 June.) The IG ludicrously denounces *Workers Vanguard* for demanding “U.S. Troops Out of Iraq, Now!” (see the IG’s “Sink U.S. Imperialism in the Quicksands of the Near East!”, *Internationalist*, November 2003). Falsely claiming that our demand for the withdrawal of U.S. troops is addressed to the American rulers and not the workers movement, the IG thunders, “*The imperialists must be driven out of Afghanistan and Iraq. The Zionists must be driven out of the West Bank and Gaza*” (emphasis in original). What kind of idiots *oppose* the demand for the immediate withdrawal of imperialist troops? Answer: fraudulent “Marxists” who despair of mobilizing the American proletariat against the capitalist ruling class.

Norden’s group equates our slogans—

“Down with the colonial occupation of Iraq! All U.S. troops out now!”—with the reformist American Socialist Workers Party’s “Out Now” slogan during the Vietnam War, which was designed to appeal to bourgeois politicians who wanted to cut U.S. imperialism’s losses and get out of Vietnam. Actually, our position is consistent with the Spartacist revolutionary history on which Norden falsely claims to stand. We refer readers to *Spartacist* No. 5 (November-December 1965), which reprints the press release “Spartacist Breaks with New York Parade Committee” wherein we state:

“The slogan ‘Stop the War in Vietnam Now’ can mean many things to many people. But given the composition of this Committee, the fact that it is dominated by right-wing pacifists and ‘liberals,’ i.e. pro-capitalist and pro-LBJ, it is clear that the slogan is deliberately ambiguous in order to avoid facing the duty to advance the only demand that has any meaning: ‘*For the Immediate, Unconditional Withdrawal of All U.S. Troops from Vietnam!*’” (emphasis added)

The IG’s polemics against us boil down to this: they say they’re for the military defeat of the imperialists and lie that we are not. Always prone to impressionism and adventurism, and willing to fight to the last drop of someone else’s blood, Norden & Co. substitute fantasies of revolutionary conflagrations sweeping aside imperialism in the Near East today in the absence of the struggle to build a Leninist-Trotskyist party to bring revolutionary consciousness to the working

class, glorifying social forces hostile to the proletariat. During the first Gulf War in 1991, as editor of *Workers Vanguard*, Norden made crazed projections of Hussein’s army inflicting serious damage to the U.S. military. When Norden broke from Trotskyism, one British comrade aptly asked, “Would it have been a capitulation to ‘smoke and mirrors’ imperialist propaganda to wake the workers of the world to the revolutionary defence of Iraq, to halt, derail, smash by class-struggle means the crushing one-sided slaughter being *prepared* before our disbelieving eyes?”

In short, occasional phrases to the contrary notwithstanding, the IG has no perspective of fighting to mobilize the proletariat in the U.S. and other imperialist centers to wage class struggle against imperialist war. Indeed, during the Afghanistan war in 2001, the IG explicitly denounced our slogan “For Class Struggle Against Capitalist Rulers at Home!”—a slogan raised in the immediate aftermath of the September 11 attacks and the government’s reactionary “national unity” drive—writing, “The emphasis on ‘at home’ is counterposed to the call to defeat the imperialists *abroad*” (*Internationalist*, Fall 2001).

Military defeats abroad help sharpen the class contradictions of a particular country. That’s the meaning of the Marxist axiom that “war is the mother of revolution.” But it is fundamentally the working class that has the social power to accomplish this historic task. We do not raise the call for class struggle at home with the pollyannish belief that the Iraq occupation is going to end with the immediate unfolding of socialist revolution in the U.S. We raise it in order to cut through the reactionary “national unity” mongering and “anti-terror” scare of the ruling class and to bring the working class to the understanding that it alone has the power to defeat the American imperialist system through proletarian socialist revolution. Out of working-class and social struggle and through the intervention of revolutionary Marxists, the workers party essential for this successful outcome will be forged. This is the purpose to which the Spartacist League is dedicated. ■

The Left and the “Iraqi Resistance”

U.S. Out of Iraq Now!

What does Iraq look like since the bally-hooed handover of sovereignty? Exactly like a country under merciless U.S. imperialist military occupation with hand-picked satraps returned from exile and crowned by Washington as local “democratic” leaders. The new prime minister, Iyad Allawi, is a thug who did wet work for the American CIA, British MI6 and the Ba’ath Party’s intelligence agency. Just days before becoming prime minister, Allawi personally shot dead six handcuffed and blindfolded prisoners in the courtyard of a Baghdad police station (reported by Paul McGeough, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 July). The morgue overflows with rotting corpses and as the mercury hits 114 degrees Fahrenheit, “Baghdad is a city that reeks with the stench of the dead” (Robert Fisk, *London Independent*, 28 July).

Ordinary citizens are blown to bits by the American military at checkpoints all over Baghdad festooned with signs reading, “Do not enter or you will be shot.” Scores more are killed by suicide bombers who make no distinction between Iraqis lining up for jobs or waiting as their documents are checked and the foreign invaders or their police lackeys. The official unemployment figure in Iraq is now 70 percent. Latest estimates of the number of civilians killed (the American occupiers don’t bother to count how many civilians they kill) range from over 11,000 to over 13,000.

Patrick Cockburn’s Baghdad “Diary” (*London Review of Books*, 22 July) reports:

“After the disasters of the past year the Americans know they cannot occupy Iraq, even in the short term, without the support of local allies. The problem is

For Class Struggle Against Capitalist Rulers at Home!



Spartacist contingent at March 20 protest in Los Angeles against U.S. occupation of Iraq.

that most Iraqis would like Allawi and the interim government to get rid of the suicide bombers and kidnappers—and of the US occupation as well. But the US shows no sign of abandoning its plans to keep Iraq as a client state. It would have a weak army, devoted entirely to counter-insurgency. It would have no tanks, aircraft, missiles or artillery and would resemble a Latin American state of the 1960s with an army and security forces controlled largely by Washington.

This was the message brought by Paul Wolfowitz when he turned up in Baghdad in June—accompanied by Kevin Tebbit, the permanent undersecretary at the [British] Ministry of Defence—just before the supposed handover of power. The US will allow Iraq to rearm, but only against its own people.”

What about areas of Iraq where the U.S. military has retreated and turned over control to former Ba’athist officers,

Sunni Muslim clerics or their Shi’ite counterparts? In Falluja, women have been forced back into veils, prohibited from wearing make-up or participating in public life under the recently imposed Islamic *sharia* law. A street poster “decree of Allah” threatens, “We will have no pity for those who oppose Allah by their beauty or mode of dress” (*Le Monde*, 30 June). Houses are raided where “sinners” are believed to be drinking alcohol or listening to music other than Koranic chants. School kids with “indecent” haircuts are surrounded by *mujahedin* trucks, hauled off, beaten and shaved bald, dangerously branded as infidels. Ghaith Abdul-Ahad (*London Guardian*, 25 June) writes that it’s now “Falluja versus Falluja.” The mayor handed him two letters. One warns, “Be careful, oh brothers, because the Americans and their traitor allies, the Kurds and the Shias, are planning to come after your leaders.” The other is addressed to the UN, demanding that Iraq be run by Sunni army officers. Meanwhile, the U.S. continues to bomb the city with impunity.

As revolutionary Marxists, we have a side in the current situation, against the U.S., its allies and Iraqi lackeys. Our starting point is to demand the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. troops, and their allies. We defend the peoples of Iraq against any U.S.-led attack and repression. Insofar as the forces on the ground in Iraq aim their blows against the imperialist occupiers (including the over 20,000 private mercenaries operating in the country), we call for their military defense against

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Supreme Court Ruling Threatens Mumia Abu-Jamal

Free Mumia Now! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!

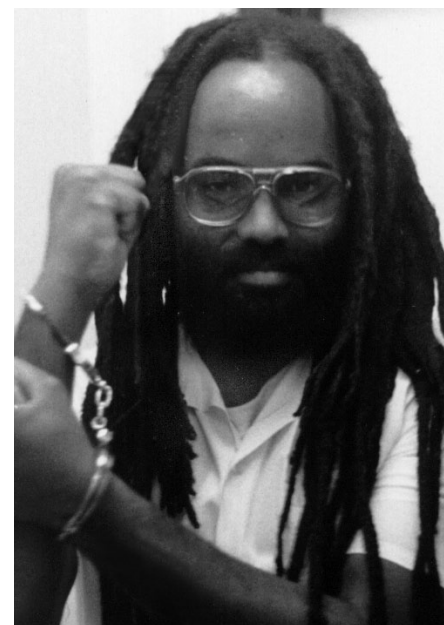
A June 24 Supreme Court ruling in the case of *Beard v. Banks* puts the death sentence back in court in the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal. Jamal was convicted in 1982 on frame-up charges of killing Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner on 9 December 1981 and sentenced to death. Ruling on Jamal’s federal *habeas corpus* challenge to his conviction and death sentence, in December 2001 federal district court judge William Yohn overturned Jamal’s sentence. Yohn overturned the death sentence on the grounds that the jury failed to consider mitigating circumstances (reasons prescribed by law why Jamal should not be executed) and that only a unanimous vote on such mitigating circumstances could spare him the death sentence. This

procedure was explicitly found unconstitutional by the 1988 Supreme Court ruling in *Mills v. Maryland*. At the same time Yohn affirmed the conviction, refusing to even hear the confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Jamal, shot and killed Faulkner. The prosecution appealed, seeking restoration of Jamal’s death sentence. Mumia appealed, seeking to overturn the conviction.

In the *Beard v. Banks* decision in June, written by Clarence Thomas, the Supreme Court grotesquely ruled that the *Mills* holding could not be used to challenge cases decided before 1988—i.e., it could not be applied retroactively. Although the jury procedure that sent George Banks to death row was identical to that found unlawful in the

Mills case, *Mills* would live while Banks (and dozens of others) is to die on the technicality that his case became “final” *eight months before* the *Mills* decision. This is just the latest in a labyrinth of court rules, legal machinations and sleight-of-hand used to secure the executions of hundreds of death row inmates after evidence of innocence and exposure of gross constitutional violations that put them in the shadow of death in the first place.

In the 1992 *Herrera* case, the Supreme Court announced that the execution of an innocent person is not unconstitutional. Democratic president Clinton’s 1996 Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, and a 1995 Pennsylvania law adopting draconian



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time limitations for “discovering” new evidence to challenge a death sentence, have both been used by federal and state courts to bar Beverly’s confession and other evidence of Mumia’s innocence.

For over two years, Jamal’s *habeas corpus* appeal has been on hold as his state appeal wended its way through the

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