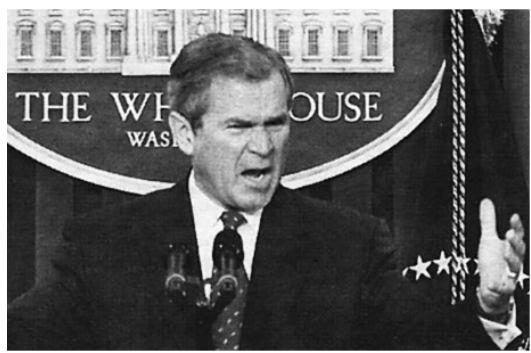


**For Class Struggle Against U.S. Imperialist Rulers!
Down With Both Capitalist Parties—For a Workers Party!**

Racist Fundamentalists Take White House, Again



"I earned capital in the campaign—political capital—and now I intend to spend it" was the chilling message from George W. Bush following his election victory on November 2. The relatively high turnout for the elections was supposed to be good for the Democrats, but the "family values," "born-again" religious types also mobilized heavily for the oddly demented Bush administration, helped along by the continued attempts to disenfranchise black voters and no-paper-trail computers. Whipping up "war on terror" fear and religious and sexual hysteria was key, as referendums to ban gay marriage in eleven states, which all passed, helped to bring out the forces of deep reaction. The Republican consolidation of the White House and both houses of Congress is bad news for working people, blacks, women, gays and immigrants—all in the gun sights of the social reactionaries in power. One of the propositions that passed in Arizona denies government benefits to non-citizens. The Bush cabal now feels it has a mandate to intensify its war on working people at home and abroad.

And the first targets are the peoples of Iraq. As we go to press, over 10,000 U.S. troops, backed by Iraqi soldiers, are invading Falluja to crush any vestige of resistance in the Sunni city. Press reports indicate that most of the city's 250,000 residents have fled in fear of their lives. One of the first targets taken by the American occupiers was Falluja's main hospital, a calculated move to mute any news about civilian casualties in anticipation of the bloody massacres U.S. imperialism is about to carry out. The *New York Times* (8 November) noted: "The hospital was selected as an early target because the American military believed that it was the source of rumors about heavy casualties." A recent report from Johns Hopkins University's Bloom-



AP photos

U.S. troops brutalize hospital workers and patients in onslaught against Falluja.

U.S. Hands Off Falluja! U.S. Out of Iraq Now!

berg School of Public Health in Baltimore concluded that between March 2003 and September 2004, some 100,000 civilians had died in Iraq.

The very same ruling class that is raping the peoples of Iraq is also looting, fleecing and attacking the rights of workers and the oppressed at home. Working people in the U.S. must take a side against U.S. imperialism's occupation of Iraq and demand the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. forces from the country. Every blow inflicted upon the occupation forces is in the interest of working people and the oppressed throughout the world, not least in the U.S. ***Defend the peoples of Iraq against U.S. attack! Hands off Falluja! U.S. out of Iraq now!***

While Bush's victory is bad news, a Kerry victory would not have been good news. Kerry promised to continue the Iraq occupation, to increase the American military by 40,000 new recruits, and to get "tougher" with North Korea. The Democrats, no less than the Republicans, are a ruling-class party dedicated to upholding the interests of the American capitalists, interests directly counterposed to those of the working class.

U.S. elections, a limited form of bourgeois democracy in any case, serve as a deception whereby the bourgeoisie cloaks its class dictatorship with a veneer of popular approval. As Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin put it in *The State and Revolution*: "To decide once every few years which member of the ruling class is to repress and crush the people through parliament—this is the real essence of bourgeois parliamentarism." Working people need a workers party to fight for the overturning of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie altogether and its replacement with a proletarian dictatorship, which would mean the disenfranchisement of a tiny band of vicious exploiters and the genuine empowerment of the working people of America.

Labor Bureaucracy Demobilizes Working Class

There is a lot of hand-wringing over the election results, particularly in the urban areas of the so-called "blue states" where people watched in horror as one state after another went "red" for Bush. Liberal ideologues, European pundits and pro-Democrat leftist types now blame the supposed ignorance and back-

wardness of the American populace for Bush's victory. But responsibility for the lack of militant class struggle and, therefore, the backward consciousness of many workers in the U.S., rests with the very apostles of "reform." The current generation of the labor lieutenants of capital, that is, the top bureaucrats of the trade-union movement, and the reformist left that tails them, are responsible for the demoralization and demobilization of the American working class through the agency of the Democratic Party.

The trade-union tops have by and large abandoned effective methods of class struggle. When pressed by the workers to strike, they have enforced the restraints of bourgeois legislation, like the Taft-Hartley Act, designed to vitiate the workers' ability to shut down production and beat back the scabs. If forced to strike, these types have either quickly thrown in the towel or signed such egregious giveback contracts as to call into question the value of ever walking a picket line.

Had the unions devoted one-tenth of the resources and manpower that their pro-capitalist misleaders mobilized for Democrat Kerry to the strike by the United Food and Commercial Workers last spring, or to fight to organize Wal-Mart, or in support of the locked-out hotel workers in San Francisco, things could be very different. Instead of sending workers across the country to Washington, D.C. for the Million Worker March, which was a thinly veiled rally against Bush (i.e., for the Democrats), what if the left-talking bureaucrats in the ILWU longshore union had mobilized their members to walk a few miles from their union hall to help locked-out hotel workers in San Francisco shut down the hotels and actually win their strike?

The current trade-union bureaucracy, however, is an obstacle to militant class struggle because it is tied to the capitalist system and subservient to its state apparatus. Its support for the Democratic Party is in direct counterposition to independent class struggle. It is necessary to fight for a class-struggle leadership in the union, a leadership which can fight not only for immediate, economic demands, but on broader social issues. Defense of immigrant rights against the government's "war on terror," defense of abortion rights, freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal and abolishing the racist death penalty—these are some of the causes that a class-struggle union leadership would take up, putting the massive power of the working class on the side of all the oppressed.

Although the bankruptcy of the Democratic Party as a force for progress has seldom been clearer, do not expect the

continued on page 12



Slogans and the Iraq War

13 July 2004

Dear Comrades,

I thoroughly enjoyed your review of Michael Moore's movie, *Fahrenheit 9/11* in WV of 09 July 2004, and found myself in agreement with it, but felt it lacked one thing it should have contained.

You write the following:

"*Fahrenheit 9/11* features a number of scenes focusing on the impact of war on black people in America: Lila Lipscomb's story, the Marine recruiters prowling a mall parking lot looking for young black recruits, and the group of young black men who all raise hands when asked who has a friend or relative fighting in Iraq. These sequences powerfully evoke the economic draft, where it is those who are most ground down by the structural poverty and racial oppression of this profit-driven society who end up on the front lines of their oppressor's wars. Moore evokes sympathy for the plight of these working and oppressed youth sent off to do imperialism's dirty work. Many, including Moore, take this to argue that those who oppose the war should 'support the troops.' But Iraq is a clear case where it is necessary to take a side, and

not the side of the U.S. or those doing its fighting—every blow struck against the American occupation forces is a blow struck against the enemy of workers and the oppressed all over the world, including in the U.S."

I agree with your political statement here, but, living as I do in the deep South, with its many American imperialist military bases, and encountering every time I participate in anti-war protests people with relatives serving in the American imperialist armed forces, I find myself compelled to address this issue in more than general terms of simply saying, defend Iraq—which I do say, but not limiting myself to that.

It is not enough simply to say, Defend Iraq. One has got to, like Lenin in *Socialism and War*, say to those either in the imperialist armed forces, or those with relatives in the imperialist armed forces, that the exploiting filth put their kids and loved ones and themselves into harm's way, and it is necessary, exactly as Lenin said in *Socialism and War*, to propagate the need to turn the imperialist war



Maurice Becker/The Masses

"Ammunition" by Maurice Becker appeared in the American left-wing paper, *The Masses*, during World War I.

against smaller dependent countries like Iraq on the part of big imperialist countries like the U.S. into a class war, a revolutionary proletarian class war, against the capitalist imperialist ruling class of the big imperialist country. If you don't do that, you run the risk of sounding like the somewhat gory-minded "Bolshevik" [sic] tendency, or others of that ilk against whom you have eloquently propagandized for their seeming grooving on the bloodshed of American working class kids. If one's in a situation in which one requires an answer to a question posed by some working class kid who's in the imperialist armed forces, or an answer to some relative of some such working class kid, one ought to have a political response, and one cannot exactly tell such a kid, "commit suicide." That's not a Marxist, Leninist, or Trotskyist "solution" at all.

I wish you would address this. I have had a number of discussions, from time to time, with anti-war activists who do have relatives in the U.S. imperialist armed forces. I have made the point that Iraq belongs to the Iraqis, and they are going to defend their country, and have the right to, and, by rights, American imperialism should be driven out. But there must be a strategic and tactical proposal accompanying that, and it is necessary to constantly stress the class enmity between the imperialist militarist brass of U.S. imperialism, and the kids they put into harm's way. Not constantly stressing that, in my view, weakens one's call to "defend Iraq," and makes it somewhat angularly abstract.

In paraphrasing Lenin's slogan, "Turn the imperialist war into a civil war," I say to either imperialist armed forces military recruits or to their relatives and loved ones, "Turn the guns the other way." Last year, in fact, during the lead-up to the imperialist invasion of Iraq, I had my own class struggle anti-war sign in one hand and a red flag with a hammer and sickle crossed with the number 4 and underneath the words, Long Live the International Communist League! Return to the Road of Lenin and Trotsky! on it, and I initiated my own improvised chant (among several improvised chants), which went: Soldiers, sailors, marines, airmen, turn your guns the other way! I was the only one in several anti-war demonstrations to chant this, and I did so deliberately to drive a hard class line between the imperialist militarist brass, and the working class kids in the armed forces. By the way, I did not limit myself to this. In one leaflet I put out and passed out myself to several anti-war protests, I also drew a sharp line between most soldiers on the one hand and, on the other hand, the torturers at the Abu Ghraib prison. I think it's necessary to point out there is a difference. Obviously, in saying, "Turn your guns the other way," we are saying that to the rank and file of the U.S. imperialist

armed forces seeking to suppress the Iraqi people, not to the Iraqi people fighting in self-defense.

I think saying, defend Iraq, is fine, but I think in situations in which one's surrounded by U.S. imperialist militarist bases, and in which anti-war activists have relatives serving in the imperialist militarist armed forces, taking the trouble strategically and tactically to drive home the class line between the imperialist and militarist brass on the one hand, and the rank and file kids in the armed services on the other hand, is very important.

Comradely,
Allan G.

WV replies:

As Allan G., a longtime sympathizer, points out, we do not "groove" on the deaths of American soldiers in Iraq. In "U.S. Bloodbath in Baghdad" (WV No. 801, 11 April 2003) we wrote: "It is America's rulers who bear all the responsibility for sending young working-class and minority men and women to kill and be killed in order to extend the power and profits of U.S. imperialism." At the same time, we had a side with Iraq in the lead-up to and during the war, and today have a side against the U.S. imperialist occupation.

The Marxist perspective on the military is to win its working-class base to the side of the workers. But as the military is a concentrated reflection of civil society, such a perspective can only be realized when civil society is gripped by tumultuous class and social struggle. American soldiers in the Iraq occupation who grow to understand that they are enforcing a reactionary and imperialist policy must also understand that insofar as they can mobilize against it, such mobilizations must be integrated with broader working-class struggles taking place in the U.S. Otherwise, isolated actions by soldiers—refusals to obey orders or more militant acts—will simply be met with swift, and often brutal, reprisals by the commanding officers.

In "Army Reservists Refuse 'Suicide Mission'" (WV No. 835, 29 October) we explained: "Every blow inflicted against the occupation forces is in the interest of workers and the oppressed around the world, as well as being in the interests of those soldiers who despise the predatory and imperialist cause for which they have been mobilized in Iraq."

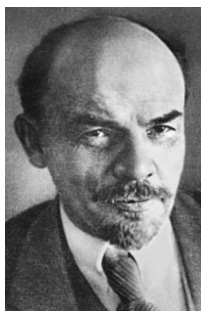
The American volunteer army at its base resembles a draft army—poor, minority and working-class youth who join mostly for economic incentives (the "economic draft"). Those U.S. soldiers and their families who come to understand that their class interests are opposed to those of the Pentagon brass, the Bush gang and the Democrats, must also understand the oppressive and exploitative nature of the U.S. occupation of Iraq.

Solidarity with Class-War Prisoners!

In 1986, the Partisan Defense Committee began sending monthly stipends to class-war prisoners as an expression of non-sectarian solidarity. In so doing, the PDC revived the tradition of the International Labor Defense, which in the 1920s organized defense for workers, revolutionaries and leftists. In 1927, James P. Cannon—the future founder of American Trotskyism who was then a leading member of the Communist Party—wrote about the need for workers to demonstrate their solidarity



TROTSKY



LENIN

with those imprisoned for taking the side of the working class and oppressed.

The *New York Times*, the organ of big business, is making its annual plea for contributions for Christmas to the "100 Neediest Cases." Other capitalist papers and organizations are conducting similar drives. The men, women and children of the working class, who have been on the rack of capitalist exploitation and are now dropped into the abyss of misery and poverty, are chosen and classified by these arch hypocrites—so their sanctimonious appeal can be made to the comfortable capitalists, to soften the bitterness of these few workers with the insult of charity, and to salve their own conscience by acts of "generosity."

This horrible farce is annually repeated in scores of other cities.

The militant workers have nothing but hatred and contempt for such appeals and drives. This year, therefore, they are again following the world-wide custom that has developed in the ranks of the working class for many years. It is the custom of raising a special fund for the men in prison for the labor cause and their wives and children, of transforming the hypocritical spirit of Christmas into the spirit of solidarity with the class-war fighters behind bars.

The International Labor Defense has already started a campaign for a Christmas Fund for the men in prison, and their dependents who suffer on the outside. The labor militants throughout the entire country are working to collect this fund. Nowhere has the appeal or the response been made on the basis of charity. Everywhere has been emphasized the duty of those who are outside toward the men on the inside....

The men in prison are still a part of the living class movement. The Christmas Fund drive of International Labor Defense is a means of informing them that the workers of America have not forgotten their duty toward the men to whom we are all linked by the bonds of solidarity. It is the Christmas drive of Labor and must have its generous support!

—James P. Cannon, "A Christmas Fund of Our Own," *Daily Worker*, 17 October 1927, reprinted in *Notebook of an Agitator* (Pathfinder Press, 1973)

WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League of the U.S.

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EDITOR: Alan Wilde

EDITOR, YOUNG SPARTACUS PAGES: Michael Davissou

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The Spartacist League is the U.S. Section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

Workers Vanguard (ISSN 0276-0746) published biweekly, except skipping three alternate issues in June, July and August (beginning with omitting the second issue in June) and with a 3-week interval in December, by the Spartacist Publishing Co., 299 Broadway, Suite 318, New York, NY 10007. Telephone: (212) 732-7862 (Editorial), (212) 732-7861 (Business). Address all correspondence to: Box 1377, GPO, New York, NY 10116. E-mail address: vanguard@tiac.net. Domestic subscriptions: \$10.00/22 issues. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Workers Vanguard*, Box 1377, GPO, New York, NY 10116.

Opinions expressed in signed articles or letters do not necessarily express the editorial viewpoint.

The closing date for news in this issue is 9 November.

No. 836

12 November 2004

Down With IRS Witchhunt Against NAACP!

On October 28, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) chairman Julian Bond revealed that the government was reviewing the group's tax-exempt status due to a speech he gave on July 11 criticizing Bush. An October 8 letter from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) threatened the civil rights organization that to keep its tax-exempt status, "leaders cannot make partisan comments in official organization publications or at official organizational functions." Ominously, the IRS is also demanding that the NAACP provide them with personal information about its 64 board members and detailed financial information about the convention where Bond gave his speech. This is nothing less than an attack on the right of free speech and association. It is a sinister witch-hunt in which black rights organizations and any critics of the Bush administration could face vindictive reprisals on an explicitly political basis. And it has grave implications for all who oppose the racist, warmongering and religion-crazed Bush regime.

During the presidential campaign, Bush underlined his contempt for black people

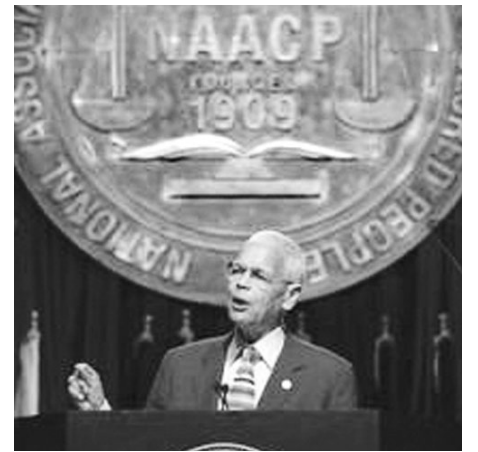
by spurning an invitation to speak to the NAACP. Though hardly radical, the NAACP—as well as leaders of the organization like Thurgood Marshall, who went on to become a Supreme Court justice—has faced scrutiny from the FBI in the past. Moreover, this would hardly be the first time an American government has used the IRS to target political opponents; the practice, for example, was widespread during the McCarthy era and Nixon administration. The government's willingness to explicitly attack an organization as mainstream as the NAACP reflects the staggering arrogance of the Bush administration. The Bush gang, bolstered by the bipartisan support for the rash of "anti-terror" laws like the USA-Patriot Act, feels it can lash out at its political opponents with impunity.

The political nature of this assault on the NAACP is underscored by the fact that the Bush administration has not subjected its own tax-exempt allies to similar scrutiny. In fundamentalist churches across the country, bible-thumping ministers roused their congregations against the spectre of gay marriage and promoted the Bush campaign from the pulpit.

Meanwhile, Catholic bishops implied that the church considered John Kerry—along with all Catholic politicians who were against banning abortion—to have excommunicated themselves.

Is this a double standard? Yes, of course it is, but that isn't the point. Julian Bond's opinions about Bush are none of the government's business, including when he states them in public, any more than are the vitriolic jeremiads emanating from church pulpits. The government has no right to define an organization's nature. The Reagan administration tried to revoke the tax-exempt status of the vile Unification Church of Sun Myung Moon in 1983, despite accepting that it was a religious institution. The Spartacist League filed an *amicus curiae* (friend of the court) brief on behalf of Moon's church because the government's case threatened the right of institutions—including religious organizations, political parties and trade unions—to establish themselves and control money entrusted to them (see "IRS Case Threatens Left," WV No. 337, 9 September 1983).

The witchhunt against the NAACP seeks to stifle any dissent within a black population already reeling from decades



AP
NAACP chairman Julian Bond speaks to Philadelphia convention, July 11.

of attacks. It underscores the need for black people, workers, women and all the oppressed to struggle against the assaults of the government and the capitalist class it serves. But to fight back, the working class and the oppressed should look not to the capitalist Democratic Party, the other party of war and racism, but to their own strength, mobilized independently and in their own interests. ■

They will recognize that insofar as the Iraqi insurgent groups are battling the American forces, they are engaged in a just struggle against colonial oppression. To recognize that is not to deny the reactionary politics of the Islamic fundamentalists or Arab nationalists that predominate in the Iraqi insurgencies.

There are many important differences between the Vietnam War and the occupation of Iraq. In South Vietnam, American imperialism was seeking to suppress not only a national liberation struggle but also a social revolution militarily supported by North Vietnam, a bureaucratically deformed workers state. Nonetheless, the history of the Vietnam War is relevant to the questions raised by Allan G.

During the first few years of the war, antiwar opposition in the U.S. was limited to a small minority of leftists and some pacifistic liberals. However, as the war dragged on with mounting U.S. casualties and no end in sight, antiwar sentiment spread to many Americans who earlier had supported the war as part of the worldwide battle against Communism. A major turning point was the 1968 Tet Offensive by the North Vietnamese which exploded the official line that the U.S. was winning the war—i.e., increasing American deaths produced a moral shake-up among the population at home over the nature of the war. Many soldiers in Vietnam opposed the war, and some were even won to the cause of the Vietnamese fighters. Additionally, the U.S. itself was in the middle of an enormous social polarization, primarily created by the civil rights movement and the struggles for black equality. In this context, it was not an accident that black soldiers in particular were the ones most hostile to the Vietnam War.

Today, despite Bush's winning reelection, there is substantial opposition to the Iraq occupation, including among large sectors of the working class (particularly black and minority workers whose children are disproportionately enlisted in the military). But the labor tops have turned opposition to the war among workers away from any form of class-struggle actions and into pathetic—and ultimately futile—appeals to get the warmongering capitalist Democrat Kerry elected. In his 1938 piece, "Learn to Think," Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky outlined the sort of policies that the international proletariat must fight for in opposition to imperialist depredation:

"Let us assume that rebellion breaks out tomorrow in the French colony of Alge-



George Butler

Demonstration of antiwar Vietnam veterans in Washington, D.C., April 1971.

ria under the banner of national independence and that the Italian government, motivated by its own imperialist interests, prepares to send weapons to the rebels. What should the attitude of the Italian workers be in this case?... Should the Italian workers prevent the shipping of arms to the Algerians?... Even if a general maritime strike broke out in fascist Italy at the same time, even in this event the strikers should make an exception in favor of those ships carrying aid to the colonial slaves in revolt; otherwise they would be no more than wretched trade unionists—not proletarian revolutionists. "At the same time, the French maritime workers, even though not faced with any strike whatsoever, would be compelled to exert every effort to block the shipment of ammunition intended for use against the rebels. Only such a policy on the part of the Italian and French workers constitutes the policy of revolutionary internationalism."

Regarding the slogan, "turn the guns the other way" (i.e., "against *one's own* bourgeoisie," as Lenin put it), it is not an accident that such slogans were first raised by revolutionaries like Lenin around the time of World War I. Interimperialist wars like World War I—where Marxists do not side with any of the belligerent countries—generally have a different reality from a colonial war (like the Iraq war).

The slaughter of World War I produced not only horror and revulsion among the soldiers from *all* the belligerent countries, but provided a real basis to win them over to the cause of socialism. By the early autumn of 1917, for example, some *2 million soldiers* in the Russian army deserted. Another country that experienced large-scale mutinies was France (a good movie on the French military during World War I is the late Stanley Kubrick's 1957 film *Paths of Glory*). In Germany, the 1918-19 working-class upheaval was sparked by

a rebellion by German sailors in the northern town of Kiel who were ordered out into a suicidal combat mission even though it was understood that the war was over, and Germany was about to surrender (see, for example, *Failure of a Revolution: Germany 1918-19* by Sebastian Haffner). In fact, Karl Liebknecht's famous slogan, "The main enemy is at home," was initially directed toward soldiers in opposition to their own ruling class.

Moreover, that slogan, as well as slogans like "turn the guns the other way," was consciously directed to all the soldiers of *all* the belligerent countries. This was in order to underline that the war was predatory and imperialist on all sides—and, therefore, Marxists were revolutionary defeatist toward all sides. In contrast, the Iraq war was predatory and imperialist on the side of the U.S., but just and defensive on the side of Iraq—and, therefore, Marxists were revolutionary defensists on the side of Iraq.

The party that best understood the situ-

ation around World War I was the Bolshevik Party. It was able to take the horror produced by the war and push it in the direction of socialist revolution. Russian soldiers won to the Bolshevik cause played a key role in the revolution and the difficult and bloody struggle to defend it against counterrevolution.

While the war and occupation in Iraq have produced horrific atrocities, they have all been one-sided. American soldiers have not suffered anything like the "shock and awe" campaign inflicted on Iraq; they have not been rounded up en masse and thrown into torture chambers like Abu Ghraib; they do not have to fight a military power that is qualitatively superior in every way. Meanwhile, American civilians, unlike their Iraqi counterparts, have not had to fear an invasion of their country by Iraq, the destruction of their homes and economic infrastructure, a full-scale foreign occupation with its crimes. They have not had to live through the kinds of atrocities committed by U.S. troops in cities like Falluja and Najaf, which can often resemble those committed in Abu Ghraib.

Since the launching of the Iraq war in March 2003, the U.S. has lost some 1,100 troops. The fact that this is producing a sense of shock not only among the population but, more importantly, among the military elite, is revealing about the mindset of the American military. The job of a soldier is to kill and *to be killed*. The job of a cop is to kill and *not* to be killed. That the U.S. military brass feels jolted by 1,100 dead troops in over a year of war and occupation shows that they think they can invade, conquer and occupy whole countries without suffering any consequence; it reveals a mentality that increasingly resembles that of a cop rather than a soldier. ■

Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth Club Forum

For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!
Greensboro Massacre 1979:
We Will Not Forget!

Saturday, November 20, 5 p.m.

University of Chicago, Reynolds Club
South Lounge, 2nd Floor, 5706 South University Ave.

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A Very Successful *Workers Vanguard* Subscription Drive

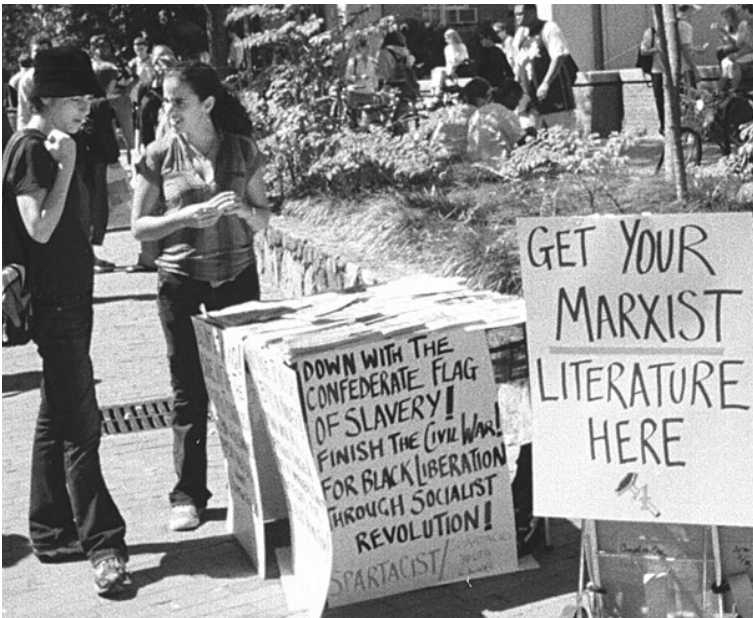
Congratulations to all those who participated in the 2004 *Workers Vanguard* subscription drive! Members and sympathizers of the Spartacist League spent six weeks, from late August through early October, in an intensive campaign to widen the readership of our press among students and working people. A measure of our success in this campaign is the fact that we exceeded our quota of 2,950 points with a total of 3,417½ points, that is, 116 percent of our goal. This represents more than 1,500 subscriptions to *Workers Vanguard*, 125 subscriptions to *Espartaco* (the newspaper of the ICL's Mexican section, the Grupo Espartaquista de México) and 262 subscriptions to the international press of other ICL sections. We welcome our new subscribers.

This year comrades did a remarkable job, not only in traveling far and wide to find new readers and reconnect with subscribers and friends of the organization, but also in selling subscriptions in the course of participating in protests, strikes

WV served as a tool for intersecting youthful activists and workers in struggle and introducing them to a Marxist program. WV is not just a source of commentary on events, but the voice of a revolutionary organization that intervenes in class and social struggles here and internationally. As uncompromising Marxists we seek to produce a hard-hitting and controversial newspaper that tells the truth squarely as we see it. Our press is also a journal of record for our history as an organization, which we make available through our bound volumes of WV, which go back to its inception in 1971.

Our annual subscription drive is one of our most important campaigns. Subscriptions enable us to multiply manyfold our party's reach around the country, to places we're not present and to populations we can't get to all the time. A subscription means that we can engage a reader over a whole year—the paper can speak to people as they live through events in the world. Also especially important are re-subscriptions and

Chapel Hill,
North
Carolina



WV Photo

including our latest pamphlet in Chinese, drew a lot of interest from Chinese students. We also held forums on China during the subscription drive (see page 6, “The Spectre of Tiananmen and Working-Class Struggle in China Today”).

Going into the subscription drive, we anticipated that many youth and workers desperate to get the vicious Bush administration out of the White House would find our position of opposition to both the Republicans and Democrats controversial. This was reflected in the angry reactions our slogans elicited from many participants in the protests against the Republican National Convention in New York City.

While a small but real portion of those who sought out subscriptions to WV this year had already decided that it wasn't worth voting for any of the major candi-

Kerry flags and distributing election paraphernalia did stop by the table to explain how they do not like Kerry, that socialist ideas were good but they needed to be doing what they are doing right now because Bush cannot get four more years.” Comrades traveling in North Carolina noted: “Far from encountering anybody-but-Bush hysteria, we found something more akin to anybody-but-Bush despair. At both the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Duke University we easily sold subscriptions to the main ‘Democrats for Kerry’ campus activists.”

Most subscribers were attracted primarily to our fight for a revolutionary transformation of society which will eradicate exploitation, racism, war and oppression, yet in the short term they still saw voting for Kerry as the best that could be done right now. A report from the New York local captured this:

“The discussions have predictably focused on the elections and the ‘anybody but Bush’ sentiment prevalent, though people have also subscribed because we offer an alternative, as unrealistic as it might seem in the immediate period. The question posed by the perspective of a workers party is what would such a party actually do? And since there is not enough time to build one right now, it's hard for people to see past November.”

Fight Against Racial Oppression Draws New Readers

Another striking aspect of this year's subscription drive was the great interest in our emphasis on the fight for black liberation. It seems the less that the racial oppression of black people is spoken about or even recognized by the bourgeois media and politicians, the more people thirst for our literature on the subject. This was especially true throughout the South, where many black students and workers were drawn to our signs reading “Finish the Civil War!” and “Down With the Confederate Flag of Slavery!”

In North Carolina, the most popular “giveaway” with a subscription among both black and white students was our *Marxist Bulletin* No. 5 “What Strategy for Black Liberation? Trotskyism vs. Black Nationalism,” and campus black organizations bought subscriptions to our press. At the College of Charleston in

continued on page 11



Above: Some of the most popular “giveaways” during the subscription drive. Right: Spartacists distribute literature to striking San Francisco hotel workers.



WV Photo

and a great range of political events locally. The lead-up to the intensely polarizing presidential election generated a heightened level of political activity as well as greater interest in our Marxist literature. This could be seen from the mass protests against the Republican National Convention at the beginning of the subscription drive, at which our New York and Boston comrades intervened, selling over 30 subscriptions, to the well-attended forums we held in various locals on our opposition to *both* capitalist parties and the need to build a revolutionary workers party that fights for socialist revolution.

Several strikes and trade-union rallies that we intersected during the subscription drive helped us to concretize for our readers our perspective centered on working-class struggle. The Bay Area Spartacus Youth Club mobilized students and others to do strike-support work in solidarity with striking and locked-out hotel workers in San Francisco, including organizing a united-front rally at the City College of San Francisco (see “Victory to the San Francisco Hotel Workers Strike!” WV No. 834, 15 October). Meanwhile, the New York local was able to sell subscriptions to striking airport hotel workers and to striking casino workers in Atlantic City, reporting back to WV on these struggles.

Subscribers Attracted to Marxist Worldview

Comrades widely reported greater interest and curiosity about Marxism among certain layers of students during the subscription drive. We met students who were reading Marx as part of their classes or out of personal interest—a new subscriber in Ann Arbor was carrying a copy of the *Communist Manifesto* in her purse when she met us. However, for a generation of youth that has been told communism is a failed experiment, Marxism is mostly an abstract theory. We motivated subscriptions by explaining that WV *applies* Marxism as a concrete guide to action in the fight against exploitation and oppression.

SYC comrades also reported that in many cases youth who got subscriptions didn't know much about Marxism but were interested in getting a broader perspective on events in the world. Some youth we intersected had participated in protests against the Iraq war and occupation. Others were drawn to our defense of the Palestinian people. Our literature on the struggle to defend the Chinese deformed workers state against imperialism and capitalist counterrevolution,

dates, most youth and workers who subscribed were planning to vote for Kerry. As Bay Area comrades put it: “Disgust with the Democrats or actively pursuing socialist politics per se weren't driving them to buy subs (most of them are ‘anybody but Bush’), but they were interested in getting our alternative, anti-capitalist take on the elections.”

Chicago comrades who traveled to the University of Wisconsin-Madison told a typical story: “Two women holding

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Bay Area	750	989½	132%
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Chicago	475	520½	110%
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L.A. Bosses Take Ax to King/Drew Medical Center



Johnny Knox

LOS ANGELES—The majority Democrat Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors voted on September 13 to shut the trauma unit at the historic Martin Luther King Jr./Charles E. Drew Medical Center, as threats loom to close the entire hospital. King/Drew is the main trauma center for the impoverished, predominantly black and Latino Watts/South-Central/Compton triangle, which has one of the highest rates of uninsured in the country. King/Drew is also one of the few teaching hospitals where substantial numbers of black doctors have been trained. Closure of the hospital's trauma unit is subject to final approval by the L.A. county supervisors after a public hearing on November 15. Meanwhile, the national Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations has voted to begin the process of revoking King/Drew's accreditation, and federal regulators have threatened to cut off \$200 million in funding unless the county brings in outside "turnaround" experts to "restructure" the hospital, which they have now done.

King/Drew is a legacy of the black uprisings of the 1960s. Black people suffering under the system of entrenched, systematic racial oppression that defines American capitalism erupted in ghetto uprisings throughout the country, including in Watts. They rebelled against chronic unemployment and poverty, rampant racist discrimination and segregation, dilapidated schools and murderous police repression. In the aftermath, forced to recognize the Watts area's grossly inadequate public health care, and hoping to stave off further black unrest, the L.A. city rulers thought it wise to inject a little more capital investment in the area for the construction of a desperately needed public hospital—King/Drew.

King/Drew trauma center, one of the nation's busiest, handled 2,150 patients last year, 45 percent of whom suffered penetrating wounds, such as gunshots and knife wounds. This is in addition to the 45,000 people the King/Drew emergency room treats every year! This area of South Central has the highest homicide rate in the county, and its ghettos and barrios are a central target of the LAPD and County Sheriffs' unending war on blacks and immigrant poor, all in the name of the "war on drugs." In fact, the U.S. Department of Defense has sent military doctors to train in the King/Drew trauma center so that they will be better prepared for the war zones they are sent to! U.S. imperialism's wars of depredation abroad, such as the current brutal occupation of Iraq, are the international extension of the American bourgeoisie's war on workers and the oppressed here at home.

Today, the U.S. crisis in health care has reached devastating proportions. Some 44 million Americans have no health insurance at all—and the numbers are increasing. As the capitalists attempt to shift more of the costs of health care onto the backs of workers, the number of workers covered by employer-provided health insurance dropped by three million from the years 2001 to 2002. Meanwhile, the bloody hand of the federal government stands out as a major influence in dismantling health facilities. The federal agency that oversees the nation's Medicare and Medicaid programs has recently conducted a number of surprise inspections of public hospitals, threatening to cut off hundreds of millions of dollars in fund-

ing when deficiencies have been found.

This has not only affected King/Drew in Los Angeles, but also Northern California's Alameda County Medical Center (ACMC), where the trauma center at Highland Hospital in largely black and immigrant Oakland is the only such facility serving the northern part of Alameda county. Highland's ER sees about 75,000 patients a year, many of whom are poor and lack health insurance. In August, about 1,000 workers walked off the job for one day at all of the medical center's facilities. The strikers, members of three SEIU locals, were outraged by the medical center trustees' announcement in April of plans to cut 10 percent of the workforce.

The federal government has been very active not only in threatening the major funding for public hospitals, but in terrorizing the poor who might use the minimal social services that still exist. In July, *armed federal agents* conducted roundups of disabled welfare recipients at gunpoint in Los Angeles—simply on misdemeanor charges of "cheating" the government out of a monthly welfare payment! Many of those arrested had already reached some agreement with the Social Security Administration. Of the 21 people arrested, one was blind and in a wheelchair; several were schizophrenic. *All 21 were black!*

Los Angeles: "Ground Zero" in Health Care Crisis

For years now, Los Angeles has been referred to as "ground zero" in the nation's profit-driven health care crisis. Conservative estimates, which do not count the underinsured, are that one-third of California's 6.3 million uninsured live in the greater L.A. area, and the number is growing rapidly. The already overburdened, underfunded and understaffed county hospitals and clinics are the only resort for the expanding numbers of uninsured, most of whom are workers and impoverished blacks, Latinos and immigrants in the ghettos and barrios. However, the ruthless politicians, overwhelmingly Democrat, who govern the L.A. region on behalf of the capitalist exploiters have consistently cut public health care budgets to the bone for decades, including the closure of dozens of county ERs, trauma units, hospitals and clinics.

Since the 1980s, 18 emergency rooms in L.A. County have been shut down, six of them in just the past year. Twenty years ago, there were 23 trauma units in the county that cared for those with life-threatening injuries; today there are only 13. In addition, 16 county clinics were closed in 2002 to "save costs." As the remaining ERs fill up, paramedics must drive wounded patients farther to find care, with every extra minute threatening lives. The racist rulers of this decaying capitalist system have made it clear that in their eyes, the poor and the uninsured are a surplus population for whom there is no need to provide health care. The bourgeoisie's systematic dismantling of what little public health care there is amounts to racist murder of the ghetto black and Latino poor.

Since the 1978 passage of California Proposition 13, which froze property taxes on which schools and county health systems depend, it's estimated that California has lost \$100 billion in tax revenue. The "tax revolt" movement behind Prop. 13 was a white, middle-class back-

lash against government programs viewed as especially benefiting the black and Latino poor. The effects of Prop. 13 have now coincided with a federal drive to gut welfare and other programs for the poor, resulting in a bloody budget ax being taken to public health services in Los Angeles by county officials.

The county sparked a furor last year when it announced plans to trim King/Drew expenditures by 16 percent over a three-year period. King/Drew has always lacked modern medical equipment and has always had too few registered nurses, which also means mistakes tend to get made more often. Then, when things go wrong, the racist rulers claim that they have to close parts of the hospital for "patient safety"; thus the proposal to close the "costly" trauma center, a part of King/Drew which is actually known for its excellent track record, claiming that funding and nurse staffing will be transferred to other areas of the hospital where they are needed, and where there have been "lapses in patient care." The hospital managers and county and federal officials are attempting to scapegoat the "neglectful" nursing staff for the hospital's problems, which are clearly the result of purposeful underfunding and understaffing. Tammy Green, who delivered three children at King/Drew, captured the essence of the situation when she said that King/Drew was allowed to fall into such a state because "we're black and we're poor." "I blame the whole system," she said (*Los Angeles Times*, 16 September).

Since January of this year, nurse staffing in L.A. County hospitals has been woefully below California's new standards. "Every single day our patients are in danger. The understaffing keeps getting worse," says Joel Solis, a registered nurse at Los Angeles County-University of Southern California Medical Center. "Less time for patients means increased risk" (SEIU Local 660 Web site). In order to raise staffing levels to meet the California state standards put into effect in January of this year, the county would have to fill 450 already-vacant positions and hire an additional 650 RNs for a total of over 1,100 new direct-care nurses. Yet over the past year and a half, L.A. County has lost 129 more nurses than it has hired.

Grace Corse, a registered nurse at County-USC Medical Center knows why. "We're losing nurses because the County salaries are too low and the stress level is

SEIU Local 660 members and community activists protest threatened closure of King/Drew trauma unit, September 21.

so high," she says (SEIU Local 660 Web site). L.A. County's five public hospitals are more than 25 percent short of the number of nurses they need to fully comply with state laws. RNs at the county's five hospitals, members of the massive SEIU Local 660, have been working without a contract since 30 September 2003. This yearlong contract dispute between the union and management has been particularly bitter at County-USC Medical Center. Arrogantly blaming overworked nurses for the effects of the county's murderous cuts, management accuses nurses of endangering lives by refusing to take on additional patients. Catherine Lefkowitz, a pediatric nurse at County-USC, said, "They should hire more nurses. They're always staffing to the bottom line" (*Los Angeles Times*, 26 October). Lefkowitz and her fellow nurses shut down a ward in early October. In the last few months, more than 160 county nurses have refused to take on more patients than state law allows, with support of union representatives who at times have shown up at the hospital wards to support them.

Outrageously, in at least three cases since September, managers called police to eject Local 660 union representatives from the wards! Since then, about 20 nurses have been suspended for their defiance. In July, the county won a restraining order to halt sick-outs by nurses protesting the lack of a contract. The union must defend itself and every one of its members! Hospital workers' battles for decent working conditions are also battles for decent health care for their patients, and both goals are in the interest of the entire working class. Attacks by the hospital management and government bosses must be met with massive class-struggle action by all county workers! The thousands of unionized county health care workers should be mobilized in a class-struggle fight for decent public medicine!

Mobilize Labor's Power in Defense of Public Health Care

The multiracial working class has shown its willingness to fight the racist rulers' attacks on health care. In the last few years, health care has been a

continued on page 11

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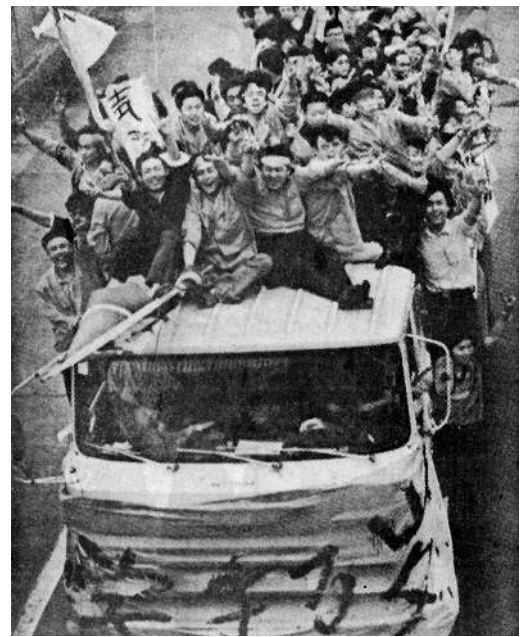
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Defend, Extend Gains of 1949 Revolution!



Beijing, May 1989: Mass student protests in Tiananmen Square drew detachments of workers (right).

AP

Reuters

The Spectre of Tiananmen and Working-Class Struggle in China Today

We print below, slightly edited for publication, the first part of an October 9 forum in Oakland, California, by Spartacist League spokesman Keith Markin.

One of the most hotly debated subjects throughout the world, especially in China, is whether China is capitalist or socialist. The significance of the Tiananmen uprising in

PART ONE

the spring of 1989 is another subject of debate in China. What is going to happen there? One thing is certain: it's not very stable. There's a book, appropriately entitled *One China, Many Paths*, which has contributions from the intelligentsia within China, that deals with these questions. I'll refer to articles from this book.

China's economy continues to grow. It has emerged as the number one steel producer in the world. At the same time, there is an increasing gap of social inequality exceeded by only a few countries. While there are some people that can buy a \$30,000 car with cash, many more live in abject poverty, especially in the countryside and in the west of China. The wealthy living on the east and southern coasts have access to the most modern comforts.

The lie of building "socialism with Chinese characteristics" has led to China losing 15 million manufacturing jobs in state-owned enterprises (SOEs) between 1995 and 2002. Prostitution is skyrocketing, and female infanticide is rampant in the countryside. There are over 100 million people living on less than \$106 per year. The United States has about 40 percent more acreage under cultivation than China, yet the Chinese agricultural labor force is 100 times larger than that of the U.S. And the U.S. has over six times as many tractors as China. These dire conditions have forced as many as 130 million rural Chinese to become migrant laborers in search of work on the eastern and southern coasts.

The workers no longer have their "iron



World Journal

Workers employed by Computime, a Hong-Kong-mainland joint-venture company, protest harsh working conditions and low pay outside factory in Shenzhen, October.

rice bowl," which guaranteed a job and benefits for workers in SOEs. A journalist traveling in the northeast of China, where millions of workers have been laid off, explained that in the past an "average worker could—just based on a letter of introduction, something equivalent to current credit card or privileged position in these times—get excellent treatment at a hospital." He says, "This is something of a legend to young people [in China] who do not know their history."

After crushing the Tiananmen uprising in 1989, the Stalinist regime waited a few years before they began more aggressive market policies, such as the increase in free-trade zones, where a section of the Stalinist bureaucracy functions as labor contractors for the imperialists and off-shore bourgeoisie. But the proletariat and peasantry have been far from silent. It is reported by the police that from 1993 to 1999 there was an increase of protests from approximately 8,500 per year to 32,000. According to unofficial Chinese reports, the number of public protests has probably risen each of the last three years.

In the spring of 2002, thousands of workers from the northeast provinces protested against the massive layoffs and the failure to receive back pay and pensions. This area used to be the industrial heartland of China; it has become a rust bowl. During the protests, banners proclaimed such slogans as "The army of industrial workers wants to live!" and "It is a crime to embezzle pensions!"

The spectre of the Tiananmen uprising looms large. This has led the ruling Hu Jintao-Wen Jiabao regime to adopt a more "populist" style than the technocratic Jiang Zemin regime which preceded it. The central government has since promised to invest in the northeast region to appease the workers. What happens in China is not a foregone conclusion. It will be determined through social struggle.

Peter Taaffe, leader of the Socialist Party, a left group centered in Britain, commented on the 16th Chinese Communist Party Congress two years ago: "China is on the road to complete capitalist restoration, but the ruling clique are attempting to do this gradually and by maintaining their repressive authoritar-

ian grip" (*Socialist*, 22 November 2002). Maoists and neo-Maoists outside China—the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) is a good example—believe that China is capitalist, and has been for some time.

Neo-Maoists *within* the bureaucracy want to reform the bureaucracy by changing its policies. They are opposed to the "market socialist" economy, though they believe China is still "socialist." The Chinese "New Left" is heterogeneous. Most support the market economy, but they are critical of the ramifications of the market: corruption, the gap between rich and poor, etc. They consider themselves part of the anti-globalization movement. Wang Hui, a prominent spokesman of the Chinese "New Left," says that after Tiananmen China "has completely conformed to the dictates of capital and the activities of the market." We Trotskyists sharply disagree with all of these characterizations of China and the conclusions drawn by the Chinese "New Left."

I want to clarify three points today: first, in Marxist terminology, China is a bureaucratically deformed workers state because the core of the economy is based on collectivized property. This is the basis for the International Communist League's unconditional military defense of China against imperialism and internal counter-revolution. Second, there is a privileged bureaucratic caste that politically rules the workers state. The bureaucracy's policies of "market socialism" are paving the way for either capitalist restoration or for a new revolutionary explosion. What happened during the Tiananmen uprising, as well as the current class struggle in China, shows the contradictions of the deformed workers state and the dual character of the bureaucracy. And third, the historical task of the Chinese proletariat is to build a revolutionary party—not its Stalinist or Maoist perversion. A revolutionary party is necessary to lead workers, peasants and the oppressed to defend the gains of the 1949 Revolution through a proletarian political revolution that establishes workers democracy. The key

For Proletarian Political Revolution!

political question for such a party is to break the Chinese proletariat from the nationalist dogma of “socialism in one country” and win them to an international, proletarian perspective. For those new to Marxism, I will explain just what all this means.

What Is Marxism?

The International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) is a proletarian, revolutionary and internationalist tendency. We are based on the politics of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky. The debates in China are framed by a false identity of Maoism with Marxism.

In order to understand what I'll be talking about and how we are different from the other political tendencies, I want to explain some basics about Marxism. First of all, Marxism is a science. The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines "physics" as a science that deals with matter and energy and their interactions. Marxism is the science of changing the world through international proletarian revolution. It deals with the relationship of class forces in the class struggle and the political consciousness of the international proletariat. The starting point for a Marxist is the understanding that the interests of the capitalists and of the proletariat are irreconcilable.

I've already jumped the gun. You're asking: What's a class? I want to quote Leon Trotsky. He, along with Lenin, led the Russian Revolution, which took proletarian revolution out of the realm of theory and gave it reality. In *The Class Nature of the Soviet State*, Trotsky explains just what a class is and why the Chinese bureaucracy is not a class (he was referring to the former Soviet Union):

"The *class* has an exceptionally important and, moreover, a scientifically restricted meaning to a Marxist. A class is defined not by its participation in the distribution of the national income alone, but by its independent role in the general structure of the economy and by its independent roots in the economic foundation of society. Each class (the feudal nobility, the peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie, the capitalist bourgeoisie and the

proletariat) works out its own special forms of property. The bureaucracy lacks all these social traits. It has no independent position in the process of production and distribution. It has no independent property roots. Its functions relate basically to the political technique of class rule. The existence of a bureaucracy, in all its variety of forms and differences in specific weight, characterizes *every* class regime. Its power is of a reflected character. The bureaucracy is indissolubly bound up with a ruling economic class, feeding itself upon the social roots of the latter, maintaining itself and falling together with it."

Another important Marxist term is the state. A state consists of armed people and institutions that defend particular types of property. A capitalist state defends private ownership over factories, natural resources and banks (called the means of production). Capitalist production is based on what is most profitable for the private capitalist. A workers state defends collectivized property in the means of production. Production is based on what is actually needed by society. Another name for a workers state is the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Through international proletarian revolution, the system of private ownership of the means of production is replaced by a system of collective ownership of the means of production. A socialist revolution must establish a workers state to defend collectivized property against both the indigenous capitalists and imperialism. It is a step toward the international revolution. In order to remove the social rule of the working class, a social counterrevolution is necessary to re-establish a capitalist state, the class dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

Capitalist production played a very important role in human history. It led to the development of modern sciences and technology. Humanity has the means to feed the world, but the capitalists and their system of production, which breeds imperialist wars, are obstacles that must be gotten rid of. Marxism seeks to resolve the problem of scarcity concerning food, clothing and shelter in the world through international proletarian revolution. Socialism is a classless, egalitarian, international economic system based on material abundance. Under a socialist system the problem of scarcity in the world can be resolved.

Both the 1949 Chinese Revolution and the Russian Revolution established collectivized property in the means of production and workers states to defend this type of property. The collectivized economy in the Soviet Union and China laid the basis for a leap in social progress, in particular for women. In China, the barbaric practice of foot-binding, which symbolized women's miserable status, was banned. But there was a qualitative difference between the two revolutions. The Russian Revolution of October 1917 was carried out by a class-conscious proletariat led by Lenin and Trotsky's Bolshevik Party, which won the support of the poor peasants, and saw the seizure of state power as the first step toward world socialist revolution. The Chinese Revolution was the result of peasant guerrilla war led by Mao. The proletariat did not struggle in its own right for power in China.

The 1949 Revolution was deformed from its inception under the rule of Mao's Chinese Communist Party (CCP) regime. Mao was a Chinese Stalin; the political regime of the Chinese workers' state was modeled on that of Stalin, who represented the privileged bureaucracy in the Soviet Union that usurped political power from the proletariat in 1923-24.

The bureaucracy derives all its privileges by sitting on top of the collectivized economy, like a parasite. This is the basis of the contradictory character of what we describe as a bureaucratically deformed workers state. China, Cuba, Vietnam and North Korea are all deformed workers states. Because there was workers democracy in the Soviet Union before the Stalinist bureaucracy usurped political power in 1923-24, we characterized the Soviet Union as a “degenerated” rather than a “deformed” workers state. You see, the

Bolshevik Party won a majority in the workers and soldiers soviets in 1917. There has never been workers democracy in China, Cuba, North Korea or Vietnam.

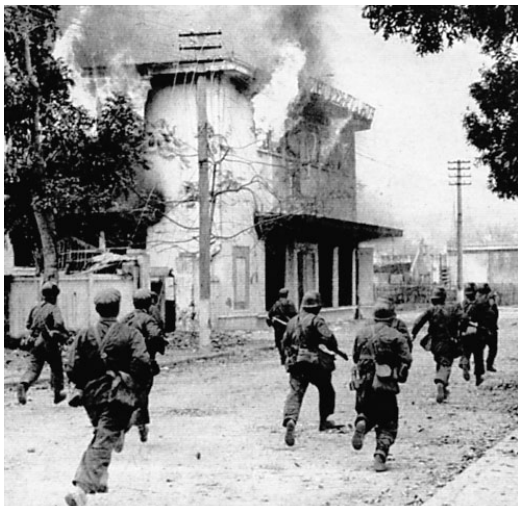
The bureaucracy rules in the name of the working class because all its privileges are derived from the collectivized property of the working class. It defends the workers state insofar as it can protect its privileged position atop the workers state. So it defends the workers state by its *own* methods.

The bureaucracy is opposed to the perspective of workers revolution internationally. The Stalinist bureaucrats adopted the nationalist dogma that socialism—an international, classless, egalitarian society based on material abundance—could be built in a single country. This means the bureaucracy prefers to accommodate world imperialism in the hope of maintaining the status quo, so that they can continue to feed off the workers state. In order to replace the political rule of the bureaucracy and change the politi-



WV Photo

1979: Spartacists demonstrate at Chinese Mission in New York City against Chinese government's invasion of Vietnam which was a shameful illustration of U.S.-China anti-Soviet axis.



Der Spiegel

cal form of a workers state to workers democracy, a proletarian political revolution is necessary, not a social revolution. The economic foundations of the state remain the same.

Another significant difference between the Russian and Chinese Revolutions is that the Russian bourgeoisie was destroyed as a class; the Chinese bourgeoisie wasn't. The offshore bourgeoisie in Taiwan and Hong Kong, along with the imperialists, are the main forces for counterrevolution in China, and the Stalinist bureaucracy strengthens these forces.

In our article "China: Defeat Imperialist Drive for Counterrevolution!" (*WV* Nos. 814 and 815, 21 November and 5 December 2003), which is now out in Chinese, we explain why China is a bureaucratically deformed workers state. It is the core collectivized elements of the economy that continue to be dominant, though not in a stable, coherent manner. The private (including foreign-owned) sector consists for the most part of factories producing light manufactures by labor-intensive methods. Heavy industry, the high-tech sectors and modern armaments production are overwhelmingly concentrated in state-owned enterprises. It is these enterprises that have enabled China to build an arsenal of nuclear

weapons and long-range missiles to ward off the American imperialists' threat of a nuclear first strike. Also, all major banks in China are state owned. Government control of the financial system has been key to maintaining and expanding production in state-owned industry and to the overall expansion of the state sector. The Beijing bureaucracy's abandonment of the strict state monopoly of foreign trade serves to facilitate Wall Street's plans for counterrevolution. It is precisely these core collectivist elements of China's economy that the forces of world imperialism want to eliminate and dismantle.

The ICL fights for unconditional military defense of all the deformed workers states against imperialism and internal capitalist counterrevolution because these states are based on collectivized property. That means we don't pose as a condition for defense that the Stalinist bureaucracy be overthrown before we will defend China. Why is this so important here in the U.S. and other capitalist countries in

the world? If the proletariat of the U.S., Japan and Germany don't understand the historic significance of the gains of the Chinese Revolution, like the collectivized economy, then they will never understand the importance of making a revolution against their "own" bourgeoisie. We are for the revolutionary reunification of Taiwan with China: this means socialist revolution in Taiwan, expropriating the bourgeoisie in Hong Kong, and proletarian political revolution on the mainland.

Tiananmen, Incipient Proletarian Political Revolution

First, the background—three key events in China shaped the Tiananmen uprising: the Cultural Revolution (1966-76), China's anti-Soviet alliance with U.S. imperialism, and the market reforms begun in 1978.

Mao's Cultural Revolution is important because it significantly shaped the political consciousness of Chinese workers, peasants, students and intellectuals through the 1980s. Essentially it was a fight between two wings of the Stalinist bureaucracy. The Maoists had to purge the conservative wing of the bureaucracy (led by Liu Shao-chi and Deng Xiaoping), who had led China during its

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For Separation of Religion and State

Canada: No to Ontario's "Sharia Courts"!

The article below was published in Spartacist Canada No. 142 (Fall 2004), newspaper of the Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyste, Canadian section of the International Communist League.

SPARTACIST

CANADA

After a campaign of more than a decade by the Canadian Society of Muslims, in late 2003 the Ontario government authorized Islamic *sharia* tribunals to function under existing arbitration laws. Under the 1991 Arbitration Act, tribunal decisions will be binding and will be upheld by Ontario courts unless coercion is shown. The new *sharia* courts are to deal with family law—marriage, divorce, inheritance—where women's subjugation is most brutally enforced. This is an outrage that will deepen the oppression and isolation of Muslim women. As revolutionary Marxists, atheists and fighters for women's liberation, we are unalterably opposed to the new *sharia* courts.

We are against all intrusion of religion into an already deeply unjust legal system that exists to defend capitalist private property and is driven by Christian thirst for vengeance and punishment. Religion ought to be a private matter in relation to the state. People should be free to practice their religion without the state persecution and religious bigotry which has spawned centuries of repression and bloodshed. But these religious tribunals are not a matter of private religious practice. Their rulings will have the force of law, making them part of the legal machinery of the capitalist state which in turn is to be the enforcer of religious obscurantism.

Sharia Law and Muslim Women

Sharia is the 1,300-year-old body of Muslim canon law that regulates every aspect of life. In Muslim personal law, women are inherently unequal (as in all organized religion); indeed they are considered less than fully human. Women may be beaten by their husbands, denied divorce, or divorced by the husband simply repeating three times, "I divorce you." Who can forget Amina Lawal, a Nigerian woman who narrowly escaped death by stoning for having a child out of wedlock?

Many of the opponents of Ontario's *sharia* plans are women who have fled Iran. Women in that "Islamic paradise" must cover themselves in the headscarf (*hijab*); they may not work in occupations that might compromise their "chastity"; and they can be stoned to death (and many have been) for having sexual relationships outside of marriage. In 2003 three young Iranian women—Nika, Mahdis and Mahnam Nahasati—were arrested, beaten with chains and sentenced to 120 lashes for the "crime" of allegedly having boyfriends. They had to overcome multiple racist hurdles thrown up by Canadian immigration authorities in order to escape Iran. Their brother Mohsen Mofidi was less fortunate—sentenced to 80 lashes, he died of injuries inflicted by the regime.

We especially oppose the Koranic strictures that dictate the seclusion of women. The head-to-toe *chador* (veil) is a walking prison, physically excluding women from society. It is not primarily a religious statement, but an embodiment of the submission of women to men, and the permanent, imposed affirmation of their inferior status. It represents the extension outside the home of the seclusion imposed on women by reactionary

sharia law. We solidarize with the countless women who have sought to escape this tyranny, whether in the historically Muslim world or the imperialist centers.

Attempting to defuse protest, both the Ontario government and would-be Muslim jurists insist that participation in the tribunals is voluntary and that their decisions will be compatible with Canadian law. This would be a "Canadianized" and "watered-down *sharia*," according to Mumtaz Ali, "patron-in-chief" of the new Islamic Institute of Civil Justice which aims to run the tribunals.

The insistence that participation is

friends. If the capitalist courts enforce reactionary religious law, this can only worsen. While bourgeois justice is racist, anti-working-class and anti-woman, it does represent a social advance over reactionary pre-capitalist and even pre-feudal institutions such as religious trials by clerics of any persuasion.

Sharia Law and Anti-Muslim Backlash

The debate on *sharia* comes amid vastly heightened anti-Muslim racism—indeed, some of the opposition to the new tribunals is fueled by this backlash.



Nerio Musa

Muslim women in Toronto. Intensification of women's oppression, influence of religion is seen in increasing appearance of veiled women.

Down With Anti-Muslim Racism!

"voluntary" is false. To its proponents, following *sharia* is obligatory, as Ali made clear in a 1995 interview: "Once the parties have agreed to be governed by Muslim PFL [Personal Family Law], then they will be committed to it by their prior consent.... [A] Muslim who would choose to opt out at this stage, for reasons of convenience would be guilty of a far greater crime than a mere breach of contract—and this could be tantamount to blasphemy-apostasy." Ali demands that women be veiled and that *purdah*—the enforced seclusion of women—is a necessity. He endorses a "learned author" who denounces "fornication" as a "hideous crime" and who upholds "the Shari'ah punishment" of 100 lashes because it "terrifies the whole population."

The Canadian Council of Muslim Women, which opposes the new tribunals, fears that women will simply be coerced into taking part. Similarly, the editor of the bulletin *Women in the Middle East*, Azam Kamguian, told a March 7 Toronto meeting:

"Too many women from Muslim origin living in the west still live in Islamic and patriarchal environments where the man's word and pressure from the community is law. It will take a brave woman to defy her husband, and to refuse to have her dispute settled under Islamic law when her refusal could be equated with hostility to the religion and apostasy."

Women who try to break out of this web of religious oppression are shunned, ostracized and cut off from family and

After the September 11, 2001 attacks, Islam was pronounced anathema, its adherents smeared as terrorists. On the streets, women have been humiliated, had their veils ripped off and denied jobs and services. Canadians of Near Eastern descent have been rounded up and detained; others were picked up abroad and thrown into jails in Syria and Egypt to be tortured.

It is noteworthy that for more than a decade Catholics, Orthodox Jews and Ismaili Muslims (who do not use *sharia*) have been using the Arbitration Act to resolve family-related and other legal disputes, without protest. In contrast, the proposal for *sharia* courts provoked an immediate outcry. There is a strain here of holier-than-thou "secularism" which is little more than a cover for anti-Muslim bigotry.

There are about 600,000 Muslims in Canada today; more than half live in Ontario. Imperialist subjugation and militarism, grinding poverty, wars of conquest and depredation from Somalia to Ethiopia, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan: the bloody workings of imperialism have driven untold millions to flee their homes in search of a better life or simply to stay alive. But especially with the intense anti-Muslim backlash that erupted after September 11, attacks on Near Eastern and African immigrants here, as in the U.S. and Europe, have sharply increased as civil rights are

shredded along with jobs and social services. Immigrants are the last hired and first fired, and this hits immigrant women hardest. Without access to jobs, services and language classes, many immigrant Muslim women live in intense isolation.

The growth of women's oppression and the influence of religion can be seen in the increasingly common appearance of the veil among women and young girls. For a minority, this is not only an expression of women's subordination, but a twisted kind of defiance of anti-Muslim racism. Less visible is the barbarism of female genital mutilation or the anguish of forced marriages. In fact, these things are aggravated by restrictive Canadian immigration laws.

At a Toronto June 26 anti-*sharia* meeting, a high school teacher reported that many teachers are seeing their young students suddenly spirited out of the country, only to return married to a much older man in order to secure him permanent resident status. A young girl's dowry is her citizenship. Similarly, immigrant women are trapped in abusive relationships if their status depends on their husbands. Attempts to flee or separate legally mean almost certain deportation. We demand full citizenship rights for anyone who makes it here. This is not only crucial to the lives of immigrants, but would undercut the basis for practices that are so detrimental to women.

Religious Bigotry and the Canadian State

Contrary to liberal mythology, Canada is not a secular state; separation of church and state is partial at best. The Charter of Rights and Freedoms invoked by some opponents of *sharia* states that "Canada is founded upon principles that recognize the supremacy of God and the rule of law"—not exactly a statement of human liberation. Actually, Canada was founded on the destruction of the pre-existing aboriginal societies, the subjugation of the Québécois with the triumph of the British over the French on the Plains of Abraham in 1759 and as a reactionary British redoubt against the American Revolution. To this day Parliament opens with prayers as the politicians seek guidance from the Christian God in their main endeavor—the business of rewarding their friends and robbing working people.

For much of Canada's long history of religious bigotry, anti-Catholic reaction was dominant, and it was always bound up with anti-French prejudice. The 19th century was marked by vicious campaigns and riots against impoverished Irish Catholic immigrants fomented by predominantly Protestant rulers. Orange Ontario was deeply anti-Catholic and anti-Semitic. Run by the white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant Orange Order, Toronto of the 1920s and 1930s was known as the "Belfast of Canada." Here and on the Prairies, the Orange Order was heavily interpenetrated with the Ku Klux Klan terrorists whose specialty was anti-Catholic cross-burnings. After World War II, Catholic immigrants from southern European countries were the targets. Today Muslims (and Hindus and Sikhs) have largely displaced Catholics and Jews as the scapegoats of choice.

Mumtaz Ali thanks today's official government policy of multiculturalism for making *sharia* courts possible, declaring that "the Ontario government is the most enlightened in the world. This is the multiculturalism of my friend Pierre

WORKERS VANGUARD

Trudeau” (*Toronto Star*, 22 May). Multiculturalism was inaugurated in 1971 by Trudeau in part to corral “ethnic” votes for the Liberals and as a wedge against growing support for nationalism in Quebec. The carefully crafted hype is that it is an anti-racist liberal reform—an official expression of tolerance of all cultures. Right-wing racists inveigh against it for just that reason.

In reality, though, multiculturalism, which is designed to encourage the “voluntary” cultural and racial segregation of the population, has served to ghettoize immigrant communities. Hugely successful at buttressing the federal Liberals, with pork-barrel grants flowing to numerous cultural organizations, it has served to tie a layer of petty-bourgeois immigrant “community leaders” to the government’s purse-strings. It has in turn been a powerful conservatizing force for policing immigrants and maintaining social peace.

By actively discouraging the integration of immigrant communities, the bourgeoisie has also helped to foster racism and chauvinism against non-white populations. For the ruling class, confronted with an increasingly multiracial working class, this policy has served to divide working people.

Capitalist immigration policy is always subject to the labour requirements of the economy. During periods of economic growth, the capitalists bring in workers from other countries as a source of cheap labour. In a downturn, they whip up racism against foreign-born workers, scapegoating them for the capitalist crisis. But the ruling class always manipulates racial and ethnic antagonisms among workers as a means of weakening their ability to struggle against the bosses’ attacks. Struggling for class unity, workers must oppose all the racist anti-immigration laws and fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants. Immigrant workers are not helpless pawns, but form a vital part of capitalist production in this country—they represent a core of the social power which is key to successful labour struggle and the overturning of the capitalist order.

Religion, the Family and Women’s Oppression

Karl Marx was right when he asserted that “*Man makes religion*, religion does not make man.” He concluded:

“The struggle against religion is therefore indirectly a fight against *the world* of which religion is the spiritual *aroma*. “*Religious* distress is at the same time the *expression* of real distress and also the *protest* against real distress. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, just as it is the spirit of spiritless conditions. It is the *opium* of the people.”

—“Contribution to the Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Law” (1844)

Islam has no monopoly on religious savagery, and the subjugation of women is not unique to it. For years the Catholic church has used its power in the state-funded separate school system to poison children with anti-abortion and anti-gay bigotry. The religious lunatics who spent the 1990s trying to murder abortion doctors in Canada and the U.S. were certainly not Muslim. The Catholic church still does not allow divorce or contraception. In Jewish law the Beis Din system is a lot like *sharia*, intensely anti-woman. For example, women may not give testimony or sit in judgement of others; once married, women are essentially the property of their husbands.

Institutionalized religions are key to reinforcing women’s oppression, but they are not its origin. The institution of the family—today fashioned to serve the needs of capitalist class rule—is the main source of women’s oppression. In *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*, written in the late 19th century, Friedrich Engels explained that the monogamous patrilineal family “is based on the supremacy of the man, the express purpose being to produce children of undisputed paternity.” The family is the vehicle for transmitting property from

one generation to the next, and the mechanism for raising new generations of workers. Bourgeois family law is thus tightly bound up with defense of private property, and women’s inequality is always reflected in the legal and social codes of every society.

The entire fabric of Muslim family law, the subordination of women through polygamy, the bride price, dowry, the veil—these are not simply the “bad ideas” of an evil caste of mullahs. In origin, they were a means of enforcing property rights and attendant mechanisms of social control in a pre-capitalist society.

In the eighth and ninth centuries, when Europe was in the Dark Ages, Muslim civilization was at its zenith. Islam gave us algebra, Arabic numbers; it preserved medical knowledge and many other key inventions. In the Spanish Inquisition of the 15th century the Muslims and Jews were driven out of Spain by the crown and Catholic church. Thousands upon thousands of books of mathematics, astronomy, medicine and poetry were burned.

Christianity and Judaism, in their many variants, also preach stifling moral codes meant to uphold the patriarchal family. But sections of Christianity and Judaism, also with roots in pre-capitalist society, had to conform with rising industrial capitalism and the bourgeois nation-states where they existed. The radical democratic principles of the Enlightenment were the ideological reflection of historic material advances over a backward, feudal society. But as a religion, Islam has not had to adapt, largely because it remains rooted in those parts of the world where imperialist penetration has reinforced social backwardness as a prop to its domination.

Capitalism came belatedly to these countries, with the European colonizers who manipulated and nurtured all that was backward and retrograde, while suppressing class struggle. And today among concentrations of immigrants in the Western imperialist countries, capitalist rule has reinforced anti-woman practices, from the barbarism of female genital mutilation to veiling to arranged marriages.

The Western imperialists fulminate against Islam. But it was these imperialist exploiters who fuelled the growth of political Islam over the last half century. In their drive to destroy the Soviet Union—the state that emerged from the victorious 1917 Bolshevik Revolution in Russia—the imperialists allied with indigenous forces of social reaction to act as a bulwark against godless Communism and the Soviet Union, and to ensure the continued flow of superprofits.

Afghanistan is the clearest example. In the late 1970s when a modernizing Afghan government moved to implement modest reforms for women (lowering the bride price, instituting education) the tribal *mujahedin* erupted in insurrectionary violence. To protect its borders from the fundamentalist threat, already backed by the CIA, in late 1979 the Soviet Red Army entered Afghanistan at the invitation of the left-nationalist government in Kabul. The U.S. government spent bil-



Members of Afghan women’s militia rally in Kabul just before Soviet pullout in 1989.

lions to fund the *mujahedin*’s holy war against the Soviet Union in what was the biggest CIA operation in history. We declared “Hail Red Army in Afghanistan,” and called to extend the gains of the October Revolution to the Afghan peoples, especially the terribly oppressed women.

But this was not the Soviet Union of Bolshevik leaders Lenin and Trotsky, but a degenerated workers state headed by a bureaucratic caste intent on conciliating the imperialist order. Criminally, instead of fighting to win, in 1989 the Soviets withdrew, paving the way for the victory of Washington’s brutal religious fanatics—including the future Taliban—and opening the door to counterrevolution in the Soviet Union itself. The Taliban, Osama bin Laden—this whole reactionary crew is literally the Frankenstein’s monster created by the imperialists in their war on the Soviet Union.

Islam and the Left

The International Campaign Against Sharia Court in Canada (ICAS)—animated by the Worker-communist Party of Iran (WCPI)—is lobbying the government to remove family law from the Arbitration Act, which would remove the legal sanction for religion-based tribunals. But the website for this campaign (www.nosharia.com) has also published blatantly anti-immigrant, pro-imperialist poison without criticism or comment.

One such article, “Shari’a: A Threat to the Canadian Society” by Elka Enola of the Humanist Association of Toronto (HAT), projects a demented three-step scenario which culminates in a future where “Muslims now outnumber Christians, and the majority rule of democracy is turned on its head, as the majority Muslims make Shari’a the law of the land.” Elsewhere, Enola raves that when leftists support “Palestinians against Israel,” they are “siding with Political Islam” (*HAT Newsletter*, May/June 2004).

The ICAS website also features a



March 2002 Toronto protest in defense of Palestinians. Canadian Trotskyists protest attacks on immigrants in name of “war on terror.”

statement, “Canada Attacked by Political Islam!”, demanding that the racist Canadian government include as a condition on the Canadian immigration form that “the applicant will protect Canadian Secular Democracy.” It further demands that the government require “all records of sermons and lectures in all religious gatherings, conferences, seminars etc [be submitted] to authority.” This is not secularism but a loyalty oath that would ban some Muslim immigrants and other people as well, and a call on the government to directly police religion. It all reeks of the racist *Clash of Civilizations* garbage of reactionary writer Samuel Huntington, which pits a supposedly progressive “western civilization” against “backward Islam.” It is the banner of imperialist “democracy” which has brought devastation to Afghanistan and now Iraq.

The racist Canadian ruling class simultaneously attacks Muslims as terrorists while nurturing the most repressive and conservative forces within the Muslim community. There is no real contradiction here: both are mechanisms for reinforcing the grip of capitalism through scapegoating and regimenting immigrant communities. Working people should oppose *sharia* courts and *all other* state-sanctioned religious interference in public institutions. The protests against *sharia* law must denounce Canada’s brutally racist “justice” system and, especially, the government’s war on immigrants.

While the Canadian left and feminists have been largely silent in the *sharia* debate, the Trotskyist League has intervened actively against the new *sharia* courts. We addressed the June 26 ICAS public meeting and we have publicized a planned protest against the *sharia* courts at the Ontario Legislature on September 8. Our letter urging left, gay/lesbian and other groups to mobilize for the protest made clear that opposition to *sharia* must be inseparable from opposition to the anti-Muslim racist backlash.

The abdication of much of the left reflects a longstanding division between opponents of the Islamic regime in Iran, and those who capitulate to it. Going back to the 1979 “Islamic Revolution”—a bloody disaster for women, workers and the left—many so-called leftists have willfully misidentified political Islam with anti-imperialism. For example, the International Socialists (I.S.) tailed the forces of Islamic reaction, running headlines like “The form—religion, The spirit—revolution” (*Workers Action*, February 1979).

In 1998, this line-up was reprised when the Trotskyist League, Ontario Coalition Against Poverty and others joined with the WCPI to drive out representatives of the murderously anti-woman Iranian government from a Toronto International Women’s Day fair. Scandalously, the I.S. and others opposed this! More recently, the IWD feminists in Toronto have barred the WCPI from their meetings and from having display tables at IWD fairs—explicitly because these feminists viewed the WCPI’s protest against the stoning, torture and imprisonment of women in Iran as a disruption that might “offend” Muslims.

Some leftists justify their reluctance to criticize Islamic reaction by pointing to the fact that the imperialists are waging a brutal “war on terrorism” through military conquest, occupations and the round-up of Near Eastern immigrants. Others push a form of “cultural relativism,” a theoretical justification for accepting the horribly oppressive status quo in the Third World which actually mirrors the right-wing “clash of civilizations” cant. In fact, Islam has long been an invaluable tool for imperialist oppression and exploitation both of immigrants at home and neocolonial subjects abroad. That the government here is allowing Islamic *sharia* courts in the midst of an anti-Muslim backlash underscores that the fundamental divide in society is not between religions or nationalities, but between the classes.

The WCPI correctly opposes *sharia*

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Transit Workers Fight Religious Discrimination by NYCT

Kevin Harrington, a New York City train operator for 23 years, was called in by New York City Transit (NYCT) management last spring and told to immediately remove his turban, which, as a Sikh, he had been wearing every day since he started on the job. He was told that if he refused, he would be stripped of his seniority rights, which earned him the train operator job, and be restricted to a yard job out of public view. Harrington publicized this prejudiced treatment in the local press, and also got coverage in Britain and India. The union weighed in on his side. After being kept out of passenger service for three days, Harrington was allowed back to his regular job, though the NYCT continued to threaten to remove him from public service for wearing his turban.

At the end of August, NYCT promulgated a policy that headwear must be agency-issued “TA blue” and bear a company logo. In a New York 1 television interview, the legal director of the Sikh Coalition, Amardeep Singh, stated that the transit bosses “believe that they can engage in a broad policy of blatant discrimination against Sikh and Muslim employees and then after a year and a half shrug its shoulders and say ‘We’re sorry, let’s shake hands on it, we might as well forget about it.’ And that’s not enough to address and redress a broad policy of possibly systematic discrimination.” As Harrington told *Workers Vanguard*, what’s to prevent the bosses from changing their minds again? The capitalists are always pushing to regiment the workforce as much as they can.

On September 29, the U.S. Justice Department announced a suit against NYCT’s uniform policy. The Transport Workers Union (TWU) tops hailed this suit, as if John Ashcroft and his Homeland Security cohorts would defend the oppressed! Ashcroft has been on a non-stop campaign since September 11 to shred civil rights, targeting labor, black

people, immigrants, Muslims and other religious minorities.

According to a May report by the Council on American-Islamic Relations, reported racist crimes against Muslims increased by 121 percent in 2003, and the largest percentage of complaints comes from government “anti-terror” activities based on the USA-Patriot Act. Deportations, detentions and FBI knocks on the door have left thousands of immigrants living in constant fear. The TWU tops have been pushing for more funds for “security,” embracing the “war on terror,” which is promoted by the Democrats as much as the Republicans. The bureaucrats’ slavish loyalty to the capitalist parties and system serves to stifle working-class struggle against exploitation and oppression, and emboldens the capitalists to carry out further attacks on immigrants, blacks and labor.

In the reactionary climate created by the “war on terror,” NYCT bosses have stepped up their attacks on the workforce. On September 8, a so-called “impartial arbitrator” upheld the firing of Carlos Blackman, an elected TWU shop chairman and dedicated fighter against unsafe working conditions who was framed up on phony “workplace violence” charges. Earlier this year, *WV* salesmen learned that a subway superintendent at the Coney Island overhaul shop harangued an assembly of mostly immigrant workers with the diktat, “No English, no overtime.” A few years ago, a black worker at the East New York bus maintenance shop had to fight for his job after standing up to physical assault and racist slurs from a boss.

The bosses’ racism and anti-immigrant bigotry are designed to perpetuate divisions within the workforce and prevent the working-class unity necessary to counter their attacks. As Harrington told *WV*, “I think what the Transit Authority is doing to minorities, either religious or racial or both, is an example of their



Ose/Newsday

Kevin Harrington

apartheid mentality; that their way to solve their problems is to separate people by race, religion or whatever.” The social power of the TWU must be organized to struggle in defense of every union brother and sister!

What happened to Harrington came on the heels of similar attacks against four black Muslim women bus drivers. Since March 2002, these women—Malikah Alkebulan, Stephanie Lewis, Deirdre Small and Gladys Muhammad—were forced to work out of the public eye because they wore headscarves. An arbitrator and the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) upheld this victimization. As we wrote in “Muslim Women Banned from Work in Public” (*WV* No. 816, 26 December 2003), the NYCT’s successful attack on these women’s rights has given a “green light for more crackdowns on workers, including Sikhs, men who wear skullcaps or yarmulkes and *anyone else* who doesn’t ‘look right’ to the boss.”

Canada...

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law, both in Iran and in Canada. Yet, lacking a working-class axis, they end up seeing the imperialist governments—far greater enemies of the world’s working class than the ayatollahs of impoverished neocolonial Iran—as potential allies. In fact, the anti-clerical reformists of the WCPI foster terrible illusions in “democratic” Western imperialism.

For example, the WCPI backs the French government’s racist campaign to ban girls from wearing the headscarf in schools. Part of a broader crusade by the French rulers against the country’s large North African Muslim population, this is also a gross act of state interference with personal religious belief. Our comrades of the Ligue Trotskyste de France sharply oppose the campaign for state bans on the veil, and further point out that expelling girls from school for wearing it can only lead to greater isolation and oppression for them, reinforcing their religious beliefs.

For many years the WCPI has campaigned for imperialist governments in Europe and Canada to close Iranian embassies in their countries. This demand has been taken up by the coordinator of the anti-*sharia* campaign, Homa Arjomand, who recently wrote to the Canadian government, demanding that it “break all its diplomatic relations with the Iranian regime” (*WPI Briefing*, 27 July). The WCPI has also repeatedly called on the UN to intervene on behalf of

the oppressed in the Near East. With such positions, they lend credence to the imperialists’ democratic pretensions and call on them to act as cops of the world. Their willingness to accommodate pro-imperialist forces in their anti-*sharia* campaign has not fallen from the sky.

For Women’s Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

Any perspective for the liberation of women must start with revolutionary opposition to the imperialist rulers, who exploit workers at home while subjugating and plundering entire countries in the Third World. It is necessary to generate the resources to change the material conditions of life, and that can only come from the expropriation of the capitalist class. Looking ahead to the socialist revolution, in *Origin of the Family* Engels wrote:

“With the transfer of the means of production into common ownership, the single family ceases to be the economic unit of society. Private housekeeping is transformed into a social industry. The care and education of the children becomes a public affair; society looks after all children alike, whether they are legitimate or not.”

When the Bolsheviks took power in Russia in 1917, they sought to carry out this program. But the resources of the new workers state, devastated by imperialist war, famine and civil war, were agonizingly slender, and this imposed harsh limits on the measures they could take. Even so, health care and education were free, and there was child care in workplaces. The Bolsheviks’ earliest measures were directed at the emancipation of

women. Unlike both modern bourgeois law and religious tradition, they made marriage and divorce simple matters of civil registration. The welfare of children was the responsibility of the state. They did away with the repressive laws against homosexuality and abortion.

How do we get to the revolution that alone can bring the liberation of women? And how do we address the conditions of oppressed immigrant women in this country who are caught between the stifling restrictions of their own communities and the racist walls erected by Canadian capitalist society? The working class alone has the power to sweep away this violent, exploitative system. Workers must be won to the understanding that in championing the rights of women and immigrants, they advance the interests of the class as a whole. This means opposing every hint of discrimination against people for their religion or ethnicity, while exposing the pernicious influence of all religions. It means taking up the struggle for free 24-hour child care and free quality health care as measures crucial to addressing the special oppression of women.

The Trotskyist League is a small revolutionary Marxist organization, and within our capacities, we seek to give leadership to working-class struggles through the force of our program, as part of the essential struggle to forge a multiracial revolutionary vanguard party. As our comrade told the audience at the June 26 meeting against *sharia* law:

“As fighters for women’s liberation, we oppose the introduction of the *sharia*

As Marxists, we defend the right to freedom of religious beliefs. At the same time, as we wrote in “New York TWU: Fight MTA Attacks on Muslim Women Workers” (*WV* No. 799, 14 March 2003), “We recognize that the headscarf prescribed by the Koran...is an expression of the subjugation of women, who are oppressed by *all* religions. But in post-9/11 America, it’s the capitalists and their government that are making life hell for all Muslims, including women.”

The abuse aimed at these workers is scarring and something they will carry with them. Stigmatizing these workers is part and parcel of creating a vicious climate where denial of civil rights is considered the norm. The U.S. ruling class continues to use September 11 as a cover for ratcheting up the screws of repression, going after the most vulnerable first, fomenting racism and bigotry against anyone deemed “deviant.” Because Sikhs wear turbans, they have suffered unremitting harassment and physical attacks alongside Muslims. Only days after September 11, a Sikh gas station owner, Balbir Singh Sodhi, was gunned down in Arizona. On July 11 of this year, Rajinder Singh Khalsa, a Sikh limousine driver, was kicked and beaten unconscious on the sidewalk in Queens by racist thugs who ridiculed his turban and yelled, “Go back to your country.”

It didn’t take long for the ruling class to extend the “terrorist” label to struggling unionists. In 2001, striking teachers in Middletown, New Jersey were labeled “Taliban” by city bureaucrats. When workers suffer racist abuse, when a union militant is framed up and fired, when Muslim women are pulled from their jobs and a Sikh worker is targeted, the TWU bureaucrats barely lift a finger, instead looking to the bosses’ courts and arbitrators, and cower behind the slave-labor Taylor Law, which outlaws strikes by state workers, as an excuse for doing nothing. But any union leadership worth its salt would stop work on the spot, and be prepared to defend its members from company reprisals. An anti-capitalist, class-struggle leadership of the TWU would mobilize its multiracial membership in defiance of every act of prejudice and company attempts to take away hard-fought gains. ■



Battistoni/CP

Canadian multiracial working class has the social power and interest to beat back capitalist assaults. Picket lines of Vancouver hospital workers in April.

laws. We are also for the separation of church and state, to which end we also oppose [the law’s] application to other religions, be it Catholic, Jewish or Ismaili....

“I am a trade unionist; we believe the way forward lies in mobilizing the integrated unions to fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants and their families and for the full integration of women into the workforce. The brutal oppression of women is fundamental to the capitalist system and must be replaced by the rule of the working people.” ■

Health Care...

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burning issue in strike after strike, particularly in Southern California. Maintaining employer-paid health benefits was a central demand in both the L.A. transit strike and grocery workers strike last year. SEIU Local 660 nurses have also shown their willingness to fight in repeated battles with the county, not only in defense of their own livelihoods, but in defense of the patients they serve.

However, the militancy and determination of this multiracial union membership have been consistently held in check, their interests and those of L.A.’s poor betrayed by the union’s pro-capitalist misleaders. In 2000, SEIU union bureaucrats scuttled a strike by 47,000 county workers after only one day under the cover of a statement by L.A.’s Cardinal Mahony, who cynically appealed to the interests of “the poorest and most vulnerable members of our community” against the overwhelmingly black and Latino county workers. Having poured union money into the campaign coffers of the very same Democratic Party county supervisors that Local 660 went on strike against, the SEIU tops did not even set up a strike fund in 2000, instead spending \$700,000 on TV and radio ads. The county supervisors such as Democrats Yvonne Brathwaite Burke and Zev Yaroslavsky, who now cry crocodile tears while shutting down vital health services, are the same ones who as MTA (Metropolitan Transportation Authority) Board members railed against the transit mechanics when they fought for affordable health care during last year’s strike.

Now the hotel workers in UNITE HERE, many of them immigrants, are in

Donate \$\$\$ for Locked-Out Hotel Workers!

San Francisco

Hotel workers organized by UNITE HERE in San Francisco have been locked out of their jobs for over five weeks by the hotel owners’ multi-employer Hotel Council. From sunup to sundown maids, cooks, bellmen, bartenders and servers walk picket lines at 14 of the fanciest hotels. UNITE HERE Local 2 has established a “Solidarity Fund” to financially assist the locked-out workers. Trade unions across the country and individual workers should donate as an act of class solidarity to defeat the bosses’ union-busting.

Two days after UNITE HERE Local 2 began a two-week strike on September 29 against four hotels, ten other hotels retaliated by locking out their workers. When the two-week strike

ended, the hotel bosses refused to let the workers return to work, locking out over 4,000 workers at 14 hotels and replacing them by hiring scabs. Reportedly, some Teamsters clerical workers are now crossing picket lines to work at struck hotels. The UNITE HERE bureaucrats rely on their Democratic Party “friends,” like Mayor Gavin Newsom, who has even walked on the picket line in response to the intransigence of the hotel owners. But the working class can only rely on its own independent strength. The hotels should be shut down through mass union action!

Since their contracts expired, hotel workers in L.A., Washington, D.C. and San Francisco have been struggling for their right to organize and negotiate as a national union against multimillion-dollar, multinational hotel chains like Hilton, Sheraton and Hyatt. The hotel

workers are fighting for an increase in wages, no increase in workers’ health benefit contributions, decent pensions and a two-year contract term that would expire in 2006. This would enable the workers to have a common contract expiration date with UNITE HERE hotel workers in nine other cities, including Boston, Chicago and New York.

Every worker in the U.S. has a stake in the hotel workers’ fight! This is a question of workers’ right to organize. This labor battle is linked to the struggle for the rights of immigrants, black people, Latinos and women, who make up the bulk of this workforce.

Make checks/money orders payable to: **Local 2 Solidarity Fund.**

Send donations to: **Mike Casey, President, UNITE HERE Local 2, 209 Golden Gate Ave., San Francisco, CA 94102-3705.**

a contract dispute with the hotel bosses where protection of health benefits is a key issue. The Los Angeles hotel bosses have unilaterally imposed a takeaway contract that deducts \$10 a week from what are already poverty wages! Meanwhile, UNITE HERE members in San Francisco have been locked out. We say: For a solid hotel workers strike! The multiracial unionized working class, welding its discipline and militancy to the righteous anger of the ghettos and barrios, has both the power and the inter-

est to fight for free, quality medical care for all. To lead this battle, the working class must mobilize its social power independent of the capitalists and their state. The labor tops’ support for the bosses’ political parties, such as the Democrats, also means support for the state that ensures capitalist class rule through force and violence against those they exploit. Workers desperately need their own political party, a revolutionary party that will take up all the struggles of the exploited and oppressed and

fight for a workers government.

The crisis of medical care cries out for a socialist revolution that will lay the basis for a society that will end all exploitation and oppression. What we need is free, quality health care, education, housing and jobs for all! We need communist medicine, where doctors will be servants of the people, hospitals will be havens to heal the sick, and research on vaccinations, new medical techniques and improved drugs will be internationally coordinated and used for the benefit of all.■

Subscription...

(continued from page 4)

South Carolina, we were invited to give a presentation to a black student group. On our trip to Atlanta, Georgia comrades discovered that the Black Student Alliance at Georgia State University had been victimized by the campus administration for protesting a racist provocation by a notorious fraternity. Comrades reported back to WV about this incident (see “Black Student Alliance Suspended for Protesting Racist Frat,” WV No. 833, 1 October).

We have been longtime fighters for the freedom of black death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, and sought to highlight his case in the course of this year’s subscription drive. It was notable that while many students had never heard of Mumia Abu-Jamal, most who had were black students. We were also pleasantly surprised to find that many students at elite Bryn Mawr College, just outside Philadelphia, the city where Mumia Abu-Jamal was framed up and convicted, not only knew about him, but a couple had even written papers about his case and the 1985 police bombing of the MOVE organization. SYC video showings of the Partisan Defense Committee video *From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal* on campuses around the country drew many people, including at Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington, where a taped speech by Mumia was played as the commencement address some years ago.

Regional and Local Highlights

Comrades in the Bay Area undertook some of the most successful regional trips this year—a trip by two comrades to Boulder and Denver, Colorado netted a whopping 213 points! Bay Area and Los Angeles comrades made the “Northern Tour,” a trip that encompassed campuses in Oregon and Washington, as well as sales to longshore workers in the ports of Portland and Seattle, selling 208

points. Despite a heavy load of regional trips, comrades also did very well selling subscriptions locally—comrades sold 177 points on Bay Area campuses and 48 points to trade unionists. Three comrades from the Bay Area topped the national competition for most points sold. Congratulations to Vanessa, who with 215 points sold the most subscriptions of any comrade by far! Honorable mention goes to Aman with 143 points and Idan with 120.

The Los Angeles local covered a wide area including Arizona, UC Santa Barbara, San Diego, UC Riverside and UC Irvine. Reflecting the high level of union activity and struggle in L.A., the local easily overshot its goal of 50 points for subscriptions to trade unionists, reaching 72 points through sales to the Labor Day rally, hotel workers rallies, port truckers, longshoremen and others. Many of these subscriptions were to *Espartaco*, showing a real receptivity to our press among Latino workers. Special thanks go to our ever-youthful sympathizer, Steve B., who sold the most among L.A. comrades with a total of 86 points.

The Chicago local traveled to the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor, Michigan State University, the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The local assisted the Bay Area with a trip to the University of Texas at Austin where two comrades endured a grueling 113-degree heat index. Chicago comrades also helped the New York local with a trip to the Tidewater area in Virginia where we were able to reconnect with longtime trade-union subscribers and sell to longshore workers as well as Newport News shipyard workers. The Chicago local sold 70 points on campuses locally, including at the University of Chicago and University of Illinois at Chicago.

In Boston comrades visited regional campuses including Bennington College, the University of New Hampshire, Wellesley College and Clark University and helped New York comrades with a trip to campuses in western Massachu-

setts. Locally at Harvard University, where we look to find a few class traitors who would become professional revolutionaries, some found our “Nationalize Harvard!” poster nothing short of scandalous.

The New York branch made many regional trips, including several to the South. A tour of North Carolina campuses netted 103 points. Despite being drenched by Tropical Storm Ivan, comrades touring Georgia intersected students at Atlanta campuses and met with trade-union subscribers in both Atlanta and at the port of Savannah, where longshore workers remarked on our staying power: “You’ve been coming here for 20 years!” A couple of these workers, who had already renewed their subscriptions via mail so they wouldn’t miss an issue, told us that they like our paper’s national and international scope and that we link the power of labor and the fight against racial oppression. Comrades from New York also spoke with longshoremen at the port of Charleston, South Carolina. In all three Southern port cities we visited the question of organizing non-unionized port truckers was a big issue in discussions. We were also able to meet and discuss

with workers involved in the port truckers strikes that took place around the country last spring (see “Support and Organize the Port Truckers!” WV No. 826, 14 May).

Other highlights of the New York local’s regional work included Rutgers-New Brunswick, a tour of campuses in Washington, D.C. and Baltimore, and Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond.

Included in our “at large” points total are 148 points for subscriptions to WV sold by our comrades of the Trotskyist League of Canada/Ligue Trotskyste du Canada as part of their *WV/Spartacist Canada* subscription drive. Subscriptions mailed in from locations that aren’t serviced by particular SL locals make up the remainder of the “at large” points.

Congratulations to our comrades and sympathizers for all their hard work—it certainly paid off! We welcome our new readers—and our old readers—and hope that for many of you reading our communist press will be the first step toward greater involvement in the social struggles through which a revolutionary working-class leadership will be forged.■

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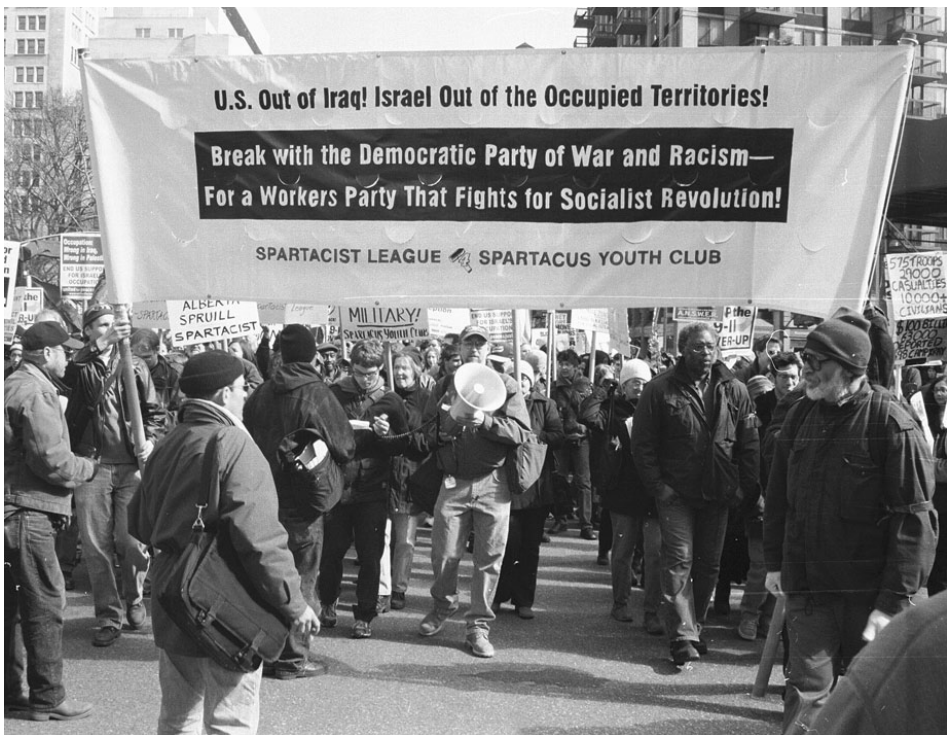
White House...

(continued from page 1)

opponents of socialist revolution on the left to forsake their endless quest for a left reformer from the ranks of the Democrats. There is the seemingly born-yesterday Workers World Party, which proclaims, “Bush Win Sets Stage for Wide Fightback” (*Workers World*, 11 November). Workers World and its International ANSWER Coalition, along with the International Socialist Organization (ISO) and the Revolutionary Communist Party and its Not In Our Name coalition, consciously built an Iraq antiwar movement designed to provide a platform for left-talking Democrats like Al Sharpton and Jesse Jackson who preached that young activists and working people must vote Democrat.

It is precisely the move to vote Democrat—expressed this year through the “Anybody but Bush” sentiment—that has bolstered the fortunes of the Republican right. Such a move is consciously designed as a substitute for class and social struggle, advocating that workers and the oppressed place their confidence in capitalist politicians instead of relying on their own power and organizations. The role of black and “progressive” Democrats, like those who addressed antiwar rallies, is to head off any possibility of social struggle and to direct discontent toward the ballot box. The absence of class and social struggle—the kinds of struggles that can transcend racial, ethnic and religious divisions—provides the basis for the racist fundamentalists to gain ground.

Certainly there is plenty to fight against. Increased attacks on working people will surely follow the election, including attacks on wages, on Social Security, on medical care, on education,



Spartacist contingent at March 20 demonstration against the occupation of Iraq in New York City.

fierce as any on the globe.

It is the capitalist system of exploitation itself that creates and perpetuates conflicts between the workers, those socially organized to produce everything, and the capitalists, those who rake in profits by exploiting the labor of others. The basis for such meager social benefits as still exist in this society—Social Security, unemployment insurance, public education and employer-paid health insurance—was laid by the class struggles of the 1930s that led to the organization of workers, black and white, into country-wide industrial unions.

The Democratic Party has its name stamped on these reforms. But in reality, they were concessions made under battle-

rulers—who had fallen into some disrepute following the civil rights movement and the defeat of U.S. imperialism in Vietnam—while renewing U.S. imperialism’s Cold War drive against the Soviet Union. More recently, it was the oh-so-personable Southern Baptist Bill Clinton who gutted welfare and completed Ronald Reagan’s initiative to fill the prisons with black people as the “alternative” to the poverty and unemployment in the nation’s ghettos.

The most recent aspirant to black leadership and the sole shining light for the Democrats during their electoral drubbing is Barack Obama, Senator-elect from Illinois. In the spirit of Booker T. Washington, Obama offers himself as living proof that the system works, invoking the patriotic battle cry: “We are all Americans.” Yeah, and we are all featherless bipeds. But neither of these truisms negates the fact that the racial oppression of black people has intensified over the past decades. On this matter, Obama stands with those who claim continued black oppression is self-inflicted.

Affirmative action in the universities has been largely strangled by the bosses’ courts and further rendered moot by the skyrocketing costs of a college education with little regret from John Kerry or, before him, Al Gore. With the limited gains of the civil rights movement increasingly shredded, black people’s right to vote was itself attacked up front in the last presidential election in Florida, and this time around by the challenges, widespread harassment, dirty tricks and endless lines at the polling places where those with little voted. In his 1 November *New York Times* column, for example, Bob Herbert described a flyer circulating in black neighborhoods in Milwaukee which asserted that people who had voted in prior elections, as well as people who had been found guilty of anything, including traffic violations, or who had any family members who had been found guilty of anything, could not vote. “If you violate any of these laws,” the leaflet declared, “you can get ten years in prison and your children will get taken away from you”!

It is not surprising that the Deep South and other anti-union backwaters in the U.S. provided the shock troops of religious, racist reaction. It is disquieting, but also not surprising, that a not small portion of those hit hardest by joblessness—workers in West Virginia, Iowa and Ohio—cast their ballots for “moral values.” For the time being, they have traded in their hopes for a better life on earth for Monopoly game deeds to mansions in heaven. The spectre of gay marriage, which would if legalized have zero impact on the lives of those not similarly disposed, undoubtedly moved many to vote up a morality they easily forgo when the possibilities for pleasure present themselves. We forthrightly defend the right to gay marriage as an elementary

defense of democratic rights. It is important that most black people, many of whom are quite religious and do not look favorably on gay marriage or the right to abortion, do not vote for the religious right, as they are painfully aware that they will be the first targets of these reactionaries.

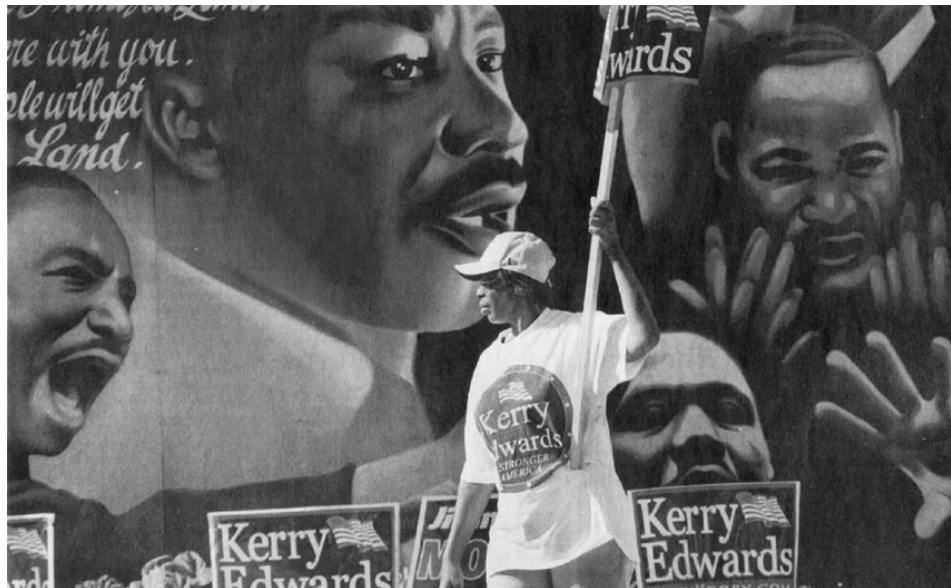
The Imperialist Order Cannot Be Reformed

Patriarchal prejudices, a not unimportant prop for the decadent capitalist order, recede during periods of class struggle, as do the divisions based on race, ethnicity and religion. The current period of religious and racist reaction is hardly unique in American history. In the first two decades of the 20th century workers and black people were grotesquely exploited and oppressed, while ranting revivalist preachers like Billy Sunday denounced divorce, whiskey and radicals. Strikes were drowned in blood. In the aftermath of the Bolshevik Revolution, the forces of reaction mobilized to crush the trade-union movement and met the stirrings for black equality and integration with race riots and lynch law “justice.” The Ku Klux Klan grew in quantum leaps while workers’ wages, even in the white craft unions, were cut in half. Yet in that crucible of terror, heroic fighters for the working class and for black freedom were forged. Initially these assembled in the syndicalist Industrial Workers of the World. In the wake of the 1917 October Revolution in Russia, the best of these became core elements of the American Communist Party under the aegis of the Communist International, inspired by the Bolsheviks, who led the, to date, only successful proletarian revolution.

Within a decade, these Communist forces, schooled by Lenin and Trotsky’s Communist International in the necessity of linking the class struggle in the U.S. to the fight for black freedom, went on to lead the massive class battles of the 1930s. The promise of these struggles was betrayed to Roosevelt’s New Deal Democrats by the Communist Party, which followed the line of the Moscow Stalinists who had usurped political power from the workers in Russia by 1923-24 and gone on to consolidate their rule over the workers state. The line pushed by the Stalinists was to stifle labor struggle internationally while making deals with imperialist rulers in the narrow interests of Russian foreign diplomacy.

The America of today is both similar and quite different from the America of the 1920s: similar in the essential hostility of the capitalist rulers to working-class progress; very different in that the final defeat of the Bolshevik Revolution through capitalist counterrevolution in 1991-92 has rendered the hope for a socialist future a seemingly utopian dream in even the most militant sectors of the working class and in the minds of youth who oppose the crimes of the capitalist system.

But the class struggle, whose high tide thus far was the Russian Revolution, has not been and cannot be extinguished. It is not just a burning necessity; it is inevitable that the American working class will rise in resistance to the unceasing attacks on its well-being over the past 30 years. And then what? The workers can only transcend the conditions under which they are raised through periods of class struggle—and even then only if there is a perceived way forward, which it is the task of a revolutionary workers party to provide. It is in the process of class struggle that a new leadership in the workers movement can emerge, overturning the current betrayers. It is also in the crucible of struggle that the cadres will be assembled to forge the internationalist revolutionary party that can lead the overturn of America’s blood-soaked capitalist-imperialist system and form a workers government. This would provide the crucial beginning to the creation of a world socialist order that will end for all time the exploitation and oppression of man by man. ■



Volunteer for Kerry in Miami on election day. Fight for black liberation, socialism requires break with Democratic Party of racism and war.

on the right to abortion and, quite simply, on the freedom to protest without the threat of jail time. But it is no less true that these attacks have been in process for three decades under the governance of both Republicans and Democrats. The truth—as explained by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels—is that working people will only face increasing misery and oppression unless they rise in combat against the capitalist order and overturn it through socialist revolution.

The working class in the U.S. does indeed have very low political consciousness. At its birth with the wave of industrialization in the late 19th and early 20th century in Jim Crow America, the working class was ethnically and racially divided, a division then maintained by the Democratic Party and by the lily-white craft-based American Federation of Labor unions. The racial divisions that persist to this day have played an enormous role in retarding the political consciousness of the American proletariat, with most workers lacking even a sense of common class interests. But political consciousness notwithstanding, there have been gigantic class-struggle confrontations with the bosses in America as

field conditions of enormous worker struggles. Contrary to what many working people who support Democrats would like, the Democratic Party, even if it wanted to, cannot by mere act of will create another period of New Deal-like reforms. There is simply no reason for this country’s capitalist rulers—and the Democrats are simply the other party of the bosses—to concede anything without a struggle.

Black Oppression and “Moral Values”

The particular version of Christian fundamentalism now associated with the Bush White House developed over the past four decades as an ideological umbrella enabling white racist bigots to link together their hostility to affirmative action, welfare, legalized abortion, public acceptance of homosexuality and other expressions of social liberalization. And it first emerged in the mainstream of American politics not through the Republicans, but with the Democratic administration of “ethnic purity,” “born-again” Christian Jimmy Carter. Carter launched a “moral” rearmament crusade to refurbish the image of America’s imperialist

China...

(continued from page 7)

recovery from the devastating results of Mao's Great Leap Forward in the late 1950s.

Millions of students were mobilized as Red Guards, supposedly to fight against bureaucratism, and, according to the RCP, against the restoration of capitalism. It played out quite differently in the real world. In January 1967, when workers in Shanghai organized a general strike to defend their standard of living, along with a national railway strike, Mao sent his Red Guards and they smashed the strikes. The orders the Red Guards were given by Mao could be summed up as the "Two Whatevers": "Support whatever policy decisions Chairman Mao made and follow whatever instructions Chairman Mao gave."

There is a prejudice derived from class society that the rulers would only work with their brains while the slaves would only work with their hands. The idea of resolving this class prejudice of the Chinese intelligentsia by sending students, intellectuals and professionals out to the countryside for a period of time to learn by toiling with the peasants has real merit. But, implemented by Mao's

bureaucracy, this became brutal punishment for long periods of time for many of those who disagreed with Mao, especially intellectuals and professionals.

The Cultural Revolution polarized Chinese society along the wrong lines by pitting subjectively revolutionary student youth against workers defending their standard of living. There was no side for revolutionaries in this fight within the Stalinist bureaucracy. More people died in the Cultural Revolution than in the suppression of Tiananmen. Yet the RCP hails Mao's Cultural Revolution.

After Mao died, the Deng wing of the bureaucracy resumed control of the government. The market reforms, begun in 1978, spawned a new class of rich peasants in the countryside and petty entrepreneurs. This, along with increasing unemployment in the cities, has laid the basis for the huge disparities in wealth that exist in China today.

Students and the intelligentsia were fervent supporters of the market reforms. Deng denounced the Cultural Revolution, and this sparked a period of debate within the intelligentsia in the early 1980s. The mainstream outlook for Chinese intellectuals became what is called the "New Enlightenment," which was in large measure seen as emancipation from what they thought was orthodox

Marxism. The intellectuals of the "New Enlightenment," which greatly influenced the students protesting at Tiananmen, knew very little about Chinese history. They had simply imported Western ideas into the reform process. In particular, the students and intellectuals had a lot of illusions that "democracy" would necessarily go together with a market economy.

For Marxists, democracy is one of the political forms of a state. As I said earlier, the class nature of the state is determined by what type of property ownership over the means of production is defended by the cops and army. When we Marxists refer to "democracy," we ask: For what class? Many students and intellectuals had illusions in the bourgeois democracy of the U.S. This was conditioned by China's alliance with U.S. imperialism.

Wang Hui of the Chinese "New Left" points out in "The New Criticism" that, while China has always been involved in foreign trade, "The Open Door policies of Deng Xiaoping demanded a much deeper insertion of China into the world market. How did that happen? A key step in the process was China's invasion of Vietnam in 1978 [sic—1979]—the first war of aggression by the PRC after 1949." When China invaded Vietnam, the Spartacist League/U.S. raised the slogan: "China: Don't Be a Cat's Paw of U.S. Imperialism!" But why did China invade Vietnam? In the first place, it was only four years after the Vietnamese workers and peasants drove U.S. imperialism out of their country. This was a historic military defeat for U.S. imperialism. China had volunteers fighting in Vietnam against U.S. imperialism, too.

During the Cultural Revolution, Mao's China became very hostile to the Soviet Union. Mao argued that the Soviet Union, not U.S. imperialism, was the greatest threat to the world. This led to Richard Nixon's visit to Beijing in 1972, where he embraced Mao at the very moment that U.S. warplanes were bombing Vietnam! Vietnam was a close ally of the Soviet Union. In addition to invading Vietnam in 1979 (by the way, they got whupped by



Boccon-Gibod/Sipa

Chinese foreign minister meets with Afghan mujahedin in Pakistan, 1980.

seasoned Vietnamese troops), China aided the CIA-backed *mujahedin* in Afghanistan.

Both Mao and Deng shared great-power aspirations based on the nationalist and anti-Marxist dogma that socialism could be built in one country. China's criminal anti-Soviet alliance with the U.S. happened because the U.S. changed its policy toward China, not the other way around. "Socialism in one country" necessitates accommodating to imperialism. China's alliance with U.S. imperialism contributed to the downfall of the Soviet degenerated workers state. The fact is that without the Soviet nuclear shield the Chinese Revolution would have very likely faced nuclear destruction by U.S. imperialism.

The increase in wealth from the market reforms only affected a very small fraction of the Chinese population. Skyrocketing inflation exacerbated this economic disparity and corruption became rampant. The "New Enlightenment" began to diverge on this issue. The government, led by Zhao Ziyang, implemented anti-corruption campaigns, but students wanted a more effective campaign.

Within China, illusions in American "democracy" and the benevolence of U.S. imperialism began to take off in 1972. In mid February 1989, Gorbachev withdrew the Red Army from Afghanistan. The Tiananmen protests began about two months later.

[TO BE CONTINUED]



Li Zhenheng

During Mao's "Cultural Revolution," regime's perceived enemies were humiliated, persecuted and often killed.

Stewart...

(continued from page 16)

Rutgers on a full scholarship and studied under Arthur Kinoy, who taught her "to go to court to change the world." Stewart joked that she is probably best remembered from those years for riding a motorcycle to Rutgers, New Jersey from the projects she lived in on Manhattan's Lower East Side.

After establishing her own law practice, Lynne Stewart took up the defense of people whose politically motivated actions led the government to brand them as criminals, as well as unpopular cases involving violent crime. She defended protesters against South African apartheid's ambassadors in rugby shorts, the Springboks. She was involved in the defense of Larry Davis, who was acquitted of attempted murder following a 1986 shootout with police in the Bronx, as well as in the Brinks case—a 1981 armored car heist in Rockland County, involving leftists, which left three people dead. Stewart testified that speaking to the press to counter media violence-baiting was essential. Regarding the Brinks case, Stewart testified that effective defense was "not just the nuts and bolts, not doing just the cross-examinations, but neutralizing the territory in which we were working."

Now Stewart finds herself charged as an accomplice in terrorism for conveying sheik Abdel Rahman's views to an Egyptian reporter who then issued a press release in 2000 stating that the sheik had withdrawn his earlier support to a ceasefire between the Islamic Group and the Mubarak dictatorship in Egypt. Against insinuations by the prosecution (and statements by Bush's top cop John Ashcroft!) that this was a "secret message" to incite terrorism, Stewart testified: "This

was done so openly, so above board, so out there for everybody to know about.... It was an expression of his personal view as to the peace initiative. It was not a message: 'go to the third sand dune and dig up the weapons' or something."

The government's case rests largely on secret wiretaps and videotape recordings of the legal team's meetings with sheik Abdel Rahman in prison, phone calls from him and by the paralegal Abdel Sattar (90,000 wiretaps on his phone alone!). The prosecution argues that Stewart deliberately defrauded the U.S. government by signing letters of affirmation that she would abide by the draconian "Special Administrative Measures" under which her client was imprisoned. The truth is as Stewart tells it: the government violated the essential right of confidentiality in attorney/client privilege. Everything Stewart brought into the prison was thoroughly searched by guards. The letters she brought in addressed the political climate in the Muslim community here post-September 11 and in Egypt and were very much a part of determining when and how best to pursue legal challenges to the horrific conditions of imprisonment derived from the SAMs. (For example, prison authorities finally allowed the sheik out of his cell to attend religious services...*in a cage just for him!*)

U.S. Government Is Biggest Terrorist on the Planet

In a courthouse near the site of the monstrous destruction of the World Trade Center, and around the third anniversary of the September 11 attack, the prosecution was outrageously granted the right to present videotapes of Osama bin Laden calling for sheik Abdel Rahman's release. Similarly, the prosecution spent months pummeling the jurors with "evidence" of terrorist attacks around the world by alleged supporters of sheik

Abdel Rahman, from the killing of tourists in Luxor, Egypt, to the bombing of the USS *Cole* and more. What does any of this have to do with Lynne Stewart and her legal team? Nothing!

On the stand, Lynne Stewart exposed the U.S. government's association with bin Laden and his ilk. Stewart said she knew that "Osama bin Laden had been a part of a wealthy Saudi family, aligned with certain American oil interests.... He was in Afghanistan and he had been fighting for the United States government in Afghanistan when we first heard the word *mujaheddin*."

Attorney Michael Tigar read from a 22 September 1995 *Wall Street Journal* article which reported how the defense team in the sheik's 1995 trial produced government documents which "confirmed for the first time that the U.S. Army trained Muslims in the U.S. to fight the Soviets in Afghanistan. In particular, in 1989, Sergeant Ali A. Mohammed of the Army Special Forces based in Fort Bragg, North Carolina, taught several courses to local Muslims in Jersey City, New Jersey." The government's key informant in that case was a confessed perjurer and double agent whom the FBI paid \$1 million to entrap the defendants in that 1995 conspiracy trial by hatching "plots to bomb the United Nations and FBI buildings in New York and the Holland and Lincoln tunnels beneath the Hudson River."

As we stated earlier (see "Drop the Charges Against Lynne Stewart, Mohammed Yousry, Ahmed Abdel Sattar!", WV No. 829, 9 July): "Fairness and logic should dictate that the chief executives of the United States government should be standing trial: Osama bin Laden and the 'Islamic Group' were armed, trained and financed by Washington in its 'holy war' against the Soviet Red Army in Afghanistan! Now, after Frankenstein's monster,

bin Laden and other anti-communist CIA 'assets' turned on their creator, the government turns and threatens a leftist lawyer with decades behind bars." We Trotskyists hailed the Red Army in Afghanistan and think they could have and should have mopped up the CIA-backed Islamic fundamentalist *mujahedin*. Extending the social gains of the 1917 Russian Revolution to Afghanistan was the best hope for women, leftists and ethnic minorities. Thus we politically oppose the views of an Islamic cleric like sheik Abdel Rahman. But what's critical for people to understand is that Stewart and co-defendants are being smeared as guilty by association with the sheik merely for defending him in court! This frame-up literally threatens *everyone*.

In the face of this sinister government terror frame-up, Lynne Stewart concluded her defense testimony with a principled and brave statement of her own personal views on violence. Stewart stated her opposition to "terrorist violence" because "it is not directed against institutions, or, it is directed against civilians and therefore it cannot be excused." She said:

"I am a revolutionary with a small 'R,' that I do believe that basic change is necessary. I think some of it will be accomplished nonviolently such as the fact that my granddaughter now plays NCAA basketball and maybe can play in Madison Square Garden someday. That revolution happened nonviolently. But I think to rid ourselves of the entrenched voracious type of capitalism that is in this country that perpetuates sexism and racism, I don't think that can come nonviolently."

We urge our readers to take an active stand in solidarity and come down to the United States District Court, 40 Foley Square in Manhattan to show their support to the defendants. Donate to the Lynne Stewart Defense Committee, 350 Broadway, Suite 700, New York, NY 10013. ■

Free the Class-War Prisoners!

These are the class-war prisoners who have received or currently receive monthly stipends from the PDC.

Mumia Abu-Jamal: Former Black Panther Party spokesman, well-known supporter of the MOVE organization and award-winning journalist known as the "voice of the voiceless," Jamal was framed up for the 1981 killing of police officer Daniel Faulkner and sentenced to death explicitly for his political views. December 9 marks 23 years of incarceration for a killing the cops know he did not commit. More than three years ago, Jamal's attorneys submitted to the courts the sworn confession of professional hit-man Arnold Beverly that he, not Jamal, shot and killed officer Faulkner. But to the racists in black robes of both the Pennsylvania and federal judiciaries, a court of law is no place for evidence of the innocence of a fighter for the oppressed like Jamal.

As the U.S. Supreme Court issues ominous rulings on the death penalty, and with his final federal appeals in motion, Mumia remains on death row, just a short walk from the death chamber. Workers, minorities and all opponents of racist capitalist repression must now redouble their efforts on his behalf. **Free Mumia Now!**

Jerry Dale Lowe: The Partisan Defense Committee continues its support to the West Virginia United Mine Workers union militant. Lowe was framed up for the shooting death of a scab contractor at Arch Mineral's Ruffner mine during a seven-month strike in 1993 and sentenced the following year to eleven years with no possibility of parole. Jerry was recently allowed into a halfway house, having served nearly the entirety of his frame-up sentence.

The bullet that killed the scab had come from an area where armed company thugs from Elite Security had been positioned. When it became clear that prosecutors had no evidence to convict Lowe under state law, the Clinton Justice Department stepped in to railroad Lowe to prison on charges of "interfering with interstate commerce."

We urged the UMW and other militants everywhere to take up Lowe's cause, but the leadership of the UMW, along with the rest of the union bureaucracy, abandoned Lowe to face the wrath of the labor-hating government alone. More than a decade has been stolen from this class-war fighter.

Eight MOVE members, **Chuck Africa, Michael Davis Africa, Debbie Sims Africa, Janet Holloway Africa, Janine Africa, Delbert Orr Africa, Edward**

Goodman Africa and William Phillips Africa, are in their 27th year in prison. They were sentenced to 30-100 years after the 8 August 1978 siege on their Philadelphia home by over 600 heavily armed cops, having been falsely convicted of killing a police officer who died in the cops' own crossfire. Convicted of the same charges, **Merle Africa** died in prison in 1998.

The politics of the Ohio 7 were once shared by thousands of radicals during the heyday of the Vietnam antiwar movement and the New Left, who wrote off the possibility of winning the working class to a revolutionary program and saw themselves as an auxiliary to "Third World" liberation movements. But, like the Weathermen before them, the Ohio 7 were spurned by the "respectable" left.

was subjected to abuse by brutal and racist prison guards. After numerous provocations in which he was repeatedly thrown into solitary confinement, Hart was recently transferred to Ray Brook, New York, near the Canadian border, many hundreds of miles from his family and supporters.

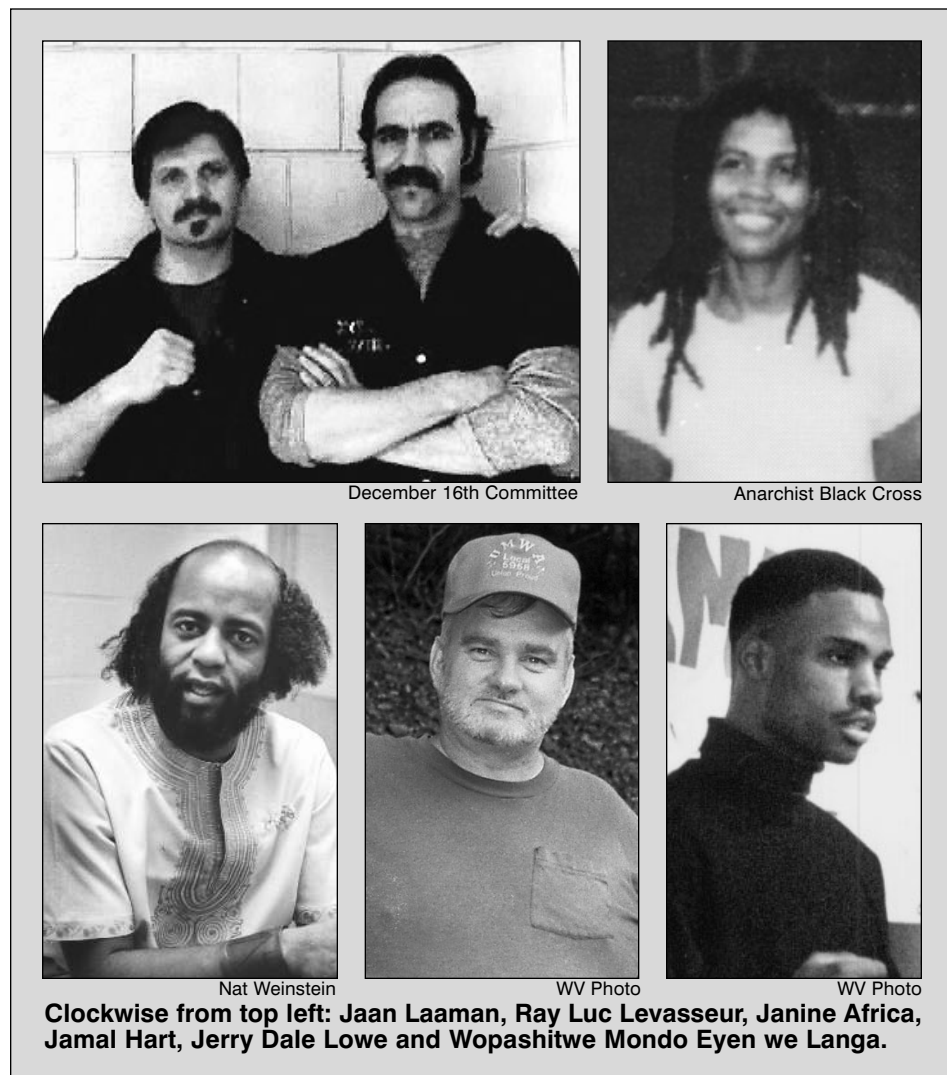
We recently began sending stipends to **Jamal Holiday**, a victim of the brutal police repression during the protests against the Republican National Convention this past summer. Holiday, a young black man arrested during these protests, spent his 20th birthday behind bars. On August 30, Holiday was part of the Poor People's March when a plainclothes cop drove an unmarked motor scooter into the crowd of demonstrators, striking at least one woman. The protesters reacted in defense against this apparently crazed individual. In standard racial profiling, Holiday was picked up the next day by police who claimed surveillance cameras showed him to be wearing the same clothing (a baseball cap and T-shirt) as an individual filmed kicking the undercover provocateur. Facing up to seven years in prison on assault charges, Holiday had his bail raised from \$50,000 to \$250,000 based in part on the fact that political literature was found in his home.

In addition, during this past year the Partisan Defense Committee has aided other class-war prisoners. Until he was released in September, the PDC sent monthly stipends to **Sherman Austin**. Austin was railroaded to prison for a year and is now serving an outrageously restrictive three-year probation for a pure and simple thought crime: hosting an anarchist Web site (www.raisethefist.com).

This year **Ray Luc Levasseur**, one of the Ohio 7, was released to a halfway house after 20 years of imprisonment. Like his comrade, Jaan Laaman, he remained during his two decades of imprisonment an opponent of imperialism and racist oppression.

Not long after he became a recipient of the PDC stipend fund, Palestinian activist **Farouk Abdel-Muhti** was released from a torturous 718 days of detention, during which he fought for the freedom of all immigrant detainees. As a result of his jailing and subsequent beatings, a hunger strike and repeated denials of medicine, Abdel-Muhti's health deteriorated. On July 21, immediately after giving a speech denouncing U.S. imperialism, he collapsed and died of a heart attack. We will not forget what was done to this courageous fighter for the oppressed.

Contribute now! All proceeds from the Holiday Appeal will go to the Class-War Prisoners Stipend Fund. Send your contributions to: PDC, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013; (212) 406-4252. ■



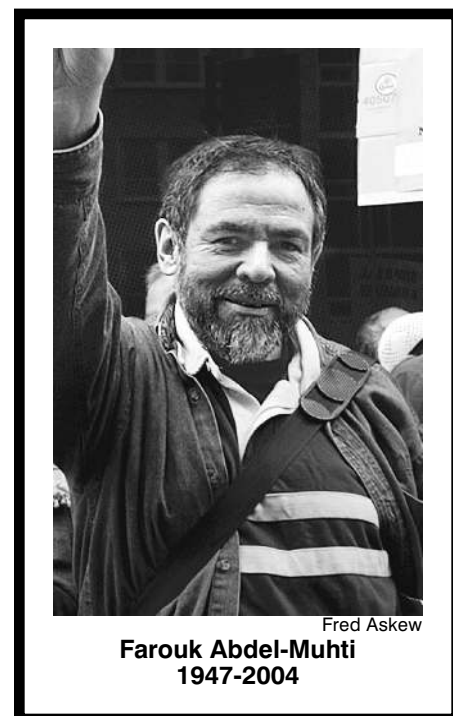
Jaan Laaman has now spent two decades behind bars. This leftist activist was part of the Ohio 7, who were convicted for their role in a radical group that took credit for bank "expropriations" and bombings in the late 1970s and '80s against symbols of U.S. imperialism such as military and corporate offices. Before their arrests in Ohio and Virginia in 1984 and 1985, they were targets of massive manhunts throughout the East Coast and Midwest. Their children were kidnapped at gunpoint by the Feds and interrogated. The government piled one sentence atop another, intent on keeping the Ohio 7 imprisoned until the day they die.

From the standpoint of the proletariat, the actions of Laaman and his comrades against imperialism and racist injustice are not a crime. As the PDC has said from the time the Ohio 7 were first persecuted by the capitalist state, these courageous fighters should not have served a day in prison and should be free now.

Hugo Pinell is the last of the San Quentin 6 still in prison; he was a militant anti-racist leader of prison rights organizing along with George Jackson, who was murdered by prison guards in 1971. In prison for over 39 years, Pinell was this year again denied parole despite hundreds of letters of support, five job offers and a clean record for over 25 years. Now 60 years old, Pinell continues to serve a life sentence at the notorious hellhole, Pelican Bay Security Housing Unit in California.

Ed Poindexter and **Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa** are former Black Panther supporters and leaders of the Omaha Nebraska Committee to Combat Fascism. They were victims of a racist FBI COINTELPRO operation, framed up for an explosion in 1970 which killed a cop. Both were convicted on the basis of perjured testimony, sentenced to life, and have now spent more than 30 years apiece in jail. The Nebraska Board of Pardons refuses to lessen their sentences so that they can be considered for parole.

Jamal Hart, Mumia's son, was sentenced in 1998 to 15½ years on bogus firearms possession charges, targeted for his prominent activism in the campaign to free his father. Although initially charged under Pennsylvania laws, which would have meant a probationary sentence, Clinton's Justice Department intervened to have Hart thrown in prison. He is not eligible for parole. Hart had been incarcerated at Fairton, New Jersey, where he



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From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal



America's Guantánamo Gulag

On the island of Cuba, stands an outpost of American imperial power—Guantánamo Naval Base.

There, hundreds of men, drawn from all over the world, are entombed in what one British court has called a “legal black hole.”

Michael Ratner, an American lawyer who has argued in the U.S. Supreme Court for several people encaged there, has written that Guantánamo is an American interrogation camp, similar to those erected by the Germans during World War II, and outlawed by the Geneva Conventions. In a recent book on the prison camp, Ratner wrote that Guantánamo is a place designed to be beyond the law:

“We have gone back to a pre-Magna Carta medieval system, not a system of laws, but of executive fiat, where the king—or in this case, the president—simply decides, on any particular day, I’m going to throw you into some prison. You are not going to have access to a lawyer or anybody else, or even know if there are charges against you, or if you will ever be released from this prison. Guantánamo has become our Devil’s Island, our Chateau d’If from The Count of Monte Cristo.” [From Michael Ratner and Ellen Ray, *Guantánamo: What the World Should Know* (White River Junction, Vt.: Chelsea Green Publ., 2004), p. 6]

If people were shocked by the recent events at the infamous Abu Ghraib prison in Baghdad, one need only look at Guantánamo for its inspiration. For, the

leadership of Abu Ghraib was exported from Guantánamo to Abu Ghraib with a specific, sinister mission: to “Gitmoize” Abu Ghraib; that is, to treat the people detained there as they had been treated at Guantánamo.

So, the torture of people; the nakedness of people; the brutal beatings of people; the humiliation of people—all of these things were done to Muslim and Arab nationals at Guantánamo.

But, according to Ratner, there was another, insidious method to their brutal madness. Those detained at Guantánamo; they were captured for the purpose of turning them, using state terror to transform these people into snitches to be seeded back into Muslim communities and countries, for the U.S. intelligence agencies. Ratner writes:

This is exactly what the British did with IRA prisoners. Just as is being done in Guantánamo, they refused to give out the names of detainees for “security reasons” and kept them in detention for long periods of time. During that period, many of them were turned into undercover agents for British intelligence. What is going on in Guantánamo is not just about interrogation, not just about keeping allegedly dangerous people off the battlefield, but about recruiting Muslim informants to go around the Islamic world, to go back to their countries of origin and get information back to the United States, essentially to spy for the United States.” [p. 48]

Americans are taking innocent men, putting them in cages, treating them like beasts, *for years*, knowingly, for the purpose of using them against their home communities and countries.

This is the face of American democracy that will be reflected in the eyes of hundreds, and then thousands, and perhaps millions of Muslims. This is the reason that the so-called “War on Terror” is a fraud; it is a war, but a war against reason. It is a mad war, designed by madmen, based on false evidence, and one which threatens to, once again, splash back against the nation that spawned it in global blowback.

We have seen blowback before. It is the grim and bitter lesson that should have prevailed in the gritty smoke of Sept. 11th. Young men, many of them trained by the CIA, and paid by the Saudis, to vanquish the then-“evil empire” of the Soviets in Afghanistan, succeeded in driving Russians from their lands, and flush with victory, turned their sights to those that trained them. They had driven one superpower to its knees; why not another?

Guantánamo, to quote British judges in the *Abassi* case, has become, despite a recent U.S. Supreme Court decision, a “legal black hole.” ...And like black holes, it threatens to swallow everything around it.

7 October 2004

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Send urgently needed contributions for Jamal’s legal defense, made payable to “National Lawyers Guild Foundation” and earmarked for “Mumia” to: Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal, 130 Morningside Drive, Suite 6C, New York, NY 10027.

If you wish to correspond with Jamal, you can write to: Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM8335, SCI Greene, 175 Progress Drive, Waynesburg, PA 15370.

Holiday Appeal...

(continued from page 16)

Republican National Convention this past summer, the bipartisan “anti-terrorism” laws are directed at anybody whose political views are deemed objectionable by the government. Only three American cities have populations exceeding that of the prisons. New restrictions on unions join dismantling Social Security on the administration’s anticipated hit list. Union activists, opponents of the imperialist occupation of Iraq, fighters for black rights, and even the lawyers who try to defend them in court, are faced with the threat of prison.

Standing with those fighters for the oppressed already in the grasp of the capitalist prisons is a necessary step in organizing a class-struggle fight against this all-sided reaction. No case is more urgent than that of death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. A former Black Panther Party spokesman, MOVE supporter and award-winning journalist, Jamal was framed up on charges of killing Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner on 9 December 1981 and sentenced to death. Despite the sworn confession of the real killer, recantation of prosecution witnesses, irrefutable proof of the trial judge’s racist bias, and the prosecution’s racist jury-rigging, coercion of witnesses, doctoring and concealing evidence, Jamal remains in the shadow of Pennsylvania’s death chamber.

This could well be the last Holiday Appeal before the long-awaited decision in the federal appeals court, the last legal step before the U.S. Supreme Court. 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 death sentence. At the same time, Yohn affirmed Jamal’s conviction, refusing to even consider the sworn confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Jamal, shot and killed officer Faulkner. The prosecution appealed, seeking restoration of Jamal’s death sentence. Mumia also appealed, seeking to overturn the conviction. Those appeals were on hold until a final determination of Jamal’s appeals in the Pennsylvania state courts, a determination which took place earlier this year. In June, the federal appeals court lifted its stay on Jamal’s proceedings. A decision could come at any time.

Jamal has been in the racist rulers’ sights from the time he was a 15-year-old Panther spokesman. A prominent and widely respected journalist known as the “voice of the voiceless,” Jamal became a supporter of the MOVE organization while covering the weeks-long siege and ultimate brutal cop assault on their Powelton Village home in 1978. Blaming the MOVE victims for the death of a cop in the police crossfire, Philadelphia mayor Rizzo promised to make the “new breed” of journalist pay, and three years later Jamal was gunned down on the street and hauled off to prison. With Jamal silenced behind bars, Philadelphia’s besieged black population was without a prominent voice of protest when black Democratic mayor Wilson Goode ordered the police bombing of the MOVE home in 1985, killing eleven black people, five of them children.

Jamal’s case cuts to the core of black oppression in the U.S. A black man set up to be legally lynched through state-sanctioned murder, Mumia’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.

As they listened to Cheney’s rantings at last year’s convention of the Conservative Political Action Conference, delegates wore “Fry Mumia” T-shirts. This racist and class hatred is not unique to the Republicans. The District Attorney who put Jamal on death row is current Pennsylvania Democratic governor Ed Rendell, and it has been Philadelphia’s Democratic Party administration that has fought for his execution for over two decades. The racist rulers of this country—Democrat as well as Republican—

want Jamal’s execution as a message to anyone who fights against the ravages of this capitalist system—“Shut up or die!”

The threatened execution of Jamal stands in a long tradition of seeking to silence by state murder fighters for the oppressed: the Haymarket Martyrs—anarchists, union organizers and leaders of the fight for the eight-hour workday executed in 1887; Joe Hill—immigrant, migrant worker, IWW militant put up against a wall by a Utah firing squad in 1915. Following the electrocutions of anarchist workers Sacco and Vanzetti by the capitalist rulers of Massachusetts in 1927, Cannon wrote:

“The rope which strangled the Haymarket martyrs, the chair which snuffed out the lives of Sacco and Vanzetti, the prison walls which confined them all—these instruments of torture and death are weap-

ons in the class war, employed against prisoners taken on the field of battle.”

We seek to mobilize the working people, minorities and all opponents of racist capitalist repression in protest actions centered on the social power of the labor movement. Our fight to free Jamal and abolish the racist death penalty is part of our perspective of winning workers to the understanding that the capitalist state, with its cops and courts, is not some “neutral” agency which serves society as a whole, but rather exists to defend the class rule and profits of the capitalists against those they exploit.

We urge all WV readers to join the fight: Free Jamal and the class-war prisoners now! Abolish the racist death penalty! Build the Holiday Appeal for class-war prisoners! ■

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**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
03-2436

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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New Papers Filed in U.S. Supreme Court

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WORKERS VANGUARD

19th Holiday Appeal for Class-War Prisoners FREE MUMIA ABU-JAMAL!

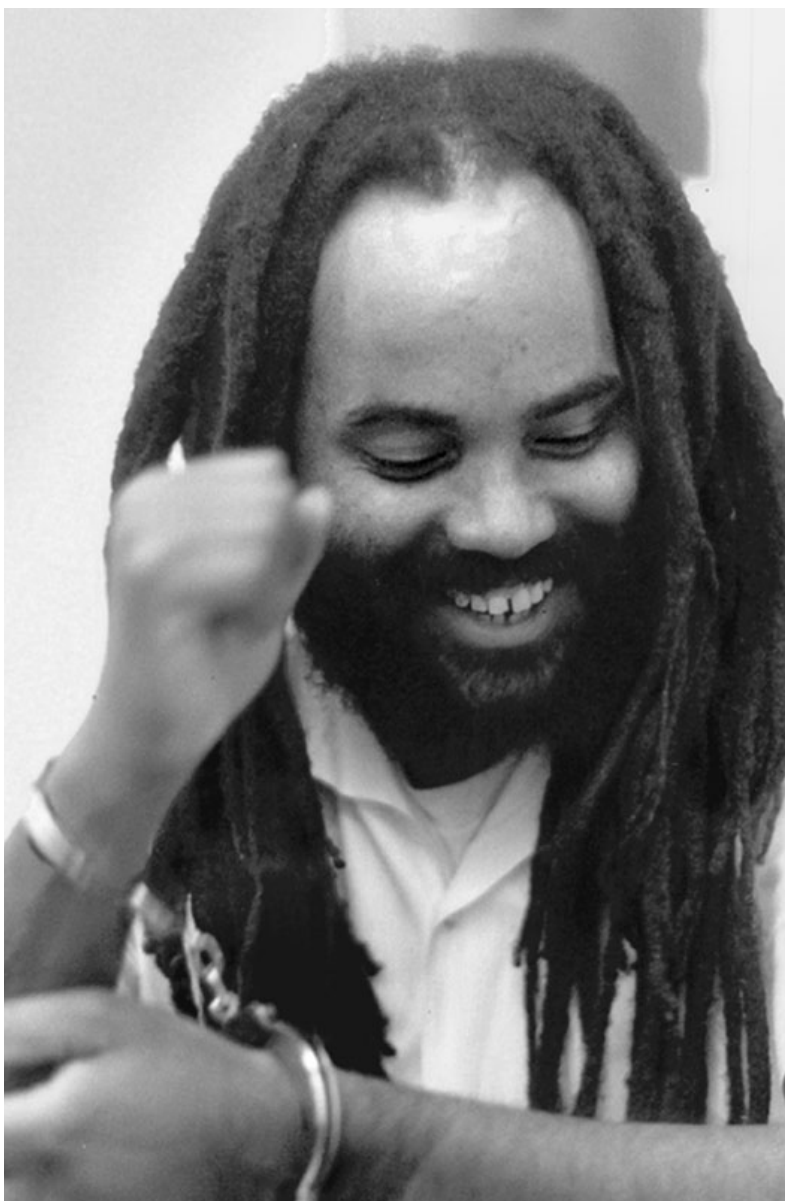
The Partisan Defense Committee is launching its 19th annual Holiday Appeal for class-war prisoners, those among the inhabitants of America's prison nation who were singled out for standing up to racist capitalist oppression and exploitation. We provide monthly stipends to 16 class-war prisoners—trade-union militants, fighters for black freedom and opponents of imperialism and capitalist militarism—as well as holiday gifts for them and their families. These gifts and messages of solidarity are a necessary reminder to these brothers and sisters that they are not forgotten.

The PDC initiated this stipend program in 1986, reviving a tradition of the early International Labor Defense (ILD) under its secretary from 1925-28, James P. Cannon. Carrying forward the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) principle, “an injury to one is an injury to all,” a resolution from the ILD's first conference in 1925 declared:

“The labor movement must be awakened from its slumber and must be roused to the menacing significance of the attempt of the capitalists to break the morale of the working-class by imprisoning its best fighters. The workers must not be allowed to forget those who lie in prison for them, but must be stirred into action in their defense.”

This year's Holiday Appeal takes place as Bush, Cheney & Co. salivate over their prospects for four more years of grinding attacks on labor, immigrants, blacks, gays, women and what remains of the Bill of Rights. With the help of the Democrats, who overwhelmingly voted for the Patriot Act, this administration has overseen a qualitative diminution of democratic rights. Court rulings that stand in their way are used as food for the shredder. Laws they don't like are just ignored. And as seen in the police mobilizations and mass arrests at the

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Fight Sinister Government “Terrorism” Smear Defend Lynne Stewart!

After months of being smeared in the press as a “secret channel” to deadly terrorism, leftist attorney Lynne Stewart finally got a chance to defend herself in court. With courage and eloquence, Lynne Stewart put the government on trial for shredding supposedly constitutionally protected rights in the post-September 11 reactionary climate of fear, and exposed the U.S. government's history of material support to terrorists like Osama bin Laden. Lynne Stewart's testimony was a defense of every intended victim of the “war on terror” which targets immigrants, leftists, anyone with unpopular views and ultimately the entire labor movement.

At issue here is whether an attorney can defend someone without themselves being accused of the same crime. If not, then nobody in this country can

be assured the right to effective legal defense! Also at issue is whether the government has the right to essentially disappear individuals convicted of crimes, severing their right to communicate with the world through “Special Administrative Measures” (SAMs). SAMs deprive prisoners of basic rights and privileges, limiting their access to mail, phone calls, media and even visits by their attorneys. SAMs were introduced under Democrat Clinton and Attorney General Janet Reno, and expanded under Bush/Ashcroft.

Attorney Lynne Stewart, translator Mohammed Yousry and paralegal Ahmed Abdel Sattar are being tried on frame-up charges of providing material support to terrorist activity and conspiring to defraud the U.S. government. This sinister prosecution stems from Stewart's defense of the blind Egyptian cleric,

sheik Omar Abdel Rahman, imprisoned for life on charges stemming from the 1993 World Trade Center bombing. If convicted, the 65-year-old Stewart could face up to 40 years in prison.

Stewart's attorney Michael Tigar effectively punctured the government's smear of Stewart as a heinous accomplice in Islamic fundamentalist terrorism by asking Stewart about her personal history and beliefs. A working-class girl from Queens, Stewart described leaving the city to attend Hope College in the Midwest. She testified: “It was a college that was run by, I would have to say, a fundamentalist Christian group, the Reform Church in America. And in 1957, when I arrived there, women could not wear pants on campus, nor smoke, nor be out of the dorms after 8:00. We could not go downtown except with someone else



Edwine Seymour

along with us. So I had...I guess a taste of fundamentalism in college. Didn't care too much for it.”

Stewart described working as a school librarian in an all-black school in Harlem, and the development of her political consciousness through direct exposure to and confrontation with the entrenched racism of this society. After having children, Stewart went on to law school at

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