

Occupation of Iraq and the “War on Terror”

Lies, Torture and U.S. Imperialism

In the year since the Abu Ghraib tortures came to light, one exposé after another has confirmed that the policies of torture and humiliation have come from the top of this government. The official use of torture extends well beyond Abu Ghraib—into other prisons in Iraq, Afghanistan and the notorious concentration camp in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, where some 500 prisoners continue to be held without charge or trial. The line of the Bush administration has been to deny every new report that comes out documenting more torture and brutality. When Amnesty International released its report last month condemning the U.S. for its mass detentions, torture, disappearances and elimination of the right to trial for those caught in the web of its “war on terror,” President Bush and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice called it “absurd,” while General Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, called Guantánamo a “model facility.”

At the same time, a growing sector of the bourgeoisie is worried that the impact of one torture scandal after another is hurting U.S. imperialism’s interests abroad. When *Newsweek* (9 May) published an article reporting that a Koran had been flushed down a toilet at Guantánamo, protests erupted throughout Muslim countries, leaving 17 people dead. Swearing on a stack of Bibles that it wasn’t true, Bush & Co. twisted arms to force *Newsweek* to retract the article as a warning to any other publication that might report on policies the government wants concealed. Having faithfully reported the government’s lies of Saddam’s “weapons of mass destruction” to encourage “rally ‘round the flag” patriotism in the buildup for war, the capitalist news media continue to kowtow to their White House masters with apologies for occasionally leaking a bit of truth. In so doing, the bourgeois media help chill free speech and assist the government’s assault on civil liberties and the right to dissent.

In fact, when the Pentagon’s own report on Guantánamo was finally released, it was clear that *Newsweek* didn’t have it far



Gambarini/EPA



Saman/Newsday

Top: U.S. Marines terrorize Sunni family in Ramadi. Above: Mother of Abu Ghraib prisoner weeps at protest, May 2004. Banner demands: “Occupiers Leave Our Country.”

off. A guard had not thrown the Muslim holy book in the toilet—he *urinated on it*.

Now, a number of bourgeois politicians and commentators are calling on the Bush administration to shut down Guantánamo. What these forces are trying to do is refurbish the image of American imperialism in order to maintain its effectiveness. Under the headline, “Un-

American by Any Name,” a *New York Times* (5 June) editorial complains that the administration’s policy has not “been effective in finding and prosecuting the most dangerous terrorists, and it has been a disaster in undermining America’s reputation for fairness.”

In a 27 May piece in the *New York Times*, “Just Shut It Down,” columnist

Thomas Friedman argues to close down Guantánamo because “I want to win the war on terrorism,” adding that the deaths of over 100 detainees in American custody “is not just deeply immoral, it is strategically dangerous.” He concludes his column by quoting the executive director of Human Rights First: “If we are going to transform the Middle East, we have to be law-abiding and uphold the values we want them to embrace—otherwise it is not going to work.” Meanwhile, in its recent report on Guantánamo, Amnesty International, too, is concerned that “the rule of law, and therefore, ultimately, security, is being undermined, as is any moral credibility the USA claims to have in seeking to advance human rights in the world.”

While the Bush administration is a particularly arrogant and demented regime, what has really offended its bourgeois critics, particularly liberals and Democrats, is that it has made shamelessly overt what is normally carried out behind closed doors. As we wrote in “U.S. Imperialism’s Torture, Inc.” (WV No. 826, 14 May 2004), state terror and torture are not “aberrations”: “They are the conscious policies of imperialist and neo-colonialist ruling regimes, who routinely and necessarily use terror and degradation as tools to maintain their power.” As death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal wrote in a 3 May 2004 column, “In the Shadows of Abu Ghraib Prison”: “The Iraq Adventure is not, and never has been, about ‘liberating’ an oppressed people.... Americans may call it ‘liberation,’ but they are bringing torture, humiliation, and domination.... Now, let us prepare for the inevitable whitewash.”

In the Afghanistan and Iraq wars, the Spartacist League took a side for the military defense of these countries against U.S. imperialist attack. At the same time, we stood in irreconcilable political opposition to the reactionary Afghan Taliban and the capitalist regime of Saddam Hussein, both former allies of U.S. imperialism. Today, we demand the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all

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Why China Is Not Capitalist

Defend, Extend the Gains of the 1949 Revolution!

SEE PAGE 8



Klan Terror in North Carolina

3 June 2005

Dear WV,

When crosses were burned in three very visible locations in Durham, NC, on May 25, many residents were shocked and puzzled. The seven foot tall and four foot wide, kerosene-drenched crosses were erected and set afire where they would most clearly target the race terrorists' intended victims. One was burned in a predominantly black neighborhood; another at a church at which supporters of fascist anti-gay bigot Reverend Fred Phelps protested the showing of a play about murdered gay youth Matthew Shepard; and the third at Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway, a prominent intersection. At one cross, racist flyers signed "KKK" were left.

Much is made here of Durham's reputation as a "progressive" place with a diverse population and a history of black economic and political progress. Durham's current population is roughly half black and also includes a growing Latino population, and the majority of city council

members are black. The city was once home to a thriving "Black Wall Street," and Durham's NC Central University was the first state-funded liberal arts college for blacks. There's also a sizeable Jewish population and an active gay and lesbian community. (The city is the site of the largest "pride day" festival in North Carolina.) It's the kind of place that one may think would be inhospitable toward the Klan, a cowardly lot who prefer to practice their nightriding terror where there's little chance of getting their noses bloodied.

Indeed, in February 2004 when a handful of Klan and Nazi scum wanted to make hay out of the release of "Welcome to Durham," a documentary about gang violence in the city, they chose to stage their rally about 25 miles away in Raleigh. (The fascists were met by a vociferous, multi-racial counterdemonstration of about 1500 people and if it weren't for the huge turnout of local cops, county sheriff's deputies, state troopers and U.S. marshals they probably



Richardson/News & Observer

Candlelight vigil in Durham, May 26, following fascist Klan provocation.

wouldn't have stuck around long.)

The "progressive" face of Durham hides a bit of reality, however: despite the sizeable black middle class and the black faces in high places, there is plenty of desperate poverty here, much of it black. There are several integrated neighborhoods, but most of the city's black poor are crammed into bleak areas full of decaying old houses or failed and crumbling public housing projects. Gangs and drug-dealing appear to be a growth industry—one of the few opportunities to make a buck in the eyes of poor kids with no future.

While the "progressives" of Durham gloss over these contradictions, the fascists haven't missed them. They know that the existence of gangs and crime brings with it a real racial fear among whites that the Klan can tap into. So, while on the surface it seems a surprise that fascists would choose an integrated, progressive city like Durham, it's consistent with their current strategy. Since the '80s the Klan has consistently targeted cities that have integrated populations, with crime. They play on the racism of the war on crime/drugs, because they feel they will get traction with whites, fed up with crime that has a black face. The incredibly racist and slanted prosecution of the war on drugs sends the racist message that the face of

crime is black. The story goes: young black men go to jail for petty drug offenses, then after "rehabilitation" come out and commit violent crimes. This plays on existing racism and fear in order to get the white population to agree to almost anything in the name of fighting crime. The Klan is the logical next step, in that they offer a final solution. They want a race war, and you're not going to have a race war in Utah. Welcome to Durham.

The day after the cross-burnings in Durham about 600 people came out for vigils near the different sites. The news photos and footage of teary eyes attest to the pain and outrage felt by decent people over the fascist threats, but the best a candlelight vigil can do is to make some people feel better. Candles and tears will not stop Klan terror. What's needed is a mobilization using the social power of the organized, multiracial working class. That's a tall order here in the so-called "right to work" South, where Jim Crow and race-terror have worked hand in hand with union-busting to keep the working class divided, disorganized and cheap.

For labor-black mobilizations to stop the KKK!

Comradely,
LB and MD,
Durham, NC



TROTSKY

Marxism vs. Pacifism

In the lead-up to the March 2003 U.S.-led imperialist invasion of Iraq, reformist socialists in the U.S. and internationally organized massive demonstrations around pacifist slogans such as "No War" and "Stop the War." These slogans were consciously designed to not challenge the capitalist system and not take a military side with Iraq against U.S. imperialism. The struggle against militarism and imperialist war must be directed not simply "against war" but against the source of war, which

is the system of imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism. In a 1936 pamphlet published by the Workers Party of the United States, then-Trotskyist James Burnham (John West) explained why the strategy of pacifism must be rejected.

We have already seen the complete fallacy of the pacifist position as a means of preventing war. But it is necessary to go further. Not merely is pacifism powerless to prevent war. In the modern world it is, in effect, *a means of preparing for war.*

Harsh as this conclusion may seem to pacifists themselves, many of whom are personally sincere in their convictions, it can be proved by both theory and history.

Pacifism in any form aids the preparation for war because:

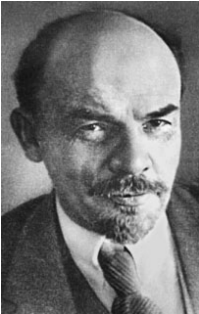
(1) It spreads illusions about the nature of war and of the fight against war (advocating disarmament, conscientious objection, naval treaties, the League [of Nations—predecessor of the UN], etc., as solutions), and thus prevents a real struggle against war, which can be based only on a true understanding of the nature and causes of war.

(2) Pacifism turns aside the working class from its struggle for power, the only genuine way to fight war. In this way it redirects the revolutionary struggle against war into "safe" channels—that is, channels safe for imperialism.

(3) Pacifism subordinates the working class—the only class which can lead the fight against war—to middle class ideas and middle class individuals (preachers, fake liberals, professional "anti-war agitators"), and thus weakens the class strength of the workers.

(4) Most dangerous of all, in the case of pacifism, is the fact that, by exploiting the desire of the masses for peace and yet completely deluding the masses about the character of the struggle against war, pacifism leaves the masses helpless when war actually comes. At that time, the middle-class and pseudo-liberal leaders of the pacifist movement and organizations for the most part go over at once to the side of the war-makers.

—John West, "War and the Workers" (1936)



LENIN

Labor Black League Discussion

For Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants! Stop Racist Violence Against Immigrants, Blacks!

A *Workers Vanguard* readers circle discussion on WV No. 847 (29 April) article on racist violence in Long Island

Saturday, June 18, 4 p.m.
299 Broadway, Suite 318
(1-1/2 blocks north of Chambers St.)

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U.S. Out of Iraq Now!

The Left and the Occupation

Following the second anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Iraq, there has been a lot of handwringing and whining among self-proclaimed socialist groups in the U.S. as to why the “antiwar movement” has fallen on hard times. Both the Workers World Party (WWP), builder of ANSWER and the “Troops Out Now Coalition,” and the International Socialist Organization (ISO) now have the nerve to complain that “the movement” was diverted into supporting pro-war Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry. Workers World vows: “The antiwar movement should never again sacrifice its independence and demobilize itself on behalf of a political party that supports the war” (“Troops Out Now Coalition” leaflet for March 19 New York City protest). The ISO, for its part, boldly proclaims: “Backing Democrats has pulled the antiwar movement to the right” (*Socialist Worker*, 22 April).

Under the headline, “Are the Democrats Our Allies?” the 13 May *Socialist Worker* includes an exchange that proves that the debate is about tactics, not fundamental class interests. While ex-Maoist Carl Davidson insists that the antiwar movement should be lobbying Congressional Democrats, Elizabeth Schulte of the ISO writes, “We need an activist movement that doesn’t compromise its antiwar positions in the name of defeating the greater of two evils—a movement that none of the politicians in Washington, Democrat *or* Republican, can ignore.” So it’s write your Congressman vs. action in the street to pressure your Congressman, be he a Democrat or Republican.

The antiwar movement did not undergo some fundamental transformation to end up in the “Anybody but Bush” camp. *From the very beginning*, the assorted reformist “socialists” subordinated the interests of the international working class to what would be acceptable to those capitalist politicians (e.g., Barbara Lee, Dennis Kucinich, Al Sharpton) who opposed the war because they deemed it was not in the best interests of U.S. imperialism. The socialist pretensions of these reformists—like Workers World (which built ANSWER), the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP—which built Not In Our Name) and the ISO (which worked within United for Peace and Justice—UFPJ)—were once again proven to be so much hot air as they devoted themselves to building a movement that did not and could not challenge the framework of the capitalist system.

Only a program of turning the antiwar movement into an anti-capitalist movement could point the way forward. The perspective of the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Clubs was to wage a proletarian fight to break the disastrous unity of antiwar militants with elements of the bourgeoisie on a pacifist program. We fight to win antiwar activists away from classless appeals to “peace” and “justice” and to the perspective of mobilizing the proletariat in class struggle against the U.S. imperialist rulers. In the absence of such a perspective, the antiwar movement could only benefit bourgeois politicians, in particular the Democratic Party, and reinforce bourgeois rule.

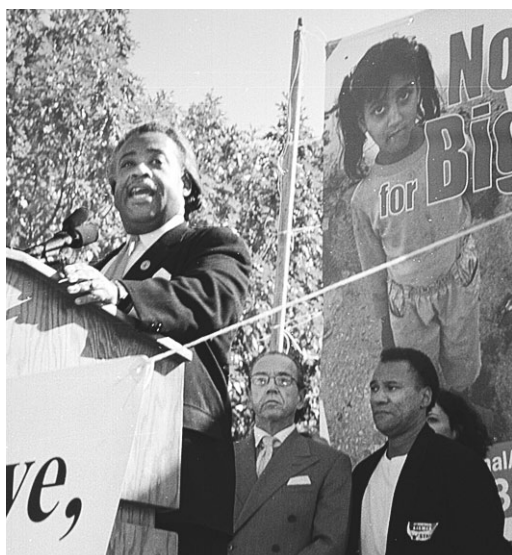
Our starting point, as revolutionary, working-class and internationalist Marxists, is the understanding that the drive toward war is inherent in the world eco-



Left: March 19 anti-occupation protest, New York City. Right: Al Sharpton speaking at antiwar protest in Washington, D.C., October 2002. In antiwar movement, Workers World and ISO promote illusion that capitalism can be reformed.

nomie system as it is presently constituted. With economies dominated by huge financial conglomerates and a small number of monopolist industrial producers, the major capitalist powers (centrally the U.S., Japan and Germany) are in competition with each other for control of raw materials, markets, labor forces to brutally exploit and strategic military positions. The U.S. is currently overwhelm-

ing a series of working-class revolutions to overthrow capitalist rule can create a world-wide planned economy and put a stop to the incessant struggle for domination by the various imperialist powers. But the power of the working class has to be marshaled and mobilized by a revolutionary party. The aim of the Spartacist League is to forge such a party. Thus we approach every social struggle from the



WW Photos

For Class Struggle Against U.S. Capitalist Rulers!



WW Photo

Spartacist contingent at Chicago anti-occupation demonstration, 20 March 2004.

ingly dominant militarily, and wants to remain so. The invasion of Iraq was designed to ensure its strategic military predominance in the Near East to the detriment of its rivals. There are now elements of the U.S. ruling class that worry that the U.S. military is over-stretched in Iraq and that it should conserve its forces for other battles (e.g., against the Chinese and North Korean deformed workers states). However the various imperialist ruling classes conceive of their interests at any particular conjuncture, colonial wars—as well as wars among the imperialist powers themselves (e.g., World Wars I and II)—are inevitable as long as capitalism continues to dominate the globe.

The Achilles’ heel of capitalism is its dependence on the labor of the working class for its profits. The proletariat has the social power and objective interests to sweep away the capitalist system. Only

point of view of furthering the interests of the working class, raising its consciousness and instilling an understanding of its historic task—to overthrow capitalism. As then-Trotskyist James Burnham wrote in “War and the Workers” (1936):

“Since the victory of socialism, and this alone, will defeat war, every step on the path to socialism is a blow at war. In the struggle against war, properly understood, every militant workers’ demonstration, every broad mass labor defense fight, every well-led strike, and in general every advance of the workers toward power, is worth a thousand ‘Peace Leagues.’”

In the lead-up to and during the March-April 2003 war, the SL raised as its central slogans: “Defend Iraq Against U.S./British Imperialist Attack!”, “Down With U.S. imperialism!”, “For Class Struggle Against U.S. Capitalist Rulers!”, and “All U.S. Troops Out of the Near East Now!” Our slogans reflected our policy of *revolutionary defense* of

Iraq and for the defeat of U.S. imperialism. We took a side militarily with semi-colonial Iraq against the U.S. imperialist invaders, while politically opposing Saddam Hussein’s bloody capitalist regime. We also clearly stated that the foremost means to defend Iraq was not on the military plane, given the colossal military advantage of the United States, but through international proletarian struggle, particularly in the United States. We called for *class-struggle opposition* to U.S. imperialism, noting, in a 19 March 2003 “Statement of the Political Bureau of the Spartacist League/U.S.”:

“Workers in Italy, Scotland and elsewhere have already staged labor actions against the war, including blocking military goods destined for the Persian Gulf. Such actions point the way to the kinds of labor struggles that are necessary, especially in the belly of the American imperialist beast. The obstacle to this is the AFL-CIO labor officialdom, which pits American workers against their class brothers and sisters around the world by promoting national chauvinism and subordinating workers to the dual parties of capitalist rule, the Democrats and Republicans.”

In contrast, the reformists consciously *refused* to take a military side with Iraq. The ISO enthusiastically built the demonstrations of the UFPJ coalition as well as the ANSWER and Not In Our Name coalitions. Typical slogans at these protests were “No to War,” “Stop Bush’s War,” “Money for Jobs & Human Needs, Not for War,” and “Bring the Troops Home Now.”

These slogans are all premised on an acceptance of the framework of capitalism, at most calling for a reordering of the policies and priorities of the capitalist government. In no way do these slogans challenge capitalism as a system that is itself *responsible* for poverty and war. Far from raising the consciousness of the working class about the need to overthrow capitalism, they lull the working masses into thinking that it is possible to pressure the capitalist system to be peaceful and to change its priorities. The aim of the various reformists is to establish a movement in which a future bourgeois-defeatist wing of American capital would feel at home, a movement similar to the one the Socialist Workers Party and others built in the early years of the Vietnam antiwar movement.

Recently, Workers World initiated a new “Troops Out Now Coalition” that is “open to all individuals and organizations willing to work together to stop the war.” Meanwhile, the ISO’s self-declared goal is to “influence Congress” by building “a confident, coherent and growing opposition to the Iraq occupation” (*Socialist Worker*, 18 February). By promoting “broad unity” (i.e., unity with the bourgeoisie), the reformists keep American workers tied to their “own” capitalists, while cutting across the international unity that workers in the U.S. must have with their class brothers and sisters in Iraq under the guns of U.S. imperialism. If the U.S. working class does not mobilize in defense of American imperialism’s victims, then it will never mobilize for socialist revolution.

Reform vs. Revolution

The fundamental dividing line between us and the rest of the left is *program*: reform or revolution. Ours is a program for the independent mobilization of the working class in opposition to the entire capitalist system, and the wars, poverty and desperation it breeds. The program of the ISO, Workers World and the RCP is based on class collaboration, which means subordinating the interests of the workers to those of the capitalist class. They push the illusion that war can

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NYC NOTICE

The New York Spartacist League’s public office will be open from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, June 11 and will be closed on Saturday, June 18.



“Honor” Killings in Germany

We print below the translation of an article that first appeared in *Spartakist* No. 158 (Spring 2005), newspaper of the Spartakist Workers Party of Germany, section of the International Communist League.

SPARTAKIST 

On January 7, Hatun Sürücü was shot in Berlin-Tempelhof, her head and body so riddled with bullets that she died on the spot. In contrast to the way she chose to live, her relatives buried her in the most conservative religious tradition. Only her three brothers were not present at the burial. They were in jail, accused of their sister’s “honor” killing, supposedly committed to restore the family honor destroyed by her behavior: abandoning a marriage arranged by her family with a cousin in Istanbul when she was 16; returning to Berlin; living with her son in a home for mothers and children, beyond the reach of family discipline. She had sought out training as an electrical installer, which she was within weeks of completing, had stopped wearing the headscarf and was dressing as she pleased. She was also dating German men and choosing her own friends, which could have led to her choosing her next husband without the agreement of her family.

This is reportedly the sixth such “honor” killing in Berlin in four months. It has horrified and polarized society, igniting the explosive mixture of women’s oppression and racism. It was the revolting sympathy with the murderers expressed by some schoolboys at Thomas Morus High

method for keeping Turkish and Kurdish girls within prescribed bounds.

Simultaneously, the bourgeois press set up a howl over fundamentalism, foreign customs and Turkish immigrants. Berlin’s SPD [Social Democratic] mayor Wowereit is demanding that “Those who come [to Germany] must show the will to assimilation” (*Der Tagesspiegel*, 22 February). This is only the latest version of Chancellor Schröder’s 1998 threat: when someone “abuses the right to hospitality, there’s just one thing to do: out with them—and fast.” It is with disgust (but no surprise) that we learn that Neukölln mayor Heinz Buschkowsky (SPD) has been using the murder of Hatun Sürücü to push his campaign for forced assimilation. In an interview with the fascist newspaper *Junge Freiheit*, Buschkowsky inveighed from the right against “multicultural” politics, saying that “many people apparently are much more outraged when foreigners become victims of right-wing extremist violence than when Turkish women are shot to restore the family honor” (*tip*, 24 March).

On March 5, occasioned by the recent “honor” killings, Terre des Femmes (TdF), along with SPD, PDS [Party of Democratic Socialism], Green politicians and others, called a demonstration against violence against women that drew some 1,000 people onto the streets of Kreuzberg [in Berlin]. The issue of *Spartakist* with the headline “Full Citizenship Rights for All Who Live Here” drew lots of attention and sales were brisk, especially when we pointed out an earlier article, “No to the Racist Headscarf Ban.” At one point small groups of

set off more racist violence on the streets. This has been among the obvious effects of the anti-Islam “war on terror” waged by U.S. and European governments since 11 September 2001. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, misery—growing unemployment, ghettoization, war and hopelessness—is on the rise among immigrants and in the entire “Third World,” with the result that fundamentalism is gaining strength as a seeming alternative.

Many social workers who took part in the TdF demonstration have been engaged in a Sisyphean task against the mosques and the state, attempting to assist, hide and defend young women immigrants. They told a *Spartakist* saleswoman how conflicted they were about joining the demonstration in the midst of an anti-Islamic witchhunt. The Turkish Association of Berlin-Brandenburg (TBB) posted the call for the demonstration on their Web site. However, three days after the demonstration, the TBB Women’s Forum put out a press release warning against “undifferentiated and all-embracing statements that could heighten prejudice and racist tendencies vis-à-vis the Turkish community and other minorities.”

Hatun’s execution was extreme in its brutality, but her situation was horribly common. A study by the Family Ministry reveals what social workers were only able to guess at: “49 percent of Turkish women said they had experienced physical or sexual violence in their marriage. A quarter of those married to Turkish husbands said that they had met their grooms only on their wedding day. Half said they were pressured to marry partners selected by their relatives and 17 percent felt they had been forced into such partnerships” (*Spiegel* online, 2 March). That Hatun had the fortitude (and help) to fight her way out of this situation was unusual. Social workers at Papatya, an institution that maintains a secret home specializing in assisting young women who are fleeing their families, have often observed that many of the young women who come for help do eventually go back to their families. It takes a very determined or very frightened young woman to break completely with her family and make her way alone or even as a single mother in this racist country.

The concept of “family honor,” i.e., control of the sexuality of women by their family, is not exclusively Islamic, but rather connected to a mode of production where a clan—a series of related extended families—holds and works the land in common. Citing Marx, Friedrich Engels explained the history of women’s oppression in his classic work *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* (1884):

“The modern [patriarchal] family contains in embryo not only slavery (*servitus*) but serfdom also, since from the very beginning it is connected with agricultural services. It contains within itself in *miniature* all the antagonisms which later develop on a wide scale within society and its state.”

“Such a form of the family shows the transition of the pairing family to monogamy. In order to guarantee the fidelity of the wife, that is, the paternity of the children, the woman is placed in the man’s absolute power; if he kills her, he is but exercising his rights.”



Hatun Sürücü

Exberliner

This Marxist view of women’s oppression as linked to private property and particularly to the oppressive institution of the family was integral to the Bolshevik program and strategy for building socialism internationally. Lenin emphasized that “one cannot draw the masses into politics without drawing in the women” (“International Working Women’s Day,” 8 March 1921). In addition to legal equality,

“The second and most important step is the abolition of the private ownership of land and the factories. This and this alone opens up the way towards a complete and actual emancipation of woman, her liberation from ‘household bondage’ through transition from petty individual housekeeping to large-scale socialized domestic services.”

Even in the face of dire poverty and imperialist encirclement, the young Soviet state undertook heroic efforts to organize public education, childcare, laundries, health facilities and canteens at the factories and in the fields. Bolshevik women organizers went voluntarily to Central Asia to inform women of their rights and mobilize them for their class interests against family interests and “honor.”

Many Bolshevik policies were reversed under the rule of Stalin’s nationalist bureaucratic caste which usurped power in 1923-24, betraying the Leninist internationalist perspective in the name of “socialism in one country” and “peaceful coexistence” with imperialism. Similarly, the family was reinstated as a “fighting unit for socialism.” Despite all these deformations, with the collectivization of agriculture, Central Asia was raised into the 20th century from a mode of production typical of the 7th century, so that women were able to cast off the veil, get an education, participate in social life, choose their own husbands and obtain access to contraception. In contrast, their sisters in Afghanistan remained chained to centuries-old customs and traditional family violence until 1979, when a leftist, secularist, pro-Soviet regime, backed by the Red Army, briefly lifted them out of this wretchedness; against this, the imperialist powers (including all the parliamentary parties in Germany) financed and armed the Islamic fundamentalists, including the Taliban. It was the first time in modern history that women’s rights became the central question of a war. In contrast to most of the “left,” we said at the time: “Hail Red Army! Extend the social gains of October to the Afghan peoples!” But with the destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92, all the old crap is coming back.

While immigrants of the Turkish and Kurdish ethnic minorities and their German-born children and grandchildren have no links to agriculture in Germany, since most have either no citizenship rights at all or citizenship rights that are revocable, they often remain tied to land and family structures in Turkey. Family organization often replaces the social measures that most Europeans have

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Berlin, 5 March: Some 1,000 protest “Against Violence Against Women.” Sign reads: “Stop Political Islam, Stop Honor Killings.”

School in [Berlin’s] Neukölln [district] that really ignited debate over the slaying and the whole issue of “honor” killing—their justification was that “she had lived like a German” (*Junge Welt*, 25 February). The shocked school principal responded to the mocking jeers with an open letter to all students, parents and teachers. And while the overwhelming majority of pupils at this school, including those of Near Eastern and Muslim extraction, unambiguously condemned the murder, this was not just an expression of macho on the part of a small minority—it also reveals the

demonstrators stood facing one another, excitedly discussing whether one should beg the racist state to defend immigrant women against Islam or defend the headscarf as such. This is a false polarization: the veil, along with the headscarf, is a symbol of the subordination of women to men, and the church/mosque/synagogue is a primary instrument for women’s oppression. Nonetheless, we defend the right of ethnic minorities to practice their religions and recognize that state persecution will not only drive oppressed women back to home and hearth but will

German Trotskyists Beat Back Attack by Pro-Zionist Goons

We print below a May 24 leaflet issued by the Spartakist Workers Party of Germany (SpAD), section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist). The leaflet outlines how our SpAD comrades successfully defended themselves against a violent attack by “anti-German” thugs in Hamburg. The “anti-Germans” are in no way part of the left or workers movement. They are a conglomeration of ex-leftists who came together in 1990, following the counter-revolutionary annexation of the East German deformed workers state by the Fourth Reich of German imperialism, and have since embraced many reactionary forces, including U.S. imperialism and the Israeli Zionist state.

Hamburg

On May 14, at 4 p.m., we held a forum at a Hamburg café of the AIDS-Help Association. The forum was entitled “8 May 1945: The Red Army Smashed the Nazi Regime! SPD [German Social Democratic Party]/Green/PDS [Party of Democratic Socialism]—Popular Front for German Imperialism.” We celebrate the 8th of May as the day of the victory of the Red Army over Nazi Germany. We stand in the tradition of the Trotskyists, who in the Second World War unconditionally militarily defended the Soviet degenerated workers state and fought for the defeat of the imperialist bourgeoisies of Germany, Japan, the U.S., Britain and France. The imperialists, no matter whether Axis powers or “democrats,” were vying for a new division of the world. While the Western imperialists bombed the workers districts of Hamburg and Dresden, it was the Red Army that brought the Holocaust to an end and liberated the peoples of East Europe from Nazi barbarism. Only when it became clear that the Soviet Union would triumph did the Western Allies open the second front in 1944 “to save” capitalist Europe from the Red Army. That is why it is false when the left of today hails the “democratic” Western imperialists as “liberators.”

After we had left the café of the AIDS-Help Association on Lange Reihe Street and some of the participants had gone to a nearby bar, a gang of 10 to 15 “anti-Germans” dressed almost exclusively in black showed up around 7:30. The group pursued two of our comrades to the bar, threatening, “We’re here to get you again!” We demanded that the provocateurs get out of the bar and informed the rest of the guests that they are racists who cheer on state terror against Muslim immigrants and the oppression of the Palestinians. When we made it clear that these people were known for attacks on leftists, one of the provocateurs shoved one of our Jewish woman comrades against a wall. While we were trying to restrain the goon, a second attacker punched another woman comrade in the face. In the course of pushing back the “anti-Germans,” two young workers were injured and one had his glasses broken. While we were successful in rapidly expelling these thugs from the bar, they turned over tables and tried to use chairs as weapons on their way out. Finally the cowards beat it. *An injury to one is an injury to all! For united-front action by workers, leftists and immigrants to defend against “anti-German” goons!*

This attack is the latest in a whole series of “anti-German” attacks on leftists, immigrants and others who don’t fit into their racist, pro-imperialist world-

view. In 2003 they attacked two of our forums at Humboldt University in Berlin, including once with a smoke bomb [see “Germany: Apologists for Zionist Terror Attack Spartakist Youth Meeting,” WV No. 806, 4 July 2003]. Most recently, on April 28, they attacked our lit table there. They hate us especially because we have exposed them as wanting to destroy leftists and have had some success in isolating them politically, not least with our article “‘Anti-Nationals/Anti-Germans’: Goons for the SPD/Green Government!” (Spartakist No. 152, Fall 2003) documenting how they are financed by the government. The “anti-Germans” are goons and provocateurs and work hand in glove with the bourgeois state. On May 8 in Berlin, they tried to pull the plug on the sound truck belonging to the ATTAC contingent at the Spasibo coalition’s Antifa [groups of self-described anti-fascists]

tion,” the U.S., France, Britain and the Soviet Union. And they carried Israeli flags. The “anti-Germans” deliberately equate the reactionary forces of Arab nationalism and Islamic fundamentalism with fascism, in order to mobilize for their modern-day version of an “anti-Nazi coalition,” in defense of U.S. imperialism and its Israeli junior partners in the Near East. What they sell as anti-fascism is in reality defense of Zionist terror against Palestinians, and imperialist war.

They hailed the NATO bombing of Afghanistan and the U.S. war against Iraq and today they support the colonial occupation there. Their racism against immigrants of Muslim background corresponds to that of the U.S. neoconservatives like Richard Perle and Paul Wolfowitz, who are quoted positively by “anti-German” magazines like *Jungle World* and who make up a main

to death row in the U.S. When the attack was repulsed, the “anti-Germans” sicced the cops on the Mumia supporters. We defended the RK (Revolutionary Communists), who supported the Mumia contingent, against the ensuing racist witch-hunt by the “anti-Germans.” The result of their slanders is that the Mumia contingent was completely banned from this year’s Carnival. Mumia Abu-Jamal is hated by the “anti-Germans” because he takes a stand against the racist politics of U.S. imperialism, which the “anti-Germans” cheer with waving flags. We demand: *Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Down with the racist death penalty!*

In Hamburg we also were in the cross hairs of these goons because we call for defending the seminars of Professor Hanisch, who argues for the right to existence of both Israelis and Palestinians, against “anti-German” provocations and attempts to get them banned. In our leaflet mobilizing for the university strike against tuition fees, we wrote: “The provocations of the ‘anti-Germans’ all follow a pattern of inciting the German state against whoever may be their victims at the time. Thus they called (in vain) on university president Luthje to ban Professor Hanisch’s seminar. Anti-racist students must defend the seminar against censorship efforts by the racist ‘anti-Germans.’ In the winter semester of 2003-04, Berlin ‘anti-Germans’ slandered the university student strike in Berlin as ‘anti-Semitic.’” The appeals by the “anti-German” group Bad Weather and people in the Hamburg student library—made to the same Luthje who sics the cops on students—to cancel Professor Hanisch’s seminar are a threat against all those protesting the imposition of tuition as well as all those who want to form their own opinion about the Near East. At least one of the May 14 attackers was among the “anti-Germans” disrupting various seminars by Professor Hanisch at Hamburg University and had already tried to set off a violent confrontation with us on May 12 while we were distributing leaflets outside a seminar. Already in July 2003, Bad Weather had made death threats against a linguistics professor at Hamburg University for supporting a call by university lecturers from Britain and Israel to isolate Israel as a protest against its occupation policy. The “anti-Germans” brand as anti-Semitic every defender of Palestinians, including non-Zionist Jews and human rights activists such as Professor Hanisch. *Workers, leftists, immigrants and anti-racists—defend free speech! Defend Professor Hanisch and his lectures and seminars!*

We stand for the overthrow of the sheiks, mullahs, colonels and Zionist butchers and for a socialist federation of the Near East. In contrast to nationalists of every stripe, we want to win the Hebrew-speaking workers to the defense of the Palestinians. Israel is not “the only secure place,” but a deathtrap for Jews. It is especially Jews from East Europe who are used by the Israeli bourgeoisie in their dirty war against the Palestinians. In Israel/Palestine, an area to which two nationalities lay claim, only an Arab-Hebrew workers revolution can democratically resolve the question of national self-determination for both the Palestinian and the Hebrew-speaking peoples. *Israeli troops and settlers out of the occupied territories! Defend the Palestinians! For a socialist federation of the Near East!*

The “anti-Germans” couldn’t care less about the fate of the Jews. Following on the Kohl government’s banning of immigration by Jews from what was then the

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Spartakist photos

Berlin, May 8: Sixtieth anniversary of Red Army victory over Nazi Germany. Spartacist placard (top left) reads: “‘Collective Guilt’ Amnesties Bourgeoisie of Auschwitz—Workers Revolution Will Avenge the Holocaust!” Below: Pro-imperialist, pro-Zionist “anti-Germans” march with flags of Allied “anti-Hitler coalition.”



demonstration, because ATTAC supporters were singing rap songs against the bloody U.S. occupation of Iraq. In our leaflet, “‘Anti-Germans’: Goons for German Imperialism” (4 May), we had already warned, prior to the demo, “The ‘anti-Germans’ feel the wind in their sails. The political backdrop for this is the rapprochement of left Antifas with these racists in the name of transclass ‘antifascist unity’.” We intervened for a proletarian internationalist perspective to stop the Nazis. “Anti-Germans,” pre-eminently the group Kritik & Praxis, were permitted to march at the tail of this coalition demonstration waving flags of the countries in the “anti-Hitler coali-

part of the Christian-fundamentalist Bush administration. And their racism corresponds to that of the SPD/Green government which is administering German imperialism for the bourgeoisie. One cannot fight the Nazis together with racist warmongers like the “anti-Germans”! The “anti-Germans” are not part of the left but accomplices of Fischer/Schily [German Foreign Minister and Interior Minister] and Bush/Blair!

At the Carnival of Cultures in Berlin in May 2004, “anti-Germans” from the group Kritik & Praxis assaulted a contingent defending black journalist and former Black Panther Party member Mumia Abu-Jamal, an innocent man condemned

Left and Occupation...

(continued from page 3)

be ended by pressuring the bourgeoisie.

The reformists did not fight to get the working people of the U.S. to understand that their fundamental interests lay in siding with the Iraqi people against the U.S. military machine. Rather, they wanted to build a “movement” tailored to “antiwar” bourgeois politicians—and no bourgeois politician is going to feel comfortable on a platform with those who support the other side in a conflict with the U.S. Nor did the ISO and Workers World, despite their socialist pretensions, call for the overthrow of the capitalist system from the platforms of the major antiwar mobilizations they supported.

In their press, the ISO and Workers World polemicize against the Democrats. For example, in “The Future of the Antiwar Movement” (*International Socialist Review*, January-February 2005), the ISO states: “The antiwar movement was quiet because it plunged itself headlong into the Kerry campaign.” But their “opposition” to the Democrats is very different from ours. We oppose the Democratic Party on principle because it is a capitalist party that is the enemy of working people, blacks and all the oppressed. The reformist left, however, views the Democratic Party as a potential ally.

For example, Workers World, which ran its own presidential campaign in 2004, enthusiastically endorsed black liberal Democrat Cynthia McKinney for U.S. Congress, calling her “Unbossed & Unbought” (*Workers World*, 22 July 2004). This year’s 19 March “Troops Out Now!” protest featured Democratic Congressman Charles Rangel as a speaker. Rangel had introduced a bill in Congress in 2003 (and again last month) for the reinstatement of the draft, i.e., more imperialist troops! The ISO’s “alternative” to voting for Kerry was to support capitalist politician Ralph Nader’s “independent” campaign for president. Nader did not even oppose the imperialist occupation of Iraq, proposing only that it be under the cover of a United Nations fig leaf, and explicitly promoting his candidacy as a vehicle to pressure the Democrats to “return” to liberalism. For its part, the RCP advised: “vote for Kerry if you feel you really have to” (*Revolutionary Worker*, 29 August 2004).

Attacking the reformist strategy on war, Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky wrote in *The Permanent Revolution* (1929) of “the boundary that separates Marxism from opportunism, the revolutionary from the pacifist position”:

“It is a question of nothing less than the struggle against war, that is, of *how and with what methods war can be averted or stopped; by the pressure of the proletariat upon the bourgeoisie or by civil war to overthrow the bourgeoisie?*...”

“Only a reformist can picture the pressure of the proletariat upon the bourgeois state as a permanently increasing factor and as a guarantee against intervention.

“The struggle against war is decided not by pressure upon the government but only by the revolutionary struggle for power.”

The ISO and “the Resistance”

The imperialist war and occupation of Iraq are a direct consequence of the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92. The USSR was the military-industrial powerhouse of the degenerated and deformed workers states—with a nuclear arsenal that could challenge that of the U.S. Without the Soviet Union to stay the hand of U.S. imperialism, the world has become a far more dangerous place, a place of unbridled American military intervention. Although bureaucratically degenerated under Stalinist misrule, which included policies that conciliated imperialism, the Soviet Union was still a workers state with a planned economy and collectivized property. We fought to defend the USSR—as we do China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba today—against imperialist attack and capitalist

counterrevolution. At the same time, we fight for workers political revolution to oust the parasitic Stalinist bureaucracies, which base themselves on the reactionary dogma of “socialism in one country,” and to establish regimes based on workers democracy and revolutionary internationalism.

In contrast, the ISO has from its inception been defined by the virulent anti-Communism of the Cold War period. In the name of “democracy,” the anti-Communist ISO hailed nearly every force arrayed against the USSR, including the CIA-backed *mujahedin* in Afghanistan who took up arms against the Soviet Army and opposed elementary democratic rights for women and reforms that infringed on the economic and political dominance of the mullahs. The ISO cheered the cutthroats Reagan called “freedom fighters,” who threw acid

relations—something the ISO would like to disappear. Further, the defeat of the U.S. was a major victory for workers around the world, creating the “Vietnam syndrome,” which stayed the hand of the imperialists from military invasions for over a decade. We were for the victory of the Vietnamese Revolution.

As revolutionary Marxists, we have a side in the current conflict in Iraq: against the U.S., its allies and Iraqi lackeys. Our starting point is to demand the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. troops. We defend the peoples of Iraq against any U.S.-led attack and repression. *Insofar as the forces on the ground in Iraq aim their blows against the imperialist occupiers*, we call for their military defense against U.S. imperialism. Every blow struck against the imperialist occupiers is a blow struck against the enemy of workers and the



May Day in Petrograd, 1917: Bolsheviks organized against imperialist war, brought working class to power in Russia in October Revolution. Center banner reads: “For the Arming of the People—Long Live the International.”

in the faces of unveiled women and skinned Communist school teachers alive! We Trotskyists said, “Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!” When the Soviet Union was dealt a mortal blow by Boris Yeltsin’s coup, the ISO and its international co-thinkers crowed, “Communism has collapsed.... It is a fact that should have every socialist rejoicing” (*Socialist Worker* [Britain], 31 August 1991).

The collapse of the Soviet Union plays an important role in evaluating the ongoing debate in the left on the Iraqi “resistance.” In “What Kind of Movement Do We Need?” (*Socialist Worker*, 22 April), the ISO reports that “New York City UFPJ leaders refused to endorse the March 19 ‘Troops Out Now’ protest in Central Park—in part, they said, because ‘some of the early materials for this protest’ contained ‘language about supporting the Iraqi resistance’.”

In an article titled “The Future of the Antiwar Movement” (*International Socialist Review*, January-February 2005), Meredith Kolodner of the ISO wrote:

“The truth is that a mass demonstration isn’t sufficient to end a war. The Iraqi resistance, whose impact on the U.S. is far more forceful than a mass demonstration, hasn’t yet been enough to force the U.S. to leave. The U.S. took years to finally admit defeat and pull out of Vietnam—a country less strategically important than Iraq today. It was forced to do so by the combination of a mass movement at home, a unified national liberation movement in Vietnam, and the disintegration of the U.S. army as an effective fighting force.”

The truth is the ISO is deeply dishonest. Kolodner holds the antiwar protests as equally responsible for the American pullout as the “unified national liberation movement in Vietnam.” In fact, the U.S. pulled out of Vietnam because it was militarily defeated on the battlefield by the heroic workers and peasants of that country. Along with the army of the North Vietnamese deformed workers state, the workers and peasants of the South sacrificed so much because they were fighting for more than “national liberation.” Their victory resulted in a social revolution—i.e., the overturn of capitalist property

oppressed. But as we wrote in “The Left and the ‘Iraqi Resistance’—U.S. Out of Iraq Now!” (WV No. 830, 6 August 2004):

“We do not imbue the forces presently organizing guerrilla attacks on U.S. forces with ‘anti-imperialist’ credentials and warn that in the absence of working-class struggle in Iraq and internationally against the occupation, the victory of one or another of the reactionary clerical forces is more likely to come about through an alliance with U.S. imperialism....

“The so-called ‘national resistance’ in Iraq is a myth promoted by U.S. and Western imperialism and cynical leftists.... Resistance forces led by religious clerics are by definition sectarian. There isn’t a unitary ‘resistance’ force in Iraq but rather disparate groupings organizing guerrilla attacks on U.S. forces—and often against rival groupings and random civilians.”

In a piece by ISO honcho Paul D’Amato in *International Socialist Review* (March-April 2005) titled “Iraqis Have the Right to Resist,” he tries to paint the insurgency in Iraq as a “national liberation movement.” D’Amato compares it to the North Vietnamese Stalinists: “North Vietnam was under the sway of a one-party dictatorship that suppressed dissent, and the Vietminh under Ho Chi Minh’s leadership murdered Vietnamese Trotskyists after the Second World War during the resistance against the reimposition of French colonialism.”

It is grotesque to compare the Vietnamese forces that fought for social revolution, that actually defeated the U.S. militarily, with the religious and nationalist fanatics in Iraq whose existence is often defined by the national and sectarian divisions in the country among Sunni and Shi’ite Arabs and Kurds, and which often target other religious or ethnic populations in criminal bombings. During the Vietnam War, we exposed the crimes of the North Vietnamese Stalinists, such as the murder of Vietnamese Trotskyists. One doesn’t need to prettify history to understand that D’Amato’s comparison exudes fierce anti-Communism.

Throughout his article, D’Amato cites war after war to lecture about the importance of supporting national liberation

struggles. This is *chutzpah*, considering that the ISO’s international founder, the late Tony Cliff, was expelled from the Fourth International for refusing to defend North Korea against the UN-backed U.S. invasion of the peninsula during the 1950-53 Korean War. Behind this was Tony Cliff’s Cold War anti-Communism, as the Korean War was more than a national liberation struggle. Like Vietnam, the Korean War was a conflict of forces of counterposed class characters, pitting the North Korean and Chinese deformed workers states against U.S. and British imperialism and their South Korean lackeys. The Korean War is unmentioned in D’Amato’s article. Also unmentioned is the fact that the Cliffites’ anti-Communism was so deep that they refused to defend the Vietnam National Liberation Front (NLF) until quite late in the war, when it became clear that their anti-Communism would isolate them among left-radical youth in the U.S. at the time who were chanting, “Ho, Ho, Ho Chi Minh, NLF is going to win!”

D’Amato, arguing against other reformists who renounce defense of the “Iraqi resistance,” tries to equate these reformists with those who defended the workers states:

“Much of the Left in the U.S. suffers from the hangover of a Stalinist approach to national liberation, which identified certain movements worthy of *uncritical support* because they were led by secular nationalist forces strongly identified with Cuba, China, or the Soviet Union....

“For those on the Left with illusions in the USSR as a socialist state (and this includes the majority of the U.S. Left), the whole project of national liberation seemed to fade in the wake of the collapse of the Berlin Wall.”

It is the Stalinists and Maoists, as well as the ISO, that have a tradition of political support to Third World nationalism. Genuine Trotskyists have always sharply distinguished between military defense, including unconditional military defense of the degenerated and deformed workers states, and political support, which Trotskyists never give to any non-proletarian party, government or movement. Genuine Trotskyists, i.e., genuine Marxists and Leninists, stand above all for the political independence of the proletariat.

In his piece, D’Amato admits that the “building of a secular resistance” in Iraq that is “on a class basis” would be a good thing, but nonetheless writes, “We do not make our support for the Iraqi resistance conditional upon our criticism of the resistance’s tactics and politics.” The ISO is seeking to prettify the insurgencies in Iraq, which have large aspects of criminal sectarian violence in which Shi’ites, Sunnis and Kurds are all targeted. Since April 28, when the Shi’ite-dominated Iraqi government was installed, more than 600 Iraqis have been killed in sectarian violence. The present-day “resistance” forces—whether Ba’ath nationalists or Islamic fundamentalists—are virulent reactionaries with a long and bloody history of murdering Communists. In fact, should the proletariat in Iraq attempt to raise its head as an independent force, it will face not only the occupation troops but the very anti-working-class “resistance” celebrated by D’Amato.

As opposed to outright craven liberals, the ISO is trying to strike a leftist posture with its position on the Iraqi insurgency. But behind this seemingly leftist position lie rightist politics. The ISO is extending its program of class collaboration to the international field—in this case subordinating the interests of Iraqi workers to reactionary Muslim fundamentalists and bourgeois-nationalist remnants of the Ba’athist regime. Subordinating the interests of the international proletariat to anti-proletarian forces is nothing new for the ISO. For example, the ISO, which has always had a fascination with Islamic fundamentalism, hailed the 1979 rise to power of Khomeini and his mullah forces in Iran—which butchered leftists, forcibly imposed the veil on women and rules the country through *sharia* (Islamic law)—painting the “Iranian Revolution” as “anti-imperialist.”

Equitable resolution of the democrat-

Lies, Torture...

(continued from page 1)

U.S. troops from Iraq and Afghanistan. Some 50,000 people were detained during U.S. military and security operations in Iraq and Afghanistan and routinely denied access to their families and lawyers. We say: from Guantánamo to Iraq, Afghanistan and everywhere else—*free all the detainees!*

Torture and Death: Standard U.S. Policy

Many of those ensnared in the government's torture chambers were literally sold to the U.S. government. According to a 31 May report by Michelle Faul of the Associated Press, in March 2002 leaflets and broadcasts from U.S. helicopters urged Afghans to "Hand over the Arabs and feed your families for a lifetime." One leaflet read, "You can receive millions of dollars. This is enough to take care of your family, your village, your tribe for the rest of your life, pay for your livestock and doctors and school books and housing for all your people."

Many detainees have been held in undisclosed locations and transferred to be tortured in countries like Syria and Uzbekistan. The CIA has established a string of shell companies to maintain a fleet of aircraft whose primary purpose is to assist in the kidnapping of "terror suspects" and transport them to torture centers abroad. The U.S. has a long history of deporting refugees and immigrants back to countries where they would be subject to imprisonment, torture and death. The administration's current policy of "extraordinary rendition" is yet another step in institutionalizing torture as a policy. This was described by former CIA operative Robert Baer in a London *Guardian* article (19 March):

"We pick up a suspect or we arrange for one of our partner countries to do it. Then the suspect is placed on civilian transport to a third country where, let's make no bones about it, they use torture. If you want a good interrogation, you send someone to Jordan. If you want them to be killed, you send them to Egypt or Syria. Either way, the US cannot be blamed as it is not doing the heavy work."

In addition, the *Guardian* article notes that there is a floating population of over 10,000 "ghost detainees" being held at secret CIA bases.

Last week Bush declared, "When there's accusations made about certain actions by our people, they're fully investigated in a transparent way." But as William Schulz, executive director of Amnesty International USA recently stated, "The critical point is the deliberateness of this policy. The president gave the green light. The secretary of defense issued the rules. The Justice Department



WV Photo

Spartacist contingent protests roundup of Arab and Muslim immigrants, Brooklyn, March 2002.

provided the rationale. And the C.I.A. tried to cover it up." Just as torture is standard policy for the imperialists, so is whitewashing the crimes of American imperialism's enforcers.

On May 26, a military court acquitted an Army staff sergeant who shot and killed an unarmed Iraqi. The same day, Marine lieutenant Ilario Pantano, a former Wall Street trader, was cleared of murdering two unarmed Iraqis. He shot the men 60 times, hanging a sign over their dead bodies reading, "No better friend, no worse enemy." In dismissing the charges, the Marine Corps announced: "The best interests of 2nd Lt. Pantano and the government have been served by this process." A month earlier, an internal Army investigation cleared Lt. General Ricardo Sanchez, the U.S.' senior commander in Iraq, and three of his deputies of any wrongdoing in the Abu Ghraib tortures. As a *New York Times* (23 April) article pointed out: "Barring new evidence, the inquiry by the Army's inspector general effectively closes the Army's book on whether the highest-ranking officers in Iraq during the Abu Ghraib prison scandal should be held accountable for command failings described in past reviews."

Bush dismissed the Amnesty International report as based in part on "allegations" by "people who were held in detention, people who hate America, people that have been trained in some instances to disassemble [sic], that means not to tell the truth." Bush is enunciating a policy that "hating America" equals "terrorist," i.e., someone without rights who could be locked away forever without a trial or any means to challenge his incarceration.

As we wrote in the *Amici Curiae* (Friends of the Court) brief issued by

the Spartacist League and the Partisan Defense Committee on behalf of Jose Padilla, an American citizen who remains held by the government without charges: "The 'war against terrorism' is a fiction, a political construct, not a military reality.... It is no more a 'war' in a military sense than the 'war against cancer,' 'war against obesity' or a 'war against immorality.' Like the 'war against communism' and the 'war against drugs,' this 'war' is a pretext to increase the state's police powers and repressive apparatus, constricting the democratic rights of the population."

Down With the USA-Patriot Act!

Today, up for review in Congress are portions of the draconian USA-Patriot Act authorizing widespread wiretapping, surveillance and break-ins on the basis of political advocacy. The Bush gang has now proposed amendments to the law, being considered in secret sessions of the Senate Intelligence Committee, which would give the Feds authority to track the mail of anyone caught up in their far-flung "terror" investigations, requiring the post office to turn over the names, addresses and all other material appearing on the outside of letters to or from people under such investigations. Other proposals would permit the government to seize business records without the court order that is required for regular search warrants.

The Patriot Act expanded on measures adopted during the Clinton administration and one of its co-authors was Beryl Howell, a Democratic Party senatorial aide. Democrats voted overwhelmingly for the Patriot Act, and it was the Democrats who pushed for the Homeland Security Act. The draconian new FBI Guidelines were adopted in response to

Democrats' criticisms that the Bush administration wasn't doing enough in fighting the "war on terror."

The government is more and more open about prosecuting thought crimes pure and simple. In March and April, a federal court in Virginia convicted Muslim spiritual leader Ali Al-Timimi and three of his alleged followers of terrorism conspiracy charges. The "evidence" against them was comments Al-Timimi made on the September 11 attacks and the destruction of the Columbia shuttle two years later, and the fact that his young followers played paintball, a typical youthful activity, portrayed by prosecutors as paramilitary training for international *jihad*. Writing in the *Front-PageMagazine* (2 May), Web site of racist ideologue David Horowitz, Daniel Pipes hailed the Al-Timimi conviction as "momentous" because "the government has put away a terrorist not for his deeds, such as raising money or blowing something up, but for his words." Pipes is part of the Project for the New American Century, which has included Vice President Cheney, Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld, and former Assistant Secretary of Defense and now head of the World Bank, Paul Wolfowitz.

Criminalization of speech and thought is exactly what the "war on terror" is about. The government's aim is to spike opposition to its domestic and international policies. A 27 May *New York Times* editorial notes that Homeland Security is even targeting groups such as the Animal Liberation Front and the Earth Liberation Front. From the beginning we warned that the "war on terror," which initially targeted Muslim immigrants, is ultimately aimed at black people, the left and the labor movement. Leftist attorney Lynne Stewart, her paralegal Ahmed Abdel Sattar and translator Mohamed Yousry face decades behind bars. Stewart was outrageously convicted of providing material support to "terrorism" for conveying the views of her jailed client (Egyptian cleric Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman) to a Reuters correspondent. Mobilizing in their defense is one concrete example of the way in which the labor movement and everyone targeted in this "war on terror" can fight the government's assault on democratic rights.

Ultimately, the colonial victims of U.S. imperialism and working people internationally will get justice when all the war criminals and commanders, from Bush and the Pentagon chiefs to their underlings as well as their Democratic Party counterparts, are swept from power through a proletarian socialist revolution. Our purpose is to forge the multiracial revolutionary workers party that will sweep away the barbaric brutality that defines the capitalist system of exploitation and oppression. ■

ic rights of all the peoples of Iraq, and the Near East more broadly, cannot be achieved under capitalism but only with the overthrow of bourgeois rule in the region and the establishment of a socialist federation of the Near East. This is the Trotskyist program of permanent revolution. This means combining the struggle against the occupation with a struggle against all manner of bourgeois nationalism and religious fundamentalism, and poses the urgent need to forge Marxist parties to lead the working people to power throughout the region. International extension of the revolution to the wealthy centers of imperialism—the

U.S., Germany, Japan—is vital, or, as Marx noted, "all the old crap" will return.

Defeat U.S. Imperialism Through Workers Revolution!

How is it that a group that refused to take a side with Iraq in the war now cheers on the "resistance"? It is more than just a coincidence that the ISO began publishing articles on the insurgency in Iraq as last November's election approached. As we wrote in "The Left and the 'Iraqi Resistance'," the adulation of the resistance then stemmed from the fact that "every blow against the U.S. in Iraq redounds against Bush in the run-up to the November election and plays to the Democrats' advantage." Today, D'Amato writes, "We can never lose sight of the fact that it is the resistance in Iraq, above all, that is currently driving down Bush's popularity, is making possible the rekindling of the antiwar movement at home, and is acting as a brake on U.S. imperial ambitions elsewhere." Given their appeals to the liberal United for Peace and Justice coalition to rejoin the common fold of the "antiwar movement," it is clear that the ISO does not propose that a "rekindled" antiwar movement break with the fundamental

class-collaborationist and pacifist character of its program. D'Amato makes this clear:

"There is, to be sure, a difference between the need to introduce this discussion [about whether or not to support the resistance] into the antiwar movement and what kind of slogans and demands most effectively widen and deepen the reach of the movement. The antiwar movement today should have as its general watchword 'Troops Out Now!'"

Thus, D'Amato says there is no need to split with the liberals and pacifists who refuse to countenance the spilling of American blood in Iraq, since everyone can unite around the single demand for "Troops Out Now." Furthermore, and most fundamentally, the ISO (and WWP, RCP, etc.) reject the Marxist perspective that the only effective "antiwar movement" is one based upon the mobilization of the social power of the working class in opposition to the capitalist system. D'Amato "supports the resistance" not with any perspective of promoting workers revolution, but with the perspective of building a "movement" to pressure imperialism to be more peaceful.

The only successful "antiwar movement" was the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, which overthrew capitalist rule in Russia

and thereby took the country out of World War I. Throughout the antiwar demonstrations of the past two years, we intervened to counterpose our revolutionary program to that of the reformist organizers. At issue is which class in this class-divided society one looks to in order to end war, racism and poverty. The reformist organizers of the antiwar movement did everything in their power to spread the lie that the capitalist system can do otherwise than breed imperialist war; we Spartacists took the side of working people and the oppressed in Iraq and throughout the world to combat the rapacious capitalist class. Join us in the struggle to build the revolutionary workers party needed to end this system of imperialist war and misery and build a socialist society. ■

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CORRECTION

In the article "Northern Ireland: British Troops Out Now!" in WV No. 849 (27 May), a photo caption mistakenly stated the date of the Bloody Sunday Massacre in Derry, Northern Ireland, as 17 October 1972. The massacre took place on 30 January 1972.

Why China Is Not Capitalist

Defend, Extend the Gains of the 1949 Revolution!

We print below an edited translation of an article that first appeared in *Spartacist Japan* No. 30 (April 2005), newspaper of the Spartacist Group of Japan, section of the International Communist League.

For the last several years, on a daily basis, at least one bourgeois newspaper, magazine, or nightly news program has had a special feature on China. We have been told

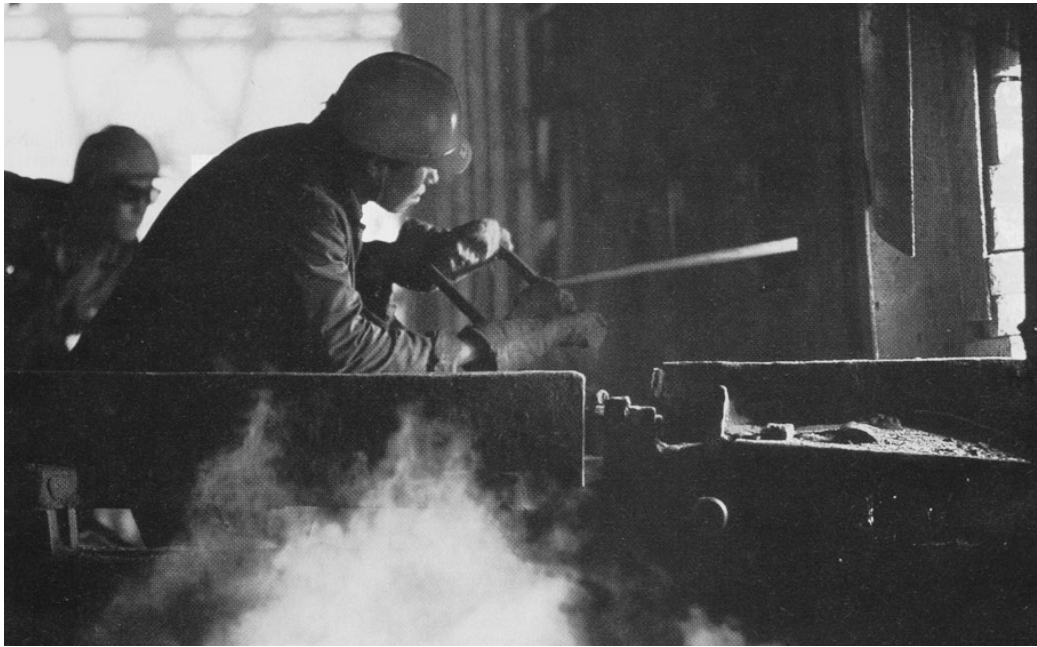
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that China's economy is growing by leaps and bounds, with no end in sight; that it has overtaken Japan in several important economic indicators, and will soon become a "super-power"; that it is in the process of "siphoning off" natural resources that "belong to the Japanese people"; that, while the Japanese economy has rebounded due to trade with China, the reason for the high level of unemployment in Japan is the "hollowing out" of industry, most of which relocated to China in search of higher profits; that soon China will replace Japan diplomatically, politically and militarily as the "most important and influential country in Asia." Accompanying the bourgeois propaganda campaign, last December Japanese imperialism released new defense guidelines, and it is in the process of re-stationing its military, and also has signed security agreements with the American imperialists, including one to defend Taiwan to "counter the Chinese military threat." (See "Joint Statement of the Spartacist Group Japan and Spartacist League/U.S.: Down with U.S./Japan Counterrevolutionary Alliance! Defend the Chinese and North Korean Deformed Workers States!" WV No. 844, 18 March.)

It is in this context that the so-called Trotskyist group Kakehashi has published a pamphlet claiming that capitalism has been restored in China. In this pamphlet, Kakehashi disappears the role that the Japanese *zaibatsu* and international finance capital have played in the exploitation of the Chinese workers and in undermining the gains of the 1949 Chinese Revolution. Japanese imperialism's direct foreign investment totaled more than \$5.45 billion in 2004 (*China Daily*, 25 March). This investment is no longer confined to areas formerly colonized by Japan, such as Manchuria, but has expanded to the southern tip of China. They write nothing about Japan's military provocations against China, and they attempt to justify their betrayal of the class interests of the proletariat and their own reconciliation with capitalism by denying the working-class nature of the Chinese deformed workers state. In sum, what is missing is a proletarian internationalist perspective and the role of a conscious, i.e., Leninist, vanguard party to lead the proletariat.

China on the Brink

The 1949 Chinese Revolution was, despite profound bureaucratic deformations, a social revolution of world historic significance. Hundreds of millions of peasants rose up and seized the land on which their ancestors had been cruelly exploited from time immemorial. The rule of the murderous warlords and bloodsucking moneylenders, the rapacious landlords and wretched bourgeoisie was destroyed. The revolution enabled women to advance by magnitudes over



Fred Scott
The core of China's economy remains collectivized. Workers in state-owned steel works in Shenyang.

For Workers Political Revolution to Oust Stalinist Bureaucracy!

their previous miserable status, historically symbolized by the barbaric practice of foot-binding. A nation that had been ravaged and divided by foreign powers for a century was unified and freed from imperialist subjugation.

Unlike the Russian October Revolution of 1917, which was carried out by a class-conscious proletariat guided by the proletarian internationalism of the Bolsheviks, led by Lenin and Trotsky, the Chinese Revolution was the result of peasant guerrilla war led by Mao Zedong's Stalinist nationalist forces. Patterned after the Stalinist bureaucracy in the USSR, Mao's regime preached the profoundly anti-Marxist notion that socialism—a classless, egalitarian society based on material abundance—could be built in a single country. In practice, "socialism in one country" meant opposition to the perspective of workers revolution internationally—for example in neighboring Japan—and accommodation to world imperialism.

In the 1950s, the People's Republic of China established a centrally planned, socialized economy and agriculture was collectivized. A state monopoly of foreign trade protected the socialized economy from being undermined by cheap imports from the far-more-developed capitalist-imperialist countries. In China under Deng Xiaoping, the bureaucracy moved toward "market socialism" following the examples of Yugoslavia and Hungary. Economic administrators and managers were rewarded or penalized on the basis of market profitability. The threat of plant closures and layoffs also served as a means of enforcing labor discipline among the workers. At the same time, agriculture was decollectivized and replaced by the "household responsibility system," i.e., peasant smallholdings.

Many of the gains of the Chinese Revolution are being obliterated. The pressures of market competition have inevitably resulted in the growth of a small class of wealthy farmers alongside tens of millions of poor peasants. As many as 130

million rural Chinese have migrated to the eastern and southern coastal areas in search of work. Education and medical care are no longer free. The workers no longer have their "iron rice bowl" which guaranteed a job and benefits for workers in state-owned enterprises. Unemployment has reached massive proportions as industries are closed or privatized. The number of women working as prostitutes has skyrocketed, and female infanticide is resurgent in the countryside.

The Beijing bureaucracy essentially acts as a transmission belt for the pressures of the imperialist-dominated world market on the workers state. The brittle, contradictory character of this bureaucratic caste can be seen in the fact that, in the face of working-class unrest, the current regime has often reversed some of its economic "reforms" and occasionally put some of its own on trial for corruption, sometimes with a penalty of execution. In the face of massive peasant protests and riots over the last year, the recent National People's Congress announced

that within two years all children of peasants in rural areas will receive a free primary education. Earlier this year, the bureaucrats promised that by year's end the basic agricultural tax in most of China's provinces will be eliminated.

In maintaining that China continues to be a deformed workers state, we do not deny or minimize the growing social weight in China of both the newly fledged capitalist entrepreneurs on the mainland and the old, established offshore Chinese bourgeoisie in Taiwan and Hong Kong. The fostering of capitalist-restorationist forces within the framework of a deformed workers state has already gone much further in China than in Tito's Yugoslavia or Gorbachev's Soviet Union. The Chinese bureaucracy itself is a major participant in joint ventures with foreign capitalists. It continues to invite overseas Chinese and foreign capital into the country, opening up entire areas to capitalist exploitation. The economic policies of the Beijing Stalinist regime that encourage capitalist enterprise (and the corresponding rightward shifts in the bureaucracy's formal ideological posture) have increasingly strengthened those social forces that will give rise to imperialist-backed, openly counter-revolutionary factions and parties when the CCP [Chinese Communist Party] can no longer maintain its present monopoly of political power.

This can be clearly seen today in the capitalist enclave of Hong Kong, the one part of the PRC [People's Republic of China] where bourgeois oppositional parties exist. (See "Hong Kong: Expropriate the Bourgeoisie!" WV No. 814, 21 November 2003.)

Nonetheless, the political power of the main body of the Beijing Stalinist bureaucracy continues to be based on the core collectivized elements of China's economy. Furthermore, the economic policies of the CCP regime are still constrained by fear of social—especially working-class—unrest that could topple it. This came close to happening in 1989, when student-centered protests for political liberalization and against corruption triggered a spontaneous workers revolt that was suppressed with great bloodshed by regime-loyal army units.

The social revolution persists in property relations and in the consciousness of the toiling masses. Trotskyists give unconditional military defense to a deformed or degenerated workers state in



Riboud/Magnum
Landlord denounced by peasant at people's tribunal following 1949 Chinese Revolution.

This is the most fundamental historic task of the Chinese proletariat. What is needed to realize this is to build a Leninist-Trotskyist party. This party would link the struggle of the workers in the state-owned enterprises with those in the private enterprises, with the struggles of the migrant workers, the poor peasants and women, and it would fight against Han chauvinism. The International Communist League is committed to bringing this Marxist program to Chinese workers and rural toilers.

For some ten years, the Kakehashi group publicly debated the question of China in its newspaper: Is it still some kind of workers state, or has capitalism been restored? While members of Kakehashi may not have agreed on the class nature of China, in action their party sided with capitalist-restorationist forces—from the pro-capitalist China Democratic Party to the CIA-backed Dalai Lama. In 1999 they organized a march on the streets of Tokyo protesting the visit of former Chinese premier Jiang Zemin to Japan, a protest that could only have appealed to Japanese anti-Chinese chauvinists. Their debate was preceded and guided by a formal rejection of their own program—which they considered Trotskyist—and a negation of the Marxist conception of a class society:

—*Sekai Kakumei*, 30 October 1995 (*Sekai Kakumei* was *Kakehashi*'s previous name.)

Later on we will explain why Kakehashi's position has nothing in common with Marxism and is in fact deeply social-democratic. For now, we will note that two of the reasons they mention for China becoming capitalist in the last century actually occurred during this century. It was in 2002 that the Communist Party

Shenzhen, October 2004: Workers at Computime, a Hong Kong-mainland joint-venture company, protest low wages, harsh working conditions.

It is not this or that resolution that the bureaucracy passes, although these are dangerous developments, that determines where China is going, but social conflict. To premise one's conclusion about the class character of the Chinese deformed workers state exclusively on the actions of the bureaucracy relegates the working class to merely a passive object of either the bureaucracy or imperialism. What Kakehashi has done is written off the Chinese proletariat as a contender in the bat-

How is a gradual, decade-long, bourgeois counterrevolution possible? Real Trotskyists would not have let this historic defeat occur without fighting against it—or even noticing it until years later. Trotsky did not live to see capitalism restored in the Soviet Union, and his prognosis of how that would occur—through civil war—did not happen. But Kakehashi members have lived through the counterrevolutionary destruction of

lapse, but the danger of the breakup of the country and bloody political chaos. In addition, because the Chinese economy is somewhat integrated into the world economy, workers around the world would be adversely affected. The current Japan-U.S. alliance against China could fracture, as each hungry imperialist beast competes for the spoils.

The Marxist revolutionary program is not based on moral repugnance against war, social oppression, class exploitation and inequality. It is based on the objective fact that capitalism arrests the development of the productive forces and must be superseded by a superior economic system, which will eliminate the basis for all the evils which are inherent in capitalist society.

For the past two decades, China's economy has been growing at about 7 to 9 percent a year, unmatched by even the main imperialist powers. Between 1998 and 2001, government spending in China increased from 12 to 20 percent of the country's gross domestic product. The largest and fastest-growing component of government expenditure has been investment in infrastructure, which increased by 81 percent over these three years. Moreover, this has been happening at a time when the entire capitalist world has been pursuing fiscal austerity. China navigated successfully through the 1997-98 East Asian financial/economic crisis and then through a generalized world capitalist recession. If China is capitalist and its economy has been growing without cyclical contractions (which are inherent in capitalism), this would negate the fundamental Leninist understanding that we are living in the epoch of capitalist reaction.

continued on page 10



But Kakehashi and the Pioneers actually thought it was the Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy that would bring socialism to China. Under the subhead, "Abandonment of the Fight Toward Socialism," a representative of the Pioneers wrote, "In 1979, after Deng came to power, the stage of the 'planned economy' went to 'market socialist economy' (read: changed to 'capitalism'). The socialist outlook was completely abandoned" (*Kakehashi*, 21 March). But the bureaucracy, from Mao to Hu Jintao, never did and does not now have a "socialist outlook." Up until 1946, Mao was still seeking a coalition government with the bourgeois-nationalist KMT [Guomindang] regime of Chiang Kai-shek. After the revolution, Mao sought to transform impoverished China into a "socialist" world power through economic autarky within the framework of a bureaucratically centralized economy, based on the anti-Marxist dogma of "socialism in one country." Contained in this nationalist perspective were the seeds of the bureaucracy's implementation of "market reforms" under Deng, called "socialism with Chinese characteristics." It was under Mao that China consummated an alliance with U.S. imperialism during the Vietnam War and betrayed revolutionary struggles from Indonesia to Africa. It contributed to the victory of capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union by supporting, for example, the

That is what capitalist counterrevolution looks like. The former Soviet Union was a global industrial and military power. And because China is so much behind where the Soviet Union was economically, capitalist restoration in China would be much worse. It would lead to widespread impoverishment of the population, and bring not only economic col-



China...

(continued from page 9)

and decay. If there exists today a capitalist system which ensures the rapid and steady growth of productive forces, this calls into question the necessity and progressive character of proletarian revolution in the capitalist countries and of working-class rule.

The CCP leadership officially describes China as a “socialist market economy.” It is the “socialist” (i.e., collectivist) aspects that are responsible for the positive economic developments in China in recent years. And it is the market aspects of China’s economy that are responsible for the negative developments—the ever-widening gap between rich and poor, the immiseration of a large and growing fraction of the populace, tens of millions of workers laid off from state-owned enterprises, the army of impoverished migrants in the cities who can no longer make a living in the countryside.

In China today, it is the core collectivized elements of the economy which continue to be dominant, though not in a stable, coherent manner. In 2003, state-owned and partly state-owned enterprises (shareholding corporations) employed half of China’s 750 million workers and accounted for 57 percent of the gross value of China’s industrial output (*McKinsey Quarterly*, 2004). But this simple statistical figure obscures the strategic centrality of state-owned industry.

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 put a man in space. Far more importantly, it is state-owned industry that has enabled China to build an arsenal of nuclear weapons and long-range missiles to ward off the imperialists’ threat of a nuclear first strike.

All major banks in China are state-owned. Almost the entirety of household savings—estimated at \$1 trillion—is deposited in the four main state-owned commercial banks. 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. Continued state ownership of the financial system has enabled the Beijing regime, up to now, to effectively (though not totally) control the flow of money-capital in and out of mainland China. China’s currency is not freely convertible; it is not traded (legally) in international currency markets. The restricted convertibility of the yuan has kept China insulated from the volatile movements of short-term capital which periodically wreak havoc on the economies of Third World neocolonial countries from Latin America to East Asia. Furthermore, the Beijing regime has maintained an increasing undervaluation of the yuan (in “free market” terms), much to the displeasure of American, Japanese and European capitalists. It is precisely these core collectivist elements of China’s economy which the forces of world imperialism want to eliminate and



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dismantle. Their ultimate goal is to reduce China to a giant sweatshop under neocolonial subjugation.

The main weapon available to a nationally isolated and relatively economically backward workers state against the intervention of cheaper goods is the state monopoly of foreign trade, i.e., the strict control of imports and exports by the government. The Beijing bureaucracy’s abandonment of the strict state monopoly of foreign trade serves to facilitate imperialism’s plans. Despite its rapid growth in recent years, the Chinese economy is backward relative to even the lesser capitalist-imperialist powers. While China’s exports continue to increase at record lev-

On a much smaller scale, the situation which Kakehashi describes is similar to that of the bureaucracy of several trade unions in Japan. Take for example Jichiro [civil servants union]. The misleaders of this one-million-strong trade union have been taking the dues money that their members pay every month and enriching themselves. They have set up “subsidiaries” of the union, whose profits do not go back into the trade union to be used to better the conditions of the members or to prepare for future class battles against the government. Some of the profits go into the pockets of the union bureaucracy. In addition, it is the bureaucracy which oversees the management of the subsidiaries,



AP

Chinese premier Hu Jintao at New York Stock Exchange, 29 April 2002.

els, these largely consist of low-wage, low-value light manufacture and consumer goods like clothing, toys and household appliances. China’s increase in gross industrial output between 1993 and 2002—from \$480 billion to \$1,300 billion—has been nearly completely offset by the increase in its gross purchases of industrial products, i.e., machinery and capital equipment. The ultimate answer to China’s economic backwardness and the only road to a socialist, i.e., classless, egalitarian society, lies in world socialist revolution and China’s integration into an internationally planned economy.

“Primitive Accumulation of Capital”

According to Kakehashi, during the 1990s the bureaucrats who had become managers of privatized enterprises were pocketing the profits, getting rich from buying and selling stock, and also buying and selling the usage rights to agricultural land, and are laying off workers. In an attempt to give a Marxist veneer to their political appetites, Kakehashi describes this process as the “primitive accumulation of capital.”

controls production, and lays off and fires the workers. Is Kakehashi now going to argue that Jichiro is a capitalist organization and not a real trade union; that this union, whose leadership is completely pro-capitalist, should not be defended against the government?

What the bureaucrats in China are doing is certainly criminal from the standpoint of the workers, but it is not what Marx meant by “primitive accumulation of capital.” Marx used the term, primitive accumulation of capital, to refer to the initial phase of capitalist development in West Europe when the massive economic surplus appropriated by the bourgeoisie did not yet derive from wage labor but rather from the peasantry and slave labor in the colonies. This wealth was then transformed into capital and used for the initial financing of European industrialization. (See *Capital and Theories of Surplus Value*.) To get a sense of what Marx meant by the primitive accumulation of capital, think about the 1873 Land Tax that was enacted during the early Meiji period. At that time, the Meiji leaders maintained an exceptionally high level of exploitation of the peasantry



AFP

Left: 1991 Yeltsin-led capitalist counterrevolution created misery for Soviet people. Above: Pensioners protest withdrawal of Soviet-era benefits, January 2005.

and channeled the resulting economic surplus into the rapid construction of an industrial-military complex.

Insofar as the economic surplus appropriated by the Chinese bureaucrat-turned-entrepreneur is used for his personal consumption or speculation, for example in real estate, this is the antithesis of the accumulation of capital. Rather it is the squandering of the existing productive wealth of society, a form of social parasitism. In China, over the past two decades a large fraction of state-owned industry—whether measured by number of enterprises, labor force or volume of production—has been privatized. Most small enterprises were simply sold off to individuals, typically the managers who had been running them. The larger enterprises, however, were “privatized” through a shareholding scheme. When, a decade or so ago, China opened its first stock market, much of the bourgeois media hailed this as proof that “communist” China had taken a decisive step on the road to capitalism. But what has actually happened?

Of the 1,253 companies listed on China’s two main stock exchanges, in some cases the government holds a majority of shares, in others a substantial minority. But even the latter remain effectively government-controlled because the CCP has retained a monopoly of political power. According to the 28 March *Financial Times*, “Only one-third of issued shares in listed companies form the free float for trading on the exchanges. The rest are mostly owned directly by the state or its companies.... Permission for initial public offerings is given first and foremost to state companies, leaving private enterprises without an easy funding route.” There is no workers democracy in China—but neither is there shareholders’ democracy. Shareholders in China’s corporations do not have ownership rights in the capitalist sense. They have the right to income from their financial assets and they can sell their shares. But they cannot determine, or even influence, the management and corporate policies. These are determined by various and often conflicting political as well as economic pressures.

Capitalists in a Communist Party

Ever since the Deng regime introduced market-oriented economic “reforms” in the early 1980s, bourgeois opinion and some leftists have maintained that the Communist Party itself is gradually restoring capitalism in China while keeping a tight grip on political power. This position was widely and loudly trumpeted in 2002 when the 16th Congress of the CCP legitimized party membership for capitalist entrepreneurs. In fact, this Congress did not introduce a significant change in either the social composition of the CCP, which has 66 million members, or its functional ideology. According to an official survey, of China’s two million private business owners, 600,000 are party members and have been for some time. The overwhelming majority of these were longtime CCP managerial cadre who took over the small state-owned enterprises they were running when these were privatized over the past several years.

Kakehashi claims that, “The Chinese Communist Party has officially become a capitalistic peoples political party, and under the one-party rule of the Commu-



Morton/U.S. Navy

Left: Joint U.S.-Japanese war maneuvers threaten China. Right: Spartacist Group Japan at April 1996 protest. Signs at center read: “For the Right of Nuclear and Military Testing for Chinese Workers State!” and “Not One Man, Not One Yen to Imperialist Japanese Military!”



Spartacist Japan

nist Party, the Chinese state has officially become a bourgeois state.” Many in the bureaucracy may aspire to a place in the ruling class of a capitalist China for themselves and their children. But this would require a social counterrevolution that destroys the workers state and creates a new bourgeois state. In East Europe and the Soviet Union, the bureaucracy as a caste did not transform itself into a capitalist class. It disintegrated, as did its political instruments, the ruling Communist parties. Various elements of the bureaucracy then regrouped into hostile political factions, and in many cases united with former anti-Communist “dissidents” whom they had previously suppressed. The new capitalist classes in East Europe and the former Soviet Union derive, with differing weight in different countries, from elements of the bureaucracy and also the intelligentsia, many of whom were not at all privileged, at least not economically. A capitalist counterrevolution in China would be accompanied by the collapse of Stalinist bonapartism and the political fracturing of the ruling Communist Party.

China’s high rate of economic growth in recent years has produced a certain triumphalist mood among the CCP leadership and cadre and affiliated intelligentsia. One would certainly encounter a very different mood among the millions of workers laid off from state-owned enterprises, impoverished migrants from the countryside and poor peasants barely eking out a living toiling on tiny plots with rudimentary equipment. Hu and his cohorts are driven by delusions of grandeur exceeding the wildest imaginings of Chairman Mao.

The present CCP leaders believe that they can modernize China, transforming it into a great world power—indeed, the global superpower of the 21st century—

orthodox Trotskyist covering, Kakehashi even quotes from Trotsky’s *Revolution Betrayed*. This was disingenuous because the chapter in *Revolution Betrayed* that immediately follows the quote they use deals with the 1936 Soviet constitution, which incorporated inheritance rights and the “guaranteeing of personal property.” Trotsky understood that this new provision in the constitution would be used to benefit the bureaucrats and not the Soviet working masses:

“...a protection by law of the hut, cow and home-furnishings of the peasant, worker or clerical worker, also legalizes the town house of the bureaucrat, his summer home, his automobile and all the other objects of ‘personal consumption and comfort,’ appropriated by him on the basis of the ‘socialist’ principle.... The bureaucrat’s automobile will certainly be protected by the new fundamental law more effectively than the peasant’s wagon.”

Trotsky went on to warn that, “By juridically reinforcing the absolutism of an ‘extra class’ bureaucracy, the new constitution creates the political premises for the birth of a new possessing class.” But he added:

“If these as yet wholly new relations should solidify, become the norm and be legalized, whether with or without resistance from the workers, they would, in the long run, lead to a complete liquidation of the social conquests of the proletarian revolution. *But to speak of that now is at least premature. The proletariat has not yet said its last word.*” [our emphasis]

The new amendment is a reflection of already existing reality. Private property has existed in China for years. Inheritance has existed since 1982. With this amendment, the bureaucracy is trying to ensure their privileges through the legal recognition of private property and the right to inherit. By late November 2003 there were 2.97 million private firms with capital exceeding \$40.5 billion (Chinese



October Review

22 April 1989: Workers join student protest in Beijing in early days of Tiananmen Square uprising. Banner reads: “We Workers Have Power.”

no need for a workers revolution that smashes the capitalist state apparatus—the police, courts, military—expropriates the *zaibatsu* and the other capitalists, and creates organs of workers rule. Therefore, there is no need for a party similar to the one that Lenin and Trotsky built which can lead the proletariat. This is the historic position of social democracy, in which Kakehashi can now be completely welcomed, now that it has thrown off its last pretenses to Trotskyism.

The Fight for Authentic Trotskyism

For the past four decades, the ICL has exposed the impostors who masquerade as Trotskyists as they abandon every principled position Trotsky stood for, above all the fight for an independent Trotskyist vanguard. Those who cheered the forces of anti-communist counterrevolution share the responsibility for selling out the gains for which the working class fought so hard. They have openly shown themselves for what they are: not Trotskyists, but traitors to the October Revolution.

Kakehashi’s international organization, the United Secretariat [USec], supported every counterrevolutionary and nationalist movement in the USSR and East Europe. They hailed clerical-nationalist Polish Solidarność as a model of a revolutionary working-class movement. The USec embraced the fascistic fringe of the Baltic nationalist movements, which sought capitalist restoration in the guise of “independence.” A key battlefield of the capitalist counterrevolution was the struggle over East Germany [DDR] in 1989-90. What was immediately posed was: either proletarian political revolution linking up with socialist revolution in West Germany, or capitalist reunification strengthening an imperialist Fourth Reich. At this critical juncture, the USec was politically paralyzed. They were unable to agree whether capitalist reunification should be greeted with champagne or aspirin. In contrast, we fought with everything we had for proletarian political revolution in the DDR before it was too late, as the only way to defend the anti-capitalist conquests of the world proletar-

iat from Berlin to Beijing. We lost, but the lessons of that struggle will be important for future struggles of the international proletariat.

The central event of the Russian counterrevolution was Yeltsin’s August 1991 “countercoup” against the inept “perestroika coup” by the Stalinist has-beens of the “Emergency Committee.” Yeltsin’s consolidation of his imperialist-backed power grab for “democracy,” in the absence of mass resistance to the encroaching capitalist counterrevolution by a working class atomized and demoralized by decades of Stalinist rule, spelled the destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state. On this question, the USec was united: they were first on the barricades of counterrevolution. The Japanese USec organization even went so far as to support the anti-Communist red purge directed against the Soviet Communist Party. “The CPSU should be disbanded and must be disbanded, which is the starting point for struggles to establishing minimum political democracy” (*Sekai Kaku-me*, 16 September 1991).

The fate of the People’s Republic of China—proletarian political revolution or capitalist counterrevolution—is of huge importance to the working class throughout the world. The Chinese workers and peasants have waged many struggles in the past ten years, but they are atomized and without a leadership whose perspective is to overthrow the political rule of the bureaucrats and place power in the hands of the workers, soldiers and peasants soviets. In addition to coordinating and leading the spontaneous and localized workers struggles, an international Trotskyist party would link the fight against the corrupt bureaucracy in China with that of the North Korean and Vietnamese workers against their Stalinist rulers. Such a party would work in concert with their comrades in Japan fighting for a workers revolution, and together with the class struggles of the militant Philippine and South Korean workers against their capitalist rulers. Only through a socialist revolution in imperialist Japan will the basis be laid for the development of a socialist Asia. ■



A.H. Buchman

Provisional Central Committee of the (Trotskyist) Communist League of China, winter 1936. Clockwise from left: Wang Fanxi, Frank Glass, Hua Zhenbin (party printer, not on CC), Han Jun, Chen Qichang, Jiang Zhendong.

through ever-greater integration into the world capitalist economy. They truly believe they can control and manipulate Citibank, the Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi and the Deutsche Bank, to help build up China so that in a generation or two it will surpass the United States, Japan and Germany. Believing they are transforming China into a global superpower, they are actually clearing the path for returning China to the pre-revolutionary era of untrammelled imperialist subjugation.

Constitutional Amendments Cannot Change the Class Nature of a State

During the National People’s Congress which took place in 2004, the bureaucrats amended the Chinese constitution to read: “Citizens’ legally obtained private property shall not be violated.” In an attempt to appease the populace, the Chinese government announced that the amendment would help prevent state officials from requisitioning private property and possessions. This amendment is surely a dangerous development, which a section of the workers in China understands. It was first proposed two years earlier at the 16th Congress and provoked something of a popular backlash.

This amendment is one reason that Kakehashi has decided that capitalism has been restored in China. In a disingenuous attempt to give itself an

embassy Web site). While this sounds like a lot of money, broken down it is \$13,636 per company. Most workers in Japan have many times this amount in their postal retirement account.

Private property in China is as unstable as the bureaucracy itself. Private property and capitalists exist in China today to the extent the bureaucracy, acting under the pressures from imperialism on the one hand and the proletariat on the other, has allowed them to exist. Whether or not private property will be “inviolable” will not be decided by the constitution, but by social conflict. It is possible that “inviolable” private property would be violated by the bureaucracy under the impact of proletarian struggle and/or open counterrevolutionary threats from the imperialists and the bourgeoisie, or, more fundamentally, by an ascendant working class struggling for political power.

Those who argue that China is capitalist must reject one or another fundamental element of classic Marxism, usually the theory of the state. If a workers state, however deformed, can become a capitalist state through amending a constitution, which Kakehashi claims, then logically the reverse would also be true. That is, a capitalist state, such as Japan, could be transformed into a workers state by making changes to the Japanese constitution. This would mean that there is

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Statement of the International Communist League, 23 October 2002

In Protest Against Resurgent Militarism
Japanese Longshoremen Refuse to Load Warships

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Class War...

(continued from page 16)

certain percentage of your income upon retirement. Low-wage workers (and we mean *low wage*—those earning under \$16,000 per year) are promised 49 percent of their pre-retirement income—a pittance, but for many retirees it is the difference between starvation and survival. Opposition to the various schemes that threaten the benefit system is widespread among the working population. The administration wants a fundamental change that would turn the SSI system into a “poor-people’s” program, like welfare. Remember what happened to welfare? It was virtually eliminated under Democrat Clinton—in part by using racist verbiage to convince white workers that their tax dollars were supposedly going to support black single mothers. In fact, white people, including white single mothers, make up the bulk of welfare beneficiaries.

Divide and Conquer

Bush has attempted to push his scheme by pitting one section of the working class against the other. Forty percent of elderly black people rely solely on SSI to survive. In January, Bush parroted one of the most cynical claims of the pro-privatization right-wingers: that the higher mortality rate of black men means that black people are getting less for their SSI tax dollars. His conclusion is that blacks should support privatization so that the pitiful sum they manage to accrue is “their own,” presumably to pass on to their orphaned children. As we wrote in our article “Bush to Amer-

tionate numbers of those collecting SSI disability benefits and children receiving survivor benefits are black.

Black oppression is the bedrock of this capitalist system. While black workers are an integral component of the working class, black people in America suffer special oppression as a race-color caste. Thus, black people suffer more from any economic downturn. Conditioning this is the deindustrialization of the U.S.—rust-belt cities like Detroit are emblematic. Deindustrialization has weakened the position of black workers who were key in auto, steel and other industrial unions, which were the heavy guns of American labor.

Blacks and Hispanics are now likely to be stuck in low-wage service jobs, but those who still have unionized jobs account for a quarter of the organized labor movement. A focus of a fighting labor movement would be to champion workers at the bottom—blacks, immigrants and women. This means fighting racial oppression, chauvinism and discrimination that are used to divide and weaken the working class. It also means fighting tooth and nail against government take-backs of social programs. When Clinton axed welfare in 1996, the union tops turned a blind eye and many enlisted as overseers of the government’s slave-labor “workfare” schemes. The devastation wrought by the axing of welfare swelled the ranks of workers desperately competing for jobs with appalling conditions, paying starvation wages. Capitalist “workfare” schemes have acted to sharply depress wages and increase overall job insecurity.

When Bush promises that his SSI plan



WV Photo

UFCW picket line against Ralphs supermarket, Los Angeles, 17 October 2003.

ica: No Pensions, No Jobs, No Rights” (WV No. 842, 18 February):

“The fact that black men have a lower life expectancy than others powerfully illustrates the entrenched and vicious racial oppression of black people.... This blatant racism barely elicited a response—such is today’s reactionary social climate where black people’s exclusion from a decent life is to be accepted as a given for all time.”

Aside from Bush’s putrid racism, the contention that blacks get less bang for their buck with SSI is an utter lie. For one thing, the low life expectancy figure is largely because of the tragically high death rates inflicted by racist American capitalism upon blacks in childhood and young adulthood. The administration’s claim also ignores the fact that dispropor-

assures that “future generations receive benefits equal to or greater than the benefits today’s seniors get,” he’s hitting one of his most sour notes. In fact, all the “reforms” proposed today are designed to batter “future generations.” Youth are saddled with shamefully poor, underfunded schools. At the same time, college students are being hit with deep cuts in school loans and grants, assuring that they will be left with crippling debt, if they can afford to attend college at all. And even those who make it through school are having a hard time finding jobs. The U.S. Department of Labor reported that in February alone, 373,000 discouraged college graduates dropped out of the labor force. And black unemployment is more than double that of whites, and in New



Harris/IFL

Top: British miners battle cops in heroic 1984-85 strike against Thatcher’s union-busting. Thatcher’s pension privatization scheme is a model for Bush.

Press Association

York City, nearly half of black males aged 16 to 64 are out of work. Some “future”!

Labor and Capital—An Irreconcilable Conflict

Without some hard class struggle, the capitalist assault on the working class and oppressed in this country will only intensify. But the current trade-union leadership’s accommodation to the capitalist class through the Democrats keeps the working class disarmed, demoralized and demobilized. The union tops believe that capitalism can be reformed, putting all faith in compromises with the class enemy. This has led to defeat after defeat. The readiness of the working class to fight is evident in, for example, the militant strike of nearly 60,000 members of the United Food and Commercial Workers that ended last year. This popular and *winnable* five-month-long battle against California supermarket owners was sold out by a union leadership unwilling to wield the workers’ power to put the employers up against the wall. The bureaucrats kept the strike limited to California despite the fact that union contracts covering tens of thousands of supermarket workers in other states had expired during the strike. Instead of extending it, the bureaucrats saw the strike as a pressure tactic on the politicians and ended up caving in to the bosses’ demands.

The social reforms that were gained in the mid 1930s such as Social Security were won through intense class struggle. As we wrote:

“The mass industrial unions of the CIO were born out of the three citywide general strikes in 1934 (Minneapolis, San Francisco and Toledo)—all led by ‘reds’—and were built through militant class-struggle tactics like the sit-down strike. Contrary to the union misleaders and their reformist tails, the right to organize wasn’t won in Washington, but through pitched battles with scabs, cops and government troops.”

—“Feds Loot Social Security,” WV No. 669, 30 May 1997

The 1934 Minneapolis Teamsters strikes were won, not simply due to the immense courage and labor solidarity of the workers nor the inherent power of the truckers to shut down production. As James P. Cannon, a leader of that battle and founder of American Trotskyism, explained in 1936, success depends on understanding that every class battle is:

“a bullheaded struggle between two forces whose interests are in constant and irreconcilable conflict. The partnership of capital and labor is a lie. The immediate issue in every case is decided by the relative strength of the opposing forces at the moment. The only strike strategy worth a tinker’s dam is the strategy that begins with this conception.”

—*Notebook of an Agitator* (1958)

Aiming to derail such class struggle and growing radicalism, Democratic president Franklin Delano Roosevelt proposed a set of palliative reforms known as the New Deal. It was the Communist Party (CP) and other misleaders of the union movement that carried Roosevelt’s liberal bourgeois politics into the working class. In the course of its Stalinist degeneration over the previous decade,

in the mid 1930s the CP came to espouse a “popular front” with “progressive” bourgeois politicians, peddling illusions in a reformed and benevolent capitalism. This helped cement the labor movement’s alliance with the Democratic Party—the other party of the American capitalist bosses—that has shackled it to this day.

Labor bureaucrats and liberals look to revive the New Deal coalition of the 1930s to pressure the Democrats to act as “friends of labor.” But now, as then, the outcome will depend not upon the supposed good graces of the capitalist Democratic Party but upon a contest of forces between the working class and the bourgeoisie. In the 1930s, the Communist League of America, then the Trotskyist party, explained in their paper, the *Militant* (23 June 1934):

“What will social insurance become? It will become what the workers make it. The words ‘social insurance’ were wrung out of Roosevelt by the grip of an aroused working class.... But to obtain actual relief, the working class must present its own demands for social insurance and immediately build the united front of labor that will push it over.”

In the end, whatever gains are won through struggle come under constant attack by the ruling class and, as we are seeing, are ultimately reversible. What is needed is a party that fights in the interest of the working class, absolutely independent of the bourgeois parties and interests, a party dedicated to leading proletarian revolution to seize the means of production and put the vast resources of this country, and ultimately this planet, to benefit the mass of people. As the Trotskyists wrote in the *Militant* (14 July 1934):

“A new Communist Party that will blend that militancy and the fighting tradition of the American working class with the theory and practice of the international revolutionary movement is needed now, not to renovate and redecorate the present social system but to end it and build the new—the Socialist Society.”

The Rip-Off Plot

Back in the ’30s, conservative elements of the bourgeoisie opposed the passage of Social Security legislation. More recently, one of Bush’s judicial nominees, Janice Rogers Brown, called 1937 “the year the Supreme Court began to uphold the New Deal, ‘the triumph of our socialist revolution’” (*New York Times Magazine*, 17 April). In opposition to the likes of Brown, liberals laud Social Security as the main progressive government program in modern American history. But in one important respect, it is the opposite of progressive. It is based on a *regressive* tax. All wage and salaried income is taxed at a flat rate for the employee (currently 6.2 percent) up to a maximum amount (currently \$90,000 a year). Because of the enormous widening of income differences over the past few decades, the top 15 percent of salaried income is now *exempt* from SSI taxes. Removing the \$90,000 cap on SSI taxes completely could in itself—with no other changes in tax or benefit policy—virtually eliminate the officially projected future shortfall for

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Much has been made of the “successful” privatization schemes introduced by two of Bush’s models: the fascistic Chilean dictator General Augusto Pinochet and Britain’s “Iron Lady,” Margaret Thatcher. Bush became enamored of the prospect of privatization after talking to a key architect of the Chilean plan, José Piñera, now a fellow at the U.S.-based Cato Institute, a right-wing think tank that has pushed privatization here. That plan was drawn up by a group of American economists known as the “Chicago Boys” and was implemented after Pinochet’s bloody CIA-backed coup in 1973 that left tens of thousands of workers and leftists dead. The system is administered by a bunch of companies, whose boards include many former Pinochet cabinet members, that are among the most profitable in Chile. The success of the plan from the point of view of the capitalist class may also be judged by the fact that at least half of the Chilean people never accumulate sufficient earnings to receive even the minimum monthly pension, equivalent to \$100.

The British plan, installed in the mid ’80s by Thatcher, a committed union-buster with notorious contempt for the working masses, is now facing a growing scandal over the fact that many workers are worse off in retirement as a result of her privatization plan. In addition, administration fees and charges take as much as **30 percent** out of retirement savings. Clearly, this has whetted the appetites of some Wall Street bankers.

The White House director of strategic initiatives, Peter Wehner, laid out the ideological theme to the current campaign in a memo, leaked in January, that calls Social Security reform “one of the most important conservative undertakings of modern times,” and *“not simply an economic challenge, but a moral goal and a moral good”* [his emphasis].

Bush’s privatization campaign uses mystification and lies to panic the masses.



Bancroft Library

Roosevelt’s New Deal enacted in response to labor radicalization of 1930s. Left: Strike by longshoremen and seamen, which sparked 1934 San Francisco general strike. Right: Roosevelt signs Social Security legislation, August 1935.

In his April 28 speech, Bush said: “By 2041 Social Security will be bankrupt.” This first lie has become the domestic version of Hussein’s “weapons of mass destruction,” which the Bush gang used to launch the devastating war in Iraq. Here’s the real story. Every tax dollar paid by workers into Social Security goes straight into federal Treasury coffers. Each year, Congress allocates the funds needed to pay out to retirees. Any amount from SSI payments that is not needed for current retirees is “borrowed” by the Feds in exchange for low-interest treasury bonds. So the “extra” money (the amount that is supposedly held in a “trust fund”) is used to finance, for example, Clinton’s bombing of Iraq in the ’90s or Bush’s pre-emptive strikes against the “evildoers” of the moment. The system was set up this way almost from the start, but it’s been getting a lot more “extra” money to play with since 1983 when the SSI tax was raised and benefits were cut.

So, what if the “extra” money, the money that is in a theoretical “trust fund,” is needed, for example to pay the pensions for the “baby-boomer” generation? It would either have to come from some-



Minnesota Historical Society

Trotskyist leadership won Teamsters union-organizing drive through militant strikes in Minneapolis, 1934.

where in the federal budget (most likely more cuts in social services) or...increased taxes. In other words: You put your money into the system, the government “borrows” it, and you have to pay more so the government can pay back the debt!

The argument to replace the “bankrupt” Social Security system with private accounts is full of Bush doublespeak. The predictions of “bankruptcy” hinge on projections of a steep slowdown in economic and population growth—lower than any two decades of U.S. history, including the years encompassing the Great Depression, 1920-39! If there were such an extended period of stagnation, and this is certainly possible, U.S. capitalism would have a lot more to worry about than shortfalls in pensions! On the other hand, the projections for returns on private accounts are based on a stock market yield of 7 percent. If the economy were doing that well, well enough to make the private accounts pay off, then the SSI trust would also be doing splendidly and the system wouldn’t need any help at all!

est and hefty fees. The balance of their benefits is to be made up by their (supposedly) successful stock and bond investments. Tell this to those approaching retirement who lost their shirts during the 2000-2002 market plunge. The privatization scheme would put people’s paltry retirement savings at the mercy of the repeated financial crises and economic depressions that have marked the history of industrial capitalism since its rise two centuries ago.

Laying the Groundwork to Destroy SSI

In 1983, the “free market” Cato Institute published a study, provocatively titled “Achieving a ‘Leninist’ Strategy.” Making clear exactly which interests are being catered to, the battle plan called for forging a coalition “that will gain directly from its implementation...the banks, insurance companies, and other institutions that will gain from providing such plans to the public.” The Cato paper sketched out a series of measures to “prepare the



Classic Publications

political ground” by dividing or neutralizing the opposition (the elderly, for example), through “guerrilla warfare against both the current Social Security system and the coalition that supports it.” Bush loaded up the Social Security Administration with Cato graduates and has followed the Cato projection almost exactly.

The drive to seize the Social Security funds and invest them in the stock market follows trends in private industry. Most employer pension funds have been transformed into 401(k) or similar plans that place the burden of risk on the worker and make many even more dependent on SSI checks. Hundreds of thousands of workers saw their pensions go up in smoke when dozens of steel and airline companies went bust in the last decades. Public employees’ retirement systems are now in the cross hairs of governments all over the country. California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger has supported a proposal to scrap current pension plans for teachers, firefighters and nurses, forcing new employees into private plans. So far, this has been beaten back by protests from labor.

The U.S. in the 1990s achieved the most

inegalitarian distribution of income of any industrialized capitalist country save Russia (whose economy is in shambles). The successful slashing of social benefits has been the fruit of a longstanding right-wing strategy. In the 1980s the Reaganites *deliberately* manufactured massive budget deficits—the federal debt tripled between 1981 and 1990—to create the financial pressure and resulting political conditions to dismantle the “welfare state.” Bush’s second term will see the lowest tax take as a percentage of GDP since the Truman administration (1945-53), allowing the administration to cry “deficit” to fuel their cuts.

Democratic president Bill Clinton accomplished what no Republican had been able to do—gutting welfare—while assuring that millions of blacks and Hispanics were in prison and welfare moms were thrown into the low-wage workforce. This set the stage for the assault on Social Security. It was Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, a respected Democratic Party strategist, who openly floated the idea of privatization in 1998. The Democratic Party leadership’s line now is that it would consider all manner of cuts as long as the privatization part is dropped. When it comes time to pull the plug on social programs, the Democrats simply have a better bedside manner.

The people pushing privatization are preaching faith in the stock market and capitalist economy. Investment firms will rake in millions but for working people it amounts to a big rip-off. Take a look at the actual state of the economy right now. Over decades, the greedy capitalists have destroyed the U.S. industrial infrastructure, and this administration has plunged the country into huge debt. The trade deficit, which stood at \$346 billion in 2001, rose to \$666 billion in 2004. Some 20 percent of this debt is held by Japanese finance capitalists and the Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy. They, along with everybody else who holds U.S. government securities, are increasingly concerned as the value of the dollar falls on the international currency market. Should China or Japan decide to dump U.S. bonds, this could cause a currency crisis and sharp rise in interest rates in the U.S. Since the housing boom is fueled by low interest rates, if the rates soar hundreds of thousands of homeowners could well find themselves on the street by default and mortgage foreclosures. In short, capitalism means more misery for working people and the oppressed.

It is surely not much to ask that, upon retirement, workers should live no worse off than they did during the years they toiled. But, under capitalism, this is as much a fantasy as full employment, universal free health care, good education and decent housing. The capitalist class will not “reorder its priorities” in the interests of the workers, nor will it relinquish its power voluntarily. The central task of the Spartacist League consists in forging an integrated, revolutionary workers party to unshackle the labor movement and the oppressed from the Democratic Party union tops and black elected officials, whose conservatism and partnership with capital facilitate every blow by the class enemy. Attainment of even the basic necessities of human life in this society, not to mention leisure and culture, urgently requires *a class-struggle fight and revolutionary leadership*. This is the way forward: To seize the means of production from the parasitic, greedy and filthy rich capitalist class. *For class war, not massacre of workers rights! Those who labor must rule!* ■

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Assata Shakur...

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against the young black men and women inspired by the Black Panther Party and the fight for black freedom intersects its unflagging determination to overthrow the 1959 Cuban Revolution. The Cuban Revolution, which forced the venal capitalist class across the water to Miami, inspired black and white youth not only in America but also around the world. The Cuban Revolution, bureaucratically deformed from its inception and economically suffering under the U.S. blockade and especially since capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union, must be defended against imperialist attack.

Shortly before Shakur’s bounty was increased, Cuban *gusano* (worm) Luis Posada Carriles entered the U.S. (see “Extradite *Gusano* Terrorist to Havana!” WV No. 849, 27 May). With a blood-soaked résumé of 45 years of terror in hand that stretches from Cuba across North, Central and South America, he is now requesting political asylum from his former CIA employers. This counterrevolutionary killer is looking for sanctuary with his reactionary *gusano* cohorts in Miami who are welcomed by the U.S. imperialist butchers. In a May 10 speech, Fidel Castro said that the U.S. actions against Shakur were intended to divert attention away from the criminal Posada. He stated that Shakur was a victim of racial persecution, adding “They wanted to portray her as a terrorist, something that was an injustice, a brutality, an infamous lie.”

The vendetta against Assata Shakur has been pushed by both Democrats and Republicans. In September 1998, the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) even voted for a House resolution demanding that Castro return Assata to the U.S. When caught out in their support for this reprehensible motion, some members of the CBC backpedaled, with L.A. Congresswoman Maxine Waters and Chicago Congressman Danny Davis “explaining” that the Republican House leadership had “quietly slipped this bill” through and deceptively used only Shakur’s former name of Joanne Chesimard. As we wrote in “Black Democrats Join Racist Vendetta Against Assata Shakur” (WV No. 699, 23 October 1998): “To believe Waters and Davis, they either voted for a resolution they hadn’t bothered to read or endorsed the extradition of black COINTELPRO victims other than Assata Shakur!”

On 2 May 1973, Assata Shakur, Sundiata Acoli and Zayd Malik Shakur were stopped on the turnpike ostensibly for a “faulty taillight” by cops of the Nazi-infested New Jersey state troopers. In fact, the cops had been tracking their car and organized an ambush. A state trooper pulled out a gun, and when the smoke cleared, one trooper and Zayd Shakur were dead. Sundiata Acoli had escaped and Assata Shakur was severely wounded. Near death, she was finally taken to a hospital where she was chained to a bed, beaten and tortured, her arms paralyzed by gunshot wounds. She was kept in barbarous conditions, in isolation in the basement of a men’s prison,

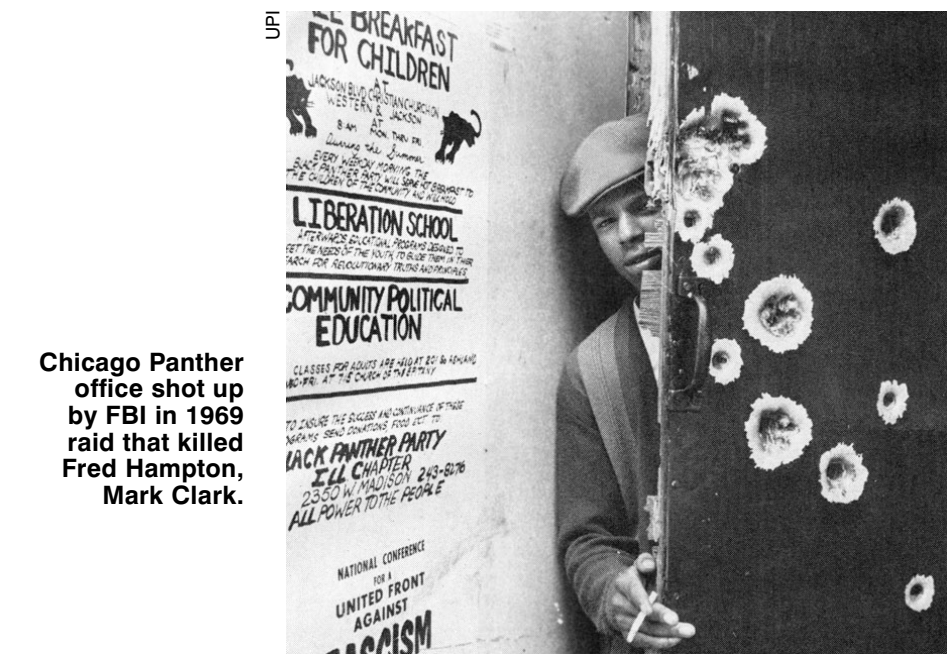
under 24-hour surveillance during her four years of pretrial detention. During this period, she was hauled from court to court where the state could not get even one of the many trumped-up charges that had been brought against her to stick. While awaiting trial, she gave birth to a daughter who was immediately taken from her.

After a hysterical, cop-orchestrated media campaign, in which she was called “the high priestess” and the “black Joan of Arc” of the Black Liberation Army (BLA, an urban guerrillaist outgrowth of the Black Panthers), she was convicted in 1977 of killing the state trooper and her own companion, Zayd Shakur! The all-white jury included two friends, one girlfriend and two nephews of New Jersey state troopers. Three physicians testified that she had been so seriously hurt by cop gunfire that she would have been physically unable to pull a trigger. The state trooper was killed with a bullet from a police revolver. There was no gun residue found on her fingers. Her wounds also showed that she was shot twice in the back while her arms were raised over her head in a position of surrender. The judge added 33 years to her life sentence because she would not stand up for him in court.

Two days after he escaped, Sundiata Acoli was captured, tried separately and sentenced to life plus 30 years. Sundiata Acoli is a college-educated mathematician who registered voters in Mississippi during the 1964 “Freedom Summer.” Like Shakur, he joined the Harlem Black Panther organization. He was arrested in 1969 as one of the Panther 21, a frame-up conspiracy case that included the ludicrous charge that they had plotted to blow up, among other things, the Bronx Botanical Garden. After a nine-month trial, the longest trial in New York State history, the jury took 90 minutes to acquit the Panthers of the 156 counts against them. Acoli has spent years in federal penitentiaries, including the notorious maximum security unit in Marion, Illinois, where he was in lockdown for 23 hours a day. In August 2004, 67-year-old Acoli was denied parole, which cannot be reviewed for another ten years.

In 1979, Assata Shakur was freed from New Jersey’s Clinton Women’s Prison in a dramatic and well-executed escape. After the recent announcement of the raised bounty, Mos Def published a tribute to Assata Shakur titled “Assata Shakur: The Government’s Terrorist is Our Community’s Heroine” that includes a moving passage about the impact of her frame-up and subsequent escape on the black Brooklyn neighborhood where he grew up: “As a high school student I remember seeing posters all around the Brooklyn community I lived in that read: Assata Shakur is Welcome Here.”

Assata, An Autobiography, Shakur’s own story written in 1987, has some powerful parallels with the recently published book by Mumia Abu-Jamal, *We Want Freedom, A Life in the Black Panther Party*, in portraying the idealistic youth that joined the Black Panther Party (see review in *Black History* No. 18, January 2005). The books give a sense of the determined black youth who grew up under the hellish conditions of racist capitalist America, and who were trans-



Chicago Panther office shot up by FBI in 1969 raid that killed Fred Hampton, Mark Clark.

formed into leaders and foot soldiers fighting for black freedom. Shakur wrote about joining the Panthers: “If a light had been plugged into me, i’m sure i would have lit up half of Harlem. I was fired up and raring to go. When i joined the BPP, i was determined to give it everything i had.” Shakur helped organize a free medical clinic in Harlem.

Assata Shakur joined the Black Panther Party right after J. Edgar Hoover ordered the 41 FBI offices to intensify their efforts “to expose, disrupt, misdirect, discredit, and otherwise neutralize” militant black organizations as part of the deadly COINTELPRO (Counter-Intelligence Program) campaign. Assata Shakur, like so many others, watched while comrades were arrested and gunned down and the organization was sabotaged and splintered.

In 1971 the FBI had initiated a new counterinsurgency program campaign named “NEWKILL.” Hoover wrote in a memo, “The Newkill cases and other terrorist acts have demonstrated that in many instances those involved in these acts are individuals who cannot be identified as members of an extremist group.... They are frequently supporters, community workers, or people who hang around the headquarters of the extremist group.... If you have no file, open files.”

Hamburg...

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Soviet Union in 1990, the SPD/Green government has, since late 2004, been planning, in consort with the Israeli government, a new anti-Semitic ban on immigration to Germany by Jews from the former Soviet Union. The Conference of the Ministry of the Interior established criteria whereby only “economically useful” Jews were to be allowed to come to Germany. Whereas we protested vehemently against such an anti-Semitic and racist ban on immigration, the “anti-Germans” kept silent. In exactly the same way, they take the side of the government in the state’s “war against terror.” For example, on 10 July 2004, 150 of them with U.S. and Israeli flags and war cries such as “Panzer into Ramallah—that’s the true Antifa” and “Anybody that likes Kreuzberg’s got to be crap,” terrorized the Berlin immigrant districts of Neukölln and Kreuzberg. Without the protection of 200 cops, who arrested many counterdemonstrators, they would have been unable to carry out this racist anti-Arab march, since they encountered the rage of 250 leftists and residents who closed ranks against them. We demand: *Full citizenship rights for everyone who has made it here!*

The reason the “anti-Germans” are still tolerated as a part of the left is the widely accepted belief in “collective guilt.” The “collective guilt” lie that all Germans are responsible for the Holocaust whitewashes those who are truly guilty. It was the German bourgeoisie that brought Hitler to power in the early 1930s. This was aided by the treacherous leadership of the KPD [German Communist Party], which refused to force the SPD leader-

The East Coast Panthers were among the main targets, and the FBI and local police initiated national search-and-destroy missions for suspected BLA members—this was the context of Shakur’s arrest and trial.

That Shakur is alive at all today, let alone out of prison, is amazing. Many of the original cadres of the Black Liberation Army like Shakur were derived from the old New York Panther leadership. They sought to keep alive the spirit of black rebellion through carrying out individual armed actions. Rejecting the Marxist strategy of mobilizing the integrated power of the working class to fight for black freedom, surviving Panthers went into the dead end of Democratic Party electoralism and/or black nationalist schemes.

Today, black youth continue to be beaten and gunned down by kill-crazy cops on the streets of rotting American cities. The fight for black freedom is the strategic question of the American revolution. There will be no social revolution in this country without the united struggle of black and white workers led by a multiracial revolutionary vanguard party.

Hands off Assata Shakur! Free Sundiata Acoli! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! For black liberation through socialist revolution! ■

ship into a united front to stop the Nazis. Instead, the KPD leaders labeled the SPD “social-fascists,” thus alienating social-democratic workers from pursuing a course of common struggle against the Nazis. The KPD leadership left the working-class base of the SPD to its pro-capitalist leadership, which feared the independent mobilization of the working class against the Nazis. Instead of mobilizing the working class, in 1932 the SPD leadership called for a vote to Hindenburg as a lesser evil. In January 1933, Hindenburg appointed Hitler as chancellor. The determination of the German proletariat to fight against Hitler was betrayed by the leaderships of the SPD and KPD. That is why Hitler came to power without a shot being fired. The Nazis then smashed the Communist Party, then the trade unions and finally the SPD. Only when the workers movement had been atomized could the Nazis carry out their war against the Soviet Union and the Holocaust. The Holocaust was the industrial extermination of six million Jews and 500,000 Roma and Sinti [Gypsies] and countless others. Today the SPD/Green government is utilizing the commemorations of the 60th anniversary of liberation, in the name of the “German responsibility” for the World War and the Holocaust, to advance the interests of German imperialism. Already in 1999, “Never again Auschwitz!” served as the battle cry in the war against Serbia, in order to ideologically justify the first wartime deployment of the *Bundeswehr* [German army] since the end of the Second World War. Only a successful workers revolution will avenge the victims of the Holocaust. To achieve this, it is necessary to build a multiethnic workers party that fights every form of oppression. ■

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“Honor” Killings...

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learned to expect from the state and other public institutions. The money to get a truck to start a vegetable business comes from an uncle, not a bank or start-up money from a state program. In most cases, one’s first job is either at a family enterprise or at a factory, achieved through the recommendation of a family member working there. All the old oppressive traditions are preserved through these intensified ties to the family.

Everyone knows that women are the big losers of the counterrevolution. In the DDR [East German deformed workers state], 90 percent of women were employed and grew up with the awareness that they could care for themselves and their children and get ahead in their profession with or without a man. But female engineers, waitresses and nuclear physicists suddenly found themselves out on the street and back in the kitchen, as the state-owned factories were destroyed one after another. Official unemployment rates in eastern Germany are twice as high as in the west and twice as high for women as for men. But in the Turkish neighborhoods of Berlin, unemployment is just as high as in eastern Germany. In this atmosphere of joblessness and isolation, religion and the oppression of women flourish.

Recently Turkish feminist voices have been getting more of a public hearing: a few years ago, Serap Cileli wrote and then filmed her autobiography, *Wir sind Eure Töchter, nicht Eure Ehre!* [We Are Your Daughters, Not Your Honor!]; Seyran Ates won the Berlin Woman’s Prize for her autobiography, *Grosse Reise ins Feuer* [Long Journey into the Flames]; and Necla Kelek’s best seller *Die fremde Braut* [The Foreign Bride] exposes forced marriage. These women have pulled *Namus* (honor) out of the closet and exposed it; they have also taken on the racism of those liberals who preach a “cultural relativism” that makes peace with the most abhorrent anti-woman practices by claiming that criticizing any aspect of another culture is racist. Thus the liberals sit on their hands when, for example, Somali women become prey to genital mutilation, Tibetan baby girls to the traditional female infanticide, Afghan women are stuck under the suffocating *burka* and Turkish, Kurdish, Indian, Pakistani and many other women are forced into marriage and become victims of “honor” killings. In an interview with the *tageszeitung* [taz] (28 February), Seyran Ates stated: “Leftists and liberals and feminists are always at a complete loss and organize conferences and seek consensus. That isn’t enough.” Turkish women, she said, are “slaves in the Muslim marriage market.” Ates makes the same proposals as Necla Kelek and Terre des Femmes: more women’s safe houses and more stringent criminal law.

But the SPD/Green government is not making more money available to Papatya and other women’s houses, and neither is the SPD/PDS-run Berlin City Council [Senat]. Public funds for abused women are being massively slashed along with all other social measures. We oppose these cuts, while recognizing that the homes run by determined, hard-working and often courageous social workers are just a drop in the bucket compared to the needs of women attempting to escape abuse in the family, in Germany, Europe and worldwide.

One of the feminist demands is “No reduced sentence on the grounds of the

Bangladeshi women scarred in acid attacks.

Gendercide Watch



perpetrators’ possible immigrant background! Violence against women cannot be permitted to be relativized” (TdF demonstration call). In Germany, “honor” killings are not automatically viewed as murder, but are reduced to manslaughter “because the stamp of the perp’s cultural upbringing is taken into account” (Seyran Ates, *taz* interview). This is both anti-woman and racist, and it’s no wonder Turkish feminists are enraged at this. In the eyes of communists and the working class (and for that matter anyone who upholds the gains of the French Revolution) murdering a woman is murder.

Feminists Call for State Intervention

It is a dangerous illusion to believe that the racist, capitalist German state can play a positive role in the liberation of immigrant women. Laws of the centralized state power are enforced in a completely racist and undemocratic manner, ultimately targeting not just victims of racism, but also the victims of “honor” killings and other patriarchal brutality. If Hatun had been armed and her murderers had known she had a weapon and knew how to use it, she might still be alive today.

While the present TdF campaign is far removed from the grassroots support of the French feminist organization “Neither Sluts nor Slaves,” which brought 20,000 onto the streets on International Women’s Day in 2003, its strategy has a lot in common with that organization’s. As our French section, the Ligue Trotskyste de France (LTF), wrote in *Le Bolchévique* No. 163 (Spring 2003):

“It is criminal to sidetrack the anger and courage of these young women into calls on the class enemy, the bourgeois state, to protect them! It is not with calls for more police repression in the ghettos that one can resolve the pathology of the ghettos, which are hit by the economic crisis and where social backwardness is encouraged by the *systematic* segregation of minority communities!”
—quoted in “Racism and Islamic Fundamentalism in France,”
Workers Vanguard No. 811,
10 October 2003

Seyran Ates, a former squatter, calls on the capitalist state to copy the immigration laws of Denmark’s rightist conservative government, according to which “only those who subordinate themselves to Danish culture should be allowed into the country.” Necla Kelek agrees. In *Die fremde Braut* she openly calls for revising the hated “Ausländergesetz” [German law regulating foreign immigrants] to read: “Bringing together the family on the basis of marriage is authorized only when both partners are at least 21, as in the Netherlands, or following the Danish model, when they have completed their 24th year.” PDS immigration politics spokesman Giyasettin Sayan uses the opportunity to call for investigating the finances of Islamic organizations, saying, “In some organizations the influence of foreign extremist groups is very strong” (*taz*, 28 February). The struggle against the real horrors of women’s oppression has been distorted into a justification for imperialist reaction, made part of the racist anti-Islam campaign that supposedly champions women’s rights. The capitalist state—the police, courts and prisons—is not there to protect young women from unwanted marriage or the consequences of escaping from it. Neither are the pro-capitalist politicians of the SPD or PDS, let alone

the Greens. The SPD/Green government was responsible for sending German troops abroad to wage a war, in the Balkans, for the first time since World War II and now has troops in Afghanistan. The German state makes use of feminist sympathy for the plight of “import brides” as a way to close one of the last few remaining legal loopholes on immigration, just as the imprisonment of Afghan women under the *burka* was used as a justification for bombing Afghanistan to get rid of the Taliban government, which had originally come to power with the support of the U.S. and all West European governments.

All these lies must be taken apart and exposed. Immemorial customs like the bride price, forced marriage and crimes of “honor” exist in countries kept backward by imperialist domination and in the beleaguered ghettos in German cities,



Friends of Afghanistan Society

Afghan women’s militia takes up arms against CIA-backed Islamic fundamentalist cutthroats. Spartacists hailed 1979 Soviet Red Army intervention in Afghanistan.

where lack of citizenship and residency rights makes it almost impossible for a young woman to break away from her family. Necla Kelek documents the plight of young second- and third-generation women married off to cousins in Turkey:

“A person’s residence permit is lost, according to paragraph 44 of the Ausländergesetz, if they leave the country ‘for a reason which by its nature is not temporary.’ After six months at the latest, the possibility of returning to Germany is lost. If the young woman doesn’t know this and is unable to report to the German authorities, she has to stay in Turkey forever.”

But just take a look at all the feminists, reformists and so-called socialists, with their arrogance and illusions in the German imperialist state: not one will join us in the call for the simple democratic demand “Full citizenship rights for all those who live here.” Why? Because they accept the German state, and the property forms it protects. And they believe that they can pressure the SPD or PDS to the left to attain all the necessary reforms or that they have to support the “lesser evil” to avert further attacks. In contrast, we are inspired by the Russian Revolution, not least because of the gains for women, always a good measure of the development of society as a whole. It will take a revolution to get there, and that means convincing the most politically conscious workers, including the crucial immigrant sector, that the Social Democracy, whether SPD or PDS, is an obstacle not only to rev-

olution but to the most elementary needs of workers, women and immigrants.

For decades the Spartacist League/U.S. journal *Women and Revolution* has been condemning and mobilizing against such horrific crimes against women as genital mutilation, *suttee*, forced marriage and child marriages. [*Women and Revolution* has been suspended as a separate journal. *Women and Revolution* pages now appear in *Workers Vanguard* and other sectional papers of the ICL, as well as the ICL’s theoretical journal, *Spartacist*.] We communists see these abominations as part of the oppressive institution of the family, which is necessary to maintain class society and can be fought only by mobilizing the power of the trade unions to bring women into social production, sharing the social power of their class, away from the isolation of the home. This is especially important for female immigrants. It is at work that language skills are really acquired, where bonds develop on the picket lines and in social struggles, where prejudices between those of German and other backgrounds, between men and women of all backgrounds can be transcended. The liberation of women starts in the class struggle and will finally be achieved when the working class takes power, freeing women from age-old family servitude and reorganizing society in the interest of all the oppressed. The family cannot simply be abolished; rather, its social functions, such as housework, child rearing, preparation of food and education must be replaced by social institutions.

For us as Trotskyists the point of departure for attaining all this is to construct a

multiethnic vanguard party that the Bolshevik leaders Lenin and Trotsky would recognize as their own. In Germany today this entails fighting for full citizenship rights for all who live here, regardless of where they, their parents or grandparents were born, or what their religious background may be. Through its daily struggles against racism and the oppression of women, a revolutionary party will build the authority among the workers to mobilize them against all manner of backward consciousness, including the abuse of women.

As Engels wrote in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*, the liberation of women is the precondition to “bring the whole female sex back into public industry, and...this in turn demands the abolition of the monogamous family as the economic unit of society.” Such a change presupposes the abolition of private property:

“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.”

Only when this is accomplished will a new generation of women grow up who have never known “what it is to give themselves to a man from any other considerations than real love, or to refuse to give themselves to their lover from fear of the economic consequences.” ■

NOTICE

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

Our next issue will be dated July 8.

WORKERS VANGUARD

Bush Attempts Heist of Social Security

For Class War, Not Massacre of Workers Rights!



Wilson/NY Times

In the one-sided class war this government is waging against the workers and oppressed worldwide, the Bush administration is taking on the final dismantling of social programs won over decades of struggle by American working people. The drive to maintain a competitive edge against its rivals fuels American imperialist adventures, like the unending, blood-spattered occupation of Iraq, as well as the push to slash social benefits and otherwise ratchet up the rate of exploitation of the working class. Competition among capitalist powers has been amplified in the age of imperialism and has intensified even more since the collapse of the Soviet Union. With their election victory, the Republicans feel at liberty to plunge ahead with reckless greed, remolding domestic social policy in the image of the robber barons of 19th century American capitalism, while rampaging across the globe at will.

While the wealthy just got massive tax breaks, the new federal budget includes savage cuts in health care, food and education programs, AIDS and HIV treat-

Break with the Democrats! Fight for a Workers Party and a Workers Government!

ment, transportation, medical research and safety inspections for food and drugs—you name it. The Social Security Insurance system (SSI) is now targeted as a major domestic battleground, to be followed closely by Medicaid. Medicare will surely be next on the chopping block. As always, the cuts will hurt the destitute, children and the elderly the most—and the employed working class will get hit too. As health care costs soar and employer-paid insurance diminishes, 45 million people lack health insurance and one million more are added every year. Workers face falling wages, and, adding a

sadistic flourish, there's a new bankruptcy law (virtually written by the credit card companies) that precludes this option for many rendered destitute and debt-ridden by medical crises, job loss or divorce.

The arrogance of Bush & Co. is matched by their religious zeal. The country is in the grip of a gang of demented fundamentalist Christians who deeply believe in their mission: to impose their peculiar set of moral values on us, and the rest of the world too. Bush may believe, as he said during the 2000 presidential campaign, that "God wants me to run for President." But five months into his second coming,

March 31: San Francisco union members protest Social Security privatization plan.

Bush's popularity is the lowest of any president in the last 60 years, at this point in a second term. Many, even Republicans, believe that the administration might be overreaching its "mandate." Plummeting support for the SSI privatization scheme has stoked that worry. Bush ploughs ahead, however. After all, if you have a mandate from God, why be concerned with the opinions of mere mortals?

This Christian fundamentalist crusade is part of the ideological wrapper for the "war on terror," the cover for violent destruction and repression of anyone, anywhere that stands in the way of U.S. imperialism. Domestically, the "war on terror" is the patriotic script for ripping up constitutional and basic democratic rights and social gains wrested through the American Revolution, the Civil War against slavery, the civil rights movement, the women's and gay rights movements and decades of labor battles.

However demented this administration may seem, it is a government by and for the owners of the means of production—the capitalist class—who are driven by the quest for profits. From that point of view, doling out millions so retired workers can live a decent life, poor children can have nourishing meals or health care or a chance at a good education, is just unproductive overhead expense that cuts into profits and, crucially, into funds needed to pay for imperialist adventures. In the last three years, profits have had the fastest growth since WWII, and this has made Bush's well-fed pals in the corporate world hungry for more. Many Wall Street firms are drooling in anticipation of the billions of dollars that will flow into their coffers (especially in commissions and fees, regardless of whether the market goes up or down) if even a partial SSI privatization plan goes through. However, Bush's SSI plan has encountered opposition from significant elements of the capitalist class, including some Congressional Republicans who are concerned that it will add further hundreds of billions of dollars to the federal budget deficit in order to finance the "transition" to private accounts and reduced benefits.

Social Security is popular because almost everyone benefits from it. It doesn't pay much, but it does promise you'll get a

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FBI's Racist Bounty on Former Black Panther Hands Off Assata Shakur!

On May 2, New Jersey's attorney general, along with the federal Justice Department, announced that the bounty on the head of former Black Panther member Assata Shakur would be raised by \$850,000, to \$1 million, and that a new reward poster would be circulated throughout the U.S., Caribbean, South America and Europe. The Justice Department also added her name to the FBI's domestic terrorist list as well as various international "terrorist" lists.

Assata Shakur is the victim of a racist frame-up for the 1973 death of a New Jersey state trooper. She escaped prison and fled to Cuba where she resides today, a political refugee from capitalist America's racist injustice. She wrote eloquently in her 1998 *Open Letter*: "My name is Assata Shakur, and I am a 20th century escaped slave. Because of government persecution, I was left with no

other choice than to flee from the political repression, racism and violence that dominate the US government's policy towards people of color. I am an ex-political prisoner, and I have been living in exile in Cuba since 1984."

Mumia Abu-Jamal, America's foremost class-war prisoner, wrote from death row on May 13 regarding Assata Shakur: "For centuries, nothing has so stirred up American fury like the escape of a slave. That ain't just distant history. For daring to slip her bonds and escape from brutal and unjust bondage, the Empire now labels *her* a terrorist.... As for terrorists, if they really wanna find some, it shouldn't be too hard to find them. Just check the White House."

Assata Shakur's case casts a sharp light on how the U.S. bourgeoisie's many, decades-long terrorist vendettas

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Elana Levy

Assata Shakur speaking in Havana, Cuba, January 1998.