

Down With Big Brother “Real ID” Act!

Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!

LOS ANGELES—A sinister bill, the “Real ID” Act, passed the U.S. Congress on May 10 and was signed into law by Bush the next day. The law targets immigrants as a step toward more effectively regimenting the entire population, including black people and the working class as a whole. In once again turning to the divide-and-conquer scheme of scapegoating immigrants, the capitalist purveyors of xenophobia have added the post-9/11 twist that “illegal” immigration into the U.S. is a threat to “national security,” and that the “war on terror” must include measures to seal the Mexican border and stop the influx of “illegal aliens,” with a particular focus on California.

“Real ID” mandates, among other things, that states deprive undocumented immigrants of driver’s licenses, transforming state motor vehicle administrators into de facto immigration officials who would be called upon to investigate the citizenship or legal residence status of all license applicants. The intended result is to drive underground those who are unable to hand over documents such as birth certificates, Social Security cards or proof of citizenship or legal residency. Individuals would be required to prove they are in the U.S. legally in order to get identification necessary to board airplanes or enter federal buildings and even national parks, and would increasingly be cut off from a variety of essential social services like schools. The bill grants the Department of Homeland Security unconditional authority to build barriers along the border and imposes impossible new hurdles for those seeking asylum in the U.S.: for example, asylum-seekers may be asked to provide written corroboration from the countries they’re fleeing that they face persecution there! This in spite of the fact that the asylum-seeking process for those oppressed in their home countries by despotic regimes buttressed by U.S. imperialism is already one of the toughest in the world. As proletarian internationalists, we say: All who come here have a right to stay.

The broader goal sought through “Real ID” is to lay the basis for a national identity card system and centralized database, an aim long desired by sectors of the ruling class. In defense of the basic democratic rights of the working masses, we are intransigently opposed to any and all attempts to strengthen the repres-



Los Angeles, April 30: Immigrant workers groups march at May Day rally.

sive apparatus of the capitalist state—its cops, spies and security agents. Down with “Real ID”! For a multiracial, class-struggle fight in defense of all our rights!

“Real ID,” which was tucked into an \$82 billion military spending bill, passed with broad bipartisan support. The Democrats and Republicans are both capitalist parties, committed to serving the interests of the ruling class at the expense of the working class, whose labor produces the profits by which the capitalist class is growing ever more fantastically rich. Although the Democrats and Republicans occasionally have tactical differences over how best to administer capitalist rule, they agree on the need to strengthen the capitalist state’s machinery of repression, which they are currently doing by whipping up fears of “porous borders” and immigrants “taking American jobs.” The war on immigrants gained particular strength with Clinton’s Illegal Immigrant and Immigrant Responsibility Act of

1996, which increased militarization of the border and called for deporting even longtime permanent residents for trivial prior criminal offenses.

For the ruling class, there is a tension between the desire to militarize the Mexican border and the need to maintain a profitable system of cheap labor. The capitalists rely on undocumented immigrants to do grueling labor at a fraction of the cost of “legal” workers, but they also want to be able to tightly regulate immigration, turning it on and off like a spigot to suit their economic needs. However, as Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels wrote in the *Communist Manifesto* over 150 years ago, “The workingmen have no country.” The attempts to militarize the border must be met with opposition by the organized labor movement, which has every interest in defending the most exploited layers of the working class.

Taking its cue from the capitalist state, a violent, armed, fascist gang of vigi-

lantes calling itself the “Minuteman Project” has been patrolling the Arizona border (see *Workers Vanguard* No. 849, 27 May). This group, and others like the “Friends of the Border Patrol,” cloak themselves in the banner of the “war on terror” and have recently been legitimized through a Congressional proposal to deputize masses of people to help patrol the Mexican border. With the explicit invitation of California’s “close the border” governor, Arnold Schwarzenegger, these same forces are planning a mass mobilization along the California-Mexico border in September. It is of the utmost importance that labor’s power be brought to bear in defense of the 8 to 12 million undocumented workers living in the U.S. For mass labor-centered, multiracial mobilizations against these fascist thugs and in defense of the immigrant population!

The campaign against immigrants is particularly hot in California, where racist organizations like “Save Our State” (SOS) and the California Coalition for Immigration Reform (CCIR) have been holding a series of increasingly provocative anti-immigrant rallies. On May 25, Minuteman founder Jim Gilchrist appeared in Garden Grove, Orange County, in Southern California to speak to a meeting of CCIR. Some 300 anti-racist protesters demonstrated against Gilchrist and his supporters. At the demonstration, several protesters were struck by the minivan driven by a local bigot. The driver was released within hours by the Garden Grove police, who refused to press any charges for this potentially murderous assault. Instead, the police went on a rampage against the anti-racist protesters, arresting five and charging at least one with a felony.

In response to this outrage, an anti-racist protester named Theresa Dang, a young Vietnamese woman who had been among those struck by the minivan, sent a letter signed by herself and two others to the Orange County district attorney. They demanded that charges against the

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South Africa: Down With Neo-Apartheid Capitalism!

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Free Ohio 7 Prisoner Richard Williams!

Richard Williams is now part of the Partisan Defense Committee's class-war prisoners stipend program. Along with other radicals who became known as the Ohio 7, Williams joined an armed clandestine movement that took credit for "bank expropriations" and bombings in the late 1970s and early '80s against symbols of U.S. imperialism and the white apartheid government of South Africa. He, Tom Manning and Jaan Laaman are now the last of the Ohio 7 still in prison.

Prior to his political activities, Williams had served time in prison in the early 1970s. This is when he came to political consciousness, as a young man experiencing the radical ferment of the period—the Vietnam antiwar movement, black radicalism and other social struggles of the '60s and '70s—refracted through

his experience of brutal prison conditions. He was imbued with a keen sense of the racist and oppressive reality of American society. In a short biographical piece, he explains (www.paow.org): "I was elected chairperson of the New England Prisoner Association. Inside, I met with legislators, and participated in food and work strikes and protests for better conditions. I read a lot of history and worked in political study groups. I was locked up, beaten, and shipped out for my activities. I learned through study and my efforts that the struggle was much larger than my surroundings. I became a communist."

After being released from prison, he took part in protecting the homes of people in the Boston area who were targeted by anti-busing racists. In 1979, he and his comrades traveled to Greensboro, North



Prison Activist Resource Center

Carolina, to protest the Klan murders of five unionists, civil rights workers and supporters of the Communist Workers Party (see "Greensboro Massacre: We Will Not Forget!" WV No. 835, 29 October 2004).

In 1986, Williams was convicted of five bombings attributed to the United Freedom Front and sentenced to 45 years in prison. This wasn't enough for a government intent on crushing opposition, so he was dragged through two trials for the 1981 killing of a New Jersey state trooper, even though Tom Manning had taken responsibility for shooting the trooper in self-defense and had testified that Williams was not even present. The second trial, at which Williams was defended by Lynne Stewart, ended in 1991, with his being sentenced to another 35 years to life. In 1989, the government attempted to pile on as much as 60 additional years by trying Williams along with Ray and Patricia Levasseur for "seditious conspiracy" to commit the same alleged crimes for which they were already serving long sentences. This government attempt to revive thought-crime "sedition" laws to be used against leftists was beaten back when, despite the govern-

ment's efforts, the jury acquitted all three.

Inside the walls of Lompoc Federal Penitentiary in California, Williams has faced calculated cruelty designed to break his will. Just hours after the September 11 attacks, he was put in solitary, suffering through months of bitter cold, denied family visits and reading material. Despite suffering a heart attack in February 2002, he was returned to solitary on April 30. An article in the *Santa Barbara News Press* in July 2002 (www.prisonactivist.org) stated that Lynne Stewart believed that Williams was being victimized because she was herself a target of the government for her leftist sympathies and vigorous defense of her client Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman. (Stewart has since been convicted of "aiding terrorism" in a chilling attack on civil rights [see "Lynne Stewart, Mohamed Yousry, Ahmed Abdel Sattar Convicted—Outrage!" WV No. 842, 18 February]).

More recently, Williams has endured treatment for cancer at the Federal Medical Center Butner in North Carolina. Last month, in a letter to the PDC, he reported that his cancer is in remission but that he will still be undergoing difficult treatment for other ailments.

Like the other Ohio 7 radicals, Richard Williams committed no crime in the eyes of the working class. He fought against U.S. imperialism and racial oppression. This is why the U.S. rulers intend to keep him in prison for the rest of his life. Free Richard Williams!

You can write to him: Richard Williams #10377-016, FMC Butner, P.O. Box 1600, Old North Carolina Hwy 75, Butner, NC 27509-1600.

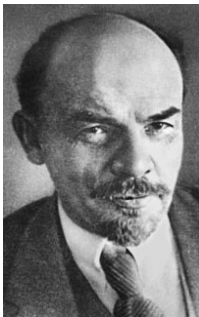
Become a sustaining contributor to help drive the work of the PDC forward! Contributions can be sent to: PDC, P.O. Box 99 Canal St. Station, New York, NY 10013-0099, e-mail: partisandefense@earthlink.net. ■



TROTSKY

The Pillars of Capitalist Rule

Marxists have as their central task the education and organization of the working class toward the goal of a victorious socialist revolution. Writing in 1919, Bolshevik leaders Nikolai Bukharin and Evgeny Preobrazhensky explained in The ABC of Communism that the capitalist class maintains its control not only through the capitalist state and its apparatus of coercion and repression, but also through the ideological domination of society, which is accomplished using the schools, churches and media.



LENIN

Among the means of *spiritual subjugation* at the disposal of the capitalist State, three deserve especial mention: the State school; the State church; and the State, or State-supported, press.

The bourgeoisie is well aware that it cannot control the working masses by the use of force alone. It is necessary that the workers' brains should be completely enmeshed as if in a spider's web. The bourgeois State looks upon the workers as working cattle; these beasts must labour, but they must not bite. Consequently, they must not merely be whipped or shot when they attempt to bite, but they must be trained and tamed, just as wild beasts in a menagerie are trained by beast-tamers. Similarly, the capitalist State maintains specialists to stupefy and subdue the proletariat; it maintains bourgeois teachers and professors, the clergy, bourgeois authors and journalists. In the State schools these specialists teach children from their earliest years to obey capital and to despise and hate "rebels." The children's heads are stuffed with fables about the revolution and the revolutionary movement. Emperors, kings, and industrial magnates are glorified. In the churches, the priests, who are salaried by the State, preach that all authority comes from God. Day after day, the bourgeois newspapers trumpet these lies, whilst working-class papers are in most cases suppressed by the capitalist State. Under such conditions, is it easy for the workers to extract themselves from the quagmire? A German imperialist bandit wrote: "We do not only need the soldiers' legs, but also their brains and their hearts." The bourgeois State, in like manner, aims at educating the workers so that they may resemble domestic animals, who will work like horses, and eat humble pie.

In this manner the capitalist system ensures its own development. The machine of exploitation does its work. Surplus value is continually extracted from the working class. The capitalist State stands on guard, and takes good care that there shall be no uprising of the wage slaves.

—Nikolai Bukharin and Evgeny Preobrazhensky, *The ABC of Communism* (1919)

Honor Andrew Goodman, Michael Schwerner, James Chaney

Klansman Convicted, 40 Years Late

On June 21, in Philadelphia, Mississippi, Edgar Ray Killen, an 80-year-old "former" Klansman and preacher, was convicted of "manslaughter" for his role in orchestrating the slayings of civil rights workers James Chaney, Michael Schwerner and Andrew Goodman in June 1964. Applying their usual liberal spit-and-polish, the *New York Times* (24 June) greeted this verdict as "Closure, or Something Close Enough," while the *Amsterdam News* (22 June) announced "Justice Served." We say it is neither. As Ben Chaney (James's brother) warned from the start, this highly publicized trial was intended to clean up the image of Mississippi—a union-busting, racist state where conditions for many blacks have *deteriorated* since the end of the civil rights movement. It has also provided an occasion for liberals of all stripes to distort and falsify the history of the black freedom struggle for which these men heroically gave their lives.

On 21 June 1964, the first day of "Freedom Summer," a Neshoba County sheriff's deputy picked up three civil rights workers on a bogus speeding violation. The civil rights workers were investigating the burning of a black church used for voter registration projects. Michael Schwerner, a 24-year-old experienced activist from New York, had been in the state for six months. He was on a Klan death list for registering blacks for the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, which was planning to challenge the state's Jim Crow delegation at the upcoming Democratic Party National

Convention. Twenty-one-year-old James Chaney was a black Mississippi civil rights organizer and a Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) staff member. Andrew Goodman, a Queens College student, had arrived in the state that day. The sheriff held them until the Klan could gather a posse, and then released them in the middle of the night. Schwerner and Goodman were each shot once. The Klan beat Chaney so badly that his bones were pulverized, and then shot him three times. Their bodies were buried under an earthen dam on the farm of a prominent Philadelphian.

For the last 40 years, virtually *everyone* in Philadelphia has known the identity of the Klan murderers. According to Ben Chaney, eight or nine of those directly involved in the killing still live in Mississippi, some of them protected by their high positions in society. As Schwerner's widow, Rita Schwerner Bender, makes clear: "Preacher Killen did not act in a vacuum, and the members of the Klan who were members of the police department and the sheriff's department and the highway patrol didn't act in a vacuum." Behind the Klan stood the state Democratic Party and the FBI, who had so thoroughly infiltrated the fascist organization that in 1965 nearly 2,000 of the estimated 10,000 Klan members were FBI informers—i.e., on the payroll. As we explained in our review of the 1988 movie *Mississippi Burning* (a lying Hollywood blockbuster loosely based on this case), far from being an ally of the civil rights struggle, the federal government

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WORKERS VANGUARD

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NYC: Racist Beating in Howard Beach

JULY 5—It was an attempted lynching up North in New York City. Shortly after three a.m. last Wednesday, 22-year-old Glenn Moore and two friends, Richard Pope and Richard Wood, were attacked by a trio of racist punks in the white enclave of Howard Beach. Savagely beaten on the head, legs and back with an aluminum baseball bat, Moore, an army vet, faded in and out of consciousness for two days, and remains hospitalized with a fractured skull and intracranial bleeding.

On June 29, Nicholas “Fat Nick” Minucci, Anthony Ench and Frank Agostini jumped from Minucci’s 2005 Cadillac SUV and attacked the three black men. Wood and Pope escaped, but Moore slipped on the lawn as he ran, and the punks pounced. As Ench ranted, “This is what you get when you rob white boys, n----r,” Minucci pummeled Moore with the bat. While Moore lay on the ground, Ench sadistically ripped out Moore’s earring, stole the sneakers off his feet and a bag containing a pair of Air Jordans for his six-month-old daughter. Police charged Minucci with first-degree assault as a hate crime and Ench with assault as a hate crime and robbery. Agostini, the son of a police detective, has not been charged although he confessed to punching Moore.

Recalling the killing 18 years ago of a young black man, Michael Griffith, just blocks away, the brutal assault on Moore raised fears of a revival of the white-hot racial tensions of the 1980s. On 20 December 1986, a racist mob set upon Griffith, his mother’s fiancé Cedric Sandiford and friend Timothy Grimes. Griffith was chased onto the Belt Parkway where he was struck and killed by a car driven by an off-duty cop. At the time, New York had long been a city on the edge, with a trail of horrors punctuated by the names of those many black people



Eckert/Newsday

Glenn Moore

killed by both racist lynch mobs and the cops of Democratic mayor Ed Koch. In 1982, black transit worker Willie Turks was beaten to death after he stopped at a bagel shop in the Gravesend section of Brooklyn. Then as now, the primary perpetrators of racist terror against black people are the cops that stalk the ghettos like an occupation army. Among the victims of Koch’s cops were 67-year-old Eleanor Bumpurs, 25-year-old artist Michael Stewart and 17-year-old honor student Edmund Perry. In the year following Griffith’s killing Koch’s killer cops gunned down 24 people—21 of them black or Hispanic.

In the 1980s, outrage over cop killings, lynchings and attacks on labor was directed toward the election of black Democrat David Dinkins, who assured nervous Wall Street brokers, “they’ll take it from me.” And, indeed, Dinkins imposed massive job cuts; he put thousands more cops on the streets, and, along with

the likes of Al Sharpton, pushed the racist “war on drugs,” which turned the ghettos into police-occupied zones and put more and more black youth in prison.

Today, fearing an outburst of anger that would return New York to the brink of racial explosion that defined New York during the Koch years, Republican Mayor Bloomberg announced “hate crimes will not be tolerated” and immediately called Al Sharpton. Democrat Sharpton praised the responses of Bloomberg and the cops. The protest Sharpton announced amounted to an impotent vigil consisting of a July 4 walk along the route the three black men took that night.

According to the capitalist press: “Enclave Is Called More Tolerant Than in ’86” (*New York Times*, 30 June). In the “new” Howard Beach, there are eight black residents according to the last census. The howling mobs may have stayed home, but “Free Fat Nick” posters were displayed on the street, and, according to one resident, the three black men “got what they deserved.” Following the beating, the city’s media vilified the victims as car thieves, though they were just walking down the street (minutes from where Moore lived) when they were attacked.

One *New York Times* article (2 July) was headlined “Like Sharpton Himself, City and Its Fears Have Calmed Since ’86.” It was Sharpton’s role as a nationalist demagogue in the ’80s that made him the Democratic Party spokesman he is today. Both Sharpton and Koch whipped up racial antagonisms to keep the multiracial working class divided. Sharpton channeled justified rage at racist mob and cop terror into a racist campaign, leading crowds in Harlem against Korean and Arab shopkeepers. His message to the city’s Democratic Party establishment was that he could contain black protest and therefore should get a seat at the table.

Following the 1999 cop killing of black African immigrant Amadou Diallo, Sharpton joined hands with racist pig Koch to make sure protests remained within the bounds of electoral pressure politics.

The “new” New York is still a racist hell of cop terror and grinding poverty, a place where Dwan Prince, a gay man, could be beaten by an anti-gay bigot. Nearly 50 percent of black men in New York are jobless. Black men like Ousmane Zongo and 19-year-old Timothy Stansbury are gunned down by the cops with impunity. And, as the brutal beating of Glenn Moore shows, there are many places black men are not allowed to walk after dark.

We have sought to mobilize the power of the multiracial labor movement in response to the racist killers in and out of uniform. In 1982, following the killing of Willie Turks, the Spartacist League supported the call of militants in the Transport Workers Union to provide defense patrols against racist terror in the streets of Gravesend. In response to the Howard Beach lynching of Michael Griffith, we issued a leaflet urging the formation of “integrated armed workers defense guards, drawn from responsible union men and women” to patrol the streets where Griffith was attacked and killed. After Amadou Diallo was gunned down in cold blood we wrote in “Beware Democratic Party Hustlers—Enemies of Labor, Blacks” (WV No. 710, 2 April 1999):

“The mass outrage against the cops *does* need an organized political expression. Not one aimed at strengthening the hand of the Democrats, the political tool of the very capitalist rulers whose interests the cops ‘serve and protect,’ but one which provides a proletarian class axis that can weld the social power of the multiracial working class to the anger of the inner city through mass labor-centered protest against cop terror.”

Such a perspective of labor struggle against racist terror is no less urgent today. ■

Free Mumia Abu-Jamal Now!

Court Rejects New Evidence of Mumia’s Innocence, Again

The black-robed judges of the racist capitalist courts have taken another step toward sealing the fate of death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. Mountains of proof of frame-up and conspiracy have been compiled for the world to see, including the confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Jamal, killed officer Daniel Faulkner on 9 December 1981. But not one court will even look at the evidence. From the courthouse to the White House to the boardrooms, the capitalist rulers want to see the execution of this former Black Panther Party spokesman, award-winning journalist, fighter for black rights and outspoken voice for all the oppressed—the legal lynching of an innocent man.

On May 27, Pennsylvania Court of Common Pleas Judge Pamela Dembe announced her intent to dismiss Jamal’s third Post-Conviction Relief Act (PCRA) petition seeking to overturn his frame-up conviction and death sentence. Claiming the court lacked jurisdiction, Dembe’s decision turned down Mumia’s efforts to bring forward two pieces of evidence that have come out since her 2001 decision denying Mumia’s earlier PCRA petition. The evidence further blows to bits key parts of the government frame-up: the false testimony of prostitute Cynthia White that she saw Mumia shoot Faulkner and the patently false claim that

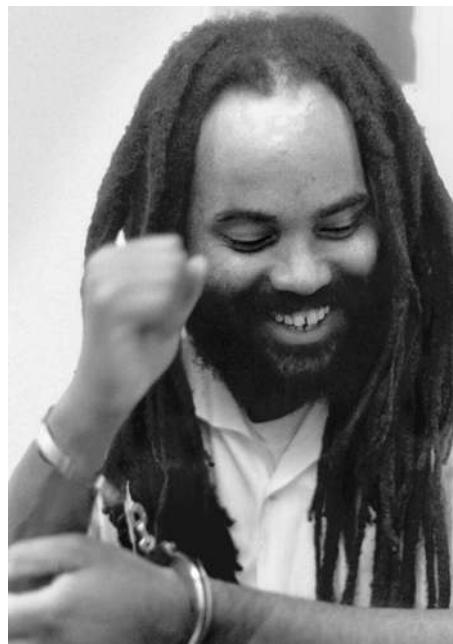
Mumia confessed to the shooting. On June 16, Mumia’s attorneys submitted a motion to reconsider.

It has long been known that White had been coerced into her lying testimony, and other witnesses have testified that White was far from the scene. In early 2002, a new witness, Yvette Williams, testified in a sworn affidavit submitted in federal courts: “I was in jail with Cynthia White in December of 1981 after Police Officer Daniel Faulkner was shot and killed. Cynthia White told me the police were making her lie and say she saw Mr. Jamal shoot Officer Faulkner when she really did not see who did it.”

Mumia also wanted to bring out the testimony of Kenneth Pate, stepbrother of Priscilla Durham, the Jefferson Hospital security guard who joined in the cops’ lie that Mumia “confessed.” In fact, the cop assigned to guard Jamal while he lay bleeding in the hospital reported at the time, “During this time the negro male made no comments.” The bogus “confession” was cooked up two months later at a round-table meeting called by the D.A.’s office to orchestrate the cops’ trial testimony. In an April 2003 declaration, Pate described how Durham told him that when Mumia was brought to the hospital, he was “bloody and the police were interfering with his

treatment, saying ‘let him die.’” Cops pressured her that, as a security guard, she “had to stick with them” as part of the “brotherhood of police,” and to “say that she heard Mumia say that he killed the police officer, when they brought Mumia in on a stretcher.” Durham told her brother, “All I heard him say was: ‘Get off me, get off me, they’re trying to kill me’.”

The pretexts for burying proof of Jamal’s innocence are recent state and federal restrictions on death row appeals. The most significant of these is the 1996 Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act (AEDPA) enacted under Democratic president Bill Clinton. Pennsylvania’s version was explicitly adopted to prevent Mumia from challenging the jury-rigging, coercion of witnesses, fabrication of evidence and wholesale violation of rights that constituted his “trial” before Judge Albert Sabo, known to Philadelphia attorneys as a “prosecutor in robes.” Dembe claimed the evidence wasn’t “new,” and therefore she was barred from considering it. In Kafkaesque fashion, Dembe ruled that since Mumia had insisted from the beginning that the “confession” was a fabrication and that White’s testimony was coerced by the cops, the testimony of Pate and Williams would not constitute “new facts” but merely “newly dis-



COC Productions

covered or newly willing sources”!

In Jamal’s previous PCRA, Dembe refused to consider the sworn account of court stenographer Terri Maurer-Carter of a conversation she overheard in which, referring to Jamal, Judge Sabo said: “Yeah, and I’m going to help them fry the n----r.” According to Dembe, such a blatant statement of racist bias was insignificant!

Still pending in the federal courts is Jamal’s application for *habeas corpus* relief. While affirming Jamal’s frame-up conviction, federal district court judge William Yohn overturned Jamal’s death sentence in December 2001. The prosecution appealed seeking to reinstate the death penalty, while Jamal appealed seeking to overturn the conviction. Under Clinton’s AEDPA, Judge Yohn had the authority to not only turn down Jamal’s *habeas corpus* petition but also limit which issues, if any, Jamal could then raise on appeal—in this case, Mumia is allowed to only raise the exclusion of

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Young Spartacus

ROTC/Military Recruiters Off Campus Now!



Young Spartacus



AP

Left: SYC-initiated protest against ROTC at UC Berkeley, April 16. Right: U.S. military devastates Iraqi city of Falluja, November 2004.

Down With the Occupation of Iraq— All U.S. Troops Out Now!

How Revolutionary Marxists Fight Against Imperialist War and Militarism

We print below, edited for publication, a forum given by comrade Dorie Reed in Vancouver on June 11, which was based on a Spartacist/Spartacus Youth Club forum held at UC Berkeley on May 7.

I gave this talk at the University of California at Berkeley where I had been a student in the 1970s, which was when U.S. imperialism was waging its brutal war against the Vietnamese. I chose that university because it had a lot of interesting courses, but more importantly to me, it was still a hotbed of radical politics. At that time, every fall quarter they had a Campus Orientation Week, which was pretty much avoided or shunned by left-leaning students as an event sponsored by the University of California Regents and by the Greek fraternities and sororities. It was a very conservative kind of affair, and what those of us who were interested in leftist politics went to instead was something called “Disorientation Week.” This was sponsored by a group called the Radical Student Union, sort of a catch-all group of New Leftists, young warriors of Mao’s Cultural Revolution—while they were giving their campus tour they were wearing their blue Mao caps and

jackets. They showed us some of the more famous sites from the Berkeley Free Speech Movement of 1964-65, such as Sproul Plaza, standing on the same spot where Mario Savio, the central spokesman of the Free Speech Movement, gave his first speech and where students had for 32 hours surrounded a police car holding one of the central leaders of the Free Speech Movement, a man by the name of Jack Weinberg, who had been arrested for manning a literature table. Sparking the Berkeley Free Speech Movement was the attempt by students and student activists to use the University of California as a springboard for organizing around the civil rights movement at that time, with a battle ensuing for the right of student organizations to have literature tables on campus.

Now, to give you a sense of the campus political milieu at that time, the Radical Student Union was part of a very broad umbrella coalition (Left Alliance) whose operating premise was sectoralism, which means that among so-called progressive peoples the political division of labor is based on your ethnicity: so, progressive whites worked within the Radical Student

Union and black students worked in the Black Student Union; Hispanic and Latino students joined a group called MEChA; Chinese, Japanese and Koreans joined the Asian Student Union; gays had the Gay Student Union; lesbians had the Lesbian Union, and so forth. If you happened to straddle several categories, you just had to choose one. So, this collection of groups came together in the Associated Students of the University of California, which was the student government. And at the time I wanted to run as a socialist, so I had gone up to one of the main leaders of the Left Alliance and said so, and he said, “Forget it, you’re a woman so you’re going to run as a feminist.” So I ran as a feminist and I won—and things changed over the years, in terms of my politics. Some of those members of the student government have since become respectable members of the Democratic Party who now run the city in San Francisco, so that’s where they ended up.

Marxism and Imperialist Militarism

The only rule of war that U.S. imperialism recognizes is what it can get away with. Two years of brutal colonial occupation in Iraq have passed and the monstrous crimes of war continue. We must never forget what happened in Falluja or in the torture chambers of Abu Ghraib! Black death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal put it very precisely: “The horrific treatment of Iraqis at Abu Ghraib has its dark precedents in the prisons and police stations across America.”

The military, the prisons, and the police are the central institutions that make up the repressive arsenal of the capitalist state. They exist to defend the capitalist class’ “right” to exploit the working and oppressed masses. This “right” to make profits is carried out abroad in imperialist adventures and colonial plunder and also at home—clamping down on class and social struggle, on political dissent, with repeated assaults on unions, social welfare, public education and other gains that were won through decades of struggle.

Over the course of the past 15 years, one political generation, the political landscape on this planet has been totally reshaped by two events. The first was the catastrophic defeat for working people internationally when the Soviet Union was destroyed through capitalist counter-revolution in 1991-92. The USSR was a degenerated workers state, where capitalism had been overthrown under the leadership of the Bolsheviks in 1917, but political power was later wrested out of the hands of the working class by a parasitic, nationalist Stalinist bureaucracy that undermined the gains of the collectivized economy. Nonetheless, this nationalized economy made it possible for the USSR to dramatically raise the living standards of its working people and to become roughly equivalent to the U.S. in nuclear and military capacity. The kind of untrammelled imperialist global rampage that we see today—the enslavement of Iraq first of all—was impossible when the USSR existed and is yet another price that working people around the world and oppressed peoples of the Third World are being forced to pay in the aftermath of its destruction.

The other key event was September 11, after which the American ruling class cynically manipulated the grief and horror felt by millions at the criminal attack on the World Trade Center. For capitalist governments across the world, this crime was like a “gift from the gods,” allowing them to beef up their militaries and repressive laws in the name of “national security.” American imperialism is the main enemy of the world’s peoples but there are other imperialist powers as well, such as Japan, Germany, Britain and Canada.

Our revolutionary opposition to bourgeois militarism is encapsulated in our slogan: “Not one person, not one penny for the imperialist military!” We are an international revolutionary Marxist organization and we translate this slogan into many different languages and many different currencies: not one yen, not one pfennig, whatever. The meaning is the same. We’re also opposed to signing up



Willy Römer

Revolutionary internationalist Karl Liebknecht addresses Berlin workers and soldiers, January 1919. Liebknecht upheld the call: “Not a man, not a penny for the imperialist military!” during World War I.

for the volunteer army, which is what you have in the United States. As revolutionaries we are also opposed to military conscription, which serves to turn the masses, the bulk of working-class youth, into cannon fodder for imperialist wars. All those who oppose the occupation of Iraq should oppose ROTC and military recruiters on the campuses and in the schools because the recruiters are the direct appendages of the military machine, the tentacles of the imperialist state.

Now, probably most people here know that many hundreds (I don't know the exact number) of Americans, who were drafted into the army but were opposed to the Vietnam War or considered themselves pacifists or conscientious objectors, took refuge in Canada. Our organization, of course, defended these individuals against any persecution by the U.S. government. But fleeing the government also removed genuinely antiwar individuals from the struggle against war. Our Marxist viewpoint on the question of the draft is very different. We're opposed to the conscript army and we don't volunteer for service, but if there is a draft and our supporters are called up, we will go into the army along with the other thousands of working-class youth, seeking to intersect antiwar sentiment and link it to broader social struggles [see "You Will Go!" *Spartacist* No. 11, March-April 1968].

ROTC has a long history and there is likewise a long history of struggle to get these imperialist tools out of our schools, as we like to say. It was during the first imperialist world war that the 1916 National Defense Act was enacted to strengthen the training of military officers on college and university campuses. ROTC recruits university students to become the next generation of the elite officer corps, who are charged with the brutal and often genocidal maintenance of the world's most rapacious imperialist power. It is their job to oversee the slaughter in wars like those against Afghanistan and Iraq. But the capitalist army needs not just officers but also troops and so the military recruiters promise tuition assistance and job opportunities to lure working-class youth, including a very high number of black and minority youth, into signing up to be their cannon fodder.

The history of opposition to ROTC's presence on campuses rises and falls and rises again, as we are seeing, and it's intimately linked to the imperialist wars at hand and the level of social struggle in opposition to them. ROTC was successfully driven off more than 100 universities in the United States between 1967 and 1969 because the U.S. was waging a *losing* war in Vietnam while facing massive social struggle in the U.S., starting with the civil rights movement. With such a system as capitalism, wars are inevitable, and it is impossible to stop war short of shattering the imperialist order at its foundations through socialist revolution.

Not surprisingly, these days the U.S. military is facing recruitment shortages, while it strains to maintain a large occupation force in Iraq and also carry out its global "war on terror," which is really a war against workers, black people, and immigrants. But for the American military to solve its "human resources problem," the capitalist rulers have been on a drive to beef up their recruiting on campuses. An article in the *New York Times* on 27 March focused on what tough times these army recruiters are having these days, but provided a very interesting statistic on their Texas operation: 250 military recruiters in the city of Houston alone.

Defend Activists Victimized for Protesting Military Recruiters!

Across the country, students have been protesting these military recruiters, and so have our revolutionary socialist youth groups, the Spartacus Youth Clubs. On March 9, San Francisco State University



UC Santa Cruz students participate in Tent University protesting fee increases and exploitation of campus workers. Inset: Brutal police attack on Tent University protesters, April 18.

students marched into an auditorium where Air Force and Army recruiters were handing out their literature, surrounded their tables and started chanting and giving speeches. You may have heard that, in January, students at Seattle Central Community College drove out some recruiters.

At UC Santa Cruz on April 5, several hundred people organized by a group called Students Against War held a protest where the military recruiters appeared at a job fair but ended up off campus. Good riddance! In addition to the protests against military recruiters, there have been some campus strikes. On April 14, while students and others, including in our organization, were manning the AFSCME public employees' strike picket lines at Berkeley, numbers of Santa Cruz students joined the striking pickets down there and shut down the campus for several hours. But several days later, when activists set up an "alternative" Tent University on the campus, they were brutally attacked by the cops: 18 were arrested at eleven o'clock at night. This is one of the reasons we raise the slogan: *Cops off campus!* High school activists have been campaigning against a provision in the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 stipulating that high schools receiving federal funding must give military recruiters students' personal information and the "same access" to schools as college and job recruiters.

The military's discrimination against gays has been central to a legal battle which has been going on over the Solomon Amendment, a law enacted in 1994 that says that colleges and universities must allow military recruiters onto campus or risk losing federal funding. This law was ruled unconstitutional by an appeals court last November, on the basis that it violated the free speech rights of schools to bar an organization which openly pursued a policy with which they disagreed. The case is scheduled to come before the U.S. Supreme Court in the fall.

Racism and social bigotry are intrinsic to capitalist society and therefore in the armed forces, as a highly concentrated microcosm of class society, racism, sexism and anti-homosexual bigotry are very much alive. As opponents of all manifestations of racial and sexual oppression we say: *Down with anti-gay discrimination in the military!* We fight for the democratic rights of members of the armed forces.

Students protesting military recruiters have been victimized by campus administrations and the cops. On March 9, three students at the City College of New York were detained and brutalized by the police for protesting the recruiters. The three, along with a staff member, faced charges of assault and were temporarily suspended from the school. [See also San Francisco State protest letter, this page.] Our youth group calls for dropping the charges against these protesters, no reprisals and, again, cops off campus!

I mentioned that our youth organization has been active for years, in fact decades, in protesting the military's presence on campus, most recently by seeking to build united-front protests around the slogans: "ROTC and Military Recruiters Off Campus! All U.S. Troops Out of Iraq Now! Down with Anti-Gay Discrimination in the Military!" Our comrades posed the need for joint action against the military recruiters to other left groups on campus but several of these supposed antiwar groups refused to participate, which is quite scandalous. In 2003, the Berkeley Stop the War Coalition (BSTW), in which the International Socialist Organization (ISO) is embedded, rejected our call for a protest against ROTC on Cal Day—the annual Berkeley campus open house. Many BSTW members saw ROTC's presence on campus as harmless or even a good

thing since it provides scholarships and a liberal education for cadets! Individual ISO members voted in favor of our proposal for a protest but when we went to the ISO meeting the ISO said, "We're not interested!"

If you were on the Berkeley campus this past April 16 for the annual open house, you would have seen us in action again protesting the recruiters and putting forward an internationalist, class-struggle perspective against imperialist war and occupation. We had something like 40 different slogans—slogans against the occupation, against the Democratic Party, our intent to build a revolutionary workers party in the U.S., for the separation of church and state, for the right of young people to have a sex life that's free of interference by the state and the church, and for the workers of the world to unite. So, narrow it was not. But where were the ISO and the Berkeley Stop the War Coalition on April 16? They made every effort to sabotage this protest because they are opposed to a forthright campaign to expose the military recruiters as part of the U.S. imperialist war machine, because they don't have a program to oppose imperialism as a system [see "SYC Leads Protest Against ROTC," *WV* No. 848, 13 May].

Our youth organization seeks to win students over to a revolutionary working-class perspective to fight against imperialist war and capitalism, a social system in which war is a product of the drive to secure new markets and territories. Regarding the occupation, we uphold what Lenin said: in the case of a war between an imperialist power and a colonial country, the duty of revolutionaries is to militarily side with the colonial country and stand for the defeat of the imperialists.

In the Iraq conflict the international working class has a side: with the Iraqi

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Protest SFSU Clampdown on Antiwar Activists!

We reprint below a July 4 letter to Robert A. Corrigan, president of San Francisco State University, from the Bay Area Spartacus Youth Club.

The Spartacus Youth Club vehemently protests the San Francisco State University administration's punishment of antiwar protesters as political harassment and intimidation. We demand that all sanctions against the student organizations and all charges against the students involved be dropped now.

Six student organizations received letters indicating the possibility of administrative reprisals against them for leading a March 9 protest against Air Force and Army Corps of Engineers recruiters. Hundreds of students including the SYC participated in this protest. While charges against four of the groups were eventually dropped, the university went forward with discipline of the International Socialist Organization (ISO) and Students Against War (SAW).

As of May 22 the ISO and SAW were convicted, without hearings, of all charges. The university imposed sanctions on the ISO and SAW, denying them funding for the 2005-2006 academic year. The ISO and SAW are prohibited from holding events pending "leadership training." Further, if either organization violates university policies, it will be suspended for a period of one year. This is intended to muzzle these groups with the threat of a ban for any violation of vague university guidelines.

In addition, for the "crime" of distributing leaflets against the continued presence of military recruiters on March 10, three student activists, Katrina Yeaw, Michael Hoffman and Pardis Esmaeili, were forcibly removed by campus cops. On March 18 these students received letters from Judicial Affairs demanding they appear before the administration in closed meetings where legal representation would be barred. Failure to do so could result in them being stripped of student status and access to financial aid.

These administration actions are of a piece with sanctions against the General Union of Palestine Students in 2002 for political expression and with the cops spying on antiwar and other student protesters in 2003 for opposition to U.S. wars. Another example of such intimidation followed an event in February featuring racist ideologue David Horowitz from which two supporters of the SYC were ejected before they were able to speak during the Q&A session. Some weeks later, these supporters received letters from the administration demanding they attend closed meetings.

The sanctions and threats of suspension are meant to intimidate and silence all who oppose and seek to protest the brutal colonial occupation of Iraq by American imperialism.

An injury to one is an injury to all! These administration actions are an attack on the free speech rights of everyone on campus; we demand: *Drop all charges against Esmaeili, Hoffman, Yeaw and all anti-military recruiter protesters now! Down with the sanctions against SAW, ISO!*



Indymedia

Ten Years of “Democracy”—Still a Hellhole for Blacks

Shantytown near Cape Town. South African masses still live in misery.

South Africa: Down With Neo-Apartheid Capitalism!

The following is a presentation, edited for publication, given by comrade Steve Henderson in Los Angeles on February 19. Since then, the black South African population has become even more restive, angry and frustrated over the ravages caused by the African National Congress (ANC) government’s neo-apartheid capitalism. Township residents have been engaging in daily protests reminiscent of the days of apartheid: blockading streets with rocks, burning tires and fighting running battles with the police. Workers have been facing increasingly severe roll-backs—including wage cuts and skyrocketing prices for food and other basic services like electricity and water—since the ANC came into power and implemented “investor friendly” policies in line with the interests of their imperialist masters on Wall Street and in the City of London.

In opposition to the depredations of neo-apartheid capitalism, on June 27 as many as two million people took part in the largest general strike in more than a decade, responding to the call of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). The COSATU tops are seeking to channel discontent into support for Jacob Zuma, deputy leader of the ANC. Zuma, who is facing corruption charges, was fired from his government post by president Thabo Mbeki in June. The squabble between these leading bourgeois politicians reflects divisions in the ruling elite over who will be the best custodian of their capitalist system. In opposition to the dead end of class collaboration, the following presentation argues for a program of proletarian revolution in South Africa.

If some South African anti-apartheid fighters of the 1970s had gone into a time warp and woken up in 2004 to be told the apartheid regime was no more, they would of course be elated. But after looking around, seeing the still widespread poverty and vast inequality, they might think they were in a bad dream. Then they would hear seemingly far-fetched news reports, for example, that the hated National Party, the former Afrikaner enforcers of apartheid rule going back to 1948, voted to dissolve their shrinking party and join the African National Congress. ANC President Thabo Mbeki welcomed them in, declaring that he “could not recall any other party of oppression saying: ‘We are defeated, we cease to exist, we join those that we had oppressed.’”

In reality, the remnants of the National Party have not joined the oppressed in South Africa; they have joined the ANC ruling party, today’s enforcers of neo-apartheid capitalism. The former apart-



Reuters

Above: Johannesburg protest by South African public workers in 2004 demanding more jobs and better housing. 2002: Nelson Mandela at New York Stock Exchange. ANC tops are front men for white South African ruling class.

Gold Fields Ltd.



heid rulers saw the light, all right—but it was not a moral epiphany; it was the realization, beginning almost two decades ago, that the wealthy capitalists could not maintain the ruthless exploitation of black labor through a white-supremacist, police-state regime. They required a black veneer for white capitalist rule. And that’s what is still playing out today.

When I came of political age in the late 1970s, the anti-apartheid struggle was headline news and most people had some familiarity with the history and structure of South Africa. But that’s no longer the case, so before talking about what’s currently happening in South Africa, I first want to lay out a few basic facts.

South Africa is a country of about 45 million people. Over 75 percent of the population is black African, with the two largest tribal groupings being Zulu and Sotho. White South Africans are divided between the Afrikaners, the descendants of early Dutch and French Huguenot colonial settlers who called themselves Africa’s “white tribe,” and the English-speaking descendants of British colonialists who arrived later. Today whites make up about 13 percent of the population. At the onset of colonization, before interracial sexual prohibitions were established, Dutch and Huguenot men fathered children by native Khoi and San women. These mixed-race children were Chris-

tianized and taught Afrikaans as their language. Though oppressed by whites, they had a more privileged status than black Africans. Their descendants, as well as the descendants of the Malay population, were called coloureds and now make up about 9 percent of the population, mostly in the Cape region. East Indians are about 3 percent of the population, concentrated mainly in Durban and KwaZulu-Natal province, along the Indian Ocean.

In terms of class structure, the entire capitalist ruling class—big, medium and small—was white, while the working class was non-white, overwhelmingly black Africans along with some coloureds and Indians. In the early part of the 20th century, there was a small white working class concentrated in the mines, privileged and organized in segregated unions, which engaged in bitter class struggle, though often with reactionary political aims. During the famous 1922 Rand strike, miners raised the slogan “for a White South Africa.” After the Afrikaner National Party came to power in 1948, whites increasingly became absorbed into the state bureaucracy and state-owned industries overseeing black labor or became apartheid enforcers in the police and military. In South Africa, uniquely, there developed an almost complete correspondence between class divisions and racial divisions, which has had a significant effect on the consciousness and organization of the South African working class.

When Nelson Mandela’s ANC took over in 1994, South Africa had the most unequal economic structure of any country on the planet. South Africa accounts for 20-25 percent of the gross domestic product for all of Africa, and it produces two-thirds of the electricity on the continent. That wealth was concentrated in the hands of the white minority. The wealthiest 10 percent (i.e., whites) got over half of all the national income, while the poorest 40 percent got less than 4 percent. Ten years later, little has changed. For the black masses, grinding poverty remains the norm, while a tiny black elite, many of them former leaders of the so-called national liberation movement, have joined that wealthy 10 percent. South African political commentators refer to the transition from the apartheid police state to an elected bourgeois government as “the miracle.” But this “miracle” which saved South African capitalism is not what anti-apartheid militants fought and died for.

For blacks, if you are lucky enough to have a job, you are still ruthlessly exploited. A typical unionized manufacturing worker might make about 15 rand per hour. At current exchange rates, that

translates into \$2.50 an hour, while basic necessities are still at First World prices. But any kind of job is hard to come by—unemployment among black South Africans is about 50 percent. So now, the government plays up the virtues of the so-called “informal economy,” such as the unemployed hawking cheap merchandise at spotlights. The desperation of black South Africans is often directed against immigrants from neighboring African countries. While in South Africa on a recent trip, I read a front-page article about a riot targeting foreign street vendors in downtown Johannesburg. The police melted away for several hours while South African vendors rampaged against their immigrant counterparts. We say: Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!

Amidst this poverty, an HIV/AIDS epidemic is decimating the population. Yet ANC president Thabo Mbeki and his government have obstructed treatment therapy, in particular the distribution of AIDS drugs. I’ll speak more on this later on. But with the AIDS crisis, an estimated 600-1,000 people are dying every day. An official report just released yesterday stated that 870 people died per day in 1997, while 1,370 people died per day in 2002. Despite government denials, this can only be accounted for by AIDS. Jobs are scarce, but I did see one poster for job training: learn how to build coffins. The old cemeteries are overflowing. I went to a new cemetery in one of the massive Johannesburg townships: it is a vast, barren, dirt field with graves marked by a single brick with a painted number on it. For the overwhelming majority, life is grim and death is common. There is a vast gulf between the promise of black freedom and the bitter reality.

This confronts you every day in every way, but there were some particularly striking examples of this while I was in South Africa. Soweto is a Johannesburg township of 4-5 million people. The huge urban townships have no shopping centers, no parks, no office buildings, no theaters—it’s just housing which ranges from cardboard and tin shacks to small brick or cinderblock dwellings to a few fancy homes. However, there is one museum in Soweto which commemorates the famous Soweto uprising of high school students in June 1976. This massive protest, which began over the enforced use of the hated Afrikaans language in classroom instruction, became a worldwide symbol of the struggle against apartheid rule. The young Soweto martyrs, ruthlessly gunned down by the apartheid butchers, are today memorialized and eulogized. There are very moving exhibits at the museum—photos, documentary film footage and the like.

A few days after I visited the museum, there was once again a bloody police attack on August 30 [2004] on protesting high school students in South Africa. Only this time riot police opened fire with birdshot at a crowd of 4,000 high school students in the Harrismith township in the Free State who were protesting poverty and the ANC’s failure to provide basic services. I watched the police assault on TV. Seventeen-year-old Teboho Mkhonza subsequently died from a gunshot wound after being punched and kicked in the police van before he was taken to the hospital. I remember press accounts describing how when local officials subsequently arrived in their limos the next day, they



Anti-Apartheid Movement

In 1952, as part of outbreaks of anti-apartheid struggle, mass burnings of the hated passbooks swept South Africa.

were run out of town by enraged youth. Higher level ANC officials then had to come in to cool out the situation. Needless to say, the ANC is not building a memorial for Teboho Mkhonza. The revolutionary proletariat in power will have to do that, along with much else.

The Class Nature of the ANC

Among the workers and the oppressed in South Africa, communism was popularly identified with both the struggle against apartheid and the liberating mission to free humanity from the shackles of capitalism. And capitalism was, and remains, quite brutal in South Africa. The red flag and the hammer and sickle often defiantly flew during strikes and anti-apartheid protests. So what happened? Why didn’t the anti-apartheid struggle bring the working class and oppressed to power? How did the ANC come to power in defense of capitalist rule?

The African National Congress, which formed in 1912, has historically exercised political sway over the black African masses. In its first decades of existence, the ANC was a relatively small organization of the black African elite, whose main activity consisted of lobbying the British imperial authorities to pursue more liberal policies in South Africa. However, in the face of continuing white intransigence, the ANC eventually had to direct its appeals more broadly to the black population.

Later on, one could not simply speak of the ANC. It was really the ANC/SACP (South African Communist Party), at least in terms of its leadership. As part of the rightward turn of the international Stalinist movement toward reformism and class-collaboration in the mid 1930s, the SACP entered the ANC, which helped provide an illusory quasi-socialist tinge to the bourgeois nationalist program of the ANC, making it more attractive to the masses.

But this did not change the political program or class character of the ANC. Regardless of its particular tactics at any given time—whether lobbying government, mass protests or guerrilla struggle—the ANC’s program has always stood in favor of capitalism. The SACP promoted the theory of “two-stage revolution” to justify its alliance with the ANC: First you fight for bourgeois democracy or

what they called the “national democratic revolution”; then sometime in the distant future you fight for socialism. So it provided a supposedly “Marxist” rationale for subordinating the workers’ interests to those of the petty-bourgeois ANC nationalists who were aspiring to become a new bourgeoisie.

In 1948, the Afrikaner Nationalist regime strengthened and hardened the racist police state under the banner of apartheid (separateness). At the same time, the wave of anti-colonial struggles which swept Africa and Asia in this period had strong reverberations in South Africa. A new generation of radical black nationalists like Nelson Mandela and



Peter Magubane

June 1976: Over 1,000 black youth were massacred by apartheid butchers during Soweto rebellion.

Walter Sisulu ousted the conservative “old guard” of the ANC. While still adhering to the ANC’s bourgeois nationalist program, Mandela turned the organization toward militant action. During the 1950s, the ANC led a series of mass campaigns in defiance of the new apartheid legislation, laws which extended the existing segregation laws and basically declared black South Africans foreigners with no rights in their own land.

Against the mass protests, the Afrikaner Nationalist regime responded with ever more savage and effective repression, culminating in the 1960 Sharpeville massacre. In its aftermath, the entire leadership and most of the cadre of the ANC and the rival nationalist Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) were imprisoned or driven into exile. The 1960s saw the totalitarian suppression of all black struggle and independent political life.

Apartheid capitalism boomed in this period, attracting British and American investment and producing enormous profits. But something else also developed and grew in this period. In 1973, a mass strike wave of factory and municipal workers in Durban signaled the emergence of a new black union movement which would become one of the largest and strongest in the Third World. At the same time, a new generation of student youth were trying to break

the shackles of apartheid slavery. I’ve already mentioned the 1976 Soweto uprising. What few people mention, besides us, is that this occurred only a few months after the humiliating defeat of the South African army in Angola by Soviet-armed Cuban troops. The apartheid regime was no longer seen as invincible. The Soweto youths’ defiant heroism captured the world’s attention, but as students, they had no social power by themselves. The white-supremacist regime responded to their protests with a bloodbath.

The Achilles’ heel of apartheid, which was instituted in 1948, was its dependence on black labor. The ANC and most leftists defined apartheid narrowly in terms of the formal legal and political structures which disenfranchised and discriminated against blacks, as well as other non-whites. But the underlying purpose of apartheid was to rigidly control and exploit the predominantly black working class.

Throughout modern South African history, the wages of blacks have been a small fraction of those of whites. In the late 19th century, with the discoveries of diamonds and then gold, large numbers of English speakers of all social classes then poured into South Africa in search of riches. At the turn of the 20th century, Britain fought the Boer War against the Afrikaners to establish English control over this superexploitation of black labor. By the early years of the last century, the whites had seized *all of the arable land*, restricting blacks under the 1913 Land Act to the most barren 13 percent of the country with no possibilities for economic survival off the land. The women and children were forced to live on “tribal reserves” or bantustans, while the men—separated from their

families for most of their adult lives—were forced to work in slave-like conditions in the white-owned farms, mines and factories. This totalitarian domination over black life intensified even further after 1948 under the Afrikaner regime. But after two and a half decades of National Party rule, the apartheid system started to break down.

The continued growth of black unions in the 1970s resulted in their legalization in 1979 by the apartheid rulers in an unsuccessful attempt to co-opt and control what they could not simply suppress. While the ANC retained the passive allegiance of the black masses, many of the new union leaders and student radicals of the 1970s came to the fore outside the organizational structures of the ANC/SACP and did not necessarily share its political outlook. The new union movement was politically diverse, but one of the more significant union groupings in the late ’70s and early ’80s was the Federation of South African Trade Unions or FOSATU, whose leadership adhered to what became known as “workerism.” These union leaders correctly feared that the nationalist ANC in power would ride roughshod over the black workers movement, and they sought to keep the new unions independent from the ANC/SACP. But the FOSATU syndicalists openly

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ceded the struggle against apartheid to the ANC/SACP, calling the ANC “a great populist liberation movement,” and consciously limited the role of their unions to defending the narrow economic interests of workers within the existing framework of apartheid capitalism. This is essentially a social-democratic or reformist perspective. They had no program for socialist revolution through mobilizing all the oppressed masses behind the working class to smash apartheid capitalism.

Black Unions: The Key

This was a variant of what we call trade-union economism. Lenin counterposed to this the concept of a proletarian vanguard party, which acts as a tribune of the people, in the fight to overthrow the whole capitalist system. Every black worker in South Africa also had family members marginalized in the townships or rural bantustans whose desperate conditions had to be addressed. Black oppression was not limited to the working class. Without the perspective that the powerful labor movement must lead the fight against oppression generally, by the late 1980s, many of the new black unions had become subordinated to the ANC, which was seen as fighting for the broad interests of blacks against white racist rule. As Marxists, we warned against this possibility at the time and posed an alternative. In a critical assessment of FOSATU’s politics, we wrote in *Workers Vanguard* in 1984 that, “The only way to ensure that national liberation movements do not turn against their worker supporters is for the workers movement to place *itself* at the head of the oppressed black people, to combat every manifestation of white racist rule” (“South African Revolution: Black Unions the Key,” WV No. 366, 9 November 1984).

The decline of FOSATU was precipitated by the black township revolt of 1984-85. During that plebeian upheaval, the regime’s collaborators and police informers in the townships were neutralized. Rents went unpaid. Effective control of the segregated black cities like Soweto and Alexandra passed into the hands of popular committees generally supportive of the ANC. The ANC/SACP sought, in their words, to “make the townships ungovernable,” which in the end could only be a pressure tactic on the apartheid regime, since the white ruling class still retained the military power and political will to isolate and crush the revolt.

By 1986, the Afrikaner National Party regime broke the township rebellion, killing over a thousand and imprisoning over 20,000 anti-apartheid activists. Nonetheless, the revolt convinced decisive sections of the white ruling class that some



Spartacist

Soon after first election to power, ANC government fired 60,000 nurses following 1995 wildcat in which strikers carried signs reading “Away with Mandela.”

kind of deal with the ANC was needed if South Africa was to regain any degree of stability. So in 1986, the regime began secret negotiations with the imprisoned Mandela and established contact with the ANC leadership in exile.

In the midst of the township revolts, the independent National Union of Mineworkers, FOSATU and the pro-ANC unions merged to form the Congress of South African Trade Unions, or COSATU, in 1985. Two years later, 1987 saw the largest strike in the Rand gold fields in South Africa’s history. At its height, 340,000 miners were involved. It ended in a stand-off, but the sheer scale and intensity of the strike greatly rattled the Randlord capitalists. But while the COSATU unions were growing in size and strength, they were also increasingly becoming subordinated to the ANC. The 1987 COSATU congress voted to endorse the 1955 “Freedom Charter,” the historic program of the ANC. The ANC in turn was now directly negotiating with the apartheid regime over “power sharing” in a capitalist South Africa.

The apartheid rulers, having faced some of the most powerful national strikes ever waged and being prodded by their imperialist godfathers on Wall Street and in the City of London, were looking to the ANC as partners to reorganize South African capitalist superexploitation. But they wanted to make sure that they had pliant front men for apartheid capitalism. Thus, they did not finally cut a deal until after the collapse of the Soviet bloc beginning in 1989. Like many Third World nationalist movements and regimes, the ANC based its strategy on playing off Moscow and Washington. For decades, the Soviet Union had been the ANC’s primary international sponsor. The ANC leadership was by no means agents or even loyal clients of Moscow. Rather, they sought to use Soviet support as a means of pressuring Western imperialism to in turn pressure the South African ruling class into

accepting a “power sharing” deal. With the ANC’s Soviet backers out of the picture, the apartheid rulers knew they could more easily call the shots in any coalition government.

Down With the Tripartite Alliance!

The ANC/SACP was legalized in early 1990, and Mandela was released from the prison hellhole in which he’d spent 27 years of his life. By 1992 they agreed to a “power sharing” deal with a “sunset clause” which guaranteed Afrikaner representation regardless of the outcome of the first elections. They formed an interim national unity government jointly headed by De Klerk from the National Party, Nelson Mandela from the ANC, and Joe Slovo from the SACP.

In 1994 Mandela was overwhelmingly voted in as president. His government, firmly committed to continued capitalist rule, was based on what’s called the Tripartite Alliance—a formal alliance between the bourgeois-nationalist ANC, the COSATU trade unions, and the SACP. This is South Africa’s version of what’s more generally known as a popular front. At the governmental level, this means an alliance between bourgeois parties (ANC) and reformist workers parties (SACP) to form a government that defends continued capitalist rule. In order to keep a lid on working-class and general discontent, the government also requires the support of the pro-capitalist COSATU union leaders (many of them also leaders of the SACP) who tell the workers that the ANC government can be made to pursue their interests. Popular-front governments come about when the bourgeois parties are too discredited or otherwise unable to rule in their own name, and require the services of the reformist workers parties to rein in working-class struggle.

You might ask, since Mandela had such enormous personal authority, why did he need the SACP? In the historic 1994 elections, black African, coloured, and East Indian toilers waited in long lines to vote for the first time in their lives with the expectation that fundamental social change had finally arrived. Having overcome the vile system of formal segregation known as apartheid, the masses also wanted genuine social liberation, an end to exploitation, and in its place some kind of egalitarian society. At the time, we quoted a woman who had voted for the ANC and said she was willing to wait for a month, perhaps two, to get decent housing, to begin receiving the long-denied fruits of her labor. Of course, that didn’t happen, but why did she think it would? It’s because there were as yet no black capitalists in the ANC, and the aspiring exploiters were given a radical cover by the SACP and other leftists. But the ANC was firmly committed to capitalism—and thus its promises to create jobs, housing, and provide social services could not possibly be kept.

Top SACP leaders were put in key positions in Mandela’s government to handle the inevitable discontent: defense minister, police minister and housing minister. They were assigned the high profile task of keeping capitalist law and order: breaking strikes, collecting rent

in the townships, and forcibly removing squatter camps and “informal housing.” SACP leaders of the COSATU unions, on the other hand, had to maintain some credibility with their members, but at the same time keep workers struggles within certain bounds. It was a division of labor.

The ANC moved quickly against working-class struggle. In 1995, Mandela’s government fired 6,000 striking nurses who had been abandoned and betrayed by the COSATU leadership. If you look through the last ten years of *Workers Vanguard*, you will see numerous articles on major outbreaks of class struggle in South Africa. Many workers are fed up with the ANC, and the COSATU leaders regularly have to suppress internal dissent against maintaining the Tripartite Alliance. Early last year, there was an airport baggage handlers strike against a company owned in part by “black empowerment” capitalists. The COSATU union leaders had allowed the other airport unions to continue working and only belatedly held a protest rally. The workers were furious. When COSATU officials chanted “Viva ANC,” the crowd roared back “Phansi!”—Down with the ANC. Workers carried signs like “Run, Black Empowerment Passengers, Before We Shoot You” and “No Vote for ANC” (see “South Africa: Workers Struggle Against Neo-Apartheid Rule,” WV No. 823, 2 April 2004).

This occurred a few months before the national elections last April. In those elections, the ANC received a two-thirds majority. So you might think I’m picking isolated examples and that the ANC really still has a huge mandate. But what is generally not mentioned is that 44 percent of eligible voters didn’t even bother to show up at the polls. Given what black South Africans went through to get the vote, that is quite a statement.

Social unrest has continued since the elections. About a month after I arrived in South Africa, escalating public worker protest strikes of individual unions culminated in a one-day strike on September 16 of unions representing roughly three-quarters of a million teachers and other government workers. I believe it was the largest strike in South African history, at least in terms of numbers. In this showdown, the unions faced off against the Minister of Public Services and Administration, Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi. An articulate spokeswoman for the ANC government, she had tried to mobilize public opinion in particular against the teachers in the guise of protecting the welfare of the children. But everyone, including the students, knew that the teachers were grossly underpaid and was thus generally supportive of the public workers. Despite all this, Fraser-Moleketi was invited by the unions to speak at the strike rally in Pretoria.

Along with other comrades, I was selling our paper, *Spartacist South Africa*, at this march and rally. I was quite distant from the speaker’s platform, but I remember hearing a roar from the crowd. I heard later that Fraser-Moleketi had arrogantly told the workers that since they were on strike, they would not be paid that day. The angry strikers booed and hurled plastic bottles, and she was escorted off the stage. Now, you might ask, why on earth was she invited to speak in the first place? Well, along with many union leaders, she too is a member of the South African Communist Party.

Most of the public workers unions settled shortly after the one-day strike, with a contract far short of what they needed and might have gotten through further strike action. The excuse for such sell-outs is always the false promise that the SACP and COSATU will eventually be able to influence the government from within on behalf of the workers, which is always the basic lie of any popular front. A popular-front government does not represent the workers, but serves to *mask* bourgeois rule and suppress working-class struggle.

The ANC calls for “black economic empowerment.” The black and other non-white masses bitterly call this the “gravy train.” But to go beyond discontent and

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advance a revolutionary program of struggle, the South African working class must transcend the ideology of nationalism, the false belief that the black African people—brutally oppressed by the white rulers of South Africa—all have a common interest which stands higher than class divisions.

The AIDS Crisis

I’ve already given plenty of reasons to oppose ANC capitalist rule. Its response to the AIDS crisis, however, truly stands out as a monumental crime against the South African masses. The ANC government has for several years now disputed that HIV causes AIDS and has consciously obstructed the distribution of AIDS drugs. In the face of domestic and international outcry over the last few years, the ANC has grudgingly announced a “rollout” plan for the desperately needed anti-retroviral AIDS drugs known as ARVs. But most features of the plan, inadequate in any case, are honored in the breach. The government had projected that 53,000 people would receive ARVs by the end of March 2004. As of June of last year, less than 4,000 were receiving the drugs through the national plan, and four of nine provinces had not even started distribution. This is in a country with an estimated 5.3 million people infected with HIV.

Last year, Mbeki denied the HIV/AIDS death toll, saying there are not proper mortality figures to know “what are the things that kill South Africans.” The Minister of Finance Trevor Manuel said that it was a waste to spend money on ARVs,

ues of rural tribal society are used by the ANC regime as a counterweight to the proponents of social change. Another important social question in this regard is defense of gay rights—it is common to hear that homosexual sex is not “African.” Our comrades in South Africa champion full democratic rights for gays and lesbians. While the “new South Africa” touts the “most progressive constitution in the world,” the ANC has never taken a public stand against still prevalent customs such as *lobola* (bride price), in which women’s status is reduced to property, or female genital mutilation, which is still practiced openly in rural areas and secretly in the townships. While I was there, I read a telling article on how the government adopted new legal guidelines for *lobola*. Bride price is traditionally determined in terms of head of cattle, so the government came up with a cash equivalent so that contractual disputes could be settled in the courts.

Having described some of the obstacles within South Africa, I want to speak now of the role of imperialism, particularly U.S. imperialism, in regards to the AIDS crisis. Of late, the Anglo-American imperialists have pressured the ANC government to adopt a more rational AIDS policy that is at least formally consistent with medical science. This is not disinterested humanitarianism on the part of the imperialists. Over the next ten years, Africa is projected to become the U.S.’s second largest supplier of oil after the Near East. And the regionally powerful South African military is often the American government’s preferred instrument



Indymedia

May 13: Protest by shantytown residents in Durban demands land and housing, decent health care and social services.

tions” are not the irrational ravings of an ignorant man—rather, they are intended to disguise the fact that the *bourgeois-nationalist ANC regime is itself the main political agent in South Africa of world imperialism and the domestic capitalists.*

For Permanent Revolution!

So what is to be done? In the last couple of years, loose groupings that have been labeled “social movements” have emerged in South Africa. They have engaged in militant actions to protest the ANC government’s policies, but they have neither a proletarian base of power nor a revolutionary Marxist program. One such group, the Anti-Privatisation Forum (APF), is an umbrella organization which includes reformist leftists like Keep Left!, who are the South African counterparts to the ISO. Keep Left! in fact once again voted for Mbeki in the last elections, while others in the APF balked at doing so this time around. The ANC regime, for its part, has employed vicious repression against the APF and detention and torture against another group, the Landless People’s Movement (LPM). The land question is a burning issue in South Africa, and the ANC has spent ten years negotiating with wealthy farmers over the price at which the ANC will buy back some of the land, all of which was stolen from black Africans in the first place.

While selling our paper in South Africa, I spoke to a number of black trade unionists who agreed on the need to break with the Tripartite Alliance. But there was always the question of what to replace it with. Some look toward a reformist labor party based on the unions, a new version of ’80s “workerism.” The fundamental point, however, is that the many-sided conditions of exploitation, oppression and backwardness in South Africa cannot be significantly diminished, much less eliminated, simply through trade-union struggle. The only way forward for the oppressed masses of the economically backward countries is for the proletariat to seize power at the head of all the oppressed, linked through its revolutionary leadership to the proletariat in the economically advanced countries. This is the program of permanent revolution. It requires a proletarian revolution such as the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, leading to the expropriation of the mines, factories and farms and the establishment of a planned, socialized economy. National liberation and the basic democratic rights

achieved in the advanced industrial countries in previous centuries are in South Africa only realizable through the dictatorship of the proletariat and international socialist revolution.

There is plenty of social tinder in South Africa. The question is: who will lead that struggle? We seek to build a revolutionary party on Lenin’s model, one that rallies all of the oppressed behind the working class in a struggle for power to overthrow neo-apartheid capitalism. Some South African leftists argue that even if the working class could take power in South Africa, it would immediately face the might of U.S. imperialism and be crushed. The war against and now the occupation of Iraq is a warning to all who would defy U.S. imperialism. This is a serious argument and has to be answered. Many people in South Africa were surprised that communists even existed in America. There is a tendency to view the U.S. as a seamless reactionary mass, and Bush’s re-election only reinforces that view. But those of you sitting here today, having seen last year’s strikes in L.A., should realize that there are in fact conflicting classes in America. Revolution in South Africa would resonate even here, particularly among blacks who themselves face daily oppression and cop terror. The necessary task is to break workers and the oppressed from the Democratic Party, which is equally the party of U.S. imperialism.

Back in the ’80s, I argued with liberal anti-apartheid activists who called for American corporations to divest from South Africa, as if U.S. imperialism stood on the moral high ground. Rather than advising American capitalists where to invest their money, the working class needs to wage class struggle on the road to expropriating them. Recognizing that U.S. imperialism, whether led by the Democrats or Republicans, is the enemy of workers throughout the world is the beginning of wisdom. Every blow struck against American imperialism from within will have powerful reverberations in South Africa and in all countries oppressed and dominated by international capital. Revolutionary battles may not begin in this country, but they will ultimately have to be fought here in the bastion of world imperialism. We want to build a party that is up to that task and hope you will join us. Down with neo-apartheid capitalism! Forward to workers revolution in the belly of the beast! ■



Reuters

Protesters in Durban call for affordable anti-retroviral drugs. ANC government does not provide millions of HIV/AIDS patients access to life-saving medication.

which he termed “a lot of voodoo.” Meanwhile, the Health Minister intensified her campaign pushing the African potato as a cure, suggesting that traditional medicine may replace ARVs. This cruel and ideologically reactionary campaign, rejecting proven medical science, is above all a crime against women, as we noted in our very first issue of our journal *Spartacist South Africa* in 2001, which was devoted entirely to HIV/AIDS.

In South Africa, AIDS is often unsympathetically referred to as the “woman’s disease.” African women between the ages of 15 to 24 are two and a half times more likely to be HIV-infected than their male counterparts. This disparity is partially the result of the biological fact that HIV is more easily transmitted from men to women. But this is compounded by the common refusal of males to wear condoms, “survival sex” driven by economic desperation, and a high incidence of rape. The horrific gang rape of AIDS activist Lorna Mlofana is emblematic of the degradation and oppression of women and its intersection with HIV/AIDS. She was beaten and killed in a bar restroom after telling her attackers she was HIV positive.

The oppression of women is institutionalized through the family under capitalism. The male is the master of the household, while the woman is slated to raise the next generation of wage slaves. This oppression may take an even more extreme form in the traditional African family. The conservative, patriarchal val-

for intervention on the African continent.

A Pentagon official made clear that a key ingredient in regional African security “is national militaries that are capable and competent and not dying of AIDS.” The Bush administration has waged an international campaign against generic ARVs and condoms, and manipulated billions in aid money to promote U.S. pharmaceutical interests and a reactionary Christian agenda of opposition to abortion and preaching abstinence. This condemns millions of people to die. At the same time, the American government’s National Institute of Health came up with \$35 million (mainly for ARVs) for the South African National Defense Force. Our comrades wrote in *Spartacist South Africa* (No. 4, Spring/Summer 2004): “From HIV/AIDS to ‘humanitarian’ relief for Sudan, the crocodile tears of concern for the plight of Africa is imperialist hypocrisy: All U.S./UN/British and French troops out of Africa! UN/South African troops out of Burundi and the DRC [Democratic Republic of Congo]! Hands off Sudan!”

The international pharmaceutical giants prevent cheap, proven drugs from reaching Africa, while at the same time using it as a human testing laboratory for drugs not yet approved in the West. This is how Mbeki’s rants against supposedly “toxic” AIDS drugs can even get a hearing: long-suffering Africans have in fact been used as human “guinea pigs.” But the “Africanist” denunciations of Western science, race-baiting and touting of “African solu-

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Wal-Mart...

(continued from page 16)

fleet is the largest private carrier in the U.S. Workers in the giant warehouses that handle the flow of imports to Wal-Mart and other large retail chains have the power to halt an important sector of commercial activity.

UFCW: A Strike Betrayed

There was an opportunity to have a spearhead for an organizing drive against Wal-Mart. But the trade-union tops threw it away. In the fall of 2003, the UFCW launched what was to become a bitter five-month-long strike by 60,000 grocery workers in Southern California demanding better pay and health care. A victorious UFCW strike could have provided the springboard for a campaign to organize Wal-Mart, including by inspiring pro-union Wal-Mart workers. In the end, however, the strike lost, with workers returning to work under new contracts containing deep concessions.

The responsibility for this defeat lies squarely with the trade-union bureaucracy. The UFCW workers fought like hell to win. Several times, the workers defied the treachery of the bureaucrats, including by appealing to Teamsters and other unions to keep the grocery stores' distribution centers shut down—a key task to cut off the flow of goods to the stores—despite the bureaucrats' efforts to let the distribution centers re-open. Tens of thousands of UFCW members—employed by some of the same chains struck in Southern California—were working under extended contracts that had already expired, and more than 280,000 grocery workers in eleven states had contracts that were about to expire. Yet, the labor tops did everything in their power to isolate the Southern California workers by refusing to extend the strike nationally.

Instead, the labor tops pushed consumer boycotts. Such pressure tactics can have some real effect, but only if they are an *auxiliary* to hard class struggle. For the labor tops, however, they are a *substitute* for class struggle. Rather than mobilizing for victory, the labor tops atomized the power of the workers and relied instead on public opinion.

For workers fighting to unionize Wal-Mart, it is vital to draw the lessons of the UFCW strike. Against Wal-Mart, the labor tops are essentially pursuing the same losing strategy they pursued during the UFCW strike. To win, however, the labor movement cannot play by the rules of the bosses and their government. It must use methods that the bourgeoisie deems “illegal”—mass picketing that shuts down operations and secondary boycotts and strikes by Teamsters and other transport workers. No decisive gain of labor was ever won in a courtroom or by an act of Congress. Everything the workers movement has won of value has been achieved by mobilizing the ranks of labor on the picket lines, in plant occupations. What counts is power. The strength of the unions lies in their numbers, militancy, organization and discipline and their relation to the means of production in modern capitalist society. The bosses



Randy Santos

John Kerry with AFL-CIO opposition leader Andy Stern at June 2004 SEIU convention. Stern spent millions for Democratic Party campaign.

are winning because the power of labor, its strength to decisively cripple the enemy, has not been brought to bear.

A chief obstacle to class struggle in the U.S. is the labor bureaucracy. The labor tops are committed to the capitalist system and the logic of the “free market.” Especially through the instrument of the Democratic Party, the union bureaucrats chain the workers to the capitalist class enemy and the bourgeois state. The Democrats, no less than the Republicans, are a party of and for the capitalist class. The difference is that the Republicans make no bones about openly trying to screw working people; the Democrats do it while bemoaning the consequences or proclaiming themselves “friends of labor” who “support” the unions.

As we wrote in “Labor Tops Sell Out Militant Supermarket Workers—UFCW Strike and Class Struggle in America” (WV No. 821, 5 March 2004):

“This strike—both the courageous determination of the workers and the venal treachery of the bureaucrats—underlined in the most stark terms the necessity of fighting for a new leadership in the unions. The unions are mass organizations of workers to defend their economic interests against the capitalists; but to consistently fulfill that role they must be led by a class-struggle, anti-capitalist leadership that understands that the interests of the workers and the capitalists are counterposed.”

The forging of a new leadership in the unions is part of the fight to build a revolutionary workers party, a party whose purpose is not to provide an electoral shill for the Democrats but to give conscious leadership to the workers, linking their struggles to improve present conditions to the necessity to do away with the entire system of capitalist wage slavery and racist oppression.

No to “Corporate Campaign” Sellouts!

In their concerted effort to defeat the UFCW strike, the supermarket bosses used Wal-Mart’s attempts to enter the California grocery market as an excuse to demand huge concessions from the workers. As a spokesman from UFCW put it, even before the strike: “Wal-Mart is essentially the third party at the bargaining table at every retailing negotiation in the country” (*Crain’s Chicago Business*, 7 July 2003). Thus, the fight to organize Wal-Mart is critical to the labor movement as a whole. But instead of waging such a fight, the labor tops offer up anti-Communist China-bashing and protec-

tionism, which posits foreign workers—not the capitalist bosses—as the enemy, and “community” and “corporate” campaigns that only highlight the impotence and weakness of the union leadership in this country.

The “corporate campaign” against Wal-Mart—exemplified by lawsuits and raising “public awareness” about the company’s anti-labor practices—epitomizes the cohabitation that exists between the AFL-CIO tops and Democratic Party bigwigs. The campaign is modeled on the AFL-CIO’s get-out-the-vote machine—with its mass mailings, phone banks and work-site visits—that serves to hustle votes for (mainly) Democratic politicians. Heading the effort is Ellen Moran, an AFL-CIO honcho with long experience in helping to organize Democratic election campaigns. Last year, Moran took a leave from her union post to work on the Democratic National Committee for the John Kerry presidential campaign.

Andrew Stern’s Service Employees International Union (SEIU) also kicked off a “broad” anti-Wal-Mart campaign,



China Newsphoto

Chinese textile workers. U.S. bourgeoisie seeks to restore capitalism in Chinese deformed workers state and turn it into one giant sweatshop.

putting up \$1 million in seed money last year to launch an umbrella coalition, the Center for Community and Corporate Ethics, as well as a related group, Wal-Mart Watch. The SEIU’s Center, which brings together feminists, environmentalists and others, is headed by Andy Grossman, former director of the Democratic Party’s Senatorial Campaign Committee. Stern is leading opposition to AFL-CIO president John Sweeney in the run-up to this summer’s national convention. The ten-point program of the Stern coalition, titled “Unite to Win,” calls for allocating \$25 million to a campaign for better jobs and benefits. “Challenging” Wal-Mart should be the first priority, according to this statement, but it does not even call for unionizing the retail giant. For all his talk of organizing workers, Stern’s objective is not union action but building a cross-class alliance to put more effective pressure on the Democratic Party. The basic strategy of all wings of the AFL-CIO bureaucracy is to pressure the capitalist government, the executive committee of the ruling class, for concessions.

The UFCW has also launched its own parallel campaign titled Wake Up Wal-Mart. It is headed by Paul Blank, who was previously national political director for Democratic presidential candidate Howard Dean. Blank, who used the Internet to

recruit to the Dean campaign thousands of enthusiastic youth (dubbed “Deanie boppers” by the press), promises to do the same for organized labor. “The UFCW has realized that it’s not just a worker-based campaign any longer, but it’s really America’s campaign to change Wal-Mart,” Blank declared. “So we have shifted the focus from just in-store organizing, which is the traditional union model of store-by-store organizing into a model where we’re building a grass-roots movement of Americans who want to change Wal-Mart” (*Houston Chronicle*, 25 April).

The unions’ “community organizing” campaigns have actually had some success in preventing Wal-Mart from setting up stores in a number of major cities (which, in turn, has reportedly helped drive down the price of the company’s stock on Wall Street). But as Wal-Mart chief executive Lee Scott haughtily told his critics, as long as customers keep coming through the doors, their campaign “doesn’t mean diddly squat” (*Denver Post*, 6 April).

Wal-Mart has launched its own counteroffensive, taking out ads in newspapers throughout the country as well as Asian language advertisements on Chinese, Vietnamese and Filipino television stations. In response to an article attacking Wal-Mart, the retail giant took out a two-page ad in the 7 April *New York Review of Books* titled: “Wal-Mart’s Impact on Society: A Key Moment in Time for American Capitalism.”

In trying to refurbish its image, Wal-Mart grossly portrays itself as a friend of poor people. In its *New York Review of Books* ad, Wal-Mart CEO Lee Scott, answering “our grocery union critics,” wrote that if Wal-Mart “raised prices substantially to fund above-market wages, as some critics urge, we’d betray our commitment to tens of millions of customers,

many of whom struggle to make ends meet.” The reality is, being the largest employer in one of the fastest growing sectors of the economy, Wal-Mart, with its “standards” of low wages, speedup and intensified exploitation, serves to drive down the wages and standard of living of *all* workers.

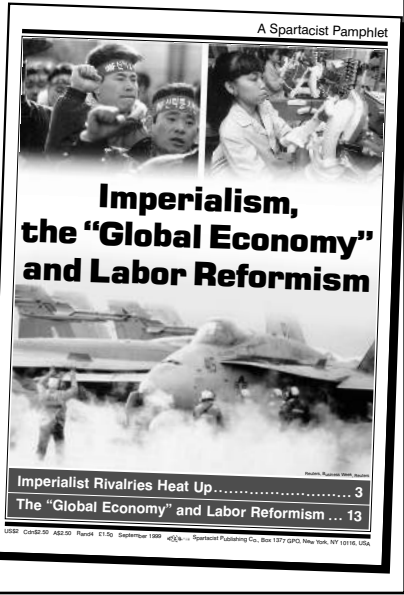
By focusing on blocking new Wal-Mart stores instead of waging the hard fight to organize the retailer, the union bureaucracy has more than once found itself opposed by a section of the poor black and minority population looking for cheaper commodities. In Chicago and Atlanta, the NAACP and other black leaders sided with Wal-Mart against the unions’ attempt to block the store from being built. Instead of organizing Wal-Mart, the labor tops have joined a campaign to defend the supermarket chains—including the very ones that defeated the UFCW strike—as well as high mark-

This pamphlet assesses recent changes in the world economy in a historical perspective, from the origins of modern imperialism in the late 19th century through the capitalist counter-revolution in East Europe and the former USSR and its aftermath. Reformist ideologues of “globalization” seek to obscure the role of the capitalist nation-state and the danger of interimperialist war which is inherent in capitalism, while amnestying the refusal of the labor bureaucracies to wage class struggle against their respective bourgeoisies.

Exploitation, poverty and social degradation can be eliminated only through proletarian revolutions in the imperialist centers as well as the neocolonial countries, laying the basis for an international planned socialist economy.

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up, non-union, small-shop enterprises against the retail giant.

The utter disarray of the union bureaucrats in the face of Wal-Mart’s PR offensive was exemplified by the following incident: In early May, Stern’s SEIU publicly complained that the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) was meeting with Wal-Mart management. A month later, Wal-Mart CEO Scott wrote to Bush asking him to “stand with me, members of the Congressional Black Caucus, other political and civil rights leaders” in supporting an extension of some of the Voting Rights Act provisions which come up for renewal in 2007. Wal-Mart Watch (whose board of directors includes Stern) was reduced to applauding Wal-Mart’s position while blustering that it “shows our efforts are having an impact, because they are feeling the pressure.” Stern’s group lamely added that Wal-Mart could “now achieve even more justice in the world by providing its employees affordable health care and sufficient wages” (*Roll Call*, 16 June).

Defend the Gains of the Chinese Revolution!

Wal-Mart is one of the largest buyers of China’s growing volume of export goods, which are produced by firms usually owned, at least in part, by outside capitalists. The labor misleaders, in pushing protectionist poison, blame cheap foreign labor and demand U.S. imperialist-enforced “labor standards” as a mechanism to invoke tariffs. In the case of Wal-Mart, the bureaucracy’s tirades are directed mainly against China.

China is a bureaucratically deformed workers state where capitalism was overthrown and replaced by a collectivized economy as a result of the 1949 Revolution—a victory for working people around the world. Despite the capitalist inroads created by the Stalinist bureaucracy’s “market reforms,” China’s core economy is still based on nationalized property. The American bourgeoisie’s counterrevolutionary aim is to restore capitalist rule and fully open up China to capitalist exploitation and turn it into one gigantic sweatshop. Just as workers defend their unions against the bosses—despite sellout leadership—it is in the interests of the international working class, including in the U.S., to defend China against capitalist counterrevolution despite the Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy’s accommodation to capitalism. The American trade-union bureaucracy’s hostility to China is based on visceral anti-Communism, with the added convenience of scapegoating a “foreign enemy” for the loss of American manufacturing jobs instead of fighting the capitalists at home.

The Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy is effectively acting as a labor contractor for the American bourgeoisie, offering up low-wage Chinese workers for the U.S. capitalists. The Chinese working class must sweep away the Stalinist bureauc-

racy, which has gravely weakened the system of nationalized property internally while conciliating imperialism at the international level. We stand for a proletarian political revolution to defend and extend the gains of the workers state, while placing power directly in the hands of workers and peasants councils. This could inspire proletarian socialist revolution throughout Asia, including in the industrial powerhouse of Japan.

Last fall, after the officially sanctioned trade-union organization, the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU), issued a list of foreign-owned companies

Wal-Mart workers in Jonquière, Quebec, won union recognition in summer of 2004. In retaliation, Wal-Mart shut down the store.



Boissinot/CP

that were blocking workers from setting up unions, Wal-Mart promised to comply with laws requiring it to allow the establishment of ACFTU unions in its 40 Chinese stores if the workers so wished. In the U.S., Workers World Party, which tails the Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy largely uncritically, hailed this as an event that “could have tremendous repercussions for low-wage retail workers everywhere” (*Workers World*, 27 January). The question of the ACFTU is contradictory. On the one hand, as the only union body legally allowed in China, the ACFTU is an arm of the Stalinist bureaucracy, whose aim is to maintain its privileges and rule, including by policing the workers. At the same time, even the official unions have at times participated in some of the large-scale labor protests that Chinese workers have engaged in in recent years to defend their livelihoods against the bureaucracy’s “market reforms.”

An integral part of our program for proletarian political revolution in the deformed workers states is building unions free from bureaucratic control. Trade unions are necessary even in a workers state ruled by genuine workers democracy to protect against possible encroachments and abuses by the government, as well as to help plan production, work methods, etc. At the same time, anti-Communist forces, including the AFL-CIO officialdom, promote “free trade unions” as a club for capitalist counterrevolution in China. The struggle in China today for trade unions free from bureaucratic control must take as its starting

point defense of collectivized property and opposition to capitalist restoration.

For International Labor Solidarity!

The pitiful wages and benefits at Wal-Mart are hardly unique. Of the ten fastest-growing sectors in the U.S. economy, four had average wages under \$11 per hour, including in retail. A successful fight to unionize Wal-Mart would be a giant step toward turning that situation around. Fighting simply to prevent the construction of new Wal-Mart stores does nothing to change it. Instead, the

labor movement ought to be telling Wal-Mart that they can open as many stores as they want, *so long as they are unionized*. In at least one instance, in heavily unionized Joliet, Illinois, UFCW leaders, instead of flatly opposing a new Wal-Mart store, demanded that Wal-Mart agree not to interfere in union organizing efforts at the store as a precondition for its construction. But for such demands to have any real effect, they must be followed up by a militant drive to actually organize Wal-Mart.

The union tops virtually ignored Wal-Mart until the supermarket chains started losing market share to Wal-Mart Supercenters in the mid to late 1990s. They have given Wal-Mart a free (union-free) hand to develop to the point where an organizing drive must now address over a million workers—and must be carried out as a nationwide campaign. Asked what it would take to achieve that end, Ginny Coughlin, spokeswoman for UNITE (Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees), replied, “I was just talking about this with a colleague the other day. We figured 3,000 organizers at a minimum. And all the resources, political will and leadership of probably four or five major unions” (*Nation*, 28 June 2004).

At least. Above all, it comes down to political program. Labor, basing itself on those areas that are already unionized, needs to extend the organizing drive to the South. When Wal-Mart lauded itself as a “leading employer” of black people, a number of black leaders aptly noted that the same could have been said of the slave plantations. But today’s union tops,

though they often speak at MLK Day assemblies and invoke racial equality, disdain the kind of labor battles it will take to organize the South, where “right to work” laws are backed up by racist Klan terror. Unionizing the notoriously anti-union South—and Southern-based companies like Wal-Mart—poses the need for the labor movement to wage a determined fight against the deep racial oppression and pervasive anti-black racism that exist in this country.

It’s not just in the South. In late 2003 during the Southern California grocery workers strike, when fascist skinheads attacked black and Latino strikers, the UFCW needed to organize picket defense guards, drawing in all of labor in the region as well as the minorities and immigrants who bear the brunt of fascist terror. But the union leadership did nothing. In the face of similar fascist provocations over the years in major cities, the Spartacist League and the Partisan Defense Committee have initiated mass labor/black mobilizations—drawing on the social power of trade unions—to stop the KKK and Nazis. This is what a fighting labor movement led by a revolutionary workers party would do, championing the cause of all the oppressed, combatting every manifestation of anti-black racism and demanding full citizenship rights for all immigrants.

Organizing Wal-Mart will require the active defense of immigrant rights. When Wal-Mart was forced to pay \$11 million early this year to settle federal charges that it employed undocumented workers to clean its stores, the union tops, rather than fighting in defense of these workers, went after Wal-Mart for hiring “illegal” immigrants. Two weeks into the UFCW grocery strike in California, “Homeland Security” federal agents raided 60 Wal-Mart stores and rounded up more than 250 undocumented immigrant workers. But the UFCW leadership, which says it wants to organize Wal-Mart, did nothing to mobilize the unions on their behalf. As we wrote in “Labor: Defend Immigrant Wal-Mart Workers! No Deportations!” (WV No. 813, 7 November 2003):

“By rising to the defense of these immigrant workers, the UFCW would be mobilizing in defense of *all* Wal-Mart workers, undercutting the company’s rabidly anti-union maneuvers and facilitating the organization of Wal-Mart workers.”

Working-class struggle must be consciously waged as an *international* fight. And it must be based on the understanding that the interests of labor and capital can never be reconciled. The only way to guarantee good living conditions for everyone, jobs for all and an end to capitalist exploitation and racist oppression is through the expropriation of the capitalist class through socialist revolution. As Trotskyist internationalists, our watchword is not the deadly dangerous trap of “defending American jobs” against foreign competition, but the words which Marx and Engels inscribed on their banner: “Workers of the world, unite.” ■

Jackson...

(continued from page 16)

arousing, appealing to, or gratifying the lust, passions or sexual desires of the person or the child.

Sex is a natural activity for humans—even children. We believe that in any kind of sexual relations, the guiding principle should be effective consent, regardless of age, gender or race. That is, if those involved have effective knowledge and desire to do whatever it is they will, that should be the end of it. We oppose arbitrary and reactionary state interference in such intimate matters. As we stated when the trial began:

“The capitalist state is intent on banning all sex for young people to prepare them for a life of unfulfilled desires and urges by imposing abstinence, guilt and fear about wanting to have sex. These laws have nothing to do with protecting children; all they do is enforce puritanical values pushed by religion, and provide a

moral justification for government interference in all other aspects of life. As Marxists, we reject all laws that criminalize consensual sex for youth, with or without adult partners. *Down with all reactionary ‘age of consent’ laws!*”

—“Stop Vendetta Against Michael Jackson!” WV No. 818, 23 January 2004

We fight for people’s right to have consensual sex with whomever they choose. Or to look at pornography. Or to do nothing at all. The point is, absent coercion, it just isn’t any business of the government—and we mean *any* government, including in a future workers state.

Though among blacks Jackson’s support runs particularly strong, the case did not polarize the country along race lines as did the O.J. Simpson case in 1995. The combination of race and sex (particularly amid allegations of “pedophilia”) made this case especially hot. Because Jackson is black, many black establishment figures who wouldn’t normally go near a “sex case” felt obliged to

come out in his defense. But no sooner had the trial ended in victory than these pompous types felt impelled to wag warning fingers at Jackson. The Reverend Jesse Jackson, parading as Michael’s “spiritual adviser,” promptly told WFLD-TV, Chicago, that the singer “must reassess his personal relations, reassess personal conduct.” Why? He didn’t do anything wrong. Jesse Jackson proclaims him guilty—even after he was found not guilty!

If Michael Jackson got off because he had the best defense money could buy, and because he is rich and famous—it is still a good thing. Look what often happens when you can’t mount an effective challenge to the virtually unlimited resources available to state prosecutors. The case of Father Paul Shanley of Boston, convicted this February in the lynch mob hysteria over the Catholic priest sex scandal, is such an example. Shanley, a former radical “street priest,” was convicted *purely* on the uncorroborated

“recovered memories” of a man who claimed Shanley abused him 20 years earlier. The defrocked priest was unable to buy an effective defense team and received 12 to 15 years behind bars. We defended him as we do NAMBLA (North American Man/Boy Love Association) to which he was (falsely, as it happens) tied during the trial.

Young people whose sexuality doesn’t fit the capitalist family model of abstinence (for young women anyhow) until marriage, then monotonous monogamy until you die, are treated like outlaws. There are still tens of thousands of people branded as “sex offenders” in this country who have committed no crime and hurt no one, and who have been abandoned by almost everyone, while their lives are made a living hell by computerized “predator” lists. There are hundreds of thousands of black men in prison, railroaded under the racist “war on drugs.” All these victims of racist, puritanical America deserve freedom. ■

Immigrants...

(continued from page 1)

anti-racist protesters be dropped; that charges be filed against the driver of the car that had struck them; and that there be an independent investigation into the Garden Grove police department for its actions that night. In a clear act of retaliation, on June 16 the Garden Grove police raided Dang’s home, claiming they were searching for a police flashlight that had been dropped by a cop at the May 25 protest!

As the Partisan Defense Committee wrote in a 1 June letter to the Orange County D.A.’s office, protesting the May 25 police rampage against anti-racist protesters: “In the name of the ‘war on terror,’ the government wants to squash any expression of dissent, hoping to frighten people into staying home with their curtains shut while the U.S. outsources torture in Iraq and elsewhere.... The domes-

gration policy as they posture as tougher than the Republicans in the “war on terror.” Thus, the reputedly ultraliberal Boxer recently opposed Bush’s “guest worker” program by saying it would “open the floodgates” to illegal immigration (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 21 April). Dianne Feinstein in turn denounced an alternative bipartisan bill as a “huge magnet” for more illegal immigration. We oppose Bush’s “guest workers” initiative because it “would give an employer near-total control over those undocumented workers who register for legal status. Such workers would have little defense against slave-labor working conditions imposed by their ‘co-sponsor’ employers” (WV No. 820, 20 February 2004).

While many Democrats have taken partisan advantage to bait Bush on his perceived laxity on immigration, the immigration issue is also polarizing the Republican Party, with the archreactionary chauvinists clamoring for a crack-

Because of the militarization of the California border, the deadly Arizona desert has become the largest immigrant corridor into the U.S. (*Los Angeles Times*, 6 November 2004). Though the Bush administration spent an additional \$30 million last year trying to plug the Arizona-Mexico border using Apache helicopters, unmanned aerial drones, and hundreds more Border Patrol agents, the immigrant exodus has reached a five-year high. Last year, more than one million arrests were made along the U.S.-Mexico border, and detentions in Arizona have totaled more than in all the other border states combined. And out of the hundreds of migrant deaths every year, the bulk are in the “gateway to hell” of the Arizona desert. Initiated in the mid 1990s when the Clinton administration imposed a draconian militarization of traditional border-crossing points around urban areas such as San Diego and El Paso, U.S. border enforcement policy

they “believe” to be in the U.S. illegally to run a check with immigration officials before making the arrest. The Orange County and Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Departments also recently announced that they planned on training deputies to enforce federal immigration laws. These changes in local police policies provide a new pretext for cops to harass “foreign-looking” individuals of Latino, Arab, African and Asian background, including American citizens, all with “reasonable suspicion.”

Giving such new powers to the police comes at a time when the black and Latino population of L.A., in particular, has been under a virtual state of siege by the racist cops. Coming on the heels of the killing of black 13-year-old Devin Brown in February, a marauding posse of L.A. County Sheriff’s deputies in Compton this May unloaded over a hundred rounds of ammunition at an unarmed black man in a car, Winston Hayes. With many bullets plowing right through people’s doors and windows, the cops were so trigger-happy that they wounded at least one of their own in the crossfire in addition to Hayes! State authorities are increasingly giving the green light to the cops to terrorize minorities, crack down on immigrant rights protests and immigrant unionization efforts, and step up deportations.

The Rampart Division of the LAPD was notorious in the last decade for meting out daily racist abuse and violence against the largely Central American residents of the area. Officers turned over people who had witnessed police abuse to immigration so they would be deported and unable to inform on the cops. Today, the Rampart Division is already working with immigration officials on a “special task force” designed to crack down on “international gangsters” who supposedly go back and forth between the U.S. and El Salvador. Recently in the Rampart Division, special “immigration detectives” arrested 18 “alleged gang members” on suspicion of the federal crime of illegal re-entry into the U.S., which can carry a prison sentence of ten years or more.

In June 2004 the U.S. Border Patrol began patrolling the streets of the greater Los Angeles area, making arrests in Riverside and San Bernardino counties—far from the U.S.-Mexico border—and rounding up about 400 people in widespread raids. Residents in heavily Latino neighborhoods said they were afraid to venture out to markets and even schools. Threatening more random and spontaneous raids in the future, Border Patrol agents called the subsequent deportations “routine business” (*Los Angeles Times*, 16 December 2004).

The ruling class stokes the fire of anti-immigrant racism in order to create a toxic brew of racism and chauvinism, seeking to keep the workers and oppressed at each others’ throats rather than engaged in struggle against their common exploiters. This time-honored ruling class strategy has a particular history in California. In 1994, after the capitalists pushed the lie that fewer crumbs for immigrants would mean more for blacks, some 50 percent of black California voters supported Proposition 187, which sought to deny social services, health care and public education to undocumented immigrants. But the same sinister forces behind Proposition 187 had their sights set on black people as well, and within a few years they had pushed through a slew of racist, anti-black and anti-immigrant measures: Proposition 209, which gutted affirmative action for all minorities; “English only” Proposition 227, which eliminated bilingual education; and the draconian “Three Strikes Initiative,” which vastly strengthened the repressive power of the capitalist state under the rubric of the racist “war on drugs/crime.”

Numerous racist ballot measures have now passed in other states in past months, such as Arizona’s Proposition 200, which denies public services to the undocumented. The passage of this racist referendum has spawned similar movements in other states such as Colorado, Wash-



Left: Protesters demonstrate against anti-immigrant Minutemen in Garden Grove, May 25. At protest, two demonstrators (right) were struck by local bigot driving minivan. Cops arrested five protesters, including a person in a wheelchair, but let the driver go!



Indymedia photos

tic side of the war abroad is an all-sided attack on the rights of working people, minorities and immigrants at home. We demand that all charges against these protesters be dropped.” Stop the vendetta against Theresa Dang!

Meanwhile, the capitalist media in L.A. and elsewhere has been enthusing over the election of Democrat Antonio Villaraigosa, the city’s first Latino mayor in over 100 years. He ran on a promise to the bourgeoisie of 1,600 more cops on the street and a “vast expansion” of intelligence units of the LAPD, who are well known for their history of penetrating and spying on the left and the labor movement. Villaraigosa won as mayor with the endorsement of leading black figures such as the vicious former LAPD chief, Bernard Parks, and Congresswoman Maxine Waters. Predictably, Villaraigosa echoes the chorus of other Democratic Party politicians in denouncing California governor Schwarzenegger’s praise of the racist, anti-immigrant Minutemen. But this has nothing to do with defense of immigrants; Villaraigosa opposes the courting of the Minutemen because “That’s not the function of private citizens; that’s the function of law enforcement” (*Los Angeles Times*, 20 May).

Democrats, Republicans Target Immigrants

California’s two Democratic Senators, Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein, often bait Bush from the right on immi-

down on “illegal aliens” and another wing trying to make a deal with similar-minded Democrats to initiate a “legalization” of some immigrant workers.

Bush has urged Congress to pass his so-called “guest worker” program. Yet, the Republican Senate in April blocked a similar measure, dubbed “AgJobs,” which was sponsored by Senator Larry Craig, a conservative Republican from Idaho—who viewed the plan as a way of ensuring a stable supply of workers for the agribusiness industry—and liberal Democratic Senator Edward Kennedy. The measure has been promoted as the product of years of negotiations between unions like the United Farm Workers (UFW) and agribusiness.

Such “guest worker” programs are reminiscent of the notorious *bracero* program initiated by Franklin Delano Roosevelt during World War II. Spurred by the need to redress labor shortages after Japanese Americans, many of whom worked in agriculture, were interned in concentration camps, the *bracero* program resulted in millions of Mexican farmworkers being brought in over the course of the next two decades to be employed under conditions of virtual bondage to their American agribusiness employers. Part of their wages was typically withheld, supposedly to be paid when they returned to Mexico. Some *bracero* workers are still suing to this day for wages withheld from them by the U.S. and Mexican governments.

has consciously channeled the flow of migrants into vast areas of uninhabited wilderness.

What drives this desperate quest for employment in the U.S. is increasing impoverishment, landlessness and unemployment in Mexico and Central America, intensified by over a decade of U.S. imperialist “free trade” rape under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Today, even many *maquiladoras* (foreign-owned factories) in Mexico have closed and moved production to countries with even cheaper labor.

In May 2004, Bush concluded an agreement with several Central American states to implement the CAFTA (Central American Free Trade Agreement), aimed at dismantling any remaining barriers to the complete U.S. domination of their economies. The agreement passed the Senate on June 30 and will be voted next month in the House. Opposition to CAFTA comes primarily from the viewpoint of the “America first” economic protectionism that characterizes the labor bureaucracy. In a statement calling to oppose CAFTA, the AFL-CIO tops call “for policies that allow American businesses and workers to compete and survive in the global economy.” But “businesses and workers” have counterposed interests, not common ones. The labor bureaucracy seeks to deny this fact, helping the capitalists maintain their profit system at the expense of immigrants, black people and the working class as a whole. In contrast, as proletarian internationalists, we in the ICL oppose NAFTA/CAFTA imperialist subjugation while fighting against the nationalist protectionism with which the AFL-CIO bureaucracy infects the workers movement.

“War on Terror” Is War on Working Class

The “war on terror” is today the main rationale behind numerous local police agencies, from Florida to California, revamping their relationships with federal immigration authorities, marking a distinct increase in state repression against undocumented immigrants that, in effect, makes street cops into agents of the hated *la migra*. In Los Angeles, the LAPD plans to scrap its decades-long policy of formally distinguishing between police and federal immigration authorities, and is now directing officers who see suspects



Ferazzi/L.A. Times

November 2003: Militant UFCW pickets confront scab truck at Vons distribution center in El Monte, California.

ington, Virginia and California. Proposition 200, supported even by a substantial percentage of Latino Arizona voters, requires applicants for public benefits to present proof of legal residence.

Whipping up racial and ethnic hatred has long served the American ruling class in furthering the exploitation of all workers. Descendants of the African slaves who were brought to America beginning nearly 400 years ago, much of the black population remains today at the bottom, while immigrants have historically been more able to advance up the economic ladder. As we noted in “Down With Capitalist Rulers’ War Against Blacks, Immigrants!” (WV No. 724, 26 November 1999): “It is true that Asians and Latinos are considered not white in this society and suffer accordingly. But they are deemed a lot less ‘not white’ than blacks.” Black oppression forms the bedrock of American capitalism, and it is vital that immigrant workers fight for black freedom. There is no road to eliminating the special oppression of black people other than the working-class conquest of power, and there will be no proletarian revolution to end class exploitation unless the working class actively takes up the fight for black rights.

Many immigrants are taught by the bourgeoisie to believe that the desperate conditions of life faced by much of the black population are their own “fault,” reflecting insufficient “values” placed on education, family, work and advancement. There is a great deal of antipathy between blacks and immigrants, as well as between immigrants with “legal” status and those without.

The way to break down these divisions propagated by the bourgeoisie is to wage a multiracial fight to organize the unorganized, including immigrant labor and in the historically anti-union, racist South. This requires that labor fight for immigrant rights, black equality, and jobs for all at union wages. Labor must break with the racist Democratic Party of the bosses. The pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucrats in the AFL-CIO are



9 February 2002: Labor contingents at Oakland united-front mobilization initiated by PDC and Labor Black League against anti-immigrant witchhunt.

an obstacle to this perspective. What’s required is the mobilization of labor’s power, led by a class-struggle leadership of the unions, as part of the fight to build a revolutionary workers party.

Based on the struggles of many immigrant workers in Southern California, who have brought with them the legacy of social and class struggles in their homelands, in the past decade there have been key strikes to unionize and fight the bosses. L.A., a historically “open shop” city, today can more aptly than any other place in the U.S. be dubbed “Strike City” thanks to such class battles as the Justice for Janitors organizing campaign in the early 1990s and the hard-fought strike in 2003-04 of the UFCW grocery store workers. This strike was sold out by the union bureaucrats who refused to spread the strike nationally and refused to shut down the distribution centers for the duration of the strike, even though there was sentiment to support the UFCW coming

from the rank and file of the Teamsters.

The trade-union tops represent an obstacle to the unions taking up the necessary fights to organize the unorganized and defend immigrant rights because they agree with the bourgeoisie’s “right” to make a profit—the phony “partnership” between labor and capital, expressed politically in their support for the racist, capitalist Democratic Party.

The labor bureaucracy pushes national protectionist chauvinism which encourages hostility to immigrant workers, even while some AFL-CIO officials talk about organizing immigrant workers and “solidarity” with workers in other countries. If they meant that, they would be mobilizing unions to defend Mexican immigrants against the posse of “immigrant hunters” that has been patrolling the Arizona border. The malign influence of the pro-capitalist bureaucracy helps breed chauvinist anti-immigrant consciousness among “legal” workers, be they white,

40 Years Late...

(continued from page 2)

intervened in the South only when black people began to arm themselves and fight back against the deadly violence of racist whites (see “How *Mississippi Burning* Rewrites History,” WV No. 470, 3 February 1989).

The murder of Chaney, Schwerner and Goodman marked a critical turning point in the civil rights movement. While the hunt for the bodies proceeded (and only ended when the FBI greased the palm of a Klan informant with \$30,000 and shielded him from prosecution), pictures of Schwerner and Goodman covered the front pages of Northern papers, while Chaney’s photo disappeared. When the FBI’s search uncovered the bodies of other murdered blacks, the Feds didn’t bother to investigate. At Chaney’s funeral, Dave Dennis of CORE gave voice to the rage many black activists felt:

“As I stand here I not only blame the people who pulled the trigger or did the beating or dug the hole with the shovel. I blame the people in Washington D.C., and on down in the state of Mississippi for what happened... I’ve got vengeance in my heart tonight, and I ask you to feel angry with me.... We’ve got to stand up. The best way we can remember James Chaney is to demand our rights.”

The summer of 1964 saw growing disillusionment within civil rights organizations such as Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and CORE with Martin Luther King’s turn-the-other-cheek pacifism, the federal government and the Northern liberal establishment. Many civil rights organizers, taking a cue from the black sharecroppers they lived with, began to arm themselves. But a real eye opener came at that summer’s Democratic National Convention in Atlantic City. After civil rights activists risked their lives to register over 80,000 black voters, the Mississippi Free-



Bob Adelman

Protesters at 1964 Democratic National Convention in Atlantic City raise portraits of Michael Schwerner, James Chaney and Andrew Goodman.

dom Democratic Party was denied seating in favor of the all-white, Jim Crow delegation. The Democratic Party’s black “leaders,” including King, worked overtime to sabotage their effort, effectively telling the Southern civil rights workers to remain at the back of the bus.

We do not look for justice from the capitalist state that assassinated 38 Black Panthers and framed up hundreds more, that keeps fighters for black freedom like Mumia Abu-Jamal on death row, that guns down black youth every day in the streets. Today, the few remaining gains of the civil rights movement are under siege by both the Democratic and Republican parties, while a Christian fundamentalist president wages imperialist wars and grinds down working people from the Oval Office. To finish the Civil War, to fulfill the promise of black liberation, will require revolutionary struggle by black and white workers against America’s capitalist rulers. We’ve got vengeance in our hearts, too, and no trial of a damn Klansman in a wheelchair will change that. ■

Mumia...

(continued from page 3)

blacks from the jury. On June 30, Jamal’s attorneys filed a motion in the Third Circuit Court of Appeals asking the court to also consider additional issues on appeal—the ineffectiveness of Jamal’s trial counsel, denial of Mumia’s right to represent himself at trial, the removal of Mumia from the courtroom and Judge Sabo’s blatant bias.

Last month, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the 1985 murder conviction of Thomas Miller-El by a jury of eleven whites and one black on the grounds that prosecutors contrived to exclude blacks from the jury. Two weeks later, the Court decided to reconsider the stringent rules on presenting new evidence of innocence. These are welcome developments. But it would be foolish to pin hopes for Mumia on favorable outcomes in these legal challenges. Court after court has

black or Latino. The same sinister forces being mobilized against immigrants either are already or will be gunning for blacks, unionists and all workers. A class-struggle leadership in the labor movement would fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants as an elementary democratic demand, and to organize the unorganized by mobilizing the social power of the working class in its own class interests.

The fight to build a class-struggle leadership in the unions is part of the struggle to forge a revolutionary workers party. Demonstrating in microcosm what a revolutionary workers party would do, we attempted to punch through the reactionary logic of the “war on terror” with a labor/black mobilization in Oakland on 9 February 2002 against the USA-Patriot Act and Maritime Security Act, involving a critical core contingent of black long-shoremen protesting side by side with immigrant day laborers. The mobilization was initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee and Labor Black League and heavily built by the SL and SYC. We fight for the political independence of the working class from the capitalist parties and their state. Break with the Democrats! For a multiracial revolutionary workers party to fight for a workers government!

It is necessary to understand that the outmoded capitalist profit system, which is based on the outdated division of the world into competing nation-states and poisonous nationalism, is the real source of the oppression of immigrants. And as the sharp decline of capitalism continues, the bourgeoisie will increasingly resort to more repression in an attempt to contain the explosive anger at the base of this increasingly cruel, oppressive and unequal society. Only workers socialist revolution can do away with capitalism and the reactionary, anti-immigrant chauvinism that it perpetuates. On the basis of an international socialist planned economy, there will be jobs and decent living conditions for all, and people will migrate of their own free will, not out of economic or political coercion. ■

disregarded its own precedents when it comes to Mumia, and the U.S. Supreme Court has already turned Jamal down three times. In 1992 the Supreme Court threw out the death penalty conviction of one David Dawson on the grounds that the prosecution improperly used his political affiliation as a member of the racist White Aryan Brotherhood to prejudice the jury. But the same court refused to even hear Jamal’s appeal that his Black Panther Party membership was central to the state’s argument for the death penalty.

Mumia’s case is a textbook example of what the capitalist state is all about. The state consists at its core of armed bodies of men—the cops and military and their adjuncts, the courts and prisons—whose role is the suppression of one class by the other. While the state vendetta against Jamal shows that there is no justice in the bourgeois courts, the reformists of Workers World Party and Socialist Action continue to promote illusions in the courts, subordinating the call to free Mumia to the demand for a “new trial.” As Partisan Defense Committee counsel Rachel Wolkenstein noted in her speech at an April 23 rally for Mumia in Harlem:

“Not only should it be clear that Mumia should have never spent a day in court, but to talk about a ‘fair trial’ only breeds illusions in the capitalist courts. These illusions demobilized a movement which once had millions around the world. The mass movement has to be built anew on the basis that Mumia’s conviction and death sentence were *political*, and it is in the interests of all working people, black and white, citizen and immigrant, to join together and fight for his freedom.”

Now more than ever, what’s needed is mass protest, based on the social power of the multiracial labor movement organized independently of the capitalist parties and their spokesmen. Free Mumia! Abolish the racist death penalty! ■

Militarism...

(continued from page 5)

peoples against the brutal occupation. There is no neutral ground. We are for the military defense of the Iraqi forces on the ground when they aim their blows against imperialism and its local henchmen. At the same time, we condemn every act of communalist, ethnic and religious violence, often carried out by the same forces targeting the U.S. occupiers. The blows directed against the U.S. imperialist occupiers are part of a just struggle by Iraqis against a neocolonial occupation. We say: **Defend the peoples of Iraq against the occupation forces! For the unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. and other imperialist troops and their allies!**

Capitalist society is divided into two fundamental classes. On the one side is the capitalist class, the bourgeoisie, which owns the means of production, that is, the industries, the mines, transportation systems. The bourgeoisie extracts as much profit as it possibly can from the workers who are its wage slaves. On the other side are these workers, the proletariat, who produce the fabulous wealth that the capitalists say belongs to them. The social power of the working class derives from its economic position and it is through the organized working class with its massive numbers, bringing its social muscle to bear through strike action—shutting down the wheels of production, flipping the switch—that the power of the capitalists is challenged.

Some people argue that if you could just stop enough people from signing up for the military and get enough soldiers to refuse to serve then the U.S. would have to end the occupation. This idea may appeal to youth who've never seen a serious mobilization of the social power of the proletariat and have been sold the lie, the myth, that the Vietnam War was ended through a mass pacifist movement of antiwar protesters and draft resisters. We'll return to this myth a little later.

Capitalist militarism regiments the population for war. Seeing soldiers in town, seeing soldiers on the campuses, serves to accustom people to the idea that wars are a normal part of everyday life. The ideology of militarism instills patriotism in workers and the oppressed in an attempt to line them up on the side of "their own" government. Such is the import of the patriotic "support our troops" line pushed by both the Democrats and Republicans during the war and occupation, and echoed by much of the reformist left. Despite the working-class background of most of the rank and file, once they don their uniforms they are soldiers in a bourgeois army who serve to defend the rule of the capitalist exploiters. For working people, these are not "our" troops, but the troops of the U.S. imperialist butchers. The call "Bring the Troops Home" is an accommodation to those who appeal to the U.S. rulers to get the American troops out of harm's way—the concern is for the loss of *American* lives only and not for the victims of U.S. imperialist terror. But make no mistake—the responsibility for the deaths of

National Guard threatens striking sanitation workers in Memphis, 1968. Racist U.S. rulers mobilized military against civil rights, labor and student struggles.

Young Socialist



John Filo

Kent State student, Jeffrey Miller, gunned down by National Guard during campus antiwar protest, 4 May 1970.

American soldiers lies entirely with the U.S. ruling class and its officers of war, and ROTC trains those officers.

The Left and the War

During the war we called for defense of neocolonial Iraq against the predatory U.S. imperialist attack, while giving no political support whatsoever to the reactionary Saddam Hussein regime. While many reformist left groups such as the ISO, Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) and Workers World Party (WWP) today vicariously cheer the "Iraqi resistance," they rejected the call for defense of Iraq during the war. Why? Because the bourgeois liberals in the United States, the Democrats, whom they see as their ticket to "political heaven," won't and *can't* side against U.S. imperialism. The few who did oppose the war simply didn't think it was the best way to advance the interests of American capitalism. Remember, the rape of Iraq, a one-sided slaughter and occupation of that country, was prepared by over 12 years of crippling United Nations sanctions and thousands of murderous bombing attacks ordered by Democratic Party president Clinton.

In February 2003, before the American empire invaded Iraq after fabricating "weapons of mass destruction," millions of people around the world took to the streets to protest. These were the largest antiwar demonstrations since the Vietnam War, but despite all the felt outrage across the globe, Commander in Chief Bush and the American capitalist ruling class went ahead with their mass murder as planned.

On the one hand, Bush and his flotilla of reactionaries and racist Christian fundamentalists reacted to the protests as you would expect: with contempt, with lies, with newly enacted repressive codes of law, and with the use of force to coun-

ter political opposition. But on the other hand, the stability of the American ruling class in wartime was never challenged by the political appetites, the program or the burnt offerings made by the dominant antiwar coalitions. In this country, this would mainly be the WWP backed up by the group misnamed ANSWER, and the ISO. How many thousands of people carried the sign "War Is Not the Answer"? What is the answer? The answer is the mobilization of the social power of the working class in its own interests, independent of the bourgeois political parties. We have a political program rooted in the understanding that to eliminate imperialist wars and colonial plunder the proletariat must take political power and rule in its own name.

The various organizations that made up the leadership of these protests have been trying to explain why these huge demonstrations for the most part reached their vanishing point after Bush declared victory in Iraq and set up the occupation. In our view, the problem with WWP, ANSWER and the ISO was that they were building an antiwar movement that the Democratic Party, a capitalist party, could call its own, and that's why much of the antiwar sentiment got flushed down the drain. These groups like to call themselves "socialist" but they call to unite the working class and oppressed peoples with their oppressors, with Democratic Party politicians or other capitalist politicians, like the Greens, who oppose the war for their own reasons. This includes those who think that Iraq is in fact a lesser threat and the real "enemy" to target is North Korea and China. These two countries are deformed workers states where capitalism was overthrown that must be defended unconditionally against imperialist provocation and capitalist restoration, including their right to possess nuclear weapons.

Helping the imperialists keep the opposition to the Iraq war and occupation safe for capitalism is what the ISO and WWP are all about. It's like amazon.com—they're looking around for some sort of antiwar Democrats to add to their shopping carts. *But you can't fight imperialist war with imperialist politicians!* It's just such false consciousness—that capitalism can be reformed and that the Democratic Party is a supposed "lesser evil"—that is the key obstacle to the kind of working-class struggle that is so badly needed. How many wars that the Democratic Party started are the likes of the ISO and WWP going to ignore? All of them!

The "leadership" of the antiwar movement relies on pressuring capitalist poli-

ticians in an attempt to reform capitalism instead of seeking to mobilize the power of the organized working class fighting against the capitalist system as a class for itself and for minorities and the oppressed. And a major player here is the trade-union bureaucracy which refuses to fight for the class it supposedly "leads." There is no mass, independent working-class party in this country to wage a real struggle against the occupation of Iraq and to fight for workers power, to fight for a workers revolution. We say: **Break with the Democratic Party of racism and war! Build a revolutionary, integrated workers party!**

The War at Home and Abroad: The 1960s and '70s

ROTC's presence on campuses was a major focus of protest by students who were outraged by the waves of atrocities committed by American imperialism's armed forces in Vietnam. Our comrades at Columbia University in 1965, which is the year the Democrats started the aerial bombing of Vietnam, marched against the recruiters then with signs that said "NROTC: Training for Colonial War" and "End U.S. Aggression—Stop NROTC." The NROTC is the Naval Reserve Officers' Training Corps. At Columbia today, attempts to restore ROTC on campus have been temporarily halted. So that's good, but it's very reversible.

On February 7, 1965, the day the U.S. air attacks against North Vietnam began, our organization sent a short and to-the-point cablegram to Hanoi (there was no Internet then) addressed to Ho Chi Minh, leader of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. The contents read: "Spartacist in fullest solidarity with defense of your country against attack by United States imperialism. Heroic struggle of Vietnamese working people furthers the American revolution." What did the International Socialists (I.S.), the forerunners of the ISO, have to say initially? They initially took a *neutral* position on the war because they opposed Vietnamese Stalinism, but there was such a reaction to this lunatic position that they felt compelled to come up with some left-sounding slogan, and settled on calling for self-determination. But the Vietnam War was more than a national liberation struggle. It was a revolutionary war, a conflict of forces of counterposed class character, pitting the Vietnamese workers and peasants under Stalinist leadership against the U.S. imperialists and the capitalist South Vietnamese regime. The I.S. position meant washing their hands of taking the side of Vietnamese workers and peasants in the revolution.

UC Berkeley was the site of the largest anti-ROTC protests. ROTC was kicked off the campus as the result of student demonstrations in April 1970 that were so militant that the campus newspaper frantically headlined, "GUERRILLA WAR ROCKS CAMPUS" (*Daily Californian*, 16 April 1970). I was involved in the protests at UC Berkeley against ROTC in the 1970s before I joined the Spartacus Youth League. But I was won to the SYL based on the politics of the organization, centrally on the question of the state, that the capitalist state must be smashed, must be dismantled. One of the things we say when we look back is that it's possible to drive recruiters off campus, from one campus or another, high school, from this job fair or that, and that is good, but the question is still that the capitalist military as an institution remains.

In Vietnamese "*Giaiphong!*" means "Liberation!" and for us Vietnam was a victory—"Two, three, many defeats for U.S. imperialism!" Nixon's slogan was "No More Vietnams" and that was also the slogan of the ISO. I mentioned earlier that there is a myth told by the liberals of the 1960s and '70s that it was they who brought the Vietnam War to a positive end through their peace marches, which we called peace crawls. Of course, the right-wingers also said that the U.S. could have won the war if it weren't for all the lily-

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livered liberals and hippie peaceniks. Both of these are self-serving tall tales. But, again today, the liberals of the WWP and the ISO have resurrected this falsehood. The U.S. imperialists were stopped in their tracks on the battlefield.

The reformist political program of groups like the ISO and WWP results in fostering illusions that *that* bourgeois party, the Democrats—the other party of imperialist war and racism—can be brought to heel, even though the Democrats support the capitalist system. By the early 1970s, a wing of the bourgeois political spectrum in the U.S., predominantly in the Democratic Party, had become defeatist on the Vietnam War. They saw the U.S. was losing and therefore wanted to pull out the troops. They were watching out for their class. Two senators of this type ran for president—Gene McCarthy in 1968 and George McGovern in 1972. The year 1973 was significant in several ways. This is when the Paris Peace Talks occurred among the parties at war, and the American troops began to be withdrawn—through a “negotiated settlement” which was really a negotiated sellout by the Stalinists. The war dragged on for another two years.

But let’s fast forward to victory. On April 30, 1975, the North Vietnamese military and the South Vietnamese National Liberation Front entered and took Saigon, smashing capitalist class rule and driving the American imperialists out. The North

dreds of thousands to a few tens of thousands. Meanwhile, the ruling class was able to defuse an escalating political crisis in the U.S.

Campus Struggle Against the Vietnam War

But it is important to understand the large-scale youth radicalization caused by the Vietnam War, not only on the campuses but also in the armed forces. In 1968-69, supporters of the Spartacist League who were in the army did some antiwar work in the military, and put out a newspaper called *G.I. Voice*, which sought to intersect the growing opposition to war among soldiers who were forced by American imperialism to kill or be killed.

By 1969-70, antiwar sentiment on campuses had become so widespread that radical leftists were able to disrupt the normal functioning of the university system. In the spring of 1970, U.S. president Richard Nixon ordered American troops stationed in South Vietnam into neighboring Cambodia, which was seen as a major escalation of the war. In the campus protests that followed, Ohio National Guardsmen opened fire and killed four students at Kent State University. Ten days later, police killed two black student protesters and injured twelve at Jackson State University in Mississippi, a state in the American Deep South, where the students were also protesting the murder of the Kent State



U.S. mass murderers scramble to flee Saigon following Vietnamese Communist victory, April 1975.

antiwar strike which shut down hundreds of colleges around the country. Four and a half million students were involved in these protests and many colleges were even shut down for the remainder of the semester. Yet the war continued as before. In the U.S. in the late 1960s and early 1970s there was a heightened level of labor struggle—in March 1970 there was a nationwide postal strike, the first national strike of federal government employees in U.S. history.

Bringing the War Home: A Bipartisan Offensive

The direct link between the war against Iraq and the war on labor in the U.S. was brought home with a vengeance in Oakland on 7 April 2003. Early in the morning on that day, riot-equipped police opened fire with wooden projectile bullets, pellet-filled “sting bags” and concussion grenades on antiwar protesters and ILWU longshoremen at the Port of Oakland who had set up picket lines against the “war merchants at the Oakland docks.” Protesters were beaten and dragged to the ground, 50 were injured. Twenty-five were arrested, charged with “interfering with business,” “disturbing the peace,” “failure to disperse.”

This attack was orchestrated under the local Democratic Party in Oakland, California. One agency, called the California Anti-Terrorism Information Center (CATIC), helped out with the April 7 attack. Their spokesman said: “You can almost argue that a protest against that is a terrorist act.” CATIC was set up by recalled Democratic governor Gray Davis and his attorney general Bill Lockyer, also a Democrat. The mayor at the time of the attack was the current mayor Jerry Brown. This throws another harsh spotlight on the capitalist class character of the Democratic Party.

But there is more background to this attack. During the ILWU’s 2002 contract battle, Bush threatened the union with military strikebreaking precisely because it is a strategic union with the ability to shut down all West Coast shipping. It was the spectre of that union power being mobilized against the bloody imperialist slaughter in Iraq that triggered the violent police response on the waterfront.

What we mean by class-struggle actions by the organized working class can be seen in the following examples, all of which we covered in our press and publicized in the antiwar and union demonstrations. In November 2001, in Japan’s southern port of Sasebo, near Nagasaki,

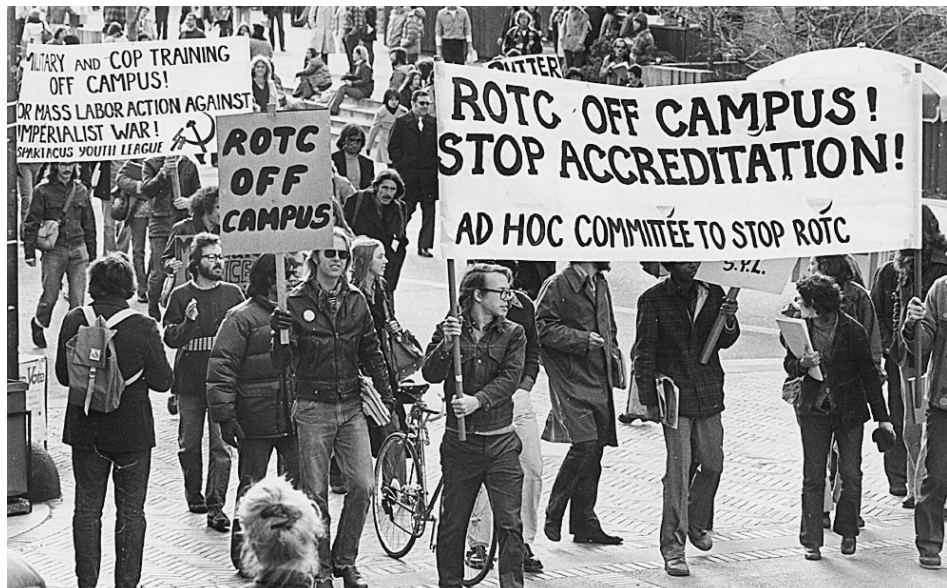
dockworkers refused to load armaments and military supplies onto *Japanese* naval ships headed to assist the U.S.-led war of terror against Afghanistan. In January 2003, Scottish railroad unionists halted a freight train loaded with tanks and munitions destined for the Gulf. On 21 February 2003, Italian trade unionists and antiwar activists blocked railway lines being used to transport 26 convoys loaded with weapons, amphibious vehicles and armored cars from a NATO base in Vicenza to another NATO logistics depot in Tuscany. In addition to pointing the way forward to how to make a dent in the war drive, these courageous unionists aimed their class-struggle opposition at their “own” capitalist government, key allies of the American-led expedition.

Many youth I have talked to say that socialism is a great idea, it just isn’t practical, or it’s utopian. But the material and objective prerequisites for socialism have been around for a long time. No amount of reforms and tinkering will change the fundamental purpose of the military itself: to uphold the capitalist system. This necessarily means that for the fight against militarism to be successful, it must go beyond the boundaries of the schools and colleges, and become a part of the struggle to overthrow the entire capitalist system. The working class uniquely has both the power and material interest to end this system by expropriating the means of production and abolishing private property through socialist revolution, which is what happened in 1917 when the working class in Russia took state power under the leadership of the Bolsheviks, tossed out the capitalists and expropriated the factories as their own.

For such a struggle to achieve victory, a revolutionary workers party is essential to lead and organize the class. You may have heard of Vladimir Lenin and Leon Trotsky—they were the co-leaders of this first workers revolution. Trotsky wrote:

“To condemn war is easy; to overcome it is difficult. The struggle against war is a struggle against the classes which rule society and which hold in their hands both its productive forces and its destructive weapons. It is not possible to prevent war by moral indignation, by meetings, by resolutions, by newspaper articles, and by congresses. As long as the bourgeoisie has at its command the banks, the factories, the land, the press, and the state apparatus, it will always be able to drive the people to war when its interests demand it.”

If you like what we’re saying, why don’t you join us? We have a world to win! ■



Spartacus Youth League protests against attempt to bring ROTC back to UC Berkeley, January 1975.

and South were reunified. Like the Vietnamese, we celebrate the 30th anniversary of this imperialist defeat. I hope you’ve all seen the photo wired across the world of the U.S. agents and their local henchmen in Saigon trying to scramble up to a rooftop, swinging on helicopter rope ladders, trying to get the helicopter to take them to the U.S. naval carrier and then hightail it home. They lost! The U.S. was defeated. *It was the heroic Vietnamese workers and peasants who inflicted a stunning battlefield defeat against U.S. imperialism.*

The Vietnamese Revolution—the overturn of capitalism in the South—was a historic conquest for the working people of the world and one which must be defended unconditionally by class-conscious workers against imperialist attack. Although the state that issued out of this revolution modeled itself on Stalin’s Russia, the overthrow of capitalism meant major gains in the living standards of the Vietnamese people. The main popular slogan of the liberals of the Vietnam antiwar movement was “Bring Our Boys Home,” to which we replied, “*Our* boys are the North Vietnamese and South Vietnamese National Liberation Front.” Thanks to the antiwar movement’s leadership, most of the students and workers who opposed the war were not won to the position of solidarity with the Vietnamese Revolution. When the American troops were brought back in 1973 and the draft was abolished shortly thereafter, the size of the antiwar protests dropped from hun-

students. The dormitory at Jackson State where this assault and murder happened was riddled by hundreds of bullets.

I wanted to discuss an example of the intersection between labor struggle and campus protest, because the state turned the same military that was slaughtering the Vietnamese against workers and students. In the spring of 1970 there was a wildcat strike by Teamsters in Akron, Ohio. In attempting to break the strike, James Rhodes, then Ohio governor, called out the National Guard in riot gear to intimidate the strikers. (By the way, the official tops of that union, who didn’t authorize the strike, fully stood by the governor’s decision to call out the Guard.) It was only a few days after the strike was over that Rhodes again called out the same National Guard, this time to Kent State University, where there were mass student protests against the escalation of the Vietnam War, with “ROTC Off Campus!” as a central slogan. The Guard planted itself on campus and on May 4 there was another rally of two to three thousand students at noon, on the commons. The Guard ordered the students to disperse to no avail, and the volleys of tear gas began. Minutes later, they fired something like 60 shots straight into the crowd, killing two young men and two young women, and wounding another nine. Our organization quickly put out a leaflet under the headline, “Blood and Nixon—Rulers Invade Cambodia, Massacre U.S. Students.”

These events triggered a nationwide

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NEW YORK

WORKERS VANGUARD

For Class Struggle, Not “Corporate Campaigns”

Labor: Organize Wal-Mart!

It is an anti-labor behemoth, a modern monument to capitalist greed and pitiless exploitation. Wal-Mart, the world's largest profit-making enterprise, today sets the standard in this country for union-busting and wage-gouging. A growing legion of American companies, inspired by the giant retailer's relentless drive for ever greater profits, has sought to adopt its brutal methods to cut costs—above all, by slashing workers' wages and benefits. Wal-Mart stands as a mortal challenge to the organized labor movement: Unionize this goliath or suffer ever greater setbacks.

With 1.6 million workers, Wal-Mart is the largest employer in the U.S. and Mexico as well as the largest retailer in Canada. This fact underlines that such a struggle must be international. Wal-Mart not only *must* but also *can be* brought to its knees by the social power of the unions. The labor movement must mobilize in the kind of hard class struggle that built the country's industrial unions in the 1930s—strike action, not “corporate” and “community” campaigns.

The enormous economic weight that Wal-Mart has acquired is unprecedented for a retail chain. If Wal-Mart were a country, its yearly revenue of well over a quarter of a trillion dollars would make it the 29th largest economy in the world. It would also be China's sixth-largest export market, accounting for 10 percent of all Chinese goods imported into the U.S. Meanwhile, fewer than half of Wal-Mart's employees can afford to pay for the company's health plan. The average wage for a full-time Wal-Mart worker in the U.S. is a meager \$9.68 an hour. At that rate, someone working 34 hours a week—Wal-Mart's definition of full-time—earns well below the federal poverty line for a family of four.

On *Forbes* magazine's 2004 list of the ten richest people in the world, five are members of the Walton family, the major shareholders of Wal-Mart (their com-

bined worth totals a cool \$100 billion). Originating from Arkansas, Wal-Mart is a Southern company that has moved into the rest of the country and brought with it the racist, anti-union “open shop” of the Southern bourgeoisie. The Walton family

machinery, as his co-workers searched for a key. Last February, the Department of Labor fined Wal-Mart \$135,540—the equivalent of no more than 15 seconds' worth of retail sales—for violating child labor laws by having 16-year-olds oper-



Carey/L.A. Times

Oxnard, California, October 2003: Five hundred UFCW strikers and supporters march from a rally at Vons supermarket to nearby Wal-Mart store.

is a major backer of George W. Bush and his family. And much like Bush, the Waltons are ideologically driven reactionaries who often censor what books, music or magazines are sold at their retail empire; Wal-Mart pharmacists are not allowed to sell the morning-after pill.

Wal-Mart managers force workers to clock out and then do unpaid overtime; they lock the doors during work shifts supposedly to prevent theft. In one case, Michael Rodriguez, a worker at a Wal-Mart store in Texas, was forced to wait for over an hour, trapped beneath fallen

ate dangerous machinery like forklifts, chain saws and box crushers. Discrimination against women is so egregious that Wal-Mart is being sued by 1.6 million current and former women employees. This is the largest civil rights class action lawsuit against a private company in U.S. history.

The impact of Wal-Mart on the rest of corporate America has been enormous. According to a 2001 study by the McKinsey Global Institute, almost 4 percent of the U.S. economy's gain in productivity from 1995 to 1999 could

be traced directly or indirectly to Wal-Mart. Wal-Mart is relentless in demanding that its 21,000 suppliers adopt its methods—from the use of cost-cutting technology to viciously slashing wages and benefits.

Wal-Mart bosses retaliate ruthlessly against any hint of unionization, firing union supporters, delaying union certification elections while transferring in union opponents and buying votes by promising raises and promotions. A federal grand jury is investigating accusations that Wal-Mart's former vice chairman siphoned off half a million dollars of company funds for such things as paying snitches to rat out union supporters. Five years ago, when barely a dozen meatcutters at a Wal-Mart store in Jacksonville, Texas voted to join the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW), Wal-Mart bosses shut down the meatcutting departments in stores across the country and switched to prepackaged meats. When workers at the Wal-Mart store in Jonquière, Quebec, voted last summer to join the UFCW, making it the only unionized Wal-Mart in North America, the company simply closed down the store. In subsequent union certification elections—such as in New Castle, Pennsylvania, and Loveland, Colorado—Wal-Mart workers voted to reject the union. As a UFCW spokesman said, the aim of the Jonquière shutdown was “to instill fundamental fear in every Wal-Mart employee that if they try to mix with the union, this is what is going to happen” (*Inter Press Service*, 18 April).

But Wal-Mart cannot shut down all its stores. Wal-Mart has enormous weight in the U.S. economy. By the same token, workers in that company have considerable social power. Many large corporations depend on Wal-Mart to market anywhere from 20 to 80 percent of their production and would be crippled by a strike or lockout at Wal-Mart. Its trucking

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Michael Jackson Defeats Racist, Anti-Sex Vendetta

In a victory against racist and social reaction, on June 13 pop megastar Michael Jackson was acquitted of charges of “lewd acts on a child” and of all ten charges against him. This trial was the culmination of over a decade of relentless government anti-sex witchhunting that could have put Jackson in jail for 18 years if he had been convicted on all counts. The acquittal was an exception to the American “justice” system's norm of racist frame-up. Still, as Wilbert Tatum, publisher of the Harlem-based *Amsterdam News*, put it in an angry editorial (16 June) noting Jackson's lengthy ordeal: “We are bitter about what happened to Michael Jackson and about what happened to so many other Black stars who have been falsely indicted by criminal prosecutors who wanted to make a name for themselves.” Kobe Bryant

and R. Kelly, too, were recently dragged through government courts in vendettas aiming to whip up hysteria over race and sex. The Jackson verdict was a victory—not only because he beat a racist frame-up, but also because it struck a blow for everyone who believes in the right to privacy and the right to consensual sexual relations. It was a blow against the government's anti-sex campaign that is aimed at increasing social control and regimentation of the population.

The jury found the prosecution's case paper-thin. It rested on contradictory testimony of two boys and their mother, whose appearance on the stand was actually a boon for the defense. The jury was treated to over a week of projected porn images. To prove what? Jackson owns porn magazines. Unimpressed, one juror

said, “Things just didn't add up.” Ominously, the prosecution was permitted to use relaxed requirements for introducing evidence, including “hearsay,” which were devised specifically in response to the 1993 witchhunt of Jackson. This allowed the introduction of “past allegations” that hadn't even come to formal charges!

A prosecution “expert” called in to explain away damaging inconsistencies in the accuser's testimony invoked the kind of pseudo-scientific “syndrome” that was a hallmark of the sham day-care trials of the 1980s. For example, if a witness shows signs of instability or has contradicted or even recanted his testimony, this, it is claimed, is simply a symptom of the abuse. If the witness is credible and claims no abuse occurred, it is alleged that he is suppressing the memory.



Reuters

Jackson steadfastly maintains that he has been asexual in his relations with boys, which is certainly possible—but for us, that is irrelevant. The state's vendetta against Jackson rested upon anti-sex laws that we oppose on principle. We pointed out when the trial began that the law used by Santa Barbara County District Attorney Thomas Sneddon to go after Jackson clearly and willfully *did not distinguish* between coerced and consensual sexual acts. Jackson was charged under a part of the California penal code that prohibits acts with the intention of

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