

## Unions: Shut Down Northwest! Solidarity Action Can Win This One!

# Victory to Northwest AMFA Strike!

The strike by 4,400 Northwest Airlines mechanics and cleaners, members of the Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association (AMFA), is a crucial battle for every airline union and the entire labor movement. When the AMFA ranks walked out on August 20, the carrier set in motion a long-planned, massive operation to bust the union, bringing in more than 1,000 scab mechanics. Northwest has suffered from delays, cancellations and grounded planes, but it is far from crippled—a result of the outright treachery of the leaders of the other airline unions, which are scabbing on the strike. The capitalist media gloat about Northwest's "brilliant" planning of the union-busting operation and what it portends for all airline unions and the rest of labor. But all their plans would go down the tubes if airline unions followed the elementary union watchwords: *Picket lines mean don't cross! One out, all out!*

Northwest has thrown down the gauntlet to organized labor. Several AMFA members have aptly described the strike as a "war." But as one striker in Detroit told *Workers Vanguard*, "We don't have a battle plan." The leadership of the AMFA craft union helped isolate the strike from the beginning with cocky assurances that their members were indispensable to the company and could win on their own. They didn't even set up a strike fund before the strike. This is not surprising for a union that uses its dues to pay a law



WV Photo

**Strikers picket at Detroit's Metro Airport, a Northwest Airlines hub. AMFA union must not stand alone—For class-struggle solidarity!**

firm to run its affairs.

AMFA members don't lack determination, *but they can't win alone!* What's needed first of all is for AMFA to call on

the International Association of Machinists (IAM), the Airline Pilots Association (ALPA) and the Professional Flight Attendants Association (PFAA) to *stop*

*scabbing* and *join the picket lines*. There are already individuals fighting within those unions to do the right thing. Addressing a strike support rally in Minneapolis on August 27, Peggy Lubinski, who was fired for honoring AMFA picket lines, told her fellow flight attendants: "You need to walk!" An IAM baggage handler walking the picket line in Detroit told WV that he had been fighting for his union to stop scabbing.

To their credit, some Machinists, individually and in groups, have refused to do AMFA's work. The Independent Pilots Association at UPS announced its refusal to handle Northwest cargo, and mechanics at KLM, one of Northwest's alliance partners, are refusing to service Northwest planes. United labor action against Northwest could help lay the basis for one industrial union for all airline workers—from pilots and mechanics to baggage handlers, cleaners, flight attendants and customer service agents.

Northwest provoked the strike by insisting that AMFA accept the elimination of more than half its jobs, including outsourcing all facilities and ground-equipment maintenance and cleaning and custodial work, on top of a 26 percent cut in wages, higher health insurance premiums, reduced sick pay and a freeze on pensions. Overall, the company wants to squeeze \$1.1 billion out of its workforce.

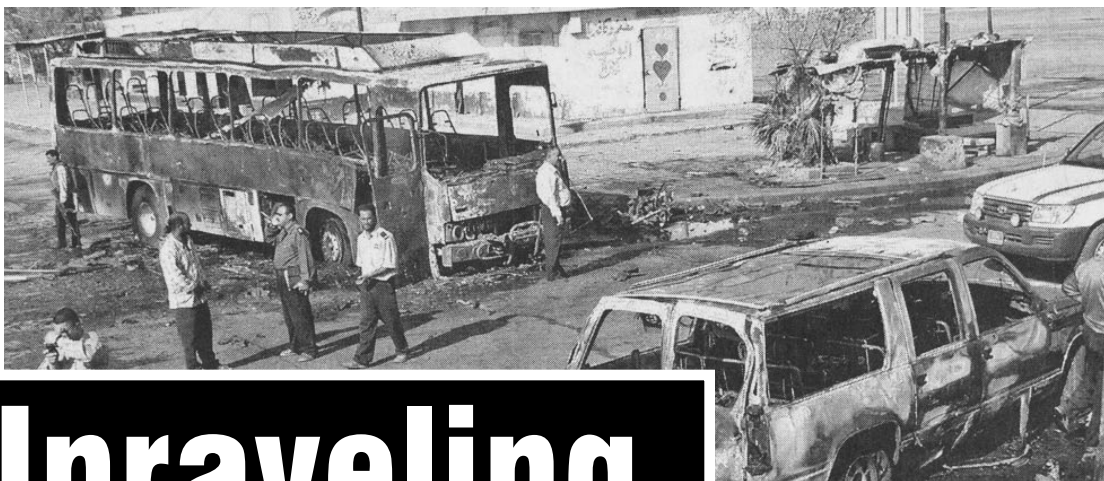
Airline unions have enormous social

*continued on page 13*



al-Rubaye/AFP

**Women demand their rights under proposed constitution, Baghdad, July 19.**



Jalil/EPA

**Terror bombing destroys bus terminal in Shiite neighborhood, Baghdad, August 17.**

# Iraq Unraveling

## Down With the Imperialist Occupation!

AUGUST 29—Huddled behind ramparts of concrete and barbed wire in Baghdad's fortified Green Zone with the committee "writing" Iraq's new draft constitution, Zalmay Khalilzad, Washington's neo-colonial emissary in Iraq, made every effort to ram through a made-in-the-

U.S.A. constitution. "The Americans say they don't intervene, but they have intervened deep," Mahmoud Othman, a Kurdish member of the constitution committee, told the *Washington Post* (13 August). Last year Khalilzad presided over the crafting of a constitution in Afghanistan that effectively enthroned a fundamentalist regime of *mujahedin* warlords and

enshrined as law the barbaric *sharia* (Islamic law).

The fantasy promoted by Bush and his neoconservative brain trust before the invasion two years ago was that American occupation forces would be met with rosewater and would proceed to erect a "unified, democratic" Iraq. A few months after Bush declared victory in the

war, we pointed out (WV No. 807, 1 August 2003):

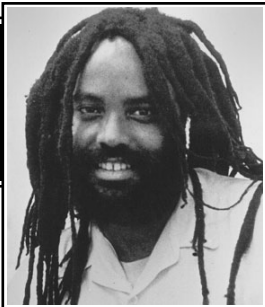
"The ignoble real purpose of the war and subsequent occupation is to plant the American flag in the oil-rich Near East as an assertion of U.S. dominance over all semicolonial countries and imperialist rivals. This baldly imperialist aim has been wrapped in the guise of a crusade to erect a secular, democratic Iraq to serve as a beacon for freedom in the region. This is an opium pipe dream. In a fundamental way there is no 'Iraq,' a country the boundaries of which were created in the divvying up of the spoils by the British and French imperialist

*continued on page 12*



# From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal

## Of Constitutions and Calm



By the time you read these words, perhaps the new Constitution of Iraq will have been written, and accepted by the political leaders of the country. Perhaps there will still be conflict.

At any rate, given the inordinate attention devoted to the subject, American political leaders are promoting the myth that the writing and signing of the Iraqi Constitution will be a signal shift in their march towards democracy.

We are led to believe that the creation of such a document portends the era of progress in the country.

But the Iraq that exists, chaotic, dangerous, and indeed, deadly, to Iraqi, American and foreigner alike, will be the very same place a day, a week, a month, or perhaps for years afterwards.

It is commonplace for Americans, especially today, to look at the US Constitution as the work of demigods; of men who were not quite human. They are reverently referred to in terms that reflect America's deep civil religion, as the 'Founding Fathers,' or, most often, simply as 'The Founders.'

One of these men who was among them certainly didn't think of his contemporaries that way. As Thomas Jefferson, in the last days of his Presidency, wrote to James Madison:

"Some men look at constitutions with sanctimonious reverence and deem them like the ark of the covenant, too sacred to be touched. They ascribe to the men of the preceding age a wisdom more than

human and suppose what they did to be beyond amendment. I knew that age well; I belonged to it, and labored with it. It deserved well of its country. It was very like the present, but without the experience of the present; and forty years in government is worth a century of bookreading; and this they would say themselves, were they to rise from the dead." [Quoted in Jack Rakove, *Original Meanings: Politics and Ideas in the Making of the Constitution* (N.Y.: Knopf, 1996), p. 367].

Constitutions, even the US one, aren't manna passed down from Heaven. They are political documents, written by men (and sometimes women), designed to set down founding principles.

Nor do they always mean what they say, for how else can one explain the American practice of adding amendments to the Constitution, and then virtually ignoring them for better than a century?

The 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments, commonly known as the Reconstruction Amendments, were passed by the Congress and ratified by the States between 1865 and 1870. In many states, like Georgia, South Carolina, and Mississippi, for example, it was as if such Amendments didn't exist. Although these amendments abolished slavery, protected citizenship rights, and embraced voting rights, these and other States enacted laws which violated their meaning and spirit. Slavery became peonage, and in some places, through the Black Codes, excuses to incarcerate Blacks and bind them to service to landowners.

Voting, and other citizenship rights were cruel jokes, violated by such local practices as 'grandfather clauses,' which meant, unless your grandfather voted, you couldn't.

It took social movements, like the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, to create a Voting Rights Act in 1965.

But, if the 15th Amendment had any meaning, if it were followed, there would've been no need for such a law, nor a need now, to renew its provisions!

For 100 years, virtually half of America ignored the Constitution that it swore to uphold, protect and defend.

As many of us saw in 2000, in Florida, so-called constitutional rights are slippery things. How many tens of thousands of African-Americans, Jews, Haitians, and others, had their votes stolen?

And Americans expect Iraq to emerge as a biblical Garden of Eden once its Constitution is written!

This, at best, is sheer wishful thinking; at worst, it's imperial arrogance.

Iraq, today, is a nation in chaos. It will be in chaos tomorrow.

The problem isn't language; it's reality. It is the occupation that is in place to install photogenic puppets to rule on behalf of the Americans.

No Constitution will change that.

21 August 2005

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

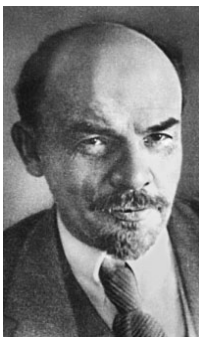
**If you wish to correspond with Jamal, you can write to: Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM8335, SCI Greene, 175 Progress Drive, Waynesburg, PA 15370.**



TROTSKY

### Revolutionary Leadership and the Class Struggle

*The capitalists' relentless drive to extract more profits from labor, from taking away medical care and other hard-earned gains to outright union-busting, engenders struggles by the working class to beat back these attacks. In the late 1930s, James Burnham, then a leading American Trotskyist spokesman, explained that the task for Marxists is to intervene into the class struggle in order to point the way toward the overthrow of the capitalist order through socialist revolution.*



LENIN

The program of the proletariat, accepted by revolutionists since the publication of the *Communist Manifesto*, can be summed up in two slogans: for workers' power and for socialism. Naturally the immediate tactic of the proletariat is not on all occasions the struggle for state power: that is possible only in a revolutionary crisis. But at all times and on all occasions the fundamental program remains the same—for the overthrow of capitalism, for workers' power and for socialism. This program expresses the basic class conflict in modern society; records the Marxist understanding that the problems of society can be solved only by socialism, and that socialism can be achieved only through the conquest of power by the proletariat. The duty of the revolutionary party, the conscious vanguard of the proletariat, is to keep this full and fundamental program always to the fore and always uncompromised. In its program, the revolutionary party thus sums up the independence of the proletariat as a class, and asserts its independent historical destiny.

—James Burnham, "The People's Front: The New Betrayal,"  
Pioneer Publishers (1937)

## Cover-Up Exposed

# London Cops Executed Jean Charles de Menezes

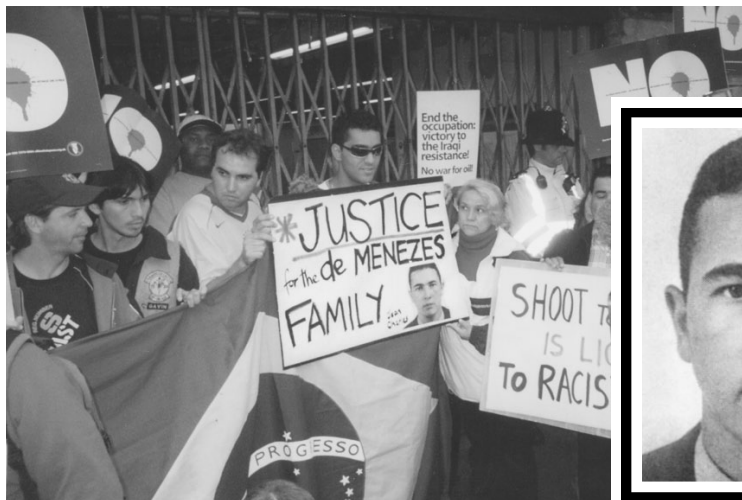
"We may be poor but we are not that stupid," said Giovanni de Menezes, the brother of Jean Charles de Menezes, who was gunned down in the subway by London police on July 22. Rejecting British officials' insulting blood money offer to the family of £15,000 (\$27,000), he said, "We will not exchange money for my brother's life." The fury and disgust expressed by the family of the slain 27-year-old Brazilian immigrant are growing daily, as millions now know, due to leaks to the press, that the British government's cover-up of the horrifying police killing was a complete pack of lies.

Barely two days after the killing, Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir Ian Blair blandly asserted that the "shoot-to-kill-in-order-to-protect policy" continued in place across the country, going on to add, "I think we are quite comfortable that the policy is right but these are fantastically difficult times" (*Scotsman*, 25

July). The cop murder of de Menezes is precisely what Blair and Bush's "war on terror" is all about—expanding the state's deadly powers of repression against the population domestically.

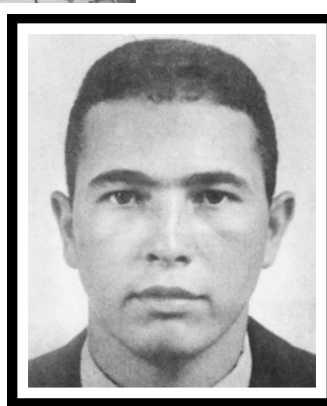
Just about every single "fact" given out by police following the killing of de Menezes, who they initially claimed was a terrorist suspect, has turned out to be a lie. He had no rucksack (where a bomb supposedly could have been hidden), he was not wearing a bulky padded jacket, he did not run from police, he did not jump over a ticket barrier. Actually, as the *Guardian Unlimited* (17 August) reported, documents from the Independent Police Complaints Commission show that "Mr de Menezes was filmed on CCTV cameras entering the station at a normal walking pace and even picking up a free copy of the Metro newspaper. He was wearing a denim jacket."

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Workers Hammer

**London, July 25: Outrage over coldblooded cop execution of Jean Charles de Menezes.**



Reuters

## WORKERS VANGUARD

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# Israeli Troops, Settlers Out of *All* the Occupied Territories!

AUGUST 28—On August 4, just before Ariel Sharon’s evacuation of settlers from Gaza, an ultra-chauvinist settler supporter opened fire on a busload of Arabs in northern Israel, killing four and wounding several others. Two weeks later, a settler in the West Bank went on a bloody rampage, murdering four Palestinians there. In the past week, Israeli forces carried out another massacre in the West Bank refugee camp of Tulkarm, killing a total of five people alleged to be Palestinian militants. Gaza remains enclosed by an electrified fence, and the West Bank is carved up by a ghetto wall and crisscrossed by military checkpoints and militarized Jewish-only highways. Hunger, disease, misery and hopelessness plague the Palestinian population of the Occupied Territories. This is the true face of Zionist Israel’s vaunted “disengagement.”

The road to today has been one of decades of Zionist land theft abetted by the perfidy of the nationalist leaders of the Palestinian people. In 1971, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) declared itself opposed to accepting a Palestinian state on anything other than all the area known as Israel and the Occupied Territories. Three years later, the PLO came out for a West Bank “mini-state,” which was posed as a transitional step toward a “democratic, secular Palestine.” In 1988, the PLO explicitly accepted the existence of the inherently exclusivist Zionist state, and in 1993 the PLO and Israel signed a U.S.-brokered agreement, the Oslo Accords, in which the PLO agreed to police the Occupied Territories on behalf of the Zionist rulers in exchange for Palestinian “autonomy.”

Today, the government of Ariel Sharon, the butcher of the Sabra and Shatila Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon in 1982, has determined that Israeli national interests are best served by withdrawing approximately 8,000 settlers from the Gaza Strip—an area about the size of the New York City borough of Queens—and four settlements in the West Bank. This is being done as vastly more numerous settlements are built in the West Bank and East Jerusalem by devouring ever more Palestinian land. Once again demonstrating the bankruptcy of petty-bourgeois nationalism, today the Palestinian Authority talks of “building our country” in Gaza: a tiny, dusty parcel of land that will still confine 1.3 million impoverished Palestinians, encircled and under the thumb of the Israeli military. Sharon’s vice prime minister, Ehud Olmert, emphasized that the Israeli military would now be *better* situated to police that desolate ghetto. After quoting Olmert that the pullout “will not reduce the capability of the Israeli security forces to respond,” the *New York Times* (11 August) commented, “Without Israeli settlers in Gaza, [Olmert] suggested, the army could strike even harder.”

The removal of the Gaza settlers by Sharon, implementing a policy earlier proposed by the Labor Party, was touted as a step forward for the oppressed Palestinians not only by imperialist spokesmen but by leftist cheerleaders for the so-called Palestinian “resistance.” The Workers World Party (WWP), the pseudo-socialist organization that initiated the ANSWER antiwar coalition, hails the “victory of the steadfast Palestinian resistance” for “the fact that Israel is forced to withdraw” (*Workers World*, 18 August). The WWP enthuses: “The mood of continuing resistance in Gaza is visible in signs there that read: ‘Today Gaza, tomorrow Jerusalem and the West Bank,’ and ‘Resistance wins—let’s go on!’” Having earlier promoted more left-wing, secular variants of Arab nationalism, WWP now cheers a “resistance” dominated by the anti-woman, anti-Semitic Islamic reactionaries of Hamas.

Newspapers and TV depicted weeping settler families and reluctant Israeli soldiers, juxtaposed with scenes of jubilant,

## Zionists Quit Gaza Ghetto



Reuters

**Gaza: One of many Palestinian homes demolished by Israeli occupation forces in 2004.**

## For a Socialist Federation of the Near East!

flag-waving Palestinians. Palestinians undoubtedly relish the departure of the hated settlers from Gaza after 38 years. However, they are not as euphoric as one might conclude from the Western capitalist media (and the likes of *Workers World*). A 12-year-old boy said that his hope for the future is “to go upstairs”: the Israeli army took over the upper two floors of his home five years ago. An old woman stated, with what the reporter described as “the language of diminished expectations”: “God willing, we hope for the best, for us and them. We only ask the United Nations and UNRWA [UN refugee agency] to build us a sewage line” (*Middle East Report* Online, 19 May).

It is necessary to demand the complete, unconditional withdrawal of all Israeli troops and settlers from all of the Occupied Territories, including East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, as well as the immediate removal of all anti-Arab fortifications—including the military checkpoints, the walls and fences and the apartheid highway network. WWP and the Palestinian nationalists notwithstanding, it is totally fatuous to believe that the current “disengagement” from Gaza will lead to a Palestinian state including the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Sharon made this clear by embarking on a massive new settlement construction program in the West Bank at the same time that the Gaza evacuation was under way.

Even were the Palestinians able to achieve a statelet on these territories—economically unviable and under Israeli suzerainty—this would hardly be a realization of Palestinian self-determination. Genuine self-determination for the Palestinian people is impossible without the dismantling of both the Zionist state of Israel, whose very existence is premised on the oppression of the Palestinian people, and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, whose population is about 60 percent Palestinian.

Unlike various “leftist” enthusiasts for Arab nationalism, we have always insisted that national emancipation for the Palestinians must not come at the expense of the right to national existence of the Hebrew-speaking people. Given the interpenetration of the Hebrew-speaking and Palestinian Arab populations—two peoples laying claim to the same territory—

the only just resolution to the national question lies in the revolutionary overthrow of all the bourgeois regimes in the region. Only through the creation of a planned economy in a socialist federation of the Near East can conflicting claims over land and water be equitably resolved and all languages, religions and cultures be placed on an equal footing.

The Israeli pullout from Gaza and a handful of West Bank settlements is a caricature of the “Gaza-Jericho first” deal that was the first step of the 1993 Oslo “peace” accords, which created the Palestinian Authority. In an article headlined “Israel-PLO Deal for Palestinian Ghetto,” we wrote that this deal “does not offer even the most deformed expression of self-determination” and “would place the PLO’s seal on the national oppression of the long-suffering Palestinian Arab masses” (WV No. 583, 10 September 1993). We added:

“This grotesque bargain over the subjugated Palestinian people marks a watershed in the Near East. By its act, the PLO has invited fundamentalist reactionaries like Hamas to pose as the only fighters against the Zionist occupation. Petty-bourgeois Arab nationalism has been shown to be the bankrupt and impotent dead end that it always was.”

Implemented by the Labor government of Yitzhak Rabin, this deal led directly to the doubling of the settler population in the Occupied Territories in subsequent years. The Palestinians who had earlier managed to eke out a living as low-wage laborers in Israeli construction and agri-

culture were now largely confined to their segregated villages and squalid refugee camps and cut off from their livelihoods, replaced by migrant labor from East Europe and Southeast Asia. A population that had once been among the most educated and cosmopolitan in the Near East is today increasingly under the sway of Islamic reaction. Whereas the first *Intifada* in the late 1980s gave rise to a plethora of women’s organizations that challenged traditional values, Palestinian women are now, especially in Gaza, increasingly forced to wear the veil and many have been murdered in “honor” killings.

Today, Hamas is maneuvering to gain maximum political capital for itself as the Fatah movement of Mahmoud Abbas, Yasir Arafat’s successor, grows increasingly discredited and despised. Over the past year, Hamas candidates won an estimated 60 percent of all seats in local government elections in Gaza and the West Bank, and in the West Bank town of Qalqilya, Hamas’ slate took all 15 positions, which was seen as “a protest not only against Fatah’s history of mismanagement but also against Fatah’s powerlessness to prevent the encirclement of the town on all sides by Israel’s wall” (*Middle East Report* Online, 21 August). Hamas also intends to run in legislative elections projected for next January.

The suicide bombings carried out by such groups as Hamas against innocent Israeli civilians—as opposed to attacks on the Israeli military and their armed settler auxiliaries—are criminal acts of terror that serve only to seal any fissures in Israeli society. The starting point for those fighting for social justice and national emancipation for the oppressed Palestinians must be that Israel, like the neighboring Arab countries, is a capitalist society with a class divide between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The proletariat includes not only European-derived Ashkenazi Jews but the more downtrodden Near Eastern Sephardic Jews and a deeply oppressed Palestinian Arab minority.

The inherently oppressive Zionist state must and can only be swept away from within, through a proletarian revolution uniting Palestinian and Hebrew-speaking workers against the common class enemy. For this to come about will likely require the prior victory of socialist revolution elsewhere, under the banner of proletarian internationalism. But if the Hebrew working class is to fight for its own liberation from capitalist exploitation, it must champion the national rights of the Palestinian people. In turn, the Arab working masses will not be won to a perspective of proletarian revolution if they are not broken from Arab nationalism and anti-Semitism. What is crucially necessary is the forging of revolutionary Marxist parties throughout the Near East, tempered through the most uncompromising struggle not only against fundamentalist reaction of all religious stripes but also even the most secular or “progressive” brand of nationalism. There is no other way. ***Defend the Palestinian people! For a socialist federation of the Near East! ■***

### Programmatic Statement of the Spartacist League/U.S.

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**For Socialist Revolution in the Bastion of World Imperialism!**

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Opponents of the Revolutionary Internationalist Workers Movement

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# Mexico: López Obrador, Democratic Rights and the Tasks of the Working Class

We print below the first part of an article translated from *Espartaco* No. 24 (Summer 2005), published by our comrades of the *Grupo Espartaquista de México*. The article centrally deals with the attempt by Mexican president Vicente Fox of the National Action Party (PAN) and a section of the former ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) to strip Andrés Manuel López Obrador of the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) of his political immunity, a process called *desafuero*, in order to eliminate him from next year's presidential race.

## PART ONE

Last May, while polls showed that Mexico City's mayor, PRDer Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO), was growing in popularity and that he could win the presidency in 2006, the PAN government, together with a majority wing of the PRI, launched a campaign transparently designed to push AMLO aside: the attorney general accused him of "disobeying" a court order for taking too long to return a piece of land he had expropriated to...build a road to a hospital! Through electoral fraud, [late 19th- to early 20th-century leader] Porfirio Díaz remained in power for 30 years and the PRI and its predecessors for 70. For more than 100 years, defense of effective suffrage against fraud has been one of the most recurrent and deeply felt demands of the masses, and it is not surprising that Fox's maneuver dramatically polarized the country. The *desafuero* process dominated newspaper headlines and TV news shows. In Mexico City,

## ESPARTACO

there were homemade banners everywhere repudiating the PAN and PRI's stories. Since last August, hundreds of thousands have marched in the streets, especially in the capital, against the new fraud. More significantly, many workers unions, above all the so-called "independent" ones, which contain many of the most combative trade unionists, took part in the demonstrations.

Even the bourgeoisie found itself divided over the *desafuero*. While important bourgeois sectors backed Fox's attack, other sections of the bourgeoisie, and even of the imperialists, were worried about the danger of "instability," i.e., an explosion of social struggle as a result of Fox's attempt. Thus, some of the most "respected" bourgeois mouthpieces in the world, like the *New York Times*, denounced the maneuver. The threat of instability provoked a fall in the stock market. According to *Proceso* (1 May), the head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the U.S. Armed Forces, Richard Myers, met with Fox in mid April to warn him of the consequences of the *desafuero*, and the U.S. government itself made its "concern" about political instability public. Finally, after the mobilization of 1.2 million people in defense of AMLO's rights on April 24, Fox backed down.

The attack by Fox & Co. would have meant a pre-emptive right-wing strike, carried out with the approval of the Mexican Congress, to get rid of the candidate that Fox's clerical gang identifies with the "left." This attack would have represented a blow against the thin "democratic" layer covering volatile Mexican capitalism and would have reinforced state tyranny. We Spartacists opposed the PAN's attack



AFP  
Rally of 200,000 in Mexico City, August 2004, in defense of PRD mayor López Obrador (inset).



Reuters

## No Support to Capitalist PRD! Forge a Workers Party!

against the elementary democratic rights of the entire population: essentially the right of people to vote for whomever they want. As Marxists, we defend democratic rights, among them universal suffrage, which have been won through bitterly fought struggles. We took this position without giving the PRD any political support and while making clear the PRD's bourgeois and therefore inherently anti-worker nature. As we wrote in a leaflet distributed at demonstrations against the *desafuero* on April 7 and 24 [see WV No. 846, 15 April]:

"If the working class is to break with the bourgeois parties and move forward toward its political independence, as a basic starting point the working class should not allow Fox's judicial dictates to prevent it from voting for whomever it

common, as well as others declaring "You Are Not Alone" or "We Are All López."

But as Marxists, we understand that the main division in society is that between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, two classes with their own, irreconcilable interests. To render this division clear and to combat illusions in the bourgeoisie are our main tasks. The PAN, PRI and PRD are *all bourgeois* parties, differing only in the form of administering capitalism. None of them challenges—and it could not be otherwise—capitalist exploitation itself. To get rid of the rapaciousness *inherent* in this system of exploitation and oppression, it is necessary for the working class to take power in its own hands through a socialist revolution, destroying the bourgeois state—whose



Union of electrical workers protests against Mexican capitalists' privatization drive.

wants. If the government can push aside even a timid bourgeois nationalist such as López Obrador, removing him from his elected post and even incarcerating him, what could a class-struggle leadership of the working class expect?"

Working people are fed up with the "government of business owners" and its transparently anti-worker "neoliberal" policies. The PRD, a bourgeois-nationalist party that combines denunciations of "neoliberalism" with meager concessions to the workers and oppressed, has managed to take advantage of this discontent to increase its popularity, especially among the dispossessed masses. Thus, in the demonstrations in defense of López Obrador on April 7 and 24, banners supporting AMLO's "alternative nation project" were

core is the police, the army, the courts and the prisons—and establishing a workers state, the class dictatorship of the proletariat. Such a state would be based on collectivizing the means of production and using them not in the service of the profits of a handful of capitalists but for satisfying the needs of the population.

### "Neoliberalism" and "Populism": Two Faces of Capitalist Exploitation

Over the last two decades, the Mexican economy has been administered according to policies identified with what is known as "neoliberalism": brutally slashing social expenditure, privatizing state industries and opening up the economy to

foreign investors without any restrictions. The high-sounding goal, according to [former president] Salinas de Gortari, was to bring Mexico into the "First World." Today, there is nothing left to privatize except the energy sector, and yet the reality is the devastation of the economy and the living standards of the masses. The buying power of wages has fallen 70 percent in the last 23 years. Privatizations have thrown millions onto the streets and significantly weakened the unions. Countless *maquiladoras* [foreign-owned "free-trade" factories] have been closed. The implementation of NAFTA [North American Free Trade Agreement] and the dismantling of the *ejido* [communal farming system] have devastated millions of peasants. Together with the tens of thousands who risk their lives every year trying to enter the U.S. in search of employment, thousands of peasants continue emigrating to the big cities, where they join the immense army of the unemployed trying to survive. An

estimated 27 percent of the total population is engaged in the "informal economy," i.e., they are street vendors.

In addition to continuing these reactionary economic policies, the PAN is also the historic party of clerical reaction; it was founded by priests, bosses and landowners in the 1930s as the "respectable" version of the [Catholic fundamentalist guerrillaist] Cristero movement and in response to the *Callista* and *Cardenista* blasphemies [referring to the secular presidents Plutarco Elías Calles and Lázaro Cárdenas]. Thus, Fox's administration is characterized by its general social backwardness, by its campaigns to reinforce "family values," and by its continuous attacks on the separation of church and state and against the rights of women. Fox grotesquely boasts that the murders of women in Ciudad Juárez have been solved, to the disbelieving ears of the victims' relatives and of a population horrified by over a decade of unpunished misogynist crimes. It was the PAN government of Baja California that in 2000 denied young Paulina her elementary right to an abortion after having been a victim of rape, and instead sent her...to a priest! Today in Mexico—the second-largest Catholic country in the world—15 homosexuals are murdered every month. Fox is the first president in over a century to kiss the hand of a pope in an official act.

The PAN is made up of openly anti-worker right-wingers, ideologically motivated neo-Cristeros and overt lackeys of American imperialism. Fox himself is nothing more than a Coca-Kulak—an ignorant landowner with a small dose of urbanity courtesy of The Coca-Cola Company. The PAN national leader Manuel Espino is a veteran of the fascist organization El Yunque. Now the country's domestic policy is in the hands of Carlos Abascal, an obscurantist fanatic and son and legitimate ideological heir to a leader of the equally fascist *sinarquista* movement [a legal political organization based on the peasantry and derived from the Cristeros]. The republican principles of Fox and his monks are probably reduced to their belief that only "Christ is King" [slogan of the Cristero movement].

On the other hand, there is nothing particularly leftist in the politics of López Obrador and the PRD. But they have managed to seize on the crass conservatism of the current federal government and its aristocratic and ignorant disdain for the poor and the workers in order to

present themselves to the masses as a friendlier alternative and a viable vehicle to achieve the felt democratic demands of the population (the right to education, national emancipation vis-à-vis American imperialism, etc.). A large part of AMLO's popularity comes from his statements against the privatization of the energy sector. To a certain degree, López Obrador has translated his democratic-nationalist rhetoric into popular measures, such as an acclaimed subsidy to the elderly and to single mothers and investment in projects of public education and urban infrastructure—timid and elementary measures which in the context of the brutal austerity of the PRI and PAN seem truly significant. This is a dangerous illusion.

The working class should not have illusions in AMLO. The particular positions that distinguish him from other bourgeois politicians (constant denunciations of neoliberalism, opposition to privatization of the energy sector, etc.) are purely conjunctural: they are either electoral campaign promises or measures to *defuse* the potential for workers struggle. Nationalist populism and economic neoliberalism are simply alternate policies of the capitalist system, often followed by the same individual according to the demands of the moment. As we said in our 7 April leaflet: “If he wins the presidency, the very support López Obrador has among the workers movement would place him in a better position to carry forward the privatization of the electric and oil sectors, which the ineffective Fox has not been able to achieve.”

The same understanding is behind the support AMLO has among important capitalists such as Carlos Slim—the richest man in Latin America, who bought the formerly state-owned communications monopoly Telmex—and statements such as that of the president of the Mexican Banks Association, Marcos Martínez Gavica. Clearly referring to López Obrador, Martínez Gavica commented on the day of AMLO's inauguration that a “left” politician represents no obstacle to the country's development: “He can even be a guarantor to further advance reforms in order to make the national economy more competitive” (*La Jornada*, 5 March). And when these people talk of “reforms” and “capacity to compete,” they invariably refer to privatizations and anti-worker measures. *Not one vote to the capitalist parties! For the political independence of the working class! For a workers party to fight for workers rule!*

**From Lázaro Cárdenas to López Obrador: The Nationalist Sleeping Pill**

The history of Latin American capitalism has been one of constant oscillations between “free trade” openness on the one hand and nationalist populism on the other. After decades of “neoliberalism,” in recent years there has been a shift



Casasola Archive  
**Mexican president Lázaro Cárdenas nationalized oil industry in 1938.**

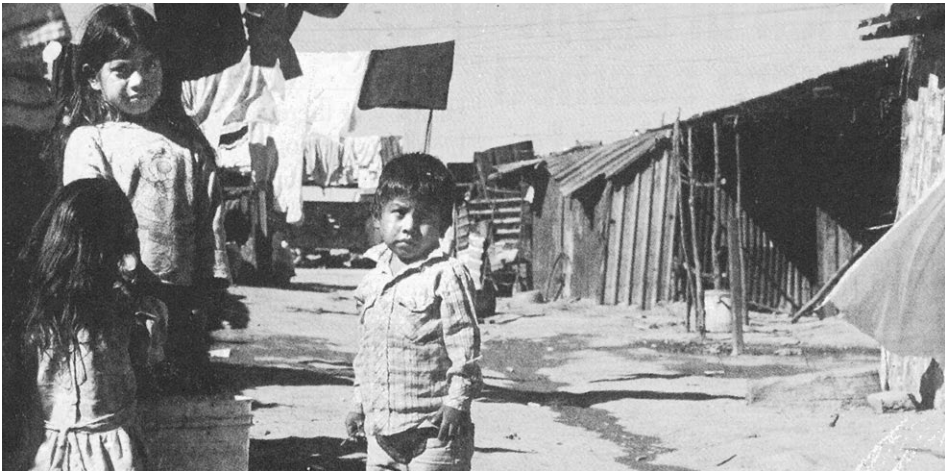
throughout South America back toward nationalist populism. However, this shift in the political climate and balance of forces is not in itself anti-capitalist. In a sense, it strengthens the forces of Latin American capitalism by solidifying the ties of the working class to its own national bourgeoisie, which is well practiced in demagogic denunciations of Wall Street and Washington. As we said in *Espartaco* No. 20 (Spring-Summer 2003), “The only constants in this inhumane

wheel of fortune are subjugation to imperialism and the human misery of millions of peasants and workers.”

The fundamental role of the PRD has been to derail the inevitable daily and spontaneous struggles of the Mexican masses into the sterile framework of electoral ballots. Its goal is to stabilize volatile Mexican capitalism and renegotiate the terms of its subordination to imperialism. It was telling that, at the April 7 demonstration against the *desafuero*, López Obrador's speech put particular emphasis on maintaining the peaceful character of the demonstrations and respecting state institutions. His speech



The Image Bank  
**U.S. combines harvesting wheat (above). Children of Indian migrant farm workers from Oaxaca. NAFTA has devastated millions of Mexican peasants.**



had an effect not only on the crowd but also on the big bourgeoisie, which sighed in relief. Even the stock exchange recovered after his speech.

The PRD emerged as a disenchanted faction of the PRI that sought to return to that party's “golden years.” Thus, in his book *Un Proyecto Alternativo de Nación* [*An Alternative Nation Project*], López Obrador writes in reference to the PRI governments before Echeverría that “although we suffered the endemic evil of inequality, Mexico grew constantly at a rate of almost 7 percent a year and with macroeconomic stability in prices and public finances.” In order to polemicize against “neoliberals,” AMLO uses the example of...Gustavo Díaz Ordaz and Adolfo López Mateos, among others. The former is infamous for the [1968] Tlatelolco massacre, while the latter was responsible for the brutal crushing of the great railroad strike of 1957-58, although many (like the leadership of the SME [Mexican Electricians Union]) remember him only for the nationalization of the electric industry. But that is what bourgeois nationalist populism means: the combination of concessions to the workers and oppressed and brutal repression, with the goal of disciplining the working class and pushing forward the interests of the bourgeoisie. Also revealing, though certainly not surprising for Marxists, is his reference to the “endemic evil of inequality.” What workers need to understand is that inequality, exploitation and oppression are endemic *to the rule of capital*.

It is worth analyzing briefly the politics of the icon of Mexican bourgeois nationalists, Lázaro Cárdenas. During his presidential period, Cárdenas carried out a series of democratic reforms, such as nationalization of oil and railroads and land distribution. Marxists defended these measures against right-wing attacks. The expropriation of oil in particular represented, in the words of Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky, “the only effective means of safeguarding national independence and the elementary conditions of democracy.”

On the eve of World War II, Cárdenas

took advantage of the conjuncture—with the existence of the Soviet Union as a counterweight to the imperialists—to expropriate the British and American oil magnates; he also humiliated them by giving asylum to the Bolshevik Trotsky, the organizer, together with Lenin, of the October Revolution and the founder of the Red Army and the Fourth International. Cárdenas' aim was to *consolidate the Mexican capitalist state* and check the excessive ambitions of the imperialists, and this required the support of the working class. In 1940, living in Lázaro Cárdenas' Mexico and months before being

assassinated by a Stalinist henchman, Trotsky explained in “The Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay”:

“Inasmuch as the chief role in the backward countries is not played by national but by foreign capitalism, the national bourgeoisie occupies, in the sense of its social position, a much more minor position than corresponds with the development of industry. Inasmuch as foreign capital does not import workers but proletarianizes the native population, the national proletariat soon begins playing the most important role in the life of the country. In these conditions the national government, to the extent that it tries to show resistance to foreign capital, is compelled to a greater or lesser degree to lean on the proletariat.”

This quote explains quite succinctly the essence of the decades of PRI bonapartist rule in Mexico, during which the state, due to the inherent weakness of the bourgeoisie, often appeared to stand above competing class interests and relied on corporatism—tying political, social and trade-union organizations to the state.

By making these concessions, Cárdenas not only used the working class as a powerful card to play against his local and imperialist bourgeois rivals, but he managed to co-opt it and to then put it under the iron leadership of the CTM [Mexican Labor Federation] bureaucracy. Cárdenas was no “socialist.” When nationalist demagoguery was not enough, he didn't hesitate before unleashing repression against the workers. For example, in 1940 he sent the police to break an oil strike in Azcapotzalco. Despite his nationalist rhetoric, by the end of his administration the Mexican economy depended on the U.S. more than ever before. “Tata” Cárdenas was, in fact, the founder of what Mario Vargas Llosa evocatively called the “perfect dictatorship” of the PRI, which was to last 60 years.

Bourgeois nationalism was the main ideological glue that made possible Cárdenas' “historic alliance,” i.e., the subordination of the working class to the PRM [Party of the Mexican Revolution, predecessor to the PRI]/PRI. Nationalism is the notion that in the end we are all Mexicans and the

key question is to push the nation forward. Today, the PRD mimics Cárdenas' nationalist rhetoric. This is only a smokescreen to cover capitalist exploitation. The proletariat will successfully struggle to achieve its historic interests inasmuch as it breaks with this *bourgeois* ideology and realizes that it is an *international* class, with common interests independent of nationality and counterposed to those of the national and foreign bourgeoisies.

**An Alternative Subordination Project**

In his book *An Alternative Nation Project*, which in reality is little more than a great collection of commonplaces and pipe dreams about how Mexico will become a paradise of social justice once the PRD holds the reins of its destiny, AMLO presents a series of proposals to solve one of the country's oldest and most burning problems: the land. But his program to “reactivate the countryside” is a bad joke. The goal is “to harmonize and support, at the same time, subsistence agriculture, production for the internal market and production for export.” How to achieve it? He writes:

“It would be necessary to promote the strengthening of the subsistence agriculture economy in communities. The purpose is to promote traditional productive activities with small grants....

“There are exceptional cases in indigenous communities where they produce almost everything they consume. There is also, for example, what has historically happened in towns like those of Tlaxcala, where the peasants, in small plots of land, grow corn, with good productivity, and have sheep, goats and cows in their yards, and a loom inside the house.”

The Tlaxcala peasants do so well that they risk their lives to migrate massively to the U.S.! Additionally, AMLO says: “The government action we propose must be oriented to granting credit through verbal agreements for the purchase of animals, grain and seeds, work materials, supplies and all that is destined to strengthen productive activities and traditional technologies.” What does “traditional technologies” mean? Pulling plows with starving oxen? Using mud to build *chinampas* [Aztec artificial islets used for growing crops on the old Texcoco lake]?

Mexican agriculture, which is in large part subsistence, cannot compete with the huge industrial farms of the U.S., which in addition cover immense expanses of fertile land that simply do not exist in Mexico. To give one example of the enormous differences, here there is one tractor for every 100 people involved in agriculture, while in the U.S. there are 1.5 tractors for every rural worker. Making the Mexican countryside productive does not require “traditional technology” but *modern* technology: tractors, irrigation systems, processing plants, fertilizers and scientific education for the peasants. But this goal is impossible within the framework of underdeveloped capitalism; to make it a reality, a workers revolution backed by a peasant insurrection is necessary, to expropriate the bourgeoisie and the landowners. This perspective cannot be separated from the struggle to extend the revolution to the colossus in the north, which would make it possible to obtain the technology necessary to pull the countryside out of backwardness and misery.

The national emancipation the masses long for and AMLO promises presupposes a modern industrial economy. But Mexican capitalism cannot rid itself of imperialism. Thus, regarding the *maquiladora* industry, AMLO holds:

“We propose direct dealing with entrepreneurs to stop the migration of *maquiladoras*. It is true that in China or other parts of the world there are more relative advantages, above all the low cost of labor, but it is possible to offer other incentives and to re-evaluate the importance of the proximity of our country to the world's largest market.”

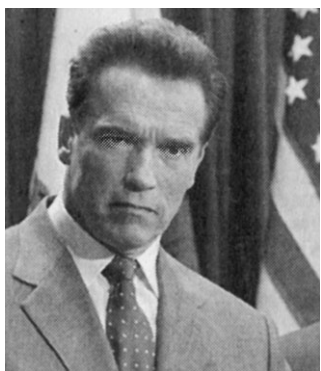
The only way to make the *maquiladora* industry competitive is to make labor even cheaper, to offer greater fiscal advantages to the blood-sucking investors and to continue the draconian labor regime established by the so-called “protection contracts.”

[TO BE CONTINUED]



# Schwarzenegger Goes After Unions, Blacks, Immigrants

## Defeat Anti-Worker Assault in California!



Arorizo/EPA

**Nurses and teachers at May 25 Sacramento rally denounce threatened cutbacks by Governor Schwarzenegger.**



Dale Crandall-Bear

## Break with the Democrats—For a Class-Struggle Workers Party!

OAKLAND—California trade unionists are alarmed and outraged over the offensive against public employee unions, education and social services being spearheaded by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. Tens of thousands of teachers, nurses, firefighters and other union members turned out in Los Angeles and Sacramento on May 25 to demonstrate their determination to fight against it. Schwarzenegger's special statewide November election is designed to push through attacks on the unions and social services.

Last December, Schwarzenegger taunted nurses protesting his attempt to impose reduced nurse-to-patient ratios, calling them "special interests" and boasting, "I kick their butt." But Schwarzenegger has been hounded all over the state by angry teachers, nurses, students and others. Sustained protests helped drive the governor's approval rating down to 31 percent by late June. On July 20, a state judge ordered nurses to postpone a one-day strike protesting reduced nurse-to-patient ratios at University of California hospitals.

The capitalists are increasingly brazen in their drive to destroy unions. William Hauck, president of the California Business Roundtable, told the *San Francisco Chronicle* (16 May) that a ballot measure he backs to increase teacher probation terms may be "no panacea" but is a step in the right direction: "Ideally, we would have no tenure or collective bargaining." In a conference call with big Schwarzenegger donors, the contents of which were leaked to the press in June, the governor's aides promised to create a "phenomenon of anger" against public employee unions (*Los Angeles Times*, 5 June).

While the convulsive labor battles of the 1930s forged powerful unions in the private sector, most public employees were not even unionized until three or four decades ago. Since then, many well-paying union manufacturing jobs in the U.S. have vanished, devastating large sections

of the unionized industrial working class. Capitalists have gone on a union-busting offensive, with the result that today only some 12 percent of workers are unionized—8 percent in the private sector.

Workers have shown no lack of determination and courage in fighting against this offensive. However, the union bureaucracy has sabotaged strikes and acquiesced to the growth of non-union jobs while appealing fruitlessly to "friends of labor" in the Democratic Party, which is no less a capitalist party than the Republicans. Now the bourgeoisie is going after public employee unions, which by 2004 accounted for some 37 percent of public sector workers. This is one of the few areas that black people can still hope to get well-paying union jobs.

An article in *Business Week* (13 June), under the scare-mongering title "Sink-HOLE! How Public Pension Promises Are Draining State and City Budgets," outlined the capitalists' theme: "Outside of government workers, very few employees have these kinds of deals anymore." The defined-benefit pensions won by the unions after World War II are being widely

replaced with 401(k)s, shifting the onus of retirement security from the company to the individual workers. So, now that pensions have been devastated in the private sector, public workers are painted as "greedy" because they have not yet been driven down to the same level.

At issue is not just defense of the unions, wages and benefits of public sector workers. The ruling class is removing obstacles to further savaging everything from public education to what's left of the "social safety net." Hospitals in poor, black and immigrant areas like L.A.'s King/Drew Medical Center are under the ax, while Schwarzenegger helps Bush cut Medicaid. In San Diego, a nearly \$2 billion pension shortfall, which led to the resignation of Republican mayor Dick Murphy last month, is the pretext for threats of massive cuts in city services.

### Mobilize Union Power!

How to fight against this assault? California union officials are conducting a purely electoral campaign centered on TV ads and lobbying the state legislature. But union power does not come from

spending the membership's hard-earned dues money on backstabbing "friends of labor" in the Democratic Party and slick lobbyists. Union power derives from the ability of the workers to collectively withdraw their labor power and bring operations to a halt. None of the vast wealth that flows through California ports moves without workers organized in strategic, multiracial unions like the International Longshore and Warehouse Union. Yet strike action, stopping the flow of profits, is the last thing to be considered by the existing leadership of the labor movement, whose entire outlook is based on appealing to the capitalist state—the government apparatus and repressive forces (cops, courts, prisons) that administer and enforce the laws protecting the capitalists' private property and profits.

The labor bureaucrats are once again hitching workers to the cart of the Democratic Party, under the guise of "stopping Schwarzenegger." In fact, Schwarzenegger is emboldened to attack the unions head-on *as a direct result of the betrayals of the union tops*. In the 2003 recall election that put Schwarzenegger in office, union officials backed the widely hated Democratic incumbent Gray Davis. Only days after the election, Los Angeles transit workers and Southern California UFCW grocery workers struck, while a potential strike by 50,000 L.A. County and Orange County workers loomed.

Instead of spreading the widely popular grocery strike to other states where contracts were expiring and linking up these struggles, the bureaucrats worked hand-in-glove with Democratic politicians to get transit workers back to work and isolated the grocery workers at a critical juncture. At every step, the labor tops sabotaged the grocery workers' determined five-month struggle. The millions the AFL-CIO gave to the Democrats should have been given to the UFCW to help them win their hard-fought strike. A victory for the grocery workers would have resounded among workers throughout the country and could have been the springboard for organizing the anti-union giant Wal-Mart, a crucial task facing the labor movement.

The obstacle to wielding union power is the labor bureaucracy—a parasitic layer in the trade unions based on the privileged upper strata of the working class—with its ties to the Democratic Party. Whether represented by the AFL-CIO's John Sweeney or the SEIU's Andy Stern, who led the recent split of several unions from the AFL-CIO, the labor tops push the lie that the interests of capital and labor can be reconciled. In the course of the class battles to come, it is necessary to forge a new leadership in the unions based on a perspective of mobilizing the power of labor independently of all the agencies and representatives of the class enemy. What is required is the forging of a party that fights to bring the power of the workers to bear in defense of all the oppressed—women, blacks, immigrants, gays. Such a revolutionary workers party would lead workers to the understanding that to meet and safeguard their fundamental needs requires overthrowing capitalist rule, a system that is increasingly irrational on so many levels—from the decaying social and industrial infrastructure to the imperialist war against and occupation of Iraq.

### Teachers, Schools Under Attack

Teachers are the main immediate target of Schwarzenegger's campaign. One of the three main ballot initiatives backed by the governor, the so-called "California Live Within Our Means Act" (Proposition 76), would gut the provisions established in 1988 by the passage of Proposition 98, which put a floor under education spending. Prop. 76 would also allow the governor to unilaterally cut state spending across the board, including tearing up state employees' union contracts to cut pay and benefits. Proposition 74, demagogically titled the "Put the Kids First Act," would increase from two to five the number of years it takes teachers to reach permanent status (i.e., increase the length of probation).



Costantini/SF Chronicle

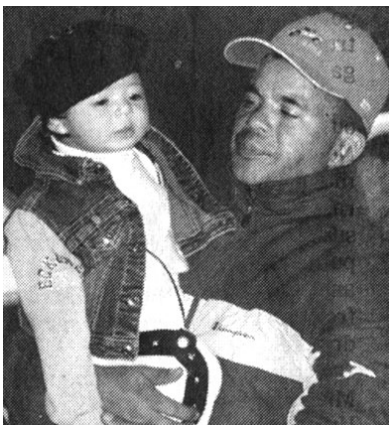
**May 17: Oakland high school students and teachers march to City Hall protesting layoffs and closures.**

Widespread seniority and tenure provisions give teachers a degree of job security, which makes teachers more difficult to intimidate. The Governor and his backers want to destroy tenure as a step toward destroying teachers unions, whose lobbying for public school funding has impeded attacks on education for working-class youth.

Schwarzenegger launched his campaign by sounding his central theme—pass my measures or the Democrats will raise taxes. “Don’t you dare touch Proposition 13,” he declared, adding demagogically that the Democrats would “maybe take these poor people’s homes away” (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 15 June). As we said in “Oakland Teachers Under Attack: Defend Public Education! Free, Quality Education for All!” (WV No. 846, 15 April):

“The severe crisis in California’s public education dates from the 1978 Proposition 13 tax revolt, when white, middle-class property owners voted a cap on property taxes. Prop. 13 was a de facto racist referendum aimed against spending ‘tax dollars’ on social programs that benefited blacks and other minorities—a convenient scam designed to pit petty-bourgeois homeowners against unions and government workers. The real beneficiaries were large commercial property owners.”

California spending per pupil has plunged from 18th among all states in 1977 to 44th today. This has intensified the savage inequalities of the racist capitalist system, under which rich white suburban kids get the best schools money can buy—private or public—while poor and minority inner-city students end up in squalid, decaying schools. In July, Democratic legislators—with the support of the California Teachers Association (CTA) misleaders—made a budget deal with Schwarzenegger to drop some \$3 billion owed to the schools under Prop. 98.



**Jose Raul Peña with daughter Suzie, both killed by cops on July 10 in Los Angeles.**

According to the CTA, this means about “\$25,000 less for every classroom in the state” (*California Educator*, May 2005).

A spokesman for the Labor Black League for Social Defense, which is fraternally allied with the Spartacist League, pointed out at a March town hall meeting in Oakland that was called to oppose attacks on the local public schools and teachers union:

“The Democrats as well as the Republicans represent an American capitalist class that is no longer interested in educating the children of working people, blacks and minorities. To the capitalists, black ghetto youth in particular aren’t wanted except as cannon fodder.”

The kind of workers party we need would mobilize the power of labor to defend teachers and the education of working-class, black and immigrant youth. That means a fight for full rights for black people and for everyone else in jobs, housing and schools! Free quality, integrated public education for all! Defeat the racist assault on affirmative action!

To counteract widespread respect for teachers and nurses, Schwarzenegger is trying to tap the same racist fears and bigotry that pushed through Prop. 13. He made a big show of embracing the racist, anti-immigrant Minutemen border vigilantes earlier this year. There is an unmistakable racist edge in whipping up a “phenomenon of anger” against unionized public workers, who are disproportionately black.

Schwarzenegger also hopes to gain

### 5,000-strong UFCW grocery workers strike rally in Los Angeles, December 2003.



from the mobilization of anti-abortion fanatics like the American Life League/Crusade for Life, who targeted women’s health clinics in the San Francisco Bay Area in July. A reactionary “parental notification” initiative on the ballot, Proposition 73, would both effectively ban abortion for many women under the age of 18 and enshrine in the state constitution the anti-abortion dogma that fetuses are “unborn children” from the time of conception. The attacks on abortion rights are part of a campaign of promoting social reaction aimed at regimenting and intimidating the entire population. A workers party would mobilize workers to defend abortion clinics and fight to make abortion and contraception available on demand as part of free, universal, quality health care for all.

### Democrats: Sweet-Talking Enemies of Workers, Blacks, Immigrants

The Democrats, who control the state legislature, operate within the same framework as the Republicans—a public spending “crisis” that requires sacrifices by the workers. The difference is that the Democrats mask the demand for sacrifice with rhetoric about “fairness.” California is not “out of money.” The state is still the fifth-largest economy in the world. The question is not how to spread around the misery capitalists inflict on workers and the oppressed to be more “fair.” The question is by whom and for what purpose the wealth and resources of society are directed: will it be by a tiny layer of capitalists who amass ever-greater piles of wealth and send workers to fight and die for their profits in imperialist wars, or by the workers who produce the wealth and who have both the interest and the ability as a class to organize society to meet the needs of the vast majority through expropriating the capitalist class?

It is no accident that Democratic mayors of major California cities, despite a veneer of liberalism, are front-line enforcers of budget cuts and layoffs. In Oakland, Jerry Brown presides over the assault on public schools and teachers. In San Francisco, Gavin Newsom has launched an offensive against civil service job protections, targeting city and school district workers and their unions, on behalf of the downtown capitalists, while posing as a friend of the hotel workers in their ongoing contract battle. The Democrats also clamor for “law and order”—the standard code word for brutal racist police occupation of the ghettos and barrios—and back the “war on terror.” While initially taking aim at immigrants from Islamic countries, the “war on terror” also targets the rights of blacks and other minorities and the labor movement.

No one personifies the role of the Democrats better than Antonio Villaraigosa. The former speaker of the California State Assembly and a former organizer for United Teachers Los Angeles, Villaraigosa became the first Latino mayor of Los Angeles in 133 years when he beat fellow Democrat James Hahn in a June runoff. Villaraigosa proved his worth to the bourgeoisie in 2003 when he joined hands with the union tops to engineer the sellout of the L.A. transit strike, which was pivotal in stemming a spreading wave of

labor struggle. Villaraigosa’s victory has been lauded by the union tops as something akin to a Second Coming. Joining them are self-proclaimed socialists like the Workers World Party (WWP), whose paper *Workers World* (1 June) raved: “There couldn’t be a more critical time to have a vocal immigrant-rights advocate and offspring of Mexican immigrants at the helm in City Hall.”

The illusions fostered by reformists like the WWP are fatuous and inimical to the task of mobilizing labor and minorities in their own defense. The day after his election, the “progressive” Villaraigosa, who was backed by former Republican mayor Richard Riordan, met with police chief Bratton, who continued the cops’ racist war on black youth when he took over the department. At his inauguration, where he was joined on the platform by Schwarzenegger, Al Gore and Jesse Jackson, Villaraigosa put supporting the cops first on his agenda, saying “We can find the resources and the political will to hire more police officers” (*Los Angeles Times*, 2 July). This means more racist cops like those who shot to death black 13-year-old Devin Brown in South Central last February. On July 10, only days after Villaraigosa’s inauguration, the LAPD SWAT team blew away a 19-month-old Latino baby, Suzie Peña, in Watts as they gunned down her father in a hail of bullets.

### Black, Immigrant, Labor Rights Go Hand in Hand

Villaraigosa is being lauded as the man who will forge a new black-Latino alliance. But the capitalist system for which Villaraigosa proclaims himself the poster boy (“I am proof that the United States is a country of opportunity and liberty,” he declared in Spanish at his inauguration) means grinding oppression and exploitation of the black and Latino masses. There are 90,000 homeless in Los Angeles County, nearly 40 percent of whom are black. The area has lost some 150,000 manufacturing jobs since 2000. In East L.A., the unemployment rate for black teens reaches 66 percent. Latino immigrants have moved into the L.A. area in large numbers, where they work for low wages at the kind of jobs historically done by blacks, while facing raids by *la migra* and attacks by racist vigilantes. The resulting tensions between blacks and Latinos recently broke out in clashes at L.A.’s Jefferson High School.

The ruling class exploits these tensions with the help of Latino nationalists who push anti-black racism and black politicians pushing anti-immigrant chauvinism; white workers are incited to direct their anger at both blacks and Latinos. This is the divide-and-conquer policy that the capitalist rulers have used for nearly two centuries.

Under both Democratic and Republican plans to “regulate” immigrant labor, immigrants are intended to become virtual indentured servants, working for next to nothing, shutting up and being deported when the capitalist state wills it. Labor must fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants and to organize the unorganized. The answer to growing unemployment is not to fight over a shrinking number of jobs, but to fight for *jobs for*

*all*. A workers party would fight for a sliding scale of wages and hours—to reduce the workweek with no loss in pay to provide a decent job to everyone who needs one. It would work to organize workers on both sides of the Mexican border, championing the defense of the Mexican masses against the rapacious U.S. imperialist rulers.

At the same time, Latino as well as white workers must be won to the understanding that the fight for black liberation is central to the struggle against the entire system of capitalist exploitation in the U.S. The oppression of black people, first as slaves and then as an oppressed caste based on skin color, pervades American society. Historically, the capitalists used blacks as a “reserve army of labor,” last hired and then, in a business downturn, first fired.

U.S. capitalists now believe that they have no particular use for the masses of the black population. As a consequence, in California blacks make up 6.5 percent of the population but nearly 30 percent of the prisoners. On June 1, the state opened a new \$716 million prison, the latest of 22 new prisons in a system that holds twice the number of prisoners it was designed for. So foul are the conditions in these dungeons that on June 30 a federal judge took over the prison medical system, citing “outright depravity in the rendering of medical care.”

This state of affairs cries out for the destruction of the social system that generates it. Black workers—particularly those concentrated in unions—are a strategic component of the working class, where they have potential social power. A revolutionary workers party would fight for labor to make every struggle against black oppression its own. For black liberation through socialist revolution!

### For a Workers Government!

In opposing Schwarzenegger’s moves earlier this year to go after state workers’ pensions, Democrats and union tops highlighted their defense of the cops, who would also have been affected. (The governor put these proposals on hold for now due centrally to police opposition.) Indeed, cops and prison guards prospered under former Democratic governor Gray Davis, as part of the massive expansion of prisons nationwide over the last couple of decades, largely due to the racist “war on drugs.” While California teachers’ salaries are the lowest of the five most populous states, the Democratic legislature and Davis gave the California Correctional Peace Officers Association a 34 percent pay raise over five years.

Cops and prison guards use their “unions” to fight for stricter laws, more jails and, in general, better “conditions” to repress workers and brutalize the ghetto and barrio poor. If unionists strike in their own defense, the role of the cops and courts will be to break their strike. However, not only have public employee unions like SEIU and AFSCME signed up every cop, security guard and prison guard they can, but the notoriously brutal prison guards have been placed front and center by the labor bureaucrats in their campaign against Schwarzenegger. “Having them as an extremely active partner has really helped broaden the coalition,” said Gale Kaufman of the union-backed Alliance for a Better California. A class-struggle labor movement would break from the policy of organizing the racist, strike-breaking cops: Police, security guards and prison guards out of the unions!

In fighting for jobs, schools and other necessities, workers must learn to rely on their own independent strength, championing the cause of all the oppressed in a common struggle to overthrow capitalist rule. The Spartacist League aims to build a multiracial revolutionary workers party that fights for a workers government to *expropriate* the capitalists as a class, abolishing private ownership of industry, transportation and banking. Victory in this struggle in the U.S. and worldwide will enable those who create the wealth to build a society based on production for social need, liberating all humanity from racism, exploitation and war. ■



# Young Spartacus

## Spartacus Youth Club Educational Work-In

For two weeks this June, members of Spartacus Youth Clubs from around the U.S. and youth from other International Communist League sections participated in an educational and maintenance work-in at the ICL center in New York. Modeled on similar events in the 1990s and 2001, the work-in not only served to carry out important tasks of physical maintenance of our party facilities, but also to counter the pernicious view inculcated by bourgeois society that there is a “natural order” dividing people into either intellectuals or manual laborers. The exaltation of intellectual labor as distinct from and superior to manual labor is a key part of the bourgeoisie’s justification for the vast inequalities of capitalist society.

A Marxist organization that fails to combat the division between mental and manual labor would not only reproduce some of the worst features of capitalist society, but by the same token limit its effectiveness and political capacity. This was captured by Spartacist League national chairman Jim Robertson at an SL/U.S. conference in 1994:

“In order to change the world, you have to be able to change it, not merely learn something to write about it....

“So if you cannot, in an educated way, work with your hands, you are ineffectual. And if you don’t know what to do with your hands, you are an ignorant person, and you are certainly not a physical scientist or an engineer....

“A good journeyman, without the engineering or scientific overview, necessarily bumps against a conceptual ceiling and must be frustrated. I think that Bukharin, in one of his speculative books, suggested that with the victory of the working class and the development into higher stages of socialism, the last residue of previous class-divided society to be shattered would be the monopoly of the petty-bourgeois-derived intellectual skills, and that after that we, increasingly united as a species, would be on the road to communism.”

—“‘Maintenance and the Communist Movement’,” WV No. 605, 2 September 1994

During the work-in young comrades worked on over 20 different projects ranging over the full spectrum of manual and mental labor—from intricate archival tasks to drywall installation, from light sheet metal work to filing projects. The youth received rave reviews for their professionalism and enthusiasm. In some cases, youth members were able to devise new procedures to streamline the projects as they proceeded. Rotating shifts of work were broken up by educational presentations and discussions spanning a wide range of topics. Indicating the success of the work-in, a number of youth, inspired by their time in the center, decided that they wanted to make the leap to party membership.

### Revolutionary Continuity: A Theme of the Work-In

A theme of the work-in was the preservation of our party history as part of the struggle to maintain continuity between our revolutionary Marxist predecessors and future generations of Marxists. Several major projects were carried out at the Prometheus Research Library (PRL), a working research facility that is the central reference archive of the Spartacist League. The PRL’s collection includes thousands of books, reels of microfilm, documents and bulletins, centering on,

## Training a New Generation of Revolutionaries



Young Spartacus Photos

**Above: SYCers hear presentation at Workers Vanguard bound volume session during work-in. Below: Assembling shelving at Prometheus Research Library.**



but not limited to, the history of the Communist and Trotskyist movements. As fighters for new October Revolutions around the world, we are not passive commentators on Trotskyist history. The PRL serves to assist in the task of the general education and political arming of ICL members, which means learning from both the victories and mistakes of previous generations of revolutionaries. Preserving the programmatic positions derived from the hard-fought struggles of the past is a major challenge for revolutionaries in the wake of the destruction of the Soviet Union, a defeat that has led to a historic regression of consciousness in the workers movement. A key task for our party in this period is to resist the intense pressures of “death of communism” ideology, which has, as Trotsky noted of reactionary periods, thrown political thinking back to stages long since passed through.

As Trotsky noted in his 1937 work, “Stalinism and Bolshevism”: “In these conditions, the task of the vanguard is

above all not to let itself be carried along by the backward flow: it must swim against the current. If an unfavorable relation of forces prevents it from holding the positions that it has won, it must at least maintain its ideological positions.... It is the only means of preparing for a new tremendous surge forward with the coming historical tide.” Imparting this understanding to youth comrades was a central component of both the educational classes and the maintenance projects at the work-in. In addition to assisting with crucial archival work at PRL, youth comrades assembled and installed several 12-foot-tall shelving units to expand the space for the PRL’s collections. Another project involving preservation of our history was the preparation of bound volumes of our press—some 20 youth comrades carried out the painstaking task of collating issues of *Workers Vanguard* to produce the 2004 bound volume.

Other major projects included the clean-up and organizing of Central Office

holdings of periodicals and press published by ostensibly Marxist organizations around the world. Comrades also assisted in a much-needed reorganization of the physical layout of the press composition department to create more space for proofreading, fact-checking and computer equipment. Comrades learned a number of skills by working with the maintenance department, from painting, plastering and drywall installation to the use of basic hand and power tools.

Comrades brought to bear a variety of life experiences as students and as workers, demonstrating in a small way the Leninist conception of a revolutionary workers party—a fusion of declassed radical intelligentsia with the most conscious elements of the working class. Especially in a student-based youth organization, there is a constant struggle against both aspects of the bourgeois division between the “doer” and the “thinker”: the petty-bourgeois “star” conception, rooted in egotism and the struggle for prestige, and the no less pernicious denigration of self-worth drummed into the working class and oppressed, centered around the notion that there are those who just do the “grunt” work while others come up with the bright ideas. We aim to build a party that rejects these bourgeois prejudices in practice; this includes fighting against manifestations of women’s oppression which parallel and intersect the mental-manual division. The very concept of “women’s work”—the household drudgery and child-rearing to which women are largely relegated—is an expression of this, as are views such as those of the Harvard University president who recently questioned women’s “intrinsic aptitude” for science. Our organization fights to counteract the degradation women face in capitalist society by having women comrades participate in all aspects of party work and seeking especially to train them to become leaders of our party. In this respect, it was particularly satisfying for some young women comrades to learn important maintenance skills for the first time through the work-in, and, for those who already had such skills, to help lead some of the major projects.

### Educational Classes and Workshops

Over a dozen educational presentations and workshops were held during the work-in. The theme of revolutionary continuity and the struggle for programmatic integrity ran through various classes: on the origins of the Spartacist League; on our work during the Vietnam War era around the early New Left and the Students for a Democratic Society; and on the history of Marxist struggle against popular-frontist strategies that programmatically subordinate the working class to the bourgeoisie, of which our principled political opposition to the World Social Forums is a current example. Other educationals covered the history of our legal and defense work and of our trade-union work, linking this history to current tasks. Educationals on China and on our campaign in the 1980s against the U.S.-backed *mujahedin* who fought the Soviet Red Army in Afghanistan focused

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# Churches, Charities and CIA Cash Social Forum Con Game

We reprint below a Young Spartacus article from the *Spartacus Youth Group in Britain*, published in *Workers Hammer* No. 191 (Summer 2005), newspaper of the *Spartacist League/Britain*, section of the *International Communist League*.

## WORKERS HAMMER

If the “Make Poverty History” campaign [against “Third World” poverty] had anything to do with actually challenging the scourge of poverty, AIDS, illiteracy and all-sided misery and destitution for the peoples of Africa, would it be endorsed by Tony Blair and [Chancellor of the Exchequer] Gordon Brown? These butchers of Iraq are trying to rebuild Labour’s popularity with voters at home and to refurbish the image of blood-drenched British imperialism. Behind them is a whole cabal of celebrities, religious charities, NGOs, trade-union bureaucrats and reformists like the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) championing the “Make Poverty History” fraud.

Not everyone is taken in by Tony Blair and Gordon Brown’s new-found concern for the poor. A letter in the *Glasgow Herald* (6 June) wryly noted: “Gordon Brown’s genuineness about eradicating poverty is as genuine as, and in direct proportion to, his willingness to lead a demonstration of bankers, financiers and stockbrokers along the streets of Edinburgh with a banner proclaiming ‘Long live the Cuban Revolution!’” As for imperialist hypocrisy about aid to the “Third World,” we endorse a characterisation of bourgeois charity written by Engels in 1845. Addressing the English bourgeoisie, he wrote it was “as though you rendered the proletarians a service in first sucking out their very life-blood and then practising your self-complacent, Pharisaic philanthropy upon them placing yourselves before the world as mighty benefactors of humanity when you give back to the plundered victims the hundredth part of what belongs to them!” (*Condition of The Working Class in England*). “Sucking out the life blood” from the world’s working masses and oppressed is what the G8 [group of eight major capitalist countries] is all about.

For those who want to protest against the G8 meeting but don’t want to go along with the “we are the world” roadshow, there is the iron fist of state repression. For months, the tabloids and other media have echoed police forces in scaremongering about “violent” anarchists attacking the G8 summit. An army of 10,000 cops has been mobilised; a five-mile-long fence has been erected around the five-star hotel in Gleneagles [Scotland] where the meeting will take place; and reportedly the U.S. is stationing an aircraft carrier full of Marines off the west coast of Scotland.

Here are the methods the capitalist rulers use to deal with any perceived protest against their rule—state repression on the one hand and political co-optation on the other. Foremost among the mechanisms

for co-opting “anti-globalisation” protest are the World Social Forum (WSF) and European Social Forum (ESF), which are led and organised by much the same forces that are leading “Make Poverty History.” Starting in 2001, these Social Forums have been used to defuse the wave of mass protests—against the G8, World Trade Organisation, IMF and other imperialist agencies—exemplified by the Seattle protest in 1999. The purpose was to draw radical youth away from pitched confrontations with the forces of the capitalist state and to corral them behind the “democratic alternative” of parliamentary reformism, while pretending that these talking shops were “non-parliamentary.” Far from being met with the tear gas, water cannons and bullets of the capitalist state, as happened in Genoa in July 2001, the WSF and ESF have been backed and bankrolled by various agencies of the imperialist rulers.

This is because the Social Forums and the so-called “anti-capitalist” movement in fact pose no fundamental threat to capitalist rule. Their organisers buy into the predominant myth of the “post-Soviet” world: that class struggle against the capitalist order is a thing of the past; the working class is irrelevant as a factor for social

change and the best that can be achieved is to give the system a “human” face. The biggest petroleum company, Petrobras! The 2002 ESF was financed by the city of Florence and the 2003 Paris ESF funded by the Chirac government. The 2004 London ESF was bankrolled and hosted by the New Labour mayoral office of Ken Livingstone, supporter of the imperialist bombing of Serbia and cheerleader for the police terror against “anti-capitalist” protesters on May Day 2000.

The Social Forums have also all been dominated by the misnamed “Non-Governmental” Organisations (NGOs). Of course these organisations, sanctioned by and receiving much of their funding from churches and capitalist states, are hardly independent from the governments to which they are answerable. Charities have long been the “humanitarian” face of imperialist intervention and of multinational companies looking to pillage “Third World” economies. Prominent NGOs at the Social Forums have included Oxfam, War on Want and Christian Aid. The major sponsor of NGOs around the world is the United Nations, which itself was set up to give a humanitarian veneer to the depredations of imperialism, particularly American. In this tradition, the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre in January 2003 received a mes-

sage of support from UN secretary general Kofi Annan. As the old saying goes, “He who pays the piper calls the tune.” And while all the Social Forums rail against the truly savage and deranged Bush administration in the U.S., among those funding the WSF are none other than foundations such as the Rockefeller Brothers Fund and the Ford Foundation. The Rockefeller foundation was used to clean up the Rockefeller’s reputation following the 20 April 1914 massacre in Ludlow, Colorado in which 20 people—including children—were killed by company guards and militia during a bitter struggle by the mine-workers union. The Ford Foundation came to prominence in 1936 at the height of the industrial struggles in the car industry in the U.S. Following World War II it became a conduit for CIA funds for anti-Communist causes around the world.

While funded by some of the most notorious agencies of U.S. imperialism, the World Social Forums have not been so welcoming to those seen as potentially threatening the interests of imperialism. The statement in the WSF Charter of Principles that “neither party representatives nor military organizations shall participate in the Forum” has been used to exclude the Zapatistas as well as the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia). Even the Madres de Plaza de Mayo, an organisation of mothers of leftists who were “disappeared” during the 1976-1983 Argentinian military dictatorship, was excluded from the 2002 WSF. On the other hand, a warm welcome has been extended to various heads of capitalist governments—who preside over “special bodies of armed men” more commonly known as the capitalist state.

An insightful article titled “The Economics and Politics of the World Social Forum” in *Aspects of India’s Economy* (September 2003) by Rajani X. Desai captured the purpose and nature of the Social Forums:

“While several political forces fighting for a change of the system [have] been excluded from the WSF meets, droves of political leaders of the imperialist countries have been attending. Not only does the WSF as a body receive funds from agencies which are tied to imperialist interests and operations, but innumerable bodies participating in the WSF too are dependent on such agencies. The implications of this can be seen from the history of one such agency, Ford Foundation, which has closely collaborated with the US Central Intelligence Agency internationally, and in India has helped to shape the government’s policies in favour of American interests.”

### Left Cover for Class Collaboration

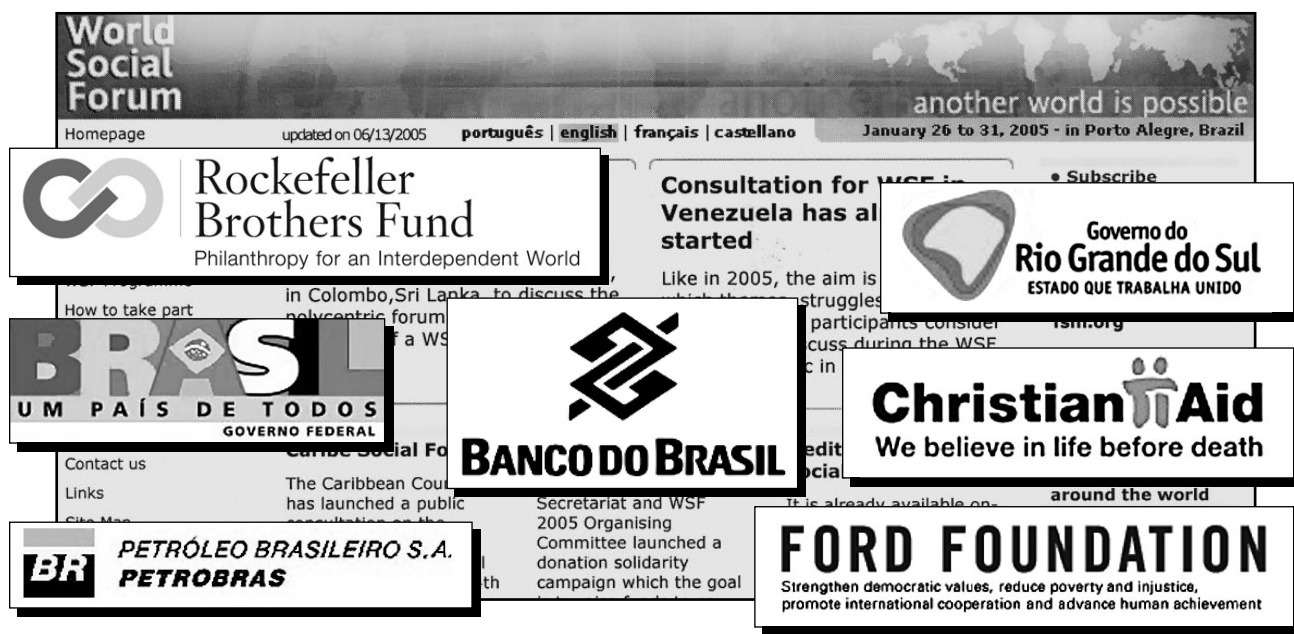
The fact that the World and European Social Forums have been all but bought and paid for by various capitalist governments and agencies is no big deal for the SWP. As SWP leader (and prominent spokesman on Social Forum platforms) Alex Callinicos shamelessly put it, “We all understood that a mass Social Forum needs money and money means compromises” (*International Socialist Tendency Discussion Bulletin*, January 2005). Indeed! Such sentiments

are hardly peculiar to Callinicos. The first World Social Forum in 2001 was partly organised by the fake-Trotskyist United Secretariat (USec). Here young radicals were schooled in administering fiscal austerity for the capitalist state through mock “participatory budgets.” The capitalist benefactors who funded the WSF got their money’s worth. Today the Workers Party (PT) of Brazilian president Lula—with the aid of a “comrade minister” who is a member of the USec—are administering the capitalist state in Brazil, slavishly abiding by the dictates of the IMF through pushing austerity on an impoverished population.

At the most recent WSF in January, Lula was roundly booed by many of the attendees who oppose his open pandering to and collaboration with the IMF and World Bank. But the truth is that Lula represents the politics and programme of the WSF on the level of state power. This

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## He Who Pays The Piper...



World Social Forum’s slogan is “another world is possible.” But whose world? Above: Some of the agencies that have sponsored and funded the Social Forums.

change and the best that can be achieved is to give the system a “human” face. The truth is that the capitalist system is as dependent as ever on the working class, which has the power to overthrow capitalism. To achieve this, the working class must become conscious that its own interests are irreconcilable with those of the capitalists. The Social Forums are an obstacle to this class-consciousness.

### Social Forums and State Funding

The European and World Social Forums have all been funded by capitalist states in the countries where they were held and received official backing from either bourgeois municipal governments or mayoral offices. The list of sponsors for the WSF has included not only the government of the city of Porto Alegre, the state government of Rio Grande do Sul and the federal government of Brazil but also the Banco do Brasil and its

secretariat and WSF 2005 Organising Committee launched a donation solidarity campaign which the goal

It is already available on...

around the world

## Social Forum...

(continued from page 9)

is what is known as the popular front: a class-collaborationist political bloc of working-class organisations with capitalist agencies in which the politics of the working-class component of the bloc are subordinated to the politics of the bourgeoisie, to the defence of the bourgeois state and capitalism. Like Lula's government in Brazil, popular fronts are called upon by the rulers to sell austerity to the workers more effectively than the discredited bourgeois parties can.

With Lula now discredited due to his attacks on Brazilian workers and peasants, the new hero of the 2005 WSF was Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez. This was quite a turnaround because at the 2003 WSF, while he was fighting the attempts of the U.S. government to overthrow him, he was not invited and not given an official space when he turned up anyway. Chávez's popularity among the oppressed in Venezuela comes from the fact he has used the oil revenues to introduce reforms that have benefited the poor, and he is not seen as a lackey of the U.S. But these are not even basic structural reforms, much less a social revolution, and are subject to the fluctuations of world oil prices. Chávez is a bourgeois nationalist who rules for capitalism in Venezuela.

Nationalist populism and economic neoliberalism are merely alternative policies of the rule of the same capitalist class. It is a fact that Chávez is reviled by many of the big landowners and capitalists in Venezuela as well as the neocons in the Bush administration, who in April 2002 backed a military coup against him. But more rational representatives of imperialism see Chávez, with his popular appeal, as a man who can be trusted to protect their investments.

Chávez's defeat of the 2004 recall referendum against him was welcomed as a guarantor of "stability" by such mouthpieces of imperialism as the *Financial Times* and the *New York Times*. As we wrote in *Workers Vanguard* No. 831, 3 September 2004:

"The immediate perspective that is urgently posed is not only to oppose U.S. imperialist incursions into Venezuela and elsewhere, but to fight to shatter the support of the workers movement to either Chávez or the opposition, and to forge a revolutionary internationalist workers party to lead the working class to power. This requires an intransigent fight against nationalism in Venezuela, which obscures class divisions in the country. Only the victorious struggle for working-class rule, i.e., socialist revolution throughout the Americas, will ensure land to the landless and enable the oil workers and other proletarians to enjoy the wealth created by their labor."

In presenting bourgeois nationalists like Chávez as fighters against "globalisation," the Social Forums provide a service against the fight for socialist revolution,

binding the working class to their "own" national capitalist class. In fact the reason why the World Social Forums have all been hosted in "Third World" countries such as Brazil and India has been to mask the class antagonism between the working class of these countries and their native bourgeois exploiters. The message has been that the bourgeoisie of the "Global South" can be relied upon to join with "the people" and fight against "globalisation." But the main concern of the capitalists of the "Third World" is to defend their profits, for which they are dependent on the imperialists and require the maximum exploitation of the working class.

With the same goal of binding the exploited to their exploiters, the ESF pushes the illusion of a humane "Social Europe" under capitalism, contrasting it to the "neoliberal" model represented by the U.S. and Britain. It is the promotion of this vision of a "Social Europe" that



**Brazilian president Lula and Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez meet in Caracas, February 14. Darlings of the World Social Forums, Lula and Chávez administer capitalist system of exploitation and repression.**

has attracted to the ESF the pro-capitalist trade-union leaders as well as social-democratic politicians across the continent. The political perspective of the European Confederation of Trade Unions was expressed by its general secretary at the 2000 Nice EU Summit protests: "There needs to be the incorporation of the trade unions and NGOs into the decision-making structures in Brussels.... We agree that Europe must become more competitive, yes. But the new Europe must also contain a dignified quality of life for all its citizens" (quoted in "The Economics and Politics of the World Social Forum"). Becoming "more competitive" means extracting greater profits from the sweat and toil of the working class. The bureaucrats of the British Trades Union Congress (TUC) endorsed the 2004 London ESF and used it as an opportunity to provide a platform for the Iraqi Federation of Trade Unions' (IFTU) Sobhi Al-Mashadani, a stooge of the imperialists' stooge government in Iraq. This followed the Labour Party conference where, at the behest of the union

bureaucrats, another IFTU representative, Abdullah Muhsin, backed the imperialist occupation by helping to ensure the defeat of a motion calling for early withdrawal of British troops from Iraq.

### Workers Power Induced by Its Own Hypnosis

In its pamphlet *Anti-Capitalism: Summit Sieges and Social Forums* (2005), Workers Power's League for the Fifth International (L5I) poses as a left critic of WSF organisers like Bernard Cassen and Susan George of ATTAC, an organisation founded to campaign for a tax on international financial transactions and against "neoliberalism." Despite the fact that its offices are staffed by French Communist Party and USec supporters, ATTAC does not pretend to oppose capitalism. It is a thoroughly bourgeois organisation which boasted of its close ties to the Lionel Jospin popular-front government. Yet regard-

ing Cassen and George, the L5I argues: "We don't need to arrange any artificial split from them. But neither do we need to fear a split with them. If we go forward determinedly, they will desert at once." By an "artificial split," the L5I means a *split along class lines*. The L5I is not opposed to class collaboration; it simply wants a more militant popular front.

Indeed, the crackpot conception of the L5I, Workers Power, and its youth group Revolution, is that they can build not only a "movement" but even a "revolutionary" party out of these cross-class, state-funded alliances: "the anticapitalist movement, the workers' movement, the movements of the racially and nationally oppressed, youth, women, all must be brought together to create a new International—a world party of socialist revolution" (*Anti-Capitalism: Summit Sieges and Social Forums*). While crying foul against right-wing bureaucratic dominance, Workers Power seeks to gain "democratic structures" within the Social Forums to engineer the movement's transformation. It urges the utilisation of "initiatives like the Assembly of Social Movements to propose permanent delegate-based, elected, co-ordinating bodies that can prepare the way for a structured Congress in which organisational and policy proposals can be debated out, amended and adopted."

Left out of Workers Power's equation is any political fight in opposition to the whole purpose of these Social Forums, which are premised on the *maintenance* of the capitalist system, merely trying to give it a more "democratic" and "humanitarian" face-lift. But even Workers Power is forced to admit that these Assemblies lack a conception of the "capitalist system as the enemy," "the working class as the force" and "socialism as the only possible basis for the 'other world' it aims to build" (*Workers Power*, March 2005).

The reality of class-collaborationism was starkly brought home at the first ESF in Florence in 2002. The L5I gushed: "The sheer intoxication of being 'tous ensemble' (all together) meant that even dyed-in-the-wool reformists spoke like revolutionary firebrands. Everyone was

carried forward too by the urgency of doing everything possible to stop George Bush's war on Iraq." "Everything possible" included an explicit appeal to Europe's imperialist rulers to oppose U.S. plans to invade Iraq, signed by a gamut of the European left including the SWP, Workers Power and Revolution at a Brussels meeting preparatory to the Florence ESF. It said: "We call on all the European heads of state to publicly stand against this war, whether it has UN backing or not, and to demand that George Bush abandon his war plans" (*Liberazione*, 13 September 2002). This wretched appeal to the "peace-loving" European capitalist rulers only serves to bind the exploited to their exploiters.

The prime movers behind the Florence ESF were mass Italian reformist parties such as Rifondazione Comunista (RC) and Democratic Left (DS). In the 1990s, DS formed part of the "Olive Tree" coalition government that administered anti-immigrant terror and severe attacks on the working class on behalf of Italian imperialism. Until late 1998, RC formed a tacit coalition with DS. The ESF provides these consummate popular frontists with a cheap way to rebuild support so that they can return to government. Likewise the Paris ESF was organised by the Communist Party (PCF) and Alain Krivine's pseudo-Trotskyist Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR). Today in France, where Chirac's government is totally discredited with the vote against the EU constitutional treaty, these same forces are working feverishly to put together a new class-collaborationist alliance hoping to take the reins of government. That means implementing the attacks on welfare as well as the racist "war on terror."

### The Popular Front: Not a Tactic but the Greatest Crime

Breaking the working class and radical youth from the idea that they can negotiate a common progressive future with representatives of the capitalist ruling class responsible for exploitation, imperialist war, racism and women's and sexual oppression, is the basic task of revolutionary Marxists. As the producers of capitalist society's wealth, and the bourgeoisie's profits, the working class is the only agent with the social power and objective interest to overthrow the capitalist system and to shatter its state. This requires socialist revolution to replace the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie with a workers state that will defend and administer a collectivised, planned economy. On an international scale, this would lay the basis to eradicate scarcity and produce for the needs of the entire human race. The only instrument that can organise the proletarian struggle for the overthrow of capitalism is a revolutionary vanguard party.

This is counterposed to the class-collaborationism of the Social Forums. Tailored to the sentiments of activists who are sick of parliamentary politics and parties, the Social Forums are popular fronts that promote the myth that a "people's alliance" with supposedly "progressive" capitalists can end the ravages of imperialism. The popular front (or "People's Front") was the weapon of choice used by the Stalinists in the 1930s for the purpose of preventing workers revolution. Trotsky vehemently opposed the popular front and relentlessly warned of its dire consequences for the working class. As then-Trotskyist leader James Burnham pointed out in his 1937 pamphlet, "The People's Front, the New Betrayal":

"For the proletariat, through its parties, to give up its own independent program means to give up its independent functioning as a class.... By accepting the program of the People's Front, it thereby accepts the aims of another section of society; it accepts the aim of the defense of capitalism when all history demonstrates that the interests of the proletariat can be served only by the overthrow of capitalism."

The popular front has often had bloody repercussions for the working class and

## Cover-Up..

(continued from page 2)

Police officials recently revealed to the London *Observer* (21 August) that the surveillance team following de Menezes "felt that he was not about to detonate a bomb, was not armed and was not acting suspiciously." However, a second, armed police unit then entered the carriage where de Menezes was seated. He stood up and they grabbed him. While he was held down, they opened fire. Seven shots to the head, another in the shoulder, while he was helpless: The death of Jean Charles de Menezes was a cop execution, pure and simple. The homicidal maniacs of Al Qaeda assert their right to kill anyone in the name of Allah. What is the excuse of "Her Majesty's" government and its cops?

The murderous and arrogant caretakers of the tattered British empire, from Tony

Blair on down, are defending their police killers. As cries are raised for the resignation of the police chief, Sir Ian Blair, London mayor Ken Livingstone (a New Labour dissident once known as "Red Ken") said Blair "is the best news that London policing has got" (*Guardian*, 24 August). After the murder, Livingstone had patiently explained the new realities to his constituents. "If you are dealing with someone who might be a suicide bomber, if they remain conscious they could trigger plastic explosives or whatever device is on them. And therefore overwhelmingly in these circumstances it is going to be a shoot-to-kill policy" (*New York Times*, 24 July).

Britain's rulers assert their right to kill anyone suspected of evil intent, especially if their skin is even slightly dark, without warning or reason. It is the imperialist rulers who are the biggest terrorists on the planet. ■



oppressed. A classic example is that of Chile in 1973, where Salvador Allende and his fellow reformists led the revolutionary-minded working class into a coalition government with the capitalists. Allende vowed not to challenge the capitalist order or the state; he put an end to peasants seizing land and workers seizing factories. Aided by U.S. imperialism the Chilean bourgeoisie then turned to General Augusto Pinochet to attack the working class and its leaders (including Allende), imposing a savage military dictatorship at the cost of 30,000 lives.

## From Seattle to Social Forums

Hoping to appeal to militant youth who despise the Social Forums as endless talk shops, the L5I pleads for a return to the street demonstrations of Seattle and Genoa. Its pamphlet proclaims that “For five years our movement has besieged the summits of the rich and the powerful.... It must take to the streets again, and show through mass direct action its intent; to build a world without classes, oppression, racism, war and imperialism.” But the politics of the WSF is an extension of, not counterposed to, the politics of Seattle. While attracting many youth who oppose the impact of capitalism internationally, the political shots at Seattle were called by the social democrats and trade-union bureaucrats whose anti-Communist tirades against China echo the interests of the imperialist rulers whose aim is the restoration of the system of capitalist exploitation to the Chinese deformed workers state. “Direct action” protest based on pro-imperialist, popular-front politics is just “militant” class collaborationism.

The backdrop to the proliferation of Social Forums is the counterrevolution in the former USSR and the bourgeoisie’s ideological campaign that “communism

is dead.” Typical of the regression of consciousness brought about by the destruction of the Soviet Union is the idea, prevalent among young leftists, that the working class is irrelevant as the agency for social change, or simply one more victim of oppression. Meanwhile union bureaucrats now justify betrayals of workers’ struggles by arguing that “globalisation” makes class struggle ineffective because the capitalists can easily move production to low wage economies in Asia or Eastern Europe. While there have been certain *quantitative* changes in the world economy in recent decades, “globalisation” is not a *qualitatively* new phenomenon. The fact that the capitalist market economy is “global,” that banks and corporations seek out those (low wage) countries where they can get the highest return, and the internationalisation of finance capital, was explained by V. I. Lenin nearly 90 years ago:

“Imperialism is capitalism at that stage of development at which the dominance of monopolies and finance capital is established; in which the export of capital has acquired pronounced importance; in which the division of the world among the international trusts has begun, in which the division of all territories of the globe among the biggest capitalist powers has been completed.”

—*Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*

Poverty, disease, exploitation and war are not aberrations in the capitalist system but are inherent within its workings. Only through the overthrow of capitalism can the productive forces be developed to provide a decent standard of living for all of humanity.

In the face of an international witchhunt against the “direct action” anarchists of the Black Bloc, following the police killing of leftist protester Carlo Giuliani in Genoa in 2001, the bulk of the social-



Mike Smith/Indymedia

Police move in on anti-G8 protesters in Edinburgh, July 4.

democratic left in the anti-globalisation movement joined in violence-baiting and cop-baiting the Black Bloc. The ICL stood out for our forthright defence of the Black Bloc against the capitalist state and its lackeys. At the same time, we stressed:

“The question before the huge numbers of young radicals who have been drawn to the ‘anti-globalization’ protests of recent years is: how do you change the world? While the protests have succeeded in forcing the imperialists to schedule future meetings in isolated backwaters, this does nothing to impede the workings of the capitalist system. To do away with imperialist exploitation requires a political mobilization of the proletariat in a thoroughgoing socialist revolution....

“What’s needed is a new, revolutionary leadership of the working class, a tribune of the people and fighter on behalf of all the oppressed. It is necessary to break with the class-collaborationist politics pushed by those who, in the name of a ‘lesser evil,’ subordinate the vital interests of the proletariat to those of its

capitalist exploiters and oppressors. It’s necessary to forge a revolutionary workers party that fights to set up a workers government through socialist revolution against the entire capitalist system.”

—“Blood and Bullets in Genoa,”

*Workers Vanguard* No. 762, 3 August 2001

We Marxists of the Spartacus Youth Group and International Communist League understand that the fight for the independence of the working class is the precondition for the emancipation of humanity through socialist revolution. Our attitude to the Social Forums, as with any other popular front, is to oppose them through intervening with a sharp characterisation and explanation of this deception in a bid to win those that genuinely want to fight oppression and exploitation to an internationalist, revolutionary, proletarian programme. We are proud communists and refuse to be lackeys of the social democrats, trade-union bureaucrats and their capitalist masters. If you do too—join us! ■

## Work-In...

(continued from page 8)

on our Trotskyist program of unconditional military defense of those countries where capitalism was overturned. Thus we declared in 1980: “Hail Red Army! Extend social gains of the October Revolution to Afghan peoples!” These educationals also took up the fight for workers political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracies. Young comrades particularly appreciated an excellent presentation on the development of our program to end the racial oppression of black people in the United States, the program of revolutionary integrationism. This program is based on the understanding that black liberation can only be achieved by destroying the capitalist system and that socialist revolution in the U.S. can only succeed if it centrally takes up the fight for black liberation.

Another theme of many of the educationals was a reassertion of the principle of proletarian class independence. This was particularly highlighted in the major work-in educational on the 1905 Russian Revolution. 1905 served as a critical dress rehearsal for the Bolshevik Revolution of October 1917—the first and only successful working-class revolution. Studying the 1905 Revolution provides necessary background to understanding the October Revolution, which continues to serve as our model. A major lesson from 1905 that Lenin and Trotsky, leading Bolsheviks, applied in practice in 1917 was that the Russian working class needed to directly seize power and move toward the construction of socialism rather than rely on a “progressive” bourgeoisie to defeat the tsarist autocracy and carry out democratic reforms. The class contained a story, appreciated by all, about young Bolsheviks who went into the factories to organize the working class: a worker in the Putilov factory said that young workers who tried to talk politics were told to first learn how to use tools, and then they could argue with some authority.



Dietz Verlag Berlin

Barricades of 1905 Russian Revolution, Moscow. This historic struggle was topic of main educational presentation at work-in.

Comrades of the WV editorial board and composition department organized a workshop dealing with various aspects of propaganda production. This included a photography clinic and a writers’ workshop in which comrades drafted a leaflet urging students to support a hotel workers’ strike based on a recent strike in L.A. After this, comrades worked in teams, checking the facts and quotes in their drafts. As the organizers of the workshop emphasized, for your politics to be taken seriously, you must demonstrate a commitment to accuracy. Comrades also attended a workshop on sound that ranged from how to effectively set up amplification for a forum to how to use bullhorns and sound equipment to organize a contingent or rally.

As the student/youth auxiliary to the Spartacist League, the SYCs are politically subordinate and organizationally independent organizations that serve to train and educate young revolutionaries. The Youth Commission is composed of comrades in the Center who oversee the production of *Young Spartacus* pages, to which all the SYCs contribute. An expanded Youth Commission meeting took place during the work-in, to which

all the comrades attending the work-in were invited. The meeting began with a report on finances, underscoring that without money you cannot organize inde-

pendently. From producing a flyer to a whole newspaper, to organizing a demonstration or forum, to paying the rent for an office, consciousness about collecting money and thinking politically about how to spend it is a crucial part of forging a revolutionary organization. The other point in the meeting was a national report on youth work and propaganda that took up many issues, including campaigns against military recruiters, right-wing witchhunts on campuses and the impact of “anti-globalization” ideology on radicalized student youth.

Unlike in the capitalist workplace, where the fruits of labor are appropriated for the profit of the exploiting class, youth comrades could take genuine satisfaction in a job well done during the work-in. If you are interested in fighting for the liberation of humanity from all forms of exploitation and oppression, which would include ending the denigration of the labor performed by the masses of this world and opening the doors to learning, culture and science to everyone—join us! ■

## Spartacus Youth Club Events

### BOSTON

#### Meet the Marxists

Thursday, September 8, 7 p.m.

Boston University  
George Sherman Union, Room 322  
775 Commonwealth Ave.

Information: (617) 666-9453  
or e-mail: bostonsyc@yahoo.com

### OAKLAND

#### Marxism and the Scientific Worldview

Thursday, September 8, 7 p.m.

University of California, Berkeley  
20 Wheeler Hall

Information and readings: (510) 839-0851  
or e-mail: sycbayarea@sbcglobal.net

### TORONTO

#### Meet the Marxists

Thursday, September 15, 6:30 p.m.

University of Toronto  
Sidney Smith, Room 1088  
100 St. George Street

Information: (416) 593-4138  
or e-mail: spartacan@on.aibn.com

### VANCOUVER

#### The Communist Manifesto and the Ideological Roots of Marxism

Thursday, September 22, 5 p.m.

UBC, Buchanan Building, Room B334

Information and readings: (604) 687-0353  
or e-mail: TLLT@look.ca

# Iraq...

(continued from page 1)

victors in the aftermath of World War I. What exists is the Kurdish North, the Sunni Muslim center and the majority Shi'ite South (and various others), with each region further riven by clan and tribal rivalries.

"In such a society the exertion of secular rule under capitalism is only possible under something like Hussein's Ba'athist dictatorship, which Bush & Co. aspire to replicate—democratic rhetoric aside—cleansed of Ba'athist elements and pliable to U.S. dictates. What does exist among all the peoples of that country is an almost century-long hatred for and resistance to imperialist colonialism. And this just hatred is likely to continue to produce American casualties."

The daily reality of death, kidnappings, rape and anarchy on the ground in Iraq collides with Bush's hallucinations that "we are making progress" and makes a mockery of Dick Cheney's claim that the insurgency is "in the last throes." The number of American dead is fast approaching the 2,000 mark. On an average day, insurgents strike at the American occupiers 70 times. More than 4,000 civilians have been killed in Baghdad by insurgents and American troops since the new regime was installed in April.

With domestic support for the war/occupation rapidly unraveling, the administration has been scrambling to come up with an "exit strategy" in all but name, hoping that a constitution would undermine Sunni support for the insurgency while piecing off the Shi'ites and Kurds. But Kurdish and Shi'ite leaders have pushed through a draft constitution, endorsed by the Bush administration, intended to assure control over their own oil-rich regions and leave the Sunnis with nothing of substance. A *New York Times* (27 August) editorial warned:

"A fractured Iraq could dangerously destabilize the broader region. Turkish hostility is guaranteed for any Kurdish statelet, which Ankara worries might set an attractive example for Turkey's own restive and oppressed Kurdish minority. Iran would find it irresistible to manipulate a semiautonomous Shiite region dominated by Iranian-financed parties and Iranian-armed militias, and spiritually guided by an Iranian-born ayatollah. "If Iraq starts to fragment along these lines, no one should be surprised to see the orphaned Sunni west looking for whatever allies it can find in Baathist Syria, in the Islamist opposition circles of Saudi Arabia and among Jordan's Palestinian majority. The threat of civil war is obvious."

## Bush's Islamic Republic

While the American bourgeois press reports incessantly on the constitutional issues that foster ethnic and religious animosity, it has remained largely silent on what Antonia Juhasz (*Los Angeles Times*, 14 August) calls "Bush's Economic Invasion of Iraq"—the wholesale privatization and armed theft of Iraq's wealth. In September 2003, U.S. occupation authorities issued orders designed to place Iraq's economy directly under imperialist control. These measures allowed 100

percent foreign ownership of business, including formerly state-owned industries (except oil), and repatriation of profits. Adel Abdul Mehdi, a U.S. appointee who is now one of Iraq's two vice presidents, declared that the new oil law will be "very promising to the American investors and to American enterprise, certainly to oil companies." Juhasz notes, "Laws governing banking, investment, patents, copyrights, business ownership, taxes, the media and trade have all been changed according to U.S. goals." And these changes will remain in effect whatever the new constitution says.

The main thrust of the proposed constitution is to assert the primacy of Islam, granting the reactionary clerics wide latitude to strike down "un-Islamic" laws and clearing the way for an Iranian-style theocracy, where *sharia* would govern all aspects of life. It would formally overturn Iraq's relatively progressive 1959 civil status law and install a confessional system where religious courts will determine issues of marriage, divorce and inheritance. Women would be stoned

Anticipating a swift victory and an easy occupation before they invaded Iraq, U.S. rulers began beating the drums against Iran, another member of Bush's "axis of evil." Now the U.S. is effectively endorsing an Iranian-style (and pro-Iranian) Islamic republic in Iraq. Some of those whom the U.S. installed in power in Iraq spent years in exile in Iran and fought on the Iranian side during the 1980-88 Iraq-Iran war; the leading Iraqi Shi'ite cleric, Ali al-Sistani, was born in Iran. These Shi'ite leaders have now set up diplomatic and economic relations with Tehran. Juan Cole remarked in *Asia Times* (11 August): "In a historic irony, Iran's most dangerous enemy of all, the United States, invaded Iran's neighbor with an eye to eventually toppling the Tehran regime—but succeeded only in defeating itself."

The Sunni Arab minority is today the big loser, and so the insurgency against the colonial occupiers will continue, as will the criminal sectarian violence among the Sunnis, Shi'ites, Kurds and other ethnic and religious minorities. Sunnis are blowing up Shi'ite mosques



Lafargue/Newsweek

**November 2004: U.S. soldiers drag prisoner through streets of devastated Falluja.**

for "adultery" and homosexuals hanged. Some of these measures must surely stoke the envy of the Bush administration's Christian fundamentalist base. Trivializing the virtual re-enslavement of women under the Iraqi constitution, administration apologist Reuel Marc Gerecht blithely asserted that American women didn't have the vote a century ago!

In many areas, particularly in southern Iraq where Shi'ite clerics are in control, repressive religious codes are already enforced—women are forced to wear the veil and the sale of alcohol is banned. Doctors attending to female patients are beaten and so are students attending mixed-sex picnics. These measures are enforced by the Badr Brigade militia, which is affiliated with one of the Shi'ite parties dominating the central government. Doctor Raja Kuzai, a secular Shi'ite and member of the National Assembly, expressed the desperate prospects facing women: "I wanted Iraqi women to be free, to be able to talk freely and to be able to move around. I am not going to stay here."

and targeting Shi'ite clerics and pilgrims. Shi'ites are unleashing their death squads and militias against Sunnis. Moreover, the binding force of religion is trumped by tribal rivalries and the appetite to maintain and consolidate local fiefdoms. Communal antagonisms are exacerbated by economic desperation. In Baghdad, electric power is often on for only four hours a day. Almost half of the city's population has lost access to running water. Unemployment is at least 50 percent. Fuel shortages are chronic.

Meanwhile, the Kurds want to keep control over the oil in their region, maintain their relative independence (under U.S. patronage) and extend their control to the oil-rich city of Kirkuk. Also claimed by Sunni Arabs and Turkmen, Kirkuk could well explode in pogromism and interethnic civil war.

There is no possibility of resolving these national and communal conflicts short of the overthrow of bourgeois rule in the region and the establishment of a socialist federation of the Near East. For now, the Iraqi proletariat has been decimated. But until there is a resurgence of the working class as a force there and in the region there can be no solution to continuing imperialist domination in alliance with the forces of domestic reaction. The current dire situation makes all the more crucial the fight to forge internationalist—and multinational—proletarian vanguard parties throughout the Near East.

## For Class Struggle Against U.S. Rulers!

When U.S. forces entered Baghdad more than two years ago, polls showed overwhelming popular support for the Bush administration and the war. In the triumphant euphoria of that moment, most of the war's supporters were willing to entertain the prospect of getting it on with all "our enemies." But with the number of American casualties rising and no end to the insurgency in sight, popular support has ebbed to 34 percent according to recent polls. More alarming from the Pentagon's standpoint is the military's failure to meet recruitment quotas. These

factors have promoted considerable consternation in sectors of the ruling class, with even elements from the Republican right expressing dissatisfaction.

An indication of the growing unease over the war is the prominence given to the ongoing protest outside Bush's vacation hideaway by Cindy Sheehan, whose son Casey was killed in the war. Sheehan drew the wrath of right-wingers, and some liberals, when she called for immediate withdrawal of troops from Iraq, spoke out against the war in Afghanistan and came to the defense of radical lawyer Lynne Stewart. Anti-Bush liberals and reformists have seized on Sheehan's protest in an attempt to revive their pro-Democratic Party antiwar movement, which got shipwrecked on the shoals of mainstream Democratic support for the war and John Kerry's election defeat in 2004.

The reformist Workers World Party (WWP) and its ANSWER coalition, among others, organized a series of candlelight vigils and "Camp Casey" replicas around the country to build for a rally in Washington, D.C. on September 24. Centered on the call "Shut the War Down!", the upcoming rally raises a grab bag of slogans—e.g., "Bring the troops home now!", "Healthcare not warfare," "Education not occupation," etc. Such slogans are the stock in trade of not only the WWP but the International Socialist Organization and other reformist leftists who appeal to the imperialist state to reorder its priorities. The reformists seek to hide the truth that only the overthrow of capitalism can put an end to racial and sexual oppression, poverty, unemployment and imperialist war. Their pacifist/populist appeals are necessarily directed at pressuring the Democrats—the other party of capitalism, racism and imperialist war. This perspective required that the antiwar movement be as toothless and "respectable" as possible. Thus, ANSWER et al. refused to call for the defense of Iraq against the U.S. imperialist behemoth in the lead-up to the war.

As revolutionary Marxists, we took a side militarily with Iraq against the U.S. imperialist invaders, while politically opposing Saddam Hussein's bloody capitalist regime. We have a side in the current conflict: against the U.S., its allies and Iraqi lackeys. We defend the peoples of Iraq against any U.S.-led attack and repression. Insofar as the forces on the ground in Iraq aim their blows against the imperialist occupiers, we call for their military defense against U.S. imperialism. Every blow struck against the imperialist occupiers is a blow struck against the enemy of workers and the oppressed worldwide. ***U.S. occupiers out now!*** However, we vehemently oppose the fundamentalism, terrorism, communal violence, kidnappings, car bombings that indiscriminately blow up innocent people on the street and so on, as the opposite of everything we Marxists stand for.

The perspective of the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Clubs is to fight for the multiracial U.S. proletariat to assert its class interests and priorities in struggle ***against*** the American imperialist rulers. The economy continues to fail to provide decent jobs. The escalating price of gasoline, itself largely a product of the destabilization caused by the occupation; the attempts to savage Social Security; the erosion of health benefits and the attacks on civil rights; the continuing decay of the ghettos and the massive incarceration of black and Latino youth—all have added to the cauldron of discontents of America's working people and minorities. Out of such discontents and the multiple contradictions of capitalist society must issue a powerful ***class*** movement of the proletariat, standing at the head of all the exploited and oppressed and led by a revolutionary workers party that will stop at nothing short of socialist revolution. Only when the proletariat seizes power from the blood-drenched, arrogant "masters of the universe" in the White House and on Wall Street can we begin to speak of a world rid of imperialist wars and occupations and offering material security and social justice for all. ■

## Spartacist League/TLC Forums

### The Lynching of Emmett Till and the Fight for Black Liberation

**Saturday, September 10, 5 p.m.**

University of Illinois, Chicago  
Student Center East, Room 603  
750 S. Halsted

For more information: (312) 563-0441  
or e-mail [chicagospartacist@sbcglobal.net](mailto:chicagospartacist@sbcglobal.net)

**CHICAGO**

### Canada Out of Afghanistan! U.S., Britain Out of Iraq! War on Terror Targets Everyone

**Saturday, October 1, 7 p.m.**

University of Toronto  
International Student Centre  
33 St. George Street

For more information: (416) 593-4138  
or e-mail [spartacan@on.aibn.com](mailto:spartacan@on.aibn.com)

**TORONTO**



(continued from page 1)

power—the world economy simply could not function without them. But instead of using that power, airline unions have been picked off one by one through devastating rounds of wage-slashing, pension-stealing and outright union-busting. It's time to turn this around, and the recent strike at London's Heathrow airport gave a taste of the solidarity in action needed to do that. Hundreds of British Airways (BA) ground staff walked out in solidarity with fired food-service workers. Airline operations were crippled for nearly a week, costing BA \$70 million, and the airport was paralyzed for two days. The workers did this in the face of laws barring such solidarity strikes, showing the potential for tearing up anti-union laws through united labor action (see accompanying article).

Now, every union in the industry must do what's necessary to ensure that AMFA is not defeated. As we wrote in WV No. 849 (27 May) when the United Airlines bosses ripped off their workers' pensions:

“A hard-fought battle is necessary and could inspire a broader upsurge in class struggle—not fighting only assures greater misery in the future. The unions must make use of their weapons: their numbers, organization and collective muscle. The watchword should be: ‘One out, all out; shut down the airports!’ After all, the carriers cannot outsource everyone’s job. Further, the crisis in the industry is worldwide; airline workers would find allies among unionized labor at their companies overseas and among those workers in struggle at foreign carriers.”

## Airline Unions Must Stand Together!

The history of the airline unions and the entire labor movement shows that when unions scab on each other, labor loses. This was seen all too clearly when the PATCO air traffic controllers union was smashed in 1981 by Republican president Ronald Reagan, implementing plans drawn up by the Democratic Carter administration. Responsibility for the defeat lay squarely with the leaders of the IAM, Teamsters and other unions who refused to honor the picket lines and shut down the airports. *WV* headlined: “Unchain Labor!” “For Solidarity Strikes with PATCO!” The smashing of PATCO laid the groundwork for a quarter-century of givebacks and union-busting. It also encouraged the capitalists to carry out broader attacks on working people and the poor, particularly the black population



AP

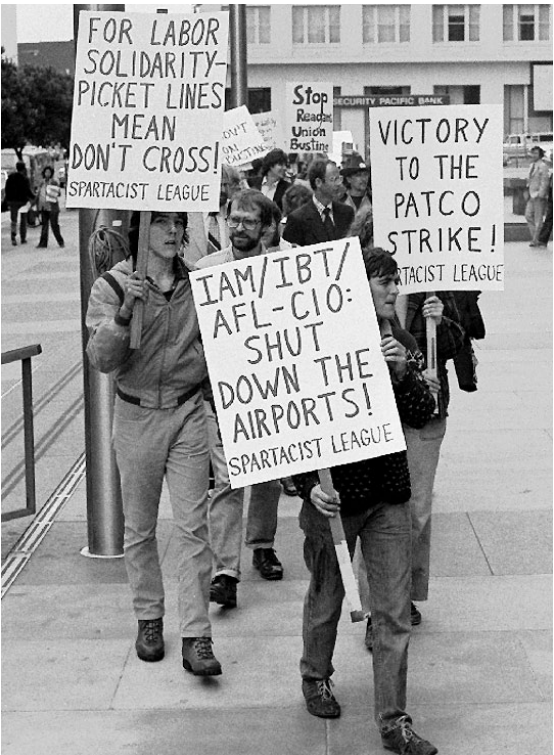
**PATCO strike leaders dragged to jail in 1981. SL called for labor to shut down airports; AFL-CIO tops' betrayal paved way for decades of givebacks and defeats.**

as well as immigrants.

Today the union tops are brazen in their backstabbing. IAM general vice president Robert Roach responded to AMFA's request for solidarity from IAM ramp workers and customer service agents: "IAM members will not be duped into standing with AMFA." The IAM local president in Detroit tried to put a spin on the scabbing by claiming it was better for his union to do the scab work than have an outside contractor do it!

Trying to justify such strikebreaking, the national AFL-CIO organizing director labeled AMFA a “renegade, raiding organization that is creating havoc in the airline industry,” adding, “It’s not in the house of labor.” It was the IAM misleaders’ pattern of agreeing to concession after concession that convinced mechanics at a number of carriers to leave the IAM for AMFA. Meanwhile, SEIU service employees head Andy Stern and his Change to Win Coalition haven’t done a thing to mobilize support for AMFA, utterly belying the speeches they made about revitalizing labor during their recent split from the AFL-CIO. The Teamsters, who are part of Stern’s coalition, are continuing to fuel Northwest aircraft in many locations and, with the exception of individual drivers, make deliveries to the airline.

The PFAA flight attendants, who are associated with AMFA, held a vote over whether to walk out in sympathy with



WV Photo

AMFA. Northwest even assembled 1,500 scab flight attendants in fear of a solidarity strike. The PFAA tops declared that the vote failed, but they refused to reveal the results “for strategic reasons.” Many flight attendants who want a solidarity strike are walking the picket lines and calling for a new vote.

Officials representing the 300 AMFA-represented mechanics at Mesaba Airlines, which is partially owned by Northwest, voted for a sympathy strike. But AMFA leaders caved in to an anti-strike court injunction. The union tops take as a starting point the inviolability of the laws issued by this government, which acts as the executive committee for the U.S. capitalist ruling class as a whole against the working people. If laws hadn't been broken and court injunctions defied, there would be no labor movement today.

The Bush administration, whose Labor Department secretary, Elaine Chao, is a former Northwest board member, gave a green light to Northwest to go ahead with its union-busting provocation against AMFA by *not* invoking the anti-union Railway Labor Act (RLA) to stop the strike. In March 2001, Bush turned to the RLA to *prevent* an AMFA strike against Northwest, when AMFA was in a better position to win. If this strike becomes effective, the government will use the RLA and everything else in its arsenal against the union. As it is, the RLA allows Northwest to hire the

scabs as permanent replacements.

Some strikers have told WV that the cops are giving them a friendly thumbs up and have even acted to defend them against the scabherding Vance Security outfit. But if the picket lines were actually stopping the scabs, the cops and Vance thugs would act together against the union.

At the August 27 strike rally in Minneapolis, almost half of the speakers were Democratic politicians. The Bush White House makes no secret of its affiliation with big business, while the Democrats rely heavily on union support in elections. But when fundamental class issues are posed, the Democratic Party reveals itself as the other party of capitalist rule. It was the Democrat Clinton who invoked the *RLA 14 times* to ban potential rail and airline strikes, including a 1997 walkout by American Airlines pilots. And it was Minnesota Congressman James Oberstar, ranking Democrat on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, who advised AMFA to try to avert the current strike by offering to take even deeper pay cuts than the company was asking for!

The answer is not simple trade unionism, but the fight to forge a new leadership of labor committed to mobilizing labor's power independently of the bosses' state and politicians. In his speech to the Minneapolis rally, AMFA Local 33 president Ted Ludwig quoted from Farrell Dobbs commenting on the Trotskyist-led 1934 Minneapolis city-wide strikes that paved the way for organizing the Teamsters as a powerful national union: "The tinder of discontent begins to pile up. Any spark can light it and once lit the fire can spread rapidly." We would point out that in assessing the historic 1934 strikes, Trotskyist leader James P. Cannon noted in *The History of American Trotskyism* (1944):

“The modern labor movement must be politically directed because it is confronted by the government at every turn. Our people were prepared for that since they were political people, inspired by political conceptions. The policy of the class struggle guided our comrades; they couldn’t be deceived and outmaneuvered, as so many strike leaders of that period were, by this mechanism of sabotage and destruction known as the National Labor Board and all its auxiliary setups....

“Our people didn’t believe in anybody or anything but the policy of the class struggle and the ability of the workers to prevail by their mass strength and solidarity.”

There is plenty of social tinder piling up in the U.S. today—over the bloody U.S. occupation of Iraq, over the massive

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# Wildcat Strike Protests Mass Sackings at Heathrow

LONDON, 27 August—When hundreds of British Airways (BA) staff at Heathrow airport downed tools on August 11 in support of 670 South Asian, mainly women workers sacked by catering firm Gate Gourmet, the whole world took notice. From Detroit and Dallas to Frankfurt and Sydney, newspapers reported that for two days members of the Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU) crippled BA and brought one of the world’s busiest airports almost to a halt.

In the context of worldwide cutbacks, layoffs and union-busting in the airline industry, this spectacular action gave a taste of the enormous social power that these strategically placed airline workers and their trade unions can bring to bear in defence of workers’ rights. It also dealt a welcome blow to the myth that class struggle no longer exists in Tony Blair’s Britain of poverty pay and “labour market flexibility.” And it illustrated the treacherous legalism of the union misleaders, who brought the strike to an end while the workers remained sacked. The union and company are now negotiating over a “voluntary redundancy” [layoff] package.

Airline workers have considerable clout. Heathrow is strategic to British capitalism, commercially as well as mili-



Gate Gourmet workers at Heathrow airport protest their mass firing.

## Reinstate Gate Gourmet Workers!

tarily. Demonstrating the power of collective action by these workers, the Heathrow strike cost the bosses more than \$70 million, grounded much of the BA fleet internationally and snarled up BA operations for nearly a week. It was all the more impressive in that the strike was under-

taken in defiance of anti-union laws forbidding solidarity strikes with workers in different companies and was launched in the teeth of the government’s “war on terror” hysteria whipped up in the aftermath of the July 7 criminal terror bombings.

The government’s “anti-terror” cam-

paign singles out the country’s darker-skinned minority population in order to divide the working class. But at Heathrow the workers gave a splendid demonstration of how class solidarity can transcend ethnic lines, with the integrated workforce, including ground crew workers, recognising that their own interests and those of the more vulnerable and mainly female and Asian catering workers were the same.

Targeting Muslims in the first instance, the government’s “war on terror” is designed to regiment the working class, to discourage opposition to the imperialist occupation of Iraq and as a club against all perceived opponents of capitalist rule. Any Muslim, Sikh, Brazilian, African or anybody else deemed a “terror suspect” can be shot by trigger-happy, racist cops—as was seen in the brutal killing of Brazilian immigrant electrician Jean Charles de Menezes, who could have been just about any worker on his way to work. The TGWU and other unions must oppose the “war on terror,” both as an elementary act of defence of the rights of their own multi-ethnic membership and to defend the unions as organs of collective struggle.

The working conditions of Gate Gourmet workers are familiar to millions of

## Victory to Strike...

(continued from page 13)

cuts in health benefits, over the broad decline in living standards for working people. But for these discontents to be channeled into a fight against the capitalist exploiters requires the class-struggle policy laid out by Cannon, based on the political independence of the working class.

### Gutting the Unions, Gutting Safety

The Northwest bosses threaten not only the livelihood of their workers but the very lives of their passengers. To cut costs, they are driving down wages and keeping old planes in the air—the world’s oldest commercial fleet—enforcing speedup and generally degrading safety standards. Since 2001, the company has already laid off half its experienced mechanics, sending the work to low-wage, non-union outside maintenance companies. Northwest has gone from one mechanic per aircraft in 1993 to one mechanic for every three aircraft today!

One day before the strike began, the nosegear of a Northwest plane landing in Guam collapsed. Now, Northwest’s

strikebreaking is an even greater invitation to air disaster. The strike’s first day saw a four-tire blowout in Detroit. Three days into the strike, Northwest had accrued almost three times its normal level of “deferred maintenance items.” But the AMFA tops’ strategy of hoping that an accumulation of maintenance problems will lead to consumer pressure plays right into Northwest’s hands. As a result of mass layoffs throughout the industry in recent years, many scab mechanics have five to ten years of experience. And as long as the scabs are working, the union is losing.

The AMFA leaders, and many mechanics on the picket lines, combine their protests against the outsourcing of mechanics’ jobs with chauvinist statements against “illegal” immigrant workers and foreign mechanics in Latin America, China and Singapore, which is depicted in AMFA statements as a haven for terrorists. The AMFA tops buy right into the government’s phony “war on terror.” But as a striking cleaner in Detroit told WV, “The war on terror enslaves us all.” That’s right. The government’s “anti-terror” campaign is shredding the rights of immigrants, black people, trade unionists and all who could be seen as opponents of the racist capitalist profit system.

The basis for unity in struggle between the union and immigrant workers

was displayed at the Minneapolis rally. Pointing to Northwest’s recruitment of desperate Somali immigrants as scab cleaners, Omar Jamal, spokesman for the Somali Justice Advocacy Center, said, “It’s nothing new to us that big corporations are taking advantage of immigrants” and called on everyone to respect the AMFA picket lines. Unions must fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants and to organize all the unorganized, citizen or not.

The America-first protectionism pushed by the union tops, which promotes the lie of a commonality of interests between the U.S. working class and its exploiters, is utterly suicidal in an industry that is inherently international in scope. The solidarity action by KLM workers is a welcome development and must be extended internationally to defeat Northwest’s strikebreaking.

Many AMFA strikers, and other workers as well, believe that the government and big corporations are on a drive to destroy the “middle class.” The notion of the “middle class” is used to hide the real-

ity that there are two fundamental classes in capitalist society, the capitalists who own the means of production and the workers whose labor creates the capitalists’ profits. There certainly is a drive to destroy workers’ livelihoods, and class struggle is the only road to defending workers against this assault. But the direction the class struggle must take is toward the abolition of the irrational, profit-driven capitalist system—through a workers revolution that seizes the productive wealth of society and builds a planned collective economy in which production is geared to satisfy the needs of all, not the profits of a few. This perspective requires the forging of a workers party that, standing at the head of all the exploited and oppressed, fights for a workers government.

\* \* \*

**A union strike fund has been established. Send donations to: AMFA National, Attn: NWA Strike Committee, 67 Water St., Suite 208A, Laconia, NH 03246.■**

### Just Out in Chinese!

Stalinism—Gravedigger of the Revolution  
**How the Soviet Workers State Was Strangled**  
For Socialist Revolution to Sweep Away Yeltsin Counterrevolution!

**For Central Planning Through Soviet Democracy**

Down With U.S./Japan Counterrevolutionary Alliance!  
**Defend the Chinese and North Korean Deformed Workers States!**  
Joint Statement of the Spartacist Group Japan and Spartacist League/U.S.,  
13 March 2005

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### SPARTACIST LEAGUE/U.S.

#### Local Directory and Public Offices

**Web site:** www.icl-fi.org • **E-mail address:** vanguard@tiac.net

**National Office:** Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116 (212) 732-7860

**Boston**  
Box 390840, Central Sta.  
Cambridge, MA 02139  
(617) 666-9453  
bostonsyc@yahoo.com

**Chicago**  
Box 6441, Main PO  
Chicago, IL 60680  
(312) 563-0441  
chicagospartacist@sbcglobal.net

**Public Office:**  
Sat. 2-5 p.m.  
222 S. Morgan  
(Buzzer 23)

**Los Angeles**  
Box 29574, Los Feliz Sta.  
Los Angeles, CA 90029  
(213) 380-8239  
slsycla@sbcglobal.net

**Public Office:** Sat. 2-5 p.m.  
3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215

**New York**  
Box 3381, Church St. Sta.  
New York, NY 10008  
(212) 267-1025  
nysl@compuserve.com

**Public Office:**  
Sat. 1-4 p.m.  
299 Broadway, Suite 318

**Oakland**  
Box 29497  
Oakland, CA 94604  
(510) 839-0851  
slbayarea@sbcglobal.net

**Public Office:**  
Sat. 1-5 p.m.  
1634 Telegraph  
3rd Floor

**San Francisco**  
Box 77494  
San Francisco, CA 94107  
slbayarea@sbcglobal.net

### TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA/LIGUE TROTSKYSTE DU CANADA

**Toronto**  
Box 7198, Station A  
Toronto, ON M5W 1X8  
(416) 593-4138  
spartcan@on.aibn.com

**Vancouver**  
Box 2717, Main P.O.  
Vancouver, BC V6B 3X2  
(604) 687-0353  
tllt@look.ca



other workers in “dynamic,” 21st-century capitalism. In 1997, BA contracted out their catering to Gate Gourmet, the world’s second largest in-flight catering supplier. BA constantly demands “productivity increases” from Gate Gourmet, squeezing workers to do more work for less pay. Contracting out is designed to carve up the working class and prevent unified strikes across a single industry. Today, Gate Gourmet workers earn a paltry £12,000 (\$21,000) per year, which is not a living wage. But even this is too much for this company. An exposé in the London *Daily Mirror* (16 August) revealed that Gate Gourmet has been implementing a union-bashing scheme code-named Operation Milestones, for which a Gate Gourmet director set up a scabherding operation named Versa Logistics, specialising in recruiting East European and other immigrant workers.

When management hired casual [temporary] workers at Heathrow, workers saw the writing on the wall and staged a protest—the action for which they were sacked by the company. Gate Gourmet is trying to use immigrant workers from East Europe and Somalia, who earn £6 (\$11) per hour with no entitlement to state benefits, as a club against the Gate Gourmet workforce who, as British citizens or permanent residents, are entitled to sickness pay and benefits. And unlike most workers in low-paid, contracted-out work, they are organised in trade unions and have family and union ties to other airport workers.

The mass sacking by Gate Gourmet is an attack on the very existence of trade unions at Heathrow airport, which according to the *Financial Times* (19 August) is the “largest remaining bastion of unionised labour in the country.” The TGWU is the largest union there, with over 20,000

members out of a workforce of 70,000. The fight to reinstate Gate Gourmet workers is an issue for the whole trade-union movement. The response by BA ground staff was precisely what is needed: decisive class struggle, in defiance of the anti-union laws, that shut down the entire airport and hit the greedy airline bosses where it hurts—in their bottom line. Airport workers took this action knowing their own jobs could be next on the line—BA is determined to root out the airport

bemoaning the fact that solidarity strikes are “unlawful” in Britain, as opposed to elsewhere in Europe, and pleading that “it is time to bring solidarity action within the framework of the law” (*Guardian*, 16 August).

But the powerful solidarity strike by Heathrow workers, which crippled operations at this major international air hub, exposed the lie of the bosses and their Labourite agents that the workers are helpless in the face of the government's

American-based Gate Gourmet, Woodley asked, “Can a company walk into Britain and plan the cynical sacking of innocent men and women to cut costs and be legally allowed to get away with it?” (*Guardian*, 23 August). He called on British-based BA to “step in and help the sacked Gate Gourmet workers get their jobs back at Heathrow” (BBC News, 22 August). Appealing to the capitalist bosses or their government, or viewing them as potential partners, is the kiss of death in class struggle, where it is critically important to know who one’s enemies are.

The key question for airport workers facing union-busting attacks is to forge, in the course of class struggles, a new leadership in the unions that will not play by the bosses rules or buy into the bourgeoisie's "national unity" hysteria, which was used to stop the striking firefighters on the eve of Bush and Blair's invasion of Iraq. Against Gate Gourmet and other companies' attempts to pit immigrant workers against other workers in Britain, the unions must organise the unorganised! A class-struggle leadership would champion the fight for *full citizenship rights for all immigrants!* The fight for such a leadership is linked to building a new, revolutionary party of the working class. We of the Spartacist League/Britain are fighting to build a multiethnic revolutionary workers party. This is not to be some warmed over version of the old Labour Party that for decades betrayed the interests of workers and minorities. What's needed is a party founded on the understanding that working people's fight for their own interests must culminate in a socialist revolution that overthrows capitalism and replaces it with an international, rationally planned economy that will consign unemployment, poverty pay and racism to the dustbin of history. ■

anti-union laws. The workers demonstrated the potential of militant class struggle to render these laws inoperable. It was Woodley & Co. who acted as the labour lieutenants of capital in enforcing these laws. With BA and the airport back in business, the TGWU leadership—aided by the Trades Union Congress and Labour government ministers—agreed to negotiate, from a position of weakness.

The TGWU leadership support the capitalist Labour government and the interests of the British ruling class—the very forces the unions have to mobilise to defend workers against. Grotesquely appealing to British patriotism against the

unions as part of sweeping changes in preparation for moving to the new Terminal Five in 2008. There is a history of mass firings at Heathrow: 270 unionised catering workers were fired in one fell swoop by Lufthansa Skycheffs catering in 1998, for having staged a one-day strike.

The solidarity strikes at Heathrow sent shockwaves through BA, not to mention the viciously anti-working-class Labour government. With Heathrow virtually at a standstill, and BA losing millions in profits, the union leadership repudiated the strikes as “unlawful” and workers went back to work. TGWU general secretary Tony Woodley justified this treachery,

# Rally...

(continued from page 16)

opposition to their system of racist oppression. Free Mumia Now!

• **Assata Shakur** is a former Black Panther and member of the Black Liberation Army. On 2 May 1973, Shakur, Sundiata Acoli and Zayd Malik Shakur were ambushed by racist New Jersey state troopers. The troopers immediately opened fire, killing Zayd Shakur. One of the state's hitmen was killed with a bullet from a police revolver. The two black militants who survived were convicted on charges of killing the cop and their own comrade! Sentenced to life, Assata escaped prison in 1979 and has been in Cuba since 1984. Acoli remains in prison hell over 30 years later. In her 1998 "Open Letter," Shakur declared, "I am a 20th century escaped slave." In May, the FBI added Shakur to its domestic terrorist list and increased the bounty on her head to \$1 million, a bounty reminiscent of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. Hands Off Assata Shakur!

- On September 23 **Lynne Stewart**, her translator Mohamed Yousry and paralegal Ahmed Abdel Sattar will be sentenced

on frame-up charges of conspiracy to provide material support to terrorism. They face decades behind bars. Stewart's "crime"? Doing what lawyers are supposed to do, representing her client, in this case, Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman, imprisoned on charges of conspiracy to blow up NYC landmarks in the early 1990s. The government is taking deadly aim at the Sixth Amendment right to legal counsel. Taking away the right to a lawyer or trial ultimately means no rights to free speech and assembly—no rights at all. Hands Off Lynne Stewart!

This united-front rally brings together, in defense of Jamal, Shakur and Stewart, speakers and organizations across a spectrum of political beliefs raising their own views on these vital cases. Within that framework, we seek to win activists to the understanding that defense of these targets of capitalist state repression must be based on a class-struggle perspective—organizing independently of the racist capitalist state that has framed them up. These frame-ups illustrate that there is no justice in the capitalist courts. The PDC, a class-struggle legal and social defense organization associated with the Marxist Spartacist League, is fighting to mobilize the social power of the multiracial labor

movement—those who create the wealth of this society and who can shut it down. It is the working people who have the class interest and social power to not only fight for Mumia's freedom and in defense

# Lynne Stewart Challenges Frame-Up Conviction

Leftist attorney Lynne Stewart is demanding that the U.S. District Court in Manhattan declare a mistrial in the political frame-up that ended in the conviction of Stewart, her translator Mohamed Yousry and paralegal Ahmed Abdel Sattar in February. The three are scheduled to be sentenced on October 21 (postponed from September 23). The 65-year-old Stewart faces decades in prison for her vigorous legal defense of Islamic fundamentalist cleric Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman.

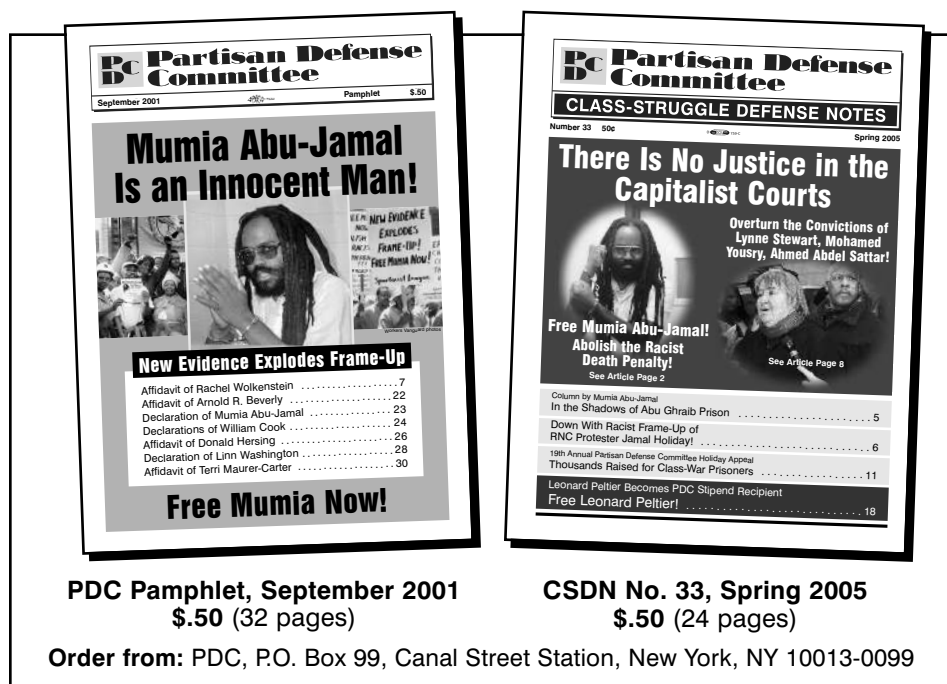
Stewart is challenging her conviction on the ground that the jury was tainted. The basis for her challenge throws a sharp light on the hysterical witchhunt atmosphere that the government has whipped up in the post-September 11 period in the name of the “war on terror.” One juror told another that if she did not vote to convict, it would be her fault if anyone died in a terrorist attack. She was further frightened on the last day of deliberations by someone not even on the jury who pointed her out as “the holdout.” The juror was so bitter and regretful for her vote to convict that she sought out the defense team after the trial ended. In a further example of blatant bias, another juror told a prospective juror that anyone who was up on charges must have done something wrong.

The irregularities during the course of the seven-month trial were rampant, and the defense fruitlessly called time after time for a mistrial. The judge allowed the prosecution to introduce such inflammatory and irrelevant “evidence” as a videotape of Osama bin Laden—shown in the week of the anniversary of the September 11 attacks!—and prosecutors

blatantly pandered to anti-Arab prejudice. Underlining the importance that the government placed on this case, early this August the Justice Department gave its highest award to the prosecutors in this frame-up.

In its attack on fundamental democratic rights in the name of the “war on terror,” the government has unfettered prosecutors and attacked the very right of individuals to legal representation. In an article titled “Corrupted Justice” in *Human Events* Online (19 August), Paul Craig Roberts, a conservative economist and former *Wall Street Journal* editor, powerfully denounced Stewart’s conviction: “Last February, prosecutors convicted New York defense attorney Lynne Stewart of violating a letter from the Department of Justice (sic) telling her the conditions on which she could represent her client! There is no statute or regulation behind the letter. How was Stewart to know that it was felony to disobey a prosecutor’s letter?... Prosecutors are in the process of criminalizing the safeguards that were put in our legal system to protect the innocent, such as the attorney-client privilege. We have reached the point where an attorney who does too good of a job defending his client can be indicted for aiding and abetting a criminal.”

We urge our readers to join protests in defense of Stewart, including the upcoming united-front rallies initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee (see page 16). To contribute to her defense, send donations to: Lynne Stewart Defense Committee, 350 Broadway, Suite 700, New York, NY 10013. ■



# WORKERS VANGUARD

**RALLY**

## The “War on Terror” Targets Blacks, Immigrants, Labor and Leftists! *Fight Government Repression!*

We reprint below an 8 August leaflet issued by the Partisan Defense Committee to build for the upcoming united-front rallies.

The bloodthirsty U.S. government’s frontal assault on democratic rights is being carried out under the pretext of the bogus “war on terrorism.” Basic rights, won through the hard-fought class struggles of the 1930s union organizing drives and the social struggles of the 1950s through the early 1970s—in the civil rights movement, the Vietnam War protests, for women’s and gay rights—are being run through the shredder by the Bush administration with the full agreement of the Democratic Party. Political opponents face being imprisoned with no right to an attorney or a trial. The government asserts the “right” to disappear and torture its opponents—to lock them up and throw away the key. From courageous anti-slavery fighter John Brown to communists during the McCarthy era, to the Black Panther Party and up to the present, the racist rulers of this country have branded fighters for the oppressed as “terrorist.”

To fight against this assault on our rights, the Partisan Defense Committee is calling a rally of solidarity for Mumia Abu-Jamal, Assata Shakur and Lynne Stewart. These cases must be rallying points for labor, blacks and defenders of civil liberties. Mumia Abu-Jamal, a death row political prisoner, and Assata Shakur, forced into exile in Cuba, are former members of the Black Panther Party. Lynne Stewart is a leftist attorney with a decades-long résumé of defending those targeted by this country’s racist rulers. We call on labor, blacks, students and defenders of civil liberties to join us in a united-front rally to demand: “Fight government repression! The ‘war on terror’ targets blacks, immigrants, labor and leftists! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Hands off Lynne Stewart! Hands off Assata Shakur!” Their fight is a fight for us all.

The real terrorists are the U.S. capitalist rulers. Today’s repressive laws are intended to terrorize anyone who would stand in the way of their relentless drive for profits and their bloody imperialist adventures, such as the murderous occupation of Iraq. While the initial victims of the post-September 11 reaction were immigrants from predominantly Muslim countries, these measures are also directed against leftists, antiwar protesters and those fighting against the racist oppression of black people that forms the bedrock of American capitalism. The “anti-terror” laws will be used to outlaw strikes and criminalize unions, as other laws were used in the early 1900s.

• America’s foremost class-war prisoner, **Mumia Abu-Jamal** is an innocent man. He was a Black Panther Party spokesman at the age of 15. Thirty-eight Panthers were killed by the FBI and local cops under the FBI’s deadly Counter-Intelligence Program (COINTELPRO) of surveillance, disruption, provocation and terror against leftists and black activists. Hundreds more were framed up to rot in prison hells. An award-winning journalist, Mumia became a supporter of the Philadelphia MOVE organization, which was subjected to over a decade of murderous state terror. In a politically motivated and blatantly racist frame-up, Mumia was convicted on charges of killing Philadelphia Police Officer Daniel Faulkner on 9 December 1981 and sentenced to death explicitly for his past membership in the Panthers. Court after court has refused to even consider the confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Mumia, shot and killed officer Faulkner. The frame-up of Mumia Abu-Jamal symbolizes what the barbaric death penalty, a legacy of chattel slavery, is all about. From the White House to the courthouse to the Wall Street boardrooms, the capitalist rulers want Mumia dead because they see in this man known as the “voice of the voiceless” a symbol of defiant

*continued on page 15*



Mumia Abu-Jamal

COC Productions



Lynne Stewart

AP



Assata Shakur

Elana Levy

**Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!  
Hands Off Lynne Stewart!  
Hands Off Assata Shakur!**

### NEW YORK CITY

**Thursday, September 15, 7 p.m.**

**Community Church of New York** — 40 East 35th St. (between Madison Ave. & Park Ave. So.)

*Speakers include:* **Lynne Stewart**

**Pam Africa**, International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal

**Don Alexander**, New York Labor Black League for Social Defense

**Charles Ensley**, President, SSEU Local 371\*

**Cleo Silvers**, 1199ers for Peace and Justice,\* Communist Workers Organization, Workers to Free Mumia

**James Webb**, President Emeritus, Coalition of Black Trade Unionists\*

*Moderator:*

**Rachel Wolkenstein**, Partisan Defense Committee

\*organization affiliation for identification purposes only

For more information: (212) 406-4252

### BAY AREA

**Saturday, October 1, 2 p.m.**

**Berkeley Public Library** — 2090 Kittredge St., Berkeley

*Speakers include:* **Robert R. Bryan**, lead counsel for Mumia Abu-Jamal

Video showing of **Lynne Stewart**’s presentation at New York Rally

**Don Cane**, Labor Black League for Social Defense

*Moderator:*

**Valerie West**, Partisan Defense Committee

For more information: (510) 839-0852 or e-mail: pdcbayarea@sbcglobal.net

### CHICAGO

**Saturday, October 1, 5 p.m.**

**University of Chicago Law School, Room 2** — 1111 East 60th Street

*Speakers include:* **Lydia Barashango**, sister of Mumia Abu-Jamal

**Standish E. Willis**, Chicago Conference of Black Lawyers

**Mike Elliott**, UAW Local 551, Chair, Education Committee\*

**Don Alexander**, New York Labor Black League for Social Defense

**Fred Redmond**, USWA Assistant Director District 7\*

*Moderator:*

**Brian Mendis**, Partisan Defense Committee

\*organization affiliation for identification purposes only

For more information: (312) 563-0442

### LOS ANGELES

**Saturday, October 8, 4 p.m.**

**Immanuel Presbyterian Church\*** — 3300 Wilshire Blvd. (at Berendo St., 2 blocks west of Vermont/Wilshire Red-line Station)

*Speakers include:* **Lydia Barashango**, sister of Mumia Abu-Jamal

**Don Cane**, Labor Black League for Social Defense

*Moderator:*

**Valerie West**, Partisan Defense Committee

\*The views expressed by the participants are not necessarily those of the Immanuel Presbyterian Church.

For more information: (213) 380-8897

Sponsored by the Partisan Defense Committee. We want to make it very clear that speakers at these rallies do not necessarily agree in any particular with the leaflet statement.