

**Organize the Unorganized!
Mobilize Labor's Power Against Death Traps!**

West Virginia Mine Disaster: Capitalist Murder

"I just went to sleep," read coal miner Martin Toler's heart-wrenching note describing his last moments to his loved ones. A massive explosion had ripped through the Sago mine in West Virginia on January 2 as Toler and 12 others were entering to help reopen it the morning after a three-day New Year's break. One miner died instantly while the others were trapped deep underground and forced deeper still to find shelter from the poisonous air slowly suffocating them. All except Randal McCloy, who is still in a coma, perished during the 41 hours awaiting rescue.

The complicity of the mine officials in the miners' deaths was compounded by their deceit. Scared for their own skins, they let three hours pass before correcting their initial false reports that 12 miners had been found alive. During this time, a police SWAT team was put in position outside the church where the miners' families were gathered. In the hours following the explosion, West Virginia's Democratic governor Joe Manchin tried to explain away the accident by citing the "inherent risks" of underground mining. But no set of excuses can disguise the coal operators' criminal neglect. The Sago mine is a death trap, pure and simple—it has no exhaust airshaft to remove deadly gases and smoke, and no escape route.

And just as the U.S. government—under both Democratic and Republican administrations—knew for decades about the dangers facing New Orleans but did nothing to replace or reinforce the city's inadequately built and crumbling levees, rarely does it enforce its own mine and workplace safety rules, even in the face of repeated life-threatening violations. The profit-hungry bosses have sacrificed the blood of over 100,000 miners killed since 1900 to the bottom line. Democratic politicians have pushed for Congressional hearings on mining safety, which would amount to a smokescreen for the malicious indifference of the bosses' government. The only way to establish and enforce safety is through mobilizing labor's power. Any real measure of protection workers have gained in U.S. mines—or elsewhere in industry—was won through hard struggle by the unions.

The Sago mine was non-union, reflecting the drastic decline in unionization of the coal industry. In the mid 1970s, the United Mine Workers of America



Kemp/Charleston Gazette

January 8: Pallbearers carry casket of Jesse L. Jones, one of 12 miners killed in Sago mine disaster.

(UMWA) organized some 70 percent of the industry; today it represents barely one-third, including in West Virginia. The workforce as a whole has been massively slashed from over 260,000 in 1979 to 108,000 in 2004. A major factor in that decline is the expansion of surface strip-mining, which is more efficient,

cheaper and requires fewer workers than deep underground mining. And as the bosses close down union mines, they open new, non-union operations, often in Wyoming, Utah, Colorado and other areas far from Appalachia. But like many other Appalachian mines, the Sago mine was union until it was closed, bought out

and, in 1999, reopened without the union.

The Sago deaths should be a clarion call for the UMWA to launch a drive to organize the unorganized mines. The difference between the union and non-union mines is recognized by unorganized miners, who often are reluctant to speak out about unsafe conditions out of fear for their jobs, which are among the better-paying in poverty-stricken Appalachia. The UMWA contract provides for memorial days that can be used to shut down mines in response to such disasters and be a springboard for union organizing. Union safety committees have the right to "red tag" unsafe mines and shut them down. Without aggressive organizing, the union will keep losing ground, leaving more non-union miners at the mercy of ruthless coal profiteers.

Miners have enormous potential power in the economy. As prices of oil and natural gases have skyrocketed, coal is expected to provide over half the energy for U.S. electrical utilities this year. Last year alone, 69 mines opened or re-opened in Appalachia. But the pro-capitalist UMWA leadership hamstringing the union's power through its reliance on capitalist politicians and government agencies and its renunciation of the class-struggle methods that built the union. UMWA president Cecil Roberts' January 4 statement on the Sago disaster barely even notes that the mine is non-union and makes no reference to the need for workers themselves to control safety conditions. Instead, Roberts calls for the government to "investigate."

With the overwhelming majority of U.S. workers unorganized, what is desperately needed is a class-struggle fight to *organize the unorganized*—from Appalachia and the West to the notoriously anti-union South. Unionizing the viciously racist, "right to work" South exemplifies the need for the labor movement to fight against the racial oppression long used by the capitalists to divide workers and weaken labor.

Capitalist Profiteering and Industrial Murder

It was capitalist profiteering that led to the deaths of the 12 miners. The Sago mine was so dangerous that Mine Safety
continued on page 9



New Orleans Convention Center, September 1: Capitalist rulers abandoned masses of poor people, mainly black, in wake of Hurricane Katrina.

Imperialist "Democracy" at Work

U.S. Torture Machine...6





**Partisan Defense
Committee**

CLASS-STRUGGLE DEFENSE NOTES

Labor Must Defend NYC Transit Unions!

We print below, slightly excerpted, a January 9 letter by the Partisan Defense Committee—a class-struggle, non-sectarian defense organization associated with the Spartacist League—to unions throughout the U.S. and internationally urging solidarity with the New York City transit workers. Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 100 and Amalgamated Transit Union locals 726 and 1056 are facing massive legal reprisals for conducting a powerful three-day strike in U.S. capitalism's financial center in December. For their defiance of the state's anti-strike Taylor Law, the unions are threatened with huge fines and the jailing of their leaders.

In addition, the Public Employment Relations Board (PERB), a state agency appointed by the governor, threatens to fine strikers six days pay (two days for each day on strike). The PERB may also move to revoke the dues checkoff,

by which union dues are automatically deducted from paychecks. This blatant attack on the unions must be fought. At the same time, union members should fight to replace this system, by which the bosses control dues collection, with collection by elected union officers. This would also be a means of making the union leadership accountable to the members.

The drive to “punish” the transit unions continues to be whipped up, with calls to jail Local 100 president Roger Toussaint by Republican gubernatorial candidate William Weld. The unions will be in court on January 20. That same day, the results of the vote on the proposed contract settlement by Local 100's 33,700 members are due to be announced. If the contract is voted down, there must be a mass membership meeting to decide what course of action to take, up to and including resuming strike action. The union should reject

binding arbitration, an option under the Taylor Law, as Local 100 leaders said they would before the strike began. Binding arbitration is a trap, in which the union membership is cut out and decisions on the contract are made by three “mediators” whose selection is weighted toward the bosses and their government.

* * *

On January 20, Transport Workers Union Local 100 and Amalgamated Transit Union Locals 726 and 1056 are scheduled to appear in court, facing devastating fines of up to \$1 million a day and a possible \$1,000 a day against individual union officers in retaliation for their recent strike. The threat of jailing TWU Local 100 president Roger Toussaint and other union officers has not been taken off the table. These unions went on strike for three days, December 20-22, in a struggle for a new contract. This was both a courageous and effective defensive action, in defiance of the vicious anti-union Taylor Law which prohibits public employees in the state of New York from striking. The outrageous penalties, fines and possible jail sentences have been leveled at the union for “contempt of court” violations of the injunctions against the strike under the Taylor Law.

All of labor must stand in defense of these workers! We must demand that all charges be dropped against the TWU and ATU locals! No fines—no reprisals! Down with the slave-labor Taylor Law! The transit workers must not stand alone—an injury to one is an injury to all!

The outpouring of support for the New York City transit strike by the city's working and poor people showed that they saw the transit workers fight as their own. Workers in this country are becoming increasingly angry over being robbed of their pensions and benefits, having their rights trampled, facing increased abuse on the job and having their working conditions and standard of living eroded. The horrendous death of 12 miners in West Virginia, employed at a non-union mine run by profit-gouging bosses, is the real face of the one-sided class war being waged by the rulers. Under the pretext of

its phony “war on terror,” the government has victimized blacks, Latinos and immigrants while intensifying the exploitation of workers and attacking unions across the board. The transit workers' defiance of anti-union laws and the threatened reprisals for their strike show what every union faces when they strike and are confronted with strike-breaking injunctions. The bosses are on an offensive against labor—from the UFCW strikers of Southern California to the AMFA strikers at Northwest Airlines to ILA and ILWU longshoremen to GM and Delphi auto workers. Like the Railway Labor Act, the Maritime Security Act, the Patriot Act, Taft-Hartley and Landrum-Griffin, the Taylor Law is crafted to chain the working class and prevent effective union actions to defend workers from stepped-up exploitation.

As an elementary act of solidarity with the transit workers who dared to stand up, walk out and give the bosses a taste of the tremendous social power of the organized workers movement, the PDC is sending a letter of protest to New York State Attorney General Eliot Spitzer. Spitzer is a Democratic candidate for governor, who went to court to slam TWU officers and members with injunctions carrying union-busting fines and seeking to jail union officers. We are also sending letters of protest to Republican governor George Pataki and Mayor Michael Bloomberg who supported these draconian anti-union actions and engaged in vile, anti-worker, racist invective against the striking transit workers—many of whom are black, Latino, immigrant. We urge you to add your voice to this effort to defend the brothers and sisters who struck in December ***before the next scheduled court date of 20 January.***

In addition to a letter or letters of protest to the Attorney General, Governor and Mayor demanding that there be no reprisals, no fines, we also urge that you forward these protest letters with a message of solidarity to TWU Local 100, ATU Local 726 and ATU Local 1056.

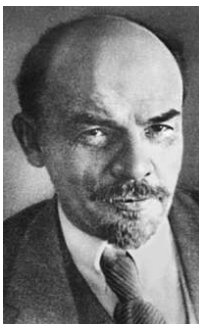
Down with the Taylor Law! For union solidarity with the New York City transit workers! ■



TROTSKY

Honor Lenin, Luxemburg, Liebknecht!

January 15 marks the anniversary of the murder of heroic revolutionary Marxists Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, victims of the repression organized by the German Social Democratic government that crushed the January 1919 Spartakist uprising. The International Communist League has revived the Communist tradition of honoring the “Three L's”—Liebknecht, Luxemburg and Russian Bolshevik leader V. I. Lenin, who died in January 1924. In print-



LENIN

ing Luxemburg's denunciation of the fraud of disarmament under capitalism, we reaffirm that the road to smashing the imperialist system of war, poverty and oppression lies in proletarian socialist revolution.

The friends of peace in bourgeois circles believe that world peace and disarmament can be realized within the framework of the present social order, whereas we who base ourselves on the materialist conception of history and on scientific socialism, are convinced that militarism can be abolished only with the destruction of the capitalist state....

Thus would be clearly explained what constitutes the kernel of the social-democratic conception: that militarism in both its forms—as war and as armed peace—is a legitimate child, a logical result of capitalism, and that whoever honestly desires world peace and freedom from the tremendous burden of armaments must strive for socialism....

For the international antagonisms of the capitalist state are but complements of class antagonisms and world-political anarchy, but the reverse side of the anarchic system of capitalist production. Both grow together and must be overcome together. “A little order and peace” is, therefore, just as impossible, just as much a petty-bourgeois utopia, with regard to world politics as it is with regard to the capitalist world market, with regard to the limitation of armaments as it is with regard to the restriction of crises.

—Rosa Luxemburg, “The Road to Peace” (1911),
printed in *Young Socialist* (October 1958)

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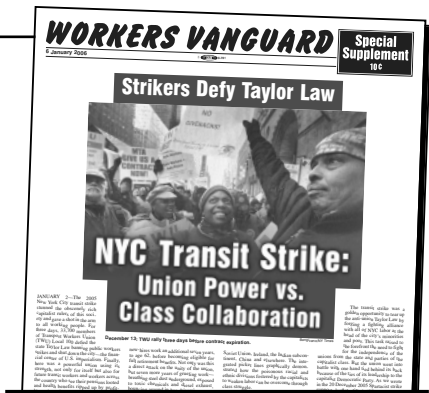
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Australian Spartacists Demand: Mobilize Unions, Minorities Against Racist Attacks!

We print below excerpts from an 18 December 2005 leaflet issued by the Spartacist League of Australia, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist), which was reprinted in *Australasian Spartacist* No. 193 (Summer 2005/06). The leaflet was issued following a mass racist rampage primarily directed against Near Eastern minorities in Sydney's Cronulla suburb. In response to the racist attacks, thousands of people in Sydney, Melbourne and other cities joined "United Against Racism" rallies on the weekend of December 16. The rallies, which were initiated by the National Union of Students, included groups of trade unionists. A truck with the slogan of the Australian Council of Trade Unions' (ACTU) campaign "Your Rights at Work" served as the speaker's podium in Sydney.



lancemen trying to assist injured victims and even cops who got in their way. Increasingly emboldened fascist outfits such as Australia First, the Patriotic Youth League and Blood and Honour, who pose a deadly threat to immigrants, Aborigines, gays and ultimately the organised working class, were deeply involved in fomenting and building this racist riot.

This racist eruption was whipped up by the capitalist rulers in order to divide the working class at a time when the bosses are pushing through their biggest attack on unions and working conditions for decades. However, decent working people from all backgrounds are horrified by the white racist attacks. Today as an elementary act of self-defence it is desperately necessary that the multiracial working class be mobilised in defence of minorities on the streets and to crush the fascists whose program is murderous racist terror.

themselves facing 15 years jail, and without the right to bail!

Down With Liberal/ALP Racist State Repression!

The violence against minorities in Cronulla is the logical extension of the ongoing violence carried out by the state, from the racist police who regularly target youth for harassment and who attacked heavily immigrant anti-war student protests in 2003, to the growing army of ASIO [Australian Security Intelligence Office] spies who carry out surveillance of immigrant neighbourhoods. Announcing the recent beefing up of police powers, including yet another police strike force, Iemma and Police Commissioner Ken Moroney have condemned the violence as “un-Australian.” To the contrary, the white racism on display in Cronulla was *very* much a part of White Australian capitalism, which was founded on bloody genocidal wars against the Aborigines and exclusion of non-white people and today means cop

continued on page 8

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Young Spartacus

Youth Must Ally with Working Class

We print below the slightly edited speeches by comrades Frank Sargent of the Bay Area SYC and Lital Singer of the New York SYC. The speeches were given at the Partisan Defense Committee's 20th annual Holiday Appeal for Class-War Prisoners held in the Bay Area on 11 December 2005 and in New York on 9 December 2005.

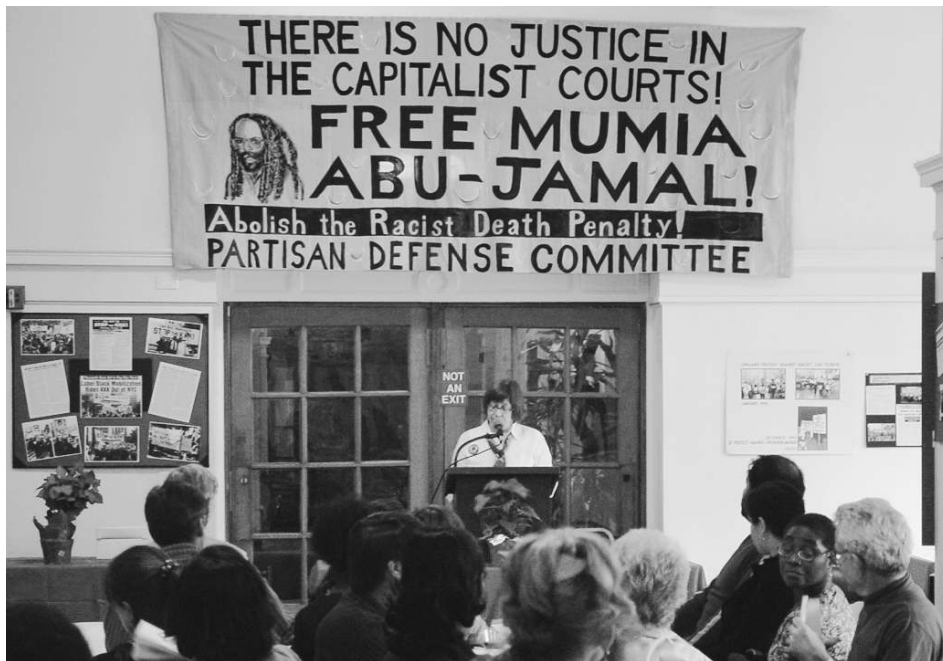
Frank Sargent

The Spartacus Youth Clubs intervene into social struggles armed with the revolutionary program of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky. Here in the U.S., in the belly of the imperialist beast, we are partisans of the working class, fighters for black liberation, fighters for women's liberation and defenders of all oppressed.

It's almost 15 years now since capitalist counterrevolution destroyed the Soviet Union. From this catastrophic defeat, the political consciousness among youth and workers has been thrust backward. The capitalists are waging an all-sided offensive. It is into this world that our youth clubs intervene.

The racist contempt of the American ruling class towards the victims of Hurricane Katrina laid bare the harsh reality of black oppression. We of course see the reflection of black oppression on campuses too. At San Francisco State University, on the evening of October 25, Ethnic Studies professor Antwi Akom, who is black, outrageously was arrested by police for entering his *own* office to pick up a book. Akom is being prosecuted and could face jail. A colleague of professor Akom, speaking to the significance of this racist attack, said pointedly, "At the end of the day, you can have all the credentials in the world, and it doesn't matter." Unlike liberals who push the strategy that black oppression can be ended by movements pressuring the government and its cops and courts to "do the right thing," we know that in the United States black people constitute a specially oppressed race-color caste, forcibly segregated at the bottom of society, subjected to everything from racist social relations and economic marginalization to the barbarous legal lynching of the death penalty. In the face of racist capitalism, the International Socialist Organization [ISO] calls to support a third capitalist party—the Greens—as a way to put pressure on the Democrats. This is an obstacle to the understanding that the working class must have its own revolutionary party, independent of the capitalists, that will fight for black liberation and proletarian state power.

To us, Akom's arrest is a threat to the right of every black student, worker and



Twentieth annual Holiday Appeal for Class-War Prisoners in Bay Area, 11 December 2005.

SYC Speakers at Benefits for Class-War Prisoners

faculty member *to simply be on campus*. We raise the demands: **Hands off Professor Akom! Drop all charges now! Cops off campus!** We warn students against illusions that the college administration can be relied upon to end racism on campus. Connected to our program of revolutionary integrationism and our defense of Professor Akom is our fight for free, quality, integrated education for all! Anti-racist students must link arms with the multiracial working class, the only force in society with the social power *and* class interest to destroy the capitalist order that gives rise to black oppression.

The brutal colonial occupation of Iraq continues to be an object of struggle. As Leninists, we say that the working people must take a side *against* U.S. imperialism. We called for the military defense of Iraq against U.S. attack during the war, and today we stand for the **unconditional, immediate withdrawal of all U.S. and allied troops** and for **the defense of the peoples of Iraq against U.S. attacks and repression**. We explain that war is inherent to capitalism. The capitalists seek to control markets and spheres of exploitation. This leads to interimperialist wars and, like in Iraq, predatory imperial-

ist wars against semicolonial countries.

Youth are used as cannon fodder for imperialist wars. We struggle against militarism on the campuses, because military recruiters and ROTC are direct appendages of the military machine that exists to defend the American imperialist ruling class. We raise the slogan: **Not one man, not one penny for the imperialist military!** But in themselves, students have no social power; the *only* road forward lies in students allying themselves with the working class in revolutionary struggle.

Recently we intervened with our revolutionary perspective into a conference organized in part by the ISO and their liberal Campus Antiwar Network. They've been promoting their "College Not Combat" campaign which included doing a cost-benefit analysis of the colonial occupation of Iraq as "butter not guns" policy advice for the bourgeoisie. Like ex-socialist Peter Camejo, they've found their job: progressive investment advisers. We argued that looking to the liberal wing of the exploiters for reforms only serves to demobilize struggle and, through the Democrats, to chain the exploited to the system that breeds war. We had to remind the ISO that Ralph Nader, whom they supported, called for the occupation of Iraq by the United Nations! Towards the end of the conference, we protested against Army recruiters.

The irrational organization of capitalist society breeds increased religiosity and rejection of scientific reason. Bigots are mounting assaults on sex and science, centrally evolution. Of course, the clearest example against intelligent design is George W. Bush himself. In the wake of the decision to teach intelligent design in science classes as a so-called alternative to the evolution of life, over the last month religious bigots in Kansas have been screaming because a University of Kansas professor boldly planned to teach "intelligent design" as part of a course on religious creation myths. Only a few days ago such bigots beat him up. In America religious fundamentalism and Klan-style terror go hand in hand. We say: **For the separation of church and state! For science, not superstition!**

We joined others in a July 23 clinic

defense action against anti-abortion bigots in San Francisco where we raised the call: **Free abortion on demand!** In the recent elections we said: **Vote no on Proposition 73!** Though this "squeal law," which would have demanded parental notification before an abortion, was defeated, the defense of women's rights must be fought through hard social struggle. The task of women's liberation can be accomplished only through socialist revolution.

The final goal of socialist revolution is the expansion of human knowledge and freedom extending to every human being, in all aspects of life. The capitalist profit system and its state must be shattered through workers revolution, setting up a workers government which runs production for human need. We fight to win a new generation of youth to the program of Trotskyism. The SYCs provide a training ground for those who will join the ranks of the vanguard party as professional revolutionaries. Join us in that struggle and the struggle to free Mumia Abu-Jamal and abolish the racist death penalty!

Lital Singer

The Spartacus Youth Clubs are the youth auxiliaries to the Spartacist League. They are transitional organizations for youth and a training ground for future professional revolutionaries. We fight to win youth to the side of the working class and the struggle for workers revolution and a communist future. What is crucially necessary is a revolutionary workers party that represents the interests of working people and the oppressed and can lead such a struggle. The SYC and Spartacist League actively work to win youth to this perspective.

We are living in a period where youth face ever-increasing repression and where job prospects are dismal at best; where getting a decent education is a privilege reserved for those with the means to afford it; where for two generations now, black youth have been criminalized in the racist "war on drugs" carried out by Democrats and Republicans alike. Just two months ago students at a high school in the Bronx protested being treated like criminals because they have to pass through metal detectors every morning. The reality is that instead of preparing these youth for a future of higher education and jobs, they are being prepared for prison. Many poor and minority youth have joined the military as a means to get an education and a job, and end up as cannon fodder for U.S. imperialism's war machine. It is notable, though, that the military is having a hard time recruiting, especially among black people, as the bloody occupation of Iraq becomes less and less popular.

We are Marxists who tell the truth that the capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in 1991-92, which we fought against, was a historic defeat for working people internationally. However, the bourgeoisie and their lying mouthpieces tell you that communism is dead. And there are some who argue that socialism is a utopian idea, that the system can be reformed and can be made to give everyone a piece of the pie. There are many so-called socialist groups, like the International Socialist Organization and the Workers World Party, that continue to push a supposedly "realistic" reformist program and illusions through slogans such as "money for jobs, not for war." But it is utterly utopian to think that this same ruling class that left blacks and poor to starve to death in New Orleans, that bombs and maims the peoples of



Spartacus Youth Club protests against proposed return of ROTC to Columbia University, 6 May 2005.

Malcolm X: Courageous Fighter Against Black Oppression Down With Racist, Anti-Communist Provocation at Columbia!

We reprint below a New York Spartacus Youth Club statement issued as a leaflet on 3 December 2005.

On November 2, Columbia College Conservative Club (CCCC) honcho Chris Kulawik published a column in the *Columbia Spectator* attacking the name of the Malcolm X student lounge. The column was a calculated provocation against black people and other minorities, leftists and anti-racist students and workers. The CCCC's 2004 anti-affirmative action "bake sale"—a disgusting insult against black, Latino, female *and* Jewish students—sparked wide-spread outrage on campus. And now these creeps are at it again. Kulawik himself might as well have been mentored by Republican bigwig William Bennett, who made the genocidal argument: "If you wanted to reduce crime, you could—if that were your sole purpose, you could abort every black baby in this country, and your crime rate would go down." It is not an accident that racist views are being retailed at Columbia, a bastion of race and class privilege run by a union-busting slumlord administration in the middle of Harlem.

Kulawik rants that Malcolm was "a radical, hate-spewing, violent, anti-American racist" and that the room should be renamed to honor Whittaker Chambers, an ex-Communist Party member who, during the McCarthyite anti-red witchhunts of the 1950s, was infamous as an informer for the FBI. Trotskyist James P. Cannon had his number in 1952: "Chambers has written a book (*Witness*, Random House) with a message to the

effect that, to his personal knowledge, God has taken a definite position against communism, and all revolutions past, present and future. That is a message which the instigators and beneficiaries of the current hysteria want to hear and have proclaimed far and wide." Kulawik hates

The racist atrocity after Hurricane Katrina starkly exposed the raw reality of race and class in capitalist America. But it's not just Bush and the Republicans who are the enemies of blacks and poor people. Despite their differences with the Republicans over particu-

It is quite fitting that students protesting against racist U.S. imperialism in 1968, during the U.S.'s counterrevolutionary war against the Vietnamese workers and peasants, would choose to honor Malcolm X after occupying and renaming the former ROTC lounge. These students also struggled against the racist policies of the Columbia administration. Kulawik would like to turn the clock back to the days when reds were witchhunted off campus and black people were mostly excluded from higher education. The SYC fights for free, quality education for all! Nationalize Columbia and open the gates to the black and Latino residents of Harlem! We understand that the fight for black liberation requires building a revolutionary, internationalist workers party with a substantially black leadership.

The Spartacus Youth Club fights for revolutionary integrationism—the understanding that black freedom will not be won short of socialist revolution and that there will be no socialist revolution unless the cause of black freedom is actively championed by a fighting labor movement. When the integrated working class in this country makes that revolution, Malcolm X will be honored as a courageous fighter and martyr for the cause of black freedom. If you are interested in taking up this fight, join us on December 9 at 6 pm for the Partisan Defense Committee's Holiday Appeal for Class-War Prisoners. Come show your solidarity with those imprisoned for standing up to racist capitalist repression! ■



Columbia College Today

Columbia, April 1968: Black students and supporters occupying Hamilton Hall. Student protests and building occupations were directed against school administration's racist policies and links to U.S. imperialism.

Malcolm X for the same reason that the racist capitalist rulers feared and hated him: he was an uncompromising fighter for black freedom, a truth teller who exposed the hypocrisy and lies of the capitalist Democratic and Republican parties and advocated the right of armed self-defense against Klan and police terror.

lar policies, the Democrats are just as much a capitalist party of racism and war. Although he did not have the Marxist understanding of the centrality of mobilizing the multiracial working class independent of its capitalist exploiters, Malcolm X inspired a whole generation of blacks and radicals who courageously stood up to the racist ruling class.

Iraq, that continuously attacks workers' livelihoods, taking away health care and pensions, that further erodes women's abortion rights, that locks "terrorists" in secret dungeons the world over, can be made to change its priorities and serve the oppressed. *That* is utopian. The brutality and irrationality of this racist capitalist system has been and continues to be exposed time and time again. It is only the multiracial working class, like the transit workers and longshore workers, that has the social power and interest to sweep away this entire barbaric system and replace it with a socialist egalitarian society. This will take class-struggle leadership and this is the only realistic and viable option for the future.

The Spartacus Youth Club intervenes with our revolutionary program on the campuses. At Columbia University, we have protested against the campus Conservative Club's racist provocations against affirmative action, and last week we issued a leaflet in defense of Malcolm X against a recent racist column in the school paper which called to change the name of the Malcolm X lounge, suggesting that it be renamed after Whittaker Chambers, an ex-Communist Party member who finked for the FBI during the McCarthyite anti-red witchhunts of the 1950s. We defend young leftists and activists who are victimized by the state, like Miguel Malo, who was framed up and convicted last month for the "crime" of holding up a sign denouncing cuts in bilingual education and hikes in ESL [English as a Second Language education] workshop fees. We defend Sherman Austin, a young black anarchist, who was railroaded to prison for a year and is now serving an outrageously restrictive three-year probation for the "crime" of

hosting an anarchist Web site. The judge in the case intended the sentence to be a deterrent to "some other revolutionary who wants to change the world."

We have engaged in many protests against right-wing witchhunts, led by the likes of David Horowitz, which aim to



Golden Gate [X]press

SFSU professor Antwi Akom, victim of racist attack by campus cops on 25 October 2005, faces frame-up charges of resisting arrest and assaulting a police officer.

purge the campuses of those who defend black rights as well as anyone who defends the Palestinians, such as Professor Massad at Columbia University. The Spartacus Youth Club in Chicago has actively been intervening at the University of Chicago against a racist "ghetto party" that happened in the dorms and was rightly met with outrage by many students on the campus. We also intervene into the antiwar movement with the perspective that we need class-struggle opposition to U.S. imperialism and that the way to get rid of imperialist war is to get rid of capitalism. We have initiated, led and participated in many protests to drive ROTC and military recruiters off

campus. We say not one penny, not one man or woman for U.S. imperialism!

I became politically active around the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal. I was a student at UCLA and was active in the Mumia coalition on campus. Our main focus was on calling for a new trial. We told students that whether you believed Mumia was innocent or guilty, he should have a new trial. Now, I personally believed that Mumia was innocent based on reading the facts of the case, but this campus coalition was appealing to people's faith in the capitalist state, promoting the liberal illusion that the courts would render a fair verdict if only Mumia got another trial. Our coalition grew and we did all kinds of events for Mumia: art, poetry, mobilizing cars full of students to the protests in the Bay Area. But as Mumia's appeals were being denied one after the other by the racist capitalist courts, the coalition began to disintegrate. These students had been won to a strategy based on illusions in the capitalist courts, and when that dead-end strategy failed so did their involvement, because they were not won to the big picture. They saw Mumia's case as an aberration: one person who didn't get justice.

It was the Spartacus Youth Club that won me to an understanding that we live in a society sharply divided by class. I was won away from illusions in the courts or any other institution of the ruling capitalist class. I came to understand that the way to free Mumia is through a mass movement based centrally on the power of the working class.

Sacco and Vanzetti were Italian anarchist workers who were executed by the state of Massachusetts in 1927. The International Labor Defense [the Communist Party's legal defense organization] consistently argued at that time that

the case was not simply an extraordinary "miscarriage of justice"; rather, it was directly connected to the struggle between the classes. As American Trotskyist James P. Cannon wrote: "It is the vengeful, cruel and murderous class which the workers must fight and conquer before the regime of imprisonment, torture and murder can be ended. This is the message from the chair of death. This is the lesson of the Sacco-Vanzetti case." This lesson is no less relevant today with the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal and countless other class-war prisoners: There will be no end to the system of frame-up, imprisonment, torture and legal lynching until capitalist class rule is smashed.

The SYC won me to an understanding of why it is that so many black men and women suffer behind America's prison walls. I was won to the understanding that Mumia's case is an example of the oppression of black people in this country, which is endemic to this racist system. Contrary to what is prevalently pushed by liberals, that racism is the result of bad ideas that can be simply changed by changing those ideas, black oppression has a material basis in capitalism. From the days of chattel slavery to the present, black oppression is the bedrock of U.S. capitalism. Our program is revolutionary integrationism. We fight for black freedom through socialist revolution.

Youth must ally with the working class in the fight for the future of humanity. If you are a young revolutionary interested in fighting for a world free of capitalist depredation, I encourage you to study history, to study Marxism, and to get active with the Spartacus Youth Club. We say: Free Leonard Peltier and Mumia Abu-Jamal! An injury to one is an injury to all! Hands off Lynne Stewart! Free all class-war prisoners! ■

Imperialist “Democracy” at Work

U.S. Torture Machine

In the year and a half since the brutalization and abuse of detainees at the U.S. military’s Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq came to light, additional torture revelations continue to emerge from beneath the government’s prison walls of concealment and lies. Last month the Bush administration sent Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice on a “charm offensive” to Europe to counteract the furor over the U.S.’ network of secret prisons in Europe and elsewhere, part of the policy of “rendition” of “terror suspects” to countries where they will be tortured. In classic doublespeak, Rice refused to confirm the existence of the secret detention centers while assuring that those detained there were being treated in accordance with the Geneva Convention’s proscription of torture. This while the Bush administration insists the U.S. is not bound to that provision! Rice lectured European leaders not to question American actions because they were for their benefit, even as she protested that the U.S. does not torture or outsource torture.

Even some CIA officials have been singing a different tune over the past few years. Telling of an Al Qaeda suspect transported to Egypt, the CIA’s former counter-terrorism director, Vincent Cannistraro, told *Newsday* (6 February 2003), “They promptly tore his fingernails out and he started to tell things.”

PART ONE

Former CIA agent Bob Baer told the *New Statesman* (17 May 2004), “If you want them to be tortured, you send them to Syria. If you want someone to disappear...you send them to Egypt.”

Rupert Murdoch’s Fox TV network, where “The Shield” shows cops brutalizing “suspects,” and rabid Zionist Alan Dershowitz, who on CNN in March 2003 advocated “nonlethal torture,” are among those extolling the torture of “bad people,” including those deemed to have weapons that could blow up the world—with the exception of the U.S., Israel and other established nuclear powers.

Ten months ago, the London *Guardian* (19 March 2005) reported that the U.S. was holding an estimated 10,000 “ghost detainees” around the world. They have been held incommunicado in secret prisons—without charge or trial—and shuttled between jails covertly by air. A *Washington Post* (2 November 2005) article by Dana Priest described the secret prison network. Relying on classified government documents, Priest spelled out that beginning shortly after the September 2001 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the CIA has been operating covert prisons in eight countries, including in East Europe.

Priest’s sources said that these “black sites” hold at least 100 terrorist suspects. Others have noted that nobody knows how many such prisoners there are, who they are or what’s being done to them. It has just been reported that Swiss intelligence services intercepted a fax from Egypt’s



Images Sans Frontières

Photo anonymously released in 2002 shows U.S. C-130 transport plane with “war on terror” detainees, presumably from Afghanistan. Below: Relatives of Iraqi prisoners protest outside notorious Abu Ghraib prison, May 2004.



Saman/Newsday

Foreign Ministry to its London embassy confirming that the U.S. was holding 23 Iraqi and Afghan prisoners at a “black site” in Romania. The fax also referred to secret detention centers in Bulgaria, Kosovo, Macedonia and Ukraine.

While the administration tried to palm off the torture at Abu Ghraib as the work of a few “bad apples,” such brutalization is meted out daily by Iraq’s U.S. occupiers. A 25 September 2005 report by Human Rights Watch (HRW) focusing on the 82nd Airborne quotes one sergeant on the torture: “In a way it was sport.” The report noted, “The torture of detainees reportedly was so widespread and accepted that it became a means of stress relief for soldiers. Soldiers said they felt welcome to come to the PUC [Persons Under Control] tent on their off-hours to ‘f--- a PUC’ or ‘smoke a PUC.’” Another sergeant explained, “To ‘f--- a PUC’ means to beat him up.... To ‘smoke’ someone is to put them in stress positions until they get muscle fatigue and pass out.” The horrors perpetrated by U.S.

forces and their allies are no aberration but are typical of colonial occupiers. ***Down with the occupation of Iraq! U.S. and allied troops out now!***

A number of bourgeois politicians in the U.S. and internationally have called on the Bush administration to shut down the Guantánamo camp and Abu Ghraib. And with the occupation unraveling and the torture revelations further undermining popular support for the military, Congress overwhelmingly adopted Republican John McCain’s amendment to a military appropriations bill ostensibly barring the use of torture. At the same time, Congress backed the administration by overwhelmingly passing a bill stripping federal courts of jurisdiction in lawsuits by detainees challenging their imprisonment and abuse. After weeks of resisting the anti-torture measure, Bush signed the bill on December 30 while issuing a “signing statement” laying out that he will interpret the measure in line with his role as Commander in Chief. Citing White House sources, the *Boston Globe* (4 January)

reported, “This means Bush believes he can waive the restrictions.”

An insightful article on the U.S. military’s School of the Americas at Fort Benning, Georgia, by Naomi Klein in the *Nation* (26 December 2005) captures the hypocrisy of McCain and the Democrats in chastising the administration for its torture policy. Detailing the school’s role in training U.S. imperialism’s henchmen in Latin America and elsewhere in the use of torture, Klein wrote, “It’s not only apologists for torture who ignore this history when they blame abuses on ‘a few bad apples’—so too do many of torture’s most prominent opponents.” Indeed, torture by the U.S. military and its South Vietnamese puppets was rampant during the dirty imperialist war in Vietnam. Klein noted that what was “unprecedented” about the latest revelations was “not the torture but the openness.”

Imperialism’s Liberal Tribunes

Bush’s liberal critics in particular seized on a May 2005 report by Amnesty International (AI) condemning the U.S. for its mass detentions, torture, disappearances and elimination of the right to trial for those caught in the web of the “war on terror.” AI’s Irene Khan announced at the time, “Guantanamo has become the gulag of our times, entrenching the notion that people can be detained without any recourse to the law.”

In using the term “gulag,” Khan was invoking a timeworn anti-Soviet battle cry derived from the 1973 book *The Gulag Archipelago* by Alexander Solzhenitsyn. An archreactionary opponent of the October 1917 Russian Revolution, Solzhenitsyn has championed the tsars and Russian Orthodox Church, which organized anti-Jewish pogroms in prerevolutionary Russia. He also lashed out at American liberals for their concerns over the plight of the oppressed black masses in South Africa under the old apartheid regime.

The General Camp Directorate (Gulag) was the name adopted in 1934 by Stalin’s regime in the USSR for the apparatus that oversaw the vast prison system that resulted from the degeneration of the Soviet workers state under the Stalinist bureaucracy beginning in 1923-24. Solzhenitsyn’s book slandered the Soviet workers state as one giant prison from birth. It thus equated the early workers state under Bolshevik leaders V. I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky—a regime of workers democracy committed to the fight for international proletarian revolution—with the degenerated workers state under the nationalist Stalinist regime. Painting life in Stalin’s labor camps as an archetype of life in the USSR as a whole, the book became an ideological weapon in the imperialists’ drive to destroy the Soviet workers state.

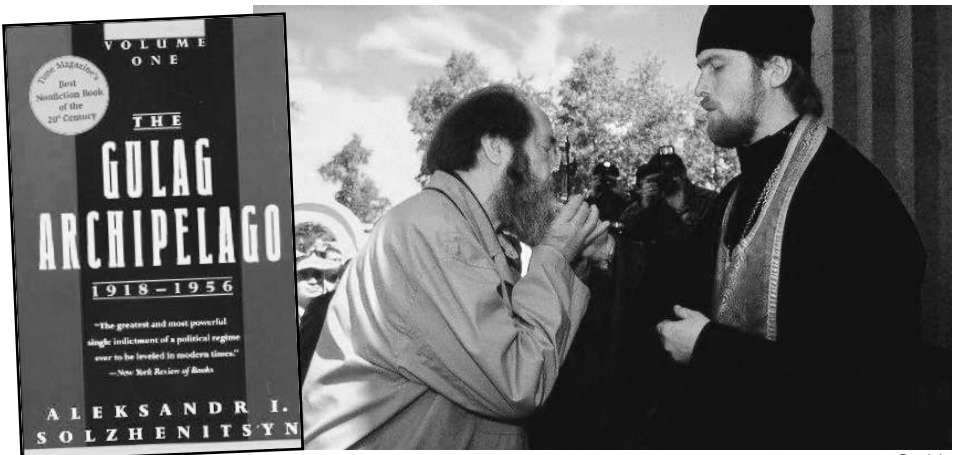
Commenting about *The Gulag Archipelago*, historian Moshe Lewin pointed out in *The Soviet Century* (2005) that Solzhenitsyn “did not offer the slightest hint that by the time of its publication

Amnesty International: “Gulag” and Anti-Communism

the Gulag as he had known it no longer existed. To have said as much would have been an act of political honesty.” AI’s analogy is equally dishonest—and ignorant. Abu Ghraib and Guantánamo are interrogation and torture centers; the gulags were labor camps.

For the anti-Communist liberals at Amnesty International to compare the U.S. to the Soviet Union was remarkable. This, after all, is an organization that in the past has offered only the meekest criticisms of repression in the U.S. For AI to use the “gulag” analogy was a form of shock therapy. And shock it did. President Bush called the report “absurd.” Defense Secretary Rumsfeld snorted, “To try to equate the military’s record on detainee treatment to some of the worst atrocities of the past century is a disservice to those who have sacrificed so much to bring freedom to others.” Even many who have criticized this or that administration policy objected. A *Washington Post* (26 May 2005) editorial declared, “We draw the line at the use of the word ‘gulag’ or at the implication that the United States has somehow become the modern equivalent of Stalin’s Soviet Union.”

From our perspective as Trotskyists who uphold the goals and program of the



Archreactionary Alexander Solzhenitsyn, seen with Orthodox priest in Siberia in 1994, slandered Soviet workers state as one vast prison system.

other party of racist U.S. imperialism. It was the Democrats who offered Bush a blank check to unleash U.S. imperialism’s killers—from Congress’ near-unanimous September 2001 military authorization to take whatever steps were deemed necessary to pursue the “war on terror” to the Democrats’ overwhelming support for the draconian USA Patriot Act and their vote in support of the Iraq war. Along with the capitalist media, the Democrats re-tailed Bush’s lies about Saddam Hussein’s

workers state based on soviets (councils).

In its initial acts in power, the Congress of Soviets of Workers’, Soldiers’ and Peasants’ Deputies decreed land to the peasants and pulled Russia out of the slaughter of interimperialist World War I. It demanded an immediate peace without annexations, including freedom for the colonies subjugated by the imperialists. The young workers state eliminated laws discriminating against women and homosexuals and recognized the right to self-determination of the myriad peoples oppressed under tsarist/capitalist rule.

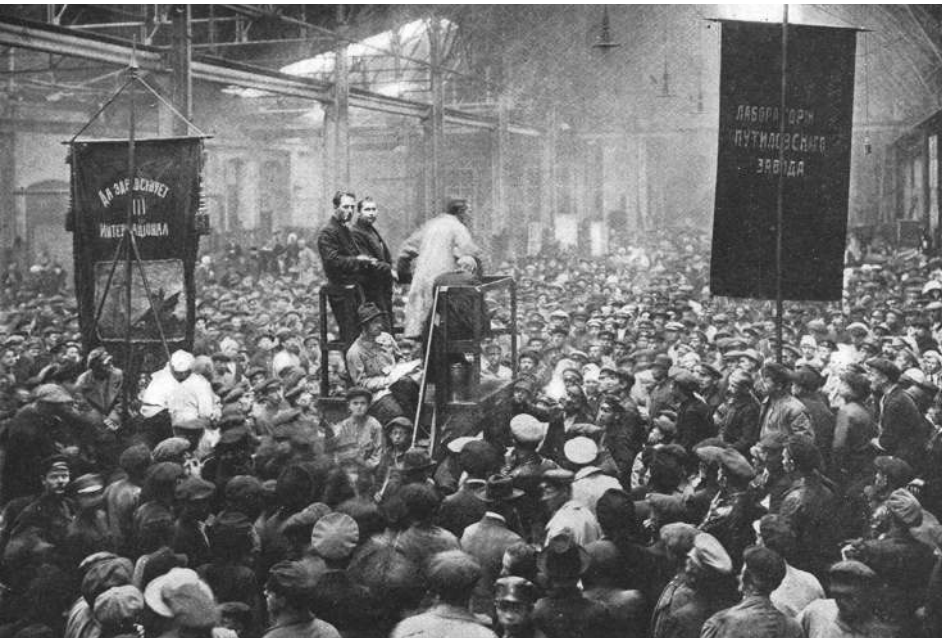
The Soviet government proclaimed the right of working people to jobs, health care, housing and education. The regime went on to expropriate the holdings of the Russian capitalists and the foreign imperialists and repudiated tsarist Russia’s massive debt to foreign bankers. Production was organized and collectivized, aiming to satisfy human need. In the space of two decades, state ownership of the means of production and economic planning made possible the transformation of what had been an impoverished, backward, largely peasant country into an industrial and military powerhouse, even under the profoundly deforming bureaucratic means employed by the Stalinist regime.

The proletarian revolution in Russia was not made solely for Russia, but was seen as the opening shot of a necessarily international struggle of labor against the rule of capital. Lenin and Trotsky’s Bolsheviks understood the necessity of extending proletarian revolution internationally, particularly to advanced capitalist countries such as Germany, in order to lay the groundwork for a world socialist society. To that end, the Communist International was founded in 1919.

However, the defeat of the anticipated German workers revolution in 1923 greatly demoralized the Soviet working class. The proletariat had already been decimated by the destruction of industry and infrastructure wrought by World War I and the bloody Civil War of 1918-20, when 14 capitalist countries invaded the workers republic in a failed attempt to restore capitalist rule. With the end of the Civil War, bureaucratic tendencies in the party and state administration began to coalesce into a self-conscious caste. By 1923, Lenin was increasingly incapacitated. In the meantime, the burgeoning party bureaucracy, controlled by J.V. Stalin, was beginning to rise to self-consciousness.

Though it only became clear in hindsight, 1923-24 marked the beginning of the Soviet Thermidor, the decisive point at which the bureaucratic caste seized political power from the working class. From this point on, the people who ruled the USSR, the way the USSR was ruled and the purposes for which it was ruled all changed. The nationalist outlook of the bureaucracy was given expression in Stalin’s proclamation in the fall of 1924 of the anti-Marxist “theory” that socialism—a classless, egalitarian society based on material abundance—could be built in a single country, and a backward one at that. In practice, “socialism in one country” meant opposition to the perspective of workers revolution internationally and accommodation to world imperialism.

Despite the degeneration of the workers state, the fundamental conquests of



Workers at Petrograd’s Putilov metal works, a bastion of Soviet power during Bolshevik Revolution. Banner at left proclaims, “Long Live the Third International.”

October Revolution and fought to the end in defense of the Soviet Union, AI’s equation of the USSR with U.S. imperialism—the biggest terrorist and mass murderer in human history—is an outrage. It must be answered by exposing the special role that AI and other liberals have played on behalf of imperialism by cloaking its depredations with the mantle of “human rights.” Their slanders of the October Revolution must be combatted in order to educate and politically arm a new generation of proletarian fighters.

“Human Rights” Imperialism

In biting the hand it usually licks, AI was motivated by concerns that Bush & Co. are harming the interests of U.S. imperialism. As AI put it in its report, “The rule of law, and therefore, ultimately, security, is being undermined, as is any moral credibility the USA claims to have in seeking to advance human rights in the world.” The liberals’ primary worry is that the Bush administration is ruining the ability of the imperialists to carry out their wars of conquest in the guise of “human rights” and “democracy.”

In the same vein, David Cole moaned in the *Nation* (21 November 2005), a bellwether of radical-liberal public opinion, that the torture practices “ultimately undermine our security, as they impair our legitimacy and create ideal recruiting tools for the enemy.” Cole continued, “If we are to prevail in the war on terror, we must do so by distinguishing ourselves from our enemy.” Thus Cole affirms the basis of the “war on terror,” which is a wholesale assault on civil liberties whose ultimate target is the left and labor movement.

It is such concerns that drive Bush’s opponents in the Democratic Party—the

supposed “weapons of mass destruction.” Now they look to take electoral advantage of the widespread disaffection and revulsion among the populace at the quagmire in Iraq and the torture revelations.

Bush’s bourgeois critics understand that even an imperialist power as militarily predominant as the U.S. should be able to sell the ideological pretenses for its military adventures. Former Democratic president Jimmy Carter complained in a November interview with MSNBC’s Chris Matthews that the torture scandal “besmirches America’s position as the so-called former champion of human rights. There’s not a single major human rights organization in the world that’s not now condemning America as one of the foremost violators of basic human rights.” It was the Carter administration that launched an anti-Soviet “human rights” crusade in the late 1970s to “morally rearm” U.S. imperialism after its defeat by the workers and peasants of Vietnam. In doing so, it sought to overcome the population’s deep mistrust of the government and aversion to further military adventures.

In Defense of the October Revolution

The 1917 Russian Revolution was the greatest victory for the working people of the world. The counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92, after decades of Stalinist misrule, was the working people’s greatest defeat. The October Revolution was the epochal event of modern history. For the first time, the program of proletarian revolution was given flesh and blood. Under the Bolsheviks’ leadership, the proletariat seized political power and created a

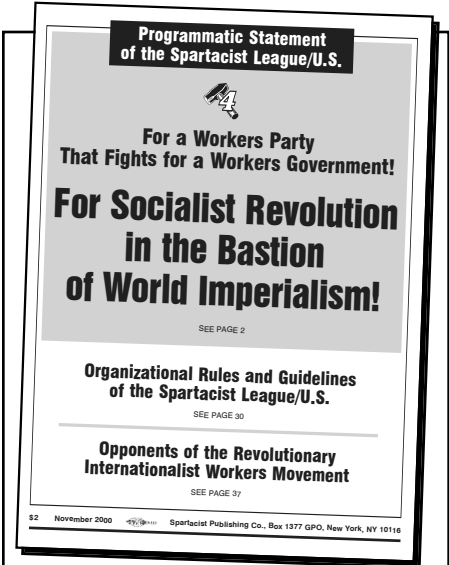
the Bolshevik Revolution remained until the triumph of capitalist counterrevolution in 1991-92. Those gains were embodied in the collectivized economy built by ripping the productive resources out of the hands of the capitalists and landlords. It was the Soviet Red Army that smashed Hitler’s Nazis and liberated Europe. And it was the military might of the Soviet Union that posed a counterweight to U.S. imperialism.

As Trotskyists—i.e., genuine Marxists—we fought to the end for the unconditional military defense of the Soviet Union and the East European deformed workers states against imperialist attack and capitalist counterrevolution. At the same time, we fought for workers political revolution to oust the parasitic Stalinist bureaucracies and replace them with regimes based on workers democracy and revolutionary internationalism. As Trotsky wrote in “Once Again: The USSR and its Defense” (1937), “Stalin overthrown by the workers—that’s a great step forward toward socialism. Stalin crushed by the imperialists—that’s the counterrevolution triumphant.” Today we apply the same program toward the remaining deformed workers states—For unconditional military defense of China, Cuba, North Korea and Vietnam! For proletarian political revolution!

The destruction of the USSR ushered in a global offensive against the working class and oppressed and an ideological climate dominated by widespread belief in the “death of communism”—the lie that the collapse of Stalinism represented the failure of Marxism and the struggle for socialist revolution. Pseudo-socialist organizations that occasionally spoke of the need for proletarian revolution have all but abandoned their Marxist pretensions, instead increasingly becoming mouthpieces for bourgeois liberal ideology.

It is in this context of political retrogression that a term like “gulag”—which only 20 years ago was a term associated with the more virulent anti-communists—has gained common currency. While in the mouths of Amnesty International it is meant as an anti-Communist slur, “gulag” has become a synonym for brutal state repression even among leftists. Our revolutionary Marxist organization has not been immune to such pressures. In an article on the conviction of leftist attorney Lynne Stewart, Mohamed Yousry and Ahmed Abdel Sattar in WV No. 842 (18 February 2005), we wrote the sub-head “Mr. Gonzales’s Gulag,” referring to Attorney General Alberto Gonzales and the government’s wholesale attacks on democratic rights. This glib echoing of liberal opinion ran counter to our task of promoting the Marxist program and

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Programmatic Statement of the Spartacist League/U.S.

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U.S. Torture...

(continued from page 7)

worldview against the pervasive ideological pressures of the post-Soviet world.

Amnesty International Covers for Imperialist Brutality

From its inception, Amnesty International has embraced the U.S. as the epitome of “human rights.” Under that rubric, AI has supported numerous U.S.-led imperialist military adventures, concerned solely that the pillage of dependent countries like Serbia or Iraq is carried out in conformity with “international law.” In its statement of “Core Values,” AI boasts of being part of a “global community of human rights defenders,” among whose principles are “impartiality and independence and democracy and mutual respect.” That “community of human rights defenders” includes fronts for the CIA such as Freedom House—a major sandbox for anti-Communist Cuban *gusano* exiles—and the National Endowment for Democracy, whose recent beneficiaries include the anti-Chávez coup plotters in Venezuela in 2002 and the “Orange Revolution” in Ukraine in 2004.

Fundamentally, what defines AI is its ideology of liberalism. For such liberals, the highest pinnacle of human civilization is Western democracy. “Democracy” in the U.S., West Europe, etc. is a sham. It is especially in the most advanced capitalist countries that democratic forms of government serve to veil the nature of the state as a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie over the exploited and oppressed masses in a garb of “equality of all citizens.” In *The State and Revolution*, written in 1917, Lenin wrote, citing Karl Marx’s comrade Friedrich Engels:

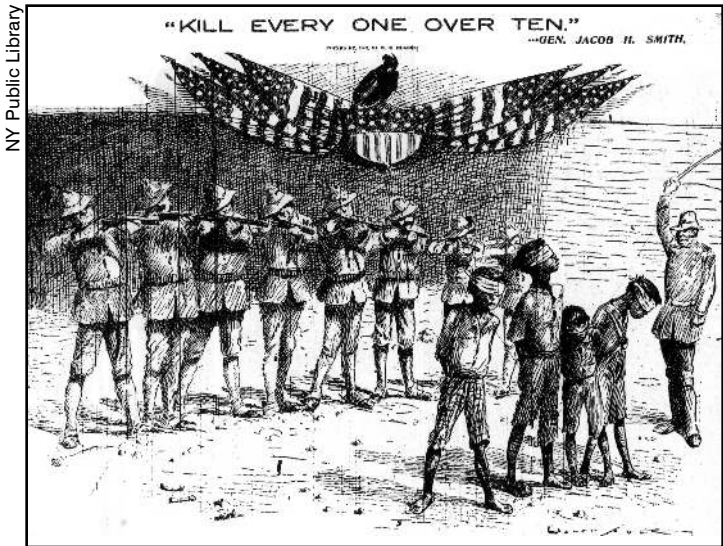
“In a democratic republic, Engels continues, ‘wealth exercises its power indirectly, but all the more surely’, first, by means of the ‘direct corruption of officials’ (America); secondly, by means of an ‘alliance of the government and the Stock Exchange’ (France and America).... ‘A democratic republic is the best possible political shell for capitalism, and, therefore, once capital has gained possession of this very best shell...it establishes its power so securely, so firmly, that *no* change of persons, institutions or

parties in the bourgeois-democratic republic can shake it.” The capitalist rulers who claim the banner of “freedom” and “civilization” have carried out mass murder and torture on an immense scale in their drive to secure world markets, cheap labor and raw materials. Much of the wealth that laid the foundations of Western capitalism was acquired from trade in African slaves. As Karl Marx put it in *Capital*, capitalism was born “dripping from head to foot, from every pore, with blood and dirt.”

From the Indian subcontinent to Africa and Latin America, European colonialists killed tens of millions, subjugating entire populations. Decades of barbaric British colonialism in Kenya culminated in the suppression of the nationalist Mau Mau uprising (1952-56), during which tens of thousands of men, women and children were imprisoned in concentration camps where forced labor was practiced and hangings were common. Belgian colonization of Congo included enslavement and mutilation of the native population, with estimates of the death toll reaching ten million. Trying to drown in blood the Algerian War of Independence in the 1950s-early ’60s, the French imperialists killed a million people—over a tenth of the total population. In Indochina between 1946 and 1954, between 800,000 and 2,000,000 were killed by French forces.

But it is the rulers of the United States whose hands are the bloodiest. Having built much of its vast wealth on the unpaid labor of black slaves, the U.S. made its appearance on the world scene as an imperialist power with the Spanish-American War of 1898, a time when black people in the U.S. were being lynched at a rate of one every other day. After driving Spain out of Puerto Rico, Cuba and the Philippines, U.S. forces slaughtered up to half a million Filipinos between 1899 and 1902 to suppress a nationalist uprising. The U.S. is the only country to have used nuclear weapons, massacring hundreds of thousands in Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the end of World War II. Particularly after WWII, the U.S. has supported and armed murderous neocolonial rulers—

Drawing depicts atrocities during U.S. occupation of Philippines following 1898 Spanish-American War. Below: British troops in India fire on protest in Amritsar in 1919, leaving almost 400 dead.



Bookwright Press

from Mobutu in Zaire (now Congo) to Pinochet in Chile—to reinforce imperialist subjugation. Determined to prevent social revolution, U.S. imperialism later killed three million in the Korean War and another three million more in Vietnam. The entry of the Chinese People’s Liberation Army into Korea in 1950 was decisive in throwing back U.S./UN forces, sealing the division of Korea between a deformed workers state in the North and a brutal capitalist police state in the South. And in South Vietnam, U.S. military defeat resulted in the overthrow of capitalist rule. The 1917 Russian Revolution was a beacon of liberation for oppressed peo-

ples around the globe. At its 1919 founding conference, the Comintern declared in its “Manifesto of the Communist International to the Proletariat of the Entire World”: “Colonial slaves of Africa and Asia! The hour of proletarian dictatorship in Europe will also be the hour of your own liberation!” That same year, the U.S. was known for its “red summer,” named for the blood of black people that ran down city streets in a series of racist pogroms across the country. The road to ridding the world of imperialist barbarism, racist oppression and savage inequality lies in the struggle for *new October Revolutions*. [TO BE CONTINUED]

Sydney...

(continued from page 3)

killings of Aborigines and the incarceration of refugees in concentration camps.

Break with Laborism: For a Class-Struggle Fight!

There are plenty of workers itching to take on the bosses. This was quite palpable on 15 November when more than half a million workers from many different ethnicities rallied in cities throughout the country against the government’s vicious anti-union attacks. However, the pro-capitalist ACTU leaders are deeply opposed to launching a militant fight against the bosses’ anti-working-class assaults. For instance they have no intention of organising a fight for jobs for all at union wages. Politically supporting

the ALP, these labour lieutenants of capital play the role of channelling working-class unrest and justified hatred of the bourgeoisie into deadly class collaboration under the capitalist system. Importantly the New South Wales Teachers Federation and the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) have condemned the white racist violence in Cronulla. However it is necessary to turn these words of condemnation into union actions. Instead the MUA “call[s] on all levels of Government and community organisations to take a stand and work to eradicate these racist sentiments from our society” (Statement by the Sydney Branch Executive, 12 December 2005). Such appeals to capitalist governments only serve to legitimise the state, which is the key source of racist terror under capitalism. The unions must realise that the “lockdown a suburb” laws will be

used to prevent mass union picket-line mobilisations like those in the 1998 Patrick’s waterfront lockout where thousands of workers assembled to defend the MUA at places like Port Botany, Webb Dock and Fremantle. The hundreds of thousands of immigrant workers facing racist attacks are not just victims. They form a key component of the multiracial working class, which has the social power and class interest to combat racist divisions and push back the bosses’ attacks. A fighting unity of oppressed minorities with the social power of the heavily multiracial trade unions needs to be forged in struggle and completely independent of the capitalist state. What is needed are organised racially integrated workers defence guards, drawn from responsible union men and women, mobilised in places such as Cronulla as a show of force. A few weekends of multiracial workers contingents patrolling the Cronulla beach area would teach the white fascist scum a lesson should they dare raise their heads. It would also ensure that anyone, of any colour or background, could take a swim and enjoy

the sun. Such a perspective for independent proletarian defence of immigrant rights demands a political fight within the unions to break with Laborite nationalism and loyalty to the capitalist state. Earlier this year the fascists of the Patriotic Youth League mobilised outside the offices of the CFMEU construction union, complaining that the union was “importing foreign workers.” They were rightly dispersed by angry unionists, including from the MUA. We Trotskyists of the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Club stand for united working-class struggle against capitalist rule. Racist terror must be met with working-class justice. United actions mobilising the power of the organised working class and minority organisations must be brought to bear to smash fascist terror. Such a course demands a political fight to split the working-class base of the ALP from the racist pro-capitalist tops. Forging an internationalist proletarian revolutionary party is the key to building a society where racism no longer exists. For that to be achieved we need to overturn the whole capitalist system through workers revolution. ■

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TORONTO

Mine Disaster...

(continued from page 1)

and Health Administration (MSHA) inspectors, who are normally in the coal operators’ hip pocket, issued 208 violations last year, half of which were deemed “significant and substantial,” such as failure to properly ventilate the mine. Ventilation is essential to prevent the dangerous buildup of methane (the principal component of natural gas) and flammable coal dust. Amplifying the danger was that four natural gas wells lie in close proximity to the Sago mine, including one adjacent to the area of the explosion. There were 19 roof collapses at the mine in the last year. A mine collapse in eastern Kentucky killed Cornelius Yates, a 44-year-old miner, on January 10.

The Sago mine operators were rolling the dice with miners’ lives. The mine’s injury rate was three times the national average—and the safety record of the mining industry as a whole is abysmal. The bosses’ murderous greed creates conditions that ensure that deadly “accidents” happen with appalling regularity. A wide range of recently developed technology, from radio communication to vibration and pressure sensors, exists to make mining far safer than it is. But as a *New York Times* (10 January) exposé noted: “Throughout the industry, the oxygen canisters, the telephones, the ventilation equipment and almost every other piece of safety equipment are nearly identical to those used more than 20 years ago.” More than 1,000 people die from black lung annually, although the technology to prevent it has been available for almost 100 years.

The coal companies don’t want to update the equipment because it would cut into their profits. Many mines still dislodge coal with explosives rather than machines. The coal barons often do not even keep maps of abandoned mines, which nearly spelled death for nine Quecreek, Pennsylvania, miners in 2002, when they unknowingly drilled into an old flooded mine. Most mine operators do not maintain one, much less two, rescue teams on site. Twelve critical hours were lost assembling the mandatory two teams for the Sago mine rescue.

Nationwide each year, thousands of workers lose their lives doing their jobs, and millions more are injured. To the capitalists, the death of a wage slave is just business as usual. Many times more working-class Americans have fallen victim to industrial murder than have died as cannon fodder in the wars of U.S. imperialism. According to a 2004 census report by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, over 10,000 fatal work injuries

occurred in the first two years of the bloody imperialist occupation of Iraq.

Following the Sago mine disaster, the *New York Times* (5 January) sanctimoniously editorialized about the particularly dangerous working conditions of non-union mines. But when New York City transit workers defied the anti-union Taylor Law and went on strike last month to defend their benefits, livelihood and safe working conditions, this same capitalist mouthpiece (21 December 2005) condemned Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 100 for holding the city “hostage.”



Striking NYC transit workers protest unsafe work conditions, December 20.

In the last two decades, 22 NYC transit workers have died on the job. Shortly before the strike, train operator Lewis Moore lay dying on December 1 while the MTA transit bosses delayed getting him medical care for a critical 20 minutes. The TWU stated that the MTA Control Center did not want to disrupt service by rerouting the train to a nearby local station only a block from an ambulance. After the train finally got to a station, Moore was declared dead. As Local 100 president Roger Toussaint bitterly put it, the MTA will stop trains for a dog but not for a worker.

Workers in the TWU and Amalgamated Transit Union collectively face some **\$40 million** in fines for their December strike (see article, page 2). In contrast, for Sago’s “significant” violations, the capitalist government issued fines between **\$60 and \$440**, totaling a mere \$25,000. Last November, the operator of an Alabama mine where 13 miners were killed in a

September 2001 explosion saw its fine reduced from \$435,000 to **\$3,000**. Paying the fines is less expensive than observing safety guidelines. Some coal companies do not even bother to pay, and are still allowed to continue operations.

Democrats, Republicans: Parties of the Bosses

As part of a muckraking series on workers’ deaths, *New York Times* writer David Barstow pointed out in a 22 December 2003 article, “U.S. Rarely Seeks Charges For Deaths in Workplace”: “When Congress established OSHA [Occupational Safety and Health Administration] in 1970, it made it a misdemeanor to cause the death of a worker by willfully violating safety laws. The maximum sentence, six months in jail, is half the maximum for harassing a wild burro on federal lands.”

Even this slap on the wrist is rarely applied. As Barstow documented, referring to roughly 100 workers killed each year by their companies’ willful disregard of safety: “Every one of their deaths was a potential crime. Workers decapitated on assembly lines, shredded in machinery, burned beyond recognition, electrocuted, buried alive—all of them killed, investigators concluded, because their employers willfully violated workplace safety laws.” Yet from 1982 to 2002, OSHA investigated only about half of these horror stories and in **93 percent** of the cases refused to seek prosecution!

The Bush administration—not one to shy away from helping to line the pockets of its corporate cronies—has accommodated the coal barons by slashing funds for MSHA, eliminating inspector posts and installing former mining bosses to run the agency. The administration has even tried to take money away from black lung victims. But it’s not just Bush. The Democratic Clinton White House redefined the “New OSHA” by stressing “partnership” with business and “voluntary compliance,” the model for MSHA today. Overall mining death totals for Clinton’s first five years in office were 208 versus 149 during the first five years of the current Republican administration.

Sago’s owner Wilbur Ross is not only a capitalist parasite but a longtime Democratic Party supporter. This billionaire financier specializes in the takeover of bankrupt steel, textile and coal companies, in the process slashing jobs, dumping pension and health care obligations and tearing up union contracts. Admired within bourgeois circles for running a “growing empire of the damned” (*Business Week*, 22 December 2003), Ross was a major fundraiser for Clinton and is personal friends with John Kerry.

Yet it is these capitalist politicians that the union tops promote as “friends of labor,” chaining workers to the capitalist class enemy. The UMWA tops preach reliance on the likes of West Virginia’s Democratic Senators Robert Byrd, a former Klansman, and Jay Rockefeller, the heir to Standard Oil and beneficiary of a wealth acquired over piles of workers’ corpses, such as at Ludlow, Colorado, where 20 miners, their wives and children were massacred in 1914. Accepting the capitalist profit system and acting as enforcers of class peace, the labor bureaucracy has overseen the precipitous decline of the UMWA and other unions. Labor needs a leadership based on the policy of class struggle, mobilizing union power independent of the capitalist government and politicians. ***Break with the Democrats! For a workers party that fights for a workers government!***

Unleash Labor’s Power!

West Virginia is synonymous with the struggles of the coal miners, for years the shock troops of American labor, including in the building of the CIO industrial unions in the 1930s. Miners have more than once turned strike bans into scraps of paper, including in the 1943 national strike during World War II when they defied Franklin D. Roosevelt’s back-to-

work order. Democrat Jimmy Carter found out the hard way when he slapped a Taft-Hartley back-to-work order on the UMWA in the 110-day strike of 1977-78. The UMWA ranks shut down non-union mines with their militant tactics while scab coal was dumped on the highways, coal barges burned on the rivers and railroad bridges on coal spurs were blown up. A year earlier, a federal judge fined Local 1759 \$300,000 but changed his mind after 80,000 miners joined the “anti-injunction” strike and shut down half of U.S. coal.

The 1977-78 strike was carried out ***in defiance*** of UMWA president Arnold Miller. Epitomizing the subordination of the unions to the capitalist state, Miller won office in 1972 through an election run by the Labor Department in the name of fighting “corruption” in the union. Miller was one of many union “reformers” who acted as tools of the bosses’ government, whose only purpose in intervening into union affairs is to stifle labor’s ability to engage in class struggle.

In place of hard class struggle, the UMWA leadership has increasingly resorted to impotent “corporate campaign”-style boycotts and endless civil disobedience arrests. In an interview with WV, Larry Bartram, a retired West Virginia UMWA safety committeeman and local union officer, aptly described civil disobedience as “just a show.” He continued, “If you really want to stand up for what you believe in, you go a lot farther than just sitting down there in the middle of the road, and then when state troopers or federal marshals walk up and say, ‘OK buddy, let’s go,’ you get up and put your hands behind you.” Union leaders have also demoralized the membership by bowing to a court order, issued following a 1984 strike, that workers watch “strike training” films produced by the government warning them about using “illegal” strike tactics.

The bankruptcy of the UMWA misleaders is shown by their refusal to mobilize the union in defense of its own militants, such as safety committeeman Jerry Dale Lowe, who was framed up on false charges stemming from the shooting death of a scab in a bitterly fought 1993 strike in Logan County, West Virginia. As a result, Lowe spent eleven years in federal prison.

Fight for a Workers America!

The capitalist rulers are waging an unrelenting war on the right of workers, the poor, immigrants and black people to live any kind of decent life, whether you’re on the job or unemployed, whether you’re a kid trapped in a prison-like public school or an old person warehoused in a barracks-like nursing home. Pensions and whatever health care workers have are being ripped up. More than a quarter of those who sought workers’ compensation due to their involvement in the cleanup at the World Trade Center following September 11 have had their applications denied.

In the U.S., race and class are inextricably intertwined with the cold statistics of poverty and death. Hurricane Katrina revealed again American capitalism’s racist bedrock, the legacy of slavery, as thousands of poor people, mainly black, were abandoned to die. The government’s open racist cruelty toward the helpless population outraged millions. Today, months later, thousands of the survivors are dispersed across the country in conditions of squalor, homeless and jobless, their former homes callously bulldozed as businessmen scheme about making a profit off the disaster. So cheaply were these peoples’ lives held that we still don’t even know how many died.

Only when the working class rips the means of production out of the hands of the corrupt, obscenely rich capitalist class and establishes a planned socialist economy can the health and safety of every person be ensured. That requires the forging of a multiracial workers party, leading all the exploited and oppressed in the struggle for socialist revolution. ■



UMWA miners burning rotten contract proposal during 1977-78 strike that defied Carter administration’s Taft-Hartley injunction.

Mumia...

(continued from page 12)

teachings, they will be dead revolutionaries.” This was the policy of the Democratic Party president, Lyndon Johnson, and his attorney general, Ramsey Clark. Because Mumia appeared and spoke in public at the age of 15 and 16, the FBI put him under daily surveillance. They put him on the Security Index, which was then the version of a terrorist list—those to be rounded up and thrown into a concentration camp if there is a national emergency. Despite the state’s efforts shown in some 900 pages of FBI COINTELPRO files on Mumia, which the PDC secured on Mumia’s behalf, the state could not come up with even one offense to pin on him.

Mumia’s case is a textbook case of police frame-up, an object lesson in the class nature of the capitalist state, which is by no means neutral. The state is an instrument for the organized violence by one class, the capitalist class, defending the profit system—against the working people, against minorities. In the United States, the segregation of the majority of the black population at the bottom of society is key. This state violence is expressed in the terror and frame-ups carried out by racist, brutal, corrupt police and enforced in the capitalist courts.

Understanding this, and acting on this understanding, provide the only way forward to victory—to Mumia’s freedom. While all legal proceedings and legal remedies must be pursued on Mumia’s behalf, we cannot have any illusions in or reliance on the capitalist courts, nor in bourgeois politicians, whether they be black or white, Democratic, Republican or Green. The fight to free Mumia must be undertaken independent of the racist capitalist state.

The capitalist injustice system is neither fair nor reformable. Demands for a new trial will not lead to Mumia’s freedom. These demands only breed illusions in the capitalist courts, and these illusions demobilized a movement of millions around the world. They were raised by many so-called socialist organizations and their front groups, organizations such as the Workers World Party, the International Socialist Organization, Socialist Action and the like. The mass movement has to be built anew on the basis that Mumia’s conviction and death sentence were politically driven, and that it is in



Owens/Philadelphia Bulletin

Philly mayor Rizzo lashed out at Mumia (far left) at press conference defending murderous 1978 cop raid on MOVE home.

the interests of all working people, black and white, citizen and immigrant, to join together and fight for his freedom. The fight for Mumia’s freedom is part of the fight for black equality in America, which itself is part of the broader fight against the capitalist system.

That truth has been shown over two decades of court appeals in Mumia’s case. His case has been through the Pennsylvania courts to the U.S. Supreme Court three times, including three post-conviction evidentiary hearings. Each and every court has rejected evidence of Mumia’s innocence, evidence of police and prosecutorial frame-up, of trial and appeal proceedings which denied even a scintilla of due process. And over the past three years, courts—federal and state—refused to consider the confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Mumia, shot and killed police officer Faulkner. Federal court judge Yohn overturned Mumia’s death sentence over three years ago. But while the government appeals, Mumia is still on death row, 23 hours a day, locked in solitary in a cell which he has described as if you’re living in a bathroom.

Mumia Was a Marked Man

So I want to talk a little bit about what happened on the early morning hours of 9 December 1981. The prosecution’s story is a pretty simple one, and that story has been exposed over and over as false—as lies based on witnesses who were threatened or bought, on non-existent ballistics evidence and on a totally fabricated confession invented by police some two months after the shooting. According to the D.A., two people were on the street corner at Locust and 13th in Philadelphia at approximately 4 a.m.: Mumia’s brother Billy Cook and police officer Daniel Faulkner. Mumia reportedly ran across the street when he saw his brother being

beaten by the cop. Then, according to the police, Mumia—some 26 years old, known for his mild manner and level-headedness—supposedly shot the cop in the back. Then the cop shot back at Mumia, and then Mumia stood over the fallen cop and shot him “execution style” several times in the head. This is all lies—even by close examination of the cops’ and D.A.’s own “evidence.”

Now, to understand the frame-up of black radical journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal, you need to remember COINTELPRO and some of the particulars of Philadel-

Susan Schary



Artist’s depiction of attorney Rachel Wolkenstein being ordered to jail by Judge Sabo at 1995 hearing seeking overturn of Mumia’s conviction.

phia. In many ways it’s a Southern city up North. The Philly police and its intelligence division provided a model for the FBI’s COINTELPRO. Mumia was personally very well-known to the Philly police and the FBI as a key founder and leader of the Philly Black Panther Party. He was known for things like protesting the December 1969 Chicago cop and FBI murders of Fred Hampton and Mark Clark and for mobilizing students to change the name of Benjamin Franklin High School to Malcolm X High School. Also for writing for the Black Panther national newspaper and then becoming an award-winning radio journalist, exposing the rampant cop brutality, including the attacks on the MOVE organization and the frame-up trial of the MOVE 9.

The Philadelphia Police Department is also uniquely the only police department in the country that the federal Justice Department tried to put into receivership because of its racial bias, police brutality and corruption. That was 1979. At the time of the murder of Faulkner in 1981, there were at least *three* ongoing federal investigations into police corruption, including police and mob connections. Police working as FBI informants were victims of hits in the early ’80s. A former federal prosecutor acknowledged that the Feds had a police informant whose brother was a cop, just as Faulkner had a brother who was a cop.

An FBI informant who worked the prostitutes in the red light district, under police protection, confirms that at the time of Faulkner’s shooting the word was out that the Feds had a police informant. The commanding officer of the Central Police Division, where the murder of Faulkner took place, the chief of the homicide division and one Inspector Alfonzo Giordano were all under investigation at the time on federal corruption charges. These cops were literally the chain of command in the frame-up of Mumia.

Inspector Giordano was the ranking officer on the scene. He was the central witness against Mumia at the preliminary hearing after Mumia’s arrest. He not only was one of the cops under investigation for corruption, but he had been Frank Rizzo’s right-hand man. Rizzo had been Philadelphia police chief and then became

a notorious mayor. Giordano was involved in the daily surveillance of Black Panther Party members, leading the police “Stakeout” squad in the 1970 attacks on the Black Panther Party headquarters. And Giordano was also the police supervisor of the year-long siege of the MOVE Powelton Village house through 1978. He knew just who Mumia was.

It is with these facts in mind that the confession of Arnold Beverly must be considered. Beverly states that he and another man were hired by the police and the mob to murder Faulkner, and that Faulkner was a problem for the corrupt police and the mob because he interfered with the graft and payoffs in the Center City area.

The proof of Mumia’s innocence is more than Beverly’s confession or the lie detector test that Beverly passed. It is the volumes of previous, internally contradictory witness testimony, of physical evidence that did not fit the prosecution’s story but which clearly supports Beverly’s version of what happened on 9 December 1981.

Faulkner was shot and killed by more than one hired hitman in the Center City red light district as the after-hours clubs were closing. Billy Cook confirms that

there was a plan to kill Faulkner that night and that the other person in his car, Ken Freeman, was involved in that plan. Witnesses said that a second person was in Cook’s car and ran away. Many police were either on the scene or close to the scene to make sure the hit went off without any problems. This included members of the police Stakeout unit and undercover cops.

Prosecution’s Web of Lies

Even with police and prosecution threats and favors at the time of the 1982 trial, no witnesses testified that they saw Mumia actually shoot Faulkner, and only one witness, the prostitute Cynthia White, testified that she thought she saw a gun in Mumia’s hand when he ran to the scene. Since then, several other prostitutes have sworn that she admitted she lied due to police and prosecution threats and favors. Witnesses have said that the shooter ran away, and some five witnesses, including two of the cops, have said that the shooter wore a green army jacket. Both Beverly and Freeman were wearing green army jackets that night. But Mumia was wearing a red quilted ski jacket with wide vertical blue stripes, and Billy Cook wore a blue Nehru-style jacket with brass buttons. There is no green army jacket in any of the police evidence.

Beverly states that Faulkner was shot and killed before Mumia ever got on the scene and that Mumia was not shot by Faulkner but by another police officer. Homicide cops on the scene told the medical examiners that Mumia was shot by an arriving police officer. That evidence was suppressed. A witness said that Faulkner’s gun was still in his holster when he was taken away. And, moreover, the gun that was allegedly Faulkner’s was likely a “throwaway”—it was inoperable and dirty.

The available ballistics and blood evidence at the scene is contrary to the prosecution’s frame-up version of what happened. The trajectories are wrong—the ballistics supports more than one shooter of Faulkner. The bullets and bullet jackets found do not fit with the prosecution theory. There is absolutely no evidence that Mumia’s gun was fired that night. And Mumia’s wounds do not fit at all with him being shot by Faulkner. The

Spartacist Black History Month Speaking Tour

Race, Class and Socialist Revolution: Class-Struggle Road to Black Freedom

Don Alexander, SL Central Committee (New York and Chicago)
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Mumia Is an Innocent Man! The Fight to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal

Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!

Rachel Wolkenstein, Partisan Defense Committee, former counsel for Mumia Abu-Jamal

NEW YORK

Saturday, Feb. 4, 1 & 4 p.m.
6 Harrison Street, Manhattan
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For more information: (212) 267-1025 or e-mail: nysl@compuserve.com

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1515 Webster Street
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LOS ANGELES

Saturday, Feb. 11, 12 & 3 p.m.
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For more information: (213) 380-8239 or e-mail: slsycla@sbcglobal.net
*The views expressed by the participants are not necessarily those of the Immanuel Presbyterian Church.

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Saturday, Feb. 25, 1 & 4 p.m.
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Richard Williams

Richard Williams, one of three remaining Ohio 7 prisoners, died at the Federal Medical Center in Butner, North Carolina, on 7 December 2005, one month after his 58th birthday. The cause was complications resulting from cancer and Hepatitis C. Prison and government authorities hounded Williams—who maintained to the end his anti-imperialist, anti-racist beliefs—to his grave. When he could barely walk, he was still shackled and chained any time he left the Butner facility. Interferon treatments were delayed until it was far too late.

This is bitter news. Williams had been held at U.S. Penitentiary Lompoc, California, and was remanded to solitary after the September 2001 terror attacks. As his son, Netdahe Williams Stoddard, wrote in a recent letter: “Richard was a strong and healthy man up to that autumn of 2001. Fifteen months of solitary confinement, lack of exercise, medical neglect and abuse by a reactionary and vengeful federal government left dad suffering from an array of medical problems.” Even after he suffered a mild heart attack in February 2002, during a short stay back in the general prison population, Lompoc authorities sent him back to solitary.

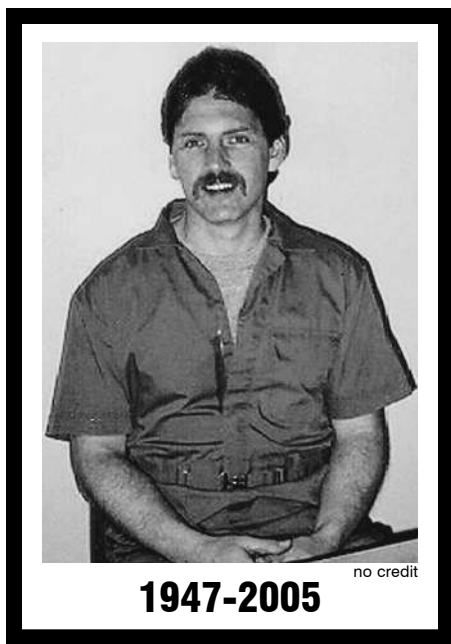
Richard Williams came of age politically in prison. A working-class kid from Beverly, Massachusetts, in 1967 he chose prison over joining the Army when convicted of marijuana possession. In prison again in the early '70s, he organized protests and strikes for better conditions. After his release, he joined other

activists in protecting the homes of people in the Boston area who were targeted by anti-busing racists. In 1979, he and his comrades went to Greensboro, North Carolina, to protest the Klan’s murder of five unionists, civil rights workers and supporters of the Communist Workers Party. In 1981, he joined what he called “the armed clandestine movement.”

Williams was convicted in 1986 of five bombings of military recruitment and corporate facilities and sentenced to 45 years. But an effective life sentence wasn’t enough for a government that wanted to bury such radicals in prison. The next year he went on trial for the 1981 killing of a New Jersey state trooper. Fellow Ohio 7 defendant Tom Manning testified that he had shot the officer in self-defense and that Williams was not even present. The result was a hung jury.

In 1989 Williams was tried on charges of conspiring with fellow Ohio 7 defendants Ray Luc Levasseur (released from prison in November 2004) and Patricia Gros Levasseur to overthrow the government of the United States. The charges of “seditious conspiracy” were based on a 1948 law designed to criminalize left-wing political and labor activity (see “RICO Witchhunt Targets Ohio 7,” WV No. 476, 28 April 1989). But despite spending millions on a trial that dragged on for months against an isolated handful of leftists, the government’s attempt to revive “thought crime” sedition prosecutions was rejected when the jury refused to convict.

The government wasn’t finished, how-



ever. In 1991 he was retried and convicted of the New Jersey killing in a courtroom packed with state troopers and their supporters. Criminally, Williams and the rest of the Ohio 7 were abandoned by the bulk of the left, including many of those who had vicariously cheered their earlier actions. As Ray Levasseur wrote in 1992: “The real deal with those that renounce us and retreat from trials and prison battlegrounds is that we are seen as anti-imperialists with guns.... The dichotomy was striking: a frenzied police power bent on exacting their pound of flesh, and the wilted response of the Left.”

The actions of the Ohio 7 are not crimes from the standpoint of the working class. However, as Marxists, we do not share the political views that animated

Richard Williams, Jaan Laaman, Tom Manning and the rest of the Ohio 7. Despairing of organizing the proletariat in struggle, they decided that the road to fighting this racist, exploitative system was “clandestine armed resistance” by a handful of dedicated leftists. Despite these political differences, the Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee have forthrightly defended these militants, adding Williams, Laaman, Manning and Levasseur to the PDC’s prisoner stipend program, and have always respected their commitment and integrity.

At the PDC’s Holiday Appeal benefit in New York City, two days after Richard Williams’ death, leftist attorney Lynne Stewart spoke movingly of her years-long association with Williams. Stewart, who faces sentencing on trumped-up charges of “aiding terrorism” for her defense of Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman, noted that Williams and his comrades “truly believed in what they were doing. And they truly believed that victory was around the corner.”

Richard Williams stood up to some of the worst that the rulers’ courts and prison system could inflict and never wavered. He never repudiated his road taken, and more than 20 years in prison hellholes could not break him. Honor Richard Williams! Free Jaan Laaman and Tom Manning!

* * *

Richard Williams’ family requests that any donations in his memory be made to: the Rosenberg Fund for Children, the Lynne Stewart Defense Committee, the Jericho Movement, or other organizations that support political prisoners or fight against the prison system. ■

Stakeout officer who purportedly found Mumia’s gun in fact testified at trial that the bullets in Mumia’s gun were of a different make than those listed even on the cops’ own ballistics report.

So what else happened on the scene after Faulkner was shot? The cops tried to kill Mumia. He was shot in the chest. He was taken and rammed into a light post and then taken in a police van. Giordano beat Mumia in the police van. He later said that Mumia had confessed to shooting Faulkner and throwing his gun on the ground. The other cop who was in the van with Giordano said there was no such confession.

Giordano arranged the supposed identification of Mumia by the cab driver, Robert Chobert, who became a witness having been promised favors and protection by the police. Later, Chobert admitted that he never saw the shooting. And Giordano also was the first cop who reported that Mumia’s gun was found on the street. According to the police radio records, this was some 14 minutes after hordes of police had arrived on the scene, thus contradicting the official police story that Mumia’s gun was found within a minute. Giordano’s intention was to finish Mumia off by taking him to police headquarters for further questioning. Mumia’s only crime was that he survived the cops’

attempt to kill him, too.

To complete the picture: Despite Giordano being the senior officer at the scene, despite allegedly hearing Mumia confess and finding the murder weapon (and testifying to that in a preliminary court hearing), Giordano never testified at Mumia’s trial. In fact, he was put on desk duty in about May 1982 while the trial was about to take place, and he resigned from the police force the day after Mumia’s trial was over. In 1986, he copped a plea on federal charges based on his receiving tens of thousands of dollars in illegal pay-offs during the period of 1979-80, and he didn’t spend a day in jail.

Mumia’s former lawyers, so-called radical leftist lawyer Len Weinglass and Dan Williams, found this evidence too hot and unbelievable. Williams said it could lead to actually arguing that the police knowingly framed up an innocent man! Now I don’t have to tell people here that not only is this not unbelievable, but it’s the reality of the cops and the courts. And furthermore, just for some empirical fact, as we litigated the 1995 post-conviction hearing in Philadelphia in the summer of 1995, daily we shared the headlines in the papers with the exposés of cop frame-ups of blacks on false drug charges, of which over 300 cases were overturned. Then of course there’s the L.A. Ramparts case, the Boston cop with mob ties, and more recently in the news, two New York homicide detectives who murdered while on Mafia payroll.

There is more, much more that the investigation that I and Jon Piper, with some help from comrades in the PDC, turned up, none of which has yet been presented in court. It’s filed in court, but the court has refused to hear it.

Mobilize to Free Mumia!

Now, what is the significance of the Beverly evidence and why has it been suppressed? There is a really simple answer: It exposes the fraud that the American legal system can provide justice. It demonstrates the unity of purpose of the cops, the prosecution and the courts to uphold the capitalist rulers’ interest. It makes it clear that the injustice to Mumia was not the action of one rogue cop, or prosecutor or judge, but the entire functioning of the so-called criminal justice system, the capitalist system of injustice. Democrats, including former mayor, former D.A.,

now-Pennsylvania governor Ed Rendell and former president Clinton, as well as Republicans are united in seeking Mumia’s execution, no less than they are united in increasing government repressive powers, in seeing leftist attorney Lynne Stewart locked away for life, and, most importantly, in continuing the capitalist system, which can only lead to increased poverty, racial oppression and war.

I want to make it clear that the courts will not free Mumia, nor grant him a new trial or new appeals on the grounds that are before them, without the weight of an international mobilization of the masses, centrally based on the labor movement. The power of international mobilization based on labor, from South Africa to Europe to the U.S., helped stay the hand of the executioner when Mumia was but ten days away from execution in August 1995. So now we need to mobilize again to exert the type of pressure that will

impact this appeals court—a mass movement based on labor and its allies. That Mumia is innocent is the truth. That the capitalist state has spent decades framing him up is the truth. That the state will use its lying, corrupt, class- and race-biased forces to see Mumia dead is the truth. But we need to use those truths to bring out more power—social power—to fight for Mumia’s freedom *now!*

Send badly needed contributions for Mumia’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 Mumia, you can write to: Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM8335, SCI Greene, 175 Progress Drive, Waynesburg, PA 15370. ■

Partisan Defense Committee
September 2001 Pamphlet \$5.50

Mumia Abu-Jamal Is an Innocent Man!

New Evidence Explodes Frame-Up

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Spartacus Youth Club Classes

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Tuesday, January 24, 7 p.m.
Defend China Against Imperialism, Counterrevolution! For Workers Political Revolution!
University of Chicago, Cobb Hall
5811 S. Ellis Avenue, Room 104
Information and readings: (312) 563-0441
or e-mail: chicagospartacist@sbcglobal.net

LOS ANGELES

Saturday, January 28, 2 p.m.
Capitalism Part II: Imperialism and War
3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215
(Vermont/Beverly Red Line station)
Information and readings: (213) 380-8239
or e-mail: slsycla@sbcglobal.net

NEW YORK

Wednesday, January 25, 7:30 p.m.
Lessons of the Transit Strike Students: Ally with the Power of Labor! For a Revolutionary Workers Party that Fights for All the Oppressed!
Columbia University
Meet in the lobby of Hamilton Hall.
(take 1 train to 116th St.)
Information and readings: (212) 267-1025
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TORONTO

Wednesday, February 1, 6:30 p.m.
China: Defend the Gains of the 1949 Revolution! For Workers Political Revolution to Oust the Stalinist Bureaucracy!
University of Toronto
Sidney Smith Building, Room 1080
100 St. George Street
Information and readings: (416) 593-4138
or e-mail: spartcan@on.aibn.com

VANCOUVER

Wednesday, February 1, 5 p.m.
Defend China, Cuba, North Korea and Vietnam Against Imperialism and Counterrevolution! For Workers Political Revolution!
University of British Columbia
Student Union Building, Room 224
Information and readings: (604) 687-0353
or e-mail: tlit@look.ca

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Court Battle Looms

Mumia Abu-Jamal Is an Innocent Man Free Him Now!



Jennifer Beach

The fight for freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal, America's foremost class-war prisoner, has reached a critical juncture. On 6 December 2005, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit in Pennsylvania ordered Mumia's legal team to file his appeals brief by January 17. The possible outcome of this appeal could range from overturning his conviction and granting a new trial, or mandating new hearings on his constitutional claims, to reinstating the death sentence, paving the way for a new death warrant.

Mumia Abu-Jamal was convicted on demonstrably false charges of killing Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner on 9 December 1981. As an outspoken journalist and supporter of the MOVE organization, he was known as "the voice of the voiceless." In 1982 Mumia was sentenced to die explicitly for his political views and his past membership in the Black Panther Party. His case must become a focal point of struggle against the capitalist "justice" system and its death penalty—a legacy of black chattel slavery that exposes the naked brutality of this class-divided and racially segregated society. The execution of Stanley Tookie Williams in California last month signaled the rulers' intention to carry out Mumia's execution and to speed up the machinery of legal lynching. In denying Williams clemency, California governor Schwarzenegger cited the fact that Williams had dedicated his 1998 book, *Life in Prison*, to Mumia, Nelson Mandela, Malcolm X and others. **Abolish the racist death penalty!**

In December 2001, U.S. District Court judge William Yohn threw out Mumia's death sentence but left the conviction intact despite mountains of evidence of his innocence. Prosecutors are appealing to reinstate the death sentence. Mumia's lawyers have continued to add to the evidence of innocence, most importantly Arnold Beverly's confession that he shot the Philadelphia police officer for whose killing Jamal was falsely convicted. But the courts have repeatedly refused to allow Beverly's confession to be heard because it would expose the fact that Mumia's conviction was an intentional frame-up of an innocent man.

Due to the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act signed by Democrat Bill Clinton in 1996, which dramatically cut back the rights of state prisoners to appeal their cases in federal court, the appeals court is not required to consider all of Mumia's claims. One issue it will hear is the racist jury-rigging in the 1982 trial, where Philadelphia prosecutor Joseph McGill struck at least 10 of 14 eligible black jurors. Of the two black people who made it onto the jury, one black

woman was removed during the trial by Judge Albert Sabo.

Of the two additional issues the court is allowing, one is the outrageous bias of Judge Sabo. Mumia's legal papers have repeatedly challenged the bias of this racist "prosecutor in robes," which infected every stage of the trial, from blocking important evidence of innocence and saddling Mumia with an incompetent lawyer to barring him from the courtroom for days. Court stenographer Terri Maurer-Carter came forward in 2001 to reveal that during the period of the trial she

Defendant guilty, of course, there would be appeal after appeal and perhaps there could be a reversal of the case, or whatever, so that may not be final." In earlier death penalty cases, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court had overruled the same arguments by the same prosecutor. But in this case the court and the prosecutors applied "Mumia rules" in their effort to railroad him.

The urgent need to mobilize the social power of organized labor and its allies for Mumia's freedom was a central theme of the Partisan Defense Committee's 20th

change." To the American capitalist state, that means Mumia is a dead man on leave.

It is necessary and urgent, now more than ever, as Mumia's case moves into the last stages of the legal proceedings, to mobilize on the basis that Mumia is an innocent man, known as the voice of the voiceless. He's on death row because of a political, racist frame-up. The federal appeals court has now put Mumia's case on what they call a "fast track" for decision. That means within about six months' time the court will decide what is next for Mumia: death, life in prison or more legal proceedings.

The federal appeals court is not required to consider all the issues that Mumia has raised—and virtually every right guaranteed by the Bill of Rights was violated in Mumia's case. Nor is the appeals court considering the evidence of Mumia's innocence or the state frame-up. It is going to decide in the first instance whether or not to uphold Mumia's death sentence. It is very good and important that the appeals court is now allowing other challenges. These are based on the racially biased jury selection; the D.A.'s prejudicial summary argument to the jury in which he falsely stated that Mumia would have "appeal after appeal," meaning that it didn't matter if he was convicted by the jury; and lastly, a challenge to the kangaroo, lynch mob appeal hearings before the notorious judge Albert Sabo in 1995, '96 and '97. Sabo was popularly known as the King of Death Row. But the real point is that Mumia should never have been arrested, tried or convicted. And our fight is to free Mumia, now!

The courts do not sit in judgment and rule in isolation. There has been and continues to be a concerted effort by all wings of the capitalist class—represented by both the Democratic and Republican parties—to see Mumia executed. It will take the social power of organized labor and its allies to create the type of pressure needed to obtain Mumia's freedom—a mass movement centrally based on the power of the working class. The power to withhold labor—to strike. Imagine what it would mean if New York transit struck—not only to secure a decent wage, health care and job conditions, but to demand Mumia's freedom!

The danger faced by Mumia today began back in 1969 when he was a 15-year-old spokesman for the Black Panther Party, targeted by the FBI's murderous COINTELPRO campaign. The message to the Black Panther Party by FBI director Hoover was: "The Negro youth and moderate[s] must be made to understand that if they succumb to revolutionary

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WV Photo

August 1995: PDC-initiated labor-centered mobilization in New York City, part of international outpouring of protest that helped stay executioner's hand.

overheard Sabo say, referring to Mumia, "I'm going to help 'em fry the n----r."

Mumia's post-conviction appeals from 1995 to 1997 were assigned back to Sabo, allowing him to "judge" the fairness of his own conduct. Throughout the post-conviction proceedings, Sabo interfered with Mumia's presentation of new evidence and declared all of the defense witnesses "incredible," with the intent of shielding evidence of his innocence from further court review. The federal appeals court is only hearing the issue of Sabo's bias during the post-conviction hearings and not of the bias so vividly displayed at the original trial.

The other issue the court will hear is McGill's closing argument to the jury, which erased the "reasonable doubt" standard. In effect, McGill argued that jurors should convict Mumia despite any doubts they had, because "If you find the

annual Holiday Appeal for Class-War Prisoners, held last month in New York City, Los Angeles, Chicago, Oakland and Toronto. We print below a speech at the New York City benefit, edited for publication, by Rachel Wolkenstein, staff counsel for the PDC and formerly a member of Mumia's legal team.

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Today marks the 24th anniversary of Mumia's arrest for the murder of police officer Daniel Faulkner, a crime the police, the prosecution and the courts know Mumia did not commit. For over 23 years Mumia has been on death row. All elements of the "criminal justice system" have colluded to kill this man for the crime of being an eloquent and effective critic of racist oppression. Mumia has said that he is "fighting to create revolution in America. Revolution means total