

Down With Imperialist Nuclear Blackmail!

U.S. Hands Off Iran!



Lockheed Martin



AFP



Reuters

Armed to the teeth with nukes, U.S. imperialists threaten Iran over reopening of nuclear facility. Right: Iranian student demonstration outside Uranium Conversion Facility in Isfahan, August 2005.

Less than three years after the invasion and occupation of Iraq, U.S. imperialism now has Iran in its crosshairs. Claiming that Iran is seeking to develop nuclear weapons, President Bush on January 26 delivered an ultimatum: “Your desires for a weapon are unacceptable” (*New York Times*, 27 January). This is rich coming from the president of a country with a stockpile of nukes capable of destroying the world several times over. The U.S. ruling class is the only one to have used nuclear weapons, incinerating some 200,000 in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, and the U.S. government today proclaims a policy of “pre-emptive” nuclear attack against any country it deems a threat.

There is clear agreement across the U.S. bourgeois political spectrum, from the religious fanatics in the White House to the Democratic Party, that Iran has to be “dealt with.” In fact, a common criticism of Bush by the Democrats is that the occupation of Iraq has been a distraction from dealing more forcibly with Iran, as well as with the North Korean deformed workers state. Senator Hillary Clinton recently denounced Bush for being soft on Iran, declaring, “I believe we lost critical time in dealing with Iran because the White House chose to downplay the threats” (*Washington Post*, 20 January).

Another group of belligerent fanatics arrayed against Iran are Israel’s Zionist rulers. The British *Sunday Times* (11 December 2005) reports that Israel’s armed forces have been ordered “to be ready by the end of March for possible strikes on secret uranium enrichment sites in Iran.” And on January 21, Israeli defense minister Shaul Mofaz threatened: “Israel will not be able to accept an Iranian nuclear capability and it must

have the capability to defend itself, with all that that implies, and this we are preparing” (*Spiegel Online*, 23 January).

In the event of military attack against Iran by U.S. imperialism or by Israel, or by any other force operating on behalf of the imperialists, we Marxists declare: *The international proletariat must stand for the military defense of Iran against imperialist attack.* At the same time, we give not one iota of political support to the reactionary Tehran regime. Our defense of capitalist Iran is conditional: In military conflicts between an imperialist power and a dependent semicolonial country, our policy is revolutionary defensism. We defend the oppressed country against the oppressor country and promote class struggle in the imperialist centers, as well as in the oppressed country. Every victory for the imperialists in their military adventures encourages more predatory wars; every setback serves to assist the struggles of working people and the oppressed.

The U.S. bourgeoisie, with its media in tow, is straining every nerve to foment hysteria about an Iranian “threat.” They portray Iran’s Islamic regime as a bunch of demented fanatics. But the real nuclear crazies are the Christian fundamentalists at the head of U.S. imperialism, who may not feel constrained from attacking Iran by whatever obstacles are in their way. The true enemy of working people, minorities and the oppressed in the U.S. is the U.S. bourgeoisie. The ruling class that is today threatening Iran is the same capitalist class that has slashed the pensions, health care and jobs of America’s working people while shredding democratic rights through the reactionary “war on terror.”

A letter to the *New York Times* (29 January) by the head of the press section of the Iranian Mission to the UN emphasized, “Iran has no ambition to build nuclear weapons,” and noted that Iran’s nuclear research work “is completely in accord with the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.” The fact of the matter is that in the context of threats by the nuclear-armed imperialists, Iran desperately *needs* nuclear

weapons and adequate delivery systems to defend itself. In today’s world, possession of nuclear arms has become the only real measure of national sovereignty. The counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state in 1991–92 removed the primary military and political counterweight to U.S. imperialism. Since then, the U.S. rulers have developed a policy of using their overwhelming military might, which dwarfs that of even the rival imperialist powers, to prevent the rise of any perceived challenge to U.S. dominance.

A letter to the *New York Times* (17 January) aptly noted in response to an editorial by the paper:

“You write that ‘no one has yet come up with any very good ways of deflecting Iran from its nuclear course.’ But it is obvious that Iran seeks a bomb principally to counter the barely concealed ambition of Bush administration hardliners to force ‘regime change’ there. “After seeing what has happened in Iraq, and listening to the ‘axis of evil’ rhetoric, any patriotic Iranian military leader must be advising his government that only a bomb will deter the United States.”

The reactionary nature of Iran’s mullah regime does not in any way diminish the duty of proletarian revolutionaries to stand on the side of Iran against U.S. imperialism. When Mussolini’s Italy invaded Ethiopia in 1935, Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky addressed the concerns of proletarian militants who objected to defending Ethiopia because of Haile Selassie’s reactionary regime, which maintained slavery in that country:

“If Mussolini triumphs, it means the reinforcement of fascism, the strengthening of imperialism, and the discouragement of the colonial peoples in Africa and elsewhere. The victory of the Negus, however, would mean a mighty blow not only at Italian imperialism but at imperialism as a whole, and would lend a powerful impulsion to the rebellious forces of the oppressed peoples.”

—Leon Trotsky, “On Dictators and the Heights of Oslo” (April 1936)

Iran today needs nuclear weapons to fend off a U.S. threat no less than Ethiopia in the

1930s needed Mausers to fend off the Italian imperialists. *U.S. hands off Iran! For the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. troops and military bases from Iraq, Afghanistan and Central Asia!*

For Class-Struggle Opposition to Imperialism!

The only nuclear-armed state in the Near East today is key American ally Israel, whose rulers have repeatedly made clear that they are prepared to use nuclear weapons. The demented Zionist rulers have a policy—dubbed the “Samson Option” by journalist Seymour Hersh—of plunging the whole region into nuclear holocaust if Israel were threatened with military defeat. In 1986 Israeli nuclear technician Mordechai Vanunu proved to the world that Israel had nuclear weapons—over 200 nuclear warheads at the time, many of them aimed at the Soviet Union. For his act of courage, Vanunu spent nearly two decades in Israel’s dungeons.

While the U.S. and Israel openly threaten to use their nukes, the current Iranian regime has said that the use of nuclear weapons is contrary to its Islamic beliefs. A 1989 book, *The Longest War: The Iran-Iraq Military Conflict*, by Dilip Hiro noted that when Ayatollah Khomeini was approached by Iranian military officials about launching chemical weapons in response to Iraq’s extensive use of such during the 1980–88 Iraq-Iran War, “he reportedly reiterated his earlier refusal based on the argument that Islam prohibits its fighters from polluting the atmosphere even in the course of a jihad, holy war.” At the end of the war, which was reactionary on both sides, United Nations investigations turned up no evidence that Iran used chemical weapons. In contrast, after Germany used poison chlorine gas during World War I, France and Britain responded with their own poison gas attacks. Thus Iran has credibility in a way the imperialist powers do not.

A 15 March 2005 draft Pentagon paper that was leaked last fall, “Doctrine for

continued on page 9



Twentieth Annual Holiday Appeal

Free Mumia! Free All Class-War Prisoners!

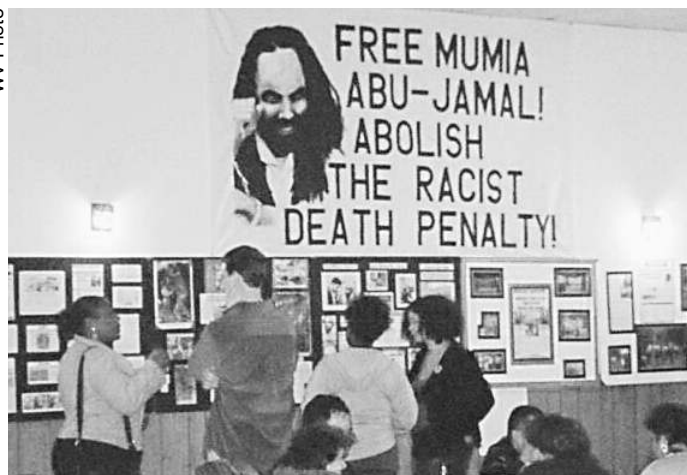
The Partisan Defense Committee's 20th annual Holiday Appeal netted over \$10,000 at December fundraisers in New York, Chicago, Oakland, Los Angeles and Toronto. The funds raised for the PDC's Class-War Prisoners Stipend Fund are a concrete expression of solidarity with those imprisoned for standing up to racist capitalist repression, reflecting the PDC's character as a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense organization.

It is more important than ever to carry on this working-class duty in today's "hypocritical, murderous, revolting so-called democracy," as a Spartacist League spokesman said at the Chicago event. The speaker pointed out that the capitalist profit system left the poor and black population of New Orleans to die in Hurricane Katrina's aftermath—a racist atrocity that "can't be separated from the bloody colonial occupation of Iraq, the shredding of civil liberties in the name of the so-called 'war on terror' and the imprisonment of the class-war prisoners."

This year's Holiday Appeal highlighted the urgent need to mobilize the power of labor and its allies to demand freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal. A former Black Panther Party spokesman and powerful journalist, Mumia is an innocent man who has been on Pennsylvania's death row for over 23 years, framed up on false charges of killing a police officer. Speakers emphasized that Mumia's case has now been put on a "fast track," as a new court battle looms over appeals in his case.

WV No. 862 (20 January) contains a speech at the New York benefit by Rachel Wolkenstein, PDC staff counsel and formerly a member of Mumia's legal team, as well as speeches in New York and Oakland by Spartacus Youth Club members, who emphasized the need for youth to ally with the working class. Wolkenstein detailed the massive evidence of Mumia's innocence that has been suppressed by the capitalist courts. In Toronto, a national representative of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers spoke of the importance of Mumia's case

WV Photo



Chicago
Holiday Appeal
benefit,
December 11.

and the need "actually to take job action if Mumia is put on the block and the execution date approaches."

This year's benefits also highlighted the case of Leonard Peltier, imprisoned for nearly three decades because of his activism in the American Indian Movement. The PDC last year added Peltier to its monthly stipend program. His frame-up trial for the deaths of two FBI agents at the South Dakota Pine Ridge Reservation in 1975 is yet more proof that there is no justice in the capitalist courts. In Oakland, Donna Wallach of the Leonard Peltier Support Group spoke, and Peltier's attorney Barry Bachrach sent a taped message to the New York event.

The benefits provided an occasion to honor Ohio 7 prisoner Richard Williams, who died on December 7 (see our commemoration last issue). The PDC continues to fight for freedom for the two remaining imprisoned Ohio 7 members, Jaan Laaman and Tom Manning. Embattled leftist attorney Lynne Stewart, who faces sentencing on trumped-up charges of "aiding terrorism," spoke movingly at the New York benefit of her own years-long association with Williams.

Among those attending the New York event were a number of city workers, including TWU transit workers in the

midst of the union's contract battle with the MTA bosses. A number of people attended the Chicago event after hearing it publicized on a black radio talk show. The Oakland benefit was attended by three members of the family of Patrick Gaston, a 34-year-old black man brutally killed by police in West Oakland in front of his mother and neighbors on November 10 (see "LBL Protests Cop Killing of Patrick Gaston," WV No. 861, 6 January).

Many attending the benefits wrote messages of solidarity to the class-war prisoners in the PDC stipend program, who also include: Jamal Hart, Mumia's son; eight Philadelphia MOVE members—Chuck Africa, Michael Africa, Debbie Africa, Janet Africa, Janine Africa, Delbert Africa, Eddie Africa and Phil Africa—who are in their 28th year in prison; Ed Poindexter and Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa, former Black Panther supporters; and Hugo Pinell, a prison rights organizer and the last of the San Quentin 6 still in prison.

* * *

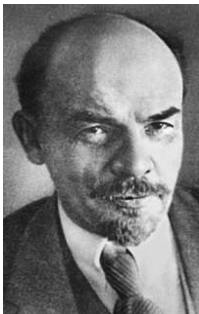
Those who would still like to contribute can send a check or money order, earmarked "Class-War Prisoners Fund," to: PDC, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013; (212) 406-4252. ■



TROTSKY

Black Freedom and the Proletarian Revolution

On the eve of the explosive civil rights struggles that led to the end of legally enforced segregation in the South, veteran Trotskyist Richard Fraser explained the unique role of racial oppression in underpinning the course of U.S. capitalism. Integrated into the industrial proletariat, black workers are destined to play a leading role in the American socialist revolution, the only road to the emancipation of the black population as a whole.



LENIN

A hundred years ago Karl Marx, in urging the American workers to support the struggle of the slaves for emancipation and to support the northern cause in the Civil War, proclaimed the following truth: "Labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the black it is branded." This is just as true today in the modern context of racial discrimination as it was during the struggle against slavery.

At each point, the fundamental interests of the industrial working class and of the Negro people are tied together. At no point is this revealed more strongly than in the problems of unionism.

Working class solidarity is a mighty antidote to race prejudice. Without the overthrow of prejudice unionism itself is always in danger. This is demonstrated in the great struggles against the giant corporations of auto, rubber, steel. Here the working class was forced, in spite of prejudice, to present a united front to the employers or meet sure defeat. This action was the beginning of the overthrow of race prejudice, just as it was the beginning of industrial unionism....

But capitalism, even in the southern United States, has created the conditions necessary for its own destruction. It has disrupted the old agrarian pattern, undermined the privileged white middle class, thus weakening the whole fabric of social repression. It has created great industries, proletarianizing white, urbanizing black. This process has centralized the Negro community in positions of great strategic advantage in large city communities, whereas before they were dispersed over the countryside. Capitalism has likewise created the conditions for the overthrow of race prejudice by working class solidarity.

—Richard S. Fraser, "The Negro Struggle and the Proletarian Revolution" (1953), printed in "In Memoriam—Richard S. Fraser," *Prometheus Research Series* No. 3, August 1990

WORKERS VANGUARD

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The closing date for news in this issue is 31 January.



No. 863

3 February 2006

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)

Don Cane, SL Central Committee (Los Angeles and Oakland)

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

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walk west on Franklin to Hudson,
one block south on Hudson to Harrison)

For more information: (212) 267-1025
or e-mail: nysl@compuserve.com

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Sunday, Feb. 19, 12 & 3 p.m.

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in downtown Oakland)

For more information: (510) 839-0851
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or e-mail: slsycla@sbcglobal.net

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

CHICAGO

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University of Chicago, Reynolds Club
South Lounge (2nd floor)
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The “N” Word: “To This Day, I Wish I’d Never Said the Word”

A Salute to Richard Pryor

Richard Pryor was so funny he could make you laugh at a funeral on Sunday Christmas day, as his character Mudbone said. He made you laugh so hard you felt like you broke something, and in a broken society crazed with race- and sex-hate, laughter and the pain of being black in America went together. “I wanted to be just like him,” Damon Wayans said a few years ago, “except for the drug habit and the failed marriages and the temper and the guns.”

Debilitated by multiple sclerosis, which was diagnosed in 1986, Pryor died of a heart attack on December 10 at the age of 65. He was in 40 movies and co-wrote, with Mel Brooks, *Blazing Saddles* (which the studio wouldn’t let him appear in). But his main legacy is his stand-up work, captured in such classics (available on DVD) as *Richard Pryor—Live in Concert* (1979), *Live on the Sunset Strip* (1982) and *Here and Now* (1983). If you’ve never watched him, you’re missing a major piece of 20th-century American culture.

Pryor wasn’t merely a comedic genius but a piercing social observer and critic. In his 1995 autobiography, *Pryor Convictions*, Pryor (as Mudbone) remarks that “the truth is gonna be funny, but it’s gonna scare folks.” There was nothing he



Columbia Records

1940-2005

wouldn’t talk about on stage, including his upbringing in his family’s brothels and bars in Peoria, Illinois. He inspired several generations of comedians, black and white. He started off as a mainstream storyteller in the Bill Cosby mold. As Pryor recalled, “I made a lot of money being Bill Cosby, but I was hiding my personality.” In 1967, Pryor stormed off stage at the Aladdin Hotel in Las Vegas,

shouting, “What am I doing here? I’m not going to do this anymore!” As he wrote in *Pryor Convictions*, at around that same time, “I read and re-read a copy of Malcolm X’s collected speeches. I put Marvin Gaye’s song ‘What’s Going On?’ on my stereo and played it so often it became the soundtrack to my life.”

Pryor took a brief hiatus in 1970 and re-emerged with the hard-hitting humor that became his trademark. The cover to his album *Is It Something I Said?* showed Pryor about to be lynched. He told audiences that he used to be a “Negro” but had given it up because there was “no room for advancement.”

Pryor won broad popular appeal with his biting routines, which included regular use of the “N” word, along with every obscenity in the book.

Among the many reasons to honor Richard Pryor is his later public repudiation of the “N” word as utterly demeaning and wounding to black people. Citing the current prevalent embrace of the word among black hip-hop artists and intellectuals, we wrote in “The ‘N’ Word in Racist America” (WV No. 807, 1 August 2003): “Far from being a protest against racial oppression, as some leftist black intellectuals would have it, the pervasive

use of the ‘N’ word is a result of the racist rulers’ denigration of black people. This is a form of ‘defiance’ born of demoralization and despair, a product of the ever-worsening conditions of black life and the absence of any significant social struggle in the decades since the collapse of the civil rights movement.”

Richard Pryor rejected the use of this hurtful and deadly racist epithet a quarter century ago. He made a trip to Africa in 1979, escaping the poisonous American atmosphere saturated with race-hatred long enough to take a clear look at it. He told about his experience in *Live on the Sunset Strip*:

“There’s nothing like going and seeing nothing but black. Black people. I mean from the wino to the president, it’s black people....

One thing I got out of it was magic. I’d like to share it with you. I was leaving, and I was sitting in the hotel and a voice said to me, it said, ‘Look around, what do you see?’ And I said, ‘I see all colors of people doing everything, you know.’ And the voice said, ‘Do you see any n----rs?’ And I said, ‘No.’ And it said, ‘You know why? Because there aren’t any.’ And it hit me like a shot....

“I was sitting there, I said, ‘Yeah, I been here three weeks and I haven’t even said it. I haven’t even thought it.’ And it made me think, Oh my God, I’ve been wrong. I’ve been wrong.”

Pryor continued:

“I ain’t never going to call another black man a n----r. You know, because we never was no n----rs. That’s a word that’s used to describe our own wretchedness. And we perpetuate it now. Because it’s dead. That word is dead. [We’re] men and women.”

Pryor said in conclusion:

“And I don’t want them hip white people coming up to me, calling me no n----r or telling me n----r jokes. I don’t like it. I’m just telling you, it’s uncomfortable to me. I don’t like it when black people say it to me.... So I love you all, and you can take that with you.” ■

Letter

On the Anti-Smoking Witchhunt

November 25, 2005
“Black” Friday

Workers Vanguard:

Perhaps this is not a class struggle issue, but recently I have been accosted by signature-gatherers for a proposition to “Tax tobacco to pay for emergency rooms”. Now smokers are mostly low-income—the middle and upper classes have rejected this habit—and constitute about 20% of the population, many of whom are people of color. Smoking, at least in California, is no longer “cool”—it is prohibited almost everywhere, including on the sidewalk within thirty feet of a business entrance, and, in San Francisco, in many parks.

Smokers are a despised minority. When I began smoking around 1960,

cigarettes were 29¢ a pack—today they are \$5 a pack, most of it taxes. This proposition would add \$1.70 to the cost of a pack of cigarettes, which assuming a pack a day habit is average, amounts to about \$500 a year in additional taxes to be paid by each smoker, above and beyond the taxes she already pays. This proposition is a slam dunk to get on the ballot and to pass because the non-smoking population hates and despises smokers, who are unable to defend themselves. Nevertheless, I am here bringing the issue before the Tribune of the People—what do you think? Smoking definitely IS bad for your health, as every smoker has heard ad nauseam, but it is a very pleasurable vice and not nearly so deadly as, say, joining the US Army and

going to Iraq! Do you defend the right of smokers to smoke, or do you stand with the enemies of this addiction? If it is OK to smoke, should the habit be taxed to the max, on some cruel premise that this will “discourage” us from smoking? Or should we be left alone to “increase the cost of health care” without serious financial damage to ourselves? Is smoking a class issue? And should there be any recourse at all for the workingclass, black and Latino individuals constituting the smoking class, against enforced taxation by the non-smoking majority? (I quit a year ago, but I identify myself as a smoker).

C.O.
Oakland, CA

WV replies:

Anti-smoking hysteria is very much a class issue, and it has been rampant for decades now. The most typical venue for this “purer than thou” moralism is California. Some time back, a black San Francisco State University student was stabbed by an anti-smoking fanatic who ranted, “She thought she had a right to pollute my air.” Unfortunately, this puritanism is increasingly gripping parts of the globe that used to provide a limited “safe haven” for smokers.

In this country, working people rou-

tinely die because the capitalist ruling class doesn’t want to spend *any* money to keep them healthy and workplaces safe—like by enforcing industrial safety standards, or repairing the levees in New Orleans. The tragic deaths at non-union, deathtrap West Virginia mines this month, and the deaths and abandonment following Hurricane Katrina of thousands of poor, particularly black people, reveal the callous indifference of the ruling class to the lives of workers and the black population. It is grotesque that the same rapacious rulers who begrudge every dime they spend on working people want to put moral blame and the financial burden of the capitalist system that kills them on...working people.

As we wrote in “Anti-Smoking Tyranny” (WV No. 612, 9 December 1994):

“Despite absurd denials by the tobacco industry, it’s never been a big secret that ‘coffin nails’ or ‘cancer sticks,’ as cigarettes used to be called, aren’t healthy. But most Americans somehow believe they’re supposed to have the right to choose their own poison—whether it’s cigarettes, cholesterol-rich steaks or martini lunches....

“As far as we’re concerned, people ought to be able to read, eat, drink, smoke, and enjoy whatever consensual activities they want without cops, courts, employers and yuppie totalitarians sticking their noses in.” ■

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Fight Racist Reaction on Campus!

On December 2 the walls and doors of a dorm suite at Columbia University were covered in racist, anti-gay and anti-Semitic graffiti, prompting black and minority students to speak out against the barrage of racist filth they are subjected to on campus. At the University of California at Berkeley, black student Erika Williams was called “n----r” by Sherman Boyson, an academic adviser for the School of Social Welfare, who also threatened to beat her up. Black and Latino students at the University of Colorado have been subject to threats: in November, black student government leader Mebraht Gebre-Michael received an e-mail telling her that black students should “disappear” off the campus, which concluded, “You will die if you run for student government again.” At Syracuse University, a student TV “comedy” show featured an image of a lynching, joking that this was “fun on the Quad” in 1870, with the punch line, “Doesn’t get much more fun than that, folks.”

Far from being isolated incidents, these and countless other outrages on campus reflect rising racist reaction throughout the country. The profound race and class divide in the U.S. was graphically exposed by Hurricane Katrina. The catastrophic destruction of lives and livelihoods in New Orleans showed that the oppression of black people is rooted in the very bedrock of American capitalism. The capitalist rulers’ one-sided class war against working people, from the attacks on pensions and health care to the gutting of education and welfare, has fostered the political climate in which these attacks on black and minority students are taking place. Also whipping up the reactionary climate on the campuses are the right-wing junior McCarthyites who seek to drive out not only pro-Palestinian and leftist professors and organizations, but also black and minority students.

What is needed in response to these grotesque incidents are not appeals to the campus administrations to “clean up” racism on campus, but militant joint student-worker protest to beat back the racists and bigots. The kind of social



Young Spartacus
Columbia University, September 7: Spartacus Youth Club speaks out during campus protest called in response to racist atrocity in New Orleans.

power that student protesters must seek to ally with was shown by the recent New York City transit strike. By crippling the finance capital of the world, this heavily black and minority union backed down the racist rulers who had branded them “thugs.” Their fight in opposition to a rotten contract offer showed that defense of the interests of working people and the oppressed requires struggle, not begging the powers that be.

Students protesting racist reaction on campus must look to the social power of the working class, which is derived from its ability to shut down production, and especially to those sectors of the labor movement in which there are large numbers of blacks, Latinos and immigrants. And because racism on campus is merely a reflection of the pernicious bigotry that pervades capitalist society more broadly, students protesting these attacks must link up with and support broader struggles, such as the fight to free class-war prisoners like Mumia Abu-Jamal, whom the capitalist rulers want to execute for

his fight for black freedom.

The campus bigots are creating a climate of intimidation and threatened violence in order to further marginalize black and minority students at colleges and universities. This is clear from the use of the “N” word and the swastika, both of which represent a program of race terror. And as the threats and acts of physical violence at Berkeley, Columbia and in Colorado show, these racist, bigoted thugs often go beyond “speech.” As Marxists, we understand that those who organize for race terror, such as the fascist KKK and Nazis, must be swept off the streets through mass, militant labor/black mobilizations, such as the 23 October 1999 anti-Klan demonstration in New York City that the Spartacus Youth Club helped build. As for racist ideologues like David Horowitz, who tour academia to spout the “virtues” of black chattel slavery in the pre-Civil War South, and whose campus minions organize racist provocations like anti-affirmative action “bake sales,” we seek to *refute* their lies and combat the corrosive effect of their retrograde ideas. The SYC has mobilized united-front protests against Horowitz and his ilk from UCLA to Columbia (see “Racism and Witchhunts on Campus,” WV No. 756, 13 April 2001).

Protests at Columbia

At a December 7 speakout at Columbia in which the Black Students Organization, Columbia Queer Alliance, and the Asian American Alliance participated, students spoke of their outrage at having their rooms defaced with the “N” word and swastikas, at being told by students and professors alike that they don’t belong on campus and at the physical threats they face. Black students have stated that being called “n----r” is a regular occurrence on campus. In the 19 January *Columbia Spectator* student Jacob McKean relates having a piece of glass thrown at him by frat boys calling him “f---t” as he walked home last semester.

In response to this vile climate of racism and bigotry, students presented university president Lee Bollinger with a series of demands to “Stop Hate on Columbia’s Campus” as part of a December 14 rally. These demands are similar

to those raised in protests against the Columbia College Conservative Club’s February 2004 anti-affirmative action “bake sale.” While the SYC certainly solidarizes with calls for greater minority enrollment and for more resources for minority and black studies programs, we oppose the demands appealing to the administration to clean up “hate” at Columbia through “anti-oppression” training.

The use of the term “hate” as an umbrella for racist, anti-immigrant, anti-gay and anti-woman bigotry has been popularized by liberal demands for “hate crimes” legislation and “hate speech” codes. For years, liberals and many leftists have promoted “sensitivity training” and restrictive speech codes as the means to supposedly combat racism, sexism and anti-gay bigotry. We oppose demands on the campus administrations and on the capitalist state to police “hate” because this not only fosters illusions in the neutrality of the racist administrations, cops and courts, but also bolsters the repressive power of those institutions, enabling them to use such codes and laws to victimize student protesters, minorities and leftists. As we wrote about San Francisco State University (SFSU) last year: “In [SFSU president] Corrigan’s arsenal, ‘hate speech’ regulations are a threat to every critic of racist American imperialism on this campus; he will use them against us—as he did against GUPS [General Union of Palestine Students] (as in 2002, to put the group on probation for a year), as he did against the Pan-African Student Union and others” (“Down With the ‘Anti-Terror’ Witchhunt Against the Four S.F. State Students!” WV No. 841, 4 February 2005).

The reformist International Socialist Organization (ISO) has often joined calls for such measures against “hate,” as they did following the racist “bake sale” in 2004. Among the demands the ISO supported was one calling for “disciplinary actions and policies to prevent and handle transgressions against marginalized student populations.” At the time the SYC warned, “One could well imagine legions of rabid Zionists, as has happened on other campuses, running to the administration with cries of ‘anti-Semitism’ to encourage a crackdown on any pro-Palestinian protest” (“Campus Right-Wingers Target Black Students,” WV No. 821, 5 March 2004).

That is in fact what happened later that year at Columbia with the notorious right-wing, Zionist witchhunt against pro-Palestinian professors, such as Joseph Massad. And now the ISO themselves are being hounded by pro-military right-wingers, after a Puerto Rican Marine Reservist filed a “discrimination” complaint against three ISOers because they had argued with him at the Columbia Military Society’s table at last fall’s clubs fair. The SYC says: *No reprisals against the ISO! Keep ROTC, military recruiters off campus!*

One of the more ludicrous demands in response to the racist graffiti incident at Columbia states: “Columbia Security also needs to participate in anti-oppression training addressing transphobia and gender policing, as well as broader issues of race, gender, and power.” At Columbia, the job of the campus cops is to “protect” the hallowed grounds of Columbia from “undesirables,” such as the Harlem poor. The cops who police this bastion of race and class privilege exist to crack down on any protest that the administration deems out of bounds, like the protests of 1968. Last semester, Columbia cops arrested a young man who was jailed overnight for the “crime” of handing out anti-Bush flyers in front of Lerner Hall! At the University of Chicago, police brutality charges against two campus cops who beat black student Clemmie Car-

Defend the De Anza 8!

We reprint below a protest letter sent by the Bay Area Spartacus Youth Club to the Santa Clara County District Attorney on January 22.

The Bay Area Spartacus Youth Club vehemently protests the brutal arrests of eight protesters and students (including two Muslim bystanders) on 11 November 2005 at De Anza College in Cupertino. The demonstration that night was part of three days of protest against former Secretary of State Colin Powell and in opposition to the Iraq war. Santa Clara County Sheriffs arrested seven young men outside of the Flint Center, where Powell was speaking, and elsewhere around the campus. All of them were black and/or Muslim. They were tackled, beaten and, in some cases, pepper-sprayed. Two of the arrestees required hospitalization, one was left unconscious. Police stepped on one pro-

tester’s head. The eighth person was arrested for protesting inside of the Flint Center. These arrests come in the context of ongoing “war on terror” witchhunts of immigrants, especially of Near Eastern descent and Muslim background.

The protesters and students were arrested and charged with an outrageous litany of trumped up felonies and misdemeanors including assault and battery on a police officer, assault with a deadly weapon, disturbing the peace, and resisting arrest. One was even charged with making a false bomb threat.

This aggressive police intimidation and violence shows that the Santa Clara Sheriff’s Department is doing its part in the government’s attempt to stifle dissent and regiment the population. Drop all charges against the De Anza 8 immediately!

thans in 2004 were recently dismissed. The SYC says: *Cops off campus!*

Calls on the administration to redress “hate” on campus reduce the fight against oppression to a matter of circumscribing bad words or ideas. This is consistent with the false view that the *source* of racism and oppression is backward ideas. The capitalist ruling class deliberately fosters anti-black racism, above all to prevent unified working-class struggle. Many white workers imbibe racist, backward ideas and don’t understand that they have fundamentally shared interests with black workers against a common class enemy. Liberal preaching cannot overcome these racist attitudes—a higher level of working-class consciousness is achieved through heightened struggle of labor against capital and the intervention of revolutionary Marxists. Racism and all forms of oppression are rooted materially in the class-divided capitalist system, and it is only through the struggle to get rid of this system and replace it with a socialist, egalitarian social order that the material roots of oppression can be eliminated.

The main obstacle to such struggle is the illusion promoted by liberals, black politicians and trade-union misleaders that the capitalist system can be reformed to serve the interests of working people and the oppressed. This is expressed in their promotion of the racist, capitalist Democratic Party as a friend of labor and

New Orleans evacuees following Hurricane Katrina, September 2005. Right: UC Berkeley, December 12. BAMN affirmative action coalition press conference protests racist administrator, calls for allowing displaced New Orleans students to stay at Berkeley.



Hicks/NY Times



Indymedia

ing Committee (GSOC), which has been out on strike for a contract since November 9. The SYC says: *Victory to the GSOC strike!* Rather than looking to the Bollinger administration to fight racist attacks at Columbia, student protesters should be looking to link up with the heavily black and minority campus workforce organized in TWU Local 241 and UAW Local 2110 who themselves are subject to racism and exploitation at the hands of this very administration.

The fight against racist reaction on campus must also be linked to the fight for free, quality, integrated education for all. Right-wing and racist attacks on campuses are aimed at driving out those black and minority students who haven’t al-

racist death penalty, a form of legal lynching. While the Civil War succeeded in ending slavery, the northern capitalists betrayed the promise of black liberation in favor of an alliance with the former Southern slavery.

The capitalist class today continues to profit from and enforce the subjugation and segregation of the black population as an oppressed race-color caste, overwhelmingly concentrated at the bottom of this society. The color bar has been a fundamental dividing line in American society, a key means for obscuring the class divide between labor and capital and retarding working-class struggle. As the last hired, and the first fired, black people have served as a desperately poor reserve army of labor for the capitalist rulers. The social conditions that imprison the impoverished black masses in the ghettos—the lack of decent jobs, education and housing as well as rampant police terror—cannot be solved through legislative reform. Providing decent jobs, education and housing to all is entirely incompatible with the maintenance of American capitalism.

Full political, social and economic equality for the black masses requires that the working class rip the economy out of the hands of the racist capitalist rulers and reorganize it on a socialist basis, where production is for human need, not profit. Only in this way will it be possible to eliminate the material roots of black oppression, through the full integration of black people into an egalitarian socialist society. It is only through this struggle for integration by revolutionary socialist means that black equality can be achieved.

At the same time that capitalism socially segregates black people, it has also served to integrate black workers into the industrial economy. While the immiseration of the black population has intensified in recent years, black people continue to have enormous potential social power as a strategic component of the American working class, serving as a bridge between the ghetto poor and the

organized labor movement. The power of black workers must be mobilized in joint, multiracial working-class struggle against the capitalist system as a whole.

This requires a political struggle against those misleaders who tie the workers movement to the capitalist class enemy, primarily through the vehicle of the capitalist Democratic Party of racism and war. Successive Democratic and Republican administrations have taken deadly aim at the gains of labor and black people that were wrested from the exploiters through struggle. From the racist atrocity in New Orleans to the ever-worsening conditions of life for working people and the oppressed, it is clear that looking to the Democratic Party is a dead end.

As we wrote in the preface to *Marxist Bulletin* No. 5 (Revised), “What Strategy for Black Liberation? Trotskyism vs. Black Nationalism”:

“Wage slavery has placed in the hands of black workers the objective conditions for successful revolt. But this revolt will be successful only if it takes as its target the system of class exploitation, the common enemy of black and white workers. The struggle to win black activists to a proletarian perspective is intimately linked to the fight for a new, multiracial class-struggle leadership of organized labor which can transform the trade unions into a key weapon in the battle against racial oppression. Such a leadership must break the grip of the Democratic Party upon both organized labor and the black masses through the fight for working-class political independence.”

In taking up the fight against racist attacks on campus, the SYC seeks to win students and youth over to the perspective of building a revolutionary workers party. Our model is the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky that led the workers to power in the Russian Revolution of October 1917, shattering capitalist rule. A revolutionary vanguard party would lead the fight against all manifestations of oppression, seeking to mobilize labor in defense of black people, immigrants, women and gays as part of the struggle to liberate humanity through socialist revolution. ■



Young Spartacus

SYC mobilized students in speakout against anti-affirmative action “bake sale” at Columbia, 9 March 2004.

the oppressed, and in the liberals’ and reformist left’s promotion of the campus administration as a potential fighter against oppression.

For Worker-Student Protest, Not Begging the Administration!

Students at the December 14 rally expressed frustration that Bollinger, known as a legal champion of affirmative action, had not followed up on his promises to address campus racism after the 2004 “bake sale.” A look at Columbia’s long history as a notoriously racist slumlord in upper Manhattan should dispel any illusions in the administration’s credentials for fighting oppression. As the third-largest landowner in New York City, Columbia is currently pushing yet another expansion plan that would drive even greater numbers of black and Latino people out of the areas surrounding the campus. Bollinger’s job is to administer Columbia on behalf of the capitalist class that rules this exploitative, repressive society. That includes training administrators, technicians, educators and intellectuals as well as the next generation of war criminals, union-busting lawyers and murderous spies needed to enforce capitalist exploitation and imperialist plunder—such as the brutal neocolonial occupation of Iraq.

Bollinger and the rest of the Columbia administration have been running their own union-busting campaign on campus, most recently by refusing to recognize the graduate student employees’ union. No doubt the Columbia administration is closely following the attempts of the New York University administration to bust the NYU Graduate Student Organiz-

ready been purged through the gutting of affirmative action and skyrocketing tuition. We demand the nationalization of the university system under student-teacher-worker control—abolish the administration! We stand for open admissions, no tuition and a state-paid living stipend for students! *Tear down the Columbia gates and let Harlem in!*

Right-wing forces on campuses around the country have been on an offensive against anything smacking of integration, public education, secularism, sexual liberation, anti-imperialism and defense of oppressed peoples in general. The latest chapter in right-wing snooping and sniping on campus developed this semester at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), where the right-wing Bruin Alumni Association launched an “Exposing UCLA’s Radical Professors” initiative, offering payments of up to \$100 to students who provide information on professors who are “abusive, one-sided or off-topic.” The association also published a “Dirty Thirty” list of left-wing and liberal professors. While outcry over this transparent witchhunt has led the association to drop its monetary incentive, such campaigns are sure to continue, and must be fought.

The Fight to Eliminate Racial Oppression

While militant struggle of students and broader social forces can succeed in temporarily beating back the most overt expressions of racism on campus, the fight must extend to uprooting the source of racism, the capitalist system. The oppression of black people in the U.S. derives from the heritage of chattel slavery, a barbaric remnant of which is the

Spartacus Youth Club Classes

CHICAGO

Tuesday, February 7, 7 p.m.
Finish the Civil War! Black Liberation Through Socialist 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, February 18, 2:00 p.m.
Capitalism Part III: Imperialism and the Third World
3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215
(Near Beverly/Vermont Red Line Station)
Information and readings: (213) 380-8239
or e-mail: slsycla@sbcglobal.net

NEW YORK

Wednesday, February 22, 7:30 p.m.
The Russian Revolution—How the Working Class Took Power
Columbia University
Hamilton Hall, Room 703
(116th & Broadway—take 1 train to 116th St.)
Information and readings: (212) 267-1025
or e-mail: nysl@compuserve.com

TORONTO

Wednesday, February 15, 6:30 p.m.
Venezuela: Bourgeois Nationalism vs. Proletarian Revolution! No Support to Chávez! For International Workers Revolution to Defeat Imperialism!
University of Toronto
Sidney Smith Building, Room 2112
100 St. George Street
Information and readings: (416) 593-4138
or e-mail: spartcan@on.aibn.com

VANCOUVER

Wednesday, February 22, 5 p.m.
From Berlin to Moscow—The ICL’s Fight Against Capitalist Counterrevolution—For New October Revolutions!
University of British Columbia
Student Union Building, Room 224
Information and readings: (604) 687-0353
or e-mail: tltt@look.ca

Visit the ICL Web Site:
www.icl-fi.org

Imperialist “Democracy” at Work

U.S. Torture Machine

We print below the conclusion of this article. Part One appeared in WV No. 862 (20 January).

Amnesty International (AI) was launched by British attorney Peter Benenson in 1961, at the height of the anti-Soviet Cold War. Benenson looked to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) as a model, and among his collaborators was his longtime friend Roger Baldwin, who helped set up AI's section in the U.S. Baldwin was a contradictory figure. During World War II, he assisted the Civil Rights Defense Committee, which defended Trotskyists against Smith Act prosecution for their opposition to U.S. entry into the interimperialist war. But he

PART TWO

was also head of the ACLU in 1940 when it purged the well-known Communist Party member Elizabeth Gurley Flynn from its board. Eleven years later the ACLU incorporated an anti-Communist resolution into its constitution, and throughout the McCarthyite witchhunts the organization regularly exchanged confidences and information with J. Edgar Hoover's FBI. (Baldwin resigned as ACLU director in 1950 to campaign for international “human rights.”) Among AI's other founding fathers was Lord Peter Archer, who went on to serve as solicitor general in the Labour Party government from 1975 to 1979 as it administered the British occupation of Northern Ireland, carrying out vicious repression that included frame-ups and torture of Irish Republican Army members.

From its inception, AI excluded from the category of “prisoners of conscience” those accused of advocating violence or carrying out violent acts. Under this rubric, AI refused to defend left-nationalist guerrillas fighting U.S.-backed puppet regimes and those imprisoned in anti-colonial wars of liberation. In 1964, AI dropped its designation of Nelson Mandela—imprisoned in apartheid South Africa—as a “prisoner of conscience” because he advocated armed struggle to overthrow that bloody white-supremacist regime. Francis Boyle, a former member of AI's board of directors, noted in *CovertAction* (13 June 2002) that AI is “the only human rights organization in the entire world to have refused to condemn apartheid in South Africa.”

Also excluded from AI's umbrella are those charged with espionage or treason (although this never stopped Amnesty from championing Soviet “dissident” and imperialist spy Anatoly Shcharansky). Thus Amnesty refused to give its vaunted “prisoner of conscience” designation to Mordechai Vanunu, the courageous Israeli nuclear technician imprisoned in 1986 for publicly exposing the Zionist state's nuclear arsenal.

Amnesty International: “Gulag” and Anti-Communism

While calling for inquiries into the case of Black Panther Party leader Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt), who was framed up by the FBI and Los Angeles police and imprisoned for 27 years for a killing they knew he did not commit, AI refused to call for his freedom. It took until 2000 for Amnesty to call even for a new trial for Mumia Abu-Jamal, a former Black Panther spokesman and renowned journalist framed up on false charges of killing a Philadelphia police officer in 1981.

imperialist intervention against Serbia, culminating in the 1999 U.S./NATO war. At the time of the failed U.S.-backed coup in Venezuela in 2002, Amnesty jumped into action—to condemn President Hugo Chávez for “crimes against humanity.” At its human rights film festival in Vancouver the following year, AI censored the film *The Revolution Will Not Be Televised*, which documented the failed coup.

In the past period, Amnesty has faced

WV told truth about pro-imperialist Soviet “dissidents” championed by Amnesty International: Andrei Sakharov campaigned for U.S. to develop nuclear first-strike weapons; Anatoly Shcharansky passed defense secrets to West.

Try the Traitors Sakharov!



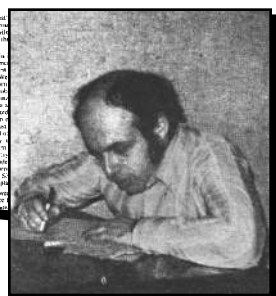
JUNE 4—The reported hunger strike of Russian “dissident” Andrei Sakharov, said to have begun on May 2, has become the latest anti-Soviet cause célèbre in the U.S. A New York Times (25 May) editorial, “The Cold Winter in Gorky,” denounced the “ugly,” “dangerous” and “vindictive” behavior of the Soviet “torturers” who have, they say, “usually denied medical treatment abroad” to Sakharov's wife Yelena Bonner, and who are allegedly forcing an “aging scientist” on protracted hunger strike to the “ultimate calamity.” Ronald Reagan has taken up the case, as has every anti-Com Mitterrand to West Germany or to Australia's Bill Kerr's mole.

Now the HBO cable network is rushing to broadcast.

28 July 1978

WORKERS VANGUARD 25c

Shcharansky Is Guilty As Hell!



8 June 1984

AI has repeatedly acted as a shill for U.S. and British military adventures. Its 1986 report critical of the Nicaraguan Sandinista regime was timed to help the Reagan administration gain additional Congressional funding for the counter-revolutionary Contra terrorists. To make the case for invading Iraq in 1991 after Saddam Hussein's troops had entered Kuwait, the first President Bush appeared on national TV waving a copy of an AI press release retailing a concocted story by the Kuwaiti ambassador's daughter that Iraqi soldiers killed 300 Kuwaiti babies by ripping them from their incubators and tossing them on a hospital floor. It took over ten years for AI to even mildly oppose the U.S.-imposed UN sanctions that killed over one and a half million Iraqis.

In 1996, AI sponsored a 25-city U.S. movie tour featuring a spokesman for the Croatian nationalist regime of Franjo Tudjman—an admirer of the fascist World War II-era Ustashi regime—who retailed lurid tales of mass rapes in Bosnia-Herzegovina by Serbians. This was part of an international campaign by liberals and feminists to drum up support for

criticism from liberal opponents of the Iraq war for its failure to oppose the invasion. In fact, William Schulz, executive director of Amnesty International USA, attacked antiwar organizations for not joining Bush's “war on terror,” railing that “the political left” has failed “to give the necessary attention, analysis and strategizing to the effort to counter terrorism and protect our fundamental right to security.”

One prominent member of AI is Diana Negroponte, wife of John Negroponte, Bush's Director of National Intelligence. As ambassador to Honduras from 1981 to 1985, John Negroponte oversaw the U.S.' dirty war against Sandinista-ruled Nicaragua. Working through Honduran military commander Gustavo Álvarez Martínez and his sadistic death squads, Negroponte used Honduras as a staging ground for Contra attacks on Nicaraguan hospitals, schools and bridges.

Diana Negroponte also sits on the Board of Trustees of Freedom House, whose main activity is supporting the counterrevolutionary Cuban *gusanos*. Her “human rights” colleagues at Freedom House include such Cold War crimi-

nals as Reagan's former UN ambassador Jeanne Kirkpatrick, who used her post to champion U.S.-backed torturers in Latin America and engage in bellicose diatribes against the Soviet Union. Another Freedom House veteran is Clinton's former CIA director James Woolsey. After leaving the administration, Woolsey and his fellow neo-cons at the Project for the New American Century wrote to Clinton in 1998 urging military action against Iraq's Saddam Hussein and his purported “weapons of mass destruction.” A leading light at Freedom House is Samuel Huntington, whose book *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order* provides ideological justification for the Bush gang's occupation of Iraq.

Soviet Dissidents and Trotskyist Defensism

Anti-Communism has always been a hallmark of Amnesty International. Throughout their histories, organizations such as Amnesty and Human Rights Watch have played a significant role in the imperialists' propaganda offensive against the USSR and, today, against the Cuban, Chinese, Vietnamese and North Korean deformed workers states. AI was particularly instrumental in aiding the imperialist “human rights” crusade of the Democratic Carter administration in the late 1970s by turning a slew of anti-Communist Soviet dissidents into international causes célèbres.

As Trotskyists who fought for the unconditional military defense of the Soviet degenerated workers state against imperialism and internal counterrevolution, we noted that among the Kremlin's crimes was that its stifling repression drove pro-socialist members of the intelligentsia into the arms of “democratic” counterrevolution. We sought to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy and re-establish workers democracy through proletarian political revolution. From that standpoint, we defended the right of free political expression even for anti-Communists provided that they did not actively work for the overthrow of the workers state. We also opposed the Soviet bureaucracy's stripping dissidents of their citizenship while they were abroad.

In contrast to the bourgeois civil libertarians and the fake leftists who joined in the imperialist anti-Soviet campaign, we stated in “Imperialists Howl Over ‘Human Rights’: The Main Enemy Is at Home” (WV No. 163, 24 June 1977):

“We repeat the warning we have sounded since the beginning of Carter's ‘human rights’ ploy: behind the liberal rhetoric stands the threat of imperialist war, principally directed against the Soviet Union. We are no friends of the Kremlin bureaucracy, which murdered thousands of Left Oppositionists, including Trotsky himself, and suppressed soviet democracy for all dissidents, socialist or otherwise. But in the face of this imperialist propaganda blitz aimed at undermining the Soviet degenerated workers state, we insist that the incomparably greater danger is the restoration of capitalism through bloody counterrevolution.”

In their efforts to undermine the Soviet workers state, AI and its brethren prominently publicized such pro-imperialist “dissidents” as right-wing Zionist Anatoly Shcharansky and Soviet physicist Andrei Sakharov. We supported Moscow's refusal to allow Sakharov, the father of the Soviet nuclear bomb, to emigrate to the West. This was a vital measure in defense of the Soviet Union, keeping its military secrets out of imperialist hands. Shcharansky was no mere “dissident”—he was guilty of treason for passing secrets to the West, something that even members of the bourgeois press at the time acknowledged

Pictorial Parade



WV Photo



Nelson Mandela (far left), shown with fellow ANC leader Walter Sisulu in Robben Island Prison, South Africa, 1965; former Black Panther leader Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt), San Quentin, 1985. Amnesty International dropped Mandela as “prisoner of conscience,” shunned Geronimo for years.

(see “Shcharansky Is Guilty As Hell!” WV No. 212, 28 July 1978).

Proletarian Rule and the Early Soviet Republic

Common to the entire spectrum of bourgeois ideologues—from Bush and the right wing of the Republican Party to AI and Democratic Party liberals—is the longstanding maxim that the Soviet Union, born of the only successful workers revolution in history, was the epitome of brutal repression. Barely a month goes by without another tome rehashing anti-Communist slanders—from outright reactionaries such as Harvard’s Richard Pipes, a former member of Reagan’s National Security Council, to ex-leftists like the authors of *The Black Book of Communism* (1997), an amalgam of Cold War propaganda and CIA lies about supposed Communist “crimes.” The 2004 Pulitzer Prize-winning book by Anne Applebaum, *Gulag: A History*, declared, “More broadly, ‘Gulag’ has come to mean the Soviet repressive system itself.”

These apologists for the bourgeois order want to impose the idea that capitalist society is the only world possible. They uphold the capitalist profit system built on centuries of the most vicious colonial oppression. In its highest stage, capitalism created a world dominated by a handful of imperialist powers, whose struggles for markets and sources of raw materials and cheap labor has led to two world wars and the plundering of colonies and neocolonies. Capitalism is a system predicated on exploitation and mass impoverishment, on brutal racial and national oppression and imperialist depredation.

One of the main techniques of the bourgeois ideologues has been to equate Communism with fascism, thereby not only smearing the former but also trivializing the unique and unspeakable crimes of the Holocaust, in which the *capitalist* government of Hitler’s Nazis murdered millions of Jews, Gypsies and others in a demented effort to eliminate whole peoples from the face of the earth. Some 27 million Soviet citizens died as result of the Nazi invasion. It was the Red Army that liberated central and East Europe from the fascist scourge.

In the London *Guardian* (19 September 2002), columnist Seumas Milne remarked on the equation of Communism with fascism: “The battle over history is never really about the past—it’s about the future.” He added, “Those who demonise past attempts to build an alternative to capitalist society are determined to prove that there is none.” The capitalist rulers are bent on spreading the most despicable lies in the hope of finally putting an end to the spectre of the October Revolution.

The world bourgeoisies and their mouthpieces loathe the fact that Lenin and the Bolsheviks applied the measures not only necessary to attain state power but essential to defend and consolidate working-class rule. In the name of “democracy,” the capitalist powers subjected the Russian Revolution not merely to the hammer and tongs of military encirclement and invasion, provocations and isolation, but to mountains of slander as well. Foremost among the slanders is the big lie that Stalinism—with its police-state repression and stultifying censorship, its bureaucratic privileges and economic mismanagement, its Great Russian chauvinism toward the USSR’s minority peoples—was the offspring of Leninism.

The main anti-communist argument is that the roots of the Moscow Trials of the 1930s and of the Stalinist gulags are to be found in the October Revolution itself, and in particular the “Red Terror” during the Civil War. In reality, the October Revolution was carried out with barely any human losses. As we wrote in “*Black Book: Anti-Communist Big Lie*” (WV No. 692, 5 June 1998):

“The fact that the Russian revolutionary proletariat, which came out of WWI decimated in an economically devastated country, was able to win the Civil War was itself irrefutable proof of the depth of support for the revolutionary cause. The workers fought heroically, sacrificing themselves to the point that the most



Basil Blackwell, Inc.

Left: Red Army commander Leon Trotsky rallies troops during 1920 war with French-backed Pilsudski dictatorship in Poland. Below: Soviet troops enter Ukrainian city of Odessa in 1919 during Civil War.



Novosti



conscious proletarian layers were virtually wiped out.”

Repression of counterrevolutionaries became more severe as counterrevolutionary atrocities increased—e.g., the 1918 attempts on the lives of Lenin and other leading Bolsheviks and the massacres of Communists and the terror wreaked against Jewish villages during the Civil War. Civil law in the early workers state guaranteed political rights for parties that recognized the rule of the soviets and codified the humane rehabilitation of common criminals. The early Bolshevik regime made a major distinction between the workers state’s legal codes—which had a more permanent quality and were based on rehabilitation and integration into society rather than on the cruel, religious concept of punishment—and the necessary and extraordinary measures needed to crush the forces of counterrevolution. The measures of the Red Terror and the campaigns of the Red Army against counterrevolutionaries were dictated by the laws of civil war.

Proletarian Justice

It would have been a crime had the Bolsheviks not utilized all means necessary to ensure victory. Trotsky, commander of the Red Army during the Civil War, explained in *Terrorism and Communism* (1920): “The working class, which seized power in battle, had as its object and its duty to establish that power unshakably, to guarantee its own supremacy beyond question, to destroy its enemies’ hankering for a new revolution, and thereby to make sure of carrying out Socialist reforms. Otherwise there would be no point in seizing power.”

For this task not only the Red Army was required. The war against counterrevolution was understood as an episode requiring temporary and drastic measures, and for that purpose the Cheka (Extraordinary Commission to Combat Counterrevolution and Sabotage) was established. The Cheka’s methods reflected the proletarian morality of the Soviet power. In 1918, Cheka head Felix Dzerzhinsky issued the following instructions:

“Let all those who are assigned to conduct searches, take people into custody, and imprison them behave solicitously toward those being arrested or searched. Let them be much more courteous even than toward close friends. Let them remember that the incarcerated cannot defend themselves and that they are in our power. Each and every one must remember that they represent Soviet power, the workers’ and peasants’ government, and that any verbal abuse, rudeness, injustice, or impropriety is a blot upon the Soviet power.”

—quoted in Anton Antonov-Ovseyenko, *The Time of Stalin* (1981)

When a small Moscow journal, *Cheka Weekly*, published a letter calling for the use of torture, the Cheka responded, “The

proletariat is merciless in its struggle. At the same time it is unshakable and strong. Not a single curse at our most wicked enemies. No tortures and torments!” The Presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, the highest governmental body, passed a decree that read, “Although the Soviet regime resorts of necessity to the most drastic measures of conflict with the counterrevolutionary movement, and remembers that the conflict with the counterrevolution has taken the form of open armed conflict, in which the proletariat and poor peasants cannot renounce the use of terror, the Soviet regime fundamentally rejects the measures advocated in the indicated article, as despicable, dangerous, and contrary to the interests of the struggle for Communism” (quoted in Roy A. Medvedev, *Let History Judge* [1972]).

The *Cheka Weekly* was closed down, the authors of the letter dismissed and forbidden to hold office in the Soviet republic. In the U.S., the authors of the Justice Department memo justifying torture, Alberto Gonzales and Jay Bybee, have been rewarded with appointments as U.S. attorney general and federal appeals court judge, respectively. Amnesty Interna-

tional and other liberals are concerned that such moves tear away at the “democratic” facade of murderous U.S. imperialism.

The revolutionary Bolsheviks intended their prisons to isolate counterrevolutionaries and rehabilitate them with the aim of reintegration into the society. What anti-communist ideologues portray as the “regime of forced labor” for counter-revolutionary prisoners was based on the idea that productive labor is the norm for all able-bodied citizens of a workers state. Article Two, point 18 of the 1918 Soviet Constitution explained, “The Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic considers work the duty of every citizen of the Republic, and proclaims as its motto: ‘He shall not eat who does not work.’” In a 29 June 1918 speech, Trotsky stated, “For centuries the workers and peasants have been cleaning the dirt of the ruling classes, but now let [the former ruling classes] clean [the dirt] which we are leaving behind, until such time as they join the working class in the pursuit of a common goal. We must place them in such conditions that they will lose the desire to remain bourgeois” (James Bunyan, *The Origin of Forced Labor in the Soviet State 1917-1921* [1967]).

Prisoners were offered “full opportunities for moral regeneration.” This meant labor aimed at training them to work and acquire skills, enabling them to be integrated into society as productive members of the working class. Even under conditions of extreme hardship, the Bolshevik regime insisted that working conditions in the prisons be covered by the general labor code that provided trade-union pay rates, food rations and other benefits.

Trotskyists Were Main Targets of Stalinist Repression

Following the political counterrevolution of 1923-24, the Stalinist bureaucracy made permanent many of the measures employed temporarily by the young workers state and twisted them into the most grotesque opposite of what the Bolsheviks had implemented. Under the Stalinist regime, prisons were transformed from institutions for re-education through labor into instruments of punishment through forced labor and all the old “tortures and torments” denounced by the early Soviet government.

The prisons under Lenin and Trotsky’s regime, which were filled with active counterrevolutionaries, cannot be equated with the bureaucracy’s concentration

continued on page 8



Corbis

Above: Former aristocrats put to work in Soviet Russia, 1921. Below: Former mansion became House of Rest for workers following October Revolution.

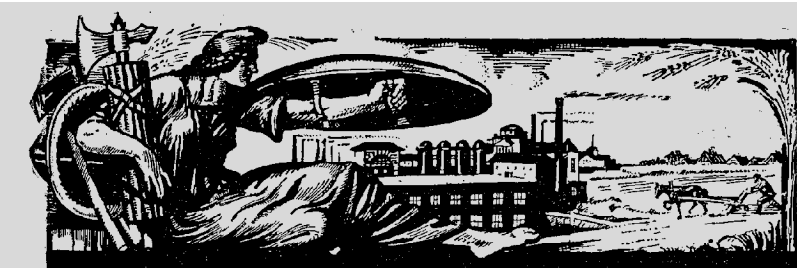
New York Public Library



We print below a translation of selected statutes and guidelines of the early Soviet workers state pertaining to prison labor, from the Russian-language book Gulag 1918-1960 (A.I. Kokurin, N.V. Petrov, eds. [Materik, 2002]).

Directive of the People’s Commissar of Justice on Prison Work Crews, 24 January 1918

- 1) From among the able-bodied detainees in jails, crews are to be formed for production needed by the state. The difficulty of this work is not to exceed that of an unskilled laborer.
- 2) Those under arrest (both those under investigation, and those convicted) receive pay at the level of salaries of the given field of industry for the labor they perform.
- 3) One-third of the above-specified pay goes into the prison’s general fund for improvement of the lives of the arrested; two-thirds is held in account for the arrested, and paid out upon their release.



From Early Soviet Correctional Labor Law

- 4) Upon the request of the arrested, one-tenth of the money earned by him may be paid out in cash at the end of each workweek.
- Correctional Labor Codex of the Russian Socialist Federation of Soviet Republics, 16 October 1924**
- Article 4: In order that the effect of corrective labor on the arrested be complete

and genuine, the jails of the previous period must be replaced by a continual improvement, and the maximal development, of a network of agricultural, artisan and workshop colonies and transitional correctional labor homes, built for the most part outside of cities.

Article 6: In detaining prisoners in correctional labor institutions, the latter must strive for proper influence on the prisoner, and reinforce those of his char-

acteristics and skills that could constrain him from further crimes. Detention must be consistent with this aim, and not inflicting physical torments or humiliation of human dignity.

Article 51: The employment of prisoners in labor has an educational-corrective character, aimed at training them to work, acquiring skills of a particular profession, giving them the chance to live the life of a worker upon their release.

Article 83: The task of cultural-enlightenment work is to raise the intellectual level and civil development of the prisoner by means of imparting to him a general education, a professional skill and a familiarity with the basis of Soviet society and the rights and obligations of citizens of the USSR.■

U.S. Torture...
(continued from page 7)

camps, which were filled with old Bolsheviks, left-wing intellectuals and class-conscious workers, as well as numerous others caught up in the web of Stalin’s terror. To consolidate his power, Stalin had to murder virtually every surviving member of the Bolshevik Central Committee of 1917 during the bloody purges of the 1930s, disproving the equation of Bolshevism with Stalinism.

The central purpose of Stalin’s terror was to repress and intimidate the proletariat whose political power the bureaucracy had usurped. Its primary victims were communist oppositionists, beginning with the Trotskyist Left Opposition, whose program was centered on the fight for international socialist revolution.

Significantly, the imperialist “democracies” had little problem with the Moscow Trials. The conservative Kremlin bureaucracy offered to the world bourgeoisie the renunciation of proletarian revolution internationally in exchange for empty pledges of “peace” toward the Soviet Union. Thus Stalin’s regime was seen as a “reasonable” alternative to the Bolshevik-Leninist opposition led by Trotsky. What the bureaucracy’s anti-Marxist dogma of “socialism in one country” meant was captured in Stalin’s 1936 interview with American journalist Roy Howard, where he explicitly disavowed the early Communist International’s aim of world socialist revolution as a “misunderstanding.” Stalin’s support to “democratic” imperialism through the policy of the “People’s Front” served to chain the proletariat in the capitalist world to a mythical “progressive” wing of the bourgeoisie. Its results were seen in the brutal suppression of the 1936-38 Spanish workers revolution by the Popular Front gov-

ernment that included the Spanish Communist Party.

New York Times Moscow correspondent Walter Duranty and U.S. ambassador Joseph E. Davies were among those who, as Trotsky put it, “assayed the Moscow trials as unalloyed gold.” Ambassador Davies’ 1941 book *Mission to Moscow*, later made into a film, was a despicable apologia for the purge trials. *Time* magazine picked Stalin as their “Man of the Year” for 1939 and 1942. As Trotsky noted in *Their Morals and Ours* (1938): “The big bourgeoisie of the democratic countries watched the execution of the revolutionists in the USSR, not without pleasure, though feigning abhorrence.”

In Stalin’s prison camps, the Trotskyists were the most resolute defenders of the prisoners’ rights. This produced innumerable cases of individual and collective heroism, which won the admiration of even those prisoners who did not share their revolutionary Marxist convictions, including many ex-Stalinists and purged bureaucrats. Most importantly, the Trotskyists remained steadfast in their defense of the October Revolution. Individual Trotskyists who survived the executions of 1937-38 were among the hundreds of thousands of revolutionaries in Stalin’s prison camps who requested to be sent to the front to fight against Hitler’s 1941 invasion of the USSR. When Stalin refused to allow this, they did what they could for the Soviet war effort by agreeing to the extension of the working day to 12 hours. In 1941, Stalin ordered a further wave of executions of political prisoners, including Trotsky’s sister Olga Kameneva and former Left Opposition leader Christian Rakovsky.

For New October Revolutions!

While Amnesty International takes no formal position on the violence and terror unleashed by the imperialists in war, it is



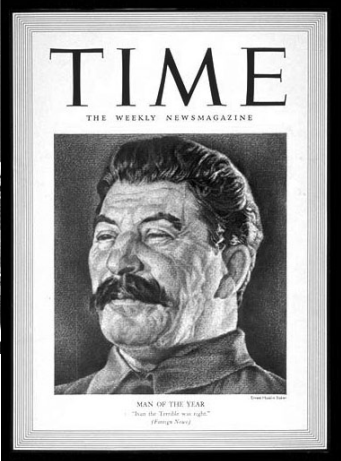
Basil Blackwell, Inc.
Trotskyist Left Oppositionists exiled to Siberia by Stalin demonstrate on anniversary of October Revolution, 1928.

resolutely opposed to the violence of the oppressed in their struggle for freedom. Projected backward in history, for the likes of AI “violent” slave rebellions such as those led by Denmark Vesey and Gabriel Prosser, as well as the Haitian Revolution, would have been unacceptable. AI & Co.’s campaigns for the bloody capitalist rulers to live up to their Constitutions, Conventions and Declarations serve to ideologically fortify a brutal system of exploitation that on an hourly basis maims, kills and tortures—not merely through military and police violence but through poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy and preventable industrial accidents. It was with the aim of ridding the world of capitalist barbarism that the Bolshevik Party took power, and that is the reason why Amnesty & Co. so despise the October Revolution and the workers state it created.

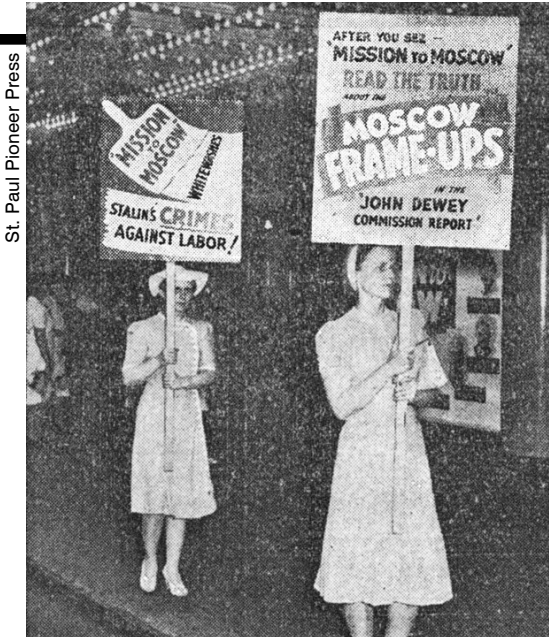
We fought for the defense of the Soviet Union and the deformed workers states of East Europe against the capitalist class enemy. We threw the bulk of our forces internationally into the incipient proletarian political revolution in East Germany in 1989-90, fighting for a Red Soviet Germany in a Socialist United States of Europe. Immediately following Boris Yeltsin’s August 1991 coup, our comrades in Moscow distributed thousands of leaflets titled “Soviet Workers: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!” calling for the workers to sweep away Yeltsin’s rabble. Today we are steadfast in our unconditional military defense of China, North Korea, Cuba and Vietnam.

As the founder of American Trotskyism, James P. Cannon, affirmed, “Who touches the Russian Question, touches a revolution.” The Soviet Union may be gone—but the necessity of defending the Russian Revolution is as vital as ever. The imperialists and their liberal torchbearers seek to rewrite history in order to ensure that the rule of capital is never again challenged. They would like to wipe out of the consciousness among the proletariat and the oppressed any attachment to the program or ideals of communism.

Our aim is to educate revolutionary-minded youth and proletarian fighters with the aim of building revolutionary parties modeled on Lenin and Trotsky’s Bolsheviks, in the U.S. and internationally, to lead the working class to power. Thus will be finally realized the goal expressed in the workers’ anthem, the “Internationale”: “The international Soviet shall be the human race.” Only then will mankind be able to achieve a society of abundance, free of coercion, where the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all.■



Imperialists saw Stalin as “reasonable” alternative to Trotsky’s Bolshevik-Leninists. Left: Former ambassador Joseph Davies’ 1941 book Mission to Moscow, apologia for Stalin’s terror; Time (January 1940) named Stalin “Man of the Year.” Right: Trotskyists protest Mission to Moscow film, St. Paul, 1943.



Iran...

(continued from page 1)

Joint Nuclear Operations,” called for giving “joint force commanders” the authority to launch nuclear attacks under a number of scenarios. “It is essential,” the document asserts, “that US forces are determined to employ nuclear weapons if necessary to prevent or retaliate against WMD use.” Under such guidelines, the commanders would have had authority to launch a nuclear strike against Iraq in 2003. Those who would be given such authority include the likes of retired Lt. Gen. William G. Boykin, who once declared in reference to a 1993 battle in Somalia with a Muslim warlord, “I knew my God was bigger than his.”

The irrational, anarchic, profit-driven capitalist system has been made even more irrational in this epoch of imperialist decay. Mass slaughter is the concentrated expression and ultimate logic of the “normal” brutal workings of the capitalist system, which daily condemns countless numbers around the world to death by malnutrition, lack of medical care and industrial murder.

What is necessary is class-struggle opposition to U.S. imperialism by the multiracial proletariat in the U.S. The primary obstacle to this course is the pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy, whose acceptance of the capitalist profit system and promotion of U.S. imperialism’s interests internationally chain the working class to the class enemy. The working class needs revolutionary leadership. If there is to be a future for the working class, minorities and youth other than one of grinding exploitation, joblessness, repression and war, if the impoverished masses of the world are to have a future other than starvation and imperialist subjugation, then this whole system must be torn up by its roots through socialist revolutions and replaced by a rational, planned economy internationally. The Spartacist League fights to build a revolutionary workers party—a U.S. section of a reformed Fourth International—that will lead the U.S. proletariat in a fight to sweep away the bloody imperialist system and establish workers rule.

Defend China!

The U.S. saber rattling against Iran also poses a serious threat to China. Having emerged victorious from the Cold War against the USSR, U.S. imperialism now has as a strategic target the Chinese deformed workers state, where capitalist rule was overthrown through the 1949 revolution. The imperialists have pursued a two-pronged strategy for capitalist restoration in China: economic penetration and military pressure.

An *Asia Times* (2 December 2004) article noted: “Increasingly, the image of the Islamic Republic of Iran as a sort of frontline state in a post-Cold War global lineup against US hegemony is becoming prevalent among Chinese and Russian foreign-policy thinkers.” China gets 14 percent of the oil for its growing economy from Iran. In late 2004, China signed a \$70 billion deal with Iran for oil and natural gas for some 30 years, under which China’s state-owned oil company Sinopec will get a 51 percent stake in Iran’s Yadavaran oil field and its estimated three billion barrels of reserves.

U.S. imperialism has placed military bases in Central Asia, aiming toward a strategic encirclement of China as well as enhancing U.S. efforts to control oil resources against both capitalist Russia and the Chinese workers state. While the U.S. has been bogged down in Iraq, it has pursued a “containment policy” against China, including by strengthening military ties with Japanese imperialism—for example, through last year’s U.S.-Japan pact to defend capitalist Taiwan against Red China. Last year, the U.S. agreed to provide nuclear-armed India with additional nuclear technology in an attempt “to improve ties with India, in part as a counterweight to China” (*New York Times*, 19 July 2005). Simply put: It’s OK for allies of U.S. imperialism to have nukes,

but not for so-called “rogue states.”

As Trotskyists, we fight for the unconditional military defense of the remaining deformed workers states—China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba—against military attack and capitalist counterrevolution. Thus we support China and North Korea’s testing and possessing nuclear arms as a necessary deterrent against imperialist nuclear blackmail. China’s modest nuclear arsenal is an important measure of such deterrence.

It is vital that China oppose the imperialist drive to disarm Iran. However, while verbally opposing UN sanctions against Iran, the Beijing Stalinist regime is collaborating with the imperialists. Along with Russia, China has just agreed to U.S. and European demands that Iran be hauled before the UN Security Council. Similarly, China helped broker imperialist “negotiations” aimed at stopping nuclear weapons development by North Korea, which last year announced that it had developed nuclear weapons. Beijing’s role was particularly criminal



Landau/Jerusalem Post

given that anything that undermines the defense of the North Korean deformed workers state will redound against the Chinese deformed workers state.

The Beijing Stalinists’ policy of “peaceful coexistence” with imperialism undermines China’s own defense. We fight for workers political revolutions in the deformed workers states to oust the Stalinist bureaucracies and replace them with regimes based on democratically elected workers and peasants councils. Such revolutionary regimes must be guided by a program of revolutionary internationalism, fighting to extend proletarian rule through international socialist revolution, particularly in the imperialist centers of the U.S., Japan and West Europe.

Nuclear Cowboys on the Loose

Since 2003, Iran has been subject to inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which has found no evidence of a nuclear weapons program. After Iran announced on January 3 that it would restart its enrichment facility at Natanz, Bush pushed to bring Iran before the UN Security Council to impose sanctions. Economic sanctions are an act of war. Both the 1991 and 2003 wars against Iraq were preceded and prepared by UN-imposed sanctions.

The Bush White House has embraced many of the positions of the Zionist “neo-conservative” think tank “Project for the New American Century,” which has long advocated “regime change” in Iran as well as Iraq as part of securing U.S. control of the Near East. Central to that perspective is the carving of a “cordon sanitaire” around Israel through installing pliant regimes in surrounding countries.

As reported by Seymour Hersh in a 24 January 2005 *New Yorker* article, “The Coming Wars”:

“The [Bush] Administration has been conducting secret reconnaissance missions inside Iran at least since last summer. Much of the focus is on the accumulation of intelligence and targeting information on Iranian nuclear, chemical, and missile sites, both declared and suspected. The goal is to identify and isolate three dozen, and perhaps more, such tar-

gets that could be destroyed by precision strikes and short-term commando raids.”

Israeli politicians have hinted that Israel, which bombed Iraq’s Osirak nuclear plant in 1981, might bomb Iran’s nuclear facilities. With the recent Hamas victory in the Palestinian legislative elections, the Zionist rulers will likely further whip up hysteria about “Islamic terrorism” to both ratchet up threats against Iran and step up repression of the Palestinian people. The U.S., which last year supplied Israel with 500 “bunker buster” bombs, might give Israel the go-ahead to attack Iran. But unlike Iraq in ’81, Iran today has at least nine different facilities, mainly underground, making such an operation far more difficult. Iran has warned that it would respond to an attack by hitting Israel and Western forces in the Persian Gulf, with one Iranian general pointing out, “The world knows Iran has a ballistic missile power with a range of 2,000 km” (*London Observer*, 29 January).

There are a number of obstacles to a U.S. assault on Iran. Since Iran sits on 10

as uranium enrichment takes place on Russian soil. While not rejecting the proposal, Iranian officials have complained that it is “not sufficient for Iran’s nuclear energy needs.”

Workers to Power!

Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who won office in June, is a reactionary who spreads poisonous anti-Semitism. In November he called the slaughter of six million Jews in the Nazi Holocaust a “myth” and said that Israel should be “wiped out from the map of the world.”

The 1979 Iranian “Islamic Revolution” that overthrew the CIA-backed Shah was supported by the bulk of the left internationally in the name of “anti-imperialism.” This included the pro-Moscow Tudeh (Masses) party in Iran, which had a base in the country’s strategic, heavily Arab oil workers. The International Communist League (then the international Spartacist tendency) uniquely warned from the outset of the 1978-79 upheaval that, absent a decisive break by the working class with



Israeli technician Mordechai Vanunu, shown being taken to Jerusalem court after 1986 abduction by Mossad, was imprisoned for 18 years for revealing Zionists’ nuclear arsenal in *London Sunday Times* (5 October 1986).

percent of the world’s oil reserves, an attack would propel oil prices even higher internationally, likely sparking an international economic crisis. Moreover, the U.S. military is severely stretched in enforcing the savage occupation of Iraq. Under such circumstances, the U.S. cannot occupy a country as large and populous as Iran without re-instituting a draft, which would not go down well with a U.S. populace that increasingly opposes the Iraq occupation. Meanwhile, as an unintentional consequence of the U.S. occupation, Shi’ite parties that have historically had close ties with the Shi’ite regime in Iran now hold power in Iraq. An attack on Iran would enrage Iraq’s Shi’ite majority and rally much of the Iranian population behind the fundamentalist regime in Tehran.

France and Germany support the U.S. demand that the UN Security Council “handle” Iran, which could lead to sanctions. Bush has found an ally with the new, right-wing German chancellor, Angela Merkel, who declared at a January 29 press conference in Jerusalem that a nuclear-armed Iran “is not just a threat to Israel, but also to the democratic countries of this world” (*New York Times*, 30 January). Meanwhile, French president Jacques Chirac launched a political storm in Europe by announcing his own doctrine of pre-emptive nuclear war. Threatening “the leaders of states who use terrorist means against us, as well as those who would consider using, in one way or another, weapons of mass destruction,” he said that the “response” by nuclear-armed France “could be a conventional one. It could also be of a different kind.”

But Germany, which trades heavily with Iran, and France, which has large investments there, have also sought to balance U.S. belligerence by pushing “negotiations” and diplomatic pressure. Even the staunchly pro-American British Labour government has declared, in the words of Foreign Secretary Jack Straw, that “there isn’t a military option.” Hedging its bets, the Bush administration has announced its support for a recent Russian proposal that would allow Iran to operate civilian nuclear facilities as long

the Islamic forces, the struggle would have a disastrous outcome. We said: “Down with the Shah! Don’t bow to Khomeini! For workers revolution in Iran!” After taking power, the mullahs enslaved women in the veil, slaughtered thousands of leftists and trade unionists and intensified repression against Kurds and other minorities.

It is the task of the working class in Iran, leading all the oppressed behind it, to overthrow the Persian-chauvinist Islamic regime. Key to this perspective is the forging of a Marxist workers party. Such parties must be built throughout the Near East to unite the proletariat—Arab, Persian, Kurdish and Hebrew, Sunni and Shi’ite, Muslim and Christian—in struggle against imperialism and against the Zionists, mullahs, colonels, sheiks and all the other capitalist rulers. The fight for workers rule in the Near East crucially includes shattering the Zionist garrison state from within through Arab/Hebrew workers revolution. The Stalinized Communist Parties of the Near East, which made a mockery of this revolutionary perspective, share responsibility for the growth of Islamic fundamentalism among the working and oppressed masses. Marxist workers parties are essential to break the proletariat of the region from fundamentalism and all forms of nationalism in the struggle for a socialist federation of the Near East.

The conquest of power by the proletariat does not complete the socialist revolution, but only opens it by changing the direction of social development. Short of the international extension of the revolution, particularly to the advanced, industrialized imperialist centers, that social development will be arrested and ultimately reversed. Defense of those subjugated by the imperialists around the globe demands the pursuit of class struggle in the U.S. and other imperialist centers, and ultimately requires a proletarian struggle for power. If the imperialists are not to plunge humanity into nuclear Armageddon, they must be overthrown through socialist revolutions internationally. This underscores the urgent need to reforge Trotsky’s Fourth International, the world party of socialist revolution.■

Dockers...

(continued from page 12)

13 workers were arrested and charged with property damage, assault and resisting arrest. In accelerated trials, recalling the police-state justice meted out to North African youth following the November ghetto revolts in France, nine of these workers were sentenced to prison terms of two to four months.

In a wretched capitulation to the chauvinist violence-baiting of the workers attacked in Strasbourg, the bureaucrats of the German ver.di service sector union stated that the workers’ “action has elicited sharp criticism from the union” (*Hamburger Abendblatt*, 17 January). This has outraged class-conscious workers from the Hamburg port and undermines the international unity of the harbor workers, which is vital for defending their interests against the bosses. **An injury to one is an injury to all! Free the imprisoned dockers! Drop all the charges!**

We print below excerpts from a translation of a special 9 January supplement of *Spartakist*, newspaper of the Spartakist Workers Party, German section of the International Communist League.

* * *

The European Transport Workers Federation (ETF) has called on port workers and seamen across Europe to protest on January 11 and 16. On January 16 there is to be a harbor workers’ demonstration in Strasbourg, France, where the EU Parliament will decide on the Port Package 2 bill on January 18. Port Package 2 would allow cargo handling by seamen or the ship owners’ own employees, who are not covered by the harbor union contract. It would also mean that when new owners take over a container terminal facility, they would not be obligated to retain the existing workforce and contract. Port Package 2 can and must be beaten back. The key to doing that is international class struggle, which must

be independent of the interests of the bosses and their state. Shut the harbors down tight on January 11 and 16! Picket lines must ensure that no containers and no cargo move, that everything comes to a standstill.

The Port Package and Bolkestein are meant to play workers against each other all across Europe. In many West European countries, East European workers are brought in to undermine union wages and drive the wage level down. In Hamburg, young newly hired harbor workers are forced to work for lower wages. Attempts are already being made to bring in seamen to break union wage scales. And within individual countries they are trying to play workers against each other, as in France, where harbor workers on the Atlantic and Mediterranean coasts have different working conditions and are hardly ever mobilized in joint struggle. East European workers are used as cheap labor to suppress the wages of the existing workforce. The lowest-paid workers are being shipped all around Europe. These attacks, like the rollback of the “welfare state,” are being carried out across Europe by both “leftist” social-democratic and conservative governments.

When the trade-union leadership raises slogans such as “Harbor work for harbor workers,” we have to point out: This slogan is craft unionist in character and potentially nationalist-protectionist. In the U.S., it is a right won through struggle that seamen who unload ships in smaller ports are paid dock workers’ wages. Harbor workers must ally with everyone—seaman or immigrant—who unloads ships, and unionize them and fight for full union wages for all. The same applies to port truckers and everyone else who has to slave away in the harbor for wages below contract levels. **Harbor workers’ wages for harbor work!** This is the only way to spike attempts by the capitalists to pit different sectors of the workers against each other. **The Port Package scheme means destruction of the harbor workers’ unions and even**

worse working conditions for seamen! Harbor workers must support seamen fighting for union wages! Organize all the unorganized working in the port! Defend the harbor workers union!

The international union movement must also mobilize against “anti-terror” measures like ISPS [International Ship and Port Facility Security], Port Security and security fences, which are aimed at massively restricting the freedom of movement of seamen, harbor workers, union representatives, including to and from seamen’s missions [service centers run by the church]. With their “war on terror,” the capitalists and their governments are taking aim at the multiethnic working class and seek to divide it. **Down with the anti-Muslim witchhunt! For full freedom of movement of harbor workers throughout the harbor! Defend the right of seamen to unrestricted shore leave!**

The bourgeoisie’s attacks can be thrown back only through class struggle! But that is not the outlook of the current union leadership. It is bound with a thousand threads to the SPD [Social Democratic Party] and in part to the PDS/Linkspartei. These social-democratic parties are bourgeois workers parties. That means that they have a capitalist program and pro-capitalist leadership, with a working-class base. **For a class-struggle union leadership! For a multiethnic revolutionary workers party!**

Resistance against the Port Package and Bolkestein affects the imperialist EU itself. The EU is a bloc of capitalist states for the oppression and exploitation of the working masses of Europe and other countries, mainly in competition with the U.S. While the individual EU countries can keep the lid on their mutually conflicting interests only with difficulty, the EU unites the ruling classes of Europe to exploit the laboring masses. **Down with the imperialist EU! Down with racist fortress Europe! For the socialist united states of Europe!**

It is necessary for workers to unite against the exploiters rather than be

played off against each other. It is in the unions’ best interests to fight for the rights of every worker, wherever he comes from. On 9 December 2005, 150,000 workers demonstrated in Ireland in solidarity with seamen from Irish Ferries. The union members took to the streets in droves to support the Irish Ferries workers, who had occupied two ships to prevent the company from forcibly removing the mainly Irish crew and replacing them with immigrant workers at only half the Irish minimum wage. Dermot Meagher, one of those occupying the *Isle of Inishmore*, said: “We have no objection to any nationality working here—but they must be paid properly and given proper conditions” (*Socialist Worker* [Britain], 10 December 2005). The leadership of the union the seamen belong to, SIPTU, then accepted a contract for the East European seamen which instead of establishing equal wages only established the Irish minimum wage, thus sanctioning wage slashing. It is the internationalist duty of the West European unions to support the workers of East Europe in building powerful unions. **Equal pay for equal work! Full citizenship rights for everyone who’s made it here! Stop deportations through workers actions! Down with all employment bans!**

The millions in profits that make it into the pockets of a few port bosses and ship owners come from the surplus value created by the sweat and the blood of workers. In a socialist society with a planned economy social wealth would go to benefit all—for example, schools with enough teachers, free education, free medical care and generous pensions. But to attain that we need a workers revolution led by a multiethnic revolutionary workers party that smashes the capitalist system and replaces it with an international, egalitarian socialist society. The Marxist Spartakist Workers Party seeks to convince workers of the need to put an end to the system of exploitation, racism and war. **Victory to the port workers!■**

NYC Transit...

(continued from page 12)

Dues collections should be done by elected union officers, making them answerable to the membership.

Transit workers, who have already been docked pay, are threatened with heavy fines. The TWU and ATU locals and officials face their own penalties, including \$3.4 million in fines and possible jail time. It is the duty of the entire labor movement to rally to the defense of the NYC transit unions (see article, page 11). The court date to contest these penalties has been postponed to March 3. But transit workers are still under the gun. The *New York Post* (28 January) rails that “if the union is suicidal enough to think about striking again” then the courts should “toss Roger Toussaint and the rest of the TWU leaders behind bars.”

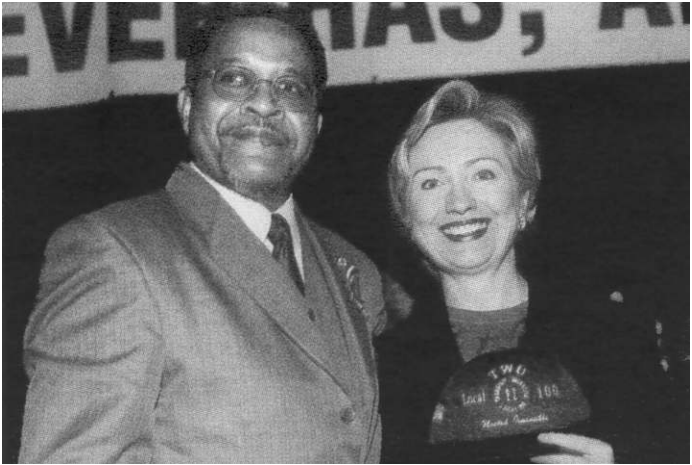
The transit workers face a tough decision. They felt their power to turn back the tide of assaults on labor when they shut down subways and buses in December. But they are increasingly distrustful of a union leadership that, after calling them out on strike, did not finish the job and sweep all the givebacks off the table. The union bureaucracy then kept the membership atomized, with voting on the contract done by e-mail and by phone rather than at a mass meeting. Just such a mass meeting is needed *now* to remobilize the workers. Workers must be able to debate what to do and who should lead them through this battle. It was only by engaging in class struggle that they beat back the MTA’s most onerous demands in December. Transit workers must now prepare to resume strike action if pushed to the wall by the MTA. That means critically reviewing the December strike and electing bargaining and strike committees responsible to the membership.

Labor Solidarity Is Key

The transit strike resonated with workers nationally and internationally. It galvanized broad support among New York’s working people and poor, among blacks and Latinos, who cheered this powerful, integrated union for fighting the MTA bosses. Despite the inconveniences caused by the strike, working people recognized the transit workers struggle as their own. The strike intersected anger at the U.S. government’s criminally negligent abandonment of the poor and black population of New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina and the ever-widening gap between the obscenely rich capitalists and the mass of the population. The strike also intersected growing opposition to the U.S. rulers’ bloody neocolonial occupation of Iraq and their broad-gauge attacks on democratic rights in the name of the “war on terror.” The TWU could further strengthen its support in the city by reviv-

TWU Local 100 head Roger Toussaint embracing Democrat Hillary Clinton at December 2001 union meeting.

Hendrickson/Local 100 Express



ing the historic union demand for free mass transit.

As *Workers Vanguard* has stressed from the beginning of the transit contract battle, key to smashing the Taylor Law is forging a fighting alliance of the transit unions and all of NYC labor at the head of the city’s working masses and its ghetto and barrio poor. Mayor Bloomberg intends to foist the 1.5 percent health care concession on other municipal unions, some of which are working without contracts. What was needed in December and is needed now is solidarity *action* by all regional rail unions and city labor. But despite the broad public support, the transit workers were left high and dry by the city labor officialdom. Beholden to their capitalist political bosses in the Democratic and Republican parties, UFT teachers union president Randi Weingarten, SEIU 1199 head Dennis Rivera and the other union tops refused to even say that they supported the strike. For its part, the Local 100 leadership failed to spread the strike by throwing up pickets at regional rail locations, including at Metro-North where workers are on the job without a contract. One TWU member told WV on the picket line that some union officers encouraged probationary and provisional

workers, who lack full union protection, to scab on the strike! A union leadership worth its salt would fight for all workers to have full union rights from the first day on the job.

The urgent need for hard class struggle against the MTA highlights the importance of fighting for labor’s political independence from the capitalist state and political parties. A New York *Daily News* (22 January) article, titled “TWU Money Train for Pols,” documents how the Local 100 leadership has doled out \$3.7 million since 2001 to sleazy politicians—both Democrats and Republicans—in the city council, state legislature and federal government. The Local 100 and city labor tops are no different from the national AFL-CIO and “Change to Win” bureaucracies, whose class collaborationism is exemplified by their political support to the Democratic, and sometimes Republican, parties and by their “America First” chauvinism. What did this money buy? Empty promises and false friends.

The newspapers report that some in the union are weighing whether the union should drag out negotiations until after the November gubernatorial elections, when Democratic attorney general Eliot Spitzer hopes to replace the Repub-

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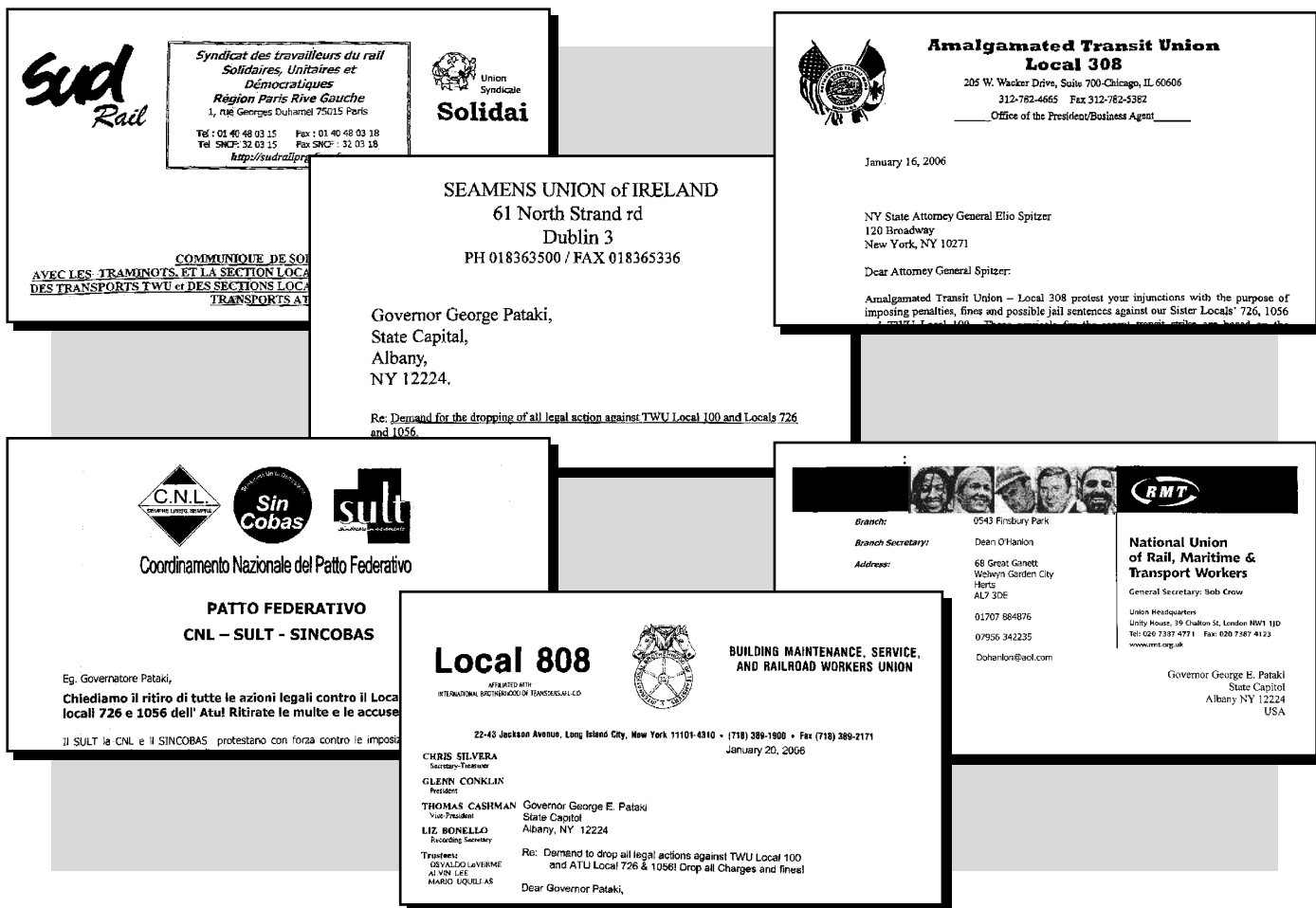
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International Solidarity with TWU, ATU

Trade unions nationally and internationally have responded to an appeal by the Partisan Defense Committee (see WV No. 862, 20 January) for solidarity with NYC transit unions facing massive fines and possible jailing of their leaders following their strike in December, which defied the state Taylor Law’s ban on public workers strikes. The unions have sent protest letters to New York State attorney general Eliot Spitzer, Governor George Pataki and NYC mayor Michael Bloomberg demanding no reprisals against Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 100 and Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) locals 726 and 1056, as well as messages of support to the unions.

As Chicago ATU Local 308’s letter to Pataki stated, the threats against the transit unions “prove once again that the supposed rights of the population are in fact honored only in the breach when it comes to working people, the poor and minorities.” Demonstrating the impact of the strike internationally was a letter to TWU Local 100 from the Betriebsrat der Gesamthafenarbeiter (port workers council) in Hamburg, Germany, which recently shut down the port to protest threatened anti-union legislation (see article, page 12). The letter stated: “Your strike in defiance of the vicious anti-union Taylor law was an absolutely necessary stand to stop mounting attacks against the transport workers of New York City. Your strike set an example for the other NYC workers, as well as working people across the U.S. and internationally.”

Other messages of solidarity include letters from Teamsters Local 813 sanitation workers and AFSCME District



Top from left: French SUD rail union, Paris region; Seamens Union of Ireland; ATU Local 308, Chicago. Bottom from left: Italian Federation of CNL-SULT-SINCOBAS unions; Teamsters Local 808, New York; National Union of Rail, Maritime & Transport Workers, London.

Council 1707 in New York City, National Association of Letter Carriers Branch 2200 in Pasadena, AFSCME Local 444 water utility workers in Oakland, and Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association Local 9 in San Bruno,

California, which has been victimized by Northwest Airlines’ vicious union-busting. Unions in Britain, Ireland, France and Italy have also issued protest letters.

The court hearing for the TWU

and ATU locals, originally scheduled for January 20, has been postponed to March 3. All of labor must take a stand with the NYC transit unions. Down with the Taylor Law! Defend the right to strike!

lican Pataki. But Spitzer is the one who brought down Taylor Law injunctions against the union, not only last month but in 1999 and 2002 when TWU members voted to strike!

A Rotten “Opposition”

The kind of class-struggle leadership the TWU needs is not what’s offered by the “Vote No Coalition” formed by various and sundry opponents of the Toussaint bureaucracy, most of whom were at one point members of the former New Directions (ND) group that propelled Toussaint into office. The left side of this lash-up, now called the “Committee for a Better Contract,” includes former NDers Steve Downs, who is supported by the fake-socialist Solidarity outfit, and Executive Board member Marty Goodman, who is supported by the reformist Socialist Action group. They are joined by Eric Josephson, who is hailed by the counterfeit “Marxists” of the League for the Revolutionary Party (LRP). Occupying the right side of this opportunist alliance are Local 100 vice presidents and former NDers John Mooney, a vice president from the Stations division who urged workers to support Bloomberg in the last mayoral election, and Ainsley Stewart, who echoed the traitors of the TWU International by *opposing* the strike.

After the vote against the contract deal, Local 100 Secretary-Treasurer Ed Watt railed against “some people whose only goal is to disrupt the union, who were working with the governor’s office and the MTA.” This is from the same Ed Watt who sits on the MTA board—a living example of the TWU bureaucracy’s class-collaborationist program. Watt labeled the opposition campaign “a COINTELPRO style of disinformation,” essentially baiting his opponents as police agents. This really takes chutzpah. The Toussaint leadership has long touted Patrolmen’s Benevolent Association head Patrick Lynch as a union “ally.” During the strike, Toussaint repeatedly invoked the cops as fellow workers. The Local 100 tops even



January 27: Local 100 executive board members Marty Goodman (left), supported by Socialist Action, and Ainsley Stewart, who opposed strike, are part of opportunist lash-up against Toussaint bureaucracy.

put a photo and quote by Lynch, from a rally prior to the strike, in the January edition of the union newsletter under the headline, “We Were Not Alone.”

Make no mistake: The cops are the armed thugs of the capitalist state whose job is to repress labor, including by enforcing Taylor Law injunctions, and to terrorize minorities. Cops and security guards, whose job is to protect the bosses’ property, have no business in the unions: MTA Property Protection Agents out of the TWU! You won’t hear this basic truth from the opposition bloc’s fake “militants.” In a January 21 television interview on *New York 1*, Goodman was asked about contract negotiations for teachers and police. He replied: “We all deserve contract justice.”

Class-struggle militants also oppose on principle bringing the courts into union affairs. The intervention by the courts, or any other agency of the capitalist state apparatus, is meant only to weaken the unions and reduce their capacity to struggle against the bosses, as the anti-strike injunctions and massive

fines under the Taylor Law attest. Labor must clean its own house!

Stewart, Mooney and three other vice presidents brought a \$3.3 million lawsuit against the union last year (although it was put in abeyance in the lead-up to the strike). This is not surprising, given that such suits were the stock in trade of New Directions when it was fighting the “Old Guard” Local 100 bureaucracy. Steve Downs openly supports such suits, while Goodman pretends to oppose them. But Goodman was a New Directions activist through Toussaint’s election in 2000, which was prepared by years of anti-union lawsuits. And no sooner had Toussaint become president than he tossed Goodman and the other servile “militants” aside, like so many squeezed lemons. Not one to learn from experience, Goodman, in an article he co-wrote in *Socialist Action* (January 2006), bemoans the demise of New Directions as leaving “dissidents” without a vehicle to challenge the Toussaint leadership. In fact, New Directions was always and only a vehicle to promote the careers of phony “militants” inside the TWU bureaucracy.

The rotten history of Toussaint and New Directions in suing their opponents in the TWU did not keep opportunist “militant” Eric Josephson from voting for New Directions and Toussaint in 2000 and urging other union members to do likewise. Josephson justifies this betrayal of class principle by saying he gave Tous-

saint “critical support.” How Josephson defines “critical” can be gleaned from an article on the transit strike in a special edition of the LRP’s *Proletarian Revolution* (Winter 2006). The article includes not one word of criticism of Josephson’s bloc partners—not on their history of supporting ND and suing the union, not on Stewart’s opposition to the strike. Not only that, it calls for extending the “united front,” aiming for the union’s elections this fall—i.e., they want a warmed-over version of New Directions.

At a January 27 “Transit Workers Fightback” event organized by *Labor Notes*, which has itself long supported court intervention into the Teamsters and other unions in the name of fighting “corruption,” Steve Downs, the principal speaker, barely gave lip service to the need for further strike action. From the floor, one transit worker noted that Downs never addressed the obstacle posed by the union leadership’s ties to the Democrats. He continued by calling for a workers party—“not a British Labour Party, but a fighting workers party.”

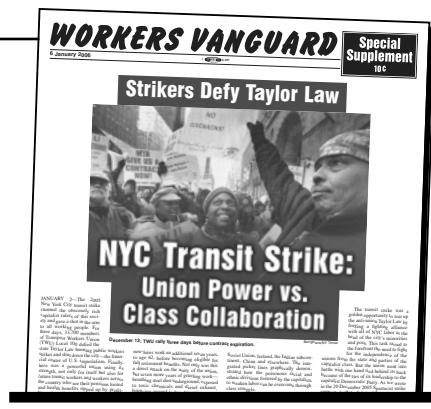
That is exactly what’s needed: a multi-racial revolutionary workers party to lead all the exploited and oppressed in the struggle for a workers government, which will rip the tremendous wealth of this society out of the hands of the exploiters and create a planned, collectivized economy. This is the only road to providing a decent life for all. ■

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WORKERS VANGUARD

**For United Labor Action to Smash the Taylor Law!
Break with the Democrats! For a Workers Party!**

Defiant NYC Transit Workers Reject Contract

JANUARY 30—Continuing to resist attacks on their livelihood, New York City transit workers who shut down public transport in the financial center of U.S. capitalism with a three-day strike in December have rejected the proposed new contract. The stage is now set for further battle against the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) bosses and the capitalist government, who are making no secret of their desire to exact vengeance for the strike, which defied the state Taylor Law banning strikes by public employees.

The first city-wide transit strike in 25 years was an impressive battle by the 33,700 members of Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 100, joined by Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) locals 726 and 1056, against the MTA's attacks on pensions, wages and working conditions. But it was stopped after 60 hours by the Local 100 Executive Board under Roger Toussaint without a contract in hand and without winning amnesty from Taylor Law penalties. Strikers' resentment at the squandering of their power grew as the terms of the proposed contract came out. While the strike beat back the MTA's demand that new-hires fork over 6 percent of their pay toward their pensions (workers currently pay 2 percent), the Toussaint leadership agreed to a major concession whereby workers would pay 1.5 percent

Arbitration Is a Trap!



WV Photo

December 13: NYC transit workers rallying as contract expiration approached.

of gross wages toward retiree health benefits. Despite an all-out ratification campaign by the union tops, the pact was rejected by a narrow margin of seven votes, out of more than 22,000 cast.

Enraged over the rejection of the pact, the MTA bosses, backed by city and state politicians and the capitalist media, have renewed the attack against the union. The MTA is provocatively demanding all of

the massive givebacks that led to the strike, from the two-tier pension payments to eliminating train conductors and "broadbanding" (combining job duties) for cleaners and others. The MTA also announced it would take back an agreement, worth some \$132 million, returning to union members extra money the workers had put into their retirement fund but which had been kept by the state. With a possible presidential campaign in mind, Republican governor George Pataki had declared that he would refuse to "reward" the workers for the illegal strike by returning their own money to them.

The MTA's demands are a serious threat that the union must counter by relying on the power it showed with the strike. The MTA has appealed to the state Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) for binding arbitration. Prior to the strike, the TWU leadership correctly opposed binding arbitration, which takes contract decisions out of the hands of the membership and puts them into the hands of a supposedly "neutral" board that is in fact on the side of the company. The PERB may also try to revoke the dues checkoff. It is crucial to repulse this attack on the unions' finances. But this threat also shows the danger of letting the employer control dues collection through payroll deduction.

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European Dockers Strike Against Union Busting

On January 11, in the first solid strike since 1978, the cranes of the harbor in Hamburg, Germany stood still and nothing moved on the docks. The 24-hour "information event," accompanied by a demonstration and march of more than 4,000 harbor workers through the city, was part of a series of Europe-wide strikes and protests against the proposed "Port Package 2" bill attacking workers' wages and conditions. Strikes in Hamburg and other German harbors were followed the next week by strikes in Greece, Spain, France and Belgium that gave a taste of the enormous power of the dock workers to stop the flow of the bosses' profits. They point to the kind of international class struggle needed to fight back against the European bourgeoisies' broad attacks on working people.

In the face of the dock workers' determined resistance, on January 18 the European Union (EU) Parliament voted down Port Package 2 by a large margin, indicating that the capitalists themselves are divided over the measure. But this victory does not put an end to the bosses' plans for attacks on port workers. There are already

rumors going around about "Port Package 3," and many of the same measures are included in the "Bolkestein Guidelines," an EU proposal for sweeping deregulation in the public services that will be decided in February. The German trade-union federation (DGB) and other European union federations are calling for national demonstrations on February 11 and a main demonstration in Strasbourg, France on February 14 against the Bolkestein Guidelines. However, the real power to stop the anti-union offensive of all the European capitalist governments lies in the ability of the working class to stop production through strike action. The class-collaborationist politics of the trade-union tops is an obstacle to this struggle.

Just two days before the EU Parliament vote on the Port Package, cops brutally attacked a demonstration of more than 6,000 dockers who had come to Strasbourg from all over Europe. Police cordoned off a section of the demo, clubbed protesters and deployed water cannons. The dockers militantly defended themselves. For this,

continued on page 10



HHLA

Hamburg, January 11: Harbor workers shut down port in one-day strike against attacks on wages and working conditions.