

Racist Anti-Muslim Cartoons Spark Fundamentalist Frenzy

The publishing of a series of anti-Muslim cartoons by the right-leaning Danish paper, *Jyllands-Posten*—several of which depicted the Muslim prophet Muhammad as a bomb-wielding or Satanic terrorist—was a racist and conscious political provocation of a particularly bourgeois-nationalist and imperialist nature. Throughout Europe,

right-wing political parties (such as the Danish People's Party) have centered their appeals on anti-immigrant chauvinism, primarily directed against Muslims. Already, a law on the books in Denmark prevents Danes from marrying foreigners until the age of 24. Notably, the cartoons appeared on the eve of a meeting of the European Union

(EU) imperialist alliance to discuss the entry of Turkey, with its predominantly Muslim population, into the EU, which Denmark and France, among others, are resisting on a chauvinist basis. The cartoons sought to weld the “war on terror”—initiated by U.S. imperialism and designed to justify whatever attacks seem necessary to effect increased impe-

rialist domination—to anti-immigrant nationalist demagoguery.

Initially, when the cartoons were published on September 30, they elicited protests only from a few Muslim clerics in Denmark who were exercised over the blasphemous pictorial representations of the founder of Islam, a practice proscribed in any form or with any content by many followers of that religion. Then in late December, the clerics publicized more widely the fact that the cartoons were printed, sparking mass protests throughout the Muslim world led

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Reactionary Hamas and Bankruptcy of PLO Nationalism

U.S./Israel Tighten Screws on Palestinians



Left: Hamas supporters celebrate electoral victory at Palestinian parliament building in Ramallah, West Bank on January 26. Right: Angry Fatah protesters storm parliament building in Gaza City, January 28.

U.S. imperialism, Israel and the European powers are threatening to throttle the Palestinians in the wake of the victory of the Islamic fundamentalist Hamas in last month's legislative elections. George Bush prattles on about bringing “democracy” to the Near East under the jackboot of the savage U.S. military occupation of Iraq. Meanwhile, the *New York Times* (14 February) reports that the U.S. and Israel plan to “destabilize the Palestinian government.... The intention is to starve the Palestinian Authority of money and international connections to the point where, some months from now, its president, Mahmoud Abbas, is compelled to call a new election.” Israel threatens to withhold the customs duties and other taxes it collects for the Palestinian Authority (PA)

if Hamas forms a government, a policy of outright theft. Israeli air strikes continue to slam civilian areas, homes are bulldozed, Palestinian men and boys are rounded up and thrown into prison, and Israeli settlements and “bypass” roads continue to carve up and disenfranchise Palestinians in their own land.

Hamas' victory was a black eye for the Bush administration, which backs Israel to the hilt and has labeled Hamas a “terrorist” organization. This is rich coming from the U.S. imperialists, who for decades fostered the growth of Islamic fundamentalism in the Near East as a bulwark against Communist influence. And despite the Zionists' hue and cry, for years they promoted Hamas as a counterweight to the secular Palestine Liberation

Organization (PLO) nationalists. For its part, while stating that it will not accede to the demand that it recognize the state of Israel, Hamas has made clear its willingness to work with Israel and the West. According to *Al Jazeera* (1 February): “Moussa Abu Marzouk, the deputy head of Hamas's political bureau, said: ‘We understand that [the Western states] need a quiet region, without conflicts, and we know that it's possible to attain this goal’.”

The victory of Hamas (an acronym for Islamic Resistance Movement) is ominous for all Palestinians—historically among the most cosmopolitan people of the Near East—especially women and secular and Christian Palestinians. The circumstances that gave rise to the Hamas

win are the increasingly desperate conditions of the Palestinian masses in the Occupied Territories. The vote was more a rejection of the scandalous corruption and proven political bankruptcy of the PLO—whose leadership delivered the Palestinians nothing but defeat and immiseration—than an endorsement of the reactionary religious program of Hamas.

The Palestinians today have no basis for a viable national economy and are subject to unrelenting Zionist terror. Over half of the population in the Occupied Territories lives on less than \$2 a day, with at least one-third unemployed. Israel's apartheid wall in the West Bank has sealed off entire villages and towns, cutting Palestinians off from access to their land,

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Israel Out of the Occupied Territories! For a Socialist Federation of the Near East!

Racial Oppression and the Supreme Court Hearings

The only things that any of the participants in the Senate Supreme Court confirmation hearings for John Roberts and Samuel J. Alito made a pretense of caring about were the questions of abortion and, secondarily, “executive power.” What the hearings dodged were the realities of race in this country, when in fact both of the new Supreme Court justices made their careers largely by pushing racist reaction.

An article in the *New York Review of Books* (“John Roberts: The Nominee,” 6 October 2005) points out: “The most intriguing question about John Roberts is what led him as a young person whose success in life was virtually assured by family wealth and academic achievement to enlist in a political campaign designed to deny opportunities for success to those who lacked his advantages.” As the article continues, Roberts became part of the Reagan administration, where “he joined in its efforts to dismantle the civil rights gains of the 1960s and 1970s.”

There was much discussion in the bour-

geois press about Roberts’ and Alito’s judicial philosophy—“originalism,” formerly known as “strict construction”—and about the right-wing Federalist Society, which spawned Roberts, Alito and a good portion of the current federal judiciary. Theirs is not a mere “judicial philosophy” but the expression in the legal/judicial realm of the call that the “South will rise again.” Strict construction arose in opposition to *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) and other court decisions acknowledging rights for black people. The doctrine also opposed those decisions growing out of the civil rights movement that put some teeth into the supposed protections of the Bill of Rights, such as the 1966 *Miranda* decision on the rights of criminal suspects.

The Federalist Society was formed in 1982 by law students whose primary motivation was overturning, limiting and obstructing enforcement of the Civil Rights and Voting Rights acts. Their mentors were former Chief Justice William Rehnquist, for whom Roberts clerked, Robert



Racist anti-busing mob in Boston attacks black lawyer, 1976.

Bork, an outright racist whose nomination for the Supreme Court was rejected by the Senate in 1987, and Ed Meese, Ronald Reagan’s attorney general. In his early years as a clerk for Supreme Court Justice Robert Jackson, Rehnquist wrote a memo urging Jackson to vote against what became the *Brown* desegregation decision, declaring, “It is about time the Court faced the fact that white people in the South don’t like the colored people.”

Bork was the Federalist Society’s chief “theoretician.” He opposed the 1964 Civil Rights Act as “an unwanted intrusion on the right of individuals to choose with whom to associate.” (George W. Bush’s father campaigned against the Civil Rights Act in his unsuccessful run for U.S. Senate in 1964.) Meese’s view of the Bill of Rights was expressed in his statement, “If a person is innocent of a crime, then he is not a suspect.” Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, who was an adviser of the Federalist Society at its inception, told an audience at Columbia University in 1997 that if presented with *Brown v. Board of Education* now, he would vote against the parents seeking to desegregate the schools.

The Federalist Society’s funding comes from a Who’s Who of right-wing foundations and think tanks. These include the Bradley Foundation, which helped fund Charles Murray, co-author of the racist *The Bell Curve*. One of the Federalist Society’s leading lights is Texas law professor Lino Graglia, whom Reagan considered appointing to the federal appeals court until Graglia publicly admitted that he regularly used racist epithets to describe black people. Graglia has opposed the Seventh Amendment, which permits jury trials in civil cases. Evoking the timeworn racist battle cry of “states’ rights,” he has also opposed the 17th Amendment, which called for the popular election of Senators instead of appointment by state legislatures, on the grounds that it weakened “state autonomy.”

What was striking about the recent Senate hearings was not that Bush’s nominees hold reactionary views, but that these views weren’t an issue. Senate Democrats barely alluded to the nominees’ views. Meanwhile, bourgeois liberal mouthpieces like the *New York Times*, which opposed the Supreme Court nominees, in fact served to cover up their sordid racist records by burying the Federalist Society’s role in pushing for the rollback of black rights in article after article on the group.

Alito’s record was even more vulnerable to attack than Roberts’, but the Democrats barely touched it. This only underscores how fundamental the oppression of black people is to U.S. capitalism. It also underlines that every real gain achieved by working people and the oppressed was, and will be, the result of hard class and social struggle, not appealing to bourgeois politicians or the courts.

During the Roberts hearings, there was some questioning of his views on affirmative action. This was a cynical joke; it was never meant to have anything to do with whether or not he was confirmed. Affir-

mative action in higher education has been dying since the racist 1978 *Bakke* decision against preferential minority student admissions quotas. Today many liberals cling to that decision under the rubric of advancing “diversity” in educational institutions. The idea that a court nominee, or any prospective government appointee, would be jeopardized by his opposition to affirmative action is laughable. In fact, it is those who have in some way supported affirmative action who have been denied confirmation. Democratic president Clinton abandoned his nomination of Lani Guinier as head of the Justice Department’s Civil Rights Division when her writings on affirmative action became an issue. The Senate refused as well to confirm Bill Lann Lee’s appointment by Clinton to the same post because he supported affirmative action.

While striking down the segregation laws, the *Brown* decisions of 1954 and ’55 called for desegregation with “all deliberate speed,” which meant at a snail’s pace. After 16 years of obstruction, the Court acknowledged calls for “affirmative action.” This measure would include busing to desegregate schools. But busing was defeated by a combination of racist mobs on the streets of Boston and other cities, liberals in Congress and the reformist left that tailed after them. In public schools today, especially in the Northeast, black children are more segregated now than at any time since 1968. The Democrats, who were instrumental in killing the only means of providing any, though inadequate, educational opportunities for black people, were certainly not going to challenge Alito and Roberts on the question of racial oppression. They are as committed to the maintenance of the capitalist system that is predicated on the exploitation of labor and the oppression of black people as the Republicans.

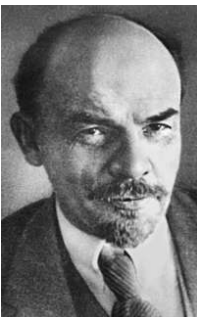
Many Democrats bemoan the right-wing predominance in the federal courts today. We would note that Democrats have for years joined in making an icon of Reagan. Now they have the federal judiciary that Reagan and Meese dreamed of. ■



TROTSKY

Capitalist “Democracy”: Dictatorship of the Bourgeoisie

In a document for the First Congress of the Communist International, Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin described bourgeois “democracy” as the dictatorship of the capitalist class over the exploited and oppressed, pointing to the violent suppression of U.S. labor struggles as well as the anti-Semitic frenzy against French officer Alfred Dreyfus in the 1890s. Polemicizing against social democrats who seek to reconcile the working class with its exploiters, Lenin defended the



LENIN

historic necessity for the proletariat to seize power through socialist revolution.

The history of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries demonstrated, even before the war, what this celebrated “pure democracy” really is under capitalism. Marxists have always maintained that the more developed, the “purer” democracy is, the more naked, acute and merciless the class struggle becomes, and the “purer” the capitalist oppression and bourgeois dictatorship. The Dreyfus case in republican France, the massacre of strikers by hired bands armed by the capitalists in the free and democratic American republic—these and thousands of similar facts illustrate the truth which the bourgeoisie are vainly seeking to conceal, namely, that actually terror and bourgeois dictatorship prevail in the most democratic of republics and are openly displayed every time the exploiters think the power of capital is being shaken....

In these circumstances, proletarian dictatorship is not only an absolutely legitimate means of overthrowing the exploiters and suppressing their resistance, but also absolutely necessary to the entire mass of working people, being their only defence against the bourgeois dictatorship which led to the war and is preparing new wars.

The main thing that socialists fail to understand and that constitutes their shortsightedness in matters of theory, their subservience to bourgeois prejudices and their political betrayal of the proletariat is that in capitalist society, whenever there is any serious aggravation of the class struggle intrinsic to that society, there can be no alternative but the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie or the dictatorship of the proletariat. Dreams of some third way are reactionary, petty-bourgeois lamentations. That is borne out by more than a century of development of bourgeois democracy and the working-class movement in all the advanced countries, and notably by the experience of the past five years. This is also borne out by the whole science of political economy, by the entire content of Marxism, which reveals the economic inevitability, wherever commodity economy prevails, of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie that can only be replaced by the class which the very growth of capitalism develops, multiplies, welds together and strengthens, that is, the proletarian class.

—V.I. Lenin, “Theses and Report on Bourgeois Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat” (March 1919)

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Black History and the Class Struggle

No. 18

WE WANT FREEDOM

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Jack Heyman: “In the Bag”

12 January 2006

Dear Editor:

As the speaker for ILWU Local 10 at the Partisan Defense Committee rally held in October in Berkeley in defense of Mumia Abu-Jamal, Lynne Stewart and Assata Shakur, I feel compelled to correct your skewed coverage of that event. My presentation began with the showing of an April 1999 TV news clip announcing that all ports on the West Coast had been shutdown to demand freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal. It showed idled cranes on the docks and then panned to the militant contingent of predominantly black longshoremen leading the 25,000-strong San Francisco demonstration chanting the ILWU slogan “An injury to one is an injury to all, Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!” Everyone at the PDC rally enthusiastically applauded that video display of labor power, except some in the leadership of the Spartacist League. As I said from the podium at least twice in my remarks, the Spartacist League erred in abstaining from that important demonstration. The SL should have impemented [sic] the Leninist united front tactic: “march separately, strike together” to differentiate themselves from those in the MOBE, the organizers of the march calling for a new trial, instead of sending a few of your newspaper salesmen. Your coverage shows that you’ve learned nothing from your past mistakes.

I have stated at many rallies that Mumia is innocent and can not get justice with a new trial in the racist, capitalist courts. A year after that demonstration, the Labor Action Committee to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal of which I am a

member, organized a labor conference with that theme inviting workers from around the country, like the Charleston longshoremen, to participate.

Such political debate is a vital component of united-front activities that draw groups and individuals from diverse political perspectives into common action in defense of the interests of the working class and the oppressed.

Heyman’s letter points to the 24 April 1999 stop-work action by the Interna-

man gave them a “labor” cover for their treachery. Their demand for a “new trial” was aimed at appealing to bourgeois liberals and others who were agnostic at best on Mumia’s innocence but objected to some aspects of his mistreatment in the courts. At bottom, the reformists who endorsed the “Millions for Mumia”

24, 1999, there will be national demonstrations to demand a stop to the execution of and a new trial for Mumia Abu-Jamal... THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That the ILWU go on record to: 1) Support the San Francisco demonstration and mobilize our membership on the coast to participate by coordinating our April stop-work meetings for the 24th to demand: ‘Stop the Execution! Free Mumia!’” By incorporating “free Mumia” into the motion supporting the “new trial” demonstration, Heyman deceitfully provided a “militant” cover for the liberal-reformist politics of the protest organizers.

Trying to slide over the role he played in this deception, Heyman resorts to the old con game of going after the reds, sneering that he has “never read in WV that the ostensibly revolutionary Spartacist League, or their supporters in the trade unions have ever initiated a mass labor action in defense of Jamal as has the ILWU.” This is an ignorant statement that conflates the trade unions—the mass organizations of the working class for their defense against the capitalists—with a revolutionary Marxist political party. Militants in the unions fight to advance labor struggle against the bosses. The Spartacist League is a Marxist propaganda group. Our task is to bring revolutionary consciousness to workers in the course of such struggle, aiming to win the most conscious elements to the fight for a workers party whose purpose is to do away with the entire system of capitalist wage slavery.

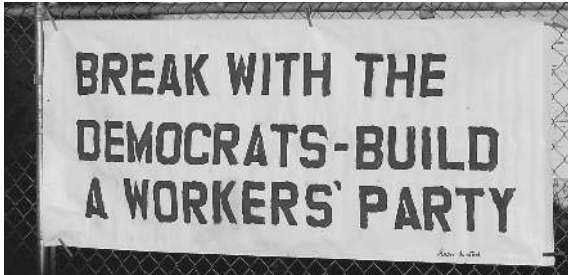
If we had influence in the unions, we could fight it out over what kind of actions the unions should undertake to win Mumia’s freedom. For us, such influence is based on winning support among workers for the program and policies of the class struggle, not on shell games played by the likes of Heyman.

Lacking the necessary weight in the working class, we recognized when the PDC first took up Mumia’s cause nearly 20 years ago that we would have to mobilize larger forces than our small revolutionary organization. We realized as well that many of the broader forces that joined in this struggle would be hostile to our Marxist perspective. Through our efforts, and through Mumia’s own powerful writings, his struggle became widely known not only in the U.S. but internationally. We took Mumia’s fight to the unions and organized united-front actions based on the PDC’s non-sectarian, class-struggle perspective. The ILWU, in particular Local 10, came on board early in endorsing the labor-centered protests we initiated. Such actions demonstrate the role and necessity of revolutionary leadership in fighting to bring to the working class the understanding that the capitalist state is not “neutral” and that, as Karl Marx stated in *Capital*, “Labour cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the black it is branded.”

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WV Photos



ILWU official Heyman helped build October 2004 Million Worker March that sought to corral workers to back Kerry, Democrats. Above: ILWU banners at the rally. Left: A recent WV photo of the banner Heyman kept in the bag.

tional Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) that shut down the West Coast ports demanding freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal. The port shutdown was indeed a powerful expression of the kind of social power that needs to be mobilized in a *class-struggle* fight to free Mumia and abolish the racist death penalty. But, as we noted in our article on the October rally, “Heyman dodged his own role in initiating the ILWU motion explicitly

demonstration share the liberal notion that Mumia can get a “fair trial” if only enough pressure is brought to bear on the bourgeois state. Such faith in the ultimate justice of the racist capitalist legal system has served to *demobilize* struggle on Mumia’s behalf.

Heyman, a member of the ILWU Local 10 Executive Board, writes: “I have stated at many rallies that Mumia is innocent and can not get justice with a new trial in the racist, capitalist courts.” But not when it counts. You did not hear Heyman criticize the call for a “new trial” from the podium of the April 1999 demonstration in San Francisco, where he was embraced as a stellar leader of the day. And why would he? Heyman himself had signed on to a list of “Labor Organizations Calling for a New Trial for Mumia Abu-Jamal on the occasion of the Millions for Mumia marches, April 24, 1999”! We mobilized our forces to join the thousands of others at the protests in San Francisco and Philadelphia. But we could not *endorse* the protests, which meant signing on to the “new trial” demand.

Heyman, however, had no problem signing his name to “Millions for Mumia.” He points to the “militant contingent of predominantly black longshoremen” who headed the demonstration in S.F. “chanting the ILWU slogan ‘An injury to one is an injury to all, Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!’” But Heyman pulled a hustle on those longshore workers who thought they were being mobilized to fight for Mumia’s freedom. Heyman authored the ILWU motion that read: “WHEREAS: On April



Poster at ILWU Local 10 hall pushed Kerry-Edwards ticket. Local newspaper highlights Kerry's agreement with Bush on asserting U.S. military power.

member, organized a labor conference with that theme inviting workers from around the country, like the Charleston longshoremen, to participate.

The social power of the integrated trade union movement when mobilized to act can free Mumia. It is a manifestly true refrain often read in the pages of Workers Vanguard. Yet, I have never read in WV that the ostensibly revolutionary Spartacist League, or their supporters in the trade unions, have ever initiated a mass labor action in defense of Mumia Abu-Jamal as has the ILWU. Your hypocrisy and hollow exhortations only serve to undermine the important work you did in publicizing Mumia’s case early on and in doggedly investigating and revealing police officer Faulkner’s real killer, Arnold Beverly.

For labor action to free Mumia, Jack Heyman

WV replies:

What Jack Heyman seems to find “skewed” in our coverage of the “Fight Government Repression” rally in the Bay Area on October 1—part of a series of united-front rallies initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee around the country—is that we criticized him (see WV No. 859,

endorsing the ‘Millions for Mumia’ rally that same day with its central demand for a ‘new trial’ for Mumia.”

This is not a mere matter of words. Behind the “Free Mumia” and “New Trial” slogans are counterposed political perspectives and strategies. We have mobilized and continue to mobilize around the call to free Mumia based on the fact that he is an innocent man who was framed up and sent to death row because of his defiant and eloquent opposition to the racism, brutality and terror of capitalist class rule. The fight for Mumia’s freedom requires mobilizing in opposition to the capitalist state—the cops, courts, prosecutors—that framed him up and whose purpose is to protect capitalist property and profits against the working class, black people and all the exploited and oppressed. The call for a “new trial” sows the illusion that Mumia can get justice from the same racist *injustice* system that railroaded him.

Heyman likes to talk “left” when it’s convenient, only to tone things down when he’s rubbing shoulders with big-wheel labor bureaucrats and bourgeois liberals. The organizers of the “Millions for Mumia” demonstration consciously *rejected* the call to free Mumia, and Hey-



WV Photo

San Francisco, 24 April 1999: Spartacist intervention at “Millions for Mumia” rally emphasized need to fight to free Mumia Abu-Jamal.

The Cop Killing of Dudley George

Canada: Racist Hell

for Native Peoples



We reprint below an article from Spartacist Canada No. 146 (Fall 2005), newspaper of the Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyste, Canadian section of the International Communist League.



Nine years after the brutal killing of Native activist Anthony “Dudley” George by Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) riot cops, the Ontario government launched a public commission of inquiry last July. George’s family has fought for hearings since his death on 6 September 1995, hoping that the full truth would finally come out. Smelling an electoral opportunity, the Ontario Liberal Party quickly seized on this demand in their campaign against the then ruling Conservative government of Mike Harris. Predictably, the NDP [social-democratic New Democratic Party] and the reformist left have saluted the Liberals’ cynical maneuver as some form of “justice.”

Whatever the information revealed or token rectification offered, such public inquiries always serve a political purpose—to refurbish the image of the racist, capitalist state. Writing about U.S. congressional hearings on the FBI’s COINTELPRO program (which targeted black and leftist radicals during the ’60s and ’70s for surveillance, frame-up and assassination), former Black Panther and political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal explains:

“While they provided a riveting show, a thrilling political performance, a scripted pantomime of the workings of democracy, they remained, after all was said and done, mere performance. When the curtain came down on the show, the real world, with its painful ambiguities and chilling truths about power, race, and violent white supremacy, remained unchanged. Revelation is not transformation—it only looks like it.”

—We Want Freedom: A Life in the Black Panther Party (2004)

Over 350 years of history lie behind the bullet that ended Dudley George’s life. Beginning with colonial conquest, Canadian capitalism was founded on the destruction of the pre-existing aboriginal societies and terror against Native peoples—from the bloody pacification campaigns by the Northwest Mounted Police and innumerable broken treaties, to the kidnapping and imprisonment of aboriginal youth in “residential schools” and the forced sterilization of Native women. Only revolutionary struggle against the capitalist system, led by the working class, can open up the possibility for the emancipation of Native peoples and all of the oppressed. But such a struggle is impossible so long as the majority of working people and the downtrodden still see the capitalist state as a potential ally, or believe that it can be made “accountable” through mass pressure and public exposure.

Racist State Terror and Government Lies: We Will Not Forget!

The events at Ipperwash were the legacy of one of the numerous racist atrocities committed by the federal Liberal government of Mackenzie King over a half century ago. In 1942, invoking the War Measures Act, the King government seized the Chippewa reserve at Stony Point near Ipperwash to build a military base. Native houses were destroyed in a few hours,

their occupants forcibly displaced without warning. Other houses in the area were untouched. It was only in 1995, following a determined two-year occupation by Native militants, that the army finally withdrew from the base.

On 4 September 1995, the day after the end of tourist season and the closing of Ipperwash Park, some 30 Native activists occupied land that had once been part of their reserve, demanding the return and protection of an ancestral burial ground that had been seized by the government. After a three-day standoff, a phalanx of riot cops marched down a darkened road, opening fire on the unarmed protesters,



killing George and wounding two others. One protester was beaten until his heart literally stopped. OPP sergeant Kenneth Deane later received a slap on the wrist—a conviction of “criminal negligence” and two years community service—for pumping a bullet into the young Native activist.

Now in power, the Liberals in Queen’s Park [location of Ontario government] are hanging full responsibility on the flagrantly right-wing and racist Harris regime. Indeed, Harris’ cries for Native blood took even the OPP trigger men running the operation aback. In a conversation recorded hours before George was killed, OPP inspector Ron Fox ranted: “We’re dealing with a real redneck government. They are f---ing barrel suckers. They are just in love with guns.”

But the Ipperwash siege involved every level of the state apparatus, from the federal Department of National Defence on down to the local cops. If tapes played at the inquiry show that orders for a brutal assault came directly from Queen’s Park, it was the Liberal federal government who equipped the OPP with armoured personnel carriers and machine guns capable of firing 800 rounds a minute. The Feds knew that the protesters were unarmed and peaceful because *they had a CSIS [Canadian Security Intelligence Service] plant among them the entire time posing as a Native activist* (Hansard No. 126, 2001). The Department of Indian Affairs and the provincial government both had evidence that the activists’ claims regarding the burial grounds were true, and concealed it until after the fact.

Whitewash Hearings and the Capitalist State

The capitalist rulers have a time-honoured strategy for dealing with public

outrage. First, they lie through their golden teeth. Second, when anger persists, they stall. Then, if things still don’t settle down, they “reluctantly” hold an “independent” public inquiry, staffed by judges, professors, priests or other loyal representatives of the ruling class, and perhaps recommending token punishment for someone involved. The more thorough the investigation appears, the better it serves its ideological purpose: to prove that the system works, that the state is accountable to the “will of the people,” and that justice has been served.

The police, military, courts and prisons are at the core of the capitalist state, an

Buston/CP

Social-democratic NDP government ordered RCMP and army to violently suppress Native protest at Gustafsen Lake, 1995.

institution that was created, exists and is replenished for the sole purpose of protecting the power of the racist, exploiting class. The belief that the state can be reformed through grassroots campaigns, mass protest or public exposure is a deadly illusion pushed by those who defend capitalist class rule. As Russian revolutionary V.I. Lenin writes in his classic *State and Revolution*:

“According to Marx, the state is an organ of class *domination*, an organ of *oppression* of one class by another; its aim is the creation of ‘order’ which legalises and perpetuates this oppression by moderating the collisions between classes.”

It is possible to win limited concessions from the capitalists, such as wage increases or greater access to social serv-

ices, through *hard social struggle*. However, short of a social revolution in which the working class seizes power and dismantles the capitalist state, such gains are temporary and precarious.

But public inquiries aren’t even a limited gain. They are expressly designed to refurbish the state’s credibility by blaming this wrong policy or that “bad cop,” deflecting attention away from the underlying system of wage slavery. Over the years, there have been scores of Royal Commissions and hearings documenting the brute dispossession of Native people. The ruling class knows exactly what Native people have suffered in the past, and it knows in detail the poverty and devastation they face today. The capitalists have absolutely no interest in any kind of meaningful rectification.

In fact, courts and public inquiries have let cops and racist thugs who murder Natives walk free time and again. In October 2004, an inquiry into the 1990 killing of 17-year-old Neil Stonechild (who froze to death in -28C [-18°F] weather after being dropped off at the edge of Saskatoon) found that there was no basis to lay criminal charges. This was despite the fact that he was last seen in police custody, despite the fact that bloody marks found on Stonechild’s face were caused by handcuffs, and despite the report’s acknowledgement that the cops systematically lied to cover the whole thing up. The underlying message is lethal: it’s a license to murder aboriginal people.

The Reformist Left

But this is completely lost on the reformist left—from the International Socialists (I.S.) to the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty (OCAP), from the New Socialist Group (NSG) to the anarchists—all of whom called for a public inquiry into George’s death. In the name of protesting the right-wing Harris government, they in effect gave a left cover to the electoral posturing of the capitalist Liberals and the maneuvers of the social-democratic NDP. These groups actually *championed* the ability of the capitalist state to deliver some kind of justice for Dudley George and other victims of police terror.

The I.S. is particularly blatant on this score. Their long-winded, academic arti-

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Ghetto Youth Upheavals Sweep France

Down With Racist Cop Terror!

The following article is based on a leaflet issued in December 1975 by our affiliate of the Ligue communist de France.

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxism and the Fight Against Native Oppression

The following excerpt from the Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyste “Programmatic Theses” summarizes the Marxist perspective for proletarian-centered struggle against the oppression of Canada’s aboriginal peoples. The full document, published under the title “Who We Are, and What We Fight For,” was adopted by the TL/LT’s Eighth National Conference in 1998.

VII. Canadian capitalism was founded on the destruction of the pre-existing aboriginal societies, beginning under French and, later, English colonialism. The possibility of independent development of Indian nations was foreclosed by the expropriation of these peoples through fraud and military conquest, combined with the devastating impact of disease following European contact.

The majority of Native people today live in urban centers, where they are the targets of all-sided racism and police terror. Thus, aboriginal people are disproportionately represented both among the homeless and in the prison population. In Saskatchewan, where they make up less than 10 percent of the population, Native people constitute fully 70 percent of jail inmates. Tens of thousands of Native people continue to live on the squalid reserves established to formalize their dispossession. Others live in isolated communities where no treaties were ever signed, as in most of British Columbia.

Only the destruction of capitalism can hold out the possibility of voluntary integration, on the basis of full equality, for those aboriginal peoples who desire it, and the fullest possible regional autonomy for those who do not. The Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyste demands that whatever residual rights Native peoples have been able to maintain, whether through treaty agreements or otherwise, be respected. In some cases, treaty rights and land claims run up against socially useful developments like railways, hydroelectric projects and oil pipelines. The aboriginal peoples should receive generous compensation for any deprivation of land or disruption of activity, based on completely consensual agreement. Only a workers government will guarantee these conditions.

The federal government currently holds out the promise of “Native self-government.” We warn that in most cases this is a cover for “transforming” the reserves, with their plagues of alcoholism and early death, into apartheid-style bantustans. Nevertheless, where Native people have a land base, the Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyste will defend whatever measure of political autonomy they are able to wrest from governments, including the right to govern their land and control its resources. As elementary measures, we demand the immediate abolition of the racist Indian Act and the Department of Indian Affairs; and that the police,

courts and state “welfare” agencies keep off the reserves and other Native land.

The Native peoples of northern Quebec have increasingly become a political football in the vicious contest between Anglo chauvinism and Quebec nationalism. We support the right of these peoples to determine their own fate. At the same time, we adamantly oppose the suggestion by some aboriginal leaders that, in the event of Quebec separation, they would call for intervention by the Canadian army. In addressing the concrete “choice” between being part of an independent Quebec or remaining in a rump Canada, our primary point of departure is that within the framework of racist capitalism, this simply means the right of the aboriginal populations to determine by whom they will be oppressed and brutalized. The unrelenting proletarian defense of Native people’s lives and rights as equal citizens is part of the fight of the multiracial working class to overturn this whole brutal and violent capitalist system. Only an egalitarian-socialist society under workers rule will be able to redress three centuries of abuse and degradation.

VIII. Canadian capitalism’s depredations have done immeasurable environmental damage. This falls heavily on Native peoples, as in the horrific mercury poisoning (Minimata disease) of entire Ojibway communities near Kenora, Ontario in the 1950s and ’60s. Meanwhile, whole indus-

tries are destroyed, throwing tens of thousands out of work. The collapse of the North Atlantic cod fishery, for example, was fundamentally the result of decades of devil-take-the-hindmost plunder by Canadian corporations.

As Marxists, we are for industrial development, and we support the introduction of useful new technologies. But we recognize that the rational exploitation of natural resources is impossible under the irrational, profit-driven capitalist system. We oppose the bourgeois “environmentalism” of groups, like Greenpeace, which push reactionary “back to nature” utopias against the interests of working people and the oppressed.

The history of our species, itself part of nature, is the struggle to master the forces of nature to provide a decent and worthwhile life. Against the spurious atavism of petty-bourgeois “environmentalists,” we stand with those workers whose livelihoods depend on development of resource industries, even as we denounce their leaders’ treacherous class collaboration with capitalist corporations like forestry giant Macmillan-Bloedel. The international success of “conservationist” campaigns against logging, trapping and the seal hunt has only reinforced the poverty of thousands, including Inuit and other aboriginal peoples. The right of Native peoples to control their resources includes the right to seek their development, a right we defend against the racist moralism of such “environmental activism.”

The working people in power, in full control of the productive resources of society, can preserve the co-inhabitants of this planet, while putting an end to human want. Only a centrally planned, socialist economy can ensure that necessary industrial progress proceeds with a minimum of ecological damage. ■

cle on “Aboriginal Rights: The Backlash and Socialist Strategy” by Valerie Lanon (*Marxism* No. 1, 2003) misquotes Lenin on “self-determination” and espouses hollow “anti-capitalist” rhetoric. But there is not a single word about the state as an instrument of bourgeois repression or the need for the working class to overthrow it. Instead, Lanon bemoans that the reforms called for by the 1996 Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples went unfulfilled and indicts the Ontario government not only for George’s murder, but for then refusing to “call for an independent inquiry into police action”! Calling on the state to police its own is typical of the I.S., who recently advanced the asinine demand for a “full public inquiry” into CSIS (*Socialist Worker*, 23 March 2005). The only reason the Liberal government in Ottawa (or any other capitalist regime) would try to reform its secret police would be to make these hired killers more efficient.

On the crucial question of the state, the politics of the “direct action” and anarchist groups are shown to be no different, whatever their lame assertions to the contrary. The first two slogans on the call for a 24 May 1997 demo at Queen’s Park were: “Harris: Blood on Your Hands! Full Public Inquiry Now!” Endorsers included Anti-Racist Action and OCAP. Along the same lines, the NSG presents the public inquiry as a victory: “The fight for justice in Ipperwash has been a multi-pronged one, an instructive example of combining traditional advocacy (in the courts and the legislature) with grassroots agitation” (“Ipperwash 8 Years Later,” *New Socialist*, November-December 2003). Instructive, indeed. As political strategies, grassroots protest/“direct action” and lobbying parliament are complementary. Both explicitly limit themselves to pressuring the powers-that-be. And neither does a damn thing toward ending Native oppression.

Canada: Apartheid for Native Peoples

Some 30 percent of aboriginal Canadians still live in Native reserve hellholes—



Spartacist Canada

Aboriginal people lead 2002 Vancouver labor demonstration against austerity attacks by Liberal government in British Columbia. Labor must defend Native rights!

a system once studied as a model by the South African apartheid state. Take the condition of the Ojibway community in Pikangikum, Ontario. Most of the homes have no sewers and the suicide rate is 36 times the national average. The only buildings with indoor toilets belong to government agencies, while the third party “Indian agent” imposed by the state to control the tribe’s finances makes over \$10,000 a month. “This was deliberately done by the Department of Indian Affairs,” according to Stan Beardsy, Grand Chief of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation. “They are starving them from their claim to natural resources” (*Sunday Sun*, 11 April 2004).

While half of the country’s 1.3 million Natives now reside in cities, their living conditions are generally little better. An incredible 42 percent of urban Natives live below Statistics Canada’s poverty line (as compared to 17 percent of all urban residents). Huge numbers are in prison, homeless, or ghettoized in poverty-stricken neighbourhoods like Vancouver’s notorious Downtown Eastside,

which has the highest per capita rate of HIV infection in North America. A recent investigation into the Saskatchewan police just scratched the surface of the sadistic torture of Natives by cops: an elderly woman dragged from bed, jailed, and forced to walk home in her nightgown; cops breaking a ten-year-old girl’s arm because “she got in the way”; the infamous “starlight tours,” where police drop off Native men on the outskirts of towns in the deadly cold of winter.

Defend Native Rights! We Need a Revolutionary Workers Party!

In our 1995 article “Ipperwash, Gustafsen Lake: Murderous State Terror Targets Native Peoples,” we wrote:

“Most of the Native protests this year have been in rural areas, isolated from the working class and far removed from the integrated urban centers. Yet the cops who are reliving the ‘Indian’ wars are the same cops who bust up picket lines and wage unremitting racist war on black people in Montreal and Toronto, and Asians and others in Vancouver....

“Under capitalism, Native people face the ‘choice’ of poverty and isolation in the cities or squalor and deprivation on the reserves. The way forward lies through building a racially integrated revolutionary workers party which champions the cause of all of the oppressed.”

—SC No. 106,

November/December 1995

The central obstacle to this perspective is the social-democratic NDP. In 1995, the B.C. [British Columbia] NDP government led the largest RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] operation in history against the Native protesters at Gustafsen Lake. More recently, the NDP and the reformist left backed Larry Campbell for mayor of Vancouver; on his election, Campbell immediately ramped up police terror against Natives and immigrants on the Downtown Eastside. A revolutionary workers party will be built in sharp political struggle against the NDP “labour lieutenants of capital” and their supporters in the trade-union bureaucracy.

In this country, Native oppression provides a litmus test for the leadership of the working class. A party that does not inscribe the defense of the most downtrodden high on its banner will never succeed in leading the proletariat against its class enemy. We seek to build a revolutionary party that would fight for measures like aggressive recruitment and training programs, run by the trade unions, as a first step toward breaking the cycle of unemployment and social marginalization for Native people in urban areas. It would defend whatever autonomy Natives with a land base are able to wrest from the racist ruling class. It would mobilize the fighting power of labour, with its key immigrant component, against acts of racist state terror to make it clear that Native people do not stand alone in their struggles. It would fight to win workers to the understanding that every act of police terror strengthens the hand of their capitalist class enemy, and that every form of racism and chauvinism serves to divide the fighting unity of all of the oppressed. We say: *There is no justice from the capitalist state! Stop racist state terror—Defend Native rights!* ■

Black History and the Class Struggle

Black Freedom...

(continued from page 12)

of Black Liberation,” written by Fraser in 1963 when he was still in the SWP, and “Revolutionary Integration: Yesterday and Today,” written by Tom Boot and adopted by the FSP’s 1982 national conference.

While the FSP claims to be in Fraser’s tradition, Boot’s views are fundamentally contrary not only to the Spartacist League’s understanding of revolutionary integrationism but also to the main ideas of Fraser himself, who was cut off from the FSP by a split in 1967. The FSP saps the strong points of Fraser’s revolutionary integrationist perspective, exacerbates the weak points and, finally, distorts the entirety with the FSP’s own brand of eclectic reformism. It is necessary to examine and explain what revolutionary integrationism is and what it is not. In particular, we want to emphasize the strategic centrality of this concept in building a revolutionary vanguard party to lead the multiracial U.S. working class to power.

Marxism and the Fight for Black Freedom

The October 1917 workers revolution in Russia, led by the Bolshevik party of V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky, was a declaration of war upon the world capitalist system and a clarion call for all the exploited and oppressed to prepare for battle. This call was heard in all corners of the globe—Europe, Asia, Africa, South America and North America. In the U.S. it found a sympathetic response among workers and black people.

Within the early American socialist movement, the aim of black equality was treated with, at best, benign indifference, typified by Eugene V. Debs’ statement that socialism had “nothing special to offer the Negro,” ranging to outright hostility on the part of racists like Victor Berger. In *The First Ten Years of American Communism* (1962), James P. Cannon—a veteran of the revolutionary-syndicalist Industrial Workers of the World, a leader of the early Communist Party (CP) in the U.S. and later the founding leader of American Trotskyism—described the crucial intervention of Lenin and Trotsky’s Communist International in driving home the centrality of the fight for black freedom to proletarian revolution in the U.S. Cannon emphasized that Lenin and the Russian Revolution “contributed *more than any other influence from any source* to the recognition, and more or less general acceptance, of the Negro question as a *special* problem of American society—

a problem which cannot simply be subsumed under the general heading of the conflict between capital and labor” (emphasis in original).

The Trotskyist movement debated the black question beginning with the founding conference of the Communist League of America (CLA), formed by supporters of Trotsky expelled from the Stalinized Communist Party by 1928. Leading CLA member Arne Swabeck also discussed the black question when he visited Trotsky in exile in Turkey in 1933. Swabeck argued against the CP’s demand for “self-determination for the Black Belt” (a swath of majority-black counties across the Deep South), asserting that the race question was integral to the class question in the U.S. and that the main demand should be for full “social, political and economic equality” for black people.

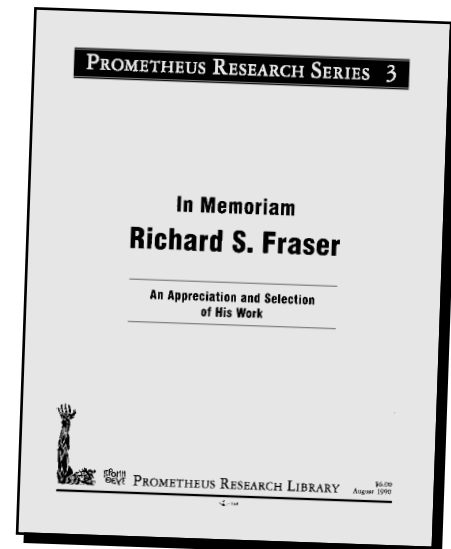
Trotsky was inclined to support the self-determination slogan based on his experience with the national question in Europe. He admitted, however, that he had not studied the question and suggested, for instance, that Southern blacks might have their own suppressed “Negro language” (see “In Defense of Revolution-



Fraser Family

Richard S. Fraser developed Marxist analysis of black oppression. PRS No. 3 is available for \$7 (includes postage). Order from/pay to: Spartacist Publishing Co., Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116.

document by Max Shachtman titled “Communism and the Negro” (recently reprinted in *Race and Revolution*, Verso [2003]). However, the CLA’s inchoate position was not theoretically grounded and developed. Unfortunately, Shacht-



Civil rights protests of 1950s and '60s helped shatter Jim Crow segregation but could not attack roots of racial oppression in capitalist system.

ary Integrationism,” *Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 49-50, Winter 1993-94). Trotsky was primarily concerned that the American Trotskyists have a serious orientation to the black question lest they capitulate to the backward consciousness of the working class. He returned to this question in 1939 discussions with American Trotskyist leaders, underscoring that without such an orientation, it would not be possible to make a revolution in the U.S.

Most of the CLA leadership adopted an integrationist, anti-nationalist position, which was the line of a lengthy 1933

man’s document was not widely distributed or discussed outside the leadership in the CLA. A 1939 convention of the SWP, which had been founded the year before, adopted two resolutions on the black question. While both were written by the West Indian intellectual C.L.R. James, they were contradictory in their basic thrust. The first, “The SWP and Negro Work,” stated that black people “are designated by their whole historical past to be, under adequate leadership, the very vanguard of the proletarian revolution.” The second resolution, “The Right of Self-Determination and the Negro in the United States and North America,” argued the theoretical possibility of the awakening of a national consciousness and mass demands for a “Negro state.”

In practice, the SWP was guided by an integrationist, class-struggle perspective. The party was able to recruit several hundred black workers during World War II by acting as the most militant fighters against racist oppression in the factories, armed forces and American society at large. The SWP’s courageous work, carried out in the face of government repression, was in the starkest contrast to the Communist Party, which, in line with its support to the Allied imperialist “democracies,” explicitly opposed struggles for black equality during the war.

Dick Fraser joined the Trotskyist movement in 1934. He was a founding member of the Socialist Workers Party, serving on its National Committee from 1940 to 1966. He began a study of the black question in the late 1940s in response to the loss of hundreds of black worker recruits with the onset of the Cold War against the Soviet Union. He concluded that the problem was not with the SWP’s practical, day-to-day work fighting discrimination and victimization of blacks but with the party’s inadequate theoretical under-

standing. Vital to the development and consolidation of a black Trotskyist cadre is a scientific (materialist) understanding of black oppression and a program corresponding to the actual living struggle for integration and equality.

Fraser began from the premise that black people, whom he described as “the most completely ‘Americanized’ section of the population,” were *not* an oppressed nation or nationality in any sense. Crucially, black people lacked any material basis for a separate political economy. Whereas the oppressed nations and nationalities of Europe (e.g., in the pre-1917 Russian tsarist empire) were subjected to forced assimilation, American blacks faced the opposite: forcible segregation. Hence, in the struggle against black oppression, the democratic demand for self-determination—separation into an independent nation-state—does *not* apply. As Fraser wrote in “Dialectics of Black Liberation”:

“The Black Question is a unique racial, not national, question, embodied in a movement marked by integration, not self-determination, as its logical and historical motive force and goal. The demand for integration produces a struggle that is necessarily transitional to socialism and creates a revolutionary Black vanguard for the entire working class.”

He had earlier noted in “For the Materialist Conception of the Negro Question”:

“The goals which history has dictated to [black people] are to achieve complete equality through the elimination of racial segregation, discrimination, and prejudice. That is, the overthrow of the race system. It is from these historically conditioned conclusions that the Negro struggle, whatever its forms, has taken the path for direct assimilation. All that we can add to this is that these goals cannot be accomplished except through the socialist revolution.”

Separatism or Social Equality?

Fraser emphasized that the entire history of mass black struggle—from the abolitionists through the Civil War and Radical Reconstruction to the civil rights movement—was in the direction of integration, not separatism. Radical Reconstruction in the South following the Civil War was a period of racial equality and black political empowerment unique in American history. In the 1930s, black workers participated in and often played leading roles in the great labor battles that created powerful, racially integrated industrial unions. The civil rights movement was directed against legalized segregation in the South and de facto segregation in housing and education, along with job discrimination, in the North.

Significant political expressions of black separatism have come in the aftermath of defeats and consequent demoralization in the face of a seemingly intractable racist capitalist order. Marcus Garvey’s ephemeral “Back to Africa” movement, which peaked in the early 1920s, was conditioned by the violent anti-black reaction at that time. Many black workers who had gained employment during the industrial

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(617) 666-9453
bostonsyc@yahoo.com

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Public Office:

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1634 Telegraph
3rd Floor

San Francisco

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

TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA/LIGUE TROTSKYSTE DU CANADA

Toronto

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

Vancouver

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

boom of the First World War lost their jobs, the victims of racist discrimination and harder economic times. This period saw the revival of the Ku Klux Klan, and in a number of cities, white racist mobs attacked and terrorized black communities.

The upsurge of “revolutionary” black nationalism in the late 1960s, best represented by the Black Panther Party, was a response to the frustrated expectations of the Northern civil rights struggles. Those struggles promised much but left unchanged the hellish conditions of life in the inner-city ghettos that are rooted in the capitalist profit system. As an expression of despair, black nationalism, or separatism, would deny blacks their birth-right: *the wealth and culture their labor has played a decisive role in creating.*

Fraser pointed out that the whole notion of “race” has been proven to be scientifically absurd. There is only one “race,” the human race. But he also noted that any black person in the U.S. would laugh if you said that race does not exist, and he would be right. Race is a scientific absurdity but a social fact.

The color bar is the American social measuring stick ranging from blacks on the bottom to whites on the top. The social standing and prospects of all “people of color” are largely determined by this measuring stick, with dark-skinned people tending toward the black end and lighter-skinned toward the white end. This is clearly indicated by the extent of intermarriage (the basic mechanism of social integration) across racial and ethnic lines. The level of intermarriage between whites and Latinos or Asian Americans is far higher than that between whites and blacks. The U.S.-born daughter of a

many not-so-advanced countries with a substantial working class). In the U.S., workers remain chained to the “liberal” capitalist Democratic Party. Anti-black racism is at the root of the backwardness of the working class and, in general, of the reactionary features of U.S. society. It is on this basis that the centrality of the black question to the American workers revolution must be understood.

The Legacy of Slavery

The racial divide between black and white is the legacy of slavery and the defeat of Radical Reconstruction. Fraser held that blacks on the slave plantations of the Old South had developed a democratic and egalitarian subculture that enabled them to play a key role in the second American bourgeois-democratic revolution: the Civil War that smashed the system of chattel slavery and the period of Radical Reconstruction following the war. Fraser wrote in “Dialectics of Black Liberation” that the cultural attitudes of the black slaves

“inundated the transplanted Anglo-Saxon culture of the slave owners. In the rest of the country a cultural vacuum prevailed, born of the melting pot, of class fluidity, of constant migration and immigration. The vacuum acted like a sponge in absorbing Black folk culture. It was readily apparent that the chief barriers between Black and white were sociopolitical, not cultural, and that whites basically needed and responded to the Black culture.”

The War of Independence—this country’s first bourgeois-democratic revolution—freed the American colonial mercantile capitalists and farmers from subordination to the British ruling class in the late 18th century. The Civil War was a social revolution that freed an oppressed,



Packinghouse workers strike in Chicago in late 1930s. CIO organizing drive built mass industrial unions by uniting black and white workers.

Chinese immigrant family is far more likely to have a white husband than is a young black woman whose ancestors were brought to this country in chains three centuries ago.

The racial division of black and white is the fundamental fact that defines American culture and shapes political discourse, even though black people constitute a relatively small minority of the population (roughly 12 percent). Of course, the fundamental economic relationships operating in the U.S. are the same as in all other capitalist class societies: the basis of oppression, including racial oppression, is the exploitation of labor by capital. Anti-black racism is the *greatest obstacle* to working-class unity in the U.S., providing an illusion of common interests between white workers and their class enemy, the white capitalist exploiters.

Until the substantial entry of blacks into industry in World War I, anti-immigrant and anti-Catholic bigotry was the capitalists’ chief weapon in dividing and holding back the working class and impeding the development of a strong, politically conscious workers movement. Since that time, anti-black racism has been the most prominent factor in the lack of even a reformist mass political party of the working class organized separately from the capitalist parties, such as exists in all other advanced capitalist countries (and

exploited class—the black slaves—and destroyed the South’s basic ruling-class institution, the slave plantation. The ensuing period of Radical Reconstruction brought such gains as political enfranchisement and public education for black freedmen and poor whites alike. This period also saw an enormous expansion of democratic rights for immigrant and native-born white workers in the North as well. For example, the extension of citizenship rights to all those born in this country, codified in the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and now challenged by anti-immigrant bigots, was a direct result of the revolutionary destruction of the Southern slavocracy.

Spearheaded by the Ku Klux Klan, the white propertied classes of the South waged a war of terror against the Reconstruction governments and the black communities that were their core base of support. The fate of the post-Civil War South was determined by the now-dominant Northern capitalist class, whose members shared no fundamental interest with the black freedmen and poor whites of the region. Quite the contrary. Black labor was vital to the Southern agricultural economy that was, in turn, vital to the national capitalist economy. A renewed alliance of the propertied classes in the North and South was built on the broken back of black labor.

THE MILITANT

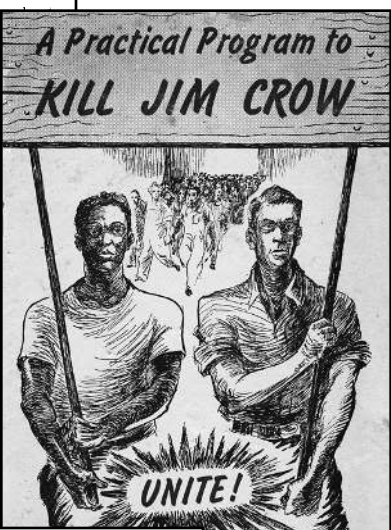
Lynn Case First Legal Test Of Army Jim Crow

On Dec. 8, the United States Circuit Court of Appeals sitting in New York City, will hear the Winfred Lynn case. Arthur Garfield Hays, attorney for the American Civil Liberties Union, will argue the case and if necessary will carry it to the U. S. Supreme Court.



Winfred Lynn

accepted induction in make the test case. H the army authorities g ed to return to civilian grounds that the 3 methods of his selecti the Draft Act.



Negro Soldiers Killed In Jersey, Arkansas, Texas

Army Jim Crow Responsible for New Wave Of Violence That Takes Lives of 4 Negroes

By ALBERT PARKER

A new wave of violence has broken out against Negro soldiers. On April 2 two Negro privates were shot dead and five wounded by Military Police in Fort Dix, New Jersey. On March 29 a Negro sergeant in Little Rock, Arkansas, was shot by a white policeman, asked by white M. P.s. A few d fore that a Negro private in Houston, Texas, was shot d a white soldier named to guard d

abuse a Negro who was accused of trying to get to the phone be from his turn.

Some of the news newspapers reported it, but an eye-witness in the building told a MILITANT correspondent that the M. P. sold the Negro "a nigger and other insulting names." -Atlanta, Ga.

The tragic clashes in Detroit threaten not only the lives and welfare of the Negro people but also the interests of the labor movement.

HOW FORT DIX FIGHT BEGAN

Unions Must Come To Defense Of Negro People

An Editorial

The CIO unions from the very first have preached and practiced the fraternal solidarity of all workers, regardless of color, race, creed or political affiliation. This has been one of the

SWP press and pamphlets during World War II. Trotskyists courageously fought against racist oppression in factories, military and society at large during the war.

The former black chattel in his freedom was reduced to peonage. As slaves, blacks owned nothing, not even their own bodies, and worked collectively on large plantations. Black sharecroppers owned their bodies and a share of the crop, but not the land they worked individually on divided lots of the former plantations. Whereas the slave was held as property to the plantation owners, the sharecropper was held in debt to the white landlords and financiers, many of them members of the former slavocracy. In *New Data on the Laws Governing the Development of Capitalism in Agriculture* (1915), Lenin polemicized against the notion that the U.S., which had never known feudalism, was free from its economic survivals, noting: “The economic survivals of *slavery* are not in any way distinguishable from those of feudalism, and in the former slave-owning South of the U.S.A. these survivals *are still very powerful*” (emphasis in original).

As Fraser explained in “Dialectics of Black Liberation”:

“After the Civil War and Reconstruction destroyed the old slave-owning class, northern capital, from economic and political motives, betrayed its promises and created a revised, capitalist form of race relations based upon many of the traditions and social relations of slavery. *Segregation* took the place of the chattel slave as the main prop of the new racist order.” [emphasis in original]

Fraser also pointed out in the same piece that the re-establishment of white-supremacist rule in the South, supplemented by the extralegal violence of the

KKK, and the violent and complete suppression of black democratic rights had a profoundly reactionary effect on American political culture as a whole:

“What was original to U.S. culture were certain progressive institutions—the plebeian folk-hero, democratic and informal manners, the relatively advanced position of women, unionism, the public school, individualism and free speech, and many more.... But these were all corrupted by the victory of Jim Crow and segregation following Reconstruction.

“Denied the opportunity to further absorb Black creativity, white American culture was left in a feeble state. The mores and habits of the imperialist ‘robber barons’ took over. This new capitalist class, produced by the Civil War, stamped its ruthless, vulgar and Philistine image on American thought. A new house of culture was built upon White Supremacy and American Superiority.”

The End of Legalized Segregation in the South

With the benefit of hindsight, a serious analytical error on Fraser’s part—exploited and vulgarized by the latter-day Freedom Socialist Party—was his belief that Trotsky’s concept of permanent revolution was applicable to the American South. Briefly stated, this concept is that in backward capitalist countries the historic tasks of the bourgeois revolution—i.e., removing the obstacles to socio-economic modernization, centrally imperialist domination and feudal-derived survivals in economic relations and political structure—could be achieved only through a proletarian revolution. Such a revolution would replace

continued on page 8

July 1993 protest in Atlanta against racist abuse at Denny’s restaurant, part of nationwide campaign organized by SL and Labor Black Leagues to demand, “Down with Jim Crow at Denny’s!”



Black Freedom...

(continued from page 7)

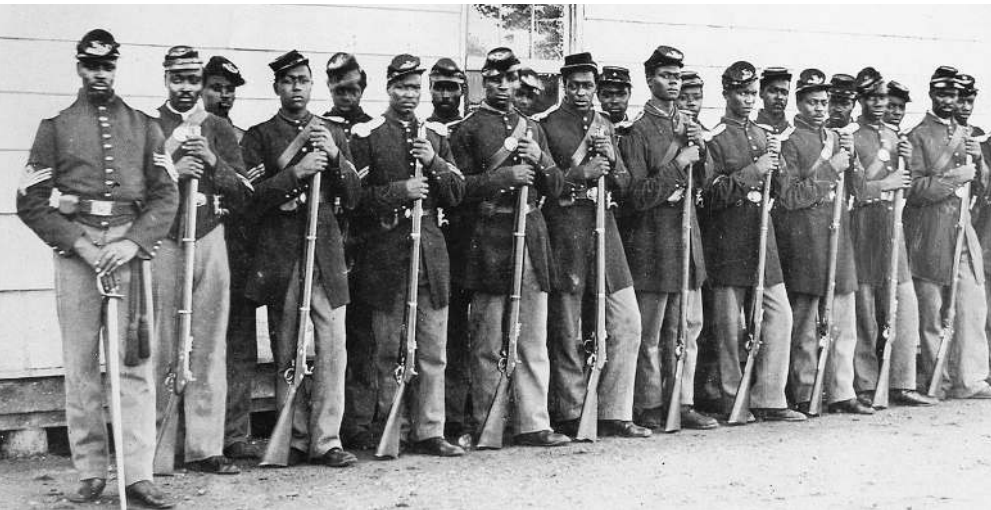
the capitalist system of production by a planned, collectivized economy, leading, through the international extension of proletarian revolution, to a socialist order.

In Fraser’s view, the struggle against the white-supremacist regimes in the South, which he described as “fascist-like,” was an uncompleted task of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in the U.S.—an advanced capitalist society despite the backward conditions reigning in the South:

“The permanent revolution in America reveals itself in the following manner: the Southern system represents massive survivals of chattel slavery. These survivals take the form of great social problems unsolved by the Civil War and Reconstruction: an antiquated system of land tenure, the absence of democratic rights, segregation and racial discrimination.... “This circumstance leads to the inescapable conclusion that although the tasks of the liberation of the South are of an elementary democratic nature, they have no solution within the framework of American capitalism: they become part of the socialist struggle of the proletariat to overthrow the capitalist system of production.”

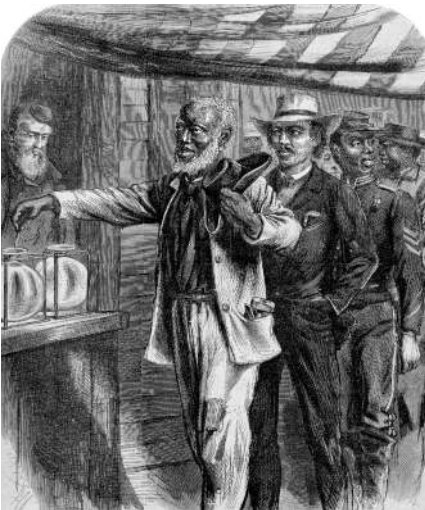
—“Resolution on the Negro Question” (1957), reprinted in “In Memoriam—Richard S. Fraser: An Appreciation and Selection of His Work,” *Prometheus Research Series* No. 3, August 1990

Additionally, Fraser argued that the black middle class had a direct material interest in the preservation of segregation. Hence the black working class would be propelled into the leadership of the struggle for democratic rights. To be sure, black businessmen, such as the owners of local department stores and funeral parlors, wanted to retain a monopoly of commercial trade in the segregated black communities South and North. However, by the late 1950s, the social character of the black petty bourgeoisie was undergoing a significant change. A college-educated managerial/professional stratum wanted access to government, corporate and educational bureaucracies on the same footing as their white counterparts. And it was this stratum, which used to be called “the



Library of Congress

Left: Black troops in Union Army helped turn tide in Civil War to defeat Southern slavocracy. Right: Graphic depicts black people voting in the South in 1867 after Union victory.



Harper's Weekly

talented tenth,” that was the *main beneficiary* of the civil rights movement. The sons and daughters of black businessmen typically became government functionaries and middle-level corporate managers.

In general, Fraser did not fully recognize the substantial changes in the socioeconomic structure of the South at the onset of the civil rights movement. The white-supremacist regimes had as their basic purpose the suppression of the mass

of black rural toilers, typically sharecroppers. The increasing urbanization of the South and the modernization of its agriculture in the 1940s and ’50s eroded the social and economic basis of the Jim Crow system. These were the fundamental developments that gave rise to the civil rights movement: the mobilization of the black populace in the struggle for basic democratic rights. Additionally, legally enforced white supremacy in the South had become



UPI

Evicted sharecroppers, 1939.

New Orleans...

(continued from page 12)

hearings may well be the bourgeoisie’s attempt to do some “damage control”—after all, the whole world watched on TV as the Gulf Coast was devastated and the people of New Orleans left to die.

But every new revelation should underline to working people one inescapable conclusion: The real truth about New Orleans is that it was not just incompetence, not just mistakes, not just bureaucratic inertia that condemned thousands to death and misery. It was the brutal workings of the racist U.S. capitalist system.

Testifying before the Senate “Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs” committee on February 10, former FEMA head and administration fall guy Michael Brown denounced as “baloney” White House and Homeland Security claims that they thought New Orleans had “dodged the bullet” and that they only heard of levee breaks on Tuesday, August 30, some 24 hours after they had occurred. The Senate hearing revealed that reports of a levee breach were available to the government as early as Monday morning. These even included a “White House Homeland Security Council” report at 11:13 a.m. that stated that “a levee in New Orleans has reportedly been breached, sending six to eight feet of water throughout the Ninth Ward area of the city.”

Brown said he spoke directly to White House aides who were with Bush on vacation about the situation on Monday, the day the storm hit land. He said he didn’t bother to call his boss Michael Chertoff, head of Homeland Security, because “it would have wasted my time.” Brown said that if the government had “confirmed that a terrorist has blown up

the 17th Street Canal Levee, then everybody would have jumped all over that.” He commented that handling “a natural disaster” had “become the stepchild within the Department of Homeland Security.” The fact that FEMA has been absorbed by Homeland Security only underscores its decades-long role as an agency of state repression (see “New Orleans: Racist Atrocity,” WV No. 854, 16 September 2005).

The Bush White House has been stonewalling for weeks, blocking investigations into its role in Katrina, and no wonder: They lied about what they knew and when they knew it. While George Bush and Vice President Richard Cheney and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice were off playing—ranching in Texas, fly-fishing in Wyoming, shopping for shoes in Manhattan—helpless wheelchair-bound patients were drowning behind nursing home doors, entire black neighborhoods were swept away, families were gasping their last as the waters trapped them up under their attic roofs, old people were dying of exposure and lack of medicine. As we wrote in a September 4 statement issued by the Spartacist League (reprinted in WV No. 854):

“The unspeakable, smirking George W. Bush trimmed his month-long vacation by a couple of days to survey the disaster zone from his presidential jet and asked inanely: Who knew the levees would break? Answer: Everyone. For years, scientists and Army Corps of Engineers warned that the levees were sinking and incapable of withstanding a powerful hurricane.”

The Katrina disaster laid bare the class and race divisions in America, underlining that the oppression of black people is rooted in the very bedrock of American capitalism. The capitalist rulers have their priorities, and taking care of working people is not one of them. The devas-

tation of New Orleans was prepared by decades of bipartisan neglect by a ruling class that, driven by lust for immediate gain, doesn’t want to pay for repairing its deteriorating infrastructure.

When any child with the ability to manipulate a TV remote control could see New Orleans drowning, could see thousands starving, desperate for drinkable water at the convention center, what kind of monster would not just get help down there? The answer is: the kind of monster that never had any intention of helping, the United States government. This government exists not to help the people but to serve the capitalist rulers. Democrats and Republicans alike, at all levels of government, from New Orleans mayor Nagin to Louisiana governor Blanco on up to the White House: Their loyalty is to the capitalist profit system.

The crimes continue. FEMA announced an early Valentine’s Day present: cutting funding as of February 13 for 12,000 Katrina evacuee families scattered in motels around the country, who now face immediate eviction. Last week, occupants of some 4,500 rooms already had their funding cut. Where will they go? Not to FEMA trailers. Of some 135,000 requests for trailers, FEMA has only filled about half, while in Orleans Parish, only 3,000 out of 21,000 requests have been filled. Insurance rates are going sky high, while FEMA claimed last year to have run out of money to pay existing flood insurance claims.

Behind the Mardi Gras glitter and tourist-fueled Bourbon Street jazz, New Orleans has a port vital to the U.S. economy (the port *will* be reconstructed). It is also one of America’s poorest, blackest cities. And now, a Brown University study has confirmed what many had already feared: “New Orleans could

an embarrassment for the U.S. imperialist rulers in their global Cold War against the Soviet Union, especially among the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Between the 1960s and the late 1970s, the legal-political structure of the South was brought into alignment with the bourgeois-democratic norms in the rest of the country. This development underscores the fact that the root cause of black oppression lies in the workings of the U.S. capitalist economy, not the legal sanctions of the bourgeois state. Today, blacks possess at least formal equality under the law, although this is pervasively violated in practice. The past two or three decades have seen *increased* segregation, particularly in Northern urban areas, along with higher black unemployment and homelessness, a racist purge in higher education, the scourge of AIDS and the massive imprisonment of young black men carried out in the name of “the war on drugs.” Black pockets of the rural South are still marked by deep poverty and vicious repression, to say nothing of the plight of black New Orleans. These conditions cannot be eradicated by a new civil rights movement and a new Civil Rights Act but only by the overthrow of the capitalist system through proletarian socialist revolution.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

lose as much as 80 percent of its black population if its most damaged neighborhoods are not rebuilt and if there is not significant government assistance” (*New York Times*, 27 January). As for the likelihood of “government assistance”—well, one float in the first Krewe du Vieux Mardi Gras parade on February 11 had a display asking France to buy Louisiana back, as the state’s people might then get better treatment.

As we wrote in our September 4 statement: “The situation cries out for workers revolution in the U.S. to do away with the capitalist system and establish a society with a planned, collectivized economy.... As New Orleans shows, the choice is clear: socialism or barbarism.” ■

Marxist Bulletin 5-
REVISED

**WHAT STRATEGY
FOR BLACK LIBERATION?**
**Trotskyism
vs.
Black Nationalism**

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Cartoons...

(continued from page 1)

and organized by Islamic fundamentalist reactionaries. These coincided with an effective boycott of Danish goods.

Since the outbreak of protests, the editor of *Jyllands-Posten* (now “on leave” supposedly because of excessive stress) has postured as a champion of free speech. Lionized throughout Europe for his supposedly brave stand in defense of freedom of the press, he was soon joined in his “struggle” when other papers in Europe (e.g., France and Italy) published the cartoons. But his record is anything but heroic and certainly not anti-clerical. In 2003, he rejected a cartoon series on Jesus because of concerns that it would provoke an outcry.

One does not have to be a Marxist to view with contempt and revulsion the hundreds of millions of lives forfeited in the names of the various prophets and their fictional deities—whether they be of the Christian, Jewish, Muslim or any other faith—in wars and communal bloodbaths. Those who pursue religious violence are often driven by the hope for such ecstasies in the afterlife as are typically promised to “holy” warriors, martyrs and saints. Nor does one need to be a Marxist to appreciate the miserable existence, the forfeiture of human potential of the many, particularly women, bound by religious superstitious constraints. Satire is more than challenged by the depravity of these continuing atrocities. However, one does have to be a revolutionary Marxist to realize that religious superstition and belief will only fade away as human want is conquered through socialist revolution and the creation of a communist society worldwide.

The international proletariat must fight against all anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim chauvinism and provocations. It must demand an end to the occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan and defend those who resist the American military juggernaut while calling for full citizenship rights for immigrants throughout



Jacob Holdt
Danish neo-Nazi demonstration, 2002. Anti-immigrant frenzy propels growth of fascists in Europe.

Europe and the U.S. A February 7 letter by Hans Jensen, the President of the Danish Confederation of Trade Unions, to the International Confederation of Arab Trade Unions rightly condemns “any statement or illustration, which serves to demonise individuals or groups because of their religion or ethnicity,” while calling for an end to the boycott of Danish goods.

However, throughout Europe, including in Denmark, the tops of the social democracies and the trade unions—advocates of capitalist reform and opponents of socialist revolution—have more than curtsied to anti-immigrant sentiment, supposedly in the defense of “their”

workers against foreign workers. In reality, this acquiescence to bourgeois reaction vitiates the working class’ ability to struggle against its capitalist rulers—by dividing the proletariat into its native and immigrant components—while calling into question the historic mission of the working class as the liberator of all humanity.

By contributing to the ghetto-like segregation and isolation of immigrants in European societies, the reformists reinforce the sway of the reactionary Muslim clerics who now lead the protests sweeping Europe and the Near East under banners that proclaim, “Kill Those Who Insult Islam,” “Behead Those Who Insult Islam,” and “Europe You Will Pay. Your 9/11 Is On Its Way!” But for all these bloodcurdling cries, it is the imperialists who dominate militarily and who are daily shooting down the protesters in Afghanistan.

Buoyed by the victory of Hamas in the Palestinian elections, by the strong showing of the Muslim Brotherhood in recent Egyptian elections, and by the just resistance of the clerical Iranian regime to imperialist efforts to deprive it of the capacity for nuclear weapons, the fundamentalists seek to extend their political power. Notwithstanding the anti-Semitic cartoons that are a regular feature in many Arab newspapers and the campaign by the press in Iran to elicit Holocaust cartoons, it is the Israeli semi-theocratic state that daily *murders* Palestinians and the imperialists who threaten and are able to starve the Palestinians unless Hamas accepts Israel’s terms.

At bottom, for all their rhetoric, the fundamentalists direct their demands to the greater and lesser “Satans.” In the communiqué issued by the December meeting of 57 Muslim nations in Mecca that launched the current wave of protests, the imperialists are beseeched to cease “using the freedom of expression as a pretext to defame religions” (*New York Times*, 9 February).

This not very veiled call for anti-blasphemy constraints must be opposed by the international proletariat. Religious “impieties” should be of no concern to the working class. In Britain, existing anti-blasphemy laws apply only to the Christian faith. Now pending is a bill with some popular support, particularly among Muslims in Britain, to outlaw expressions of religious hatred. Such laws are a danger, and would be used by the state primarily to indict and suppress the opponents of religious reaction.

The “politically correct” logic that gives support to anti-blasphemy laws was articulated by those liberals who apologized for the 2004 murder of right-wing Dutch filmmaker Theo van Gogh by a Muslim fanatic because he made a film on the wretched condition of women in Islamic countries. The film was made in collaboration with Ayaan Hirsi Ali, a Somali refugee trying to free herself from the constraints of Islamic fundamentalism, who has received numerous death threats. The flip side has been that immigrant leftists and women appalled by the rise of Islamic reaction, and seeing no alternative perspective, have turned more and more to the “democratic” imperialists and their states for answers—a case in point being Ayaan Hirsi Ali herself, a Dutch parliamentarian who favors Western intervention against Islamic reaction.

Hypocrisy is never too far behind the West’s claims to “democracy” and “civilization.” When Martin Scorsese’s *Last Temptation of Christ* was released in 1988, it was met by howls from the Christian right, and Blockbuster Video refused to circulate the film. When the film came to France, religious fanatics went on a rampage, firebombing one theater where it was showing. And when the Brooklyn Museum of Art in 1999 showed an exhibit by black artist Chris Ofili, a Catholic of Nigerian background, that included a collage titled “The Holy Virgin Mary” incorporating the use of dry elephant dung (as employed in some



AP
February 5: Muslim protesters set fire to building housing Danish embassy in Lebanon.

kinds of traditional African art), then-NYC-mayor Rudolph Giuliani threatened to cut millions of dollars in funding and evict the museum.

More recently, the born-again George W. Bush had no qualms about closing down Islamic charities in the U.S. with the impeccably racist and imperialist logic that those victimized in Iraq and Palestine were opponents of America “the holy.” Nor did he have any qualms about authorizing such indignities and tortures as were (and doubtless still are) perpetrated at Abu Ghraib and Guantánamo (where U.S. guards urinated on the Koran). The right-wing American political forces that have been howling about “freedom of the press” over the cartoon row are the very same forces that want to curtail civil liberties in the U.S. in pursuit of the “war on terror” and promote the teaching of the religious notion of “intelligent design” over evolution in public schools.

Though lacking in the same kind of military, political and economic might as the imperialists, the Islamic fundamentalists are no less disposed to bigotry and violence. One can look at the case of Salman Rushdie who was targeted for assassination by a *fatwa* backed by the Iranian clericalist regime for writing the mildly impious, and quite funny, *The Satanic Verses* in 1988. The current reactionary mobilizations in the Near East have frequently targeted local Christian populations and places of worship. And in Iraq it is communal violence, primarily between Sunni and Shi’ite Muslim forces—not the illusory democracy enforced by the imperialist occupation—that will determine which sect will rule. In Algeria, Iran, Jordan and Yemen, several editors and journalists defied the status quo and printed the cartoons, a “crime” for which they now face prosecution for “defaming” Islam. An independent political stand by the Near Eastern proletariat would be to demand their immediate freedom.

As Marxists, we are militant atheists. At the same time, we defend the right of all to worship as they please. But we do not defend such practices that enjoin the lives, safety and freedoms that should be accessible to all. We champion the complete separation of church and state.

Although Islamic fundamentalism is achieving ascendance throughout the Muslim world, these are diverse, class-divided and heterogeneous societies where the just reaction to imperialist domination is not always subsumed to religious reaction. In a recent article in the Egyptian *Al-Ahram Weekly* (2 February) Ramzy Baroud, a Palestinian American journalist, poignantly describes the dilemma of those not totally enamored of the current demonstrations. “If Arabs can be so efficient in organising such popular (and effective) campaigns

that utilise economic, political and diplomatic leverage to extract concessions, then why the utter failure to carry out such campaigns protesting against the US war on Iraq, its unconditional support of Israel and its condescending foreign policy and grand democracy charades it wishes to impose on everyone?”

Fair question. The fundamentalist mobilizations over the cartoons doubtless articulate pent-up anger at the U.S. occupation of Iraq, the pounding of the Palestinians, the imperialists’ unholy crusade against Muslims expressed through the “war on terror.” At the same time, these mobilizations, based on religious fanaticism, are a deflection from what is necessary to fight these very real atrocities.

What about the meaningful problems, magnified tenfold by imperialist subjugation, that face the numerous peoples and societies that constitute the Muslim world? The proximal answer is that the 1991-92 overturn of the bureaucratically degenerated Soviet workers state removed the sole support for a more independent bourgeois-nationalist stance in the Near East. Today, those who rule the regimes of the region are in servile relationship to the imperialist powers, a factor that further fuels reactionary Islamic fundamentalism.

As is pointed out in Trotsky’s theory of permanent revolution, the ties that bind the national bourgeoisies in the backward countries to the imperialist order are a thousand times stronger than those that tie them to the cause of national liberation. The Stalinized Communist parties of the Near East betrayed their mass base among workers, women and minorities and made a mockery of the struggle for socialist revolution by tailing after the “progressive” nationalists of the region, such as during the 1958 Iraqi Revolution. For this, they share responsibility for the growth of Islamic fundamentalism.

It is to be remembered that when the heads of the primarily Germanic tribes that overturned the decaying Roman Empire in the fifth century were in the process of acquiring skills in literacy, if not in hygiene, the early dynamic mercantilism of the Muslim empires, which began their rise in the late seventh century, was the transmission belt for culture and knowledge in the region. In many parts of their empires, most notably Andalusian Spain, the Muslims were known for a certain tolerance for other religions hardly found in barbaric Europe. But it was primarily Europe that spawned the forces that led to the formation of the class basis of modern society, the various nationally based bourgeoisies and the international proletariat.

The early liberating promises of the European bourgeois-democratic revolutions were soon subsumed to the drive for world dominance in pursuit of profits by those nations where capitalism dominated. The imperialist rulers of today do not represent the Enlightenment, rationalism or secularism. To cement their domination, the imperialists have historically backed the forces of religious fundamentalism against “godless” communism and, at times, even secular nationalism. Beginning in the late 1970s, U.S. imperialism armed and financed Islamic fundamentalist cutthroats fighting against the Soviet intervention into Afghanistan, an intervention that opened the possibility of extending the gains of the October Revolution to the Afghan peoples. Soviet leader Gorbachev’s criminal withdrawal of troops in 1989 opened the door to the triumph of capitalist counterrevolution in the USSR itself, while greatly contributing to the growth of Islamic reaction.

Proletarian power remains the only way forward in the Near East. It is necessary to forge Marxist workers parties in the region to mobilize the working class in struggle to overturn the rule of the imperialists and their lackeys and to begin the liberation of that area from imperialist rule and fundamentalist reaction, a liberation that will be completed only by the world socialist revolution. ■

Palestinians...

(continued from page 1)

subsistence agriculture and water. Curfews, blockades and military checkpoints impede movement to jobs, hospitals, schools and crucial social services. A year ago, U.N. secretary general Kofi Annan observed that “Palestinian women are suffering massively from malnutrition.” Nearly 70 percent of pregnant women and nursing mothers are anemic.

It is under these conditions that Hamas, which has hitherto rejected “peace” talks with Israel, emerged as the only perceived alternative to the nationalist Fatah movement. A 30 January posting on *Al Jazeera’s* Web site noted: “While Hamas’s international reputation is based on its campaign of attacks against Israel, its popularity in the West Bank and Gaza stems in part from its providing a safety net for some of the poorest Palestinians.” Isolated and under international pressure, Palestinians seek first of all simple relief from Zionist terror.

The imperialists’ hostility to Hamas has little to do with opposition to “terror”—U.S. imperialism is the biggest terrorist on the planet, and the Israeli state was founded on terror and “ethnic cleansing” against Palestinians. U.S. threats

in the era of “Arab Revolution,” the PLO looked first to the Arab bourgeoisies in the region as its allies against Israel. By the early 1990s, reliance on the Arab regimes was supplanted by direct appeals to the imperialists, particularly the United States. After capitalist counterrevolution destroyed the Soviet degenerated workers state in 1991-92, removing the main military and political counterweight to U.S. imperialism, the PLO was deprived of crucial diplomatic and financial support. In 1993, the PLO signed the Oslo Accords with Israel.

Brokered by Washington, the Oslo Accords established Palestinian-controlled ghettos in Gaza and the West Bank. As noted by Columbia University professor Joseph Massad (*Al-Ahram Weekly*, 11 February), the U.S./Israeli terms of the agreement “did not only include the Oslo capitulation but also that the newly created and Fatah-controlled Palestinian Authority be indeed armed and that its weapons should have a new target: the Palestinian people themselves.” We warned at the time of the accords:

“Whatever happens, this grotesque bargain over the subjugated Palestinian people marks a watershed in the Near East. By its act, the PLO has invited fundamentalist reactionaries like Hamas to pose as the only fighters against the Zionist occupation. Petty-bourgeois Arab



Israeli occupation troops carry out house-to-house raid near Jenin in West Bank, December 14.

tore up Oslo, launching a series of attacks on the Occupied Territories that devastated the Palestinian Authority infrastructure, and imprisoned Yassir Arafat in his shelled-out compound in Ramallah until he died.

Desperate to hold on to their jobs as overseers in the Occupied Territories, PA

Islamists became a force in these organs of collaboration. Israel’s rulers helped the Islamic Association gain control of the Islamic University of Gaza and a base among the intelligentsia, while funding welfare programs to help the fundamentalists win a base among the poor.

With the beginning of the first *Intifada* in 1987, the Islamists feared that if they stood aside they would lose their following. Hamas was founded in the spring of 1988 as an Islamist political movement with an armed wing. Hamas sought to fuse the national struggle, previously a secular movement containing a leftist component, with reactionary Islamic fundamentalism. Notwithstanding Hamas’ rabidly anti-Semitic charter, Israel’s rulers promoted Hamas as a counterweight to the PLO and broke relations only in the fall of 1989 after discovering that Hamas had killed two Israeli soldiers.

The Zionists have used the rise of Hamas and rival fundamentalist Islamic Jihad—both of which increasingly responded to Israel state terror by carrying out criminal suicide bombings against Israeli civilians—to justify scuttling “peace” talks and intensifying the oppression of the Palestinian people. Israel’s intensification of bloody repression and terror has included “targeted assassinations” of Palestinian leaders, such as that of Sheik Yassin in 2004.

Anti-Palestinian repression is not just the policy of hard-line right-wing Zionism. The Kadima party was founded by now comatose ex-prime minister Sharon—the man responsible for the slaughter of some 2,000 Palestinians in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in 1982—working in collaboration with Zionist “dove” Shimon Peres. Kadima has adopted the liberal Zionist, and racist, line that the central reason for withdrawing from some lands in the West Bank is to preserve a Jewish majority in Israel. This is echoed by Amir Peretz, current leader of the thoroughly bourgeois Labor Party, who states that if he wins the upcoming Israeli elections, “Any concession I make—any agreement I reach—is based on retaining a Jewish state.... So the [Palestinian] right of return is not even a question for the negotiating table.”

Palestinian Women Under the Gun

A 3 February *New York Times* article, “Women, Secret Hamas Strength, Win Votes at Polls and New Role,” points to the growth of support for Hamas among Palestinian women. While promoting the segregation of women, Hamas has been able to gain a base among them by instituting needed social services and giving women a more prominent role in its activities. This itself is a damning indictment of the political bankruptcy of the Palestinian nationalists. As a young woman in Fatah put it, “Fatah took women for granted, and this is one reason it lost.”

Hamas is descended from the clerical-fascistic Muslim Brotherhood, which became particularly prominent in Egypt in the late 1940s. Under the slogan “com-



Jean Mohr

against the Palestinians must be put in the broader context of imperialist machinations in the region. As it maintains its bloody occupation of Iraq, the U.S. threatens Iran with sanctions and military attack if it proceeds with its nuclear program, while it annually gives Israel, armed with over 200 nuclear weapons, billions in armaments and other financial assistance. **Down with U.S. aid to Israel! Defend the Palestinians! Israeli troops, settlers out of all the Occupied Territories! U.S. out of Iraq!**

The Bankruptcy of PLO Nationalism

Hamas’ electoral victory was a major political defeat for the PLO, though Fatah at this point retains its control of the PA security forces. Founded in 1964

nationalism has been shown to be the bankrupt and impotent dead end that it always was.”

—“Israel-PLO Deal for Palestinian Ghetto,” WV No. 583, 10 September 1993

Since the Oslo Accords, Israel has created 102 new settlements and doubled the population in existing settlements. There are now some 450,000 Jewish settlers in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Over 700 military checkpoints were built to control the movement of Palestinians from town to town and in and out of Jerusalem and Gaza. In 1994, an electric fence was built around the Gaza ghetto. Some 34 percent of the budget of the Palestinian Authority is spent on policing, compared to 8 percent on health and 2 percent on agriculture. In 2001, the government of Ariel Sharon effectively



Getty

Rise of Islamic fundamentalism threatens Palestinian women. Left: Students at West Bank Bir Zeit University, 1984, where many women rejected wearing Islamic headscarf and veil. Above: Women line up to vote in Gaza City during recent Palestinian elections.

cops, hired by Fatah, rioted against Hamas’ recent victory. In turn, Hamas has backed off earlier threats to reorganize the security forces and pledged to support the PA cops. Policing the Palestinians in “autonomous” shreds of territory is the “right” the PLO wrested from Israel. As Israeli journalist Amira Hass noted, Arafat “measured the ‘accomplishment’ by the number of Palestinians he controlled and were subject to his security branches, rather than by the extent of their freedom—for there is no freedom in enclaves surrounded by an occupying army” (*CounterPunch*, 2 February).

Zionist Rulers Supported Hamas

In 1974, the Arab League declared the PLO to be the “sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.” Four years later, Menachem Begin’s right-wing government approved an application from Sheik Ahmed Yassin to license the Islamic Association, a front group of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood and the predecessor of Hamas. As an official charity organization, Yassin’s group received funding from Israel. In 1986, the former military governor of Gaza, Yitzhak Segev, said: “We extend some financial aid to Islamic groups via mosques and religious schools, in order to help create a force that would stand against the leftist forces which support the PLO.” Carrying out attacks on secularists and Communists, the Islamists engaged in neither political nor military struggle against Israel.

In the 1980s the Shamir government set up conservative, tribal-based “Village Leagues” in the Occupied Territories. The

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Heyman...

(continued from page 3)

Heyman is a hypocrite who postures as a labor “militant” while working at every critical juncture to *undermine* class-struggle politics. Take, for example, the 2004 Washington, D.C. Million Worker March (MWM). ILWU Local 10 was one of the main endorsers and Heyman heavily built the march as “an independent mobilization of the workers.” In *Socialist Viewpoint* (July-August 2005), Heyman criticized a number of top labor bureaucrats who “all agreed to prevent an independent workers demonstration before the presidential election lest it jeopardize the electoral chances of pro-war, pro-Taft Hartley Kerry.” The MWM was “independent” of what? Its “Mission Statement” deliberately avoided renouncing support for the Democrats at a time when the labor bureaucrats, including the ILWU International, were pouring money into Democrat Kerry’s coffers. A letter posted on the official MWM Web site from one of its main backers, Chris Silvera of Teamsters Local 808 in New York City, openly declared: “The Million Worker March is a crucial vehicle for voter mobilization.” And he wasn’t talking about getting out the vote for Bush.

As we argued in “Million Worker March: Tail of Lesser Evilism” (WV No. 831, 3 September 2004): “Workers who

want a genuinely independent workers party must raise their own class banners at the MWM in October.” The Spartacist League literature table at the march featured the banner: “Break with the Democrats! No Vote to Nader! For a Workers Party that Fights for Socialist Revolution!” Did Heyman raise any such banner? He had one made calling to “Break with the Democrats, Build a Workers Party!” But on site, this banner never saw the light of day. While doing his job of unfurling the ILWU and official MWM banners at the march, *Heyman left the “workers party” banner in the bag it had come in!*

Heyman gallivants around the world perpetrating similar frauds. At a rally for “international workers solidarity” in Tokyo in November, he excoriated the AFL-CIO bureaucracy for supporting “the monopoly of political power in the two parties of the capitalist class—the Republicans and the Democrats—not an independent labor party or workers party that has been raised by the ILWU.” Who was to know that back home the ILWU was continuing to back the Democrats? Heyman, for one: In his *Socialist Viewpoint* article, Heyman had complained of the fact that “our officers continue to uncritically support the Democratic Party.” And this is the cynical faker who denounces us for “hypocrisy and hollow exhortations”!

One would think from reading Hey-

man’s letter that we are also guilty of having censored his criticisms of our organization in his remarks at the October Berkeley rally. On the contrary. Our article on the event reported that “Jack Heyman criticized the SL and the PDC for not fielding contingents at the 24 April 1999 ‘Millions for Mumia’ demonstrations and for not commending the union’s West Coast stop-work meeting on behalf of Mumia the same day.” We referred our readers to the article “A Hard Look at Recent Party Work and Current Tasks” (WV No. 841, 4 February 2005), which Heyman cynically commended at the October rally for doing an “excellent job of admitting the mistakes around Mumia’s defense.” We acknowledged that we made a mistake in not fielding “Free Mumia” contingents in the 1999 protests, which would have provided an organized pole to combat the deadly illusions in the capitalist state sown by the reformists and labor fakers and to fight for a class-struggle perspective.

But we certainly did not abstain from the protests. In S.F., for example, we had a full mobilization of our members and supporters to get out our propaganda calling to mobilize the social power of our class in defense of Jamal as opposed to reliance on the courts of the class enemy. Our literature table prominently featured the PDC banner reading: “There Is No Justice in the Capitalist Courts! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the

Racist Death Penalty!” Our intervention was hardly an empty gesture, as Heyman implies. A number of the longshoremen who shut down the ports that day had first heard of Jamal’s case through PDC literature and articles in *Workers Vanguard*. Nonetheless, not having contingents was a tactical error, and a costly one. At a critical point in the fight for Mumia’s freedom, it undercut our effectiveness in fighting against the liberals, reformists and labor fakers like Heyman whose policies demobilized support for Mumia’s cause.

V.I. Lenin, whose Bolshevik Party led the only successful workers revolution in history—the 1917 October Revolution—wrote: “A political party’s attitude toward its own mistakes is one of the most important and surest ways of judging how earnest the party is and how it fulfills *in practice* its obligations towards its *class* and the *working people*.” Heyman’s response to being held accountable for the swindle of covering the politics of class collaboration with the veneer of class-struggle rhetoric should serve as a similar, if contrary, measure of his purpose. This “militant,” who keeps his politics in the bag when it matters, reveals himself as nothing more than a component of the labor bureaucracy whose support to the capitalist profit system has sapped the workers’ fighting spirit in the face of the bosses’ one-sided class war over the past several decades.■

munism = atheism = liberation of women,” the Muslim Brotherhood mobilized a terror campaign against Communists and other secular forces. Hamas preaches the social segregation of women, the wearing of the *hijab* (Islamic headscarf), and anti-woman *sharia* law. With the growth of Hamas especially in Gaza, there has been a rise in “honor killings” of women who “shame” their families by having sex outside marriage, defying arranged marriages, donning Western “jezebel” dress or other transgressions of Islamic law.

When women stepped forward to play a leading and courageous role in the resistance against Israeli occupation forces during the first *Intifada*, Hamas stepped up its activity against “un-Islamic behavior.” During the first year of the *Intifada*, what distinguished Hamas was its attacks on unveiled women. In May 1988, religious youths broke into classrooms demanding that schoolgirls wear the *hijab*. In summer 1989, unveiled women were stoned in Gaza. The campaign to force women back into the veil was acquiesced to by the PLO’s Fatah and the leftists who tail the PLO. A symbol of women’s segregation from society, these

stifling yards of black cloth, meant to symbolize female “modesty” and subervience, were promoted as a symbol of national resistance.

The PLO was not merely trying to bolster its waning support by tailing the Islamic fundamentalists. As petty-bourgeois nationalists, the PLO is incapable of fighting for women’s emancipation. As we wrote in “Palestinian Women and the *Intifada*”:

“The PLO aims to create its own bourgeois regime which would be in the image of the neighboring states. At bottom, these bourgeois nationalists are hostile to women’s emancipation because it can only be achieved through a thoroughgoing working-class revolution, shattering bourgeois property relations and all associated social institutions. The victory of the proletariat fighting for its own *class* interests will break the old bonds of oppression and lay the basis to revolutionize daily life. This is flatly counterposed to the program of ‘national unity’.”

—*Women and Revolution* No. 39 (Summer 1991)

For Arab-Hebrew Workers Revolution!

The Israeli/Palestinian conflict is one of interpenetrated peoples: two peoples

fighting for control of the same piece of land. With some 50 percent of the Palestinian population living outside the Occupied Territories—in Jordan, Lebanon, Israel—the national liberation of the Palestinians demands a perspective of socialist revolution throughout the Near East, including within Israel, the most powerful and economically advanced country in the region. This means recognizing the right of the Hebrew-speaking people to national self-determination. In turn, breaking the Hebrew proletariat from their Zionist rulers requires that they champion the national rights of the Palestinians. We have no illusions that winning the Hebrew proletariat to this perspective will be an easy task. Indeed, it will likely require the victory of socialist revolution in one of the other Near Eastern states to break the Hebrew proletariat from Zionist chauvinism.

The Zionist state is not only a catastrophe for Palestinians—it is also a death-

trap for Jews. As long as Zionist oppression of Palestinians continues, Israeli Jews will continue to be a target of hatred and outrage by the more than 100 million Arabs who surround them. In Israel, 25 percent of citizens live in poverty and income disparities are higher than in Egypt and Jordan. The false consciousness of religion and nationalism—in the face of pervasive anti-Semitism—is the glue holding this multiply fissured society together.

The Arab working masses must be broken from fundamentalism and Arab nationalism and won to a perspective of proletarian revolution. This requires the forging of revolutionary Marxist parties 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. There is no other way.■

Spartacist Black History Month Speaking Tour

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

Don Alexander, SL Central Committee (Chicago)
Don Cane, SL Central Committee (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

OAKLAND

Sunday, Feb. 19, 12 & 3 p.m.
YWCA Tea Room
1515 Webster Street
(near 12th & 19th BART stations
in downtown Oakland)

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

CHICAGO

Saturday, Feb. 25, 1 & 4 p.m.
University of Chicago
Reynolds Club
South Lounge (2nd floor)
5706 South University Ave.

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

Spartacus Youth Club Classes

BOSTON

Saturday, February 25, 4 p.m.
The Russian Revolution Betrayed
Boston University
George Sherman Union, Room 310-11
775 Commonwealth Ave.
(BU Central stop on Green Line B)
Information and readings: (617) 666-9453
or e-mail: bostonsyc@yahoo.com

CHICAGO

Tuesday, February 28, 7 p.m.
For Women’s 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, March 4, 2 p.m.
After the Revolution:
Economic Planning and
the Communist Social Vision
3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215
(Near Beverly/Vermont Red Line Station)
Information and readings: (213) 380-8239
or e-mail: slsycla@sbcglobal.net

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

NEW YORK

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

TORONTO

Wednesday, March 1, 6:30 p.m.
For Women’s Liberation
Through Socialist Revolution!
Free Abortion on Demand!
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: tlit@look.ca

WORKERS VANGUARD

The Legacy of Richard S. Fraser

Revolutionary Integrationism: The Road to Black Freedom

When Hurricane Katrina left untold thousands of poor, overwhelmingly black people either dead or homeless, the reality of black oppression in the U.S. was laid bare. Half a century after the outbreak of the mass struggles for black civil rights, official Jim Crow segregation in the South

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is long gone. But the conditions of black life in this country—North and South—have worsened, from jobs and wages to housing and education, while cop terror runs rampant in the ghettos and masses of young black men have been relegated to years in prison. The situation cries out for massive class and social struggle against the racist U.S. capitalist rulers, based on a firm understanding of the roots of black oppression and the lessons of past struggles for social equality.

From the formation of the Spartacist tendency in the early 1960s, we have stood for the perspective and program of revolutionary integrationism. This position is counterposed to both the liberal reformist response to black oppression and to all political expressions of black separatism. The liberation of black people from conditions of racial oppression and impoverishment—conditions inherent to the U.S. capitalist system—can be achieved only

in an egalitarian socialist society. And such a society can be achieved only through the overthrow of the capitalist system by the working class and its allies. As we wrote in “Black and Red—Class-Struggle Road to Negro Freedom,” a document adopted at the founding conference of the Spartacist League in September 1966 and subsequently printed in *Marxist Bulletin* No. 9, “Basic Documents of the Spartacist League”: “Because of their position as both the most oppressed and also the most conscious and experienced section, revolutionary black workers are slated to play an exceptional role in the coming American revolution.”

We have described the black population in the U.S. as an oppressed race-color caste. We noted in “Black and Red” that “from their arrival in this country, the Negro people have been *an integral part* of American class society while at the same time *forcibly segregated* at the bottom of this society.” Thus blacks face discrimination, in different degrees, regardless of social status, wealth or class position. Despite the increasing destruction of industrial jobs and erosion of union strength in recent decades, black workers, whose rate of union membership is a third higher than that of white workers, continue to be integrated into strategic sectors of the industrial proletariat, such as urban transit, longshore, auto and steel.

Blacks also make up a large percentage of unionized government and public workers. Won to a revolutionary program, black workers will be the living link fusing the anger of the dispossessed ghetto masses with the social power of the multi-racial proletariat under the leadership of a Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party. Labor/black mobilizations initiated by the Spartacist League and its fraternal organizations, which defeated fascist Klan and Nazi provocations in a number of major cities over the past quarter-century, were concrete demonstrations of the fight for revolutionary integrationism.

The current expression of the concept of revolutionary integrationism derives from the ideas of Richard S. Fraser, a veteran Trotskyist who made a unique Marxist contribution to the understanding of American black oppression and struggle, particularly through his lectures and written documents in the 1950s. James Robertson, a founding leader of the Spartacist tendency, was won to Fraser’s views on the black question when both were members of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), the historic party of American Trotskyism which, however, underwent a process of rightward degeneration beginning in the late 1950s. Comrade Robertson later recounted that when he stayed a few days at Fraser’s home in Seattle, the latter pounded him incessantly with his views on the black question.

In 1963, the SWP leadership expelled the Revolutionary Tendency, a left opposition that was the forerunner of the Spartacist League. In 1964, within the first months of our existence as an organizationally independent tendency, we published Fraser’s “For the Materialist Conception of the Negro Question” (reprinted in *Marxist Bulletin* No. 5 [revised], “What Strategy for Black Liberation? Trotskyism vs. Black Nationalism”). This document provided our members and supporters with the historical depth and Marxist understanding to combat the resurgence of black nationalism and its ersatz, bourgeois-sponsored offshoots like “community control,” which was adopted wholesale by most of the left.

Fraser accepted our invitation to be a co-reporter on the black question at our founding conference. While Fraser rejected our use of the term “caste” as applied to the American black population, he agreed in substance with the description of black oppression captured in this term. By the time of our conference, Fraser and his co-thinkers had left the SWP and formed their own organization, the Freedom Socialist Party (FSP). In 2004, the FSP published a book titled *Revolutionary Integration: A Marxist Analysis of African American Liberation*. It consists of two documents: “Dialectics

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WV Photo
Detroit, November 1979: 500 auto workers, youth and leftists stopped the Klan in labor/black mobilization heavily built by Spartacist League.

“Brownie” Spills Some Beans

New Orleans Racist Atrocity: Crime and Cover-Up

Untold numbers are dead and tens of thousands dispersed, their homes rotting shells, the land they lived on eyed by greedy speculators. Even as human remains still lie unidentified and unclaimed in the Gulf Coast region, thousands upon thousands of the living are being pushed relentlessly into homeless, jobless, rootless misery. The lethal incompetence and racist contempt displayed by all levels of government for the fate of New Orleans’ black and poor population before, during and after Hurricane Katrina spelled a crime of enormous magnitude. And the crime continues, blossoming into fuller malignity, as the capitalist

vultures and their cronies in Washington, D.C. pick over this vast tragedy to maximize their profit opportunities.

The *Washington Post* (12 February) writes that now—nearly six months after the disaster—an all-Republican House of Representatives committee is about to issue a 600-page report on Katrina. A draft of the report includes “90 findings of failures at all levels of government.” Between House and Senate investigations, over 800,000 pages of documents have been produced based on testimony and evidence from more than 250 witnesses. These

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Ainsworth/Dallas Morning News
Capitalist rulers left New Orleans blacks, poor to die.