

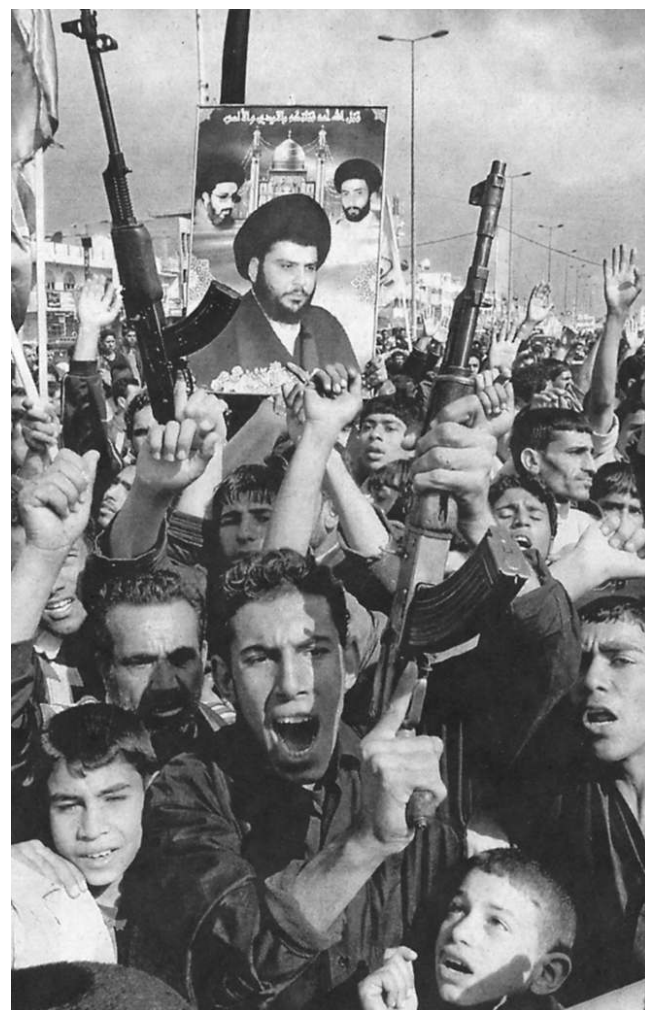
Imperialist Occupation Fuels Communal Slaughter

U.S. Out of Iraq Now!

FEBRUARY 28—The daily slaughter that has come to define life under the blood-drenched U.S. occupation of Iraq is now threatening to spiral into an all-sided bloodbath. On February 22, the Al-Askariya Mosque in Samarra, which houses a thousand-year-old mausoleum for one of Shi'ite Islam's most revered imams, was bombed, obliterating its beautiful golden dome and triggering a wave of attacks between Shi'ite and Sunni Muslims that have thus far claimed nearly 400 lives. In a particularly heinous attack, 47 factory workers in the outskirts of Baghdad were dragged from buses taking them home and executed. In another attack, Atwar Bahjat, a female journalist for the Dubai-based Al Arabiya news channel, was killed along with two of her colleagues.

A three-day curfew imposed on Baghdad and surrounding provinces was punctuated by sporadic gun battles and mortar attacks. After the "coalition" puppet government the U.S. is seeking to forge in Iraq threatened to fall apart, the major Sunni party has said it will resume talks to patch up the government. Iraqi officials and clerics outside the government have been putting on a show of unity to prevent an outbreak of civil war, with the defense minister warning that "if there is a civil war in this country it will never end."

A *New York Times* (26 February) article warned "that an unrestrained civil war...would not only give birth to warring Sunni, Shiite and Kurdish enclaves inside Iraq, but that the violence could also spread unpredictably through the region." The article continued, "Iran would side with the Shiites.... And Sunni countries like Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Kuwait would feel a need to defend Sunnis or perhaps to create buffer states for themselves along Iraq's borders. Turkey might also feel compelled to move in, to protect Iraq's Turkoman minority against a Kurdish state in the north."



AP photos

Destruction of the Shi'ite Golden Mosque in Samarra (left) on February 22 touched off explosions of fury in Sadr City, Baghdad (right), and elsewhere.

U.S. and Iraqi officials blamed the bombing of the Al-Askariya Mosque on Al Qaeda, while Sunni leaders have blamed reprisals against random Sunnis on the militias of Shi'ite cleric Moqtada Al-Sadr, who denies the claim and is reportedly calling for unity. Whoever is responsible for such attacks, the situation has a logic of its own, dictated by the particu-

lar history of Iraq and the vicious U.S. occupation, under which some 100,000 Iraqis have died.

Shortly after U.S. troops took Baghdad, we warned in WV No. 802, (25 April 2003): "The imperialist occupation has encouraged reactionary forces to emerge, from fundamentalists demanding an Islamic republic to monarchists to 'democrats' on the CIA payroll. Ethnic and religious antagonisms, stoked by the British imperialist conquest at the end of World War I and fueled by decades of bourgeois-nationalist rule, now threaten to erupt in an orgy of bloodletting." The government Washington created is dominated by Shi'ite and Kurdish parties at the expense of the minority Sunni Arabs, who enjoyed a relatively privileged existence under the regime of Saddam Hussein.

The growing threats of civil war underline that in a fundamental sense, there is no "Iraq." The country was carved out of the collapsing Turkish Ottoman Empire following the First World War by the British imperialists, who forced together historically hostile populations—Kurds, Sunni Arabs and Shi'ite Arabs—that are themselves further riven by clan and tribal rivalries. In such a society, there is certainly no basis for stable bourgeois-democratic rule.

The recent wave of attacks and counter-attacks marks an escalation of what Iraq's masses have been suffering through since the U.S. invasion: whole towns laid waste, entire families annihilated, imprisonment and torture at the hands of the American imperialist occupiers; death-squad Iraqi military forces that have been targeting the minority Sunni population; sectarian bombings and attacks that purposely hit civilians, overwhelmingly Shi'ites, as they try to go about their daily lives. Such are the bitter fruits of U.S. imperialism's "Operation Iraqi Freedom."

In the lead-up to and during the 2003 invasion, the Spartacist League called for the military defense of Iraq against imperialist attack, without giving the brutal capitalist regime of Saddam Hussein—once an ally of U.S. imperialism—an iota of political support. At protests in the U.S. against the war, we called to "Fight U.S. imperialism through class struggle at home!" Today we demand the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of U.S. troops and their allies from Iraq, Afghanistan and the Near East.

In contrast, the various antiwar coalitions set up or supported by the reformist left refused to call for the defense of Iraq during the war while pleading with the

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Spanner/Polaris

Iraqis being loaded into helicopters en route to detention/torture centers run by U.S. occupiers and their puppets.



**Black History
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Class Struggle**

**Revolutionary Integrationism:
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Keeping Black People from Coming Back

New Orleans Update

13 February 2006

To the Editor,

Thanks for printing my letter from New Orleans in November [WV No. 858, 11 November 2005]. Here's an update: incredibly, not much has changed.

Fully 5 months post-Katrina, three-quarters of the city is still without power, phones and mail. While some businesses and streetlights are restored to power, the residences are not, and remain mostly unpopulated. The populated part is still the "Sliver by the River" from the Uptown colleges and St. Charles Avenue mansions to the CBD [Central Business District], French Quarter and precious little beyond.

Many people were stunned when Bush Junior visited the (wealthy, unflooded) Garden District in January and declared New Orleans to be "a heck of a place to bring the family"...but they missed the rest of the comment. He went on to say

that it was a good thing "the infrastructure was back on its feet." Bubble Boy beyond belief!

If the infrastructure is back, that would be news to the hundreds of thousands of residents living in exile, unable to return for lack of housing, public utilities, schools and jobs.

The loss of housing stock is key. A trickle of FEMA trailers has finally begun to arrive here (like the blue tarp roof program, trailers were distributed to the less flooded areas like the white-flight Jefferson Parish first). There were 1,700 trailers by last count in N.O., versus 32,000 in Mississippi where far fewer residences were lost.

However most of the New Orleans trailers sit empty for lack of electricity, water and sewage hook-ups. 900 more trailers were delivered to the University of New Orleans in time for classes beginning last week...only no power is expected to be supplied for another month, leaving UNO to scramble for housing and make a public appeal for space for faculty, staff and students in private homes.

But the private homes are already packed with friends, relatives and co-workers who were flooded out. Air mat-

Damaged building and debris on St. Bernard Avenue, January 25. Six months after Hurricane Katrina, black neighborhoods in New Orleans remain devastated.

Reuters



tresses on floors are as ubiquitous as blue tarps on roofs. Traffic and population are incredibly dense in those areas with electricity.

Some visiting Congressmen recently expressed surprise when they toured the miles of devastation. They wanted to know where was the money that they allocated for New Orleans. Local hospital officials testifying at a sub-committee meeting asked where was the \$400 million in emergency aid allocated to the hospitals. Seems the feds gave it to FEMA to distribute. Oh.

But there is more afoot than the staggering incompetence of FEMA and the feds. There is a deliberate plan at all levels, city, state and federal, to seize the opportunity of an evacuated city, to keep the black and poor people from coming back. The current euphemism is to "shrink" the city to a "smaller footprint."

While black Democratic Mayor Ray Nagin got national publicity and is still the butt of jokes for speaking of a "Chocolate City" at an MLK Day event, the fact is Nagin and all the other politicians seek a Vanilla City: a smaller, whiter, wealthier New Orleans.

One Brown University study has estimated that 50% of the white population has not returned while 80% of the black population has not returned. Capitalist politicians are doing the math. Eight white politicians have jumped into the fray for the Mayor's race in the April city elections, including the head zookeeper, considered a serious contender.

The elections had to be postponed from November when there were no polling machines or polling places to be had. But officials poured on the steam to have elections re-scheduled ASAP...quick, before the black people return! Incredibly, the bourgeois press spoke openly of this rationale.

The powers-that-be are pretty sure the black absentee ballot will not be a problem because it is a 4 step process that will never happen. The dispersed voters must first RECEIVE a "request for absentee ballot" by mail, then mail it in, then

receive the actual ballot in the mail, then send that in by mail. This from a city where you cannot receive BILLS in time to pay them IN TOWN. Half a million changes of address were filed with the Post Office since the storm, and mail is generally not being forwarded in town or out of town, or not reliably. This is more effective in disenfranchising blacks than the old poll taxes, grandfather clauses, and literacy tests put together.

Nagin's "Rebuild New Orleans Committee" and the Governor's "Louisiana Recovery Authority" both back a Moratorium on residential rebuilding for the next 4 months while they decide which areas they will "allow" to be repopulated. If that is a Moratorium, what have the last 5 months been?

At this point residents, disproportionately black residents are being kept away by economic means. The only people who can afford to come back must have all of the following: an unflooded home or be able to buy one, a high-paying job, ability to send their kids to private schools or create a charter school, have an emergency reserve fund, and navigate a difficult world post-Katrina by paying extra for everything.

All the significant material resources like home insurance claim payouts, flood insurance money and FEMA trailers go to homeowners. Renters got a few months rent money in exile, that's it. Rents have doubled here. Businesses can't hire staff or extend their hours due to difficulty hiring staff. Burger King offers \$2,000 sign-on bonuses. Hotels have doubled the extremely low pay to maids and clerks and doormen, still not enough to pay the rent. Hibernia Bank just moved 350 loan processor jobs to Dallas citing difficulty of their (low-paid) employees finding housing.

Hospital beds are down 58% in New Orleans and the surrounding parishes. Emergency Rooms are bursting at the seams. Since the closing of Charity Hospital, the nearest Level One Trauma Center is 8 hours away in Shreveport. There used to be 4,486 doctors in the 3 parishes;

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TROTSKY

World War II and Trotskyist Defense of the Soviet Union

Writing one month after the June 1941 invasion of the Soviet Union by Hitler's Germany, the then-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP) published a program of demands to reinforce the defense of the Soviet workers state, which had undergone degeneration under the Stalinist bureaucracy. That declaration, from which the following is excerpted, was published in the same issue of the Militant that announced the U.S. government's indictment of 29 SWP

and trade-union leaders—18 of whom were jailed—for their revolutionary proletarian opposition to American imperialism as it prepared to enter World War II.

We stand for the unconditional defense of the Soviet Union, as everyone knows who is acquainted with our party's position.

The Stalinist leaders are desperately trying to fool their rank and file into believing that the Trotskyists do not defend the Soviet Union.

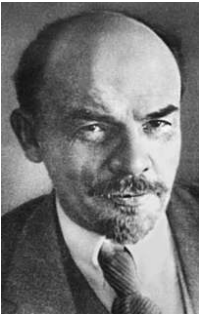
The word "unconditional" is plain enough. It means that we set no conditions whatsoever before we defend the Soviet Union. We do not demand that Stalin make any concessions to us before we defend the Soviet Union.

We defend the Soviet Union because the foundation of socialism established by the October revolution of 1917, the nationalized property, still remains and this foundation it is necessary to defend at all costs.

The Trotskyists in this country, in the Soviet Union and everywhere in the world say to the Soviet government: Place us in the most dangerous posts, we are ready and shall unhesitatingly accept....

In this situation the Soviet Union, alone of the existing states, can undermine Hitler by pledging to the German workers that the defeat of Hitler will not mean a second and worse Versailles but will begin the creation of the Socialist United States of Europe. The imperialist states cannot possibly make this pledge to the German workers. Only the Soviet Union, the Workers' State, can thus cement revolutionary unity with the German proletariat.

—"For Unconditional Defense of the Soviet Union: A Program of Victory for the Soviet Union," *Militant* (19 July 1941)



LENIN

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3 March 2006

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JUST OUT!

SPARTACIST/English Edition SPRING 2006

Women and Revolution

The 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, made strong, gave power to the masses, and is a model for the world today. The 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, made strong, gave power to the masses, and is a model for the world today. The 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, made strong, gave power to the masses, and is a model for the world today.

The Russian Revolution and the Emancipation of Women

Women workers demonstrate in Petrograd, March 1917. Banner reads: "Comrade Workers and Soldiers, Support Our Demands."

The 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, made strong, gave power to the masses, and is a model for the world today. The 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, made strong, gave power to the masses, and is a model for the world today. The 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, made strong, gave power to the masses, and is a model for the world today.

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ISO: It's So Easy Being Green

“Socialist” Chretien’s Capitalist “Peace” Campaign

We print below an edited February 18 leaflet distributed by comrades of the Los Angeles Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth Club at an “Elections 2006” event at Bethel AME Church on that day. This public event was held mainly to promote Green Party candidates in California, including members of the International Socialist Organization (ISO) who are scandalously running in the June primary election for the capitalist Green Party nomination. Well-known ISO supporters, who did not publicly identify themselves as such, ran the meeting and orchestrated the “security.” During the discussion, a Spartacus Youth Club member was granted the microphone and attempted to speak from the floor to denounce the ISO’s latest betrayal of class principle. He intended to present our position against all capitalist parties and for a workers party that fights for socialist revolution. Our attempt to counterpose revolutionary Marxism was suppressed. “Security” for the event grabbed the microphone and pushed our comrade and another SYC’er out of the room.

International Socialist Organization (ISO) leader Todd Chretien is running on a bourgeois liberal platform seeking the capitalist Green Party’s nomination for Senate in California. This is the logical extension of the ISO’s political support to the Green Party, beginning with presidential candidate Ralph Nader in 2000. The Green Party is a small-time capitalist party with a thoroughly bourgeois program extolling the virtues of local business enterprises. As revolutionary socialists, we oppose political support to any capitalist party or candidate on principle and stand for the complete and unconditional independence of the working class from all parties and agencies of the capitalist class enemy.



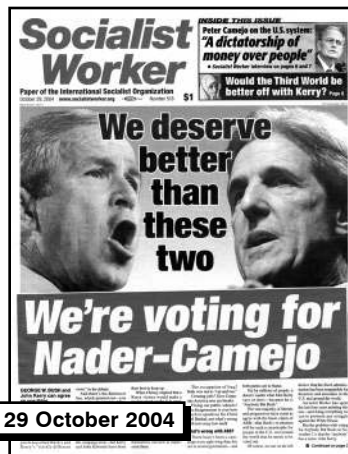
Josh On

Consummating ISO’s support to bourgeois Greens in last two presidential elections, Todd Chretien (above left) vies for nomination as Green for U.S. Senate.

The main focus of Chretien’s Green campaign is an attempt to channel anti-war sentiment into a “Million Votes for Peace.” However many (or few) votes Chretien gets, pushing bourgeois pacifist illusions in the possibility of peaceful capitalism is perpetrating a fraud. Unlike the ISO and Greens, we Marxists in the Spartacist League tell the truth: the only way to end this system of imperialist war and colonial occupations, like in Iraq, is through socialist revolution to do away with capitalism that generates racism and war. The ISO’s strategy of pressure politics and class collaboration, whether in the streets or at the ballot box, is an *obstacle* to fighting for the necessary mobilization of *independent working-class struggle* against imperialist war and the capitalist rulers.

When the U.S. invaded Iraq in 2003, the ISO simply called to “stop the war”

and refused to take a side in defense of Iraq. As revolutionary internationalists, the Spartacist League called for the military defense of Iraq against the U.S. invasion and for class struggle against the U.S. capitalist rulers. With the continuing imperialist occupation, Chretien’s yellow-ribbon appeal to bring “our troops” home is aimed at “peace is patriotic” liberals, including sections of the bourgeois establishment who are worried about how to get out of the Iraq quagmire. For its part, the Green Party’s call for United Nations “peacekeepers” to replace U.S. troops in Iraq is an attempt to give a “humanitarian” facade to what would be an equally imperialist occupation. The ISO claims to oppose U.N. intervention, but in seeking the Green Party nomination, Chretien proves just the opposite. The Spartacist League says: All imperialist troops out of Iraq now! Every blow inflicted against



the U.S. occupiers in Iraq is in the direct interest of workers and the oppressed.

The ISO’s pursuit of the Green Party nomination stands in blatant contradiction to its paper position of opposing capitalist parties. To maintain this fiction, the ISO must deny that the Green Party is indeed a capitalist party. But, in the real world, the Greens serve as a liberal pressure group on the Democratic Party. Chretien himself makes this clear when he explains that the purpose of his campaign is to “demonstrate to [Democratic] Sen. Feinstein and the world that we, the California anti-war movement, mean business.” Indeed, the historic role of capitalist “third party” movements in the U.S. is to divert anger among the masses away from social protest and back into bourgeois electoral politics. It speaks volumes that the Greens’ leading candidate in California is ex-socialist Peter Camejo, now a “progressive investment banker,” who is also Chretien’s main endorser. The Greens’ “anti-corporate” posture is nothing more than the desire to *tinker* with capitalism in the name of small business. To see what the Greens would do in power, one need only look at the Green Party in Germany when it controlled the foreign ministry and ordered German imperialist troops into the Balkans for the first time since WWII during the U.S./NATO bombing and invasion of Serbia in 1999.

Joining the camp of the capitalist class enemy is nothing new for the ISO, an organization that has been the “socialist” handmaiden of liberal anti-communism for decades. Its political forebears were renegades from Marxism who refused to defend the Chinese and North Korean deformed workers states during the Korean War. These days the ISO builds class-collaborationist “peace” coalitions, joining with “antiwar” liberal Democrats who criticize the Bush administration for wasting time in Iraq instead of going after the “real threat” of nuclear-armed North Korea. When it comes to fighting communism, the ISO has no “antiwar” pretensions. They did their utmost to assist the U.S. imperialists in their drive against the Soviet Union during the Cold War and cheered the destruction of the Soviet workers state in 1991-1992. In the 1980s, the virulently anti-Soviet ISO sided with the CIA-backed Islamic fundamentalist *mujahedin* against the Red Army in Afghanistan. In contrast, we hailed the Red Army in Afghanistan, which was fighting on the side of social progress, and

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Mobilize for March 10 Sentencing Hearing!

Defend Lynne Stewart, Mohamed Yousry, Ahmed Abdel Sattar!

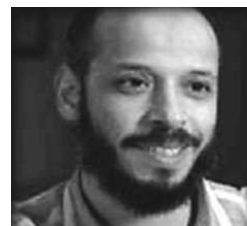
NEW YORK CITY—It is urgent that fighters for civil liberties and black and labor rights rally to the defense of leftist attorney Lynne Stewart, translator Mohamed Yousry and paralegal Ahmed Abdel Sattar. The three are scheduled for sentencing on March 10, having been convicted on frame-up charges of conspiracy to provide material support to terrorism and to defraud the U.S. government. The 65-year-old Stewart, who has been diagnosed with cancer, faces more than 20 years in prison—an effective life sentence. Her “crime” was her vigorous legal defense of Islamic fundamentalist cleric Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman, who is serving a life sentence for conspiracy to blow up NYC-area landmarks. Yousry also faces more than 20 years, while Abdel Sattar may get a life sentence. These convictions are out-



WV Photo



Lisa Quiñones



AhmedAbdelSattar.org

From left:
Lynne Stewart,
Mohamed Yousry,
Ahmed Abdel Sattar.

geous attacks on the Sixth Amendment right to an attorney as well as everybody’s free speech rights. Protest outside the courthouse at Thomas Paine Park, Centre and Worth Streets in lower Manhattan, 9:00 a.m.! Pack the courtroom!

Stewart’s alleged crime consists of making the views of her imprisoned client

known to a Reuters journalist, in violation of unprecedented and patently unconstitutional Special Administrative Measures (SAMs) devised by the Clinton government. The government’s case was based on hundreds of hours of videotaped and recorded discussions between the sheik and his attorney that are supposed to be

free from government snoops. The prosecution was allowed to play inflammatory and irrelevant videotapes of Osama bin Laden during the anniversary week of the September 11 attacks—in a courtroom located within walking distance of the World Trade Center! Following the trial, one juror wrote to the judge that she had been pressured by the witchhunt atmosphere of the deliberations into voting for conviction, against her better judgment. She had been told by another juror that if she didn’t vote to convict, it would be her fault if anyone died in a terrorist attack.

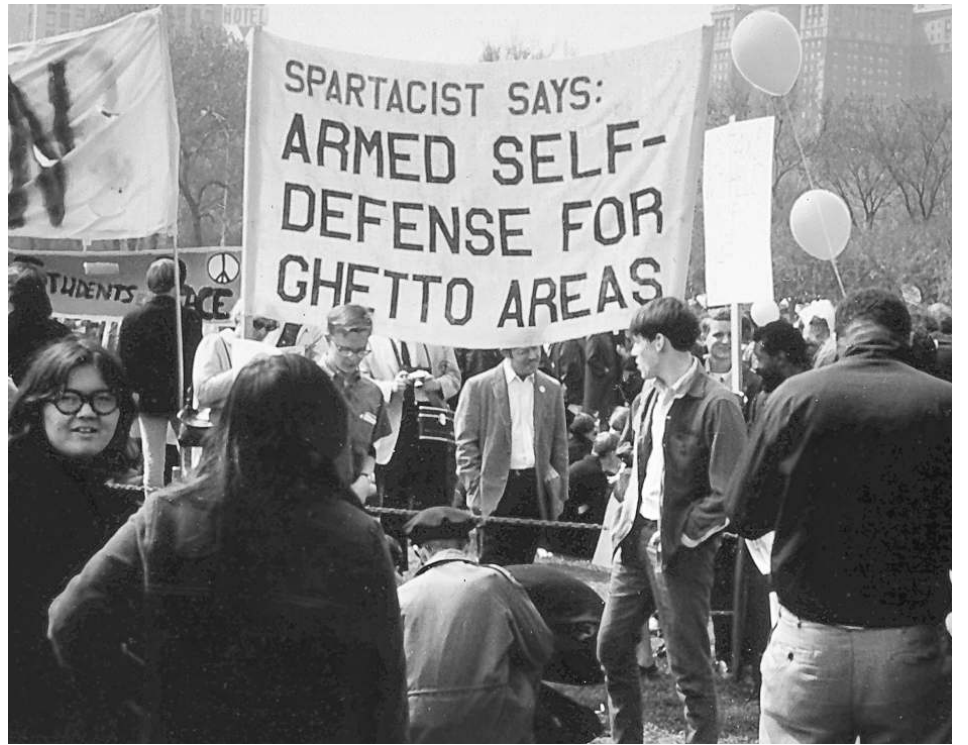
In an October ruling rejecting defense motions to overturn the verdicts, U.S. District Judge John Koeltl cited a previous court ruling that “speech is not protected by the First Amendment when it is the very vehicle of the crime itself.” But even

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Black History and the Class Struggle



New York Times



Spartacist

Left: Spartacist-initiated Harlem Solidarity Committee rally in NYC garment district, July 1964, called in defense of ghetto masses during cop riot. Right: Mid-1960s civil rights demonstration in Central Park.

The Legacy of Richard S. Fraser

Revolutionary Integrationism: The Road to Black Freedom

Part One of this article, which we conclude below, appeared in WV No. 864 (17 February).

PART TWO

It is profoundly wrong to assume that what actually happened in the course of history had to happen, that no other divergent paths, including radically divergent paths, were possible. The Southern civil rights movement in the early-mid 1960s offered a rare and fleeting opportunity for even a relatively small revolutionary organization to win to its program and ranks the best of a generation of young black (and white) radicals experienced in mass, militant struggle against what was then called the “white power structure.” Had such a development taken place, the subsequent course of U.S. and therefore world history would have been radically different. It was not beyond the range of historical possibility that today we would be living in a socialist world.

In the U.S. at the time, the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) was the only organization with a credible revolutionary past and traditions and with, at least formally, an authentically revolutionary program based on Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky. However, by the early 1960s, ground down by the isolation and McCarthyite witchhunting of the 1950s, the SWP had lost its revolutionary bearings. The party’s qualitative departure from its erstwhile revolutionary working-class politics began around 1960, when it slid into the role of uncritical cheerleaders for the petty-bourgeois radical-nationalist leadership of the Cuban Revolution. The SWP thus abandoned the centrality of the working class and the necessity of building Trotskyist parties in every country.

The abandonment of the struggle for Marxist leadership of the black struggle in the U.S. was the domestic reflection of the SWP’s denial of the centrality of the proletariat in the destruction of capi-

talism. The “Freedom Now” resolution adopted at the SWP’s 1963 Convention codified a wholesale embrace of black nationalism and was accompanied by a policy of *abstention from the Southern civil rights struggle*. In the name of black “self-determination,” the SWP’s *Militant* became an unpaid public relations organ for all manner of black “leaders,” from the pacifistic liberal Martin Luther King to the reactionary nationalist Elijah Muhammad, head of the Nation of Islam.

The Spartacist tendency originated in the early 1960s as a left opposition, the Revolutionary Tendency (RT), in the SWP. A central axis of our political fight was for an active intervention into the Southern civil rights movement based on the perspective of revolutionary integrationism, i.e., linking the struggle for black democratic rights to working-class struggle against capitalist exploitation. At the 1963 SWP Convention, the RT presented a one-page amendment to the perspectives document arguing that the party should “expend significant material resources in overcoming our isolation from Southern struggles. In helping to build a revolutionary movement in the South, our forces should work directly with and through the developing left-wing formations in the movement there. A successful outcome to our action would lead to an historic breakthrough for the Trotskyist movement.”

After the leaders and many members of the RT were expelled in late 1963-early 1964, we sought, despite our small forces, to make the civil rights struggles, North as well as South, a main focus of our intervention into society. We raised the transitional demand for a Freedom Labor Party as a means of breaking young black militants from the capitalist Democratic Party in the direction of working-class politics. As we wrote in 1967:

“Only by the development of a working-class program and by explicitly opening the door to support by white workers can real political independence be

maintained, real gains won and the basis laid for eventual working-class political unity. This unity will come about when the exploited section of the white South is driven into opposition and is compelled to forego color prejudice in order to struggle along class lines against its real enemies—the owners of land and industry.

“The creation of a South-wide Freedom Labor Party would serve as a tremendous impetus for similar action by Northern workers. The struggle for such a party would necessitate a rank-and-file revolt within the organized labor movement to overthrow the present labor bureaucracy.”

—“Black and Red—Class Struggle Road to Negro Freedom,” *Spartacist* Special Supplement, May-June 1967; reprinted in *Marxist Bulletin* No. 9, “Basic Documents of the Spartacist League”

We combined the call for a Freedom Labor Party with agitation for a labor-based campaign to unionize the “open shop” South.

Fraser on the Civil Rights Movement

As the SWP began to move rightward in the mid-late 1950s, Richard Fraser often opposed the policies of the party leadership from the left, especially on the black question. Thus he strongly opposed the SWP’s periodic demand for the federal government to send troops to the South in order to defend black rights against state and local white-supremacist regimes and Klan terrorists. Fraser wrote in 1956 in “Contribution to the Discussion of the Slogan ‘Send Federal Troops to Mississippi’” (reprinted in *Prometheus Research Series* No. 3, “In Memoriam—Richard S. Fraser”):

“Under either Eisenhower or [Democratic presidential candidate] Stevenson, the most probable condition under which the Federal Government will send troops to the South will be that the Negroes hold the initiative in the struggle. As long as the white supremacists have the initiative and the lid of repression is clamped on tightly, the social equilibrium is not upset by a lynching or other terrorist actions. When the Negroes take

the initiative it is a ‘race riot’ and the public security is threatened and an excellent reason is given for the government to intervene.

“When the Negroes hold the initiative it will be the function of the Federal army to restore law and order on the basis of the existing social system, and will involve severe repressions against the Negroes.”

A 1963 document by Fraser titled “Dialectics of Black Liberation” has recently been republished by the Freedom Socialist Party (FSP) in the 2004 book *Revolutionary Integration: A Marxist Analysis of African American Liberation*, which also includes a 1982 document by the FSP’s Tom Boot, “Revolutionary Integration: Yesterday and Today.” Fraser’s document is scathing in its denunciation of the SWP leadership’s kowtowing before the black misleaders of the day: “The concept of ‘self-determination,’ a revolutionary demand when used by the Bolsheviks, is denuded of all meaning and becomes a rationale for the SWP position that anyone who is leading at the moment is a good leader and a destined leader, regardless of program.” He aptly described the SWP leadership as having “raised tail-endism to a political principle.”

However, as the mass Southern civil rights movement acquired an increasingly militant character in the early 1960s, certain weaknesses in Fraser’s analysis came to the fore. Because he believed that a bourgeois-democratic reform of the Southern legal-political structure was not possible within the framework of American capitalism, he ascribed to the civil rights movement an intrinsically revolutionary dynamic. Thus his 1963 document begins with the statement: “The Black revolt in the southern U.S.A. stands objectively on the threshold of a new stage in its development: a stage of political organization for revolution, involving a showdown struggle *against* the southern police state and *for* a new democratic political system” (emphasis in original). Here a revolution in the South is given an

essentially democratic content. The struggle of labor against capitalist exploitation receded into the background.

Along similar lines, Fraser no longer emphasized the necessary struggle for *black leadership* in the *racially integrated* organizations of the U.S. working class: the Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party at the most advanced political level, the trade unions at the mass level. He now advocated, or at least endorsed, the idea of a separate “black vanguard party” as a transitional step in breaking black radicals from the Democratic Party:

“A Black vanguard party would furnish (a) a principled program, a rostrum, and an apparatus for independent Black candidates; (b) a graduate school for militants, specializing in political theory, the strategy of the struggle, and electioneering; and (c) an object lesson for the labor, peace and ‘progressive’ movements.”

Yet at the very same time, Fraser also advocated a Southern labor party, *substantially the same programmatic demand that we expressed in our call for a Freedom Labor Party*. He wrote in this regard: “A

lectics of the sexual revolution: the vitality of the Black lesbian/gay sector is the catalyst for restoring the entire Black movement to the revolutionary path!” Such bombast might pass as bad vaudeville were it not pronounced just as the AIDS epidemic was ravaging the gay population, puncturing the last balloon of life-style radicalism.

The FSP abandoned and repudiated Richard Fraser’s understanding of the central importance of black oppression in maintaining the bourgeois order in the U.S. Thus Boot’s document denounced the Spartacist League for “an over-emphasis and unbalanced view of the importance of the Black worker. This simplistic approach to the race question in the U.S. writes off the revolutionary potential of the masses of non-white workers who are not Black.” In opposition to the FSP, we have always affirmed the revolutionary potential of *all racial and ethnic components* of the U.S. working class, including its white majority, while stressing the *central* importance



Eve Arnold
American Nazi Party leader George Lincoln Rockwell (center) at 1960 Black Muslim meeting in Washington, D.C. Fascists supported policy of racial separatism put forward by Elijah Muhammad's Nation of Islam.

southern labor party is the only kind of organism which embodies the needs of class unity this side of socialism. Whatever it may be named, the construction of a political party serving the interests of Blacks and white workers is the next stage of development of the southern struggle.”

The FSP: Liberals with Attitude

The contradictions evident in Fraser’s 1963 document were carried into the formation of the Freedom Socialist Party. (As we noted in Part One, Fraser, who helped found the FSP in 1966, was cut off from the organization by a split the following year.) Under the leadership of the late Clara Fraser, these contradictions were resolved by openly repudiating the centrality of the struggle of labor against capital and embracing and glorifying various currents of petty-bourgeois radicalism—“people of color” ethnic politics, gay liberation lifestyle politics, and, above all, feminism.

As we have emphasized, a key aspect of revolutionary integrationism is that black workers, with their generally higher level of political consciousness, can and must lead the mass of white workers, mainly through the organizations of the labor movement. But Clara Fraser and her followers contemptuously wrote off white male workers as incorrigibly reactionary bigots. She declaimed in *Freedom Socialist* (December 1980): “Given the class-collaboration politics of the U.S. worker, the culture of bigotry and misogyny lock the privileged white males into a prison of conservative or slow reformism *that has no exit*” (emphasis added). She then went on that these “lackeys of the bosses” are “being swiftly replaced and ignored by the army of new worker militants from the ranks of women, youth, minorities and lesbian/gays.” Underlying this hostile contempt toward white male workers, which is shared by black nationalists (who extend their hostility to white women workers as well), is profound despair toward the prospects for a socialist revolution in the United States.

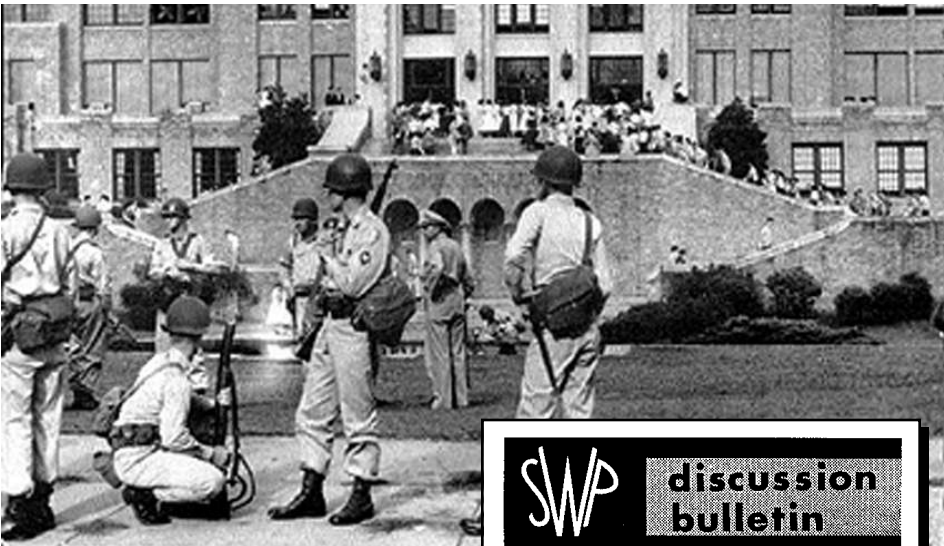
The FSP’s despairing attitude toward proletarian struggle and revolution is often masked by a fatuous triumphalism with regard to struggle by other oppressed social groups. In “Revolutionary Integration: Yesterday and Today,” written in the early years of Reagan reaction, the FSP’s Tom Boot exults: “And hearken to the dia-

of the struggle against black oppression in the fight for the American socialist revolution.

The FSP dissolves the black question into the fashionable notion of “people of color.” This notion obscures the ability of Latinos, especially lighter-skinned Latinos, and Asian Americans to move up toward the white end of the American racial-social spectrum through intermarriage and other mechanisms of social advancement. It also obscures the very significant class as well as racial and ethnic divisions among the various “peoples of color.” What does a third-generation Japanese American doctor really have in common with an undocumented Mexican immigrant farm worker? What does an Indian immigrant computer technician have in common with a black janitor who cleans the office building where the former is employed?

Just as the FSP abuses Richard Fraser’s concept of revolutionary integrationism, so it abuses Leon Trotsky’s concept of permanent revolution. Trotsky’s understanding was that in countries of belated capitalist development, the tasks historically associated with earlier bourgeois-democratic revolutions can only be achieved through proletarian seizure of power, which must be extended internationally, principally to the advanced capitalist countries. Boot’s document begins by pontificating that revolutionary integration “represents a continuous contemporary thread in the ideological fabric of international Permanent Revolution, the uninterrupted march of all the world’s oppressed, led by the working class, toward social, political and economic equality.” Permanent revolution is here presented as an all-powerful, transcendent (one might almost say God-like) force that will eventually bring about the triumph of all good things—democratic rights and freedoms, the eradication of all forms of social oppression, economic equality—the world over.

What Fraser said in 1963 of the SWP’s misuse of “self-determination” can be said of the FSP’s misuse of permanent revolution. It is denuded of all meaning and serves as a rationale for liberal reformist politics and fatuous enthusing over various petty-bourgeois radical currents. According to Boot, “The theory of Permanent Revolution, first formulated by Marx and later extended and enriched by



Wide World
Little Rock, 1957: Federal troops dispatched by President Eisenhower to suppress black defense efforts during school integration battle. Fraser (Richard Kirk) opposed SWP’s call for federal troops.

Lenin and Trotsky, states in essence that *the unfinished tasks of bourgeois democracy can only be completed by proletarian socialist revolution*” (emphasis in original). In other words, the goal of proletarian revolution is to realize the principles of bourgeois democracy, which presumably represent the highest, most noble-minded aspirations of humanity.

Like most groups in the U.S. that call themselves socialist, the FSP appeals mainly to young liberal idealists. Socialism is thus presented not in terms of progressive working-class struggle against capitalist exploitation but rather as the expansion and consistent application of democratic principles. Abusing and trivializing the theory of permanent revolution, the FSP invests any and every liberal reform or demand—defense of legalized abortion, the legalization of same-sex marriage, amnesty for undocumented immigrants—with an anti-capitalist revolutionary content, dynamic or dialectic.

There’s nothing very new about this. In *The State and Revolution* (1917), Bolshevik leader V. I. Lenin explained how social democrats like Karl Kautsky distorted and vulgarized the ideas and doctrines of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in order to make them palatable to bourgeois liberals and petty-bourgeois democrats. The reformist left obscures the Marxist understand-



AP
Powerful NYC transit strike in December drew broad support from ghetto and barrio masses.

ing of bourgeois “democracy” as simply a facade that covers the reality of the capitalist state as an instrument of organized force and violence—consisting at its core of the police, army, courts and prisons—for maintaining capitalist property and profits. It is the task of proletarian revolution to smash the bourgeois state and establish a workers state, laying the basis for the abolition of classes in an international communist world.

The Politics of Petty-Bourgeois Sectoralism

We describe the politics of the FSP as sectoralist. What does that mean? They begin from the premise that the

SWP

discussion bulletin

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basic actors on the U.S. left are separate movements of different oppressed social groups, based on gender (feminism), sexual orientation (gay liberation) or race and ethnicity (“people of color”). The FSP views itself as representing these diverse sectors, integrating and balancing their particular interests and demands. On a minute scale, the FSP offers a leftist version of traditional Democratic Party constituency politics.

The FSP’s sectoralism is clearly indicated by its fervent championing of affirmative action and “community control,” two programs promoted by the liberal wing of the U.S. bourgeoisie to divert and undermine unified working-class struggle against the capitalist class as a whole. In a section of his document attacking the Spartacist League, Boot contends that “the SL’s through-the-looking-glass approach to affirmative action condemns women and people of color to no improvement in their status until *after* the revolution” (emphasis in original).

Military Recruiters Off Campus!

Drop Charges Against U of C Protesters!

We reprint below a statement issued by the Chicago Spartacus Youth Club on February 27.

On February 21 four activists protesting against military recruiters were arrested at the University of Chicago (U of C). Spartacus Youth Club supporters joined several other students protesting Marine recruiters at the Reynolds Club. When two protesters, Jeremy Cohan and Ben Fink, refused to end their protest, the campus cops arrested them. As the SYC led chants of "Administration hands off!" and "Recruiters off campus!" the cops dragged out Tom Discepola and Brian Stapleton who are supporters of the SYC. In trying to justify these outrageous arrests, director of the Office of the Reynolds Club and Student Activities (ORCSA) Sharlene Holly slanders the SYC. According to the *Chicago Maroon* (24 February), "Holly said they [supporters of the SYC] escalated the protest and created a dangerous environment."

This is an outright lie. The four protesters were arrested on bogus charges of disorderly conduct for exercising their right to free speech. This is an attempt by the U of C administration, backed up by the Chicago cops, to suppress and intimidate anyone who opposes military recruitment and the occupation of Iraq. Students should demand: Drop all the charges against the anti-military recruitment protesters now! No retaliations! No disciplinary actions! Administration hands off the protesters!

U of C: Complicit in U.S. Imperialist Crimes

All of U of C's pretensions to being about the "life of the mind," where stu-



Jarrett C. Belle-Isle

U of C cop grabs student Jeremy Cohan, one of four arrested for protesting Marine recruiters on February 21.

dents are free to think and express their opinions, are nothing but a bunch of lies. This was made clear when the administration called their cops to arrest student protesters in order to protect the military recruiters. U of C is a pillar of bourgeois society and plays a role in the maintenance of the bourgeois order. A main function of U of C is to train the next generation of ideologues, technocrats, capitalist politicians, corporate lawyers and spies needed by the bourgeoisie to perpetuate its rule.

U of C has a history of aiding U.S. imperialism; the Economics Department

of Milton Friedman helped braintrust Pinochet's bloody junta which came to power in Chile in 1973 and murdered, tortured and starved to death tens of thousands of workers and leftists. In fact, there is a bigger case for "weapons of mass destruction" at U of C than there ever was in Iraq. This is exemplified by U of C's involvement in the Manhattan Project, which developed the nuclear weapons technology that enabled U.S. imperialism to obliterate and kill hundreds of thousands in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It is no surprise that the killer spies of the CIA seek recruits for their bloody terror at U of C. Only five days before the protest against the Marine recruiters, the SYC initiated a protest on campus against CIA recruiters, chanting slogans such as "the biggest terrorist in the world today is U.S. imperialism and the CIA!"

U of C is also a leading landlord in Chicago's largely black South Side, whose private army of campus cops terrorizes the black residents of the surrounding neighborhood. It was at this campus in 2004 that black student Clemmie Carthens was beaten by campus cops when they saw him hugging a white woman. It is no wonder then that it was at U of C earlier this year that white students at May House held a racist "Ghetto" party and thought they could get away with it. We call for the opening of U of C to the surrounding black neighborhood as part of our fight for free, quality education for all. Nationalize the university! For open admissions, no tuition and a state-paid living stipend for all students!

Not One Person, Not One Penny for U.S. Imperialist Army!

The SYC is opposed to military recruiters on campus. At campuses like U of C they seek to recruit the next generation of the elite officer corps whose job is to oversee U.S. imperialist slaughter and occupation. Meanwhile, in high schools and on more plebeian college campuses,

military recruiters use promised tuition assistance and job opportunities to lure working-class youth, including a disproportionate number of black and minority youth, into signing up to be the cannon fodder for U.S. imperialism. We say: not one person, not one penny for the imperialist military!

The imperialist military cannot be reformed to become a force for good in the world. The SYC opposes any extension of the U.S. imperialist military onto college campuses and high schools. We urge students to protest military recruiters as part of the struggle against the brutal occupation of Iraq and the entire imperialist system. Military recruiters off campus now! End militarism and war once and for all through worldwide socialist revolution!

The SYC is opposed to the occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan by the U.S. imperialists. The U.S. crusade against Iraq, carried out under the administrations of Bush Sr. and Democrat Clinton as well as George W. Bush, has killed over 1.5 million Iraqis as the result of UN sanctions alone and hundreds of thousands more during both wars and the current occupation. We took a side in defense of Iraq in the lead-up to and during the war, standing for the defeat of our "own" bourgeoisie. We called for class struggle at home against the U.S. capitalist rulers. As Marxists we understand that imperialism is not a bad "policy" that the capitalist rulers can choose to carry out or not depending on the "conscience" or the will of the populace; it is a system based on cutthroat economic competition between imperialist nation-states over markets and spheres of influence. This will always be the case as long as the capitalists are in power.

This is why we fight to win students to the side of the working class, the only force in society with the power and objective interest to smash capitalism. The working class is the source of all the profits that the capitalist class usurps for themselves. By withholding their labor power, the working class has the power to shut down production and stop the flow of profits. It is this social power that has to be mobilized in the fight for socialist revolution to establish an egalitarian society based on human need rather than profit. Down with the colonial occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan! All U.S. troops out now! U.S. hands off Iran! Down with imperialist nuclear blackmail!

Much has been made of a banner held by some of those protesting the Marine recruiters that read "Don't join the Marines, join the American Nazi Youth Corps." As an example, in the February 24 *Maroon* article ORCSA head Holly says: "Many members of the University of Chicago community were hurt, outraged, and offended by the swastikas, Nazi references, and shouts inviting people to join them to kill Muslims and other minorities." What's outrageous is these Marines recruiting students to carry out racist imperialist slaughter! What really outrages this administrator is that these youth exposed this fact.

It is obvious that the banner was intended to compare the U.S. war machine to Nazism. Though the Bush regime is made up of a bunch of Christian fundamentalist warmongers, this is not fascism. War, repression: this is what bourgeois democracy looks like. From the Philippines to WWI, WWII and Vietnam, millions have been slaughtered in the name of "democracy."

Those students opposed to war often look to the Democratic Party as the "lesser of two evils." The Democrats just like the Republicans are committed to the maintenance of the capitalist order. The Spartacus Youth Club fights to win youth to the perspective of building a Leninist vanguard party that will lead the working class in socialist revolution, laying the basis for a world free of capitalist exploitation and imperialist slaughter. Join us! ■

Spartacus Youth Club Classes

BAY AREA

Thursday, March 9, 5 p.m.

Imperialism and War

SF State University, Rosa Parks F
Cesar Chavez Student Center
Information and readings: (510) 839-0851
or e-mail: sycbayarea@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

NEW YORK

Wednesday, March 22, 7:30 p.m.

For Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

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 15, 6:30 p.m.

From Berlin to Moscow— The ICL's Fight Against Capitalist Counterrevolution— For New October Revolutions!

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, March 8, 5 p.m.

For Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution! Free Abortion on Demand!

University of British Columbia
Student Union Building
Room 224
Information and readings: (604) 687-0353
or e-mail: tilt@look.ca

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

Defend UCLA Professors Against Right-Wing Thought Police!

We reprint below a statement issued on January 31 by the Los Angeles Spartacus Youth Club in response to a McCarthyite witchhunt against leftist and liberal professors at UCLA launched by a former protégé of David Horowitz. Alarming, some of the victimized professors have stated that this attack should not be taken too seriously. The SYC intervened with our communist program from the floor during a teach-in held by targeted teachers titled, "Defending Academic Freedom" on January 31. At the teach-in, professor Sondra Hale actively *discouraged* the widespread campus protests that are needed, telling a student who asked what students could do that "we're not in danger," because the professors have tenure.

It is not surprising then that only about 30 people turned out at a rally to "Defend Academic Freedom" on Bruin Walk on February 7, at which the SYC spoke. The dangerous illusion that the campus administration can be relied on to protect the victimized professors flies in the face of the reality of the investigations, harassment, firings and even death threats faced by professors around the country, such as Joseph Massad at Columbia University. Importantly, the University Council of the American Federation of Teachers, Locals 1990 and 2226 and the California Federation of Teachers have condemned the UCLA witchhunt. No reliance on the campus administration! Students, teachers, campus workers and others must actively mobilize to defend these professors!

* * *

Andrew Jones, former chair of the Bruin Republicans, wants to purge his UCLA alma mater of liberal and leftist professors, initially offering \$100 bounty money to wannabe informants in the classroom. In response, the editors of the *Daily Bruin* quickly leapt to the defense of their former columnist's "free speech" rights (as if Jones were the victim!), advised students to ignore the controversy, and warned professors that "...Jones will only infringe on their academic freedom if they let him." The *Daily Bruin* absurdly denies any witchhunting campaign at UCLA, claiming that Jones, unlike Joseph McCarthy, has no "Senate hearings" or "government agents backing him up." But campus reactionaries of Jones' ilk are spawned by far more powerful political forces. Jones' mentor was right-wing ideologue David Horowitz, who is intimately connected with the Republican neocon cabal running the White House. Horowitz now tries to distance himself from Jones' ham-handed efforts because the prospect of a right-wing big brother network running amok on campuses exposes the purpose of Horowitz's own efforts, in particular his grossly misnamed "Academic Bill of Rights."

The point of legislation modeled on Horowitz's "bill" is to enable the government, if university administrations are insufficiently zealous, to victimize professors accused by right-wing students of "abuse" in the classroom and, in Horowitz's words, "step in and see that this situation is remedied" (frontpagemag.com, 29 April 2005). The Georgia state senate has passed the measure, and it is up for consideration in several other states. In California, this measure failed in a legislative committee last year but is up for reconsideration.

Harassing, intimidating and silencing professors who dissent is part of a broader right-wing campaign to stifle *all* opposition to the American ruling class agenda. Jones brags that he sponsored the foray of

David Horowitz and Dinesh D'Souza onto UCLA in January 2002 to whip up support for the "war on terror." Horowitz labeled opposition to America's imperialist wars as "treason," which is nothing but a thinly veiled justification for government repression. At the time, these notorious apologists for black chattel slavery and racist reaction were met by a sizable contingent of black and minority students organized by the African Student Union, as well as a demonstration we Marxists in the Spartacus Youth Club called to "Protest David Horowitz and Dinesh D'Souza, Racist Ideologues of U.S. Imperialism!" These ideological hatchet men for racist American imperialism should be met with protest whenever they step on campus! Andrew Jones' boast that he organized the first anti-affirmative action "bake sale" in the country at UCLA shows that these

Ali al-Timimi did not carry out any terrorist acts, nor plan any, nor did he provide support or financially assist in any terrorist plots. In a 2 May 2005 piece on Horowitz's FrontPage Magazine Web site, fellow neocon Daniel Pipes hailed al-Timimi's conviction as "momentous" because "the U.S. government has put away a terrorist not for his deeds, such as raising money or blowing something up, but for his words." We say: Free Ali al-Timimi!

Snooping, harassment, frame-ups, imprisonment, torture, executions: these attacks have intensified with the U.S. capitalists' bipartisan "war on terror." It is waged with the support of the Democratic Party, the other party of racist U.S. imperialism. From their near-unanimous September 2001 support for the military authorization to pursue the "war on terror" to their substantial support for the draco-

paging radicalism," this is invariably used against the left-wing voices of dissent. Leftist students and defenders of democratic rights must ally with unions on campus and workers more widely in opposing the right-wing assault!

This struggle must be linked to broader struggles against capitalist state repression, including the fight against the racist death penalty, a legacy of chattel slavery. The life of Mumia Abu-Jamal, America's foremost political prisoner, a former Black Panther and courageous fighter for black freedom, hangs in the balance. In 1981, Mumia, a journalist, was known as the "Voice of the Voiceless" because he exposed racist police repression in Philadelphia. To silence him, the state framed him for the murder of a police officer. In a 1982 trial that made a mockery of due process, the state got its false conviction and then used Mumia's political advocacy of black freedom to obtain the death penalty. Mumia Abu-Jamal is an innocent man! Free him now! Abolish the racist death penalty!

Domestic reaction in America did not just begin with George W. Bush or September 11. The destruction of the USSR, the first workers state in history, ushered in a global offensive against the working class and an ideological climate dominated by widespread belief in the "death of communism"—the lie that the collapse of Stalinism represented the failure of Marxism and the struggle for socialist revolution. Horowitz and his ilk are particularly rabid purveyors of this bourgeois ideological onslaught. Much of Horowitz's fire is directed at liberals who, however critical of the Bush administration, likewise partake in the "death of communism." We defend them against right-wing witchhunters, but we do not share their political views. As Marxist-Trotskyists, we have never flinched in defending the workers states, those countries that have gotten rid of capitalism. We fought to the end for the unconditional military defense of the Soviet Union and the East European deformed workers states against imperialist attack and capitalist counterrevolution. Today we apply the same program toward the remaining bureaucratically deformed workers states—For unconditional military defense of China, Cuba, North Korea and Vietnam! At the same time, we fight for workers political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracies who undermine the very gains resulting from the overturn of capitalism.

It is only the revolutionary transformation of society that will put an end to the American rulers' racist, witchhunting, warmongering offensives for good. The replacement of this decaying capitalist system through working-class socialist revolution is the necessary goal of those aspiring for the genuine liberation of society. ■



SYC speaker addresses February 7 UCLA rally to "Defend Academic Freedom."

right-wing forces also aim to drive black and minority students off campus.

Of a piece with the current witchhunt was the Bruin Republicans' truly grotesque campaign against MEChA in 2004, which compared this minority student group to the Nazis and labeled them "student-funded" racism. In October, Bruin Republican David Lazar proclaimed that the César E. Chávez Center and the Ralph J. Bunche Center for African American Studies must "either regain a sense of legitimacy, or risk being replaced" after they deigned to sponsor a campus talk by Raymond Lotta of the Revolutionary Communist Party.

The rabid proponents of U.S. imperialism take particular aim at critics of American and Israeli foreign policy in the Near East, especially those who oppose the bloody occupation of Iraq and voice outrage at the genocidal "collective punishment" of the Palestinian people by Israel's Zionist rulers. Middle East studies departments with professors who defend the Palestinian people are among the prime targets of these campus witchhunts. Students must defend these professors against the right-wing thought police! More broadly, we Marxists defend the Palestinian people against Zionist aggression and demand: All Israeli troops and settlers out of the Occupied Territories! Defend the peoples of Iraq against U.S. imperialist occupiers! U.S. out of Iraq now!

These campus witchhunts are not limited to loss of job or tenure. Last July, Muslim scholar Ali al-Timimi, a U.S.-born American citizen, was sentenced to life in prison for exercising his right to free speech in September 2001, against the then-impending invasion of Afghanistan.

nian USA Patriot Act and their vote in support of the Iraq war, the Democrats gave Bush a blank check to unleash U.S. imperialism's killers.

The American ruling class seeks a docile, regimented society, all the better to send the sons and daughters of working people and minorities to serve as cannon fodder in U.S. imperialism's wars abroad while ripping up even the most minimal gains of previous class and social struggles at home. The same forces that would like to see the campuses inhabited solely by white frat boys also want to see a union-free workforce that they can more brutally exploit. The organized working class not only has an interest in opposing this reactionary campaign, but also the social power to do so. We warn against any reliance on the supposed "neutrality" of the campus administration. We oppose calls on the administration to regulate political speech on campus because, contrary to the right wing's howls of "ram-

Spartacist/SYC Forum

Mumia Is an Innocent Man!

The Fight to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal

Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!

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

Thursday, March 23, 7 p.m.

First Parish Church

3 Church St., Harvard Sq., Cambridge

(This forum is not sponsored by the First Parish Church.)

For more information: (617) 666-9453
or e-mail: bostonsyc@yahoo.com

BOSTON

Revolutionaries and World War II

We reprint below the first part of an edited version of the presentation given by Comrade Olly Laing at a Spartacus Youth Group forum in London on October 22, which appeared in the Young Spartacus pages of Workers Hammer No. 193 (Winter 2005-2006), newspaper of the Spartacist League/Britain.

PART ONE

This year marked the sixtieth anniversary of the end of the second world war. I'm sure anyone here who observed George Bush and [British prime minister] Tony Blair's platitudes about the fight for freedom and democracy around the VE day commemorations was sickened by the hypocrisy of these imperialist butchers of Iraq. The notion that World War II was, for the British and American imperialists, a crusade of democracy against fascism is still used by them today to portray their imperialist wars abroad and war on civil liberties at home as progressive struggles against tyranny.

After the 7 July London bombings, "the spirit of the Blitz" was invoked by politicians and the bourgeois media to declare the unity of all Londoners against "terrorism"—supposedly today's tyrannical threat to democracy. The purpose was to rally the population around the flag of national unity, so that they would accept the racist and ever-increasing draconian "anti-terror" legislation. But national unity is a lie. Capitalist society is based on the exploitation of the working class by the bourgeois ruling class, which fosters the poison of racism and other bigotry to divide the working class in order to maintain capitalist rule. Pushed by all manner of liberal and reformist ideologues, the idea that the second world war was a "people's war" on the part

WORKERS HAMMER

of the "democratic" capitalist powers, with all classes standing together against fascism, is also a grotesque lie.



Arbeiter und Soldat (Worker and Soldier), June 1944: distributed by heroic Trotskyists in Brest, France, who built cell in German army, seeking to polarize Hitler's army along class lines.

of the "democratic" capitalist powers, with all classes standing together against fascism, is also a grotesque lie.

The Nazi regime was unparalleled in its barbarity. It systematically exterminated six million Jews, millions of Slavs and other peoples and strangled all working-class organisations, turning Europe into a living hell. But this did not make the Allied imperialist "democracies" anti-fascist fighters for freedom. To understand World War II, or the history of the twentieth century for that matter, it is essential to understand the significance of the Russian Revolution. In the period following the first world war, the political consciousness of all



Red Army soldiers trample Nazi flag in Austria, 1945. Soviet Red Army defeated Nazi war machine.

classes in Europe was dominated by the victory of the world's first workers revolution in Russia in 1917. For those who gained any material advantage from the status quo, those with any ideological or religious connection to the bourgeois order, fear of communism dictated profascist sympathies. In this period of economic and social crisis in Europe, where the facade of parliamentary democracy could no longer deceive and contain the militant organised working class, the bourgeoisie looked desperately to fascist reaction to smash the workers organisations and the threat of socialist revolutions. That imperialist pig [former British prime minister] Winston Churchill,

humanity was made to pay for this with Nazi terror and the Holocaust. The German proletariat had suffered the defeat of a series of insurrectionary and semi-insurrectionary movements in the period 1919-23 due to the immaturity of the Communist leadership there. The German bourgeoisie resolved to crush the organised working class once and for all. To do this it turned to the Nazi party which, in its crusade against communism, also fed off the traditional anti-Semitism of the German ruling class and targeted the whole Jewish people as racially decadent "Jew-Bolsheviks."

It was only when German imperialism, militarised under Hitler, re-emerged as an imperialist competitor to be reckoned with that the "democracies" began to be hostile to the Nazis. For all the capitalist countries involved, the second world war was no different in character from the first world war. It was an interimperialist struggle for redividing the booty of capitalist profits. The imperialist states of both the Nazi-allied Axis powers and the Allied "democracies" all fought to defend their "right" to oppress and exploit the masses of the world. As Leon Trotsky pointed out, the "imperialist democracies are in reality the greatest aristocracies in history. England, France, Holland, Belgium rest on the enslavement of colonial peoples" ("Manifesto of the Fourth International on the Imperialist War," May 1940).

For Britain, as the oldest imperialist power, the second world war was all about defending an empire whose dominance had already been encroached upon and eroded by other imperialist powers. The bloody British Empire's prize possession was its severely oppressed Indian colony. As Trotsky remarked upon the hypocritical pretensions of the British ruling class about defending democracy:

"If the British government were really concerned about the flowering of democracy then a very simple opportunity to demonstrate this exists. Let the government give complete freedom to India. The right of national independence is

one of the elementary democratic rights. But actually, the London government is ready to hand over all the democracies in the world in return for one tenth of its colonies."

—"India Faced with Imperialist War," 25 July 1939

As for the United States, the society was founded on black chattel slavery whose racist legacy of black oppression was, and still is, an essential feature of American capitalism. Its interests in the war had nothing to do with the defence of "democracy" but everything to do with the defence and advancement of its imperialist sphere of influence in the world, particularly in the Pacific. From the Allied firebombings aimed specifically at the civilian populations of Dresden and Tokyo and the atomic mass murder in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 to British imperialism's deliberate starvation policies in its colonial domains like Bengal, the Anglo-American war was an imperialist crime against humanity.

For Defeat of Imperialism and Defense of the USSR

Trotskyists upheld the Leninist programme of revolutionary defeatism for all the capitalist states involved in the second interimperialist world war. Revolutionary defeatism is the position taken by Leninists in a war between rival imperialist blocs, where the working class has no side. It means hostility to all sides in a military conflict, with communists working for a revolutionary uprising of the proletariat on all sides. In a war between a colonial or semi-colonial country and an imperialist power, revolutionaries do have a side. This policy is known as revolutionary defensism, the position we of the International Communist League took in the 2003 war on semi-colonial Iraq, without giving any political support to Saddam Hussein. There was a just side to take, in defence of Iraq against U.S. and British imperialist attack. We fought for class struggle in the belly of the imperialist beasts, and for the blacking [workers refusing to handle goods] of military shipments in order to defend Iraq against the imperialist slaughter.

In an interimperialist war the defeat of an imperialist power—with the ruling class weakened, demoralised and totally discredited—opens up revolutionary possibilities. It is this situation that the programme of revolutionary defeatism strives to achieve. Revolutionary defeatism is best encapsulated by a slogan of the German revolutionary Marxist, Karl Liebknecht in World War I: "The main enemy is at home!" The aim being for the workers to focus their opposition against their "own" capitalist ruling class in order to turn the imperialist war between nations into a civil war for socialist revolution. The position was developed by Lenin in the first world war against the treachery of the reformist leadership of the so-called "socialist" parties of the Second International, who supported their "own" national bourgeoisies in the conflict. These agents of the capitalist class in the workers movement led the workers into the interimperialist slaughter, against their own class brothers, for the profits of their exploiters. The term Leninists use to describe the support of members of the workers movement for their own imperialist ruling class is "social-chauvinism." As Lenin wrote in the midst of the first world war: "A revolutionary class cannot but wish for the defeat of its government in a reactionary war" (*Socialism and War*, 1915).

It was the betrayal of fundamental socialist principles by the social-chauvinist reformist

Imperialism and the Myth of the "Democratic" War Against Fascism

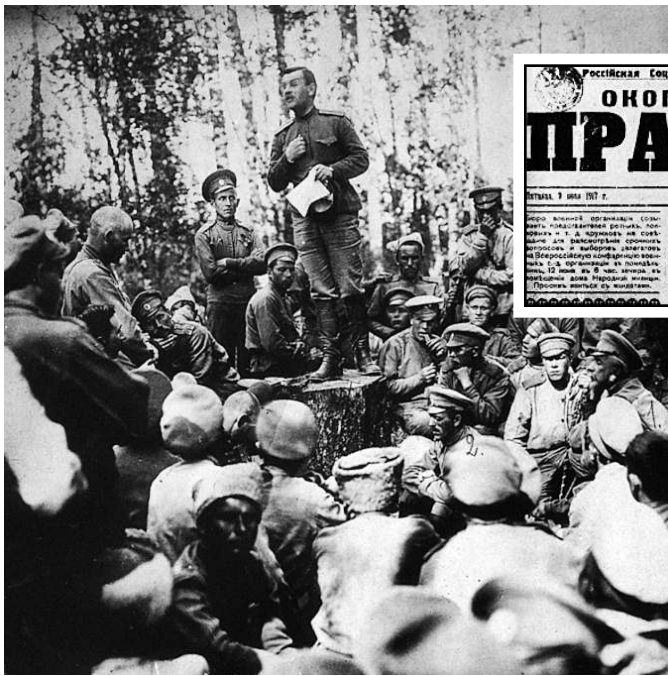
leaders which necessitated the crucial split in the workers movement between the reformists, who had proven their loyalty to their national bourgeoisie, and the revolutionary internationalists who still represented the interests of the working class, socialism and therefore humanity. Lenin's Bolsheviks broke with the Second International on the basis of the programme of revolutionary defeatism towards all the warring capitalist powers. It was this split that enabled the Bolshevik Party to uniquely lead the working class, supported by the peasantry, in a socialist revolution in 1917 against the Russian aristocracy, landlords and capitalists. The revolution pulled Russia out of the interimperialist conflict.

It was the existence and participation of the state that resulted from this revolution—the Soviet Union—that made one important difference in the strategy of revolutionaries in World War II. While being for the defeat of all capitalist states, Marxists were for the unconditional military defence of the Soviet Union. This was because the USSR was a workers state that had overthrown capitalist and landlord exploitation, as well as tsarist tyranny. It was based on a collectivised, planned economy where production was not determined by the capitalist profit motive. The revolutionary economic and social gains that produced full employment, free universal healthcare, education and affordable housing remained despite Stalinist degeneration. The revolutionary leadership under Lenin and Trotsky fought for world socialist revolution, but the conservative bureaucracy led by Stalin abandoned this programme when it usurped political power from the working class in 1924.

The rule of the Stalinist bureaucracy came about in the context of the abortion of the German revolution in 1923, which produced a wave of disillusionment amongst the people of the Soviet Union and a conservative cynicism about the prospects for the international extension of the revolution. The majority of the revolutionary Bolshevik workers who had led the Russian Revolution had either been killed in the civil war or co-opted into the bureaucracy. Lenin had been incapacitated by a stroke during Stalin's rise to power, and died in January 1924. Motivated by maintaining their privileged position against the working people, the Stalinist bureaucracy had given up on world revolution in favour of peaceful coexistence with world imperialism under the utopian-reactionary dogma of "socialism in one country." To consolidate this political counterrevolution, the Stalinist bureaucracy exiled, executed or imprisoned the best remaining proletarian revolutionary elements led by Leon Trotsky's Left Opposition.

USSR Liberated Europe from Nazism Despite Stalin

The Stalinist misleadership seriously endangered the Soviet Union during World War II. Soviet Russia was Hitler's main target and the Nazis almost succeeded in



VAAP

destroying it due to the sabotage of the Stalinist bureaucracy. Stalin's regime had been consolidated by bloody purges in the 1930s in which many of the Red Army's best officers were murdered, including Marshal Tukhachevsky, one of the most brilliant generals in the civil war of 1918-21. Stalin trusted the paper promises of his 1939 pact with Hitler. He ignored all warnings from Soviet spies of the coming Nazi invasion and even when it was clearly imminent he ordered the Soviet armed forces not to actively prepare for defence. But it was the Soviet Union, *despite* Stalin, that took on the vast majority of the Nazi war machine, smashed it and liberated Europe from fascist enslavement.

Up until the last year of the war in Europe, nearly 95 per cent of all German troops were engaged against the Soviet forces. By the time the Allied imperialists launched D-Day, the guts of the German army had already been destroyed, especially in the decisive battles of Stalingrad and Kursk in 1943. A truly remarkable example of the Soviet peoples' endurance and heroism was the 900-day siege of Leningrad, where the city's population was mobilised in a fight to the death to defend the city from the Nazis. Over 800,000 citizens died. For example, when a giant armaments factory was attacked by German artillery, the workers formed a battalion and went to the front.

In fact the D-Day "second front" was not motivated by finishing Hitler off, but by saving European capitalism from the Soviet Union. The policy of the imperialist "democracies" was to let the USSR, the real arch-enemy of the imperialists, go it alone against German imperialism so they would destroy each other. Only when it was clear that the Soviets were going to win the war did the Western Allies launch D-Day in fear of Europe succumbing to Soviet dominance. Around 28 million Soviet citizens sacrificed their lives in defending the world's first workers state and liberating Europe from Nazism. It was testimony to the superiority of a collectivised, planned economy and the fact that the Soviet working peoples saw

they had revolutionary gains to defend that the USSR had the resources and the will to defeat the powerful and barbaric Nazi war machine.

The Trotskyists of the Fourth International were the only force in World War II who had the revolutionary Leninist perspective of defeat for all of the imperialist powers and defence of the Soviet workers state. The policy of the Stalinised Communist parties internationally was determined by Stalin's diplomatic manoeuvres with the imperialist powers, burying the interests of the international working class. For the first couple of months of war, when Stalin was in a pact with Hitler, the Stalinist parties declared it an interimperialist war. But even then their strategy was not Leninist revolutionary defeatism. Instead of fighting for civil war against the bourgeoisie, the Stalinists called for imperialist peace. In fact its "neutral" stance tilted towards Nazi Germany, with the Communist parties giving backhanded support to Hitler's "peace initiatives."

But after the USSR was invaded by the Nazis, the Stalinists transformed the nature of the imperialist "democracies" from being exploiters and oppressors of the world to lovers of "freedom" and "democracy." The Stalinists were now for the defence of the British and American imperialist fatherlands and supported the war effort. Siding with their "own" ruling class in the war meant class-collaboration for the Communist parties of the Allied countries. The American Communist Party supported the racist internment of American citizens of Japanese origin and expelled those from its own ranks. The British Communist Party opposed independence for India for the duration of the war.

The size of the Trotskyist forces was small but their intervention was significant and heroic. British and American Trotskyists were persecuted and jailed for their anti-imperialist propaganda and support for working-class struggles during wartime. In Britain greedy bosses used the war as an excuse to drive down wages, particularly in the coal mines. The miners reacted with strikes which the British Trotskyists threw their forces behind, calling for the organisation of strike committees and all-out support for the miners, demanding nationalisation of the mines without compensation to the coalowners and under workers control. This was in stark contrast to the British Stalinists, who acted as strikebreakers. They insisted that the miners should go back to work as they were criminally damaging the British war effort and joined the capitalist government's witch hunt against the Trotskyists, becoming the most enthusiastic in slandering the Trotskyists as Nazi agents.

While fighting for class struggle against the imperialist war, British and American Trotskyists were actively fighting for the defence of the Soviet Union. Members of the American then-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP)—which is in no way

a relation of the British Socialist Workers Party—volunteered as merchant seamen for the deadly Murmansk supply run to Russia, risking their lives in U-boat-infested waters doing their internationalist proletarian duty to aid the USSR. On these supply runs Trotskyists also carried revolutionary internationalist propaganda to inspire the overthrow of the Stalinist bureaucracy that was undermining the defence of the Soviet workers state. As for the hundreds of thousands of revolutionaries in Stalin's prison camps—among whom numbered many individual Trotskyists who survived the executions of 1937-38—they requested to be sent to the front to fight to the death against fascism. When Stalin refused to allow them to do so, they did what they could for the Soviet war effort by agreeing to the extension of the working day to twelve hours. In 1941 Stalin ordered a further wave of executions of political prisoners. Among 157 murdered on 11 September were Olga Kameneva, Trotsky's sister, and Christian Rakovsky, formerly a leading member of Trotsky's Left Opposition.

Fraternisation with the soldiers of the occupying armies is an essential wartime activity for revolutionaries in order to undercut national chauvinism. In Nazi-occupied Europe, French Trotskyists fraternised with working-class conscripts of the German army in a bid to get them to turn their guns the other way against the Nazi rulers. Courageously, they distributed an underground revolutionary



Dietz Verlag Berlin
Karl Liebknecht in soldier's uniform during WWI. German bourgeoisie drafted and then jailed Liebknecht in attempt to silence his revolutionary anti-militarist agitation.

newspaper in German, *Arbeiter und Soldat* (Worker and Soldier) and built a cell within the German armed forces at Brest. For example, 65 heroic French and German Trotskyists were shot by the Nazis in 1943 when they were discovered. Rather than trying to evade forced labour in Germany, some French and Dutch Trotskyists went to work there in order to aid the hoped-for German workers revolution against the Third Reich. Such proletarian internationalist mobilisation of the German workers—in or out of uniform—against the Nazis was anathema to the Stalinist-led resistance in Europe. In alliance with the much smaller nationalist bourgeois resistance, they carried out the chauvinist and anti-working-class policy that the "only good German is a dead German."

[TO BE CONTINUED]



Deutsche Fotothek Dresden

Firebombing of Dresden, February 1945. U.S. and British imperialists deliberately targeted civilians, slaughtering over 100,000.

U.S. Out Now!...

(continued from page 1)

imperialist rulers for money for education and jobs, “not for war.” Once the occupation was on, the International Socialist Organization (ISO) and Workers World Party (WWP) turned to painting the insurgencies in Iraq as a “national liberation movement.” Behind this seemingly leftist posture stands the same old Democratic Party lesser-evilism, as Bush’s difficulties in Iraq play to the Democrats’ advantage. This is particularly true now as an increasing number of Democratic politicians are calling for an “exit strategy,” fearing that the occupation is becoming increasingly harmful to U.S. imperialism’s interests.

As the recent events in Iraq underscore, there is no unitary “resistance.” Rather, there are disparate groupings organizing attacks on U.S. forces—and more often against random civilians from the various religious and ethnic populations. When the insurgents strike against the U.S. occupiers, they are striking against the greatest enemy of the world’s proletariat and the oppressed. Such acts coincide with the class interests of the working class

internationally. However, resistance forces led by religious clerics are by definition sectarian. As we warned in “The Left and the ‘Iraqi Resistance’” (WV No. 830, 6 August 2004):

“We do not imbue the forces presently organizing guerrilla attacks on U.S. forces with ‘anti-imperialist’ credentials and warn that in the absence of working-class struggle in Iraq and internationally against the occupation, the victory of one or another of the reactionary clerical forces is more likely to come about through an alliance with U.S. imperialism. We are intransigent opponents of the murderous communal violence against other ethnic, religious and national populations oftentimes carried out by the very same forces fighting the occupation armies.”

We stand for an independent proletarian strategy, one based on the understanding that liberation from the imperialist yoke and equitable resolution of the democratic rights of all the peoples of Iraq and the region more broadly can be achieved only through the overthrow of capitalist rule in the region and the establishment of a socialist federation of the Near East. Should the Iraqi proletariat raise its head, it would face not only the savagery of the imperialist occu-

piers but also the brutality of the reactionary Muslim fundamentalists and bourgeois nationalists who dominate the “resistance” hailed by the ISO and WWP reformists.

The situation in Iraq requires the forging of a Marxist workers party that will fight against both imperialist subjugation and all manner of nationalism and religious reaction, as part of a struggle for proletarian revolution. Weak and decimated today, the Iraqi proletariat nonetheless has a vivid history of struggle rich in lessons for the future. In 1958, as the British-backed monarchy was collapsing, the working class, led by the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP), was in a position to take power. But the Stalinist leadership of the ICP subordinated the proletariat to the bourgeois-nationalist Qassim regime. On orders from the Soviet Stalinist bureaucracy under Khrushchev, which was pursuing the pipedream of “peaceful coexistence” with imperialism, the ICP moved to rein in its proletarian base. This paved the way for the Ba’ath party’s rise to power in 1963 and its subsequent murderous repression of Communists and trade unionists, carried out in collaboration with the CIA.

From the Iranian oil fields to the ports of Egypt, there is a powerful working class in the Near East that must be mobilized under the banner of proletarian political independence. Marxist parties must be forged to unite the Near Eastern proletariat—Arab, Persian, Kurdish and Hebrew, Sunni and Shi’ite, Muslim and Christian—against imperialism and all the capitalist rulers of the region. Essential to this perspective is the understanding of the necessity of socialist revolution in the centers of imperialism—the U.S., West Europe and Japan. Otherwise, as Marx noted, “all the old crap” will return.

In the U.S., we fight to build a workers party—section of a reformed Fourth International—to lead the multiracial proletariat in socialist revolution. Such a party can only be built through political struggle against the misleaders of trade-union officialdom, who chain the proletariat to its capitalist class enemy, not least through supporting U.S. “national interests.” Victorious workers revolution, extended internationally, will end imperialist slaughter and ethnic bloodletting and open the road to eliminating material scarcity and building an egalitarian socialist society.■

Ports ...

(continued from page 12)

the “war on terror” and war on the unions are one and the same. Nevertheless, the ILWU tops signed on to the “war on terror,” offering that its own members would help police the docks.

Both the ILWU and ILA supported the 2002 Maritime Transportation Security Act (MSA). If fully enforced, the MSA would bar access to port terminals by workers convicted of a felony in the previous seven years. This is a particular threat to the hard-won union jobs of blacks and Latinos, who have been on the receiving end of the racist “war on drugs.” Yet a February 23 ILWU press release complains that the union “has repeatedly appealed to federal authorities to enforce port security regulations—but to no avail” and demands the strict enforcement of several MSA regulations. Moves to jack up policing of the docks also threaten the largely immigrant and non-union port truckers, a number of whom are Arab. But the ILWU press release demands that the government “thoroughly screen all vehicle drivers” at terminal gates, undermining any efforts to organize the port truckers and setting them up for further police scrutiny.

At the February 24 Oakland protest,

which drew about 100 people, former ILWU Local 10 executive board member Clarence Thomas warned against xenophobia and racial profiling and declared that the issue was “about capital” and “privatization” of the docks. So what was he doing addressing a rally whose sole purpose was to whip up xenophobia and anti-Arab racism...and chanting “Goodbye Dubai” with the rest of the labor fakers? The ILWU Local 10 tops are masters at providing a “progressive” veneer for the chauvinism and class collaborationism of the U.S. labor bureaucracy. For his part, Democratic Oakland mayor Jerry Brown called for “an active political movement to take back the United States.” The last time we know of that Jerry Brown made his presence felt on the docks was when his cops fired wooden bullets, pellet-filled “sting bags” and concussion grenades on antiwar protesters and ILWU longshoremen in April 2003 (see “Shipping Bosses, Police Collude in Cop Rampage,” WV No. 802, 25 April 2003).

Fighting against poisonous “war on terror” chauvinism, on 9 February 2002 some 300 unionists, immigrants, blacks and youth rallied in Oakland around the demands: “No to the USA-Patriot Act and the Maritime Security Act! Down with the anti-immigrant witchhunt!” Initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee and the

Labor Black League for Social Defense, this rally—with black longshoremen at its core—was the first time that organized labor mobilized in defense of its immigrant brothers and sisters targeted under the “war on terror.” ILWU Local 10 officials were among the endorsers of the united-front rally, which was addressed by Clarence Thomas. The Spartacist League speaker at the rally, Brian Manning, stated: “The workers and the capitalists have irreconcilable interests: the capitalists

want to extract as much profit as possible, drive down wages, etc. The capitalists have a state to help them do this—the cops, the courts, the prisons—and then they try to scam you and say this is democracy.... A class-struggle leadership in the trade unions must be forged, a leadership that knows who our friends are and who our enemies are. We need a workers party to fight for a workers government.”

—“Black Rights, Immigrant Rights Go Forward Hand in Hand,” WV No. 775, 22 February 2002 ■

ISO...

(continued from page 3)

called to extend the gains of the October Revolution to the Afghan peoples. We fought to mobilize Soviet workers to defeat the Yeltsin-Bush counterrevolution. Today we call for the unconditional military defense of those states resulting from the overthrow of capitalism in China, Cuba, North Korea and Vietnam against imperialist attack and capitalist counterrevolution. Our fight for workers political revolutions is premised on our defense of the social gains of those revolutions and our fight for international socialist revolution.

The working class and the oppressed cannot take a single step toward liberation if locked in an embrace with the political parties of the class enemy—whether Democrat, Republican or Green. What’s needed is to build a revolutionary workers party, based on the political indepen-

dence of the working class, which would have as a crucial task the fight for all of the oppressed, not least the liberation of black people. Workers have the social power to overthrow capitalism and establish a collectivized, planned economy as the basis for socialism. But they must first be won in the course of hard class struggle to a Marxist understanding of their historic task. A key part of that fight is combating illusions in the reformability of capitalism fostered by today’s misleaders of the working class. The Bolshevik-led workers revolution in Russia in 1917 opened up the perspective of international socialist revolution to put an end to imperialist war for good. In opposition to Chretien and the ISO who, at bottom, defend capitalist rule, we fight for the program of new workers revolutions across the globe. No vote to the Green Party! No vote to Chretien! Break with the Democratic Party of racism and war! Join us in the struggle for socialist revolution!■

New Orleans...

(continued from page 2)

now there are 1,200. 18 of 117 Orleans Parish public schools are open. Parents are having to hire lawyers and file suit in court to try to force the opening of public schools.

Speaking of the courts: 3,500 prisoners in the Orleans Parish Jail have fallen into a worse hellhole of oblivion than ever before. These include people who were arrested but not charged, or charged but not convicted, for anything from peeing on the sidewalk or soliciting to prostitution or anything at all back in August. They are now simply lost to the so-called Justice system. The local courthouse and jail were flooded, some prisoners drowned in their cells, the rest were evacuated and dispersed to jails all over the state and outside the state. Nobody knows where they are. All computerized records of criminal court cases were lost, and the entire Evidence Room was flooded. The Innocence Project found this a bitter end to some cases where prisoners were in line to be freed on saved DNA evidence.

Here is a quote from open court from the *Times Picayune* 1/21/06. “Kevin Crawford is in jail,” a deputy announced, naming a 21-year-old charged in July with being a felon with a firearm. “Where he

is, I have no idea.” (Judge) Hunter set a new court date for late March and moved on. “OK, Kevin Crawford is somewhere out there in limbo-land,” Hunter said for the record, “the Twilight Zone.” In the case of a man charged with soliciting crime against nature... (the deputy said) “He might have drowned, Judge, in the chaos.” A federal judge has just pronounced the city’s indigent defense program to be non-existent. The local *City Business* newspaper, of all sources, has run a two-part exposé on this travesty.

New Orleans cannot pull itself up by its bootstraps from this man-made disaster. Massive outside aid is needed, but the White House is...disinclined. Local columnists have cited the Marshall Plan and the level of aid supplied to New York after 9/11 as the scale of help that is needed. Liberal commentators cite money that is being spent on the Iraq war as a rightful source of aid for New Orleans. During the hurricane, many countries from Cuba to Sweden offered medical and other aid which Bush ignored, not by accident. It’s not that Bush hasn’t thought of where the money could come from: he represents a ruling class with other priorities, namely maintaining the rule of the propertied class. It will take a socialist revolution to sweep him and his class out of power.

Ruth
New Orleans

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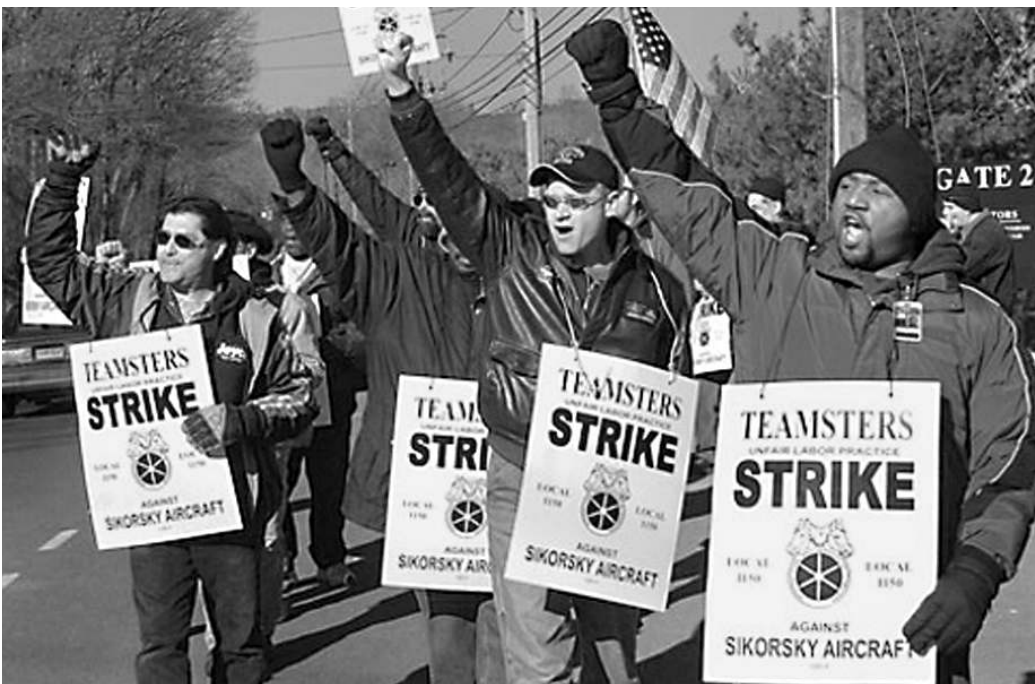
WORKERS VANGUARD

Victory to the Sikorsky Strike!

FEBRUARY 25—Some 3,590 members of Teamsters Local 1150 went on strike on February 20 against Sikorsky Aircraft, and picket lines have been up around the clock in Stratford, Bridgeport, Shelton and West Haven, Connecticut, as well as in West Palm Beach, Florida. The walkout at Sikorsky comes on the heels of a three-month strike by 1,500 members of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers in California, Alabama and Florida, who make and launch Boeing's Delta rockets. These strikes are particularly significant as they hit two of the U.S. military's most important suppliers in the midst of the imperialist rulers' bloody occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq.

The core issue in the Sikorsky strike is the company's demand to nearly *triple* the workers' health care payments over the three-year life of the contract—from \$25 to \$72 per week—in addition to increases in prescription costs and doctor visit copayments. With an average age of 48 years and job seniority of 24 years, workers suffer widespread injuries and chronic medical conditions from labor on the assembly lines. Hourly wages for this highly skilled workforce range from only \$18.59 to \$32.50. After workers rejected the company's takeback "offer" by an overwhelming vote of 2,145 to 1,052, a 100-member strike committee began organizing picketing and financial assistance for strikers. As Everald Davis, a 28-year Sikorsky veteran, put it, "Sometimes you have to fight for what you want. You just can't let people push you around."

Attacks on union health benefits, which were won through labor struggle, have been a key issue in virtually every recent strike in the U.S. The massive United



February 20: Striking Teamsters outside Sikorsky Aircraft plant in Stratford, Connecticut.

Technologies conglomerate that includes Sikorsky, along with Pratt & Whitney Aircraft, Otis Elevator and other subsidiaries, wants to increase workers' medical payments at all of its operations. Throwing out the sucker bait of a \$2,000 contract signing bonus, Sikorsky is trying to gouge its workers' health benefits even after raking in \$250 million in profits last year (up 25 percent from 2004), not to speak of a backlog in government contracts.

Sikorsky's main products are helicopters for civilian and military use. The company supplies all five branches of the U.S. armed forces, most notably Army Black Hawks and Navy Seahawks, and boasts that it has built nearly half of all helicopters serving military forces throughout the world. Picketers in Stratford told *Workers Vanguard* that the union warned them that Sikorsky

would wave the flag and that the strikers would be called "terrorist." The *Connecticut Post* (21 February) began the drumbeat at the very beginning of the strike: "The nation is at war in Afghanistan and Iraq, and workers said they have heard charges the strike might delay some vital parts needed for military orders." But the strikers, many of whom are military veterans, are undaunted. One picketer remarked to *WV* that there is a distinction between having pride in the workers' skills and the product they make and the way their product is used.

The theme of "national unity" that the government has hammered on since the September 11 attacks is intended to obliterate the *class line* between the workers and their U.S. capitalist exploiters, aiming to block the working class

from fighting in its own interests. The top Teamsters leadership plays right along, for example, by staging chauvinist, flag-waving rallies with various capitalist politicians across the country on February 24 to protest the projected takeover of port facilities by an Arab-owned company (see accompanying article). The Sikorsky strike is objectively a strike against the lie of "national unity" patriotism.

Strikers should beware of those Democrats, and also some Republicans, who have proclaimed their "sympathy." The Democrats are taking the opportunity to swipe at the Bush administration over the state of health care in this country. But their agenda is to get the workers back on the job, to keep profits flowing and the imperialist war machine running. Workers need their own party, to lead all the exploited and oppressed in the struggle for a workers government.

Spirits are high on the picket lines in Connecticut, where the white, black and immigrant strikers have been supported by many people dropping by with coffee and donuts, and where passing cars, trucks and fire engines honk their horns in support. At the same time, thousands of engineers and other salaried employees have been driving right past the picket lines through plant gates, and the company says that it's continuing to build some helicopters. Whatever the truth of this claim, the way to win this strike, and win it fast, is with mass picket lines, drawing on other area unions, to *stop all scabbing* and *shut Sikorsky down*. It is particularly important to mobilize workers from other United Technologies companies who are also facing attacks on union benefits. *Victory to the Sikorsky strike!* ■

Globalized, Except...

Anti-Arab Hysteria Over "Port Security"

FEBRUARY 27—Adding to the racist frenzy over the proposed takeover of some terminal operations at six U.S. ports by Arab-owned Dubai Ports World, the Teamsters union staged demonstrations across the country on February 24 around the slogan, "Goodbye Dubai, Secure America's Ports!" The Port of Oakland protest was joined by the ILWU longshore union. The International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) held its own rally today in Port Newark, New Jersey. These rallies are part of a drive, led by Democrats, against the Bush administration's approval of the takeover, which they denounce as a blow against the "war on terror."

In the "liberal" advance guard of this jingoist campaign, Maureen Dowd ranted in her *New York Times* (22 February)

column, "Just because the wealthy foreigners who own our debt can blackmail us with their economic leverage, does that mean we should expose our security assets to them as well?" Fearing that Democrats are finally succeeding in their attempt to supplant the Republicans as the party of "national security," Republican leaders on Capitol Hill have joined in the chorus against the administration. With Bush hoist on his own petard, the Dubai company is postponing taking over port operations, providing time for a face-saving "investigation." In an earlier chauvinist outburst over the workings of the "globalized economy," last year a Congressional anti-Communist furor forced the Chinese deformed workers state to withdraw a bid by its state-owned CNOOC company to buy out oil giant Unocal.

The port deal is simply business as usual: The British-owned P&O company, including its U.S. terminal operations, has been bought out by an outfit owned by the emirate of Dubai, which happens to provide the U.S. Navy with a crucial deep-water seaport in the Persian Gulf as well as an American air base. In fact, some 80 percent of shipping terminals in the U.S. today are managed by foreign-owned companies. To be sure, Dubai's royal family is a bunch of slave drivers. An Australian port workers union statement points out that in Dubai, "foreign workers predominate and trade unions are outlawed. Deportation awaits those who dare to organize."

Reporting on discussions with Newark longshoremen, the *Washington Post* (25 February) cogently noted that many workers "took the age-old view that a



WV Photo

ILWU's Clarence Thomas on platform of jingoist "Goodbye Dubai" rally, Oakland, February 24.

boss is a boss and a contract is greased." But the labor bureaucracy has undermined the unions' ability to fight against the port bosses by buying into the government's "war on terror," which is nothing but a pretext for the rulers' imperialist depredations from Afghanistan to Iraq and for ripping up the rights of immigrants, black people and labor at home. During the ILWU's 2002 contract battle, Thomas Ridge, then Bush's Homeland Security chief, warned the union president that a strike would "threaten national security"—a concrete demonstration that

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