

Imperialist Hypocrisy over Darfur

U.S./UN Hands Off Sudan!

“Out of Iraq Into Darfur.” That was the plea on placards distributed by a phone service company and liberal outfit called “Working Assets” and scattered throughout the April 29 demonstration against the occupation of Iraq. The protest, held in New York City, was initiated by United for Peace and Justice.

The next day, Washington, D.C. was the site of a massive rally, addressed by numerous Democratic and Republican politicians, celebrities like actor George Clooney and notables like Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel. Their central message was for the Bush regime and United Nations to intervene on behalf

of the terrorized population of Darfur, in the western region of Sudan. The demonstration in D.C. came two days after five U.S. Congressmen and several others were arrested for staging a protest outside the Sudanese Embassy.

The conflict in Darfur has set groups of Muslim nomadic peoples, backed

by the central government in Khartoum, against a largely pastoral Muslim population, resulting in mass slaughter and displacement. It is a truly horrific situation, and, particularly within the black population in the U.S., there is great sympathy for the victims of this

continued on page 9

Class Struggle and the Fight for Black Liberation

Cruelty and lethal indifference toward working people, black people and immigrants are the hallmarks of the U.S. government and the capitalist class it represents. Even as profits and the stock market rise, FEMA continues to slash disaster relief for the thousands upon thousands of poor, largely black New Orleanians dispersed first by flood waters and then by government policy. It's the biggest population displacement since the 1930s Depression era and the Dust Bowl.

The U.S. government—under both Democratic and Republican administrations—knew for decades about the dangers facing New Orleans but did nothing to reinforce the city's inadequately built and crumbling levees. When Hurricane Katrina hit, masses were simply left to drown. The aftermath of the hurricane was a racist atrocity that continues, over eight months later, in the forced diaspora of much of the black population that gave this storied city its lifeblood.

The infamous FEMA has now ruled that one-third of some 55,000 families still unable to either return home or afford other housing are “ineligible” for financial aid for housing and utilities that was supposed to last for a year. The other two-thirds of the displaced families have to sign new leases while their benefits are cut and they have to pay gas and electric bills. For most of them, there is nothing left in New Orleans to return to. In Memphis, which has 1,500 such families on vouchers, a spokesman for a community services agency said that FEMA even asked these impoverished people to give their kitchen pots and pans back! This comes as Bush's cronies continue to reap windfall profits from the Katrina disaster, including, according to a *Wall Street Journal* (5 May) article based on a Congressional report, big contractors who “overbilled the government in a \$63 billion operation that only will get more expensive.”

The death and devastation along the

Gulf Coast was a product of the capitalist system, in which a tiny class of obscenely rich owners extracts its profits from the exploitation of the working class. The human toll of this brutal system can be seen in the rulers' attempts to dump retire-

ment and health care benefits for workers after years of grueling toil on assembly lines or in other dangerous jobs. It can also be seen in the all-sided attacks on immigrant rights and the threats to further militarize the border by Republicans and

Democrats alike. Dangerous working conditions are the norm in the drive for profits, as shown by the disaster last January at the International Coal Group's Sago Mine in West Virginia, which left 12 miners dead.

Now Randal McCloy Jr., the lone survivor at Sago, only recently able to speak again, has told the victims' families that the company's emergency breathing equipment failed at least four of the men, so, as they slowly suffocated deep underground, they had to share their last breaths of oxygen. “As my trapped co-workers lost consciousness one by one, the room grew still and I continued to sit and wait, unable to do much else,” he wrote in late April.

At hearings concluded on May 4 in Buckhannon, West Virginia, relatives of the dead miners assailed the company and government. “You guys are investigating International Coal Group,” said the son of one of the miners. “Who's investigating M.S.H.A. [the federal Mine Safety and Health Administration] and the state?” The company has tried to claim that a bolt of lightning four miles away somehow made its way across the Buckhannon River and dove deep underground to cause the explosion. As a United Mine Workers spokesman put it, “You know, if it was lightning then that's an act of God. And you can't sue God.”

In reality, with coal production expanding, cascading layers of cost-cutting on safety, with the government's collusion, led to this disaster. Sago Mine was a death-trap—no exhaust airshaft to remove gas, no escape route—and it was non-union. Any real measure of protection gained by mine workers—or elsewhere in industry—was won through hard struggle by the unions. As we wrote in “West Virginia Mine Disaster: Capitalist Murder” (WV No. 862, 20 January): “With the overwhelming majority of U.S. workers unorganized, what is desperately needed is a class-struggle fight to *organize the unorganized*—from Appalachia and the West to the notoriously anti-union South.” Such a struggle requires fighting against the policies of the pro-capitalist union misleadership that by and large has renounced the class-struggle methods that built the unions and in some instances

continued on page 6



Above: Desperate Katrina victims trying to escape hellish conditions in Superdome in New Orleans. Below: Striking bus workers walk picket line on December 19, one day before TWU Local 100 shut down the entire New York transit system, crippling the city.



On Abortion Article

Mexico City
18 March 2006

Dear Spartacists:

It is with delight that I have read the article on “Free Abortion on Demand!” in the 17th of March issue of Workers Vanguard [No. 866]. I wanted to write this short letter to congratulate you on a clear and concise presentation of the sexist and reactionary onslaught on women’s rights. What started as a strong critique of the Capitalist State’s continued attack on individual rights hard won through social struggles became a sharp presentation of the role of the family under capitalism and ended with the unambiguous argument favouring the need to forge a workers’ vanguard party to fight for Socialist Revolution.

As Lenin stated in What is to be done? the role of the Revolutionary Party is to elevate spontaneous social struggle against absolutism to political grounds and this article does just that. I found the entire exposé had been well researched, presenting data from various sources which clearly revealed the parallel directions of the policies of both bourgeois parties, fighting hard against the illusions which other ostensibly revolutionary parties or leftist organiza-

tions try to instill on the Democrats. One critique I have had of revolutionary propaganda is that it sometimes lacks clarity in the arguments especially when it comes to explaining the theory behind Socialism, a critique which Lenin also presents in What is to be done? However, your article in Workers Vanguard profited from the State’s attack on abortion rights to present in a succinct and crystal clear manner the basic thesis in Engels’ book The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State.

I look forward to reading more from Workers Vanguard and take advantage of this short letter to urge you to write an article linking quasi-fascist and hypocritically contradictory US international politics, with its attack against Evolutionary theory, against abortion, the rights of homosexuals, the enforcement of age of consent laws, the influence of reactionary religious beliefs, the relentless degradation of the environment in the defense of the capitalists’ profit margins, etc., as a way of showing how numerous and diverse a Capitalist State’s attacks can be and how these end up having devastating effects on all levels of society.

Sincerely,
A.V.



Spartacists at San Francisco antiwar demonstration, March 2004.

“Guest Workers” and Apartheid

7 April 2006

Dear Workers Vanguard,

The bipartisan “war on terror” that has targeted Muslims in particular and all immigrants in general finds its logic in the latest attempt to criminalize a significant swath of the U.S. workforce for the “crime” of being undocumented immigrants.

The U.S. House of Representatives proposes building a 700-mile apartheid wall along the U.S./Mexico border after stealing half of Mexico’s territory one hundred and fifty years ago. Twelve million undocumented immigrants including children will be turned into felons. The so-called alternative bills proposed in the Senate with Democratic Party support combine draconian enforcement measures with massive “guest worker” programs.

These racist “guest worker” programs are reminiscent of South African apartheid. Blacks were only welcome as temporary “guest workers” to toil in the homes, mines and plantations of their white bosses. Under notorious pass laws, blacks were forced to carry documents at

all times that gave their work authorization and employer’s monthly signature, to be produced on demand by police. Termination of employment, violation of any of the numerous apartheid laws, or a finding that one’s presence was “detrimental to the maintenance of peace and order” were grounds for immediate detention and deportation to desperately impoverished, rural reserves.

The massive protests across the U.S. by immigrants and their allies must be backed by the social power of labor demanding: No deportations! Down with racist anti-immigrant repression! Organize the unorganized! Down with apartheid-like “guest worker” programs! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! It will take a socialist revolution on a world order to put an end to neocolonial exploitation that gives rise to the desperation forcing masses to leave their home countries.

Comradely,
Adwoa
Bay Area Labor Black League
for Social Defense



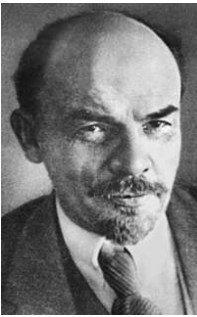
TROTSKY

Imperialism and War

Throughout the demonstrations against the Iraq war and occupation, the reformist left has promoted the lie that imperialism can be reformed and pressured to serve the interests of working people and the oppressed. Writing in 1915, amid the carnage of World War I, Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin explained that war is intrinsic to the system of capitalist imperialism. This analysis has been confirmed by the second inter-imperialist world war and by the numerous predatory wars against colonial and semi-colonial countries. Only socialist revolution can put an end to imperialist war.

Imperialism is the highest stage in the development of capitalism, reached only in the twentieth century. Capitalism now finds that the old national states, without whose formation it could not have overthrown feudalism, are too cramped for it. Capitalism has developed concentration to such a degree that entire branches of industry are controlled by syndicates, trusts and associations of capitalist multimillionaires and almost the entire globe has been divided up among the “lords of capital” either in the form of colonies, or by entangling other countries in thousands of threads of financial exploitation. Free trade and competition have been superseded by a striving towards monopolies, the seizure of territory for the investment of capital and as sources of raw materials, and so on. From the liberator of nations, which it was in the struggle against feudalism, capitalism in its imperialist stage has turned into the greatest oppressor of nations. Formerly progressive, capitalism has become reactionary; it has developed the forces of production to such a degree that mankind is faced with the alternative of adopting socialism or of experiencing years and even decades of armed struggle between the “Great” Powers for the artificial preservation of capitalism by means of colonies, monopolies, privileges and national oppression of every kind.

—V.I. Lenin, “Socialism and War” (1915)



LENIN



WV Photo

New York City: Hundreds of thousands march in support of immigrant rights as part of nationwide protests on May 1.

WORKERS VANGUARD

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CLASS-STRUGGLE DEFENSE NOTES

Number 34 50¢ Spring 2006

Court Puts Mumia's Case on "Fast Track"

Mobilize Labor's Power to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!

Contents:

- Pharm Abuse Jailed in an Immigrant Run Prison? 2
- From the Editor: The U.S. is a Slave Society 2
- Organizing Worker Against Whorehouse: The TWU Strike 8
- International Solidarity: 400 NYC Transit Unions! 10
- Defend Lynne Stewart, Ethelwood Yosty, Abouel Abdol Batta! 12
- Anti-Separatist: From Separatist to Nationalist 14
- From John Lennon, Tom Manning! 16
- Nuclear Operation and No Supreme Court Hearings 17

2

WORKERS VANGUARD

The latest foray into bourgeois “peace” politics by the International Socialist Organization (ISO) and the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) marks a low point even for these shameless reformists. The ISO, the Campus Antiwar Network (CAN—an ISO project) and “World Can’t Wait” (WCW—an RCP vehicle) have signed on to a petition addressed to “Dear President Bush and Vice President Cheney,” appealing to these certified war criminals—who are currently threatening Iran, including possibly with nuclear weapons—to effectively *disarm* Iran and, along the way, inaugurate world peace!

The petition states:
“The most effective way to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons would be to closely monitor its nuclear energy program, and to improve diplomatic relations—two tasks made much more difficult by threatening to bomb Iranian territory. We urge you to lead the way to peace, not war, and to begin by making clear that you will not commit the highest international crime by aggressively attacking Iran.”

Of course, Bush/Cheney have already repeatedly committed international crimes by “aggressively attacking” both Afghanistan and Iraq. This petition is like appealing to Jack the Ripper to take up social work—while simultaneously demanding that his potential victims walk the streets defenseless.

In signing the petition, which is sponsored by the “After Downing Street” coalition (of which the ISO and World Can’t Wait are members, along with Progressive Democrats of America), the ISO and RCP join bourgeois liberals in advising U.S. imperialism on improving its foreign policy. (Yeah, it probably wouldn’t help “diplomatic relations” much if the U.S. nuked Iran.)

The ISO’s *Socialist Worker* (5 May) writes that “the antiwar movement has to take the Bush administration’s threats against Iran seriously—and unconditionally oppose U.S. there and throughout the Middle East,” while the RCP calls in *Revolution* (23 April) on “people in the U.S.” to “oppose U.S. war plans against Iran with all their energy.” For these sniveling reformists, such “opposition” consists of building class-collaborationist coalitions with Democratic Party liberals, as they did in opposing “Bush’s war” in Iraq. Democrats commonly complained that the Iraq war was diverting attention from “real threats,” like Iran and North Korea. And now that the liberals are chiming in on how to deal with Iran, the ISO



WV Photo
New York City, April 29: ISO pushes illusion that capitalism can provide “Money for jobs and education, not for war and occupation.”

CORRECTION

Our article “ISO Goes All the Way with Capitalist Greens” (WV No. 866, 17 March) polemicized against the International Socialist Organization’s Todd Chretien and his “‘Million Votes for Peace’ Campaign—directed against pro-war incumbent Democratic Senator Dianne Feinstein—for the Green nomination for California Senate in the June primary elections.” To be clear, Chretien’s campaign is for the U.S. Senate, not the state senate.

ISO, RCP to Bush: Disarm Iran, “Lead the Way to Peace”



ISO and RCP’s World Can’t Wait signed petition advising the Bush regime on how best to disarm Iran.

Imperialists’ Bootlickers

and RCP are swept right along.

While these bleating lambs were appealing to the proprietor of the world’s biggest slaughterhouse in the latest round of antiwar protests, the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Clubs highlighted the need for the international working class to defend Iran in the event of imperialist attack. At the national protest in New York City on April 29, our comrades sold hundreds of copies of WV No. 869 (28 April) with its article “Imperialists Threaten Iran,” which stated straight out: “In the context of threats by the nuclear-armed imperialists, Iran clearly *needs* nukes to defend itself and deter U.S. attack. In today’s world, possession of nuclear arms has become the only real measure of national sovereignty.”

At a CAN conference at Borough of Manhattan Community College following the demonstration, a Spartacus Youth Club member tore into the ISO for signing the petition: “This is protest politics, this is ‘we can change the world through appealing to capitalists’ who wage wars in their interests, not in ours. Our fight is not simply to end the occupation of Iraq, to end this war, but to end all war and abolish the system of imperialism through socialist revolution.”

SYCers challenged the ISO’s panel speaker, Elizabeth Wrigley-Field, on why the ISO signed the obscene appeal to Bush. She replied by saying that she disagreed with some of the petition’s wording, but continued, “I also agree with signing it because I thought that the point of that petition was to come together against the idea of attacking Iran.” No, the point of that petition was to advise U.S. imperialism on how best “to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons.” Sometimes words just mean what they say.

As gross as the petition is, it’s nothing new for the ISO to appeal to the imperialists to take action against their enemies. In the lead-up to the 1991 Gulf War, the ISO endorsed a “peace” demonstration that called for United Nations sanctions against Saddam Hussein’s Iraq as an “alternative”

to war. UN-imposed sanctions killed some one and a half million Iraqis, more than have been killed by the two brutal wars and the current occupation. ISO honcho Todd Chretien is running for the capitalist Green Party’s nomination for the U.S. Senate race in California on a stock liberal program to “reduce” the budget of the armed forces—what level of imperialist firepower would he be satisfied with?—and to bring “our” troops home from Iraq. Chretien’s electoral pipe dream notwithstanding, the Greens have more than amply demonstrated their support for imperialist slaughter. In Germany Green Party foreign minister Joschka Fischer helped implement the 1999 imperialist bombing of Serbia (which among other horrors left the Balkans riddled with depleted uranium shells).

Back in 1979, the ISO promoted Khomeini’s reactionary mullah-led movement in Iran, even cheering, in a January 1979 headline: “The Form—Religious, the Spirit—Revolution!” Today we find the social-patriots of the ISO advising the U.S.

“Great Satan” on how to cripple Iran. As Trotskyists, we are politically hostile to the reactionary mullah regime in Iran and call for proletarian revolution to liberate the oppressed masses. But in the event of attack by the U.S. imperialist colossus, we stand foursquare in defense of Iran, a dependent semicolonial capitalist country.

In regard to North Korea, Vietnam, Cuba and China—bureaucratically deformed workers states, where the overthrow of capitalist rule was a historic gain for the world working class—we stand for unconditional military defense against imperialism and capitalist counterrevolution. We fight for proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracies and replace them with regimes based on workers democracy and revolutionary internationalism.

If North Korea has developed nuclear capacity, as Pyongyang claims, then that is a good thing. But you won’t hear this from the anti-Communist ISO. The ISO’s political godfather, the late Tony Cliff of Britain, broke from the Trotskyist movement during the 1950-53 Korean War when he refused to defend the Soviet Union, China and North Korea against the counterrevolutionary war led by the “democratic” U.S. and British imperialists. The ISO hailed every CIA-backed movement arrayed against the Soviet Union, from Polish Solidarność to the Islamic fundamentalist *mujahedin* who fought the Red Army in Afghanistan to Yeltsin’s capitalist-restorationist forces inside the Soviet degenerated workers state. The counterrevolutionary destruction of the USSR in 1991-92 was a massive defeat for the world working class. At home, the ISO’s embrace of capitalist “democracy” extends to its treacherous support of trade-union dissidents who haul the unions into the bosses’ courts.

The RCP was also part of the imperialist anti-Soviet chorus, following the “Great Helmsman” Mao Zedong who denounced “Soviet social-imperialism” as the greatest enemy of the world’s peoples while forging a counterrevolutionary alliance with Washington. Today, these eccentric Maoists have made “World Can’t Wait,” which is based on calls for Bush to “step down,” their favored means of cozying up to liberal capitalist politicians and celebrities. What the RCP can’t wait for is the November Congressional elections, as shown by the fact that the next big WCW mobilization is October 5. For anyone doubting the RCP’s commitment to Democratic Party lesser-evilmism, *Revolution* (29 January) trumpets that “ruling class figures like [Al] Gore will inevitably be part of the whole swirl and ferment that will go into driving out the Bush regime.”

In time-honored Stalinist fashion, the RCP justifies this groveling before the Democrats by claiming that the other capitalist party, the Republicans, are running a “fascist” regime. No, they’re just the right-side profile of the ugly face of capitalist-imperialist “democracy.” Our commitment is to building a revolutionary workers party that will lead the multiracial working class in socialist revolution—the only road to ridding the world of imperialism and its wars and depredations. *U.S. hands off Iran! Out of Afghanistan, Iraq now!* ■

In counterposition to reformists, Spartacists at April 29 antiwar demonstration in NYC asserted Iran’s need for nukes today.



Scrap the Sex Offenders Register!

Britain: Anti-Sex Witchhunt in Schools

The following article is reprinted from Workers Hammer No. 194 (Spring 2006), published by the Spartacist League/Britain, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

WORKERS HAMMER

It is a sign of the reactionary times in Blair's Britain that Education Secretary Ruth Kelly was almost hounded out of her job in January for being "soft" on so-called "sex offenders." A member of the sinister, ultra-right-wing Catholic sect Opus Dei, Kelly is currently preparing Blair's latest attack on secondary education. Yet even she was placed on the defensive by a hysterical media frenzy about "sex offenders" in schools, one of many such moral crusades that have been detonated by the Blair government's 1997 Sex Offenders Act. Passed just weeks after coming to power, this act (re-enacted as the Sexual Offences Act in 2003) required those branded as "sex offenders" to register with the police. This register is a witch hunter's charter.

The issue of "sex offenders" is a political football that has been used repeatedly to ignite often violent public campaigns against those who end up on the register, which currently contains roughly 24,000 names. The term "sex offender" grotesquely and wilfully equates heinous acts such as the brutal murder of Soham schoolgirls Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman with harmless activities like teenage sex, or looking at pornographic images. People's names can be placed on the Sex Offenders Register even if they've never had sex with anyone!

The latest witch hunt was started by the "liberal" *Observer* running a scaremongering piece that "sex offenders" had been cleared to teach in certain schools, igniting hysteria that might make one think child-rapists and murderers were lurking in the classrooms. The pretext was that, until now, not everyone on the Sex Offenders Register was automatically banned from teaching or working with children. Such a ban was restricted to those on List 99, the government's official blacklist, which numbered 4,200. A tiny number of those on the register had been permitted by the education department to teach. This "loophole" was seized upon for a muck-raking media vendetta in which the "respectable" BBC, *Guardian* and *Independent* joined the rabidly right-wing *Daily Mail*, particularly targeting two people who had been cleared to work as teachers. What "sex crimes" had these two people committed? William Gibson, a former maths teacher, had been placed

on the register for a *consensual*, long-term relationship that began in 1980 when his girlfriend was a 15-year-old pupil, with whom he went on to have three children during a 19-year marriage! Paul Reeve, a popular Norfolk PE teacher, received a "caution" three years ago because his credit card details were found on a U.S. pornography website!

Reeve was forced out of teaching and became the victim of a police dragnet code-named "Operation Atlas," a trawl through a list of "paedophile suspects" by Norfolk police. The list came from the National Crime Squad, a unit specialising in searching for people using porn websites, known as "Operation Ore." This trawl was launched in 2002 when the American FBI provided British police with the credit card details of 6,500 people in Britain who accessed an American website called Landslide, resulting in an invasion of privacy by the state on a mass

drug use and pornography; we oppose the existence of a legal "age of consent," which gives the capitalist state the right to determine at what age youth can engage in consensual sexual activity. And we utterly reject the practice whereby looking at porn is equated with violent crimes such as rape, sexual assault and even murder. *Down with the "age of consent" laws!*

State Out of the Bedroom!

For us the guiding principle for sexual relations is that of *effective consent*, meaning mutual agreement and understanding, as opposed to coercion. We believe that as long as those who take part agree to do so at the time, no one, least of all the state, has the right to tell them they can't do it. Determining what effective consent is can be difficult, and particularly in sexual relationships between youth and older adults such as teachers, there will always be grey areas.



Reuters
Former British Education Secretary Ruth Kelly has fueled virulent anti-sex campaign.

Ominous noises are now being made about "sex offenders" lurking in the NHS [National Health Service] as well!

Dozens of teachers have been hounded out of their jobs and even jailed for nothing other than consensual sexual encount-



No credit



Tom Pilston

Seventeenth-century witchhunts, such as depicted in graphic (left), are recalled by modern-day "sex offender" hysteria in Britain (above).

scale. Hundreds of computers have been seized and a staggering 3,500 people arrested, including Who guitarist Pete Townshend. Some have been convicted and jailed; even those who are merely "cautioned" are automatically placed on the Sex Offenders Register. Not surprisingly, Operation Ore has contributed to a vast increase in the number of people cautioned for possessing child porn images. In the last decade there has been an increase of 2,692 per cent in cautions for this! (*Guardian Unlimited*, 16 January).

We vehemently oppose such police surveillance which is an outrageous intrusion by the state into people's private lives. We call for an end to all laws against "crimes without victims" such as prostitution,

As we wrote in an article titled "Labour's Witch Hunt Against 'Sex Offenders' Unleashes Vigilante Terror," published during a media-generated frenzy over "paedophilia" in 2000 that resulted in lynch mobs on the streets:

"'Paedophilia' simply means sexual desire towards children. To equate this with child murder and rape is grotesque and partakes of the same reactionary bourgeois bigotry which declares all sex other than heterosexual monogamy to be 'deviant.' We oppose the persecution of those who engage in consensual inter-generational sex, we oppose the reactionary 'age of consent' laws and we have a long record of defending against persecution organisations such as the North American Man/Boy Love Association (NAMBLA) and the British Paedophile Information Exchange, whose leaders were jailed in 1984 for advocating the right of youth under the 'age of consent' to have sex with adults."

—Workers Hammer No. 174, Autumn 2000

We also oppose the criminalisation of those who look at child pornography which, like all pornography, is simply images and words designed for pleasure. This was the subject of *Capturing the Friedmans*, a documentary depicting the true story of how two innocent individuals were framed up, jailed and had their lives destroyed by false accusations of raping dozens of children, simply because the father had received images of child pornography through the post!

Ruth Kelly has proposed new measures that will ban anyone convicted or cautioned of any so-called "child sex offence" or "serious offence against adults" from ever working in schools.

ers with teenagers. This was the subject of the November 2005 Channel 4 documentary *Sleeping with Teacher*. Among others it featured Scottish music teacher John Forrester, whose partner was a student when the relationship began and both were shown as a happy couple expecting a baby; Lucy Hayward, who was jailed for two years and placed on the Sex Offender's Register for a fling with a 15-year-old pupil (who seduced her) who wasn't even attending the school where she taught at the time. There was *no* suggestion that these relationships were anything other than consensual.

Criminally, the National Union of Teachers has endorsed Ruth Kelly's new measures, saying they are "fully in line with the NUT's approach." The reformist left—the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), Workers Power and the Socialist Party—have refused to utter a word against this reactionary moral crusade that made front-page news for days on end. In April 1998 the SWP denounced paedophilia as a "sick product of a sick society," while at other times doing some liberal handwringing over "innocent" people being caught in the web. But today the SWP's alliance with the mosques in [the electoral coalition] Respect precludes even that. According to *Weekly Worker*, Salma Yaqoob, a prominent leader of Respect, actually welcomed the government's crackdown on "sex offenders" as a "positive move" on the BBC's *Question Time* (quoted in *Weekly Worker*, 26 January 2006). The bottom line for reformists (and bourgeois liberals alike) is that they look to the capitalist state—the butchers of Iraq and

WORKERS VANGUARD

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After Anti-Militarist Protest

D.A. Drops Charges, UofC Threatens Ban Against SYCers

On the morning of April 5 all charges were dropped against Jeremy Cohan, Ben Fink, and two supporters of the Spartacus Youth Club, Tom Discepolo and Brian Stapleton, who were arrested at the University of Chicago (U of C) on February 21 for protesting Marine recruiters and the U.S.'s neocolonial occupation of Iraq. The university was forced to drop all charges and threats of disciplinary action by a successful campaign that was initiated and led by the SYC to defend the arrested protesters.

The SYC collected more than 40 endorsements for a united-front defense rally from individuals and organizations spanning a broad spectrum of political perspectives. The SYC shaped the widespread outrage against the arrests into a successful protest in defense of the protesters. During this campaign, we refuted a variety of slanders, including the outright lie by the campus newspaper, the *Chicago Maroon*, that the Spartacus Youth Club "escalated the protest and created a dangerous environment" (24 February). On March 8 over seventy students and U of C faculty stood together in demanding: "Drop all charges against the anti-military recruitment protesters now! Administration hands off! No disciplinary actions!" (see "Drop Charges Against Anti-Military Recruitment Protesters!" WV No. 867, 31 March).

It is a substantial victory that the university was forced to back down from its assault on the free speech rights of students and activists. However, the fight is not over. We recently learned that the university administration is attempting to ban SYC supporter Brian Stapleton from setting foot on campus. We print below an April 29 letter from the Chicago SYC to University of Chicago



April 5: U of C anti-military recruiter protesters and their supporters celebrate outside courthouse after charges were dropped.

vice president Stephen Klass protesting the threatened ban.

* * *

Our supporter, Brian Stapleton, has informed us that he received a letter from you, in your capacity as Vice-President and Dean of Students in the University of Chicago, prohibiting him from entering the campus and any and all university property and threatening him with arrest for criminal trespass should he violate your ban. We note that you do allow him access for medical treatment to the University of Chicago Hospitals but are somewhat puzzled by your concern for

the physical well-being of this twenty-year-old. As you point out this is Brian's punishment for his "disruptive" behavior at the 2/21 demonstration against Marine recruiters on the campus, behavior for which he and three others were arrested by your cops.

Having been forced to drop your charges against the four by the mobilization of those who saw these arrests as an attack on the rights to assemble and protest protected by the U.S. Constitution, you now promise to exert your authority as a landlord against Brian as an outsider (as you are aware there is no similar ban against the three others who were students). This

is an old tactic that was used extensively during the civil rights era, as Northern activists who came to the South to fight against Jim Crow segregation were branded as "outside agitators." This is certainly consistent with the U of C's past practice when it used its landlord status to clear the Hyde Park area of its poor and mostly black tenants while cleansing the area of such social gathering spots where students, to their benefit and pleasure, could mix with those who could impart a certain urban sophistication. Far from acquainting your students with the world, you maintain and seek to enforce their separateness as you train them to be America's leaders.

The most revolting feature of your letter is the ersatz gentility with which you promote your "right" to defend your wards against disruption. Could this be the same U of C that provided its then star economists, Milton Friedman and Arnold Harberger, as advisors to the vicious Chilean military dictatorship of General Pinochet, who now seeks to avoid the courts of Chilean justice that are attempting to prosecute this murderer of thousands of workers and leftists? That you share more than advisors with Pinochet is demonstrated by your assertion of dictatorial powers over who says what and of what, how and where it is said.

We do not acknowledge your assertion of such powers, with respect to Brian or to any others who would exercise their constitutional rights on the U of C or on any university "property" and will do all in our ability to fight such political repression. As a first step, we will circulate this letter and associated materials to all who endorsed our united-front rally that resulted in the charges against the four being dropped and, additionally, seek its publication and availability for a wider audience. You are, perhaps, aware that we call for the nationalization of all private universities under student, worker and faculty control as a democratic measure to provide higher education to all and control to those who, in fact, make up the university. Were this to be realized at the U of C, it would have the additional benefit of allowing residents, particularly those on Chicago's South Side to access the many opportunities available in Hyde Park without the interference of your police-statelet forces. ■

Afghanistan—as protectors of children.

Marxists oppose these puritanical witch hunts by the state, which are the latter-day version of Christian fundamentalist crusades against "sin," but are today dressed in "secular" and even "liberal" and "human rights" garb. A case in point is Labour's proposals to crack down on prostitution which is being marketed as "protecting women from exploitation." The purpose of these morality drives is to regiment the population and to bolster the repressive powers of the state. The state is not a neutral arbiter, but the instrument for the suppression of the exploited by the exploiters. As such it plays a key role in enforcing the oppression of women (and youth) alongside organised religion and the patriarchal family, which remains the central instrument for the subjugation of women under capitalism. The family is critical for the ruling class to pass on its property to "legitimate" heirs and to instil obedience to bourgeois codes of morality.

For Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

In capitalist society, one of the main functions of the family is to impose on the working class the burden of rearing the next generation. In Britain today the shift from an industrial to a service economy has drawn unprecedented num-

bers of women out of the home and into the workforce, where they are often concentrated in the lowest-paid part-time jobs. The dramatic increase in the number of one-parent households has been met with reactionary crusades against "absent" fathers and "lack of role models." This reflects the fact that the nuclear family is expected to play a conservatising role in the upbringing of children. Today the working people, particularly women, face the choice of paying for expensive childcare or staying at home to look after the children and thus living in dire poverty. Either way, working-class parents and children face a climate of constant fear, that every minute of the day "the kids are in danger"—of rape, sexual assault, drug addiction and much more.

The supposed mortal threat to all children has been a central theme of repeated moral crusades of the past decades: the truly bizarre tales of "Satanic ritual abuse" in the 1980s and early 1990s that originated with evangelical Christians in the U.S. and were swallowed by social work departments here; the 1990s scare-mongering over children's homes being "infiltrated" by "organised groups of paedophiles," which led to frame-ups and prosecutions of hundreds of care workers. These puritanical crusades are also the thin end of a wedge stigmatising all those whose sexual behaviour differs from the

presumed "norm" of one man on top of one woman for life. Human sexuality is complex. No amount of state repression or surveillance will change the fact that children do, in fact, develop sexual attractions towards other children and adults, including their teachers.

We seek to win workers, youth and the oppressed to the perspective of building a revolutionary workers party that will fight against all aspects of oppression and state terror, as part of the fight to mobilise the working class to overthrow the capitalist system and to establish societies where

the workers own and control the means of production. The family cannot be abolished. Under socialism, it will be replaced by communal childcare and housework; birth control, abortions and quality health care will be free and available to all and youth will be able to live independently of their parents. Only then will relations between people in all spheres, including sex, be genuinely free and equal, devoid of any economic or social constraints, and in the words of Frederick Engels, there will be "no other motive left except mutual inclination." ■

Spartacus Youth Club Events

CHICAGO

Tuesday, May 16, 7 p.m.
Class: Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!
University of Chicago
106 Cobb Hall
5811 S. Ellis Avenue

Information and readings: (312) 563-0441
or e-mail: chicagospartacist@sbcglobal.net

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

LOS ANGELES

Thursday, May 18, 6 p.m.
Video Showing:
Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!
Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!
Ackerman Union 3508, UCLA

Saturday, May 20, 2 p.m.
Class: The Struggle for Black Liberation: The Key to Socialist Revolution in America
3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215
(near Beverly/Vermont Red Line Station)
Information and readings: (213) 380-8239
or e-mail: slsycla@sbcglobal.net

Black Liberation...

(continued from page 1)

(e.g., Delphi auto parts and General Motors) has actually helped to liquidate workers' hard-won gains. The labor bureaucracy has hamstrung labor's power through its reliance on capitalist politicians and government agencies.

To defeat the capitalists' unrelenting war against workers and minorities requires the forging of a revolutionary workers party that will lead all the exploited and oppressed in the fight for socialist revolution. Such a party can only be built through combatting the structural oppression of the black population, rooted in the very foundations of this capitalist society. We print below a presentation by Spartacist League Central Committee member Don Alexander, edited and abridged for publication, at a Black History Month educational in Chicago on February 25 that also featured a presentation on the fight for freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal. Particularly in light of the massive nationwide mobilizations for immigrant rights on May 1 and before, comrade Alexander's speech serves to illuminate that there will be no effective resistance to the immiseration of American working people with-

repression at every turn for simply trying to survive. Any kind of assistance was thwarted.

The capitalist vultures today are supposedly "rebuilding" New Orleans—by discarding the public education system, bringing in more charter schools, getting rid of the unions and keeping as many black people from returning as possible. This is accompanied by a very conscious attempt to foment racial divisions between black people and Hispanics for the most meager, low-paying jobs. As communists, we denounced the racist atrocity in New Orleans. We called on the multiracial labor movement to fight to win union jobs at union wages, to organize the unorgan-



Ebony

Summer 1965: Protesters march in Bogalusa, Louisiana, for black equality.

out the unity in struggle between the trade unions and the black and Hispanic poor.

* * *

The fight for black freedom is a strategic task for proletarian revolution in the U.S. A class-conscious labor movement under revolutionary leadership must and will take up the fight for black liberation as an inseparable part of the struggle for the emancipation of workers from capitalist exploitation. We say: Finish the Civil War—For black liberation through socialist revolution!

It took a bloody civil war—a social revolution—for black people to be considered persons. There have been centuries of racial oppression in the U.S., and anti-black racism has been central to the maintenance of this capitalist system. There can be no socialist revolution in this country unless the proletariat—the working class—takes up the fight for black liberation, and there can be no liberation of black people short of the overthrow of this racist capitalist system. We fight for the class-struggle program of revolutionary integrationism. This is a fighting program counterposed to liberal integrationism, the false view that blacks can achieve social equality within the confines of racist American capitalism.

Today you see the democratic mask falling from the face of the bloody, hypocritical, lying U.S. ruling class. They torture with impunity. Under their system, black people are expendable. During Hurricane Katrina, poor, mainly black people were allowed to die in New Orleans by this racist capitalist ruling class. Thousands continue to face indescribable immiseration, scattered throughout this country and rendered jobless, homeless and rootless. Hurricane Katrina laid bare the naked reality of racial and class divisions at the heart of this sick society. Black people were met with police intimidation and

ized, to fight against the oppression of black people, and to enlist the victims of Hurricane Katrina in the rebuilding of New Orleans. Instead of blacks against immigrants and vice-versa, we fight for jobs for all, for full citizenship rights for all immigrant workers, and against the bourgeoisie's divide-and-conquer schemes.

Reconstruction and the Betrayal of Black Freedom

The U.S. in its colonial origins was rent by two distinct rival economic systems: black chattel slavery in the South and the so-called "free" labor system in the North. The economic interests of the Southern slaveholder, which required expansion, came into collision with those of Northern capitalists, resulting in bloody civil war. The Civil War was America's second bourgeois revolution, which culminated in the destruction of the Southern slavocracy.

The post-Civil War Reconstruction period, which was brief, was the most democratic, egalitarian period in U.S. history. It brought not only black enfranchisement but other significant democratic reforms. But the Northern capitalists betrayed the promise of black equality, allowing it to be smashed by Ku Klux Klan terror. The Northern capitalists had fought during the war in defense of their property rights, and now the Northern banks sought to exploit the new economic opportunities in the South. The last of the federal troops were pulled out of the South by the Compromise of 1877 and political power was returned to elements of the former slaveholding class.

Intensive exploitation of black agricultural labor, rather than industrial development and capital investment in agriculture, remained the basis of the Southern economy. The rigid system of Jim Crow segregation—that is, race-caste oppression—was the bitter fruit of the defeat of Reconstruction. This corresponded to the

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

Kemp/Charleston Gazette



rise of U.S. imperialism at the end of the 19th century, manifested in particular by the 1898 Spanish-American War, which inaugurated the brutal exploitation of U.S. imperialism's dark-skinned colonial slaves overseas.

The defeat of Reconstruction was not simply the result of internal economic and political factors. There were other powerful factors, including internationally. Just take New York. Manhattan was a city of militant opposition to Reconstruction. Ruled by the pro-Confederate slavocracy Democrats under William Marcy "Boss" Tweed and his corrupt Tammany Hall administration, New York City from late 1865 on was, as historian David Quigley put it, "the Northern capital of anti-Reconstruction activism" (*Second Founding*, 2004).

Class struggle in France haunted the Northern capitalists. In particular, the Paris Commune of 1871 concentrated their minds. New Yorkers of all classes watched with great interest the revolutionary development of the Paris Commune, in which the workers briefly, for the first time in history, set up their own government. Some of the Communards who escaped the mass butchery of the French counter-revolutionaries escaped to New York City, which made the propertied classes, the bourgeoisie, very nervous. Conservative New Yorkers viewed any and all evidence of local working-class unrest through a French lens, finding a wealth of evidence for the rising threat of communism on this side of the Atlantic. E.L. Godkin, the editor of the liberal *Nation* magazine, the same magazine around today, moved from supporting the anti-slavery Republicans and embraced the Democrats. Godkin complained that patriotism was giving way to "a strong class feeling." The capitalists then and now were conscious of their class interests.

Working-Class Rights and Black Rights Must Go Forward Together

Until the substantial entry of blacks into industry during World War I, anti-immigrant and anti-Catholic bigotry were the chief weapons of the rulers in dividing and holding back the working class. Virulent racism against Chinese and Japanese on the West Coast, and the playing off of many ethnic groups against each other in the East—anti-Irish, anti-Italian, anti-Jewish—was the norm.

Poisonous ethnic and racial divisions can be broken down in the course of class struggle. A recent example of this was the

New York transit strike, when the bosses sought to split the workers through racist demagoguery. You all recall that talk about the workers, in a heavily black union, being "thugs." That's what the bosses were saying against the union. Such ethnic divisions have historically impeded the construction of a workers party standing in opposition to both parties of the ruling class. Anti-black racism is the key weapon employed by the capitalist exploiters to divide and hold down the entire working class, and to prevent the working class from becoming what Marx called "a class for itself"—a class fighting to abolish capitalist wage slavery.

Now, many reformists and liberals push so-called "people of color" politics, which indiscriminately lumps together the diverse history and struggles of non-whites in this country. This is what we call a sectoralist perspective, which counsels each sector of the oppressed to mobilize on behalf of its own constituency, appealing to the Democratic Party for a few crumbs. What we fight for is a Leninist vanguard party that is a tribune of the people, that champions the interests of all the oppressed and the exploited.

"People of color" liberalism also negates the centrality of the fight against black oppression, which is a motor force for the fight for proletarian revolution in the U.S. The majority of black people, as a race-caste segregated at the bottom of society, face brutal daily racist subjugation and humiliation, by whatever index of social life one might choose—joblessness, imprisonment, lack of decent integrated housing—in this so-called "democracy," a democracy for the rich.

On the other hand, and crucially, black workers are a strategic part of the proletariat in urban transport, longshore, auto, steel (what remains of some of those industries), and they are the most unionized section of the working class. They form an organic link to the downtrodden ghetto masses who are valuable potential allies in the class struggle against the capitalist rulers. Being strategically located in the economy and facing special oppression, black workers under revolutionary leadership will play a vanguard role in the struggles of the entire U.S. working class. Class-conscious black workers, armed with a revolutionary program, can play a central role in building a multiracial workers party. The capitalist rulers note and fear this, along with their labor lackeys.

Marxists and the U.S. Civil War

The Spartacist League, as a fighting revolutionary Marxist organization, stands in the heroic tradition of the mid 19th-century revolutionary abolitionists John Brown, Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglass; of the founders of scientific socialism, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, and the Bolsheviks under V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky, who led the workers revolution of October 1917 in Russia; and of the German Communists Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht and others.

Karl Marx stated shortly after the Civil War that "Labor cannot emancipate itself in white skin where in the black it is branded." In his pamphlet *Wage-Labor and Capital*, a series of lectures to the German Workingmen's Club in Brussels



Comblair

Communards manning barricade during 1871 Paris Commune, hailed by Marx as the first "working-class government."

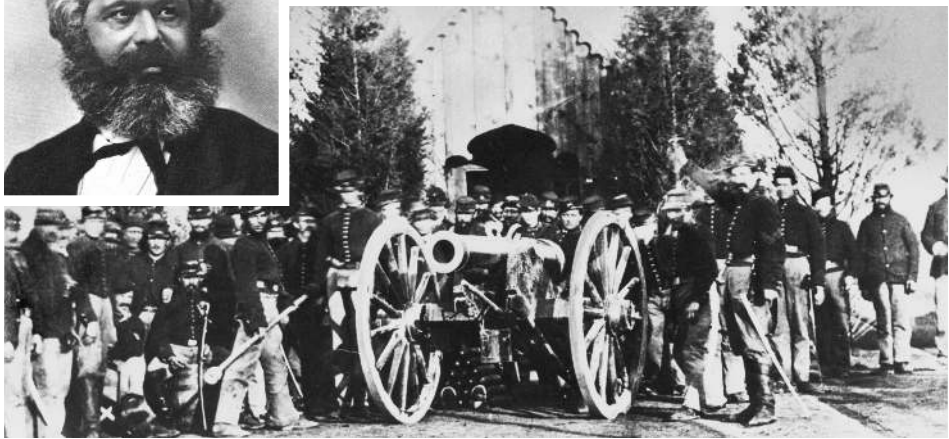
in 1847, Marx sought to throw a historical light on the nature of the black question. He wrote: “What is a Negro slave? A man of the black race. The one explanation is worthy of the other. A Negro is a Negro. Only under certain conditions does he become a slave. A cotton-spinning machine is a machine for spinning cotton. Only under certain conditions does it become *capital*.” He was addressing the material basis of that oppression, which is exactly what we as Marxists seek to do.

Now, in order to win we have to have a program that is revolutionary, proletarian and internationalist. Revolutionary German workers came to the United States following the defeat of the 1848 revolutionary wave in Europe and helped to overthrow slavery. They led regiments in the Union Army. They were animated by revolutionary ideals. Marx and Engels played a key role in winning English weavers and spinners of the cotton industry to the cause of victory for the forces of the Northern army and in impeding the ruling classes in England and France from supporting the Confederacy. These workers in England endured great privations and suffering. But they saw that they had an interest in fighting to get rid of black chattel slavery.

Armed black freedmen, ex-slaves, 200,000-strong in the Union Army and Navy, were powerful instruments that helped smash slavery. They made a huge difference in the war both strategically and symbolically. Frederick Douglass called black enlistment in the ranks of the



German “Red ’48ers,” many of whom were supporters of Karl Marx (inset), enlisted in Union Army to fight Confederate slavocracy in U.S. Civil War.



Karl F. Wunder (inset photo), Americana Image Gallery

home the bankruptcy of conciliating the class enemy. He wrote:

“In civil war, incomparably more than in ordinary war, *politics dominates strategy*. Robert Lee, as an army chieftain, was surely more talented than Grant, but the program of the liquidation of slavery assured victory to Grant. In our three years of civil war [in Russia], the superiority of military art and military technique was often enough on the side of the enemy, but at the very end it was the Bolshevik program that conquered. The worker knew very well what he was fighting for.”

—*The Spanish Revolution* (1931-39) (1973), emphasis in original

Now, whether Lee was more talented or not, we know that it is important to know what you are fighting for. To paraphrase an old African proverb: If you don’t

called “black nation” supposedly situated in the collection of majority black counties in the Deep South that they called the “Black Belt.” This was Stalin’s contribution to the black question. Initially this reactionary line was opposed, especially by some of the leading black Communist Party [CP] cadre. Even the ultra-Stalinist Harry Haywood, the ex-CPer who was a fervent champion of this line, admitted in his autobiography *Black Bolshevik* [1978] that it didn’t go down well. It smelled like segregation.

In spite of this erroneous line, however, in the early 1930s the Communist Party waged an aggressive fight for black rights and equality—against evictions and against rampant police brutality and murder. They organized sharecroppers in the South. They did some very courageous work. This changed with the Stalinists’ embracing of the program of the Popular Front. This program meant subordinating the struggles of blacks and workers to the government of Franklin D. Roosevelt, to the Democratic Party and the capitalist system. It meant opposing the struggle of black people during World War II, and it meant opposing workers’ strikes. It meant supporting the wartime internment of the Japanese. It meant supporting the aims of U.S. imperialism during the second inter-imperialist world war, which was a war for the redivision of the world.

Whatever lack of knowledge Trotsky had on the historical development of black oppression in the U.S. (and he readily acknowledged this), his impulse was to urge revolutionaries to pay special attention to this question. In his 1939 discussions with the Trotskyists in the U.S. at that time, the Socialist Workers Party [SWP], he was particularly concerned that they have a serious orientation to the black question, or they would run the risk of adapting to backward consciousness within the working class. Trotsky stated: “We must say to the conscious elements of the Negroes that they are convoked by the historic development to become a vanguard of the working class.... If it happens that we in the SWP are not able to find the road to this stratum, then we are not worthy at all.”

The SWP, Black Nationalism and the Civil Rights Movement

The SWP waged an aggressive fight for black rights and equality during World War II. That is our tradition. The Socialist Workers Party was heavily involved in

campaigns and struggles against discrimination and segregation. They sought to link the fight for the defense of black rights to the working-class struggle against capitalism. Their interventions were animated by a militant integrationist perspective. They recruited hundreds of black workers and made a significant breakthrough in Detroit. However, as Richard Fraser, the veteran Trotskyist, later noted in his writings, the SWP was politically disoriented. They pushed black workers toward joining the petty-bourgeois, liberal-integrationist and legalistic NAACP, which had grown quite a bit in the post-World War II period.

In 1953, Richard Fraser gave two lectures to the SWP on the black question (reprinted in *In Memoriam—Richard S. Fraser*, Prometheus Research Series No. 3). His main opponent on the black question at that time was George Breitman, who was the principal SWP spokesman for years on this question. Breitman argued that self-determination applied to black people in the U.S.—that is, it was a national question, the right of an oppressed nation to set up its own separate state. Breitman’s program of self-determination was a capitulation to black nationalism. But for the time being, there was no difference between the two lines in terms of the public policy and practical work of the Socialist Workers Party.

Fraser argued that self-determination was being misapplied to American blacks. Unlike the oppression experienced by non-Russian nationalities in tsarist Russia, who were subject to forcible assimilation, the exact *opposite* dynamic was operating in the U.S. That is, the historic tendency of black struggle was for equality, for integration, against segregation and for elementary democratic rights. In Fraser’s powerful 1955 polemic “For the Materialist Conception of the Negro Question” [reprinted in *Marxist Bulletin* No. 5 (revised), “What Strategy for Black Liberation? Trotskyism vs. Black Nationalism”], he cogently argued that black people were not a nation for whom the demand for self-determination applied. There is no economic basis for a separate political economy for black people, a separate mode of production and commodity exchange.

When I first saw his article in 1971, it bothered me a lot: “For the Materialist Conception of the *Negro* Question.” We were kind of literal-minded, and it was out of step with the times. I said, “This is quaint—we are *black* people.” But the comrade who sold it to me argued against the prevalent misconception that the oppression of blacks was a “national question.” So I hung on to the pamphlet. I was under the sway of so-called “revolutionary nationalism,” which was a contradiction in terms, because nationalism is a form of capitalist ideology that presumes a fundamental unity of interests between the workers and the bourgeoisie.

By 1955, the differences within the SWP over the black question were emerging. This was reflected in the debate over the call for federal troops—the armed forces of the federal government—to defend the black masses in the struggle for civil rights in the South. The demand

continued on page 8



Military History Institute

Gun crews of a battery of “Corps d’Afrique” at Port Hudson, Louisiana in 1863. Black soldiers helped turn tide of Civil War, leading to Union victory.

Union Army “the greatest event of our nation’s history, if not the greatest event of the century.” Ulysses S. Grant said, “I have given the subject of arming the Negro my hearty support. This, with the emancipation of the Negro, is the heaviest blow yet given the Confederacy.... By arming the Negro we have added a powerful ally.” It was no accident that many captured black Union soldiers were massacred by the Confederate army.

The black people in Louisiana have a proud history of fighting for freedom. The book *Generations of Captivity* [2003] by Ira Berlin describes an incident during the Civil War when slavery was collapsing. When “the manager of the Magnolia plantation in Southern Louisiana dismissed the slaves’ claim for wages, the slaves erected a gallows within the shadow of the Big House.” When the masters learned the slaves intended to hang them so that “‘they will be free,’ the masters paid up and fled.” The slaves had the Union Army behind them. And today we fight to mobilize the social power of the army of labor behind the fight for black liberation in this country.

Marx and Engels, in their writings on the American Civil War, were critical of the timidity of Lincoln’s Republican Party and its policies of conciliation toward the slaveholders, manifested for example in the role of General George McClellan, who led the Union Army for a period. In 1937, Leon Trotsky, who fought against the politics of class collaboration embodied in the “Popular Front,” raised the example of the American Civil War to drive

know what you are fighting for, any road can take you there.

The Communist International and the Black Question

The early Communist International—the Comintern—under Lenin and Trotsky was assisted by American Communists such as John Reed and also the radical West Indian poet Claude McKay, both of whom provided useful information on the situation of blacks in the U.S.

The revolutionary Trotskyist James P. Cannon eloquently indicated in his very important essay “The Russian Revolution and the American Negro Movement” [*International Socialist Review*, Summer 1959; reprinted in *The First Ten Years of American Communism*, 1962] that the assistance rendered by the Bolsheviks to the early American Communist Party in overcoming its colorblindness on the race question, which was a big defect of the early socialist movement in the United States. The Bolsheviks made the argument that black people in the United States were not just exploited as workers but oppressed as black people. There was racial oppression—special oppression—that had to be combatted as part of mobilizing the working class to fight for power in this country. That was an important contribution, and it was made as a result of the fact that they were thoroughgoing internationalists fighting for world proletarian revolution.

However, in 1928, at the Sixth World Congress of the Stalinized Communist International, there was invented a so-

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\$7.00 (110 pages, includes postage)

Black Liberation...

(continued from page 7)

for federal intervention in Mississippi was raised by the SWP. And Fraser denounced it. By 1957, the SWP supported Republican president Eisenhower's introduction of federal troops into Little Rock, Arkansas, which crushed developing black self-defense efforts. In 1957, an SWP convention passed a resolution, despite some opposition, promoting the myth that the federal troops were on the side of the oppressed, instead of being an instrument of class oppression, reflecting a revision of the Marxist understanding of the bourgeois state.

Fraser had his own tendency within the SWP in 1957, and by 1963 he was in opposition to the majority leadership under Farrell Dobbs. It was known as the Kirk-Kaye tendency, and at the 1963 SWP convention they submitted a resolution upholding the program of revolutionary integrationism. The Revolutionary Tendency, a left-wing opposition within the SWP that was the forerunner of the Spartacist League, supported the resolution while advocating an aggressive communist intervention into the civil rights struggles to take advantage of a time-limited opportunity. The SWP rejected this perspective. [For more on Richard Fraser and his legacy, see the two-part article "Revolutionary Integrationism: The Road to Black Freedom," WV Nos. 864 and 865, 17 February and 3 March].

We have paid an incalculable price for the abstention of the rapidly rightward-moving Socialist Workers Party during the civil rights movement. An entire generation of radicalized black youth, which had gained experience and authority in the Southern civil rights movement, was lost to the revolutionary movement. By 1963 the SWP had explicitly renounced the fight for communist leadership of the black struggle, relegating itself to the role of a "socialist" vanguard of the white working class. The Revolutionary Tendency fought this liquidationist perspective. We fought for the necessity of a Leninist vanguard party. In an August 1963 document, "The Negro Struggle and the Crisis of Leadership," the Revolutionary Tendency wrote:

"The rising upsurge and militancy of the black revolt and the contradictory and confused, groping nature of what is now the left wing in the movement provide the revolutionary vanguard with fertile soil and many opportunities to plant the seeds of revolutionary socialism.... We must consider non-intervention in the crisis of leadership a crime of the worst sort."

Winning over and forging black communist cadre with authority, rooting them in the black working class in the South,

could have changed the course of U.S. and world history. In historical terms, the civil rights movement confronted the unfinished business and tasks of the Civil War.

We raised the need for a Southern-wide Freedom Labor Party as an expression of working-class political independence and the need to mobilize the labor movement to fight for black emancipation. We linked this to other demands, including organizing the unorganized, for a sliding scale of wages and hours to combat unemployment and inflation, for the right of armed self-defense against racist terror, and for a workers' united front against government intervention in the labor movement and against suppression of black struggles. We recognized the need for special organizational forms to win specially oppressed strata to the revolutionary party. So we projected the need for a transitional organization to win over black militants, an organization that would be politically subordinated to, but organizationally independent of, the party and linked to the party through its most conscious cadres. That's why the Labor Black Leagues exist in a few cities, to provide a vehicle for those who want to fight for a class-struggle program for black freedom and for workers revolution.

Ghetto Rebellions and "Black Power"

The liberal-led civil rights movement, embodied in Martin Luther King's "turn the other cheek" pacifism, aimed its strategy at pressuring the racist federal gov-

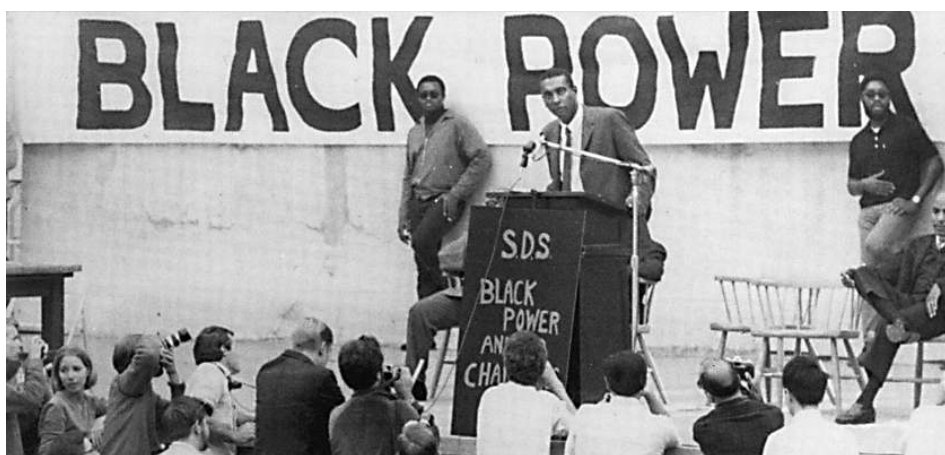


Spartacist

Spartacists at mid 1960s civil rights demonstration in Central Park, New York City.

ernment and the Dixiecrat Democratic Party to fight for black rights. The Democratic Party was an alliance between Northern liberals and the virulently racist Southern Dixiecrats, and this repelled the radicalized black youth. The New Deal-derived labor-black Democratic Party coalition forged under the Roosevelt administration was shattered by the civil rights struggles in the South.

The civil rights movement could not achieve black freedom because its leadership and program were based upon sup-



AP

Berkeley, 1966: Stokely Carmichael, leader of "Black Power" movement, denounces the draft during Vietnam War.

port to the Democrats and the racist capitalist system. When it went North, it had no answers to the burning economic oppression of the black masses, who were permanently consigned to the ghettos, who were the last hired and the first fired, who faced rampant police murder and lower life expectancy. Today's beneficiaries of that struggle, petty-bourgeois "leaders" such as Al Sharpton, Jesse Jackson, Congresswoman Barbara Lee, and ex-Black Panthers such as Congressman Bobby Rush, keep blacks tied to the Democrats and confine their struggles within the framework of capitalism. Anti-Semitic nationalist demagogue Louis Farrakhan offers, as an "alternative" to the bankrupt black "leadership," reactionary, dead-end black capitalist schemes designed to

and clarification, the Spartacist League fought to pose the demand for "black power" in class terms and warned that otherwise it would be a bridge to reconciliation with the Democratic Party and co-optation by what was commonly referred to as "the racist power structure." And man, a lot of militants were being co-opted. We referred to them as "poverty pimps," with these government poverty programs which were basically to cool down the ghetto and keep people in line.

During that period the Spartacist League lacked the numbers and the political authority to influence the agonizing debate and soul-searching that was going on within the ranks of organizations such as SNCC that had broken from mainstream liberalism but had not yet embraced utopian black separatism. The program of black separatism was incapable of generating a program of struggle because it was based upon acquiescence to the racist capitalist status quo and made a virtue of segregation. It propagated the myth that black people, no matter what class they belong to, have the same interests. Then and today there was a third way, an alternative to the program of liberal integrationism and black separatism. And that's the program of revolutionary integrationism—a class-struggle fight for black freedom.

The Black Panthers and the League of Revolutionary Black Workers

In 1966, the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense was formed in Oakland, California. The Panthers were the hegemonic radical black nationalist organization among militant black youth. They were very contradictory. They fought initially to organize independently of the Democrats and Republicans. So-called "revolutionary internationalists," they were a product of the New Left. They viewed the working class as "bought off" and hopelessly backward. In particular, they promulgated the myth of the "lumpen proletariat vanguard"—the brothers on the block, the streetwise black youth—as the revolutionary vanguard of social change in this country.

The Panthers were all over the map politically, eclectic radicals. Their Marxism was kind of a smorgasbord. They heavily borrowed from Mao, guerrilla groups, Stalin, whatever. They were heavily influenced initially by the writings of Frantz Fanon, a supporter of the Algerian National Liberation Front. His *The Wretched of the Earth* [1961] had a powerful impact especially on black radicals. Fanon was the quintessential "Third World" nationalist, who equated the working class in the capitalist countries with their own rulers.

The Panthers argued that black people in the U.S. were a "black colony"—though not of the classic sort, with an imperialist power exploiting non-white masses. This was emotionally seductive and deeply impressionistic. Seductive, because from the standpoint of a ghetto-based political struggle, they could point to an "occupying army," namely the murderous racist police. The "black colony" line was used mainly to justify their nationalist perspective of black people going it alone, independent of the rest of American society—especially the working class. This utopian program of "community control" of impoverished, segregated ghettos was a proven dead end, and it distracted from

exploit the ghetto poor while making a virtue out of the segregation imposed upon the black masses.

The collapse of the civil rights movement led to ghetto upheavals that were violently suppressed by the armed forces of the racist rulers—the cops and National Guard. My awakening corresponded to that. The suppression of the black rebellion in Watts in South-Central Los Angeles in 1965 was supported by Martin Luther King. Watts was the symbol of the angry black ghetto. From 1964 to 1968 there was a series of black ghetto revolts that were leaderless, that expended a lot of energy with very few results. There was an acutely felt sense that the civil rights movement did not and could not address the burning needs of the masses. It was the case that its legalistic program brought the legal and social structure of the South in alignment with the rest of the country. But it could not get rid of black oppression short of mobilizing to get rid of capitalism.

The failure of the labor movement to mobilize its social power in support of black democratic rights fed the development of a separatist mood expressing despair at the possibility of waging an integrated struggle for black freedom. When ex-civil rights activist John L. Lewis, who is now a Democratic Party Congressman from Georgia, tried to put in his speech at the 1963 March on Washington language expressing criticism of the Democratic Party, the labor faker and United Auto Workers head Walter Reuther and the various other Democratic Party bigwigs muzzled him.

By 1966, civil rights organizations such as the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee [SNCC] came out for "black power," which shocked the liberal establishment. After some internal struggle

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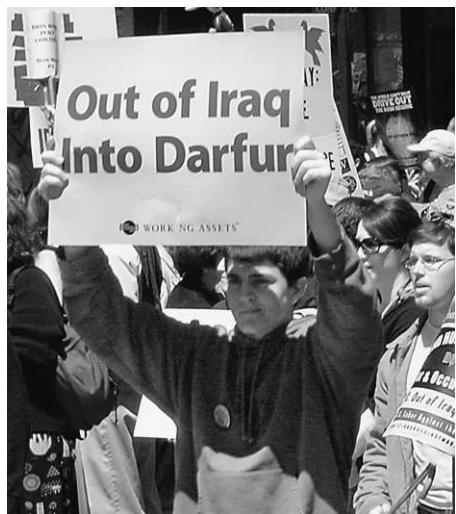
Darfur...

(continued from page 1)

carnage and devastation. However, as we underlined in “Imperialist Crimes in Rwanda and Sudan” (WV No. 845, 1 April 2005), regarding calls for imperialist intervention into Sudan: “There is profound anger and desperation over these tragedies, *but this anger is being manipulated in defense of forces who are profoundly culpable.*”

An article in the liberal *In These Times* (16 February 2005) by Eric Reeves complains, “Without robust humanitarian intervention...Khartoum’s genocide in Darfur will continue.” It is grotesque to uphold the U.S.—which is today carrying out bloody occupations in Iraq and Afghanistan and threatening missile strikes, possibly a nuclear attack, against Iran—as the instrument for a “civilizing mission” in Africa. In fact, the Bush administration is clearly not eager to send U.S. troops to Darfur. U.S. envoys were instrumental in getting Sudanese officials and the main rebel faction in Darfur to agree to a “peace deal” earlier this month, though two other rebel factions have rejected the deal. What the liberals calling for U.S. intervention into Darfur want is a return to the Clinton-style “humanitarian” interventions of the 1990s.

The racist U.S. rulers, who left the black people of New Orleans to die, will not intervene to help black people in Africa. Recall the U.S.-led UN intervention to “help” starving Somalia. In November 1992, the lame duck Bush Sr. administration sent 30,000 U.S. troops to Somalia, supposedly to help distribute food and other relief supplies. Under the Democratic Clinton administration,



WV Photo

Demonstrator calls for imperialist intervention into Darfur at April 29 protest against Iraq occupation, New York City.

“Operation Restore Hope” was expanded. Somalis were bullied, shot at roadblocks, and massacred when they resisted the occupiers. In a battle in Mogadishu in October 1993, at least 1,000 Somalis were slaughtered. The deaths of 18 soldiers there led to an outcry in the U.S., and in 1994 the Clinton administration withdrew American troops from Somalia.

Clinton’s next bloody wars around the globe included the 1994 invasion and five-year occupation of black Haiti and the 1999 U.S./NATO war against Serbia, carried out in the name of stopping “ethnic cleansing” in Kosovo. These wars were widely supported by liberals who sought to bolster the “human rights” credentials of the U.S. The face of “human rights” imperialism was also bloodily expressed in Clinton’s aerial bombings of Sudan and Afghanistan in 1998 for supposedly harboring Al Qaeda terrorists. Clinton’s act of terror against Sudan killed dozens of people and destroyed the country’s only pharmaceutical factory. The U.S.-enforced UN starvation sanctions against Iraq, carried out overwhelmingly under the Clinton regime, killed some 1.5 million people, far more than have died since the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

The imperialist powers that dominate the UN, which are now beseeched to bring “peace” to Darfur, are the very same forces that have bled, starved and exploited Africa. Britain, France, Belgium and other European powers carved up Africa to suit their interests, drawing the boundaries to divide and set populations against each other. Britain, which colonized Sudan in the 19th century, pitted its northern and southern regions against each other, setting the stage for the civil wars that have ravaged the country since independence in 1956.

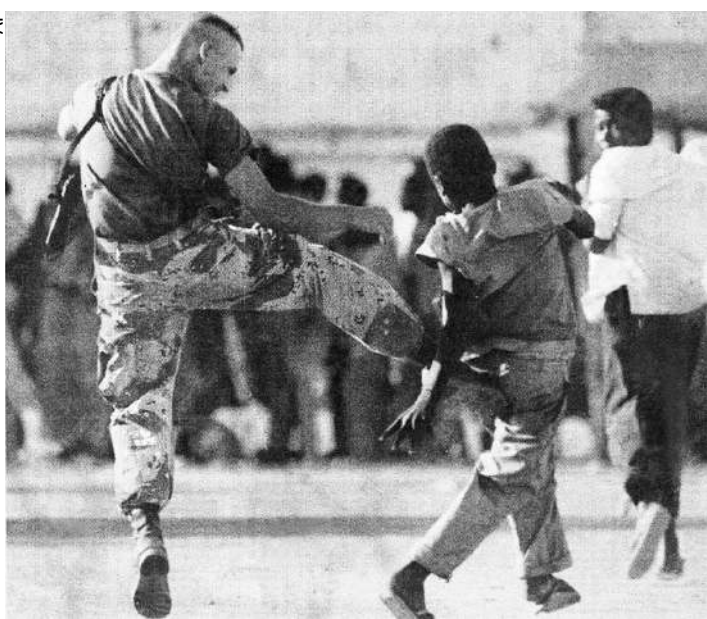
In his classic work *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, written in 1916 amid the slaughter of World War I, Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin laid out that imperialism is the stage of capitalism in its decay, where massive military force is used to “settle” the inevitable economic rivalries between major capitalist states. These rivalries throw humanity into interimperialist world wars of massive devastation, such as the First and Second World Wars. The drive to control markets and spheres of exploitation also leads to predatory wars by imperialists against colonial and semicolonial countries.

Rhetoric about “humanitarianism” notwithstanding, foreign intervention by the U.S. and other imperialists is driven by what best promotes the interests of the imperialist rulers. Indeed, the main criticism of the Bush administration by the Democrats is that its war-crazed, “unilateral” actions have hurt U.S. imperialism’s abilities to pursue its interests. The *In*

stants traveling in the region. At one conference in Kuwait I met John Watson, a leader of the Detroit-based League of Revolutionary Black Workers. He was there to show their film on the struggles of black auto workers in Detroit, *Finally Got the News*. Watson was interesting, he was smart, he was articulate, he was serious—he was a little older than myself. We met again. We had a long discussion on our respective political histories, and on the struggle for Palestinian national liberation, which black radicals were especially interested in then.

What was running through my head was, how could I interest him in the SWP? At the time I thought it was revolutionary and Trotskyist. Well, he knew more about the SWP than I did. He told me that he once had a lot of respect for the SWP and that he and black militant friends of his had regularly attended their Militant forums, but eventually they decided that they needed to form their own “black revolutionary party.” The SWP was chasing the pacifist preachers and the black nationalists simultaneously because they had already given up on fighting for a revolutionary working-class program. The SWP offered them a separate black party, so they concluded: Why hang around the SWP? Why not form their own

AP
U.S. soldier in Somalia, 1992. U.S./UN “humanitarian” intervention, escalated under Democrat Clinton, meant racist imperialist terror.



These Times article urging Western intervention in Sudan laments: “The war in Iraq continues to take its toll on U.S. efforts to act effectively within the United Nations—efforts that have been hobbled by the profligate squandering of diplomatic capital.”

Behind the campaign for U.S. intervention in Darfur is an unholy alliance of liberal forces and a sinister cabal of Zionist and Christian fundamentalist groupings, such as the National Association of Evangelicals. These forces reduce the complex conflict in western Sudan to “Arabs” oppressing “Africans” in order to whip up anti-Arab and anti-Muslim chauvinism, which has greatly intensified since the launching of the reactionary “war on terror” after the September 11 attacks.

One of the most prominent figures in the Darfur protest movement is one Charles Jacobs, who for years has been central in pushing universities to divest from companies doing business in Sudan. Jacobs is also president of the Zionist outfit the David Project that was the force behind the 2004 video, “Columbia Unbecoming,” which launched a witch-hunt against pro-Palestinian rights professors at Columbia University, particularly targeting Professor Joseph Massad (see “Defend Columbia Professor Joseph Massad! Down With Zionist Witchhunt on Campus!” WV No. 837, 26 November 2004).

A component of this movement’s attempt to uphold U.S. imperialism as the champion of global “democracy” and “peace” is to hold the Chinese deformed workers state responsible for the carnage in Sudan. The campus divestment movement in fact got started in October 2004 when Harvard announced it had invested in the state-owned Chinese oil company, PetroChina, which has interests in Sudan.

Following a public outcry, Harvard sold its stake, and at least eight other campuses have followed suit, including the University of California system, Yale, Stanford and Brown. Divestment measures have also been passed by city and state governments, including Illinois, New Jersey, and Oregon, and further legislation is pending.

As Trotskyists, we stand for the unconditional military defense of the Chinese deformed workers state, where capitalist rule was overthrown by the 1949 social revolution. In contrast, in February 2005 the supposed Trotskyists of Socialist Alternative (SAlt) co-signed a leaflet by the “Coalition for an Anti-Sexist Harvard” that demanded that “Harvard support justice and human rights campaigns by divesting from corporations like Unocal and PetroChina.” The campaign against PetroChina is an anti-Communist campaign that predates the atrocities in Darfur. By signing on to it, SAlt joined with forces that are exploiting outrage over Sudan to push for capitalist counterrevolution in China.

Ending the hideous oppression in Africa will take a series of workers revolutions, in the imperialist countries as well as in key proletarian centers on the continent—in northern Africa and the industrial powerhouse of South Africa. American capitalism was built by bleeding the labor of African slaves. Today, it is the multiracial American proletariat that has the social power and the interest to bring down the U.S. imperialist beast through socialist revolution. It is necessary to build an internationalist, revolutionary workers party that fights on behalf of all the oppressed to build a socialist society in which today’s horrors will become a distant memory. *No to U.S./UN imperialist intervention! U.S. hands off the world! ■*

the fight for workers revolution to liberate all of the oppressed and exploited.

In 1971 there was a split in the Panthers between the pro-Democratic Party Huey Newton wing and the self-proclaimed “urban guerrillaist” (mainly on paper) Eldridge Cleaver wing. This was accompanied by internecine bloodletting fanned by the flames of FBI COINTELPRO provocation. Despite the Black Panthers’ penchant for physical attacks against other leftist critics, including Progressive Labor and ourselves, we defended them against bloody state repression. We raised our criticisms of their program and fought to win the best elements to a revolutionary proletarian perspective. You can see how we intervened in our article “Rise and Fall of the Black Panthers: End of the Black Power Era,” reprinted in *Marxist Bulletin* No. 5.

The League for Revolutionary Black Workers was another radical black nationalist organization on the scene. In 1970-71, I was studying abroad in Beirut. I was a member of the YSA (the SWP’s youth group, the Young Socialist Alliance) and SWP and wrote some reports on the plight of the Palestinians for the SWP. The Black Panther Party leadership, mainly the New York Panthers, was in exile in Algiers and there were other black mili-

party? Which is exactly what they did. And program is key. When we say program is primary, it’s not an abstraction. It determines where you’re going, what you’re fighting for. I’ve thought a lot about what it would have meant to have won such militants to the Spartacist League and to our Trotskyist program.

The League was a radical nationalist workerist organization, but they rejected common struggle with white workers, and they lumped white workers together with the white racist rulers and the racist trade-union bureaucracy. This was a fatal error that sealed their doom. When they split in 1971, a wing of them coalesced around the “radical” lawyer Ken Cockrel, who went into the Democratic Party. The other wing around General Baker and Luke Tripp went into a hard Stalinist group called the Communist Labor Party, which had some influence among militant black auto workers. Now if you claim a “working-class orientation” but you argue that the white population is a single reactionary mass and refuse to give white workers leaflets—which they did—then the bourgeoisie wins and the proletariat loses.

There is no substitute for building a Leninist vanguard party that fights against all social oppression, modeled on the

Bolshevik Party under Lenin and Trotsky that made the only successful workers revolution in history. There is no substitute for studying genuine Marxism, that is, Trotskyism, the Marxism of our time. It is the indispensable weapon in the struggle for a communist future for humanity. ■

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**Free Mumia Abu-Jamal Now!
Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!**

Black Journalist Herb Boyd: Rally for Mumia's Freedom!

WV received the following letter, dated April 25, from Herb Boyd, managing editor of *The Black World Today* (www.tbwt.org). The letter was sent to various individuals and organizations and was edited for publication here with the permission of the author.

A number of pertinent questions were raised at a recent forum on hip hop culture conducted by Professor Cornel West at the Schomburg Center in Harlem. None of the questions or comments, however, resonated with as much political conviction as the one posed by Don Alexander, a member of the Partisan Defense Committee.

Alexander very passionately alerted the audience to the urgency of dealing with the plight of Mumia Abu-Jamal. He pressed the importance of mobilizing immediately in order to galvanize support for Mumia who faces the possibility of execution for a crime he did not commit.

Like Alexander, I believe the confession of Arnold Beverly, who admitted that he was the person who shot and killed the police officer that fateful morning nearly a quarter of a century

ago, a murder for which Mumia was convicted and has been languishing on death row these many years.

The execution of Tookie Williams a few months ago was a warning to all justice-seeking people that the state is preparing to take Mumia from us in the same way. In general, I oppose the death penalty, and in the case of Mumia, who has been a voice for the voiceless, an execution would be doubly painful and unforgivable.

Let this letter join the hundreds being written and the thousands now assembling in a mass protest of this miscarriage of justice.

It is time now for all freedom-loving people to rally like we used to when our precious liberties were threatened, time to mobilize as we did during the Vietnam era, to stop the senseless murder of innocent people.

To murder Mumia would be akin to losing a Malcolm, a King, an Ella Baker, a Geronimo, a Che, a Lumumba. We must salvage his life knowing that if they come for him in the morning, they will come for us in the evening. ■

Mumia...

(continued from page 12)

author Richard Wright and coordinator of the International Committee in Solidarity with Mumia Abu-Jamal and Political Prisoners, Paris; and Leslie Jones from the Youth for Mumia and the ICFMAJ. Also present at the event were our comrades of the Ligue Trotskyste de France, section of the International Communist League, who for years have played a key role in bringing Mumia's case to broader forces in that country. Mumia sent a note of thanks and solidarity to the gathering.

Ramona Africa, who spent seven years in prison for the "crime" of being the only adult survivor of the government's 1985 bombing of Philadelphia MOVE (see "Remember May 1985 MOVE Massacre," this page), powerfully spoke of the government's vendetta against MOVE and Mumia: "The government murdered my family but nobody went to prison for

it except me. Nobody sits on death row for burning babies alive. But they want to convince you that Mumia is a murderer and that he should be executed. Mumia is innocent."

In the U.S., the death penalty is a legacy of black chattel slavery and represents the pinnacle of state terror. Though in France the death penalty has been abolished, minorities, particularly those of North and West African descent, face daily police brutality and racist discrimination, a legacy of French colonialism. As Wolkenstein stated, minority youth in France "are stigmatized as potential 'Islamic terrorists,' 'casseurs' [hooligans—a racist codeword] and 'anti-Semites'. When young people revolted in the *banlieues* [suburban minority ghettos] last fall, the workers movement should have taken up their cause. They should be freed, granted amnesty and all charges dropped!"

In her speech at Saint-Denis, Wolkenstein emphasized: "A labor-centered campaign on Mumia's behalf must be built on the principle of political independence of

the working class from the capitalist class enemy and its state. In the U.S., just as the so-called 'war on terror' is supported by both major parties of capitalism, Democrats and Republicans, Mumia is in all their gun sights. In France, that means no illusions in a new Popular Front." This was a warning against the attempts in France by the PCF, the Socialist Party and several small bourgeois parties—such as the Chevènementistes, the Left Radicals and the Greens—to form a new popular-front capitalist government, disarming the working class by tying it to the class enemy.

It is crucial that Mumia's fight be taken up internationally. A week before the Saint-Denis event, a French delegation from the PCF and CGT trade-union federation participated in a meeting in Philadelphia for Mumia's defense. Earlier this year, a coalition including the PCF, the CGT, and other labor, anti-racist and left groups launched a drive to raise 100,000 euros (close to \$130,000) for Mumia's defense. And in Mexico City on May Day, a

comrade from the ICL section Grupo Espartaquista de México addressed a rally of some 15,000 people sponsored by the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN), calling on Mexican workers and youth to join the campaign for Mumia.

The key to Mumia's freedom lies in the social power of labor. In her speech, Wolkenstein referred to the fact that France was rocked this spring by two months of massive protests, involving student youth and workers, and strikes against the hated First Employment Contract, forcing the government to back down. This is the kind of social power that must be mobilized behind Mumia's cause! As Wolkenstein stated: "That Mumia is innocent is the truth. That the capitalist state has spent decades putting its lying, corrupt class- and race-biased forces to work to see Mumia dead is also the truth. But we need to use these truths and bring out more power, social power, to fight for Mumia's freedom." **Free Mumia now! Abolish the racist death penalty!** ■

Remember May 1985 MOVE Massacre

"Attention MOVE. This is America." That was the ultimatum issued over a cop bullhorn on 13 May 1985. Soon after, the Philadelphia police, working together with the FBI and BATF (Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms), dropped high-powered explosives onto the MOVE commune. When MOVE members attempted to escape the ensuing fire, hundreds of heavily armed cops drove them back into the inferno under a hail of gunfire. Eleven black people, among them five children, were slaughtered. The fire was deliberately allowed to rage for five hours, reducing the entire neighborhood to smoldering rubble and leaving hundreds homeless.

The firebombing, ordered by Democratic mayor Wilson Goode and orchestrated by the Feds, was the culmination of years of harassment, beatings, arrests and police assaults against MOVE, a largely black, radical back-to-nature collective. It was also meant as a message to those who might "get out of line." Ed Meese,

**Bombing of
Philadelphia
MOVE home
killed eleven
people,
including five
children, and
destroyed entire
black
neighborhood.**

Republican president Ronald Reagan's attorney general, cited this state terrorism as a "good example" for other police to follow. Unlike much of the left, the Spar-

tacist League protested this heinous massacre at the time, describing it as "the signature of the Reagan years" and vowing to sear the atrocity into the memory of

the working class.

Not one of the government officials behind this monstrous crime was ever penalized, much less jailed. But Ramona Africa served seven years in prison for the "crime" of being the sole adult survivor. To this day, eight MOVE members still languish in prison, falsely convicted of killing a police officer who died from the cops' own crossfire during a 1978 police assault on MOVE's former home in Powelton Village. It was in the wake of his courageous defense of these MOVE prisoners that Mumia Abu-Jamal was framed up and sentenced to death in 1982. The Partisan Defense Committee, a legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League, sends monthly stipends to the eight MOVE prisoners, as well as Mumia, as an expression of solidarity with those imprisoned for standing up to racist capitalist repression.

Free the MOVE prisoners! Free Mumia! The American workers revolution will avenge the MOVE martyrs!



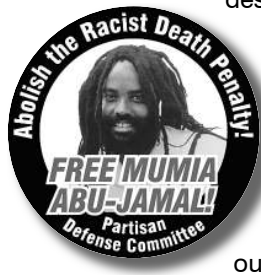
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Funds are urgently needed for legal defense!

Make a contribution today, payable to "National Lawyers Guild Foundation" (earmarked for "Mumia") and mail to: Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal, 130 Morningside Drive, Suite 6C, New York, NY 10027.

Organize protest! Pass motions in your unions, campus, community and religious organizations demanding Mumia's freedom. Get your union or organization to make a contribution and join rallies and protests for Mumia. Publicize Mumia's case in your union or organization's newsletter.

Spread the word! Contact the PDC for copies of our pamphlet, *Mumia Abu-Jamal Is an Innocent Man!* This 32-page pamphlet arms activists in the struggle for Mumia's freedom with the explosive evidence which completely destroys the more than two-decades-long frame-up of this eloquent fighter for black freedom. It is available for 50 cents. Get the PDC button: "Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!"—\$1 each. Order the PDC video, *From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal*—\$10 for DVD, \$15 for VHS. Bundles of the 4-page brochure, *Mumia Is an Innocent Man: Free Mumia Abu-Jamal*—\$2 for 25 copies. Order from, make checks payable to Partisan Defense Committee at our New York City address below.



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Show Trial...

(continued from page 12)

are reprehensible, but the government had not one shred of evidence that he was involved in the September 11 attacks. The fact that the government will put him away for life on the basis of lies and manipulation will only serve to reinforce its assaults on the democratic rights of the entire population.

Deprivation of Moussaoui's rights and dirty tricks by the prosecutors pervaded the case. According to the government's indictment, Moussaoui deserved to die because "while being interviewed by federal agents in Minneapolis," he "attempted to explain his presence in the United States by falsely stating that he was simply interested in learning to fly." The Feds ludicrously claimed that without this diversion they could have prevented the September 11 attacks. As Elaine Cassel, a Virginia lawyer and author of *The War on Civil Liberties: How Bush and Ashcroft Have Dismantled the Bill of Rights*, pointed out in *CounterPunch* (7 April): "The problem with this argument, though, is that like all those facing custodial government questioning, Moussaoui had the Fifth Amendment right to remain silent." Cassel added that Moussaoui was facing death "for his silence, through which he exercised a constitutional right."

In 2004, a federal appeals court upheld the government's refusal to allow Moussaoui to question Al Qaeda leaders in U.S. custody who would provide evidence that he had nothing to do with September 11—a clear violation of Moussaoui's Sixth Amendment right to present witnesses on his behalf. After the Supreme Court refused to consider his appeal, Moussaoui entered his guilty plea.

The fact that Moussaoui was sitting in a Minnesota jail on 11 September 2001 meant little to the prosecutors, who based their case entirely on conspiracy charges. Historically, conspiracy law has been used to nail anyone the government wants to silence yet can't charge with a single demonstrable criminal act—organizing against slavery was "conspiratorial," and labor unions used to be considered illegal conspiracies in this country.

An important historical example that comes from Britain was the case of Derek Bentley. Bentley and a younger friend broke into a warehouse in 1952. When the police arrived, they managed to arrest Bentley but not his friend, Christopher Craig, who opened fire. One

of the cops was killed. Prosecutors could not hang Craig because he was under 18. Even though Bentley was in police custody when the cop was killed, both were charged with the murder, with the cops claiming that Bentley egged on Craig to shoot the police officer. Bentley was hanged in 1953. The case would go on to play a notable role in the abolition of the death penalty in Britain in 1965.



Guantánamo detainee being taken for interrogation by U.S. torturers.

Though labeling Moussaoui the "20th hijacker," the government has never produced anything linking him to the September 11 hijackings—no witness, no evidence that he ever met the plot's purported leader, Mohammed Atta, or any other hijacker, or that he even had any communications with them. French intelligence, which had been watching Moussaoui for some time, as well as numerous unnamed U.S. government officials confirmed that Moussaoui had nothing to do with September 11. In videotaped statements, other Al Qaeda members recalled Moussaoui as so incompetent that Osama bin Laden would never have trusted him with anything. The September 11 commission set up to investigate the government's "intelligence failures" concluded that Moussaoui had no direct involvement in the attacks.

One juror told the *Washington Post* that he and others questioned whether "the death penalty is an appropriate punishment for lying." It certainly isn't a basis for a life in prison either. Moussaoui will be confined to the super-maximum security prison at Florence, Colorado, one of the "control units" which came into use in the 1970s to isolate those deemed "dangerous," among them leftist political prisoners. Writing some time ago, class-war prisoner Ray Luc Levasseur of the Ohio 7 described his experience at the

prison: "Lock yourself in your bathroom for four years and tell me how it affects your mind." For all the bourgeoisie's talk about Constitutional protection against cruel and unusual punishment, such maximum security prisons are designed to be cruel and unusual.

We pointed out from the outset of the "war on terror" that while initially directed against immigrants from Muslim

backgrounds, the government's repressive measures threatened a qualitative diminution of democratic rights and would target perceived opponents of government policy, black people, leftists and, ultimately, the labor movement. Those currently being investigated for "terrorism" include black radicals, anarchists, animal rights activists, antiwar groups and proponents of Puerto Rican independence, as well as numerous people from predominantly Muslim countries.

At the core of the USA Patriot Act and other repressive measures enacted in the wake of September 11 are definitions of "terrorism" and "material support to terrorism" that are broad enough to encompass anyone whose political views put them afoul of the madmen running this country. In a *New York Times* (7 May) op-ed piece about previous sedition laws that have been used to criminalize criticism of the government (many enacted in reaction to the 1917 Russian Revolution), Adam Liptak points out that there are "echoes of earlier sedition charges in some terrorism charges today," and quotes law professor David Cole: "Sedition laws and the material support laws are all designed to serve the same purpose: to give the government incredible discretion to go after people without proving they took part in any criminal or violent act." This is seen in the vendetta against leftist attorney Lynne

Stewart, who faces 20 years in prison on frame-up conspiracy charges for her vigilant defense of her client, Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman, who is serving a life sentence for conspiracy to blow up New York City-area landmarks.

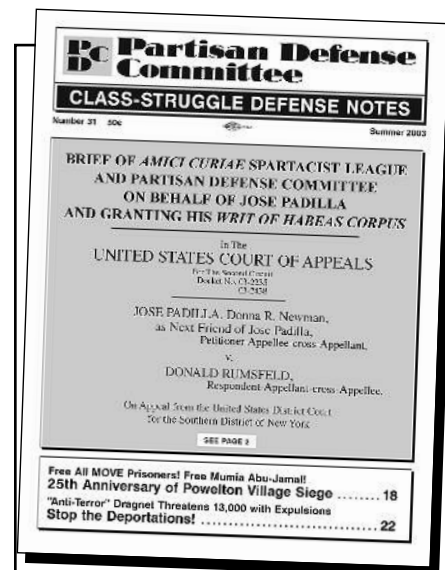
That the Democratic Party and its liberal mouthpieces share the aims of the Bush administration's "war on terror" can be seen in their responses to the Moussaoui trial. In a 4 May editorial, "Due Process," the *New York Times* cites the Moussaoui trial as the way to deal with "terror threats," calling it, "fair and in accordance with the rules of American justice." Writing in the radical-liberal *CounterPunch* (18 February), Elaine Cassel, a critic of the administration, stated of Moussaoui: "He's a dangerous man who should be locked up—a sworn enemy to the United States. Indeed, enemy combatant status which would keep him locked up in military custody until the end of the war on terrorism would be appropriate."

The Democrats have endorsed nearly every repressive measure implemented by the Bush administration and put themselves forward as more capable enforcers of the "war on terror." In anticipation of recapturing control of the House of Representatives in November's elections, the Democrats have already announced plans to fully implement the recommendations of the September 11 commission to shore up "homeland security." To get a picture of what this portends, the Bush administration announced last month that it will start conducting background checks on some 400,000 port workers—a frontal assault on labor—taking up a longstanding complaint of the Democrats that the administration hasn't done enough to "secure" the ports.

As the U.S. imperialist rulers terrorize countries in the name of bringing them "democracy," at home they are implementing the sorts of measures normally associated with the military dictatorships propped up by Washington around the globe—torture, unlimited detention, "disappearing" those who run afoul of the government. As Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin explained in *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* (1918):

"There is not a single state, however democratic, which has no loopholes or reservations in its constitution guaranteeing the bourgeoisie the possibility of dispatching troops against the workers, of proclaiming martial law, and so forth, in case of a 'violation of public order,' and actually in case the exploited class 'violates' its position of slavery and tries to behave in a non-slavish manner."

The U.S. capitalist rulers have long sought these repressive measures, which the Bush administration seeks to inscribe as permanent features of the "justice" system. It is crucial that the labor movement mobilize in struggle against the government's assaults on civil liberties. Short of the overthrow of capitalist rule, none of the rights that working people fought for are secure. What's needed is a thoroughgoing socialist revolution led by a multiracial workers party to sweep away the brutal bourgeois order and establish in its place the rule of the working class. ■



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Build the Campaign to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!

Mumia Honored in France

On April 29, the city government of Saint-Denis, a suburb of Paris, named a new street in honor of class-war prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. Some 150 people attended the dedication ceremony, held a few steps from Nelson Mandela Stadium. The French Communist Party (PCF) city mayor, Didier Paillard, hailed Mumia for becoming “a symbol of the fight for justice.” Patrick Braouezec, PCF member of Parliament and president of the group of towns that includes Saint-Denis, said, “We in Saint-Denis wished to find an event which would allow us to salute the fight led by Mumia in prison, not just for him but for all those today who are on death row and who have been condemned to death.”

The fight to free Mumia, America’s foremost class-war prisoner, has reached a critical turning point. His legal case has been put on the “fast track” by the Third Circuit federal appeals court and decisions that will put his life in the balance could be made within months. At the event in Saint-Denis, Rachel Wolkenstein, Partisan Defense Committee counsel and a former member of Mumia’s legal team, emphasized: “The cops, prosecutors and the entire so-called ‘criminal justice system’ have colluded to kill Mumia for the crime of being an eloquent and effective critic of racist oppression, for being a former Black Panther Party member, and for being a MOVE supporter. In Mumia, the U.S. government sees the spectre of black revolution.”

Mumia Abu-Jamal was framed up and sent to death row, falsely charged with killing Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner in 1981. Shredding their own precedents, court after court has rubber-stamped the wholesale trampling of Mumia’s rights at his 1982 sham trial. The courts have barred proof of Mumia’s innocence, including the *sworn confession* of Arnold Beverly that he—not

Mumia—shot and killed Faulkner. In fact, in the current round of court hearings, Mumia is barred from presenting evidence that he had nothing to do with Faulkner’s killing. Mumia’s opening brief, due July 13, is limited by the courts to three issues: the D.A.’s racist jury selection that kept blacks off the jury in Mumia’s 1982 trial; the D.A.’s prejudicial closing argument stating that the jury

should convict because Mumia would get “appeal after appeal”; and the grossly biased state post-conviction hearings before the notorious hanging judge Albert Sabo, who presided over the original trial.

Wolkenstein was invited to address the Saint-Denis gathering to speak on the Beverly confession and other evidence that proves Mumia’s innocence. Referring to the current legal proceedings, she

warned, “We cannot be lulled by the fact that the courts have agreed to hear legal issues which could lead to a new trial or new appeals proceedings. It is necessary and urgent, now more than ever, for there to be a mass mobilization based on the power of labor. The rallying cry for this movement must be to free Mumia now! That Mumia is an innocent man—that the frame-up was racist and political.” This is a vital point in the fight for Mumia’s cause. The international mass movement that stayed the executioner’s hand after a death warrant was signed in 1995 has since been demobilized, not least by the reformist left and liberals who subordinated the fight for Mumia’s freedom to the call for a “new trial.” These groups promoted the illusion that the very same courts that have kept Mumia on death row for 24 years could give him justice.

In an interview printed in the PCF’s daily newspaper, *L’Humanité* (25 April), Mumia himself said, regarding the current court hearings: “I have very little hope in a favorable decision from the Federal Court which has accepted to look at three points of the petition submitted to appeal by my lawyers.” As Wolkenstein underlined in her speech: “We must place all our faith in the power of the masses. It is that power, centered on the power of labor to shut down the workings of this system, which can free Mumia now. The courts will provide justice for Mumia only when faced with the determination of that power.”

Other speakers at the Saint-Denis event included Robert Bryan, Mumia’s attorney; Pam Africa and Ramona Africa of the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal (ICFFMAJ); Julia Wright, daughter of
continued on page 10



Rachel Wolkenstein of the Partisan Defense Committee speaking at inauguration of street named in honor of Mumia Abu-Jamal in Paris suburb of Saint-Denis, 29 April.



Le Bolchévik photos

Moussaoui Case: 9/11 Show Trial

MAY 9—Last week a federal jury stunned the government when it announced, after seven days of deliberation in the trial of Zacarias Moussaoui: “We the jury, do not unanimously find that a sentence of death should be imposed on the defendant.” Rejecting the prosecutors’ bloodthirsty pleas, the jury sentenced Moussaoui to life in prison. As opponents of the racist death penalty, we welcome this rebuff to the government. At the same time, we recognize that from beginning to end the detention and trial of Zacarias Moussaoui was a mockery of justice—a September 11 show trial aimed at furthering the capitalist rulers’ crusade against civil liberties in the name of the “war on terror.”

Arrested and imprisoned on immigration charges while attending a Minnesota flight school in August 2001, Moussaoui was charged four months later with six conspiracy counts related to the September

11 attacks. Deviating from their usual script, in which untold numbers are held and tortured in secret prisons around the world and hundreds are confined without charge as “enemy combatants” at the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo, Bush & Co. staged a public trial. They sought to exploit the unstable Moussaoui and passions for revenge for the September 11 attacks to get a slam dunk conviction. In April 2005, Moussaoui pleaded guilty to conspiring with Al Qaeda to fly planes into U.S. buildings and to training to fly a plane into the White House in a later attack, while also insisting he had nothing to do with September 11. This set the stage for the trial to determine whether he’d receive the death sentence or life in prison. On the stand, contradicting his prior statements, the mentally unhinged Moussaoui claimed he was part of the September 11 plot. After he was sentenced to life, on May 8 Moussaoui’s

lawyers announced that they filed a motion to withdraw his guilty plea, and Moussaoui now says he had nothing to do with September 11.

Throughout the trial, the government pulled out all the stops to see Moussaoui killed. This included parading on the witness stand relatives of those who were killed in the September 11 attacks. Yet several of the relatives made clear that they did not want Moussaoui to die. On 11 September 2001, two civilian airliners were crashed into the World Trade Center, another hit the Pentagon and a fourth was brought down by its passengers in a Pennsylvania field. The attack on the World Trade Center was indeed a criminal act of terrorism that murdered nearly 3,000 everyday working people. However, unlike the World Trade Center, the Pentagon is the command and administrative center of the U.S. imperialist military, and being a military installation,

the possibility of getting hit comes with the territory. That recognition does not make the attack on the Pentagon an “anti-imperialist” act, nor does it change the fact that terrorism almost always gets innocent people—in this case, the passengers on the plane as well as the maintenance workers, janitors and secretaries at the Pentagon.

In the Spartacist League’s initial statement on the World Trade Center attack, issued on 12 September 2001 (see WV No. 764, 14 September 2001), we warned: “The ruling parties—Democrats and Republicans—are all too eager to be able to wield the bodies of those who were killed and wounded in order to reinforce capitalist class rule” and the “arsenal of domestic state repression against all the working people.” And that is what has happened with the Moussaoui case. Moussaoui’s bloodthirsty views
continued on page 11