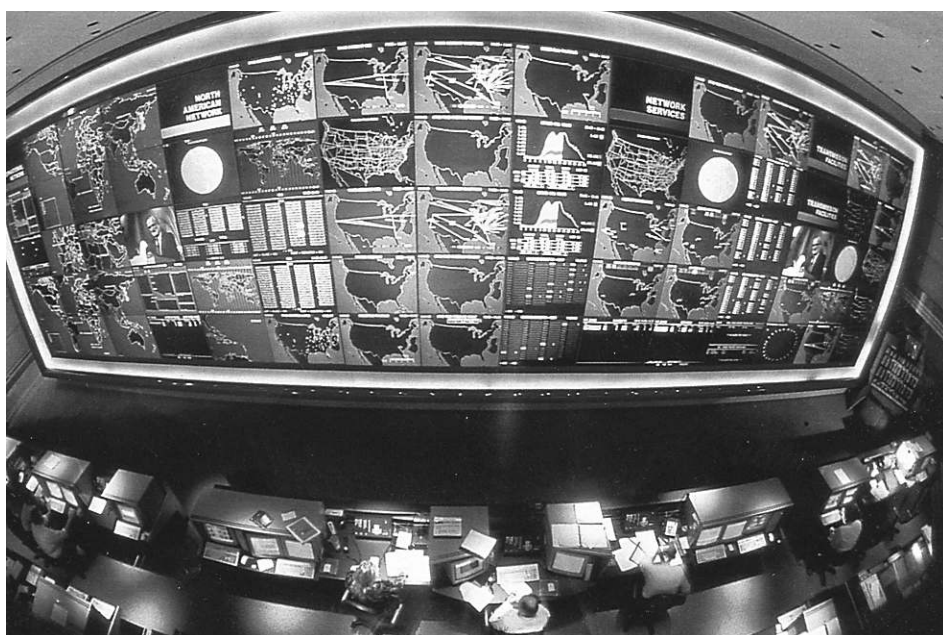


## Big Brother and Ma Bell's Brood

# Government Spy Network Exposed, Again



AP



Gamma



White House

Left: Gen. Michael Hayden, architect of NSA warrantless wiretapping operation, at May 18 Senate hearing for confirmation as CIA chief. Center: AT&T network operating center. Right: President Bush at NSA headquarters in January.

Recent revelations that the National Security Agency (NSA) has been working in collusion with several major telecommunications companies to “data mine” the phone records of tens of millions of people are another instance of the massive assault on the democratic rights being carried out in the name of the “war on terror.” For the U.S. capitalist rulers, the September 11 attacks were a pretext to launch new imperialist rampages around the globe, brutally occupying Afghanistan and Iraq, imprisoning and torturing “terror suspects” in Guantánamo, Abu Ghraib and secret prisons elsewhere. Even U.S. citizens declared “enemy combatants” can be held indefinitely with no legal rights.

Domestically, the government seized the opportunity to intensify repression of the population, introducing measures the rulers had long sought. As we warned immediately after the September 11 events, the repressive measures directed initially at Muslims and immigrants have led to attacks on political dissent and civil liberties across the board, not least against black people and the labor movement. From “rendition” of “terror suspects” to domestic spying, the government claims legal justification for its crimes abroad and at home.

As the Spartacist League and the Partisan Defense Committee wrote in our 2003 *amici curiae* (friends of the court) brief on behalf of Jose Padilla, a citizen seized and detained by the government as an “enemy combatant” in the “war on terror”: “Like the ‘war against communism’ and the ‘war against drugs,’ this ‘war’ is a pretext to increase the state’s police powers and repressive apparatus, constricting the democratic rights of the

population.” From the beginning, the “war on terror” has been a bipartisan affair. Democrats in Congress overwhelmingly joined in voting Bush authority to “use all necessary and appropriate force” after the September 11 attacks, a vote Bush points to as giving him legal authority for warrantless wiretapping, communications “data mining” and the like.

With the advances in digital technology, the NSA is amassing a huge pool of personal data to fish in, aiming to snare those the government deems guilty of “conspiring” with “terrorists.” It’s computerized guilt-by-association. These big-brother efforts to examine the intimate details of everyone’s life are causing concern even in the capitalist class, whose rule the NSA and the whole machinery of government repression exist to defend.

The *New York Times*, a major ruling-class mouthpiece, expressed such worries in an editorial (12 May): “What we have here is a clandestine surveillance program of enormous size, which is being operated by members of the administration who are subject to no limits or scrutiny beyond what they deem to impose on one another. If the White House had gotten its way, the program would have run secretly until the war on terror ended—that is, forever.” Albeit a little less secretly, the surveillance program continues. As for scrutiny, while the Senate Judiciary Committee held some hearings on the NSA’s domestic spying, earlier this month an investigation by the Justice Department ethics office into the conduct of department lawyers who approved the NSA program was closed when investigators were denied security clearances.

The latest revelations of NSA spying can be added to the list of factors causing the Bush administration’s public approval rating to tank. On top of growing popular disillusionment with the brutal U.S. occupation of Iraq, the huge increase in gas prices is hitting working-class families

hard, and even better-off suburbanites are screaming. Meanwhile, the musical-chair scandals continue to rock Bush’s cronies. The Republican Party is itself deeply divided over immigration policy, while the NSA, CIA and Pentagon are embroiled in turf battles.

With their eye toward the November Congressional elections, the Democrats raised a bit of a flap over the sinister NSA/phone company spy network. But their main objection is to the unfocused targeting by the program. Whatever dismay the Democrats are expressing has something of the character of the corrupt police chief in the movie *Casablanca* who suddenly announces he is “shocked” to find gambling going on in Rick’s café. Far from being a plot by the Bush gang, government spying on the population—be it by the NSA, FBI, CIA or other such agencies, past and present—has been carried out by Republican and Democratic administrations alike. In fact, the likely outcome of the publicity over NSA domestic surveillance is a new law codifying such practices.

It is no accident that the Democrats are allowing the confirmation of Air Force general and former NSA chief Michael Hayden as head of the CIA to sail through the Senate. This is even after a *USA Today* (11 May) story exposed the extent of the NSA-telecom spy network. According to the *New York Times* (14 May), Hayden was the “principal architect” of the domestic wiretapping program. Like Bush, he publicly insisted that the program was strictly limited to monitoring Al Qaeda types.

Senate Minority leader Harry Reid and other leading Democrats praise Hayden as the right man to lead the CIA, which has spent over half a century assassinating people, overthrowing governments, torturing and murdering people on behalf of U.S. imperialism. The Democrats are pushing for *more effective* spy agencies. Not wanting to be outdone on the “secu-

riety” issue, the Democrats have made their theme in the Hayden confirmation hearings the charming thought that the CIA should “speak truth to power,” as California’s Senator Dianne Feinstein, a police and security groupie, put it. The Democrats want the CIA to give good advice to the government, rather than making things up (like the mythical Iraqi weapons of mass destruction) at the behest of a particularly demented administration averse to “reality-based” policy.

Especially with the Democrats posturing as the party better suited to prosecute the “war on terror,” which Bush has invoked to launch pre-emptive, unilateral predatory wars, there hasn’t been much in the way of public outcry over the government’s snooping into the intimate details of everyone’s life. Indeed, both capitalist parties aim to cow the population into accepting blatant attacks on their rights as necessary for “national security.” This underscores the need for the labor movement, black people, immigrants and other minorities to break from the Democratic Party in order to fight against the increasingly repressive measures of the capitalist state.

### Yes, They Can “Hear You Now”

The NSA’s current “data mining” project goes far beyond its warrantless tapping of phone and Internet communications. These practices are in addition to monitoring international communications, as the agency has done since its inception in 1952. NSA spooks are also prying into all electronic messages passing through key points in the communications grid. The NSA—the largest agency in the capitalist state’s espionage apparatus—quite literally aims to spy on the entire population.

The *New York Times* (24 December 2005) reported that the NSA had “gained the cooperation” of phone companies “to obtain backdoor access to streams of

*continued on page 11*



## Feds Hands Off Mormon Fundamentalists!

On May 6 the FBI announced a new name on its notorious “Ten Most Wanted” (which include an alleged Colombian drug lord, Boston mobster James “Whitey” Bulger and Osama bin Laden): Warren Jeffs, 50-year-old leader of a polygamist Mormon sect called the “Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.” The Utah attorney general is now investigating the church as “an organized crime-type setup” based on allegations of financial fraud. Jeffs has been a fugitive since 2005, when he was indicted in Arizona for conspiracy and for the “sex crime” of allegedly marrying a 16-year-old woman to an older man. In April, Utah prosecutors charged him with “rape as an accomplice” for performing another marriage.

The official Mormon church renounced the practice of polygamy to meet conditions set by Congress for Utah to achieve statehood, which it did in 1896. But there are an estimated 30,000 to 100,000 Mormons still practicing “that old-time

religion” in communities throughout Utah and Arizona. Our view is that the government should leave the Mormons, all varieties of them, alone, as Abraham Lincoln once proposed.

The government’s pursuit of the fugitive Mormon is being aided by a media circus. It almost seems like the Feds’ revenge for the popular HBO series *Big Love*, the sympathetic soap opera of a Utah polygamist and his wives. Here in the real world, we have a gang of patriarchal fundamentalist Christians in the White House chasing a bunch of patriarchal fundamentalist Mormons out in the sticks, in the name of saving young women from polygamous marriages in order to stifle them in monogamous ones instead.

The witchhunt against Jeffs recalls the case of Tom Green, a Utah Mormon convicted of felony bigamy charges in 2001 over the objections of his wives. As we wrote in “Mormon Polygamists: Leave Them Alone!” (WV No. 764, 14 September 2001): “The family structure—whether

monogamous or polygamous—necessarily oppresses women. However, not everybody understands the source of their oppression, and people do all sorts of things that are undoubtedly bad for them that the state still has no business throwing them in prison for.” The Mormons are one of many peculiar American religious sects (check out Christian Science and L. Ron Hubbard’s Scientology) essentially chosen by their practitioners. However, in many societies that never experienced bourgeois revolutions, women are held to be little more than property, requiring struggle by communists to end such institutions as polygamy, the bride price and other such legacies of social backwardness.

It’s both a sign of anti-sex hysteria and the height of hypocrisy for authorities today to pretend horror at 16-year-olds in the U.S. getting married, as this was utterly commonplace only decades ago. Indeed, New Hampshire still allows 13-year-old girls to marry if they have parental consent. We uphold “effective consent” as the only guiding principle in sexual relations. We have always opposed reactionary “age of consent” and “statutory rape” laws, which are designed to repress youth and strengthen the repressive reach of the state, and also serve as a diversion from the real brutality of this sick capitalist society.

Our liberating Marxist position is anathema to the capitalist ruling class and its government. The oppression of women is rooted in the institution of the family, which arose with the advent of private property as the mechanism for passing property from one generation to the next, with the monogamous wife supposedly ensuring the heirs’ paternity. The family serves as the social mechanism to rear the next generation, and under capitalism serves, along with religion, to instill obedience to authority among youth. The private property system, upheld by the bourgeois state, and the family cannot be “reformed” away. The liberation of women requires proletarian revolution internationally to lay the basis for a socialist society of material abundance, in which child-rearing and other functions now performed by the family will be the

responsibility of society as a whole.

Today, of course, there is real violent abuse, including sexual abuse, of both women and children within polygamous families, just as within monogamous ones. But prosecuting Mormons for polygamy won’t help, as such families retreat further underground in fear of the authorities.

The Irish playwright Brendan Behan commented, “I have never seen a situation so dismal that a policeman couldn’t make it worse.” Certainly the government’s “sex offender” Internet registries have made a dismal situation far worse for those falling into the clutches of the law, often for acts that in a rational society would be no crime at all. These registries, providing photos and home addresses of “offenders,” are an “all you can kill” buffet for wackos driven mad by the thought of children and sex. This April in Maine, two men on such a registry were shot dead in separate towns. Last summer in Washington state, two other men were murdered; the killer said he’d targeted them after finding their names on an online list.

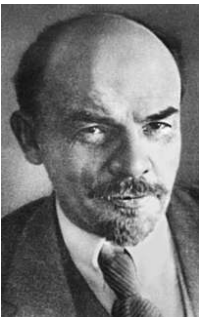
Government vendettas against anyone it decides to target are deadly business. In 1985 under Ronald Reagan, the FBI and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms conspired with the Philadelphia police department and black mayor Wilson Goode to incinerate the mainly black back-to-nature MOVE commune, killing eleven people, including five children, and burning down a whole black neighborhood. In 1993 under Bill Clinton, Attorney General Janet Reno ordered a fiery assault on the racially integrated Branch Davidian commune near Waco, Texas, killing more than 80 men, women and children on such pretexts as suspected “child abuse.” In vigorously protesting these government atrocities, we declared that these people had the right to live and be left alone. Now today, we Marxist atheists are again defending a religious sect, in this case a Mormon one, against a government witchhunt. Sure, the Mormons may be weird, but the main enemy of human progress and women’s liberation in the world today is the U.S. imperialist ruling class and its state. ■



TROTSKY

### The Communist International and the Struggle for Black Liberation

*Under the influence and tutelage of the Communist International led by V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky, the early American Communist Party came to understand the strategic importance of the struggle against the oppression of black people in the United States. Writing at the time of the mass Southern civil rights movement, James P. Cannon, a founding leader of both the Communist Party and the Trotskyist movement in the*



LENIN

*U.S., explained the organic link between the Bolshevik Revolution and a proletarian revolutionary perspective against the racist American capitalist state.*

The earlier socialist movement, out of which the Communist Party was formed, never recognized any need for a special program on the Negro question. It was considered purely and simply as an economic problem, part of the struggle between the workers and the capitalists; nothing could be done about the special problems of discrimination and inequality this side of socialism....

The difference—and it was a *profound* difference—between the Communist Party of the Twenties and its socialist and radical ancestors, was signified by its break with this tradition. The American communists in the early days, under the influence and pressure of the Russians in the Comintern, were slowly and painfully learning to change their *attitude*; to assimilate the new theory of the Negro question as a *special* question of doubly-exploited second-class citizens, requiring a program of special demands as part of the over-all program—and to start doing something about it....

After November, 1917 this new doctrine—with special emphasis on the Negroes—began to be transmitted to the American communist movement with the authority of the Russian Revolution behind it. The Russians in the Comintern started on the American communists with the harsh, insistent demand that they shake off their own unspoken prejudices, pay attention to the special problems and grievances of the American Negroes, go to work among them, and champion their cause in the white community....

An honest workers’ party of the new generation will recognize this revolutionary potential of the Negro struggle, and call for a fighting alliance of the Negro people and the labor movement in a common revolutionary struggle against the present social system.

—James P. Cannon, “The Russian Revolution and the American Negro Movement” (1959), reprinted in *The First Ten Years of American Communism* (Pathfinder Press, 1973)

## WORKERS VANGUARD

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26 May 2006

Join the Campaign to  
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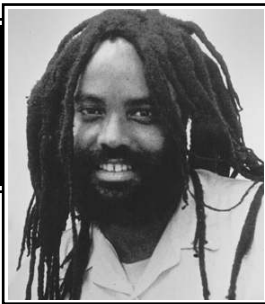
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Free Mumia Abu-Jamal Now!  
Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!

# From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal

## Immigration Blues



Now, as polls show growing disenchantment with both political parties, the issue of immigration is raised once again, as politicians seek to stir the pot of social resentment.

Voices are raised, tempers are frayed, proposals are launched, and the destinies of millions are apparently held in limbo.

But, in numbers not seen for generations, mostly Mexican-born (or related) families pound the pavements in protest, demanding amnesty for the millions who live and work, in the most thankless jobs, here in the U.S.

The immigration "discussion" masks deeper currents in American life, of those who dread the approaching dawn when those who number the nation's majority are brown, instead of white.

As the government and the servile corporate media hawked fear to trap the nation into the Iraq War, so now fear is once again merchandised for political gain. The perpetual fear of the foreign Other, the fear of Spanish-speaking people, who are called "criminal" for daring to cross the Rio Grande, to inhabit the lands stolen from their ancestors!

The truth of the matter is that it is highly unlikely that over 11 million men, women and children will be returned to Mexican territory. That's because businesses, especially those engaged in agriculture, would

virtually go out of business if their immigrant-based workforce up and disappeared.

But, like most people, many Latino immigrants are involved in other businesses and industries in U.S. life. Guess who's doing the lion's share of the work to actually rebuild New Orleans? (In case you've not guessed, let me just say—It ain't FEMA!)

With the exception of Native Americans (as in so-called "Indians"), and African Americans, every person in the U.S. today is a descendant of a willing immigrant. (OK, strict historians will object that many poor whites, especially in the Southern states, were sent to Georgia and Maryland as indentured servants, as part of a penal sentence.)

But the point is clear. Immigration was consciously used to craft the U.S. as a white nation. For centuries, certain racial groups, like Chinese, for example, were specifically excluded by law from citizenship. (Like their Mexican counterparts, many Asians were needed in the building of this country as cheap labor.)

As law professor Ian F. Haney Lopez has shown in his book, "White by Law: The Legal Construction of Race" (New York: NYU Press, 1996), American courts and legislatures have consistently defined "citizens" as "whites," and over the course of centuries, millions of people were denied entry to the U.S., or even if allowed in, denied citizenship, because they

were not "white." In 1882, Haney Lopez explains, the U.S. Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act, which barred Chinese workers for a decade. In 1884, the Act was expanded to bar all Chinese people, and shortly thereafter an indefinite ban was implemented. State and federal court decisions banned Syrians, Asian Indians, Palestinians, mixed-race people and multitudes of others on the basis of insufficient whiteness!

That ugly history may be reborn in this latest "battle" over Mexican immigration. Political storms have a way of giving way to political hurricanes that even those who planned them cannot control.

Several years ago, a right-wing politician in California tried to ride the anti-immigrant train to the White House. His name is Pete Wilson, and his playing with fire left him politically burnt. Angry Hispanics in Cali sent him, and some of his colleagues in the Republican Party, into retirement.

But this era of politicians, trying to create an issue that protects them from the falling numbers of the incumbent Bush Administration, look at Wilson's fate as ancient history.

Perhaps the recent demonstrations, massive in their size, vociferous in their spirit, have given them pause.

Time will tell.

The political entity that truly befriends this growing segment of the U.S. population will have tapped into a powerful social force.

Don't expect it to be either the Republicans or the Democrats.

From Death Row, this is Mumia Abu-Jamal.

©2006 Mumia Abu-Jamal

If you wish to correspond with Jamal, you can write to: Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM8335, SCI Greene, 175 Progress Drive, Waynesburg, PA 15370.

# Trade Unions Say: Free Mumia Now!

The campaign to free class-war political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal is gaining support, in the U.S. and internationally. Mumia, an eloquent and defiant spokesman for the oppressed, has been sitting on death row for some 24 years, falsely convicted of the 1981 killing of Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner. The fight to free Mumia confronts the full force of the capitalist state's system of injustice that originally framed up this innocent man and is still determined to see him dead. Federal and state courts have barred any of the evidence proving his innocence, including the sworn confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Mumia, shot and killed Faulkner. While the Third Circuit federal appeals court agreed to hear a limited number of challenges to Mumia's frame-up, its decision, expected within months, could open the door to his execution.

When Mumia faced a death warrant in August 1995, a mass outpouring of protest worldwide succeeded in staying the executioner's hand. It is now necessary to mobilize a new generation of youth, fighters for black rights, opponents of the death penalty and, crucially, the labor movement to take up the urgent fight for Mumia's freedom. As the Partisan Defense Committee wrote in its mobilizing brochure, "Mumia Is an Innocent Man—Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!" (25 January): "If undertaken through a mobilization based on the social power of the working class, the fight for Mumia's freedom would be a giant step forward in the defense of all of us against the increasingly depraved and vicious rulers of this country."

We print below two of the trade-union statements in support of the campaign to free Mumia recently received by the PDC and its international fraternal organizations. The first, dated May 4, is by Mike Payne, Chair of the International Longshoremen's Association Local 1526 Public Relations Committee in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. The second, dated April 27, is from the French SUD Rail union in Paris. Join the campaign: Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the racist death penalty!

### ILA 1526 Public Relations Committee

It is with a great deal of concern and a deep sense of responsibility I issue this statement of protest and support on behalf of Brother Mumia Abu-Jamal and the campaign to free him. I truly believe that Brother Jamal is an innocent man and was targeted, set-up, framed, wrongfully convicted and sentenced to death.

Brother Jamal, a former Black Panther spokesman and supporter of the organization MOVE has spent over 24 years on death row even though there is documented evidence in the form of the confession of Arnold Beverly

who swears that he, not Brother Jamal did the shooting that resulted in the death of a Philadelphia Police Officer.

The Mumia Abu-Jamal case is another blatant example that race and class bias in the U.S. Justice System continues to keep justice, fair and equal treatment out of the reach of the poor, the oppressed, the minority community and the working class of America.

This case exemplifies the fact that you **will only get the amount of justice that you can afford.**

It is without reservation, and with a great measure of pride that I stand proudly with the millions of workers, students, death penalty abolitionists and civil, minority and immigrant rights activists in defense and in support of Brother Jamal. **FREE HIM NOW!!!**

Darryl "Mike D." Payne



The Versailles-Chartres local of the SUD Rail workers union (Solidarity, Unity and Democracy) wishes to express its full solidarity toward prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, locked away in U.S. jails since 1981.

At the same time we want to use this occasion to make a sincere and fraternal salute toward all U.S. political prisoners, like Leonard Peltier of the Native Indian movement, environmental prisoners, anti-imperialist prisoners Yu Kikumura, Tsutomu Shirotsaki, David Gilbert, Richard Williams and all the others who cannot

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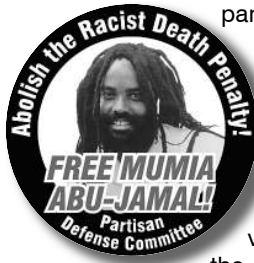
## Free Mumia Abu-Jamal Now! Join the Campaign!

### 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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# U.S. Out of Iraq Now!

## The U.S. Occupation and the Kurdish Question

Under the U.S. occupation of Iraq, ethnic antagonisms rooted in the imperialists' carve-up of the Near East and stoked by decades of bourgeois-nationalist rule threaten to erupt in an all-sided orgy of bloodletting. The bombing of the Shi'ite Al-Askariya Mosque in Samarra in February touched off an explosion of communal violence between Shi'ite and Sunni Muslims that left hundreds, mostly Sunni, dead. Almost daily, the bodies of victims of communal militias or the Shi'ite-dominated police force turn up in and around Baghdad, often hideously tortured and finished off execution-style. Tens of thousands have fled their homes in the face of "ethnic cleansing" of mixed villages and neighborhoods by Sunni, Shi'ite or Kurdish forces. This comes on top of the brutal massacres, massive arrests and widespread torture carried out directly by U.S. forces.

The latest expression of Washington's cynical claim to be bringing "democracy" to Iraq is a puppet government, announced on May 20. As with the previous government, it is dominated by Shi'ite and Kurdish parties at the expense of the minority Sunni Arabs, whose leaders played a dominant role under the regime of Saddam Hussein. The ministries of defense, the interior and national security have still not been filled because each ethnic group fears the murderous consequences if its rivals get control over the armed forces and police.

The imperialist occupation has fostered reactionary forces in Iraqi society, from Islamic fundamentalists and rival clan leaders to virulent bourgeois nationalists. With these forces now at each other's throats, the stage is set for civil war within Iraq's borders and significant destabilization beyond. Sunni Arab leaders across the Near East are bristling over the fact that in Iraq, for the first time in centuries, an Arab country is dominated by Shi'ites. The Wahabi rulers of neighboring Saudi Arabia, where the population of the oil-rich eastern region is predominantly Shi'ite, view with alarm the growing influence of Shi'ite Iran in southern Iraq. The Turkish regime of Recep Tayyip Erdogan has amassed some 250,000 troops, backed by tanks and



**March 16: Kurdish protesters in Halabja carrying man wounded in attack by Kurdish security forces.**



**Building in Kirkuk, key city in Kurdish region of Iraq, destroyed by U.S. bombs, April 2003. Left: Kurdish nationalist leader Massoud Barzani greets Condoleezza Rice, May 2005.**

## For a Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan!

helicopter gunships, in the southeastern Kurdish region along the Iraqi border, aiming to stifle any stirring of Kurdish independence.

The deepening sectarian bloodshed underlines the fact that Iraq is not a nation but rather a patchwork of different peoples and ethnicities carved up by the British imperialists out of the Turkish Ottoman Empire at the end of the First World War. The borders of Iraq were arbitrarily drawn to encompass imperialist oil concessions, forcing together historically hostile populations. In such a society, stable bourgeois-democratic rule can be nothing more than a pipe dream. Absent the working class emerging as an independent political force in a struggle against neocolonial rule, each of these populations can come to power only by oppressing the others and in alliance with U.S. imperialism.

This is exemplified by the Kurds, whose nationalist leaders actively collaborated with the U.S. invasion of Iraq, offering their Kurdish militias (the *pesh merga*) as an auxiliary to U.S. military forces. Today, the two rival Kurdish bourgeois-nationalist parties, Jalal Talabani's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and Massoud Barzani's Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), act as pawns of the U.S. occupation forces. Since 1991, a semi-autonomous Kurdish region has existed in northern Iraq, first under cover of a U.S.-enforced "no fly zone" and now under direct U.S. military occupation.

This is a cynical parody of self-determination for the Kurdish people, who have endured generations of oppression at the hands of various colonialist and nationalist regimes. The Kurdish nationalist leaders in Iraq have subordinated themselves to the American-led occupation forces. And many Iraqi Kurds mis-

takenly look with favor on the occupation as a guarantor against Arab conquest. Any fight for Kurdish independence that does not take as its starting point opposition to the occupation and to the nationalist parties that serve it will necessarily be subordinated to the occupation.

### **Iraqi Kurdistan: Oil and Ethnic Conflict**

Numbering some 30 million people, the Kurds constitute the largest nation in the world without a state of its own. Kurdistan includes the expanse of rugged mountains and parched valleys that straddles the remote reaches of four different countries: Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. Thus, to achieve Kurdish self-determination requires the overthrow of four capitalist states.

From bombing and gassing by British planes in the 1920s through the brutal repression under Saddam Hussein's rule to Turkey's current war of annihilation, the people of Kurdistan have been the victims of repression, forced transfers and massacres by the colonial powers and local capitalist regimes alike. The Kurdish people have a long record of struggle against their oppressors. Their feudal and bourgeois-nationalist misleaders have just as long a record of sacrificing these struggles for illusory support from the imperialists or their regional lackeys.

When U.S. forces drove out Falluja's Sunni population and devastated the city in late 2004, the Iraqi troops that supported them were largely the Kurdish *pesh merga* combined with some Shi'ite units from the south. Soon afterward, the same combination aided U.S. forces that overran the mixed Kurdish-Arab city of Mosul after it had been seized by Sunni insurgents. Around that time, former UN weapons inspector Scott Ritter com-

mented that the only effective unit of the Iraqi army was the 36th battalion, "a Kurdish militia, retained by the US military because the rest of the Iraqi army is unwilling or unable to carry the fight to the Iraqi resistance fighters" (*Al Jazeera* online, 9 November 2004).

In Kurdish-dominated northern Iraq, which is portrayed by the U.S. occupiers as a model for the rest of the country, *pesh merga* backed by U.S. troops have attacked Sunni and Shi'ite Arabs as well as the Turkmen and Christian Assyrian minorities, seizing their property and driving them out by the thousands. The wave of terror began immediately after the U.S. occupation and surged after the January 2005 elections, in which the PUK and KDP consolidated their control over the provincial government. A focal point in the conflict is the battle to control the city of Kirkuk, which lies atop huge oil reserves. In fact, some 40 percent of Iraq's oil reserves are located in the Kurdish region.

To suppress Kurdish nationalism and dilute the Kurds' political strength in this oil-rich region, successive Sunni Arab governments in Baghdad systematically expelled Kurds from Kirkuk and surrounding areas and replaced them with Arabs from the south. "Arabization" was intensified by Saddam Hussein after the 1991 Gulf War, when hundreds of thousands of Kurds were forcibly driven out of their homes.

Now the Kurds are reversing the process. The PUK and KDP have repatriated as many as 300,000 Kurds to the outskirts of Kirkuk in rapidly expanding settlements, effectively adding hundreds of thousands of voters ahead of a referendum on the status of Kirkuk scheduled for the end of 2007. The repatriations have provoked bloody confrontations between Arabs and Kurds. In recent weeks, hundreds of Shi'ite militia have moved into Kirkuk to jockey for position, setting the stage for more bloodshed.

### **Kurdish Liberation and Permanent Revolution**

With U.S. support, the two Kurdish nationalist parties have held sway over the people of the region through fear and terror. As *Time* online (17 March) reported: "Kurdistan is a veritable police state, where the Asayeesh—the military security—has a house in each neighborhood of the major cities, and where the Parastin 'secret police' monitors phone conversations and keeps tabs on who attends Friday prayers."

The KDP, which dominates Erbil and Dohuk provinces, and the PUK, which controls Suleymania province, both have their own militia. Demonstrations are banned, and journalists are regularly arrested and beaten. The writer Kamal Karim, an Iraqi-born Kurd with Austrian citizenship, was sentenced to 30 years in prison after accusing Barzani of corruption and abuse of power. After an international outcry, his sentence was reduced to 18 months and he was later pardoned.

But the Kurdish people in Iraq are hardly a homogeneous mass lined up in support of their nationalist leaders. A March 16 demonstration in Halabja, where Saddam Hussein's regime had launched a poison gas attack in 1988 that killed some 5,000 people, exposed the anger against the

nationalist leaders simmering beneath the surface of Kurdish “unity.” As officials gathered for a day of mourning on the anniversary of the 1988 atrocity, thousands of angry Kurds took to the streets to protest corruption, tyranny and neglect. *Pesh merga* fired on the demonstration, killing a 17-year-old demonstrator. Enraged protesters reached a monument and a museum commemorating the victims of the gas attack and set the museum on fire.

It is a measure of the depth of popular rage that the protesters burned a monument commemorating their own suffering. The BBC (18 March) reported that the monument had become a focus of popular anger because, according to residents, “officials have used the atrocities for their own political ends, but they have seen little in return.”

The March 16 protest was the latest in a series of demonstrations and student strikes across Iraqi Kurdistan against corruption, unemployment, poor services and lack of housing. Despite the \$4 to \$5 billion that the regional government receives from the central government, none of it trickles down to the impoverished population. Much of the region remains underdeveloped, with high rates of illiteracy and unemployment. Disappointed and frustrated with the nationalist parties, many students and other youth are turning to the Kurdistan Islamic Union, which is linked to the Muslim Brotherhood.

The Kurds are not simply victims of national oppression and repeated betrayals by their nationalist leaders. As we pointed out in a two-part series, “The Kurdish People and the U.S. Occupation of Iraq” (WV Nos. 804 and 805, 23 May and 6 June 2003):

“There is a sizable Kurdish working class with a history of militant struggle in the oil fields of Kirkuk and other strategic centers. But for the most part the Kurdish proletariat is to be found outside of Kurdistan in such industrial centers as Istanbul and the mining regions of southern Turkey, as well as Baghdad—at least before it was starved by sanctions and bombed to rubble. It is in the urban centers, among the industrial proletariat, that the power exists to lead the Kurdish people to freedom.”

In the colonial and semicolonial countries in the epoch of imperialism, only the proletariat in power can achieve the tasks that were historically addressed by the classic bourgeois-democratic revolutions of the 17th and 18th centuries, such as national emancipation, land to the tiller and formal equality before the law. To open the road to socialism, proletarian revolutions in the Third World must be linked to the fight for the overthrow of capitalism in the advanced industrial countries of Europe, North America and Japan. This understanding, the Trotskyist perspective of permanent revolution, encapsulates the experience of the 1917 Russian Revolution.

As part of the multinational proletariat



NYC, July 1999: United-front demonstration demanding freedom for imprisoned PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan.

of the Near East, Kurdish workers can play a leading role in bringing down the rotten structure set up to serve the imperialist overlords. Kurdish and Turkish workers in Europe, especially in Germany, can serve as a living bridge linking the Kurdish struggle for independence to the fight for socialist revolution in the Near East and the advanced capitalist countries of West Europe. This struggle requires the leadership of internationalist workers parties, which will inscribe on their banner the call for a *Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan, part of a socialist federation of the Near East*.

### Forge Proletarian Revolutionary Parties!

The rulers of Turkey, Iran and Syria are unanimously hostile to any serious concession to Kurdish nationalism in Iraq, fearful that this would inspire Kurds throughout the region to seek independence. This is especially true of the Turkish ruling class, which since the mid 1980s has been waging a campaign of annihilation against the Kurds and the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK). For decades, Turkey was a favored recipient of military hardware from the U.S., serving as a key outpost in the Cold War against the Soviet Union.

From 1984 to 1999, the Turkish military killed some 37,000 people and forcibly transferred hundreds of thou-



March 29: Turkish riot police mobilized to put down protest in Kurdish city of Diyarbakir following funerals for nationalist guerrillas killed by army.

sands, possibly millions, of Kurdish villagers, burning and razing thousands of their hamlets. For years, the central government banned the use of the Kurdish language in schools and in publishing and broadcasting. Speaking Kurdish in public was outlawed. The Kurdish people were officially referred to as “mountain Turks,” their villages’ names changed to Turkish names.

The Turkish bourgeoisie has introduced cosmetic reforms intended to appease the European Union (EU), as part of Ankara’s bid for EU membership. Thus the regime cynically allowed Kurdish-language classes in private schools, which very few of the impoverished Kurds can afford to attend. Kurdish radio broadcasts were limited to four hours per week and television broadcasts to two hours.

With hopes of joining the EU now dwindling, the Erdogan regime is trying to deflect anger over rising unemployment, a deteriorating economy and allegations of graft and corruption by whipping up chauvinist hatred of the Kurds. In the past 18 months, the upsurge in Turkish chauvinism has frequently boiled over into vigilante violence and attempted lynchings of both Kurds and leftists.

Meanwhile, the Turkish state has stepped up its repression in the southeastern Kurdish region, from military operations against nationalist guerrillas to suppression of popular protest. Erdogan has explicitly threatened that “the security forces will intervene against the pawns of terrorism, no matter if they are children or women” (*BBC News*, 1 April). Like Turkey, Iran has amassed thousands of

troops along the Iraqi border, where they regularly shell positions of the Iranian militant Kurdish group PEJAK, which took refuge in Iraqi Kurdistan.

Turkish, Persian and Arab workers must be won to the need to uphold the national rights of the Kurds and the rights of other oppressed peoples, thus opening the road for joint workers struggle against their common capitalist oppressors. This perspective is diametrically opposed to the petty-bourgeois nationalist program of the PKK, now also known as the People’s Congress of Kurdistan or Kongra-Gel. Despite its claim to be a “Marxist-Leninist” national liberation movement, the PKK is vehemently opposed to a program of proletarian-internationalist struggle and consequently ends up looking to the good graces of imperialism. Thus the PKK has repeatedly called on the UN, the EU and even the U.S. to pressure Turkey to resolve the Kurdish question. The PKK even embraced the U.S. occupation of Iraq, proclaiming its desire to “establish a dialogue with Washington on joining its campaign of democratisation in the Middle East” (*Financial Times*, 15 April 2003).

Founded by Abdullah Öcalan in the 1970s, the PKK has long waged a courageous struggle against the far better equipped Turkish army, winning mass support among rural Kurds and among Kurdish workers in Turkey, West Europe



Los Angeles Times  
U.S. soldier guards refinery in oil-rich Kirkuk, April 2003.

being hounded by Turkish security in the late 1990s. The U.S. provided the intelligence that led to his abduction by Turkish commandos in Kenya. Like the U.S., the EU considers the PKK a “terrorist” organization. Germany has long banned the PKK and a range of Kurdish political, cultural and social organizations.

Raising the call for self-determination for Iraq’s Kurdish people is the Worker-Communist Party of Iraq (WCP-Iraq), which has a certain base in Iraqi Kurdistan. In 2003, these reformists called on the United Nations to “safeguard free conditions” in Iraq while calling for the withdrawal of U.S. and British occupation forces. The UN is nothing but an instrument serving the interests of the imperialist powers. It is the same institution that for 12 years, beginning in 1990, imposed sanctions on Iraq, killing some 1.5 million people. It was UN weapons inspections that helped pave the way for the U.S. war of occupation. Over the last year, the WCP-Iraq’s main initiative has been the creation of the Iraq Freedom Congress (IFC), whose program boils down to the call for a “secular, unifying government”—i.e., the continuation of capitalist rule with a “democratic” veneer.

In greetings to a 1984 conference of Kurdish militants in Europe, a Spartacist representative laid out the alternative to the history of betrayals by bourgeois nationalists and reformist left organizations:

“We understand that the struggle for a United Socialist Republic of Kurdistan will be shaped by and in turn shape the future of the revolutionary proletariat of the whole region toward a socialist federation of the Near East. Our model is Lenin’s Russia of 1917-1924 where the Bolsheviks offered the national minorities the option and the advantages of association with the Soviet Federation. For our part, we are dedicated to the forging of the internationalist party of worldwide proletarian revolution and speak to you in the understanding that the future of humanity depends on its construction.”

—WV No. 362,  
14 September 1984 ■

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# Against Capitalists' Divide-and-Rule

## Immigrant Rights and Black Liberation

The recent wave of demonstrations for immigrant rights, which were predominantly made up of Latino working people, underscores the growing weight and combativity of immigrant labor in the U.S. The protests have also touched off a virulent chauvinist backlash spearheaded by such right-wing media types as CNN's Lou Dobbs and politicians like California Republican Congressman Dana Rohrabacher. Such racist reactionaries are even attempting to incite sections of the black population against immigrants. Thus Dobbs, railing against the liberals who have dubbed the protests a "new civil rights movement," cynically declaims that blacks were not "illegal aliens."

It is clear that there are real divisions among American blacks over the fight for immigrant rights. Many black working people see immigrants as successfully competing for scarce jobs while further depressing the wages of low-paid workers. It is a fact that capitalism brings into the working class new sources of cheaper labor, principally immigrants from poorer, less developed countries who have few rights and are deemed more disposable in times of economic contraction. The economic pressures resulting from increased immigration bear down especially on black people, historically segregated at the bottom of U.S. society, and also the lower levels of white workers. The resulting divisions within the working class can only be countered by militant struggle by the labor movement to defend the interests of all workers.

A number of black liberals express a certain degree of resentment that the immigrant rights protests are detracting attention from the horrific conditions and brutal oppression of the ghettoized black masses. Reflecting this sentiment, one prominent black commentator in Los Angeles wrote, "This is what vexes blacks most about immigration, even the most progressive and pro-immigration among us: the idea that people from somewhere else are ultimately accorded more of a place and a function in this country than we ever have and probably ever will be" (*Los Angeles Times*, 5 April).

Along similar lines, in a 2 May online article, L.A.-based black publicists Earl Ofari Hutchinson and Jasmyne A. Cannick criticize mainstream Latino organizations for their narrowly based ethnic politics. In particular, they point to the mission statement of the Mexican American Political Association, one of the chief organizers of the recent protests, which states that the organization "has been, and is, dedicated to the constitutional and democratic principle of political freedom and representation for the Mexican and Hispanic people of the United States of America." They comment, "There is no mention of blacks, poor whites or even other immigrant groups, just Latinos."

More generally, Hutchinson and Cannick argue:

"Latinos who want to change the mindset of blacks on illegal immigrants' rights must make a visible and concerted effort to reach out to blacks and not just on immigrant rights issues but on issues that are important to blacks as well. Just as they vigorously pound on Congress, the Bush Administration, employers, and the American people to make jobs and justice the watchwords for dispossessed immigrants, they must make jobs and justice the watchword for dispossessed poor blacks too. This is the right and indeed the only way to build a firm and lasting relationship between blacks and immigrants rights groups."

Hutchinson and Cannick's criticisms of the bourgeois liberal organizers of the protests for not raising any demands speaking to the oppressed black populace are entirely justified. However, their solution is just another version of liberal constituency politics, centered on the Democratic Party.

### Capitalism and Black Oppression

In opposition to such bourgeois pressure politics, as Marxists we understand

that the only way to overcome the divide between immigrant and native-born, and between black and white, will be the united class struggle of the multiracial proletariat against the common capitalist enemy and its profit system. This perspective calls for forging a new union

in this country without the united struggle of black, white and immigrant workers led by their multiracial vanguard party, just as there is no other road to eliminating the oppression of black people other than the victorious conquest of power by the U.S. proletariat. The growth



WV Photo

Los Angeles transit workers at strike rally, September 2000.

leadership committed to the political independence of the working class and the development of a multiracial revolutionary workers party. Such a party would fight for quality, integrated housing and schools and for free, quality health care for all. It would fight for full citizenship rights and for the unionization of vulnerable immigrant laborers. It would advance demands for a sliding scale of wages and hours to distribute available jobs to everyone who wants them with no loss in pay, challenging the capitalist system that requires a reservoir of the unemployed to keep wages down. To achieve full employment and social equality requires the overthrow of the capitalist order through socialist revolution and the construction of a rational, planned economy based on collectivized property.

Central to the struggle for the emancipation of labor in the U.S. is the fight for black liberation. The special oppression of black people as a race-color caste is rooted in centuries of chattel slavery and subsequent segregation. Indeed, black oppression is rooted in the very foundation of racist American capitalism. The racist atrocity in New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina revealed the harsh reality of black oppression to the whole world.

While newly arrived plebeian immigrants in their vast majority begin at the bottom of U.S. society, light-skinned immigrants have historically been able to advance up the economic ladder. The color bar is the American social measuring stick, ranging from blacks on the bottom to whites on the top. The social standing and prospects of all "people of color" are largely determined by this measuring stick, with dark-skinned people tending toward the black end and the lighter-skinned toward the white end. This is clearly indicated by the extent of intermarriage across racial and ethnic lines: The rate of intermarriage between non-Hispanic whites and Latinos or Asians is far higher than between whites and blacks.

The fight against black oppression is a strategic question of the American socialist revolution. There will be no social revo-

lution in this country without the united struggle of black, white and immigrant workers led by their multiracial vanguard party, just as there is no other road to eliminating the oppression of black people other than the victorious conquest of power by the U.S. proletariat. The growth

### L.A. Rulers Foment Black-Latino Conflict

The Los Angeles area is a textbook example of the capitalists' divide-and-rule policy. In 1992, Latinos joined blacks in protesting the racist acquittal of the cops who beat Rodney King. Shaken by the multiracial nature of the ghetto upheavals, which posed the possibility of integrated class struggle, the bourgeois rulers—abetted by black and Latino nationalist demagogues—worked to pit the black and Latino poor against each other in a scramble over the crumbs from the "Rebuild L.A." project. Of course, the bourgeoisie had no intention of rebuilding the decaying ghettos and barrios.

Los Angeles has witnessed growing antagonisms between blacks and Latinos, as once predominantly black neighborhoods have been increasingly populated by Latino immigrants over the past couple of decades. Contributing to such ethnic conflicts is the fact that L.A. has one of the highest poverty rates—about 22 percent—and the largest homeless population in the country.

Over the last two years, sharp clashes between black and Latino students have taken place at nearly a dozen L.A. County schools. Predictably, the response of school and police authorities has been increased repression, prompting one Jefferson High School student to remark, "They treat us like we're in prison." These antagonisms have reverberated in the prisons and jails. In February, 2,000 inmates at the North County Correctional Facility in Castaic rioted for four hours after a group of Latinos attacked black prisoners with prison furniture. Fighting also occurred at the Men's Central Jail in downtown L.A. and

the Pitchess Detention Center. In one case, prison authorities responded to the fighting by forcing more than 100 inmates at an L.A. County jail to strip naked, leaving them with only blankets to cover themselves.

The anti-immigrant Minutemen vigilantes, who mainly appeal to poorer whites susceptible to racist demagoguery, were recently joined in L.A. by a small, reactionary black

outfit called the "Crispus Attucks Brigade." Its leader, Ted Hayes, rants: "Illegal immigration is the greatest threat to African Americans since slavery"! Hayes was echoed by Theodore J. Smith III, chairman of the African American Caucus of the California Democratic Party, who wrote in a letter to the *Los Angeles Times* (28 April), "Activist Ted Hayes is right—illegal immigration has lowered wages and pushed African Americans out of the building trades and service jobs that were our opportunity to have the American dream." Many blacks have seen right through these divisive attempts, and some have actively protested against the Minutemen. When Hayes recently staged a photo-op in L.A.'s Leimert Park embracing Minutemen honchos, his followers were outnumbered by black protesters who equated the Confederate-flag-wielding Minutemen with the KKK.

Immigrant-bashing and anti-black racism always go hand in hand. The passage in 1994 of California's notorious, anti-immigrant Proposition 187, which sought to deny public services to "illegal aliens" and was supported by approximately half of black voters, served to pave the way for the passage two years later of Prop. 209, which eliminated affirmative action programs in hiring and education, with devastating impact on blacks in particular.

Whipping up tensions between Latinos and blacks especially serves the L.A. rulers in their drive against the resurgent labor movement in the city, particularly the powerful unions that are largely Latino and black, such as transit and longshore. Internally, the power of labor is shackled by the class-collaborationist trade-union bureaucracy. Maria Elena Durazo, head of the L.A. County Federation of Labor, recently alibied the racist hotel bosses by claiming that "ethnic networks" were the reason for the decline in the number of black workers and the increasing numbers of Latino workers in the local hotel industry. Durazo's "solution" is to plead with the employers to recruit and train more black people, citing UNITE HERE Local 11's contract "guarantees" from some hotels to do so. Instead of looking to the racist bosses, there should be union-run hiring halls carrying out an equitable distribution of available work, with union-run programs to hire more blacks, other minorities and women.

The mass unemployment of black youth, who are lucky to get a minimum-wage job at McDonald's, is not caused by the influx of immigrants from Mexico and elsewhere. The pro-capitalist labor tops, who have accepted large cuts in union jobs, wages and benefits, bear major responsibility for the dire situation of workers and minorities. The past few decades have seen the disappearance of millions of stable, well-paying jobs as a result of deindustrialization and de-unionization in capitalist America. For example, industries such as auto and steel once were the economic bedrock of black working-class communities in Detroit, Chicago and other Midwestern cities. The labor force in these industries has been slashed, non-union operations have proliferated (especially in the South).

We fight for a workers government which would rip the means of production out of the hands of the capitalists and put the wealth produced by working people to the service of all. A planned socialist economy would rebuild this society, providing the necessary material basis for productive jobs and a decent living standard for all, native-born and immigrant alike. ■



# Immigrants...

(continued from page 12)

discrimination and massive unemployment. While the racist press in France calls these youth “immigrants,” actually most of them were born and raised in France. They are the children and grandchildren of the immigrant workers who came to France in the ’60s and ’70s from the countries of France’s former colonial empire, centrally North Africa.

The scrapping of the CPE is a victory. When the working class entered the scene with strikes, it changed the entire situation and showed the power of the working class. The government is coming out of the struggle *weakened*. Many students and workers want to continue the struggle until the whole racist act of which the CPE is a part is scrapped. Now, France and the U.S. are different. But they also have much in common. There are lessons from each as to how it is necessary to fight and what is needed to end exploitation and oppression internationally.

We start from the standpoint that only socialist revolution internationally can put an end to the growing immiseration of the toiling masses—both in dependent countries like Mexico and in the imperialist centers. The fundamental divide in all capitalist countries is between the working class, whose labor makes society run, and the capitalist class that reaps enormous wealth from exploiting that labor. Under capitalist imperialism, a handful of wealthy industrial powers strive to divide and redivide the rest of the world for their own aggrandizement, leading to neocolonial exploitation and imperialist wars, of which we have seen quite a few. As we explained in the International Communist League Declaration of Principles [*Spartacist* (English-language edition) No. 54, Spring 1998]:

“Modern capitalism, i.e., imperialism, reaching into all areas of the planet, in the course of the class struggle and as economic need demands, brings into the proletariat at its bottom new sources of cheaper labor, principally immigrants from poorer and less-developed regions of the world—workers with few rights who are deemed more disposable in times of economic contraction. Thus capitalism in ongoing fashion creates different strata among the workers, while simultaneously amalgamating the workers of many different lands. Everywhere, the capitalists, abetted by aristocracy-of-labor opportunists, try to poison class consciousness and solidarity among the workers by fomenting religious, national and ethnic divisions. The struggle for the unity and integrity of the working class against chauvinism and racism is thus a vital task for the proletarian vanguard.”

So that’s sort of a theme of this talk: the unity and integrity of the working class. We fight for this against chauvinism and racism because this is a vital task for the proletarian vanguard that must lead the fight for socialist revolution internationally. As Karl Marx said more than 150 years ago, the workers of the world have no fatherland. This perspective also requires an uncompromising fight for the class independence of the proletariat from all wings of the capitalist exploiters; and in the U.S., that chiefly means breaking the ties that bind labor and the oppressed to the Democratic Party.

## Immigrants and the “War on Terror”

Now, the context of this bipartisan war on immigrants is a bipartisan “war on terror” which is really a war on immigrants, blacks, workers and democratic rights in general in the U.S. and a pretext for neocolonial wars and occupations abroad. There has been an all-out capitalist assault on jobs, wages, unions, health care, pensions, education, and every meager social benefit that this country has ever provided. And then there are the police-state measures of every variety: the torture chambers around the world, rendition, domestic spying at an unprecedented level, the USA Patriot Act, the Maritime Security Act, disappearing people, declaring citizens to be “enemy combatants” with no rights—all of this no longer covert, but justified aggressively!

Now I read in the *New York Times* that the U.S. government is saying they don’t want to send people back from Guantánamo because they might be mistreated in their home countries! I mean, “hypocrisy” doesn’t even describe this. Look at the persecution of immigrants from Muslim countries, like this vicious frame-up of the young Pakistani man and his father in Lodi, California. The U.S. government would have you believe the top leaders of Al Qaeda are making the pilgrimage to Lodi, California! I’ve heard some tall tales in my life, but this one takes the cake.

Abroad, it’s U.S. imperialism’s bloody war on Iraq and Afghanistan. Iraq was one of the most advanced countries of

gration struggles. There has been massive immigration to the U.S. in the past decade: 12.1 percent of the population of the U.S. was born in another country. This is the highest figure since 1920 (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 2 May). It is now estimated that there are nearly 12 million undocumented immigrants in the U.S., about half of them from Mexico, another quarter from Central and Latin America, the remaining quarter from a variety of different Asian and European countries.

But the really significant date here is 1994 and the imposition of NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement. Our U.S., Canadian and Mexican sections wrote a joint statement beforehand, where



Bancroft Library, UC Berkeley

**Left: Mexican migrant workers in 1933 California cotton strike. Below: Deported workers back in Mexico, victims of 1950s “Operation Wetback.”**



University of Texas

the Middle East; the mass murderers who run *this* country have massacred its people and destroyed its infrastructure. We called for defense of Iraq during the Iraq war and now we call for the unconditional withdrawal of the U.S. from Iraq and Afghanistan and for class struggle at home against the capitalist rulers carrying out these imperialist depredations. We call for “Hands off Iran,” currently in the U.S.’s gun sights, and hope to hell they do have nuclear weapons, because that’s the only thing that U.S. imperialism respects.

All of this is very much related to the ascendancy of counterrevolution in the former Soviet Union, a bureaucratically degenerated workers state. Its demise was a world-historic defeat for working people all over the world, decisively altering the political landscape on this planet. No longer challenged by Soviet military might, U.S. imperialism has declared a “one-superpower world,” running roughshod over the whole world. In France, as in all of West Europe, the capitalist governments are trying to overturn the remains of the so-called welfare state—social measures introduced mostly during the anti-Soviet Cold War by a ruling class fearful of the spectre of social revolution. And in Russia the working people starve. We fought for unconditional military defense of the Soviet Union against imperialism and internal counterrevolution, and for proletarian political revolution to oust the bureaucracy and return the USSR to the revolutionary road of Lenin and Trotsky.

## Immigrant Rights Protests and the Democrats

Now after this probably too-long introduction, let me get back to today’s immi-

grants. We said: “Yankee imperialism gears up for global trade war—Stop the U.S. ‘free trade’ rape of Mexico.” We were so right: As a direct result of this agreement, millions of Mexicans were forced out of the countryside, leading to a huge increase in urban poverty in Mexico and mass migration by millions of desperate immigrants to the U.S. looking for work. It is estimated that 10 percent of the Mexican population now lives in the U.S., and the \$20 billion they send home annually is Mexico’s third-largest source of income. Meanwhile, the Mexican rulers cry crocodile tears over the plight of Mexican immigrants. But this is simply a smokescreen to cover exploitation and oppression by a parasitic Mexican bourgeoisie. None of the bourgeois parties in Mexico opposed NAFTA.

What is hopeful and encouraging in the recent period is that in marked contrast to the past, there has been an outpouring of millions of immigrant protesters, despite their vulnerability to government victimization. Millions took to the streets on May 1 in the largest coordinated demonstrations since the Vietnam War. Many Tyson Meat and Perdue chicken processing factories were closed. The port in L.A. was described by the *San Francisco Chronicle* as “eerily quiet,” as the mostly immigrant, but still not unionized, port truckers shut it down. Good for them! Across California there was a big student boycott. And, of course, the U.S. government has stepped up deportations in a clear attempt at intimidation, rounding up nearly 1,200 people in one big sweep. The Department of Homeland Security, which had no interest whatsoever in saving black people in New Orleans, promises to be quite efficient when it comes to

deporting Hispanic people and sending a message that they better not go to the demos.

Look at these protests: massive demos of desperate and brave Hispanic immigrants fighting for their rights but carrying the red, white and blue of U.S. imperialism and led by the reactionary Catholic church hierarchy and a bunch of Democratic Party capitalist politicians. The Catholic church—an all-sided force for reaction. People here in L.A. could probably speak more specifically than me, but Cardinal Mahony has his own history as a union-buster.

One of the main slogans of the marches has been: “Today we march, tomorrow we vote,” a clear attempt to steer anger at the Republican-led efforts to criminalize immigrants into the Democratic Party. But it was Clinton’s 1996 immigration “reform” that allowed the deportation of even longtime permanent residents for the most trivial of offenses. It was Clinton’s Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act that vastly expanded the racist death penalty and set up star-chamber courts to deport immigrants without even allowing their lawyers to see the “evidence,” such as it was. It was Clinton’s Operation Gatekeeper that further militarized the San Diego border, resulting each year in the deaths of hundreds crossing the border in remote desert areas.

The Democratic Party is a capitalist party, representing the class enemy. We fight for a revolutionary workers party. And on this point I will here comment: Do you want to know what the very reformist International Socialist Organization (ISO), for example, says about the immigrant marches? “Potentially, the movement can break the logjam of U.S. politics, in which the Republicans launch attack after attack with little or no response from the Democrats” (*Socialist Worker*, 31 March). That’s what the ISO is really about: getting the Democrats to respond. For them the point of any movement is to pressure the Democrats to fight for the people. The Democrats may occasionally posture as the friends of labor, immigrants and blacks, the better to hoodwink them. But they are, no less than the Republicans, a capitalist party.

So on to the bills: HR 4437 is the bill, sponsored by Republican Congressman Sensenbrenner and passed by the House of Representatives in December, that would build the 700-mile wall and make it a felony to be an undocumented immigrant or provide any assistance to one. I’ve been taking classes on how to teach English as a Second Language, and someone made a presentation to my class noting that all of us would-be ESL teachers could wind up in jail. That certainly caught my attention!

What the rally organizers are mostly pushing are alternatives mostly based on bipartisan legislation proposed by Kennedy and McCain. Kennedy’s Web site touts this bill as having “tough enforcement measures,” and believe me, he isn’t kidding. The bill would double the number of border patrol agents, add 5,000 immigration cops to hunt “illegals” in

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A Spartacist Pamphlet \$1

**Black History and the Class Struggle**  
No. 19

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**For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!**

**NYC Transit Strike: Union Power vs. Class Collaboration...14**

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Immigrants...
(continued from page 7)

interior states, require Homeland Security to build 20 concentration camps capable of holding 10,000 detainees, and add a bunch of high-tech stuff along the border. Its much-vaunted “path to citizenship” is practically unachievable; it includes significant fines and fees, requires impeccable English and no arrests in this racist society, and you can never have acted adversely to U.S. foreign policy. So, all of you out there who attended those antiwar rallies, you would certainly not be eligible for citizenship. And if Bush has his way, you may yet be declared an “enemy combatant.”

The cornerstone of this bill—presumably the liberal part—is the “guest worker” program under which hundreds of thousands of immigrants would be assigned to, and at the mercy of, particular employers. Denied elementary rights, forced to slave in inhuman conditions, never able to become a citizen, then sent back. We’ve said it’s a form of indentured servitude, and that’s so clear. The current wrangling over immigration “reform” is entirely within the framework of capitalist interests. On the one hand are the right-wing anti-immigrant ideologues, including those Republicans who hope to ride anti-immigrant chauvinism in the November Congressional elections. On the other hand, there is a wide swath, which goes from the Bush White House and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce to most of the Democratic Party, that speaks for those capitalists who depend on the labor of immigrant workers and are pushing various “guest worker” programs. The Kennedy-McCain bill speaks for California agribusiness and sweatshop owners from here to New York, whose slogan is “Use ’em, abuse ’em, and send them back.”

Mobilize Labor’s Power!

The AFL-CIO leadership is opposed to “expanding” guest worker provisions. But they certainly don’t call for citizenship rights, and they don’t oppose further militarization of the border. And the Change to Win split-off, which includes the heavily Latino SEIU service employees and UNITE HERE hotel, restaurant and garment workers unions, is worse yet. They are for a guest worker program, and Anna Burger, the head of Change to Win, rants and raves about beefing up the border to prevent illegal immigration. The Teamsters bureaucracy, another component of Change to Win, is notorious for its chauvinist campaigns against Mexican truckers using U.S. highways. Let me comment that when NAFTA was first proposed in the early ’90s, the AFL-CIO bureaucracy denounced it very much from the standpoint of gross, chauvinist protectionism.

All of these labor bureaucrats accept and defend the capitalist profit system and identify with the national interests of U.S. imperialism. They tie the unions to



Chinese workers in California, 1889, part of labor force that built transcontinental railroad. Graphic depicts 1880 anti-Chinese riot in Denver.

the class enemy through the medium of the Democratic Party. Daniel De Leon, an early American socialist, aptly called these bureaucrats the labor lieutenants of capital. Their class collaboration has led to defeat after defeat. It is the task of the revolutionary party to educate the workers so they can politically oust these misleaders and set the unions on the path of class struggle against the capitalists and their whole system.

A symptom of the grave weakness of the U.S. labor movement today was that there was no organized union presence and banners at any of the big immigrant rights rallies. An article in the Los Angeles Times (3 May) commented: “Organized labor’s money, muscle and mobilizing expertise played an instrumental role in managing the myriad details involved in the two Los Angeles marches.” That’s true, labor put up the porta-potties and built the stage, and contributed money. The working class was present but it was not mobilized on a class basis. It was dissolved into the classless “people,” and therefore the marchers did not express their power as a class. This was deliberate; the bureaucrats don’t want organized labor to start thinking about expressing its demands through general strikes. And I will comment on the 12,000 longshoremen on the West Coast. When they vote, that’s nothing. When they go on strike and shut down every port on the West Coast, that has immense social power. But the trade-union bureaucracy does not want that power mobilized.

What is needed in the U.S. is a class-struggle mobilization to organize the unorganized, including undocumented workers, into the unions with full rights and protections. The potential for this was seen in the strike by the supermarket workers right here in Southern California in 2003-2004. Had the union tops really tried to extend this strike nationally and enlist Teamster truck drivers to halt shipments to the supermarkets and warehouses, that strike could have been a resounding victory. Such a victory would have paved the

way for a successful drive to organize Wal-Mart. That in turn would have had an immediate impact in Mexico, where Wal-Mart is the largest private employer.

During the grocery workers strike, when la migra rounded up 250 undocumented Wal-Mart workers, the Spartacist League said, “Free the rounded-up Wal-Mart workers! No deportations!” But the United Food and Commercial Workers bureaucracy, which says it wants to organize these workers, did nothing to mobilize the union on their behalf. Rising to the defense of such workers is the only way to undercut the company and their government in their anti-union maneuvers. Some years ago, the Spartacist League wrote an excellent piece called “Labor’s Gotta Play Hardball to Win.” In it, we wrote, “No decisive gain of labor was ever won in a courtroom or by an act of Congress. Everything the workers movement has won of value has been achieved by mobilizing the ranks of labor in hard-fought struggle on the picket lines, in plant occupations.” So true!

Earlier I spoke about the struggles in France, which has a considerably more combative working class. But the class struggle in itself does not solve the crisis of leadership. The union bureaucrats are happy to let the struggle stop and have planned no further strikes to support the students’ demands, which virtually assures that the bulk of the law will be implemented. The union bureaucrats in league with the reformist workers parties even got into violence-baiting minority youth protesters, buying into the racist government campaign labeling such youth with the racist code word “hoooligans.” The leaderships of the opposition Socialist Party and Communist Party are seeking to use the crisis of the rightist government in order to put together a new popular front—that is, a class-collaborationist alliance with capitalist parties—to run in next year’s elections and administer capitalism for the capitalists. In contrast, our comrades in France have intervened with a proletarian, revolutionary and internationalist program pointing to the need to fight for socialist revolution.

California: Immigration and Racist Reaction

I want to speak about several aspects of immigration to the U.S., centering on California, which still has the most undocumented immigrants of any state. The recurring pattern of capitalist countries, which is especially clear in the U.S., is that when there is a need for labor, when the economy is expanding, the capitalists attract and recruit workers from poor countries. But when the economy slows down, they deliberately incite anti-immigrant hysteria in order to cut off the flow of immigrants.

This is very clear from a tragic and important chapter of California history. When gold was discovered in California in 1848, there was an immediate demand for labor. There were no railroads connecting California with the more populous East Coast, and overland travel was



Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Weekly

very expensive. Work in the mines eventually dried up, but by then, after the Civil War, the American capitalists had embarked on a large and very necessary project: the building of the transcontinental railroad. The mine owners imported laborers from China, who were practically slave labor. It was mainly Chinese immigrants who built the western branch and Irish immigrants who built the eastern branch.

But once the railroads were built and the cost of transportation became much lower, there was a big flood of white Europeans into California. There was the beginning of a workers movement, and the local capitalists, many of them fabulously wealthy from the gold strikes, diverted the workers movement against the Chinese. In his book Reconstruction, America’s Unfinished Revolution, Eric Foner writes: “In California, where indentured Chinese immigrants by 1870 constituted a quarter of the wage labor force, the agitation for their exclusion, more than any other issue, shaped the labor movement’s development.” So in the 1870s and ’80s there was a series of violent anti-Chinese riots up and down the West Coast. In 1882, the Chinese Exclusion Act was passed, cutting off further immigration, which was not reversed until the 1940s. They no longer needed the Chinese, who at one point had been absolutely critical to the development of American capitalism.

I will comment that the bourgeoisie is capable of taking advantage of even the most tragic natural disasters to further its aims, as is clear in New Orleans today as they try to “whiten” the city. Let me give you an example you may not have heard about. In the San Francisco Chronicle, there have been endless articles about the 1906 earthquake, marking the 100 year anniversary. The Chronicle did not deem fit to tell us that the city fathers of San Francisco tried to take the occasion of the destruction of Chinatown in the earthquake to grab this valuable downtown land from the Chinese and move them to Hunter’s Point, then the site of slaughterhouses. As Simon Winchester comments in his book A Crack in the Edge of the World:

“By mid-April the Chinese legation in Washington had made it abundantly clear that no less a figure than the Dowager Empress herself, speaking from deep within the Forbidden City, had demanded that her people be housed where they had long wished to be housed. To underline the issue, the legation (which sent an official party to San Francisco) pointed out that the Chinese government owned title to land on Stockton Street, in the heart of Chinatown, and fully intended to rebuild its consulate there.”

So in this case, the sanctity of private property and the threat of trade sanctions won out, and San Francisco Chinatown was rebuilt where it had been before.

ICL Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program

The Declaration of Principles of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) is a concrete expression of our purpose: to build national sections of a democratic-centralist international which can lead the struggle for worldwide socialist revolution.

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Now Out in Tagalog!



Let me continue with my point that the capitalists recruit immigrant workers when they need them and try to get rid of them when they don't. Amid the mass unemployment of the Great Depression of the 1930s, the U.S. repatriated nearly half a million Mexicans from the American Southwest. Some of these people incidentally had citizenship papers, but it didn't matter: they were still deported. And this was, after all, on land that the U.S. stole from Mexico in the 1840s. A workers government in the U.S. would return to Mexico certain predominantly Spanish-speaking areas along the border.

During World War II, when the 120,000 Japanese Americans, many of them working in the fields of California, were rounded up and put in the concentration camps, the growers suddenly discovered that they didn't have enough workers. We've written extensively about the internment, one of the darkest chapters of U.S. history. Out of the resulting labor shortage was born the *bracero* program, which, like the internment of Japanese Americans, was the product of the liberal Democratic Party administration of Franklin Roosevelt. Up to half of 4.5 million Mexican workers toiled in American agriculture over the 20 years of this program from 1942 to 1964. But they were not immigrants and had no right to become immigrants. They were considered permanent Mexican citizens, and they could be sent back by their employer at any time.

In the 1950s, when the *bracero* program was still going on, again over a million Mexicans and Mexican Americans were expelled from the U.S. in an operation whose racist name tells the whole story. It was called Operation Wetback! In

as in the 1930s, remain the reserve army of labor for California agribusiness.

**For United Class Struggle!**

As revolutionary leader V.I. Lenin wrote in an article titled "Capitalism and Workers' Immigration" in 1913:

"There can be no doubt that dire poverty alone compels people to abandon their native land, and that the capitalists exploit the immigrant workers in the most shameful manner. But only reactionaries can shut their eyes to the progressive significance of this modern migration of nations. Emancipation from the yoke of capital is impossible without the further development of capitalism, and without the class struggle that is based on it. And it is into this struggle that capitalism is drawing the masses of the working people of the whole world, breaking down the musty, fusty habits of local life, breaking down national barriers and prejudices, uniting workers from all countries in huge factories and mines in America, Germany, and so forth."

Today the immigrant worker, who often brings with him militant traditions of class war, is vital to reinvigorating the working class here, breaking down its supremely musty, fusty habits of local life and breaking down deeply ingrained national prejudices. Latinos from Mexico and Central America have turned "open shop" L.A. into a battleground of the class war. We welcome them; the U.S. working class needs all the help it can get! Mexican immigrant workers can also serve as a human bridge linking the struggles of the North American and Latin American proletariat. For class struggle on both sides of the border!

But our task is not easy. Near the end of his life, Friedrich Engels noted in a letter to the German American Marxist Frie-



**August 2005: Fascistic anti-immigrant Minutemen vigilantes in Laguna Beach, California.**

an interesting book called *Outlaws in the Promised Land*, the author makes the point that often immigration and deportation go on at the same time, and that the revolving door policy is very useful for the capitalists in intimidating people and keeping them from organizing. In 1960, Edward R. Murrow, the newscaster, did a documentary on the *bracero* program called "Harvest of Shame." It was an excellent exposé of the horrible conditions, but I read that Murrow was later very discomforted when he found out that the Soviet Union was showing the movie to demonstrate the evils of capitalism, which it did!

Former *braceros* and their families continue to fight both the U.S. and the Mexican governments for wages that were supposedly set aside and sent to Mexico for them to pick up when they got back there. The *bracero* program was legally abolished, mainly under pressure from the trade unions. But in a sense it still exists. What happens is that the contract worker without rights becomes the so-called illegal alien, also without rights. Let me make an obvious point: If the Pew Hispanic Center knows there are 12 million undocumented immigrants here, then the U.S. authorities certainly know they're here and allow them to be here. The government wants immigrants to be fearful and afraid to organize, but capitalists need them and the government knows that. Mexican immigrants, now

drich Sorge that among the obstacles to forming a mass workers party in America was:

"immigration, which divides the workers into two groups: the native-born and the foreigners, and the latter in turn into (1) the Irish, (2) the Germans, (3) the many small groups, each of which understands only itself: Czechs, Poles, Italians, Scandinavians, etc. And then the Negroes. To form a single party out of these requires quite unusually powerful incentives. Often there is a sudden violent élan, but the bourgeois need only wait passively, and the dissimilar elements of the working class fall apart again."

As Engels indicated, we have our work cut out for us, and our first step is a clear-eyed look at the problems. Which tendency—that toward working-class unity in the struggle against capitalist exploitation or that toward antagonistic divisions along racial and ethnic lines—will prevail in the historic long run? For class unity to prevail, it is necessary to build a revolutionary vanguard party modeled on the Bolshevik Party that Lenin built in the Russian tsarist empire. Liberals tend to condemn the concept of a vanguard party as elitism. But we are not alien to the working class, seeking to impose our goals from the outside. Rather, we represent in a conscious and consistent way the powerful inner tendency of the working class toward united struggle against capitalist exploitation, ultimately for socialist revolution. For this to succeed, we have to fight the powerful forces seeking to divide the work-



**Japanese Americans arriving at California internment camp, 1942. 120,000 Japanese were rounded up under World War II directive of Democratic president Franklin D. Roosevelt.**



ing class along racial and national lines.

In the U.S., opposition to anti-immigrant racism must be intertwined with the struggle against black oppression. We must combat anti-immigrant chauvinism among U.S.-born black and white workers. It's gross to see, as I've heard reported, a few blacks here in L.A. joining these vigilante Minutemen. At the same time, immigrant workers must understand that anti-black racism must be defeated because it remains the touchstone of social reaction in the U.S.

We have described black people as an oppressed race-color caste, integrated into the U.S. capitalist economy while segregated at the bottom of American society. Black oppression is the cornerstone of American capitalism. The racist atrocity in New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina made this fact plain to the whole world. In fact, what was really clear was the impulse to genocide that the American bourgeoisie has toward black people. We stand for revolutionary integrationism, fighting against segregation and for the integration of black people into an egalitarian, socialist America. The slogan "Black liberation through socialist revolution" sums up our strategic tasks. This means confronting the unfinished business of the Civil War, which ended slavery but most certainly did not fulfill the promise of black liberation. Only workers revolution can fulfill that promise. Karl Marx, around the time of the Civil War, wrote, "Labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the black it is branded." This quote tells two important truths: first, that the fundamental division in society is class; second, that racism is a tool of the capitalist class to divide and rule the working class.

The opposite view, that race is the key divide, is expressed by the term "people of color," which has become fashionable among left-liberals and radicals. This is not simply a neutral description of ethnic groups that are deemed to be non-white. Behind the term "people of color" is a political outlook and implicit program. First, it says that no significant section of the white population, including white workers, can be expected to fight the

racial oppression of people of color. Secondly, it holds that all people in the U.S. considered to be non-white have, or should have, common interests and a strong sense of solidarity with one another—or, to put it crassly, that a black auto worker or a Mexican agricultural laborer has fundamentally more in common with a Chinese American real estate mogul or an Indian doctor than with a construction worker of Irish or Italian lineage. We start from the opposite perspective: that is, a determined struggle to unite the multiracial proletariat in class struggle against the capitalist system.

The labor bureaucracy has long pushed "Buy American" protectionism that blames the Japanese worker or the Chinese worker, not the American bosses, of course, for the deteriorating living standards of the American working class. Of course, with China, it's more than simply pro-U.S. protectionism; it's that the labor bureaucracy shares the anti-Communist aims of U.S. imperialism's drive to turn the Chinese bureaucratically deformed workers state into a colony of the U.S.

But if you want to know where protectionism leads, examine the case of Vincent Chin in the '80s, which kind of radicalized a generation of Asian youth. He was a young Chinese American man who was beaten to death, a few days before his wedding, by a foreman from an auto plant and his stepson who thought Vincent Chin was Japanese American. In their crazed, racist minds they thought he was responsible for the mass layoffs in auto in Detroit.

But they didn't originate this racist garbage. Anti-Japanese hysteria was pushed by the auto bosses, by the Democratic Party and by the top bureaucrats of the United Auto Workers. This was at a time when the union bureaucrats organized parties where they encouraged workers to smash Toyotas with sledgehammers (you can see a picture of this in *Workers Vanguard*) and where you didn't dare park a foreign car in a union parking lot. This was the labor sellouts' answer to layoffs—not plant takeovers or sit-down strikes, but blame the Japanese. The murderers of

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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!**

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# Immigrants...

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Vincent Chin never spent a day in jail. Vincent Chin's mother eventually moved back to China, disgusted with the U.S. injustice system.

Let me give you another startling example of the kind of chauvinism that must be combatted. Cesar Chavez has become something of a left-liberal icon. But if you go back and look at old *Workers Vanguard*, you can read some very hard-hitting articles from 1973 and '74 about Chavez's class collaborationism, reliance on the Democratic Party and the Catholic church, and insistence on passive protest and consumer boycotts rather than class struggle—hot-cargoing of struck goods, solidarity strikes, etc. But the most shocking article is one from the 13 September 1974 WV [No. 52] titled "Chavez Finks on 'Illegal' Mexican Workers." This article reveals that Chavez, concerned that growers were deliberately using undocumented workers as scabs, was going around, not organizing these workers, but fingering them to federal agents. This information was available not just in the pages of *Workers Vanguard*, but also in the *San Francisco Examiner*. And it was commented on, in their typically whiny and somewhat dishonest fashion, by the Communist Party, the Socialist Workers Party and the Maoist October League. This was totally well known at the time and is now totally covered up!

## For Proletarian Revolution!

On the note of whiny and somewhat dishonest, let me talk about some of the left groups and their attitudes toward the current demonstrations. The reformist International Socialist Organization (ISO), Workers World Party and ANSWER and Socialist Workers Party (SWP) have all signed up as cheerleaders for what is being dubbed the "new civil rights movement." Now, all these outfits editorialize against "guest worker" programs but refuse to raise the straightforward call for full citizenship rights. The ISO's maximum demand is "Amnesty Now," while the SWP calls for "permanent residency." Both of these demands would keep immigrants in second-class status. What is amnesty? It means that you will not be prosecuted for your "crime" of coming here and working like a dog and being exploited to the max. The amnesty of 1986 allowed *some* undocumented workers to become permanent residents and *some* of these to become citizens many years later. Workers World calls for full rights and amnesty, which is a deliberately confusing slogan designed to not offend liberals while sounding a little left. We say that anybody who made it here, by whatever means, has the right to full citizenship rights.



WV Photo

**Washington, D.C., 27 November 1982: Thousands of protesters charge up Capitol Hill after stopping Ku Klux Klan march centrally targeting immigrant rights.**

Most importantly, the reformists disappear the central role played by the capitalist politicians and the Catholic church in these demos. Here's a quote from *Workers World* [4 May] speaking of the May 1 demo: "By raising the banner of mass struggle and taking a path independent of both Republicans and Democrats, they are setting a tone of resistance, challenge and defiance that is so needed to show the true power of the workers and end this long period of retreat." I wish! But wishing doesn't make it so. There must be political struggle!

Let me take up one other question. At least in the Bay Area, a few anarchist types—not the main leaders of these demos, by any means, but a few anarchists—have been raising the liberal utopian slogan, "Open the borders." This implies illusions that there can be the abolition of national states under capitalism. It implies that the state, which in our Marxist view is armed bodies of men—cops, *la migra*, army, courts, and prisons—whose function is the suppression of the working class in the interests of the capitalist class, can somehow be reformed away or be made to serve our interests. No, it can't; it must be overturned, and a workers state established.

The slogan "Open the borders," if applied to small, neocolonial or underdeveloped countries, can be downright reactionary: Should Aztec leader Montezuma have welcomed the Spanish conquistadors with open arms? Or should the Mexican regimes in the early 19th century have allowed unfettered American immigration into what is now the American Southwest and California? But applied to imperialist powers like the U.S., which are the only ones really capable of defending their borders, it is fatuous utopianism. Capitalism cannot provide economic well-being and freedom for the people of the world. We understand that unlimited immigration

and the destruction of national frontiers will become a reality only under socialism, as a result of the abolition of material scarcity.

It is through united class struggle that the divisions between white and black workers, and between the native-born and immigrants, can be overcome. A model effort in this regard was the November 1982 labor/black mobilization in Washington, D.C., initiated by the Spartacist League, which stopped the race-terrorist KKK. Many people here have probably heard of that demo, but a lot of people don't know or don't remember that the Klan was marching against immigrants and against some kind of minor amnesty proposal. But because it was the Klan and because we provided some revolutionary leadership, 5,000 people, mostly black, came out and stopped them. Previously that same year in Chicago, when the Nazis were going after gays, we organized a labor/black mobilization that stopped these fascists. Now there is plenty of anti-gay prejudice among white and black workers, but with communist leadership, working people can overcome these prejudices and be mobilized to fight on the grounds that "an injury to one is an injury to all"—and also on the basis of the understanding that the ultimate target of any kind of fascist movement in the U.S. is always blacks.

Finally I want to talk about the 9 February 2002 demo in which we organized labor to flex its muscle in defense of immigrant brothers and sisters targeted under the U.S. rulers' "war on terrorism." This was right after 9/11 and there was a lot of hysteria. So it was difficult, but some 300 unionists, immigrants, blacks and youth rallied in downtown Oakland in opposition to the USA Patriot Act, the Maritime Security Act and the anti-immigrant witchhunt. At the core of this demonstration were over 30 dock workers from the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 10. They joined transit workers, water utility workers, printers, Hispanic day laborers, Asian and Near Eastern immigrants and college and high school students to declare that the U.S. working class will

fight to defend all the oppressed against their common capitalist class enemy.

It took a fight to put this demo together, a political fight. For one thing, the ILWU International does not oppose the Maritime Security Act, which is directed at all port workers. The ILWU bureaucracy buys into the "war on terror." They want it reformed a little, and mostly they want it applied to the immigrant port truckers whom the bureaucracy points to as the "real security risk." So it was a very conscious choice for these black longshoremen to come to the demo, and we had a lot of discussions at the longshore hall about why it was important for black workers to defend immigrants. When people came, the most popular chant was, "Asian, Latino, black and white, workers of the world unite!" You could see every one of those kinds of workers at the demo, and you could see they really meant what they said. So it was small, but impressive.

It had an effect around the world, too. Our Mexican comrades said that the people they were talking to were just amazed by this demo, which cut against the very common idea in Mexico and other Third World countries that there are no classes or class struggle in the U.S. With its internationalism, it cut against Mexican nationalism—the "we Mexicans must stick together" rhetoric that the Mexican bourgeoisie uses to bind the exploited to their exploiters. The ICL got letters from countries where we have no sections, from people who had just heard about the protest and were congratulating us on this stance of defense of immigrants against the predatory U.S. government. It was a small demo, but I think that in some ways it showed the way forward and how the multiracial working class of this country *can* be organized.

In conclusion, our model is the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. It replaced the rule of the capitalists and landlords with that of the working class and raised high the banner of world socialist revolution. Despite the Stalinist degeneration that ultimately opened the door to capitalist counterrevolution in 1991-1992, the Soviet Union demonstrated the power of a planned, collectivized economy in providing employment, education, health care and decent living conditions. We continue to stand for and fight for the liberating principles of the Bolshevik Revolution. And on the subject of this talk, the principles were very clearly stated in the 1918 founding constitution of the Soviet workers state:

"Article 20: Acting on the principle of the solidarity of the toilers of all nations, the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic shall grant all political rights enjoyed by Russian citizens to foreigners resident within the territory of the Russian Republic for purposes of employment and belonging to the working class or to the peasantry not employing hired labour. Local soviets shall be authorized to confer upon such foreigners, without any troublesome formalities, the rights of Russian citizenship."

This straightforward assertion was simply the concrete application of the basic Marxist principle that the workers of the world must unite against their oppressors. ■

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# Free Mumia...

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be mentioned in a simple declaration of solidarity.

For more than 24 years, Mumia has been locked away for a crime he did not commit. His innocence is internationally recognized. Mumia, former Black Panther militant, committed journalist, is a victim of a racist frame-up orchestrated by the FBI and the American government. Numerous support campaigns led by youth and workers across the world have made known the case of Mumia and of Afro-American prisoners in the U.S.

Not all Parisian rail workers know who Mumia Abu-Jamal is. This is why we, SNCF [French national railroad system] workers in commercial services (ticket offices) and in the engine and driver section, will take the opportunity of this initiative to commit ourselves to making

the case of Mumia and other political prisoners known in the workshops, in our train stations and workplaces.

We will continue to mobilize against the repressive terror of the racist and capitalist governments that lock away and repress minorities, trade unionists (as is the situation of one of our own members) and those participating in the social movements. We recall that during the movement against the CPE [anti-youth First Employment Contract bill], prison terms (such as in Rennes), suspended sentences and heavy fines were handed down to youth from the ghettos, students, high school students and trade unionists.

We, workers and trade unionists, will continue to mobilize for Mumia and for others.

Immediate and unconditional freedom for Mumia and for Afro-American prisoners!

Long live international workers solidarity! ■

WORKERS VANGUARD



# Spy Network...

(continued from page 1)

domestic and international communications.” A business executive told the *Los Angeles Times* (25 December 2005) that the NSA has a direct hookup into AT&T’s massive database, codenamed Daytona, of nearly *two trillion* phone records. The next month, the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) launched a class-action lawsuit against AT&T, charging the company with illegally giving the government access to its customers’ communications and records. The EFF is also seeking an injunction against the spying. *USA Today* subsequently reported that these companies include not only AT&T but MCI (now part of Verizon) and Sprint.

Following the announcement of lawsuits against several of the companies, *USA Today* (11 May) reported that AT&T, Verizon and BellSouth had contracted to give the NSA access to records of every phone call made through their systems. BellSouth has since denied that it provided any such records, while a number of wireless companies have either denied handing over records to the NSA or refused to comment. But *USA Today* is sticking by its story. And now, in a *New Yorker* (29 May) article titled “Listening In,” Seymour Hersh cites a security consultant working with a major telecommunications company that had “set up a top-secret high-speed circuit between its main computer complex and Quantico, Virginia, the site of a government-intelligence computer center.” The source said, “What the companies are doing is worse than turning over records.” He continued, “They’re providing total access to all the data.”

The government is tracking phone calls made by journalists from the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post* and ABC News as part of “investigations” into such leaks as those that exposed the NSA’s domestic spying. Attorney General Alberto Gonzales is threatening to prosecute journalists for revealing government secrets.

## NSA, Telecom Old Tricks

So secretive that it was nicknamed “No Such Agency,” the NSA is by far the largest of the U.S. spy agencies, with some 40,000 employees and operations that span the globe. The NSA’s partnership with the recombinant offspring of Ma Bell—the Bell Telephone monopoly broken up in the 1980s and now recoalescing in a series of mergers—brings to mind the 1967 satirical movie *The President’s Analyst*, starring James Coburn and Godfrey Cambridge. In the movie, it turns out that The Phone Company runs the world and its robotic executives scheme to implant devices in everyone’s brain. Exemplifying the tight relationship between the phone companies and the state, in 1994 under Clinton the FBI successfully pushed for the Communications Assistance for Law Enforcement Act, which requires that digitally switched telephone networks be built with “back doors” to allow wiretapping.

Documents filed by the EFF in its suit against AT&T give us a glimpse into how the NSA-telecom partnership operates. The documents were courageously provided by Mark Klein, a retired AT&T technician with more than 22 years’ experience. After Klein submitted an April 6 statement summarizing his evidence in the lawsuit, *Wired News* published it on its Web site, along with a document Klein wrote in January 2004 detailing what he saw while working in AT&T’s downtown San Francisco hub.

According to Klein, in 2002 an NSA agent visited his worksite to interview a management-level technician for a “secret job.” The following January, Klein witnessed the construction of a new room in the company’s downtown central office, off-limits to the regular workforce of union technicians, where equipment was installed by the person interviewed by the NSA. Klein observed in his 2004 document, “The telltale sign of an illicit government spy operation is the fact that *only people with security clearance from the National Security Agency can enter this room*” (emphasis in original).

Klein writes that later in 2003, “I learned that fiber optic cables from the secret room were tapping into the WorldNet [AT&T’s Internet service] circuits by splitting off a portion of the light signal.” Klein explained that in order to monitor fiber-optic signals, which conduct light rather than electricity, devices called splitters must be installed. For this purpose, a special cabinet was built. Circuits from the “Peering Links” that connect WorldNet to the rest of the Internet are fed into the cabinet, where the light signal is split into two signals, one of which is diverted to the secret room. Among the links tapped is “Mae West,” one of two key Internet nodes in the U.S. According to Klein, this means that “it’s not just WorldNet customers who are being spied on—it’s the entire internet.” In the course of his work, Klein learned of similar cabinets in other cities, including Seattle, San Jose, Los Angeles and San Diego.

Klein obtained an equipment list for the secret room, which was submitted as part of the lawsuit and is posted on the *Wired News* Web site. The list includes an item called the Narus STA 6400—equipment and associated software designed

AT&T’s claim but kept the documents under seal. *Wired News*, however, has just published a complete set of Klein’s documents online. Meanwhile, the government seeks to dismiss the whole suit on the grounds that even to consider it would jeopardize “national security.” A hearing on the issue is scheduled for June 23.

Government lawyers rely on a legal doctrine of “state secrets” that the Bush administration seeks to greatly expand. That doctrine has been applied in the past to try to suppress evidence of the government’s surveillance and dirty tricks against its opponents, from the NSA’s spying on pediatrician and Vietnam antiwar figure Dr. Benjamin Spock to the Nixon administration’s warrantless wiretapping of Pentagon Papers leaker Daniel Ellsberg, and FBI programs directed against leftists. A recent chilling example was the dismissal earlier this month of a lawsuit against the CIA and private security companies by Khaled al-Masri. A victim of the government’s rendition of “terror suspects,” al-Masri, a Lebanese-born German national, was seized in late 2003 and imprisoned and tortured for



Paramount Pictures

The Phone Company plots world domination in 1967 film *The President’s Analyst*.

to sift rapidly through vast quantities of Internet traffic, select Web pages, e-mail or other content based on pre-programmed criteria, and play back the content of those communications. According to the manufacturer, Narus, its product is designed to help “law enforcement agencies to conduct authorized electronic surveillance.” On Narus’ board sits William P. Crowell, a former deputy director of the NSA. According to the Narus Web site, Crowell has served on the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) Task Force on Terrorism and Deterrence since the September 11 attacks.

Klein noted that these devices were installed by AT&T at the time of the notorious Total Information Awareness (TIA) program, which was run by convicted Contragate criminal John Poindexter, operating out of DARPA. As Poindexter described it, the TIA would give the government “instant access to information from Internet mail and calling records to credit card and banking transactions and travel documents, without a search warrant” (*New York Times*, 9 November 2002).

Following a public outcry, Poindexter resigned and Congress made a show of cutting off funding for the project. But as is now abundantly confirmed, the core of the TIA is alive and well. Funding has simply been shunted to other agencies, including the NSA. Congress went through the pretense of cutting off funding for another TIA-type project, CAPPS II, which aimed to “data mine” commercial databases of personal information on airline passengers (see “Big Brother in the Skies,” WV No. 818, 23 January 2004). That program has continued under another name, “Secure Flight.” These programs add a number of new installations, such as at the AT&T site in San Francisco, to the NSA’s vast, global network of satellites, listening stations and supercomputers. The NSA even has at its disposal the nuclear-powered submarine USS *Jimmy Carter*, specially retrofitted for tapping other countries’ undersea fiber-optic cables.

The government and AT&T are doing their best to quash the EFF lawsuit. AT&T moved to suppress the Klein documents on the grounds that they are “proprietary.” On May 17, a judge in San Francisco denied

nearly five months in Afghanistan before being released in Albania without explanation. In dismissing the suit, the court intoned that “in the present circumstances, al-Masri’s private interests must give way to the national interest in preserving state secrets.”

In the defining 1953 Supreme Court case *United States v. Reynolds*, the court ruled that “state secrets” prevented a lawsuit by the widows of civilians killed when the Air Force bomber they were on crashed. According to the ruling, the relevant Air Force documents could not even be examined by a judge to determine if any state secrets were involved. When the documents were declassified and released 47 years later, they contained no secrets but much evidence of negligence (Federation of American Scientists *Secrecy News*, 26 January 2004).

## Government Surveillance and the Imperial Presidency

The cozy relationship between government snoops and the communications industry goes back to one of the NSA’s ancestors—a secret outfit known as the Black Chamber that worked under military intelligence—which got Western Union to turn over copies of international telegrams in 1919. Following World War II, the Signal Security Agency, the NSA’s direct predecessor, arranged for Western Union and International Telephone and Telegraph to do likewise in a project code-named Operation Shamrock that soon extended to all the big telecom companies. The NSA itself was founded in 1952 by secret order of Democratic president Harry Truman primarily to spy on the USSR during the Cold War, part of U.S. imperialism’s drive to destroy the Soviet degenerated workers state. An immediate precipitant for its formation was the complaint from military and government leaders about the quality of communications intelligence during the Korean War.

The NSA’s domestic spying underwent a big expansion under the Johnson administration in 1967 and again under Nixon, as the government targeted radicals, Vietnam antiwar activists and black militants, based on “watch lists” of citizens given to the NSA by the FBI, CIA and other agen-

cies. Following the Watergate scandal, and under the impact of the social struggles of the 1960s and early ’70s, some of this history came out in the investigation and hearings of the Senate’s 1975-76 Church Committee. President Ford extended executive privilege to shield those involved from testifying on the recommendation of his chief of staff, one Dick Cheney, and his Secretary of Defense, one Donald Rumsfeld (*Baltimore Sun*, 12 May). Spying continued, with some cosmetic changes. In 1978, the Carter administration signed the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA). Billed as a barrier to NSA/CIA domestic spying, FISA in fact codified such surveillance by adding a veneer of legality. While FISA is now invoked by liberals as a check on the nation’s secret police, in 27 years, the secret FISA court that is supposed to vet requests for wiretap warrants has turned down only *five* of nearly *20,000* wiretap applications!

The current expansion of the government’s repressive apparatus is a significant escalation in the war against the rights of working people and the oppressed. The NSA’s invasion of privacy can carry drastic consequences. Now, if you are singled out and labeled a terrorist based on “classified” evidence, the government claims the right to “disappear” you as an “enemy combatant” with no legal recourse. The “war on terror” has accelerated the drive toward unfettered power by the executive branch. Much of the constitutional power originally vested in Congress has increasingly been transferred to the “imperial presidency,” corresponding to the needs of U.S. imperialism to assert itself as cop of the world.

Whether the capitalist rulers prevail in their attempts to shred the rights of the population will be determined in the final analysis by the level of class and social struggle. The working class, due to its relationship to the means of production, has enormous potential social power that must be brought to bear in struggle against the capitalist class. But the current misleadership of the U.S. labor movement is an internal obstacle to such struggle. Wedded to the capitalist politicians who pose as “friends of labor,” the union bureaucrats have signed on as auxiliaries in the “war on terror,” whose ultimate domestic target is the organized working class. The spearhead of this “war” is abroad; at home, the population gets the shaft.

Instead of organizing the largely immigrant port truckers, the Teamsters tops are rallying for increased “port security,” one of whose targets would be just such immigrant workers. The “progressive” International Longshore and Warehouse Union bureaucrats call for implementing the Maritime Transportation Security Act and its mandated “background checks” of waterfront workers, which would directly threaten blacks and Latinos who have been on the receiving end of racist cop harassment. Such chauvinist class collaboration is in the sordid tradition of the AFL-CIO bureaucracy’s embrace of the Cold War against the Soviet Union. An instrumental part of that decades-long campaign was the notorious American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD), which worked with the CIA to destroy militant, left-led unions, especially in Latin America. The AIFLD was the brainchild of Joe Beirne, longtime president of the Communications Workers of America, the main telecom union.

As Marxists, we expect that the capitalist state will continue to eavesdrop on “persons of interest” to them—mainly those who oppose bloodsoaked capitalist rule. “Illegal” or not, spying, harassment and repression are the norm for the capitalist state, whose function is to defend capitalist profits and rule. As we wrote in “NSA/FBI Spying and the War on Our Rights” (WV No. 861, 6 January): “Short of the overthrow of capitalist rule, none of the rights and gains that working people hold dear are secure. What’s needed is a thoroughgoing socialist revolution led by a multiracial workers party to establish the rule of the working class and usher in a society based on production for human needs not profit.”■



# WORKERS VANGUARD

## Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants! Labor and the Fight for Immigrant Rights

Facing a barrage of calls from the Republican right to crack down on “illegal aliens,” President Bush last week announced his intention to deploy some 6,000 more National Guardsmen to help police the border with Mexico. While Democratic Party politicians have been prominent in recent protests against a Republican House bill that would criminalize all undocumented immigrants and those who provide them assistance, the Democrats have joined with many Republicans in pushing through an alternative package of repressive measures. Last week, the Senate voted overwhelmingly to add nearly 400 miles of border walls, along with 500 miles of vehicle barriers, and, in a 99-0 vote, to deny the possibility of citizenship to those who have been convicted of criminal offenses or have ignored deportation orders.

By a nearly two-to-one margin, the Senate also tacked on an amendment to its pending immigration bill recognizing English as the national language, specifically denying any right for government agencies or officials to provide information or services in other languages. As Marxist opponents of chauvinist bigotry, we stand for full equality of all languages in all spheres of public life, defending, for example, bilingual education. No to “English-only” laws!

The government’s moves to step up the militarization of the border have provoked a storm of outrage in Mexico. With the July presidential elections looming, even Mexico’s right-wing president Vicente Fox, who used to parade his friendship with Bush, has felt compelled to issue an official protest against the border wall and National Guard proposals. Fox’s government has also called for an investigation into the May 18 killing of a Mexican driver by two federal agents in California near the border crossing.

We print below a presentation, edited for publication, by Spartacist League spokesman Diana Coleman at a May 6 forum in Los Angeles. Her presentation began with the Woody Guthrie song, “Plane Wreck at Los Gatos (Deportee).”

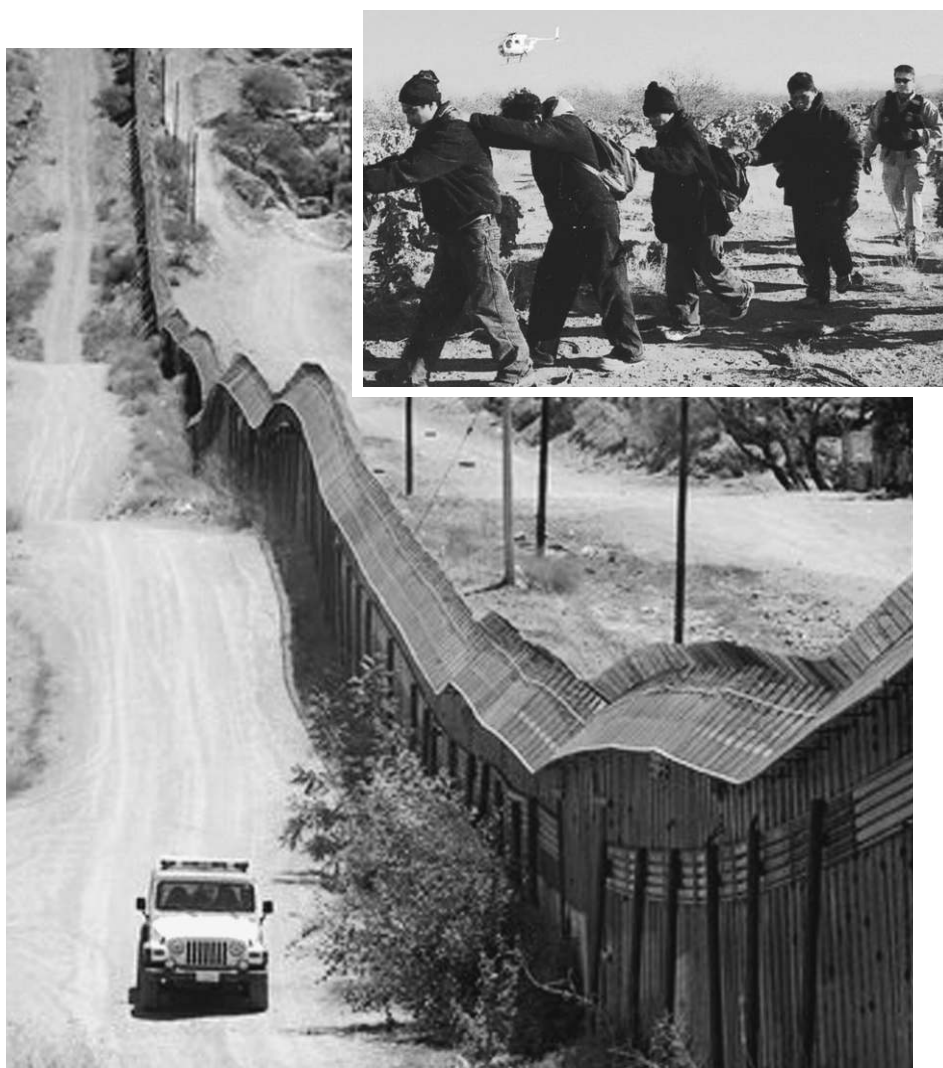
\* \* \*

“The crops are all in and the  
peaches are rott’ning,  
The oranges piled in their creosote  
dumps;  
They’re flying ’em back to the  
Mexican border  
To pay all their money to wade  
back again....  
“The sky plane caught fire over  
Los Gatos Canyon,  
A fireball of lightning, and shook  
all our hills,

Who are all these friends, all  
scattered like dry leaves?  
The radio says, “They are just  
deportees’.”

This is a song by Woody Guthrie  
written in 1948. Like many of Guthrie’s  
songs, it was written about a real incident:  
that is, a plane that left from the Oakland

*continued on page 7*



Kontos/Polaris (inset), Getty

**Top: People arrested trying to cross border from Mexico. Immigration cops patrol border wall, Nogales, Arizona. Below: Oxnard, California protest, part of massive nationwide May Day demonstrations for immigrant rights.**

Osman/LA Times



## Break with the Democrats! Build a Revolutionary Workers Party!