

U.S. Out of Iraq! Hands Off Syria, Iran!

Down With Zionist Onslaught Against Lebanon, Gaza!



Reuters

AUGUST 1—In the bloodiest massacre of almost three weeks of relentless Israeli bombardment, some 60 people, including many children, were killed on July 30 in a bombing attack on the Lebanese village of Qana. Qana is the same village that Israel struck in 1996, murdering over 100 refugees in a United Nations compound. Among those who died in Qana this time around were the most helpless of southern Lebanon's suffering population—those too poor, too young, too old or too sick to escape the region. The 48-hour "halt" in aerial bombardment that Israel announced following the Qana slaughter was in fact a continuation of airstrikes and an expansion of the ground offensive. As we go to press, up to 10,000 Israeli troops are pushing into Lebanon.

The devastation of Lebanon is staggering: upwards of 750 people slaughtered; power stations, factories and entire neighborhoods leveled; over 800,000, nearly a fifth of the population, forced to flee their homes. The pretext for this carnage was the July 12 ambush by the Shi'ite fundamentalist Hezbollah of an Israeli border patrol, killing eight soldiers and capturing two. The Zionist rulers began their offensive by imposing a sea and air blockade and destroying roads leading to Syria, effectively trapping the population while turning Lebanon into a free-fire zone.

This is what U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice celebrated as the "birth pangs of a new Middle East." A retired Israeli commander threatened: "Israel is attempting to create a rift between the Lebanese population and Hezbollah supporters by exacting a heavy price from the elite in Beirut. The message is: If you want your air conditioning to work and if you want to be able to fly to Paris for shopping, you must pull your head out of



Silva/NY Times

Southern suburb of Beirut devastated by Israeli bombardment, July 20. Inset: Lebanese man carrying dead child in southern town of Qana, where a July 30 Israeli airstrike killed some 60 people, including numerous children.

No to Imperialist "Peacekeepers"! For a Socialist Federation of the Near East!

the sand and take action toward shutting down Hezbollah-land" (*Washington Post* online, 19 July).

Clearly, if Israel is the mother of this barbaric onslaught, U.S. imperialism is the father. Having armed Israel to the hilt over the years, Washington has opposed calls for an immediate cease-fire and rushed a shipment of precision satellite and laser-guided bombs to Israel in support of its bombing campaign. On July 18 the U.S. Senate passed a *unanimous* resolution endorsing Israel's onslaught. Meanwhile, Israel's brutal offensive against the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip continues, with more tanks rampaging through Gaza and continued airstrikes and massacres, including some 24 Palestinians killed on July 26. At least 159 have been killed since the Zionist offensive began on June 28, while Palestinians starve as what remains of Gaza's infrastructure is decimated.

The U.S. seeks to build its "new Middle East" by stamping out any regime that does not bow to its dictates, and by fully backing Israel's assaults against Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in the Occupied Territories. The U.S. is embroiled in its bloody occupations in Afghanistan and Iraq while openly targeting Iran and Syria for "regime change." With the counter-revolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92, the U.S. imperialists

proclaimed a "New World Order," and in 2001 declared an unlimited global "war on terror" as a pretext for unbridled imperialist depredation and attacks on the population at home. Washington has openly declared several countries, including the Chinese and North Korean deformed workers states, to be on its nuclear "first strike" list.

Hezbollah's success so far in resisting the Israeli ground assault has been a shock to the Israeli rulers' self-image as invincible warriors. On July 29, Israel pulled its troops back from the Lebanese border town of Bint Jbail after days of fierce fighting. The *New York Times* (30 July) described the combat around that hilltop town last Wednesday: "A well-laid Hezbollah ambush pinned down infantrymen from the elite Golani Brigade for hours. At times the firing was so heavy the brigade's soldiers could not return it; eight Israelis were killed. The highly advanced Merkava tanks were reduced to ambulances and several were destroyed." Against Israel's attacks on Lebanon, we stand in military defense of Hezbollah without giving that reactionary fundamentalist outfit any political support whatsoever.

The imperialists are now jockeying over proposals, supported by President Bush and British prime minister Tony Blair last week, to send troops to occupy

southern Lebanon, where Hezbollah is based. France, Italy, Germany and Turkey have said they are considering participation in a UN-sponsored force. And Hezbollah itself has signed on to a Lebanese government proposal for (some sort of) international military force to occupy the south following a cease-fire.

The International Communist League has intervened in protests against Israel's offensive in cities in Europe, the U.S., Canada and Australia, putting forward our perspective for proletarian internationalist defense of the Palestinians and the peoples of Lebanon and for a socialist federation of the Near East. Our comrades underlined our opposition to any imperialist military force being sent into Lebanon, whether under the banner of NATO, the UN or some other "multinational" force. In contrast, pseudo-Marxist groups have issued groveling appeals to the imperialists—either their "own" governments or the UN—to intervene into Lebanon or to pressure Washington to pressure Tel Aviv into a cease-fire.

At a July 18 demonstration in Paris, the speaker from the French Communist Party demanded that the Chirac government and the European Union support sending a UN-backed military force to Lebanon. Alain Krivine's pseudo-Trotskyist Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire, while opposing

continued on page 13



Exchange on Iraq Occupation

This letter was received via e-mail on June 28.

Letter on Haditha: The long, low swan-song of Trotskyism?

My dear former comrades,

Well into the U.S. occupation of Iraq, I wrote you with a critique of your military support for the Iraqi resistance, to which you graciously responded [see “An Exchange on the Iraq ‘Resistance’,” WV No. 847, 29 April 2005].

Your recent article on the massacre in Haditha raises some issues anew [see “U.S. Imperialism’s Massacre in Haditha,” WV No. 872, 9 June]. Specifically, the equation of US policy in the Korean and Vietnam counterinsurgencies with US policy today in invading and occupying Iraq.

Your equation of such historical phenomena to present reality conceals more than it reveals, and suggests the possibility of Trotskyism becoming, at best, a fossil, much like the DeLeonists of the US Socialist Labor Party became after the Russian Revolution, i.e., remaining correct in a way that has become so occult and needs so much qualification as to be rendered irrelevant—and that, ultimately, becomes wrong. Your slogans and orientation in the present are based on a decidedly past historical epoch, the time before the destruction of the Soviet Union.

Now, as opposed to the example of DeLeonism, I would like the opportunity to suggest another, less exotic, and more problematic eventuality that might be in store for you on your present course, which is that of a creeping centrism (a

Marines brutalize Iraqis in Falluja, November 2004.



AP

creeping ISO-ism, for example).

To say that imperialist occupations are brutal is one thing; to say (in retrospect) that the US massacred civilians mercilessly during the Korean counterinsurgency because they “hated” Koreans and not because they were attempting to fight back a social revolution, and to suggest that the US troops’ role in Iraq is primarily to kill Iraqis indiscriminately, is to substitute anger and frustration for clarity—and for politics.

In past articles on the US occupation of Iraq, you have even flirted with the idea that the US troops can no longer be regarded as “workers in uniform,” but are more akin to the cops! This was no mere gaffe on your part, but betrays appetites that flourish under conditions of political confusion and despair. At the very least, this represents a serious loss of class-struggle perspective; at worst, a craven, impressionistic (bourgeois) pseudo-radicalism.

The American rulers are not at all unwilling to put the troops’ (even their “white”) skins on the line for their policies. Racism does not *motivate* but it does *facilitate* the horrors of late capitalist society. And, frankly, what the US troops are doing in Iraq does not require them to be racist; it does not require much more than for them simply to be in the position they are in. Let us say this another way: brutal military occupations are the policy of last resort for maintaining the “law-and-order” of capitalism. If, as opposed to Bush, the more UN-oriented Democrats’ dream of a “multinational” (and not “unilateral”) invasion and occupation of Iraq had come to pass, would things look any different? —Would brown-skinned troops from nations of the semi-colonized world (say, Pakistani troops in blue helmets) act with any less brutality in the face of circumstances and forces at work in Iraq today?

Today, perhaps more than ever before, we need a political program and set of slogans that can address simultaneously and equally workers and Leftists in Iraq and workers and Leftists in the US, including the “workers in uniform” that, like it or not, are the US troops in Iraq.

Not to try to embarrass you, but, with the phraseology of your recent literature mentioned above, I would bet that you do not have even one single sympathizer or WV subscriber, let alone a bona fide member, who is actually serving in the US military, in Iraq, or anywhere else! But this is hardly the point. What ever happened to “going with one’s class” (to go to Vietnam with other workers who were drafted in that era)?

If anything, the volunteer army/poverty draft of today means the US military is even more “proletarian,” even more closely identified with the conditions of the working class more generally (for instance, it is even more non-white) than in the past. Do you have no orientation whatever to the members of a generation going through the brutalization (and not just exercising the brutality) of the present? If you can’t speak to them, then what hope is there?

Unlike in Vietnam or Korea, the (reformist) “Left” in Iraq does not call for the immediate withdrawal of US troops, let alone the defeat of the US in Iraq, nor does it even support the kind of pin-prick military attacks on them being carried out by the so-called insurgents. Please see the January 2006 statement by the Iraqi Communist Party, which opposes the occupation in principle, of course (as do I), but recognizes the practical difficulties of realizing such a politics. You would be well cautioned to pay heed to this difficulty that even the reformist “Left” recognizes—even if only by a single group in Iraq, where social reality confronts the sterility (and ultimate opportunism) of sloganeering. The dangers of disorientation are real and not rhetorical.

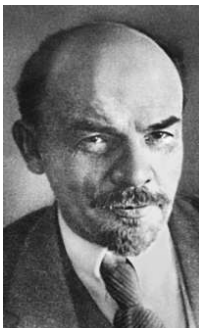
The reality is that the US troops in Iraq stand between the Iraqi workers and Leftists and the insurgents and Iraqi-government affiliated paramilitaries. This is indeed a paradoxical situation, uncomfortable for the Left, and fraught with problems, but real nonetheless.—John Negroponte does not have essentially the same goals in Iraq today that he had in Central America in the 1980s, other than the superficial one of maintaining US power—because he is

Defend the Gains of the Chinese Revolution!

Drawing on his analogy between the Soviet degenerated workers state and a trade union, Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky asserted the critical need to defend the USSR against imperialist attack and capitalist counterrevolution. Today, this question is urgently posed in regard to defense of China, which, despite the Stalinist bureaucracy’s undermining of the gains of the 1949 Revolution, is the largest of the remaining deformed workers states and the imperialists’ strategic target for counterrevolution.



TROTSKY



LENIN

From the point of view of our program, the trade union should be an organization of class struggle. What then should be our attitude to the American Federation of Labor? At its head stand manifest agents of the bourgeoisie. Upon all essential questions, Messrs. Green, Woll, and Company carry out a political line directly opposed to the interests of the proletariat.... But the AFL does not because of this cease to be an organization of the trade unions....

The function of Stalin, like the function of Green, has a dual character. Stalin serves the bureaucracy and thus the world bourgeoisie; but he cannot serve the bureaucracy without defending that social foundation which the bureaucracy exploits in its own interests. To that extent does Stalin defend nationalized property from imperialist attacks and from the too impatient and avaricious layers of the bureaucracy itself. However, he carries through this defense with methods that prepare the general destruction of Soviet society. It is exactly because of this that the Stalinist clique must be overthrown. But it is the revolutionary proletariat who must overthrow it. The proletariat cannot subcontract this work to the imperialists. In spite of Stalin, the proletariat defends the USSR from imperialist attacks.

Historical development has accustomed us to the most varied kind of trade unions: militant, reformist, revolutionary, reactionary, liberal, and Catholic. It is otherwise with a workers’ state. Such a phenomenon we see for the first time. That accounts for our inclination to approach the USSR exclusively from the point of view of the *norms* of the revolutionary program. Meanwhile the workers’ state is an objective historical *fact* which is being subjected to the influence of different historical forces and can as we see come into full contradiction with “traditional” norms.

—Leon Trotsky, “Not a Workers’ and Not a Bourgeois State?” (November 1937)

Letters Policy

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either at the time of publication or at a later point. In order to facilitate the printing of letters, which we do not edit, please keep them to 500 words or less. Letters can be sent to *Workers Vanguard*, Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116 or e-mailed to vanguard@tiac.net.

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No. 874

4 August 2006

Editorial Note

On BT’s Poison Pen

We recently received two lengthy letters from the Bolshevik Tendency (BT). The BT is neither an interested reader with political questions or comments nor a legitimate political opponent. And they have means—their own press, *1917*, and their own Web site. There is no reason to routinely reproduce their poison pen efforts in our own press.

In “BT: Renegades for Hire” (WV No. 807, 1 August 2003), we noted: “To the extent the BT has a political profile, it is as centrists who use their anti-Spartacism as the entry ticket into the swamp of social democracy. But the BT is also something

else altogether: a vicious gang of crazed ‘god that failed’ renegades, eager to serve the purposes of those who would like to destroy us.” The BT is led by one Bill Logan, who was expelled from our tendency in 1979 following a thorough investigation by an international Control Commission and trial body that found him to be a twisted sociopath who manipulated the most intimate details of comrades’ personal lives for his own purposes and gratification. The BT is now running a racket by aiming to have its letters published in *Workers Vanguard*. We will respond to them in the pages of WV as we deem appropriate. ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

not being opposed by the same kinds of social forces today as those represented by the Sandinistas/FMLN in the 80s. The politics of opposing US imperialism were far simpler back then. But for us to say today that opposing US power is the bottom line is to take social reality only in terms of bourgeois politics! We do not simply oppose US power, but seek to revolutionize the world!

Yes, the US, as global hegemon/cop of the world, is a primary obstacle to social emancipation today, but there are other forces at work in the world besides the US; we have other enemies, too! Not everyone who opposes the US helps us—certainly not subjectively, in terms of enlightening people politically towards emancipatory struggles, but also not “objectively.” What is “bad” for the US is not necessarily good for “us”—meaning socialist revolutionaries internationally—and might even be worse. The world has become a far more dangerous place (for any kind of socialist Left) after the destruction of the Soviet Union. Real conclusions must be drawn from this. Can Marxist revolutionaries today, throughout the world, and trying to form a revolutionary vanguard internationally, find ways towards a critical-theoretical grasp of the world, and programmatic orientation towards fundamentally changing it, that recognizes that the policies of US imperialism can be (and today are being mostly or only) opposed from the *Right*?

Shouldn’t Marxists, especially those consigned (supposedly by historical circumstance) to remaining an isolated propaganda group, not be oriented, first and foremost, to disenchanting and cutting through false polarities and reigning ideological appearances, while grasping material social reality, with all of its problems? What kind of legacy for any possible future Left (or even for the future of your organization) are you leaving with your slogans today, which, you must admit, are meant to be more exemplary than practical, but might end up being neither?

Your current slogans seem to be calculated, not to intersecting Iraqi Leftists and American workers—including the “workers in uniform”—to gaining an internationalist, revolutionary perspective, but rather to the petty-bourgeois rad-lib milieu (not only in the US, but also elsewhere), which shades quickly into the bourgeois “defeatism” of the Democratic Party (and even among some in the Republican Party), and which engages in the typical kinds of overstatement and downright paranoia rife in bourgeois politics (e.g., of Rep. Murtha, Cindy Sheehan, et al.).—What gives? You should know better.

When I was a youth member during the period of the destruction of the Soviet Union (and the Gulf War that was thus facilitated, setting the stage for the subsequent sanctions regime and current invasion and occupation of Iraq), one Spartacism that was most educational for me was the phrase “pseudo-Left.” Well, things are so much worse today than even 15 years ago: we would be strained today to identify even a pseudo-Left (or any-

thing of the Left at all). I think you are flinching from this reality in your blind retention of supposed orthodoxy, and it is starting to sound more than a little desperate.

Trotsky’s political orientation and slogans in the 1930s were based on the existence of a millions-strong international working class movement and an enormous workers state (the Soviet Union) that claimed to be trying to overcome capitalism.

Such reality doesn’t exist today, and therefore calls for a different set of political interventions—and recognition of different and perhaps greater dangers. Trotsky could count on the objective reality of a Left that could be intersected by a relatively small propaganda group and potentially revolutionized that simply does not exist today—there are no larger parties that we could even theoretically split and transform into vanguards of the international working class. We have it a lot

principles against those who turn to “democratic” imperialism in the post-Soviet period.

Partaking of the “death of communism” lies of the bourgeoisie, Chris C. asserts that in the post-Soviet world workers revolution is off the agenda. He takes issue with our straightforward statement that the U.S. forces in Iraq are engaged in “counterinsurgency” blood-letting—from the Haditha massacre to the horrors of Abu Ghraib and other barbaric results of imperialist war and occupation—reminiscent of that in Vietnam or the atrocities committed during the Korean War, among others. In short, he disputes that, while occurring in a different social and political context, these crimes can be “equated” with these earlier imperialist war crimes.

Nauseatingly, he attempts to *alibi the crimes of the U.S. imperialists in Iraq* and writes: “The reality is that the US troops in Iraq stand between the Iraqi

imperialist *racist* arrogance plays a part in the occupation of Iraq. Indeed, his position smacks of the worst sort of “white man’s burden” chauvinism. Examples of racist U.S. atrocities abound, such as the slaughter of up to half a million Filipinos between 1899 and 1902 and the A-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945.

As to the comparison to cops to which Chris C. objects, we stand by what we have written: The job of a soldier is to kill and *to be killed*. The job of a cop is to kill and *not* be killed. That the U.S. military brass feels alarm by the death of some 2,500 troops in three years of war and occupation shows that they think they can invade, conquer and occupy whole countries without suffering any consequence; it reveals a mentality that increasingly resembles that of a cop rather than a soldier. As we noted in our Haditha article: “These are not ‘our troops’! The pictures of the slaughtered in Haditha, the images of Falluja leveled, the photo of Lynndie England, dog leash in hand abusing a naked Iraqi prisoner—all are graphic reminders of the routine brutality meted out by imperialism’s military enforcers.”

Chris C. wrote, “The policies of US imperialism can be (and today are being mostly or only) opposed from the *Right*.” Let’s be clear: by “the Right,” Chris C. is not referring to neocons and other elements of the U.S. ruling class, but Islamic fundamentalists. At bottom, he echoes those liberals who grace the pages of the *Nation* and advocate an imperialist presence in Iraq to nurture “democracy” and prevent the further spread of Islamic fundamentalism.

As revolutionary Marxists, we are intransigent political opponents of Islamic fundamentalist forces, even as we stand for their military defense against the attacks of the imperialists and the Zionist Israeli state. Our article on the U.S. imperialist atrocities in Haditha also made clear that we defend Iran’s *need* for nuclear weapons to deter a U.S. imperialist attack, without giving an iota of political support to the mullah regime. Such a position is an elementary duty of communists.

Chris C. not only obscenely complains of the “practical difficulties” posed by the elementary demand for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq, he has also dispensed with Lenin and Trotsky, as, in his words, their “ability to help us has become quite limited.” We communists draw our lessons from comrades Lenin and Trotsky, whose revolutionary work in theory and practice, especially their historic victory in leading the October Revolution of 1917 and founding of the Third (Communist) International, is not only relevant to but is the model for our struggle today. As for Chris C., he is indeed a *former* comrade who is adapting to the pressures of bourgeois liberalism and making his peace with U.S. imperialism. ■



Washington Post

Sadistic prison guard Charles Graner beats Iraqi detainees at Abu Ghraib prison near Baghdad.

harder today than Trotsky did, and thus we have far more work to do rebuilding the Left. To this extent, the ability of our forebears like Trotsky—and Lenin—to help us has become quite limited, at least to the extent that we can simply repeat their slogans. Instead, we must struggle (really struggle!) to keep their spirit alive under changed—and worsened!—circumstances.

Revolutionaries cannot afford to recoil from sobering realities into the comforts of past certainties, not if they want to remain revolutionary. It may not be possible to resist the inexorability of the present, but I, for one, regret your veering towards becoming just another variety of pseudo-Leftism.

—Chris C.

WV replies:

As our readers will see from our letters policy, published on page 2, WV seeks to print letters we receive, publishing replies to them as we deem necessary. Chris C.’s letter reflects politics imbibing of—and in fact even to the right of—the wretched pro-Democratic Party reformist left in the U.S. Printing this letter and our reply will hopefully be a useful heuristic device for our readers, as our reply upholds elementary Leninist-Trotskyist

workers and Leftists and the insurgents and Iraqi-government affiliated paramilitaries.” He goes on to write: “What is ‘bad’ for the US is not necessarily good for ‘us’—meaning socialist revolutionaries internationally—and might even be worse.”

No! The main enemy of the peoples of the world is the bellicose, demented, racist and rapacious U.S. ruling class! That must be the starting point of any would-be revolutionary working within the belly of the imperialist beast. Whole regions of the world, not least the Near East, are composed of artificial states created by the former colonial empires and their present imperialist heirs. The masses living in these artificial creations, overseen by the imperialists’ local lackeys, are now on the murderous receiving end of the imperialists’ bloodthirsty depredations.

Chris C. paints the volunteer U.S. military (as opposed to a conscript army, such as at the time of the Vietnam War) as “workers in uniform.” He also flinches over our insistence on the simple fact that

Remembering Sam Hunt

“*Sam Hunt 1946–2006*” (WV No. 873, 7 July) detailed the political contributions of our longtime cadre, who died on June 2. Below is an excerpt from a reminiscence of Sam by a comrade who worked with him in Japan.

2 July 2006

Dear comrades:

Sam, a coworker of his who became a good sympathizer and I went to Tama Cemetery, to see Sorge and Ozaki’s graves. [Soviet spies Richard Sorge and Ozaki Hotsumi were executed by the Japanese government in 1944.] We found Sorge’s gravesite first, cleaned it, placed our flowers and then started pouring the vodka. After a while we went to find Ozaki’s grave, and when we arrived we were surprised to see a whole entourage of people. This is when we first met Ozaki Hotsuki,

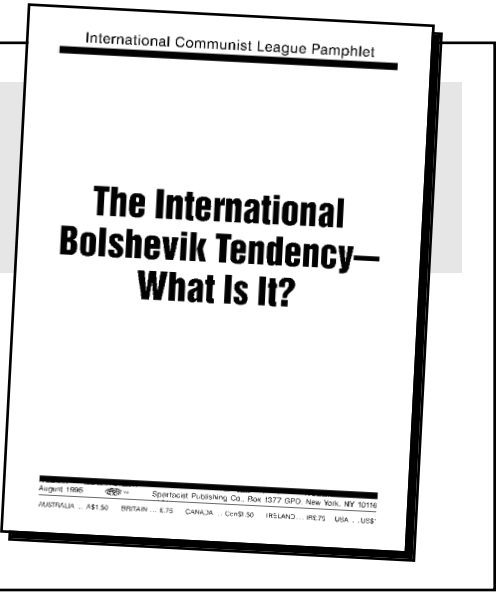
Hotsumi’s younger brother. Sam, his coworker and myself were not proficient in Japanese, but Sam immediately understood the import of this intersection: how would we communicate our message on why we were there? So he grabbed a man and said, “Please translate for me.” The man turned out to be a professor of Japanese at the University of Hawaii, and that is how we were able to say in Japanese, “The ICL and Spartacist Group Japan came here to honor Richard Sorge and Ozaki Hotsumi as heroic defenders of the October Revolution and the Soviet Union.” Thereafter, each November, we would join Ozaki Hotsuki, his daughter and others to honor their memory until 1998. Hotsuki died in 1999 and his circle disbanded.

Communist Greetings,
D.R.

International Communist League pamphlet August 1995

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Defend Chinese Deformed Workers State!

For Proletarian Political Revolution!

China's "Market Reforms"

—A Trotskyist Analysis—

Two years ago, two left-wing American intellectuals, Martin Hart-Landsberg and Paul Burkett, produced a harsh and sweeping condemnation of the Chinese economy in the "reform" era from a purportedly Marxist perspective. Their article, "China and Socialism: Market Reforms and Class Struggle," was originally published in *Monthly Review* (July-August 2004) and subsequently brought out in book form. In particular, the authors target those

PART ONE

"progressive" intellectuals who regard China as a successful alternative model of economic development to the neoliberal "structural reforms" dictated by U.S. imperialism and the International Monetary Fund that have devastated so many underdeveloped countries. Hart-Landsberg and Burkett write: "Not only do we disagree with those progressives who view China as a development model (whether socialist or not), we think the process by which they arrived at this position highlights an even more serious problem: the progressive community's general rejection of Marxism."

Among the "progressives" with whom they disagree is Victor Lippit, who with his cothinkers at *Critical Asian Studies* (37:3 [2005]) responded with some critical studies of "China and Socialism." Hart-Landsberg and Burkett in turn wrote a lengthy rejoinder (*Critical Asian Studies* 37:4 [2005]).

A political liberal and longtime student of the Chinese economy, Lippit is basically a supporter of China's program of market-oriented "reforms," albeit with some left criticisms. For example, he decries the deterioration of the public health system, especially in the country-



Shanghai's state-owned Hudong shipyard. Chinese deformed workers state is world's third-largest shipbuilding country.

side, as "shameful." He would have the Beijing regime expend far more resources on health care, education and improving the conditions of the rural populace, even at the cost of a short-term reduction in economic growth as conventionally measured. Nonetheless, Lippit is definitely bullish on China, citing a study by the Wall Street investment bank Goldman Sachs projecting that China's gross domestic product will surpass that of the United States by 2041.

For all their differences, Hart-Landsberg and Burkett on the one side and Lippit on the other share certain basic premises. Both wrongly maintain that the market-oriented "reforms" have resulted in the restoration of capitalism

in China and, moreover, that this was inevitable. For Lippit, the modernization of China requires its continuing and ever-greater integration into the world capitalist system. He claims that "capitalism will have to play out its historic role before it can be supplanted," adding that "Welfare-state capitalism of the continental European variety may be the best that can be done at present." For Hart-Landsberg and Burkett, a socialist program in China or elsewhere—which they identify with the confusionist formula of a "worker-community-centered economy"—must have little or no commerce with the corrupting evils of the world capitalist market.

Most crucially, both reject the possibility of proletarian socialist revolutions in the advanced capitalist countries in any historically meaningful time period. Lippit does so explicitly, Hart-Landsberg and Burkett implicitly. Hence the Trotskyist perspective of the modernization of China in the context of a globally integrated and planned socialist economy lies outside the conceptual boundaries of both protagonists. Yet this framework, the antithesis of the nationalist Maoist-Stalinist dogma of building "socialism in one country," is the *only* road to the all-round liberation of China's worker and peasant masses.

China Today: Myths and Realities

The ruling Chinese Communist Party (CCP) under Deng Xiaoping introduced its program of market-oriented reforms a few years after the death of Mao Zedong in 1976. This included opening China to, and subsequently attracting, an enormous volume of direct capital investment from Western and Japanese corporations and

the offshore Chinese bourgeoisie, concentrated in manufacturing. Mainstream bourgeois ideologues have pointed to China's impressive economic and especially industrial growth as proof positive of the superiority of a market-driven system over a centrally planned, collectivized economy (derogatively called a socialist "command economy"). For his part, Lippit is representative of a layer of left-of-center intellectuals who hold up China as a prime example of a successful *anti*-neoliberal economic strategy, one based on a significant level of state ownership and overall state direction of the economy.

This latter view has the merit of recognizing, in its own way, that the core elements of the Chinese economy, established following the overthrow of the capitalist system in the 1949 Revolution, remain collectivized. State-owned enterprises are dominant in the strategic industrial sectors, such as steel, non-ferrous metals, heavy machinery, telecommunications, electric power and oil extraction and refining. The nation-

alization of land has prevented the emergence of a class of large-scale agrarian capitalists socially dominating the countryside. The mass of economic surplus generated outside the foreign-owned sector is channeled into state-owned banks as well as the government treasury. Effective control of the financial system has to date enabled the Beijing regime to insulate China from the volatile movements of speculative money-capital that periodically wreak havoc with neocolonial capitalist countries from East Asia to Latin America.

It is now commonplace across the entire political and geographical spectrum, from spokesmen for the CCP regime to Wall Street analysts, to claim that China is far along the road to becoming a global economic "superpower" by the mid 21st century. This view ignores the economic vulnerabilities of China in its relations with the world capitalist market. It ignores the implacable hostility of the imperialist bourgeoisies, above all the American ruling class, to the People's Republic of China, a bureaucratically deformed workers state issuing out of the 1949 Revolution. Further, it ignores the internal *instability* of Chinese society, which has seen a significant and growing level of social protest against the consequences of the CCP's bureaucratic misrule.

In the past few years the economic strategy pursued by the CCP regime has been designed to run huge balance of trade surpluses with the United States which has led China to become the world's largest holder of foreign-exchange reserves. This has generated increasing pressures within American ruling circles for anti-Chinese economic protectionism. In any event, the sheer size of the trade deficit with China



U.S. warships in massive "Valiant Shield" military exercises in Asian Pacific in June. U.S. imperialism has strengthened its deployment in the Pacific Rim as part of its military pressure against China, North Korea.

cannot be long sustained. A major economic downturn in the U.S. and/or anti-import protectionist measures would be a severe blow to China's industrial economy. Foreign-owned and joint operations and private Chinese companies, as well as some state-owned enterprises, whose production is geared to the export market, would be forced to sharply cut back output and lay off both industrial and white-collar workers. This would have a strongly depressive effect throughout the Chinese economy.

Recently China has begun to open its banks to partial foreign ownership. If the bankers of Wall Street, Frankfurt and Tokyo acquire a substantial degree of control over China's financial sector, the economic effects are likely to be dire. Some large debt-ridden state-owned enterprises could be forced to cut output and payroll. There would even be a real danger of a sudden, massive outflow of money-capital, such as that which triggered the East Asian financial/economic crisis in the late 1990s.

According to conventional bourgeois public opinion, capitalism has already been restored in China or is rapidly and irreversibly being restored. However, as was the case in the former Soviet Union, the decisive arena in which a capitalist counterrevolution would have to triumph is at the political level, in the conquest of *state power*, not simply through a quantitative extension of the private sector, whether domestic or foreign. In their own way, the imperialist bourgeoisies, centrally the American ruling class, understand that very well. Hence the open support of the U.S. and British governments for the aggressively anti-Communist parties and forces in the capitalist enclave of Hong Kong, a former British colony that is the one part of the People's Republic of China (besides Macao) where the CCP does not exercise a monopoly of political power and organization. Hence also the U.S. rulers' harping on the need for "political liberalization" in China.

Aspiring to replay the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92, the imperialists aim to promote an anti-Communist political opposition in China primarily based on the new class of capitalist entrepreneurs and those elements of the CCP officialdom and the managerial/professional/technocratic stratum closely tied to domestic and foreign capital.

At the same time, U.S. imperialism has been ratcheting up the military pressure on China, building bases in Central Asia, attempting to surround China with American military installations and concluding a pact last year with Japan to defend the capitalist bastion of Taiwan, whose bourgeoisie holds considerable investments in mainland China. The Pentagon is actively pursuing plans to neutralize China's small nuclear arsenal in the event of an American nuclear first strike, a strategy openly proclaimed by the Bush gang in Washington. As Trotskyists, we stand for the unconditional military defense of China and the other remaining bureaucratically deformed workers states—North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba—against imperialist attack and capitalist counterrevolution. In particular, we support China and North Korea's testing and possession of nuclear arms as a necessary deterrent against imperialist nuclear blackmail.

Despite and in part because of its rapid economic and especially industrial growth, China has become a seething cauldron of popular discontents. An enormous and strategically powerful industrial proletariat confronts a society of stark and increasing inequalities and inequities. As part of its market-oriented reforms, the Beijing Stalinist regime has starved public health care and primary education of financial resources when, more than ever before, such resources are available to meet the basic needs of Chinese working people. There have been widespread and continual worker protests against layoffs from state-owned enterprises, unpaid wages, pensions and bene-



Li/Liaison

fits, and similar abuses. The countryside is rife with angry protests by peasants, frequently involving violent clashes with the police, against the seizure of land by local CCP officials engaged in real-estate speculation.

The ruling bureaucracy is clearly divided between elements who want the economic "reforms" to continue unabated, those who want more state intervention to check the ravages of marketization and thereby stifle discontent, and others who seek a return to a bureaucratically planned economy. At some point, likely when bourgeois elements in and around the bureaucracy move to eliminate CCP political power, the multiple explosive social tensions of Chinese society will shatter the political structure of the ruling bureaucratic caste. And when that happens the fate of the most populous country on earth will be starkly posed: either proletarian political revolution to open the road to socialism or a return to capitalist enslavement and imperialist subjugation.

We stand for a proletarian political revolution to sweep away the oppressive and parasitic Stalinist bureaucracy and replace it with a government based on democratically elected workers and peasants councils. Such a government, under the leadership of a Leninist-Trotskyist party, would re-establish a centrally planned and managed economy—including a state monopoly of foreign trade—administered not by the arbitrary "commandism" of a closed-in bureaucratic caste (which produced such disasters as Mao's "Great Leap Forward" in the late 1950s) but by the widest proletarian democracy. It would expropriate the newly fledged class of Chinese capitalist entrepreneurs and renegotiate the terms of foreign investment in the interests of Chinese working people, insisting, for example, on working conditions at least at the same level as in the state sector. A revolutionary workers government in China would promote the voluntary collectivization of agriculture on the basis of large-scale mechanized and scientific farming, recognizing that this requires substantial material aid from successful workers revolutions in the more economically advanced countries.

A proletarian political revolution in China raising the banner of socialist internationalism would truly shake the world. It would shatter the "death of communism" ideological climate propagated by the imperialist ruling classes since the destruction of the Soviet Union. It would radicalize the proletariat of Japan, the industrial powerhouse and imperialist overlord of East Asia. It would spark a fight for a revolutionary reunification of Korea—through political revolution in the beleaguered North and socialist revolution in the capitalist South—and reverberate among the masses of South Asia, Indonesia and the Philippines, ground down by imperialist austerity. Only through the overthrow of capitalist class rule internationally, particularly in the imperialist centers of North America, West Europe and Japan, can the all-round

modernization of China be achieved as part of a socialist Asia. It is to provide the necessary leadership for the proletariat in these struggles that the International Communist League seeks to reforge Trotsky's Fourth International—the world party of socialist revolution.

Economic Development and the Communist Worldview

The differences between Hart-Landsberg and Burkett on the one hand and Lippit on the other are not primarily over an empirical assessment of the changing socioeconomic conditions in China during the past quarter century of the "reform" era. Certainly, they do have important differences in this regard—for example, over the quantitative extent to which poverty has been overcome. But what basically separates Hart-Landsberg and Burkett from Lippit is what might be termed a different hierarchy of values. The former elevate egalitarian and communalist values above the expansion of productive forces, disregarding that the latter is a *necessary condition* for liberating the mass of humanity from want and drudgery. Thus they argue in their rejoinder: "China's successes according to mainstream development criteria (economic growth, FDI [foreign direct investment] inflows, and exports), far from creating conditions for actual or potential success on the human welfare front, might have instead undermined the conditions of human development for the majority of Chinese working people."

No less than Lippit, or for that matter the proponents of neoliberalism, Hart-Landsberg and Burkett believe that capitalism in its present "globalized" form is driven to maximize economic growth as measured by the increase in goods and services. This is directly contrary to the Marxist understanding that the capitalist mode of production and the nation-state system, which are rooted in the drive for private accumulation of profit, block the progressive development of productive forces on a global scale. A case in point is the profound and increasing impoverishment of the masses of semicolonial Africa, Latin America and parts of Asia.



AFF

Left: Factory workers producing Nike shoes in Dongguan, China. Right: Migrant workers at Beijing train station.

Writing in the early 1930s, in the context of a world economic depression and resurgent interimperialist rivalries that would soon lead to World War II, Leon Trotsky explained:

"Capitalism has outlived itself as a world system. It has ceased to fulfill its essential mission, the increase of human power and human wealth. Humanity cannot stand still at the level which it has reached. Only a powerful increase in productive forces and a sound, planned, that is, socialist organization of production and distribution can assure humanity—all humanity—of a decent standard of life and at the same time give it the precious feeling of freedom with respect to its own economy. Freedom in two senses—first of all, man will no longer be compelled to devote the greater part of his life to physical labor. Second, he will no longer be dependent on the laws of the market....

"Technology liberated man from the tyranny of the old elements—earth, water, fire, and air—only to subject him to its own tyranny. Man ceased to be a slave to nature, to become a slave to the machine, and, still worse, a slave to supply and demand. The present world crisis testifies in especially tragic fashion how man, who dives to the bottom of the ocean, who rises up to the stratosphere, who converses on invisible waves with the antipodes, how this proud and daring ruler of nature remains a slave to the blind forces of his own economy. The historical task of our epoch consists in replacing the uncontrolled play of the market by reasonable planning, in disciplining the forces of production, compelling them to work together in harmony and obediently serve the needs of mankind. Only on this new social basis will man be able to stretch his weary limbs and—every man and every woman, not only a selected few—become a full citizen in the realm of thought."

—"In Defense of the Russian Revolution" (1932), reprinted in *Leon Trotsky Speaks* (1972)

This genuinely Marxist vision of the future is completely alien to the thinking of Hart-Landsberg and Burkett.

Anarcho-Populist Nostrums...

What Hart-Landsberg and Burkett counterpose to neoliberalism is the notion of a "worker-community-centered economy." The term as well as the concept are totally foreign to Marxism. "Community"

continued on page 11

Chinese-Language Pamphlet No. 7

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Young Spartacus

Failed Anarchist on “Failed States”

BOSTON—On June 6, members of the Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth Club attended a Harvard Book Store-sponsored forum in Cambridge, featuring Noam Chomsky as one of two panelists. Chomsky was there to promote his new book, *Failed States: The Abuse of Power and the Assault on Democracy*. Chomsky’s exposure of some of the crimes of U.S. imperialism can open students’ eyes to what the U.S. really does internationally, but the “esteemed professor” then *feeds them the lie* that this can be changed through the promotion of “pure” democracy with the help of the UN and international law. An SL/SYC speaker at the forum challenged Chomsky:

“Basically what I see that you’re doing, as the title of your book says, is basically—as you have done historically—build faith in this mythical bird called Pure Democracy.... The fact of the matter is that democracy has a class basis. This is what capitalist democracy looks like: It’s Lynndie England with a naked, tortured Iraqi on the end of a leash. It’s...the racist frame-up of Mumia Abu-Jamal, who faces the very real threat of execution now.... For all your criticisms of the Democrats whose hands are dripping in blood, you called people in the last election to vote for the Democratic Party.”

Unlike Noam Chomsky, we understand that under capitalism “democracy” serves as a mask for a system of exploitation, oppression and state repression. Under its facade of “government of the people, by the people and for the people,” the U.S. capitalist state is a violent terror machine for the defense of the capitalist class’s profit system—a system based on private ownership of the means of production and the concentration of vast amounts of the wealth created by the labor of the working-class masses in the hands of a tiny, exploiting minority. The capitalist state’s cops, courts and prisons exist to prevent working people and, in the U.S., particularly the specially oppressed black masses, from fundamentally challenging the racist, oppressive capitalist order. Capitalist “democracy” is in reality the dictatorship of the capitalist class over the working class and oppressed.

It is only through proletarian revolution and the establishment of the dictatorship of the working class that the basis can be laid for creating an egalitarian, socialist society where production

Noam Chomsky: “Radical” Adviser to U.S. Imperialism

is based on human need and not profit. Democracy for working people can only become a reality by ripping the means of production out of the hands of the capitalist exploiters and replacing their state with a state for the defense of the interests of workers and the oppressed, as a transition to a classless, stateless, communist society.

Far from wanting to smash capitalist states, armchair anarchist Chomsky wants to rescue these from failure! According to Chomsky’s book, the salient features of “failed states” such as the U.S. include what he calls the “democratic deficit” or “the sharp divide between public opinion and public policy.” Once again, Chomsky arrives with the earth-shattering news flash: the capitalist rulers don’t govern based on the interests of the working class and the oppressed! But that won’t stop him from promoting the virtues of U.S. capitalist democracy: “The United States was the first modern (more or less) democratic society, and has been a model for others ever since. And in many dimensions crucial for authentic democracy—protection of freedom of speech, for example—it has become a leader among the societies of the world.”

Chomsky’s regard for U.S. capitalist democracy is superseded only by his regard for the UN Charter and the “sacred” international law that he makes impotent appeals for the U.S. to respect. Behind the anarchists’ purported rejection of all states, including the dictatorship of the working class, is a program that in practice upholds the capitalist state. Yet, Chomsky fails to even pretend he is for the destruction of capitalism, openly counseling the imperialist rulers to “democratize” their system. And his virulent anti-communism, typical of anarchists, places him squarely in the camp of the bloody imperialist powers that he purports to criticize. Thus it follows that Chomsky’s idea of “free speech” at his own events means telling the communists to shut up and ask their question, as he did at the Harvard forum on June 6.

This prompted another SL/SYC member in the crowd to tell Chomsky to “stop manufacturing consent.”

It’s Canada’s Fault?

In response to a question from the floor regarding the recent immigration debate in the U.S., Chomsky gave the usual endless speech of a rambling, pompous professor: saying everything while saying nothing. But then, suddenly, we sat up in our seats as the spectre of *South Park* entered the hall: “We need to form a full assault. It’s Canada’s fault!” Chomsky said:

“There was a 9/11 Commission set up, a government commission to recommend a means to produce a threat barrier to the United States. It was set up over *strong*

Chomsky is now calling on the racist, rapacious American ruling class and its murderous state to save us from the evil clutches of...Canadians! That’s right, this “radical” imposter has joined the chorus of hysterical townspeople of *South Park*: “With all their beady little eyes and flapping heads so full of lies,

Blame Canada! Blame Canada!”

But unlike the creators of *South Park*, Noam Chomsky wasn’t joking. Chomsky’s comments about the Canadian border were made just a few days after Canadian police carried out “anti-terror” raids resulting in the arrests of 17 Muslim men. A central and recurring complaint in Chomsky’s latest book is that members of the Bush administration “do not consider terrorism a high priority.” Chomsky echoes the Democratic Party liberals who complain that Bush is giving low priority to fighting terrorism and who consider the U.S. war and occupation of Iraq as a distraction from the “war on terror.” Chomsky complains: “Preventing terrorist attacks is simply not a high priority in comparison with serious geopolitical and strategic objectives—specifically, controlling the world’s major energy resources.”

It is grotesque that Chomsky posits that the biggest terrorists on the planet, the U.S. imperialist rulers, who also attack the livelihoods of working people at home, could be in the business of “protecting” anyone but themselves and their profit system. The racist atrocity that took place in New Orleans around Hurricane Katrina is proof on its own of the murderous contempt the capitalist rulers have for black, working and poor people in this country. The so-called “war on terror” is in reality a cover for imperialist slaughter abroad and for a war on the rights of labor, immigrants, black people and leftists at home. For all of Chomsky’s concern about the “assault on democracy” in the U.S., his recent book doesn’t even reference the Patriot Act or comment on the wholesale shredding of the democratic rights of the U.S. population under the rubric of the “war on terror.”

While Chomsky complains about the “unguarded” Canadian border, the Canadian capitalist rulers have in fact followed the U.S.’s lead in using a purported “war on terror” to vastly restrict the rights of the population as a whole, as have other “democratic” capitalist governments around the



Paramount Pictures

Scene from *South Park: Bigger, Longer & Uncut*. But Chomsky’s not kidding when he rants against the “long, unguarded” Canadian border.

opposition by the Bush Administration, for which it carries a very low priority, and they didn’t want it.... As they pointed out that the greatest threat of terror, one of the greatest infiltrations across the border, namely the Canadian border. The *long*, unguarded border reaching across. And that they said, ‘You’ve got to do something about infiltration from the Canadian border.’ What has the Administration done? Well, first the Bush Administration since 9/11 reduced the border control altogether, reduced the growth of border patrol. The really *long* length of border.... But they don’t care...the Canadian border is left unguarded, the one that’s considered the most dangerous.” (Emphases his.)

More...or Less?

“The United States was the first modern (more or less) democratic society, and has been a model for others ever since.”

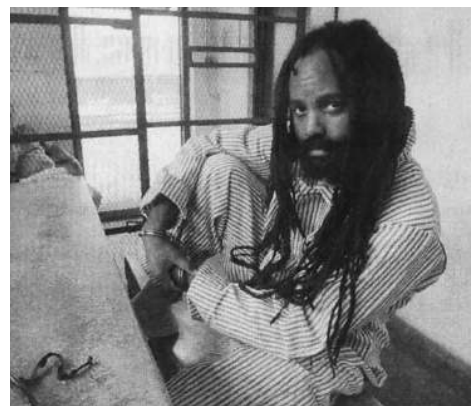
—Noam Chomsky



UMW



AP



Saul/Philadelphia Inquirer



Jane Therese

(From left to right) National Guard and company thugs mobilized against 1914 Ludlow miners strike: 19 were massacred. Birmingham, Alabama: Cops attack Civil Rights marchers, 1963. Mumia Abu-Jamal: framed up and sentenced to die for speaking out against black oppression. Passengers dragged off bus as “terrorist suspects” by New Jersey cops, September 2001. This is what Chomsky’s “(more or less) democratic” U.S. looks like under capitalism.

world. These restrictions are aimed at repressing working-class and social struggle, which will always represent the biggest “threat” for the capitalist rulers.

Disarming Iraq and Iran

Chomsky calls for relying on “diplomatic and economic measures rather than military ones in confronting terror.” Indeed, it was such measures that the UN employed with its sanctions against Iraq that resulted in the deaths of over 1.5 million Iraqis, especially children, during the period of “peace” between America’s two shooting wars against Iraq. While Chomsky spends several pages in *Failed States* railing against the “murderous regime” of sanctions against Iraq, he fails to mention that he himself advocated these sanctions in 1991 (*Z Magazine*, February 1991). Chomsky’s beloved UN, which in his fantasy world is supposed to lead the way to “peace,” served as a “democratic” fig leaf for the sanctions and weapons inspections, which were aimed at disarming neocolonial Iraq and setting it up for a one-sided slaughter by U.S. imperialism.

As Marxists, we not only opposed the sanctions and the U.S. war, but stood for the military defense of Iraq against U.S. imperialism while giving no political support to the capitalist regime of Saddam Hussein. In the same way, today we oppose the U.S.’s nuclear blackmail

Chomsky is far from alone among liberals and leftists in counseling the mass-murdering imperialists on how “best” to disarm Iran, with the International Socialist Organization and Revolutionary Communist Party’s World Can’t Wait signing a petition calling on Bush and Cheney to effectively disarm Iran and inaugurate world peace (see “ISO, RCP to Bush: Disarm Iran, ‘Lead the Way to Peace,’” WV No. 870, 12 May).

Anti-Communist Fighter for “Democratic” Counterrevolution

At the June 6 forum, a second SL/SYC speaker challenged Chomsky over his endorsement of a 2003 declaration which echoed the U.S. imperialist hue and cry over the arrests of 78 pro-imperialist “dissidents” in Cuba. Our speaker asked: “Please explain why, in 2003, you signed on to an anti-Cuba declaration, penned by none other than Joanne Landy, member of the Council on Foreign Relations and a lifelong advocate of the violent overthrow of the Cuban government. You endorsed this letter. Please tell us why you fought for the fall of the Soviet Union.”

Chomsky is typical of the petty-bourgeois liberals and “leftist” intellectuals who lend their “anti-imperialist” credentials to U.S. imperialism’s drive to overthrow the gains of the Cuban Revolution. For these types, the abstract notion of (*bourgeois*) “democracy,” and not the proletarian class character of the Cuban



WV Photo

New York SL protests cutoff of Soviet aid to Cuba, 1991. In opposition to “democratic” counterrevolutionaries like Chomsky, we stand for defense of Cuba against imperialist attack, capitalist restoration.

against imperialism and all measures that are genuinely in defense of the Cuban Revolution, including the imprisonment of those “dissidents” who are actively collaborating with U.S. imperialism. At the same time, and as we noted in 2003:

“As Trotskyists, we know full well that the Castro regime metes out repression to those of its opponents, including socialist militants, who are not counter-revolutionaries....

“Workers democracy is completely alien to Stalinism, as it is to the crew of radlibs and others who peddle the cause of the pro-imperialist ‘dissidents’ in the name of bourgeois democracy. But it is critical for us Marxists, who fight to defend and extend the gains of the Cuban Revolution by replacing the nationalist rule of the Stalinist bureaucracy that seeks to appease the imperialists with the rule of the workers soviets based on a program of proletarian revolutionary internationalism.”

—“Defend the Cuban Revolution!”
WV No. 805, 6 June 2003

Our fight for proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy and institute a regime of workers democracy is premised on *defense of the proletarian property forms* in the deformed workers states. Chomsky postures as a defender of Cuba against U.S. imperialism, opposing the U.S. sanctions and the imprisonment of the Cuban Five. But far from defending the collectivized economy of Cuba against the imperialist drive toward the restoration of capitalism, Chomsky can’t even bring himself to mention its existence in his latest book, theorizing that U.S. hostility toward Cuba stems from “the fear of independent nationalism.” Thus, Chomsky’s statement that he’d like to see the Castro “regime overthrown by an internal libertarian revolution (and not that one alone)” (“Chomsky on Cuba,” 27 August 1994, posted on www.zmag.org) can only be a call for “democratic” capitalist counterrevolution.

Not surprisingly, Chomsky’s “models” of democracy are *capitalist* Bolivia, *capitalist* Venezuela and *imperialist* America! Chomsky deflected our question at the June 6 forum by telling us to go listen to his interview on Radio Havana for an answer. In this 28 August 2003 interview, Chomsky announces to the Cuban workers state that “the United States, to its credit, is a very free country, maybe the freest country in the world in many respects” (“Radio Havana Interviews Chomsky,” 4 September 2003, posted on www.zmag.org). One wonders if the news reached the ears of the bound and hooded prisoners at Guantánamo Bay.

For a Leninist-Trotskyist Revolutionary Vanguard!

For Chomsky, the blood-drenched “Democratic Party is far less objectionable than Bolshevism” (see WV No. 829, 9 July 2004). The Bolshevik-led workers revolution, which Chomsky spits on, liberated one-sixth of the planet from the clutches of capitalist exploitation. The destruction of the Soviet Union has been a world-historic defeat for working people internationally. We Trotskyists fought for the unconditional military defense of the degenerated Soviet



Karen Robinson

Desperately ill children in Iraqi hospital, 1998. Over 1.5 million Iraqis were killed by UN sanctions, which Chomsky advocated.

against Iran, which it has threatened to attack. As we noted in “U.S. Hands Off Iran” (WV No. 863, 3 February):

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

We have also noted that in the context of threats by the nuclear-armed imperialists, Iran clearly *needs* nukes to defend itself and deter a U.S. attack. Not so Noam Chomsky, who penned an article titled “A Negotiated Solution to the Iranian Nuclear Crisis Is Within Reach” (London *Guardian*, 19 June). While acknowledging that the “very credible US and Israeli threats...virtually urge Iran to develop nuclear weapons as a deterrent,” Chomsky’s response is to urge the U.S. and Israel to “call off” their threats! And just in case that wasn’t too much of a fantastical demand upon the U.S. imperialists, he also calls on them “to take ‘good-faith’ efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons.”

The bottom line for Chomsky is expressed in his *Failed States*: “Of course, every sane person hopes that ways will be found to prevent Iran from developing a nuclear weapons program.” The U.S. imperialist madmen, who are unique in having actually carried out nuclear holocaust with their bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, push the same line. And

state, is the be-all and end-all. This was expressed clearly in the declaration Chomsky signed: “We support civil liberties and democratic rights everywhere, regardless of the country’s economic, political or social system....We support democracy in Cuba. The imprisonment of people for attempting to exercise their rights of free expression is outrageous and unacceptable.”

The Spartacist League understands Cuba to be a deformed workers state: a society in which capitalism has been overthrown and workers property forms established, but deformed by the rule of a parasitic, nationalist Stalinist bureaucracy. Following the 1959 Cuban Revolution, the petty-bourgeois Castro government expropriated the holdings of the U.S. imperialists and their domestic bourgeois lackeys. The nationalization of the means of production and the creation of a collectivized, planned economy led to enormous gains for the Cuban working masses and made it possible, with critical Soviet military and economic aid, to provide everyone a job, decent housing, food and education. Despite these achievements, which have been eroded since the destruction of the Soviet Union, the Cuban workers state has been bureaucratically deformed from its inception, with the working class excluded from political power. Cuba is run by a Stalinist bureaucratic caste that upholds the nationalist dogma of “socialism in one country,” which means renouncing the struggle for international socialist revolution and undermining the defense of the Cuban Revolution.

We call for the unconditional military defense of the Cuban deformed workers state—as well as the other remaining workers states of China, North Korea and Vietnam—against imperialism and capitalist counterrevolution. While opposing the barbaric institution of capital punishment and the Stalinist bureaucracy’s use of it, we support Cuba’s military defense

workers state against imperialism and capitalist counterrevolution, and for political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy. We fight to build a workers party that will make a socialist revolution in the belly of the U.S. imperialist beast. In the final instance, this is Cuba’s and the other workers states’ best defense.

From our labor/black mobilizations to stop the Klan, to our fight against the forces of capitalist counterrevolution through our interventions in the former East Germany and Soviet Union, to our fight to free Mumia Abu-Jamal today, we have earned our reputation and proudly carry on the tradition of Lenin and Trotsky. Meanwhile, Chomsky continues to babble about how the “democratic” credentials of the bloodiest empire on the planet have lost their luster. As we stated about Chomsky at the June 6 forum, “You perpetuate that you can have a humane imperialist system, which actually disarms not only the working class but leftists.”

In “Noam Chomsky: Imperialism’s ‘Armchair Anarchist’” (WV No. 735, 5 May 2000) we wrote:

“Just as it took Lenin and Trotsky’s Bolshevik Party, a vanguard party leading the working class, to create the first revolutionary workers state in history out of the ruins of the autocratic Russian empire, so today it will take a revolutionary internationalist vanguard party to lead the fight for successful workers revolution against rotting American imperialism. That is the fight to which the Spartacist League, American section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) and Spartacus Youth Clubs are dedicated. Those who set their sights higher than a comfortable academic career as an ideologist for the imperialist war machine should join us in our fight for a communist future for humanity.” ■

Spartacus Youth Club Events

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Saturday, August 5, 5 p.m.

Class: Defend the Gains of the 1949 Chinese Revolution! For Workers Political Revolution!

299 Broadway, Suite 318

(between Duane and Reade Streets)

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or e-mail: nysl@compuserve.com

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Meet the Marxists

Caffe Strada

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Berkeley

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or e-mail: sycbayarea@sbcglobal.net

Thursday, August 31, 6 p.m.

Meet the Marxists

San Francisco State University

Cesar Chavez Student Center

Room T153

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THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION OF 1917

FROM THE FEBRUARY REVOLUTION TO THE JULY DAYS

We print below, edited for publication, the first part of a class given by comrade T. Marlow, which was one in a series of educational on Leon Trotsky's *The History of the Russian Revolution* (1932) held in January of this year as a Spartacist League young cadre school.

It was in the course of the year 1917 that Leon Trotsky, co-leader with V.I. Lenin of the October Revolution, came over to the Bolshevik Party. Trotsky had declared his political solidarity with the Bolsheviks to the party's leaders upon his return to Russia in May 1917. Having facilitated the fusion of the Inter-Borough Group of United Social Democrats (known as the "Mezhrayontsi") with the Bolshevik Party, Trotsky formally joined the Bolsheviks as part of this fusion in July.

PART ONE

Trotsky titled the first chapter of his *History of the Russian Revolution* "Peculiarities of Russia's Development"; his summary of the 1917 February Revolution is "The Paradox of the February Revolution." These two themes continue throughout the events that occurred in Russia in 1917, which culminated in the October Revolution. The first goes back to Trotsky's brilliant prognosis, *Results and Prospects* (1906), which forecast not only the possibility, but the necessity for the Russian proletariat to seize power, leading behind it the mass of the peasants. This work, begun in 1904, was completed shortly after the 1905 Revolution, which shook the rotting edifice of the tsarist monarchy to its core. But it did not overthrow the monarchy. That task would have to wait until 12 years later, which is the second of Trotsky's themes. Its completion in the conquest of state power by the Bolsheviks occurred a mere eight months after the February Revolution deposed Tsar Nicholas Romanov and his dynasty.

A key outgrowth of 1905 was the creation of the *soviets* (workers councils). These were formed spontaneously by the insurgent workers and had not been called for by any of the left parties, the Bolsheviks included. Their significance as the most democratic and flexible form of mass organization of the working class quickly became apparent. Soviets reappeared in 1917 during the February Revolution with an added important difference—not only the workers but also the soldiers were represented in the soviets. As Trotsky notes in his *History*:

"As a matter of fact, thanks to the tradition of 1905, the soviets sprang up as



Russian workers demonstration calling for eight-hour workday, 1917. Banner in rear reads "Long Live the Soviet of Workers Deputies."

though from under the earth, and immediately became incomparably more powerful than all the other organisations which later tried to compete with them (the municipalities, the co-operatives, and in part the trade unions). As for the peasantry, a class by its very nature scattered, thanks to the war and revolution it was exactly at that moment organised as never before. The war had assembled the peasants into an army, and the revolution had given the army a political character! No fewer than eight million peasants were united in companies and squadrons, which had immediately created their revolutionary representation and could through it at any moment be brought to their feet by a telephone call."

The politicization of the peasants—driven at bottom by their desire for a sweeping agrarian revolution—was critical. Without the support, overt or tacit, of the peasants, the proletarian revolution could not hope to succeed and survive in backward Russia, with its overwhelmingly agrarian population.

War and Revolution

The strains of World War I really laid the basis for the downfall of the monarchy. Trotsky's chapter on the tsar and the tsarina is one of my favorites: to put it mildly, Nicholas was a dim bulb on the family tree, totally isolated and deliberately ignorant of what was going on in his country (except for his generous support to Black Hundred pogromists, reports of whose activities he eagerly consumed). But with or without the will of the

dynasty, Russia could not have avoided participation in the interimperialist conflict. Trotsky placed Russia's participation in WWI somewhere between that of France (a full-blown imperialist power) and China (with its comprador bourgeoisie subservient to the big powers). In his *History*, he adds:

"Russia paid in this way for her right to be an ally of advanced countries, to import capital and pay interest on it—that is, essentially, for her right to be a privileged colony of her allies—but at the same time for her right to oppress and rob Turkey, Persia, Galicia, and in general the countries weaker and more backward than herself."

Russia did not do well in the war. There were some successes against the Austrians, but as Trotsky notes, this was less due to the skill of the Russians than to: "The disintegrating Hapsburg monarchy had long ago hung out a sign for an undertaker, not demanding any high qualifications of him."

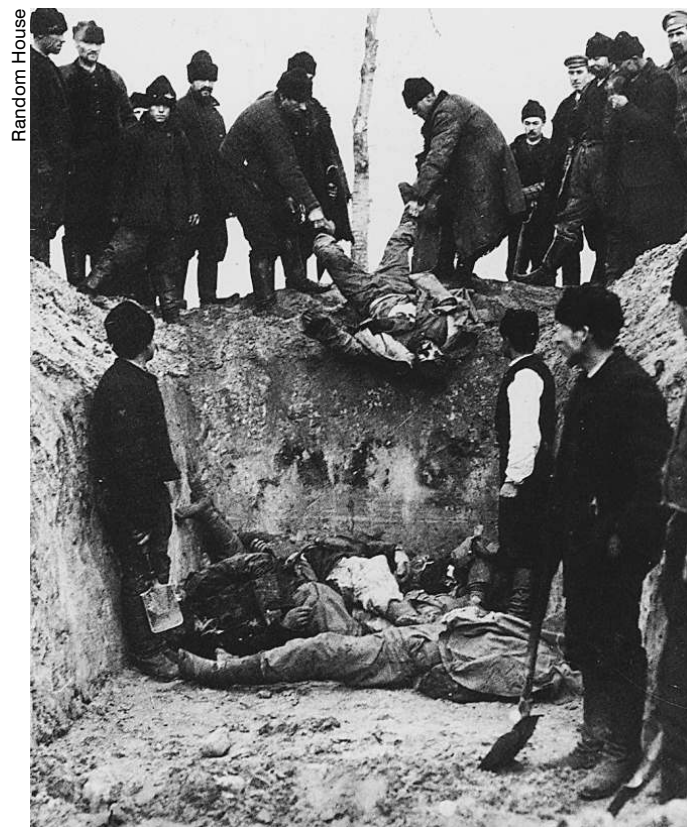
When it came to the Germans, things went rather badly for Russia. In August 1915, that is, one year after the war began, General Ruzsky reported to the

Council of Ministers: "The contemporary demands of military technique are beyond our powers; in any case we cannot keep up with the Germans..." (quoted in Trotsky's *History*). Two years later, in the aftermath of the revolutionary upheaval and repression of the July Days, and the failure of then-Minister of War Kerensky's June offensive, this same general would rail: "People followed the old banners as sacred things and went to their deaths.... But to what have the red banners brought us? To the surrender of armies in whole corps." The decrepit generals and the bourgeoisie would blame Russia's collapse on the Bolsheviks, whom they slanderously claimed were acting as paid agents of Germany.

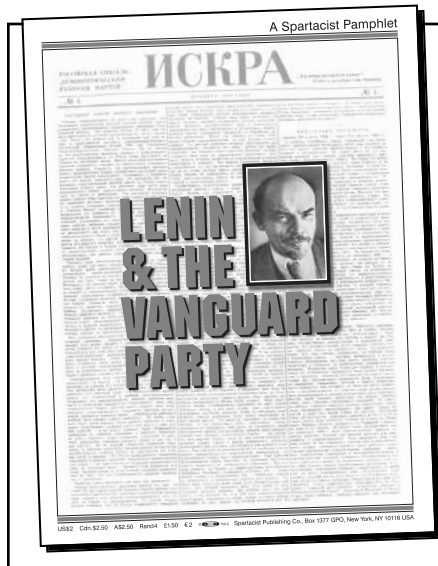
By Trotsky's reckoning, some 15 million men, mostly peasants, were mobilized for the war, out of which 5.5 million were counted as killed, wounded or captured; some 2.5 million were killed. Trotsky encapsulated the situation as follows: "'Everything for the war!' said the ministers, deputies, generals, journalists. 'Yes,' the soldier began to think in the trenches, 'they are all ready to fight to the last drop...of my blood.'"

The extraordinary casualty rates were due both to incompetent military command and a pervasive lack of supplies, including weapons and ammunition, and even boots. Meanwhile, the capitalists were making huge profits selling (often inferior) goods to the government, paid for by exactions on the working class and also by more and more loans from the City of London and the French Bourse (stock market). Rodzianko, Lord Chamberlain under Tsar Nicholas II, later President of the State Duma (Russian Parliament), and one of the leaders of the Russian big bourgeoisie, got rich by providing low quality, essentially useless wood to be used for rifle stocks. As an aside, one might note that Halliburton has a long line of predecessors! Trotsky speaks of the "shower of gold" coming from the top that funded the lavish parties of the rich, while the lower classes were desperate to find even bread.

What broke the back of the dynasty was that the army no longer wanted to fight, and units were increasingly either



Mass burial of Russian soldiers during WWI. Russian deaths totaled 2.5 million, 40 percent of total killed fighting for the Entente.



First published in 1978, this pamphlet provides a detailed historical and theoretical account of Lenin's struggle for a vanguard party. Includes: "In Defense of Democratic Centralism"

This edition also includes: "The Fight for a Leninist Vanguard Party"

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abandoning the front in mass desertions or refusing to carry out orders. A powerful indication was when the Cossack regiments in Petrograd refused to suppress a workers demonstration in the Vyborg district—the proletarian core of Petrograd. As Trotsky relates in the *History*:

“...the officers first charged through the crowd. Behind them, filling the whole width of the Prospect, galloped the Cossacks. Decisive moment! But the horse-men, cautiously, in a long ribbon, rode through the corridor just made by the officers. ‘Some of them smiled,’ Kayurov recalls, ‘and one of them gave the workers a good wink.’”

If the *Cossacks* were winking at the workers, the tsar was in trouble.

The February Revolution

Trotsky’s chronology in Volume One of the *History of the Russian Revolution* gives a vivid idea of the tempo of events: on February 23, a demonstration for International Women’s Day demanding bread sparks the revolution. By February 25, there is a general strike in Petrograd. The next day, the tsar dissolves the Duma—but neither this, nor the shooting of demonstrators, are to any avail. On the next day, there is a mutiny in the Guard regiments and the formation of the Soviet of Workers’ Deputies. By February 28, the tsar’s ministers are arrested. Attempts to arrange an orderly succession failed—none of the grand dukes wanted to feel the rope, so richly deserved by Tsar Nicholas Romanov, around their own necks.

The revolution came as a surprise not only to the abysmally clueless monarch but also to the assorted political parties. Its spontaneity carried dangers. As Trotsky noted:

“A revolutionary uprising that spreads over a number of days can develop victoriously only in case it ascends step by step, and scores one success after another. A pause in its growth is dangerous; a prolonged marking of time, fatal. But even successes by themselves are not enough; the masses must know about them in time, and have time to understand their value. It is possible to let slip a victory at the very moment when it is within arm’s reach. This has happened in history.”

It was only on February 25 that the Bolsheviks decided to issue a leaflet calling for an all-Russian general strike—when Petrograd was facing an armed uprising. What was clearly lacking was political leadership: “The leaders were watching the movement from above; they hesitated, they lagged—in other words, they did not lead. They dragged after the movement” (Trotsky’s *History*).

Hence the paradox of the February Revolution: the tsar was overthrown by a massive upsurge of the Petrograd workers, with the support or indulgence of the garrison troops, and the soviets emerged with the real power. Yet the Provisional Government which was formed was dominated by monarchists—its leader was Prince Lvov—and even the Kadets (a bourgeois and landlord party favoring a constitutional monarchy) were considered to be on the left wing! The workers had toppled the monarchy, but the political power which they rightly possessed was handed off to the bourgeoisie like a hand grenade whose pin was already pulled.

How to explain this? On the face of it, the overthrow of the monarchy had been accomplished without the leadership of a revolutionary party. But as Trotsky points out, this is a misleading view. First, there had been the experience of 1905. Subsequent to that, despite the period of deep reaction, the Bolshevik Party was steeling its cadres in all arenas of work, both legal and underground. By 1912, the working class had recovered some fighting spirit, and a series of strikes occurred. The influence of the Bolsheviks within the proletariat was steadily growing. It is certainly within the realm of possibility that the proletariat could have conquered power in the urban centers of Petrograd and Moscow (as was later threatened in the July Days in 1917). The question was how long they could have held it—without a shift in the attitude of the peasantry, one would likely have had a repeat of the

defeat of the Paris Commune of 1871.

The world war changed that. Despite the initial burst of patriotism in August 1914, in which the Bolsheviks were shunned by the masses and repressed by the government, the seeds planted by the Bolsheviks through their intervention into the workers’ upsurges from 1912 to 1914 eventually found fertile ground. After August 1914, the defeats on the military front, and the corresponding economic suffering in the rear that was brought about during two and a half years of imperialist carnage, had weakened support for the monarchy to zero. As Trotsky points out, even though the Bolsheviks as a party were repressed to the point of organizational collapse, the individual cadres were still alive and able to engage fellow workers on the shop floor. That is, if the Bolsheviks as a party were not in the leadership per se of the February Revolution, their ideas and agitators certainly played a critical role.

Dual Power

This brings us to the period of dual power. The downfall of the monarchy was brought about through the forces of the Petrograd proletariat and the active support (or neutrality) of the military garrison. The cringing liberals had no role, and the big bourgeoisie sought to cover their power with some regurgitated monarchical order. The Provisional Government was headed by Prince Lvov, with a sprinkling of Kadets representing the bourgeoisie and with the deputy chairman of the Petrograd Soviet, Kerensky, assuming the post of Minister of Justice



Above: First session of Soviet of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies in Moscow, February 1917. Below: Members of first Provisional Government headed by Prince Lvov, flanked by Kerensky (center) and Miliukov (second from right).



VAAP

in contravention of a Soviet Executive Committee decision that its members not enter the government. In reality, the power belonged to the Soviet, but its leadership was dominated by the Mensheviks and, especially, the Social Revolutionaries (SRs, a leftist party based on the peasantry); the Bolsheviks were a minority, even among the workers. The soviets of February reflected the *consciousness* of February, which accounts for the position of the SRs, who were the predominant party of the peasants and hence the soldiers.

As Trotsky noted, the Soviet leadership was ceding power:

“The bourgeoisie received the power behind the backs of the people. It had no support in the toiling classes. But along with the power it received a simulacrum of support second-hand. The Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries, lifted aloft by the masses, delivered as if from themselves a testimonial of confidence to the bourgeoisie.”

When the Compromiser leadership



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Revolutionaries take aim at Petrograd police headquarters, February 1917.

crawled before the bourgeoisie, begging it to take the power, they were politically consistent—the Mensheviks thought that the Russian Revolution never could go beyond the ascendancy of the bourgeoisie. Even the sharp Miliukov (head of the Kadets) was astonished and proclaimed his praise to the Mensheviks’ betrayal: “Yes, I was listening and I was thinking how far forward our workers’ movement has progressed since the days of 1905” (quoted in Trotsky’s *History*).

to speak of guidance of the revolution.

“The highly remarkable feature of our revolution is that it has brought about a *dual power*. This fact must be grasped first and foremost: unless it is understood, we cannot advance. We must know how to supplement and amend old ‘formulas,’ for example, those of Bolshevism, for while they have been found to be correct on the whole, their concrete realisation *has turned out to be* different. *Nobody* previously thought, or could have thought, of a dual power.”

“What is this dual power? Alongside the Provisional Government, the government of the *bourgeoisie*, *another government* has arisen, so far weak and incipient, but undoubtedly a government that actually exists and is growing—the Soviets of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies.”

—V.I. Lenin, “The Dual Power”

Referring to the Menshevik/SR leaders of the soviets and their capitulations, Lenin adds:

“They refuse to recognise the obvious truth that inasmuch as these Soviets exist, *inasmuch as* they are a power, we have in Russia a state of the *type* of the Paris Commune.

“I have emphasised the words ‘inasmuch as,’ for it is only an incipient power. By direct agreement with the bourgeois Provisional Government and by a series of actual concessions, it has itself *surrendered and is surrendering* its positions to the bourgeoisie.”

In several instances, the soviets intervened and took actions which are normally the prerogative of the (bourgeois) state power. The first Minister of War in the Provisional Government, Guchkov, complained: “The government, alas, has no real power; the troops, the railroads, the post and telegraph are in the hands of the Soviet. The simple fact is that the Provisional Government exists only so long as the Soviet permits it” (quoted in Trotsky’s *History*). However, this did not alter the fact that the Provisional Government was bourgeois, that it was pursuing the imperialist war aims of the bourgeoisie, and that the economy of Russia was still operating on a capitalist basis. The Provisional Government sought to strangle the Soviet in order to exercise its state power unfettered. Please recall Lenin’s description of the Soviets as an *incipient* power. Dual power was inherently an unstable situation, during which the contending classes marshaled their forces for the confrontation which would decide *which class would rule*. In other words, it would take another *revolution* to put state power in the hands of the Soviets. And that is what would happen in October.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

NOTICE

Workers Vanguard skips alternate issues in June, July and August.

Our next issue will be dated September 1.

Imperialism's Labor Lieutenants

Down With AFL-CIO Tops' Anti-China Protectionism!

With the profit-bloated capitalists looting pensions and ripping up health benefits, working people are saddled with a labor “leadership” that has overwhelmingly capitulated to the bosses’ giveback demands. With few exceptions, rather than using the weapons of class struggle, like strikes, to fight against the bosses and their government, the labor tops push corporate boycotts and spend millions in union money to promote the “lesser evil” capitalist Democrats. And nothing more clearly exemplifies the union misleaders’ role as “labor lieutenants” of capital than their anti-Communist campaigns against China for “stealing American jobs.”

Charging that the Chinese government “systematically denies workers’ rights,” the AFL-CIO leadership petitioned the Bush administration in June to “immediately take action,” such as hitting China with trade sanctions. The labor tops claim that suppression of workers’ rights by the Beijing regime gives companies in China a competitive advantage, causing the loss of manufacturing jobs in the U.S. Joining the AFL-CIO in filing the petition were two Congressmen, Democrat Benjamin Cardin and right-wing Republican Christopher Smith, while another 40 Congressmen signed a letter to Bush supporting it. On July 21, the administration rejected the petition but took the opportunity to chime in with “serious concerns with labor rights and working conditions in China” (AP, 21 July).

Pushing national protectionism is poison for the U.S. workers movement; it means scapegoating foreign workers for the loss of jobs in the U.S. instead of fighting the capitalists at home. It is doubly pernicious when directed against China, a bureaucratically deformed workers state. The fact that capitalist rule was overthrown in China by the 1949 Revolution, leading to the building of a collectivized economy, represents a historic gain for the working class internationally. The aim of the U.S. and other imperialists is to destroy the Chinese workers state and restore capitalist rule in order to turn the Chinese mainland into one gigantic sweatshop.

The imperialists have a two-pronged strategy for counterrevolution in China. On the one hand, they aim to undermine the workers state by strengthening internal counterrevolutionary forces, including through capitalist investment. Thus Washington is today not inclined to disrupt U.S. economic penetration by issuing trade sanctions against Beijing. On the other hand, the imperialists are exert-

ing unrelenting military pressure against China. U.S. incursions into Afghanistan and Central Asia have significantly tightened the military vise around China, while over the past decade the Pentagon has strengthened its military deployment in the Pacific Rim, placing antiballistic missile systems in the region and signing a joint declaration with Japan last year in defense of capitalist Taiwan.

Just as workers in the U.S. must defend their unions against the bosses despite the sellout labor leadership, it is the duty of the international working class, especially in the U.S., to *defend China against imperialism and internal counterrevolution*, despite the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) regime’s accommodation to capitalism. Insofar as it offers up low-wage Chinese workers to U.S. corporations, the Beijing bureaucracy acts as a labor contractor for the American bourgeoisie. The same Stalinist regime conciliates imperialism at the international level, by such acts as voting in the United Nations Security Council to condemn the North Korean deformed workers state’s missile testing. CCP rule thus undermines the system of nationalized property and the defense of the deformed workers state itself. It is the task of the Chinese working class, led by a Trotskyist party committed to defending and extending the gains of the 1949 Revolution, to sweep away the Stalinist bureaucracy through *proletarian political revolution*.

As the accompanying article “China’s ‘Market Reforms’—A Trotskyist Analysis” makes clear, Beijing’s economic measures are deeply contradictory. While penetration by offshore Chinese and imperialist capital strengthens internal counterrevolutionary forces, increased trade and investment have led to a marked increase in development, including through the importation of industrial machinery.

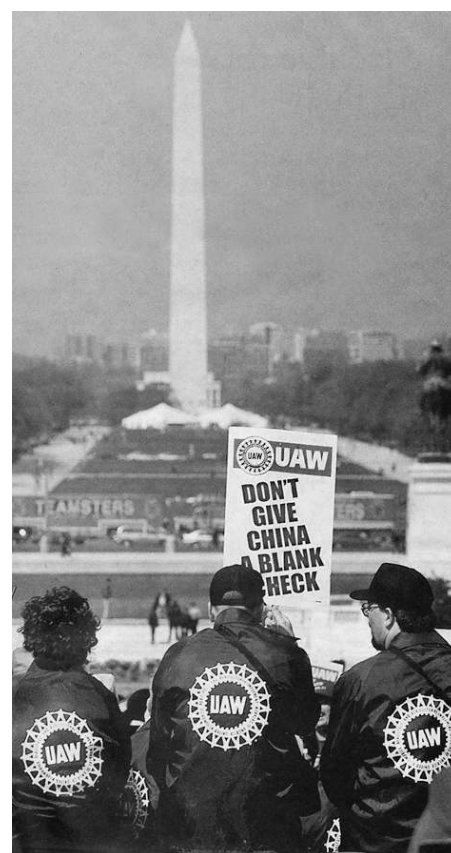
But who are the AFL-CIO tops to scream about the lack of workers’ rights in China? These same labor fakers, who accept the capitalist profit system and defend the interests of U.S. imperialism, have for decades overseen massive attacks on the wages, benefits, jobs and working conditions of their own members. The United Auto Workers misleaders, who are among the loudest voices clamoring for trade restrictions against China, caved in to the Delphi and GM bosses’ demands for givebacks and job-slashing without even the pretense of a fight at those companies, not to speak of the need to organize non-union auto plants. A real fight on

behalf of workers in the U.S. could also begin at Wal-Mart—not through campaigns against the Chinese exports that fill Wal-Mart’s shelves but through a concerted effort to unionize Wal-Mart. That will take the kind of hard class struggle that built the industrial unions in the 1930s.

In 2004, an alliance of AFL-CIO unions issued a petition calling on the Bush administration to pressure Beijing to revalue its currency, the yuan (also called renminbi), or face sanctions. The so-called China Currency Coalition united trade unions like the Teamsters, Machinists and others with capitalist enterprises, manufacturers’ associations and 35 (mainly Democratic) Congressmen. Two members of that coalition, Democratic Senator Charles Schumer and Republican Senator Lindsey Graham, sponsored a bill that threatens to slap a draconian 27.5 percent tariff on all Chinese imports. We oppose the labor bureaucracy’s efforts to deny China the elementary right of any state to engage in economic commerce, to buy and sell on the world market. Not accidentally, the recent AFL-CIO petition effort feeds into the drive by the Democratic Party—the other party of capitalist imperialism—to retake control of Congress from the Republicans in the November elections, in part by portraying Bush as “soft” on China.

Andrew Stern, head of the Service Employees International Union and of the Change to Win Coalition, led a delegation to China in 2002 that broke with AFL-CIO protocol by meeting with the leadership of the All-China Trade Union Federation. But despite its split from the AFL-CIO last year and its “global union” rhetoric, Change to Win does not in any way represent a break with the class collaboration and chauvinist protectionism of the AFL-CIO tops. The UNITE HERE hotel, restaurant and garment workers union, a key component of Change to Win, has a long history of collaborating with the textile bosses in pressuring the U.S. and Canadian governments to limit Chinese imports.

The anti-Communist trade-union bureaucracy has a long track record of dirty work on behalf of U.S. imperialism, particularly its championing of “free trade unions” as a means of undermining the Soviet Union and East European deformed workers states during the Cold War. In the 1980s, the AFL-CIO tops channeled millions of dollars of CIA money to Polish Solidarność, a reactionary movement masquerading as a trade



Undated photo of anti-China UAW protesters in Washington, D.C. Anti-Communist protectionism is poison for U.S. workers.

union that was in the forefront of the drive for capitalist restoration in East Europe. In 1989-92, as the fate of the Soviet Union hung in the balance, the AFL-CIO tops funneled in money and “advisers” to win combative Soviet miners to support U.S.-backed counterrevolutionary Boris Yeltsin. More recently, the AFL-CIO sponsored the “Labor Committee for a Free Cuba,” a collection of Cuban *gusano* counterrevolutionaries and CIA Cold Warriors who dream of smashing the Cuban Revolution and retaking the island for their imperialist masters.

The U.S. labor tops are trying to repeat in China the scenario played out in East Europe and the former Soviet Union, where capitalist counterrevolution, prepared by decades of Stalinist misrule, plunged the working people into mass unemployment, falling life expectancy and all-around social degradation. Capitalist restoration in China would mean even deeper misery, poverty and devastation for its population, and would further embolden the capitalists worldwide in their attacks against workers and minorities.

Working-class struggle must be consciously waged as an *international* fight, based on the understanding that the interests of labor and capital can never be reconciled. In the U.S., that understanding means fighting to break the ties forged by the labor bureaucracy to the Democratic Party and the capitalist state and building a revolutionary workers party. As we wrote a decade ago in “Protectionism vs. Class Struggle: Exchange on Boeing Strike” (WV No. 634, 1 December 1995): “Our watchword is not the deadly dangerous trap of ‘defending American jobs’ against foreign competition, but the words which Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels inscribed on their banner nearly 150 years ago: ‘Workers of the world, unite’.” ■

Abortion...

(continued from page 16)

Throughout the 1990s, bourgeois feminist groups such as NOW *demobilized* protest in defense of abortion clinics by preaching reliance on the Democratic Clinton administration. During Clinton’s eight years in office, safe access to abortion was effectively gutted across much of the country, as the number of abortion providers plummeted 14 percent between 1992 and 1996, and a huge number of laws chipping away at abortion rights were passed. While occasionally paying lip service to women’s formal right to abortion, the Democrats spout the “family values” rhetoric of the Republicans to win over

their religious constituency.

On July 25, the U.S. Senate passed a bill criminalizing anyone who takes an underage girl across a state line to avoid parental notification laws. Last year, the House passed an even more comprehensive national parental notification law, and Bush promises to sign any version that comes to him. Forty-four states have parental notification or consent laws on the books. *Down with “squeal rules”—abortion rights for teens!*

For decades anti-woman bigots along with the KKK and other fascists have terrorized women seeking abortions. Seven abortion clinic doctors and workers have been killed. State legislatures have passed every possible restriction to strangle access to abortion. Democrats and

Republicans alike have axed welfare and slashed medical care. What is urgently needed is a fight to defend and extend women’s rights, including the right to abortion. We wrote in the Programmatic Statement of the Spartacist League/U.S.:

“In seeking to forge a Leninist party as a tribune of the people championing the rights of all the exploited and oppressed, we fight for the workers movement to take up the struggle for women’s rights. We call for mass mobilizations backed up by the social power of the labor movement to defend abortion clinics against rightist mobs. We place no reliance on the bourgeois state, the enemy of women’s rights, to defend the clinics. We fight for free abortion on demand as part of the necessary struggle for free, quality health care for all, in order to ensure that legal abortion can become a reality for working, minority and immigrant women.”

The legal right to abortion was won as a result of the massive social struggles of the 1960s and 1970s, the civil rights movement and the radicalization that took place during the Vietnam War years. This short but intense period shook loose some gains for black people and women from a bourgeoisie in fear of losing its control. But as the all-sided attacks on abortion rights show, reforms are always reversible under capitalism. The liberation of women requires a socialist revolution, which will uproot the private property system and replace the family—the main source of women’s oppression in class society—with socialized childcare and housework, to bring women fully into social and political life. ■

China...

(continued from page 5)

is a conventional bourgeois term that serves to obscure the class divisions and conflicts of interest in society. Applied in particular to China, the notion of a “worker-community-centered economy” obscures the class difference between workers and peasants. The latter is a petty-bourgeois stratum whose income is derived from the ownership and sale of commodities. Peasants have a material interest in high prices for the foodstuffs and other agricultural produce that they sell relative to the price of the manufactured goods that they buy both for production purposes (e.g., chemical fertilizer, farm equipment) and for personal consumption. Moreover, the interest of peasants in high prices for foodstuffs is not eliminated by the transformation of family farms into agricultural collectives. The income of the collective’s members is still largely dependent on the prices received for their produce, whether from a government procurement agency or on the private market.

Despite their professed Marxism, Hart-Landsberg and Burkett’s outlook amounts to a form of anarcho-populism. Their notion of a “worker-community-centered economy” has an affinity with the classic program of a federation of politically autonomous and economically largely self-sufficient communes associated with the 19th-century anarchist adventurer Mikhail Bakunin. This can be seen by the nature of their criticism of the Chinese economy during the Mao era. They maintain that over-centralization of the economy was inefficient and, more importantly, implicitly identify a centrally planned economy with authoritarian political rule:

“Economic planning had become overly centralized and, as the economy grew more complex, unable to effectively and efficiently respond to people’s needs.... “There was a critical need to build on the strengths of China’s past achievements while empowering workers and peasants to create new structures of decision making and planning. Among other things, this implied a restructuring and decentralization of the economy and state decision making to enhance the direct control of the associated producers over the conditions and products of their labor.”

Hart-Landsberg and Burkett condemn the increasing inequalities generated by the market-oriented “reform” program. However, the achievement of a uniform level of wages and benefits across different enterprises, industries and regions necessarily requires a centrally administered economy. Only such a system is capable of redistributing economic resources from more productive enterprises, industries and regions to less productive ones.

In the roughly 150 pages of “China and Socialism” and the rejoinder to Lippit et al., Hart-Landsberg and Burkett do not explain how a “worker-community-centered economy” would operate in practice. For the most part they use the formula as a mantra to ward off the evils of neoliberalism. At one point they give as a hypothetical example “the creation of a



Above: Mao’s People’s Liberation Army enters Beijing, January 1949. Chinese Revolution smashed landlord/capitalist rule. Below: Chinese troops in Kaesong, Korea in 1951. Chinese army defended North Korea during 1950-53 war.



national healthcare system,” explaining that this:

“would require developing a construction industry to build clinics and hospitals, a drug industry to treat illnesses, a machine-tool industry to make equipment, a software industry for record keeping, an educational system to train doctors and nurses, etc., all shaped by the developing needs and capabilities of the people on local, national, and regional levels.”

Nowhere do they indicate the political institutions and structural economic mechanisms necessary to achieve this laudable goal. How would the fraction of total available economic resources expended on the health care system be determined as against other needs, such as investment in industrial expansion and infrastructure, military defense, education, pensions, etc.? The coordination of different economic activities (e.g., construction, medical equipment, computer software) to develop a health care system would require centralized planning and

administration. Such a system is *entirely compatible* with the active democratic participation of workers at the point of production, for example, advising on the best use of technology, establishing and enforcing safety standards, maintaining labor discipline and the like. The division of total economic resources among competing needs should be debated and decided at the highest level of a government based on proletarian democracy—i.e., the rule of workers and peasants councils. Proletarian democracy is essential for the rational operation of a planned economy.

...And Maoist-Stalinist Ideology

Lippit points out that the Chinese economy in the Mao era was institutionally modeled on that of the Soviet Union under Stalin and that “there wasn’t even a hint of worker control in either country.”

Hart-Landsberg and Burkett do not dispute that. What they find attractive in pre-“reform” China are certain elements of late Maoist ideology, notably the rhetorical egalitarianism associated with the Cultural Revolution of 1966-76.

The grotesquely misnamed “Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution” was launched by Mao to purge the wing of the bureaucracy, led by Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, that had led China during its recovery from the devastating results of the “Great Leap Forward” of the late 1950s. The latter was an insane adventure in economic autarky, exemplified by backyard steel furnaces, which ended in total collapse and widespread starvation. During the destructive frenzy of the Cultural Revolution, millions of students were mobilized as Red Guards, supposedly to fight against bureaucratism and so-called “capitalist roaders.” In January 1967, when workers in Shanghai organized a general strike to defend their standard of living, alongside a national railway strike, Mao sent the Red Guards to smash the strikes.

During the Cultural Revolution, material self-interest was denounced as a “bourgeois” attitude. “Building socialism” was defined as changing the social psychology of the masses such that they identified themselves with the collective well-being (“serving the people”). A well-publicized credo of a Maoist partisan at the time was: “I must remember Mao’s teachings to set myself *high* political standards and *low* living standards.”

Hart-Landsberg and Burkett do not subscribe to this kind of “socialist” asceticism. But they do divorce socialist consciousness from the overcoming of economic scarcity and the achievement of material abundance in a future communist society, in effect *counterposing* technological progress to the egalitarian development of mankind. In their reply to Lippit et al. they contend:

“Human development in the Marxist view does not simply get floated up on a sea of productive forces and consumer goods produced by capital, but rather occurs largely in and through the class struggle—understood (even while capitalism still rules, as well as after the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat) as a long struggle for the de-alienation of all the conditions of production.”

Significantly, they here identify raising the productive forces and increasing consumption levels with *capitalist* development. Unlike Hart-Landsberg and Burkett, Marxists do not counterpose class struggle to raising the productive forces of society. Quite the contrary. The ultimate goal of working-class struggle is to overthrow the capitalist mode of production and the bourgeois nation-state system, which *limit* the productive forces, and replace them with an internationally integrated and planned socialist economy. And the goal of the latter is to create a global communist civilization in which all members of society have access to

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Li Zhenheng

Red Guards humiliate government official, September 1966. Mao unleashed Cultural Revolution against rivals in Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy.

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Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program
International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)
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SPARTACIST

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International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)

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China...

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material and cultural resources sufficient to fully realize their capacities.

It is, as they say, no accident that “China and Socialism” was first published in *Monthly Review*. This has long been the main journal of American left-wing intellectuals of Maoist persuasion or sympathies going back to the 1960s when its leading figure was Paul Sweezy. Sweezy asserted that “the experience of the Chinese Revolution...has shown that a low level of development of productive forces is not an insuperable obstacle to the socialist transformation of social relations” (*Monthly Review*, November 1974).

The whole framework for the present-day debate between Lippit and Hart-Landsberg/Burkett is fundamentally false: that the choice is either integration into the capitalist world market or one form or another of pseudo-egalitarian national economic self-sufficiency. For Mao, the doctrine of “self-reliance” in “building socialism” was a typical Stalinist expression of making a virtue out of necessity. Socialism, the lower stage of communism, presumes a classless, egalitarian society based on material abundance. The notion that socialism can be achieved in one country is profoundly anti-Marxist. Socialism demands an internationally planned economy in order to direct productive resources on a global scale. In reality, “socialism in one country” in China, as in

tions with China in the early 1960s. It was then that Mao and his ideologues began preaching the virtue of “self-reliance,” i.e., national economic autarky, as a basic principle in “building socialism.”

However, a few years later the international political climate changed radically when China entered into a strategic alliance with American imperialism against the Soviet degenerated workers state. This was signaled in 1972 when Mao embraced U.S. Commander in Chief Richard Nixon while American warplanes were bombing North Vietnam. Beijing’s alliance with Washington was sealed in blood by China’s invasion of Vietnam in 1979. In return, the imperialists opened their markets and sources of supply to China. In the last half decade of the Mao era, the value of China’s trade, mainly with the advanced capitalist countries, more than doubled, albeit from a very low base. However, the ideological posture of “self-reliance” was maintained.

Hart-Landsberg and Burkett denounce the strategy of export-led growth that China has pursued for the past few decades. To be sure, they insist that they do not oppose foreign trade as such but only foreign trade governed by the laws of capitalist profitability: “The problem faced by workers is not export production per se, but rather the absence of alternatives to *profit-driven* export activity—alternatives that serve the needs of human development” (emphasis in original). But China exists in a world dominated by capitalist corporations, banks and states; thus its exports are necessarily



Magnum

Mao welcomes Nixon to China in 1972 while U.S. rains bombs on Vietnam.

the USSR of Stalin and his heirs, meant opposition to the perspective of workers revolution internationally and a general accommodation to world imperialism.

When China entered the Korean War in late 1950, the American imperialists and their allies like Japan imposed a trade embargo against China, prohibiting the export of a wide range of industrial products, especially technologically sophisticated capitalist equipment. This embargo was maintained for the next two decades. During the 1950s, the Soviet Union’s aid to and trade with China contributed to its rapid economic development—on a par with existing growth rates—particularly the construction of large-scale, modern industrial plants. However, as the rift between the two nationalistic bureaucracies in Beijing and Moscow deepened, the Kremlin leaders severed economic rela-

subject to the laws of the capitalist world market.

As revolutionary Marxists, we do not oppose as such China’s extensive economic relations with the capitalist world through trade and joint ventures with Western and Japanese corporations. A government based on workers and peasants councils in China, led by a Leninist-Trotskyist party, would seek to utilize the world market to accelerate economic development. But in doing so it would re-establish a state monopoly of foreign trade, while renegotiating the terms of foreign investment. More fundamentally, a revolutionary socialist government in China would *actively promote proletarian revolutions internationally*.

The real crime of the Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy—past and present—is that it has helped to perpetuate and indeed



Brown/AFP

Above: Laid-off factory workers protest in northeastern city of Liaoyang, March 2002. Below: Overturned police buses in Dongyang city in China’s Zhejiang province, after mass protests against stifling pollution, spring 2005.



World Journal

strengthen the capitalist-imperialist system on a global scale. In particular, China under both Mao and Deng was a strategically important component in the U.S.-led alliance against the Soviet Union during the last two decades of the Cold War. The Chinese Stalinists thus bear direct and no small measure of responsibility for the counterrevolutionary destruction of the USSR, a world-historic defeat for the international proletariat.

In the post-Soviet period, the CCP regime has continued to accommodate the interests and aspirations of American imperialism. Thus the government of Hu Jintao has endorsed Bush’s global “war on terror,” the political rationale for the U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan and the current military threats against Iran, the second-largest supplier of China’s oil imports. Beijing has collaborated with Washington and

Tokyo in brokering “negotiations” aimed at stopping nuclear weapons development by North Korea. Any weakening of the defense of the North Korean deformed workers state against imperialist militarism will redound against China. While railing at China’s commercial relations with the capitalist world, Hart-Landsberg and Burkett make no mention of the real crimes of the Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy—from Mao to Deng to Hu Jintao—against the international proletariat. In utter contrast to the Beijing Stalinist bureaucrats past and present, among the very first acts undertaken by Lenin, Trotsky and the other Bolshevik leaders of the 1917 October Revolution in Russia was to forge the Communist International as the necessary instrument to lead proletarian revolutions against the rapacious capitalist system.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Lebanon...

(continued from page 1)

the call for imperialist troops to Lebanon, calls for “political and economic sanctions against the state of Israel,” presumably to be implemented by, among others, French imperialism. As our comrades of the Ligue Trotskyste de France underlined in a July 23 leaflet, French president Jacques Chirac’s proposals “simply represent France’s bid to use the bloodbath—caused in large part by UN resolution 1559 [calling for Syria to get out of Lebanon and for Hezbollah to be disarmed]—to reinsert itself into its former colony and attempt to regain leverage in the oil-rich Near East.”

The fake socialists are grotesquely and explicitly promoting their “own” imperialist rulers, who have waged war against the immigrant and Muslim populations of their countries, as a force for peace in the Near East. In Britain, Lindsey German, of the Stop the War Coalition and the Socialist Workers Party, signed a letter published in the London *Guardian* (28 July) complaining of Blair’s “total subservience to the US” and declaring, “Our country is being humiliated.... We therefore call on the government to join the vast majority of the world’s states, the UN secretary general and the Archbishop of Canterbury in calling for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire.” And in Berlin, a July 21 rally concluded with the singing of the Lebanese and *German* national anthems!

With Israel bogged down in fierce fighting with Hezbollah, the entry of imperialist “peacekeepers” would only serve to bail out the Zionists by assuming the task their military forces have been incapable of carrying out—the disarming of Hezbollah. That is exactly what happened in Lebanon in 1982, when UN “peacekeepers” disarmed Palestinian fighters, setting up the massacre at the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps. At protests in London and elsewhere, our comrades carried signs reading: “Remember Sabra and Shatila—No reliance on the UN!”

In the U.S., the reformist International Socialist Organization (ISO) complains of the “weakness of the mainstream U.S. antiwar movement toward Israeli war crimes,” and criticizes the Democrats for acting as “vocal cheerleaders for Israel” (*Socialist Worker* online, 28 July). Of course, the Democrats are superhawks for Israel, as they have been for decades. But the ISO sought to build a liberal-pacifist antiwar movement premised on appealing to just such Democratic capitalist politicians to oppose “Bush’s war” in Iraq.

Unlike Israel’s invasion of Lebanon in 1982, which touched off massive protests in the Zionist garrison state, there has been widespread popular support for the current campaign. Nonetheless, there have been courageous protests against the assault on Lebanon, including a demonstration of 5,000 in Tel Aviv on July 22. Notably, 150 demonstrated against the war on July 25 in Haifa, a city that had been hit by Hezbollah missiles and where eight maintenance workers at a train depot died in a single barrage. The U.S. press has given wide coverage to Hezbollah’s rocket attacks, which have hit innocent civilians, while grossly playing down the infinitely greater terrorism carried out by



**July 30:
Enraged
protesters at
main UN
building in
Beirut, after
Qana atrocity.**

Israeli forces in Lebanon.

By standing up to the Israeli assault, Hezbollah has won widespread support among the Arab masses, including among Sunni Muslims. Even the Sunni-dominated regimes of Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, which initially denounced Hezbollah for “provoking” Israel, have backtracked in the face of growing popular support for Hezbollah. Gratifying though it may be to see Hezbollah hold out against the Israeli war machine, there must be no illusions that Hezbollah is anything other than a reactionary fundamentalist movement that seeks to establish an Iran-style theocracy in Lebanon. Hezbollah represents a deadly danger, especially for women, secular Muslims and Christians.

That masses of the oppressed in the Near East today look to reactionary Islamic fundamentalism for their liberation is a direct result of the political bankruptcy of the bourgeois nationalists and of the historic betrayals by the Stalinist parties that tailed and capitulated to them. In the 1950s, Communist parties in Iran and Iraq attracted mass support based on their association with the 1917 October Revolution, which overturned capitalist rule in Russia. But the Stalinists betrayed the aspirations of their supporters, derailing potentially revolutionary situations by supporting bourgeois nationalists like Nasser in Egypt, Mossadeq in Iran, and Qassim in Iraq (see “Near East, 1950s—Permanent Revolution vs. Bourgeois Nationalism,” WV Nos. 740 and 741, 25 August and 8 September, 2000). Throughout the Cold War, the U.S. manipulated and cynically reinforced religious fundamentalism as an organized force against Communism, most clearly expressed in the billions funneled to arm and train *mujahedin* reactionaries fighting Soviet forces in Afghanistan in the 1980s.

The struggle against Zionist aggression and imperialist neocolonialism requires a fight against capitalist rule, both in the imperialist centers and in the Near East. **Down with the U.S.-Israeli axis of terror!**

We print below a July 21 leaflet by the Spartacist League/U.S.

* * *

With Israeli troops poised to invade southern Lebanon, relentless Zionist bombardment is turning large areas of the country into a pile of rubble and twisted metal. At least 350 civilians have been slaughtered, the country’s infrastructure is in ruins, and Beirut is once again being devastated. Out of a population of less

than four million, some 500,000 have been displaced. Meanwhile, the bloody Zionist rulers continue their murderous rampage against Palestinians in Gaza, pounding the densely populated strip, murdering dozens. The master-race mentality of the Zionist rulers dictates that for every Israeli killed, whether soldier or civilian, a score of Arabs must die. Behind Israel’s latest harvest of blood stand the U.S. imperialists, who have given Israel a green light while continuing to enforce their own savage occupation of Iraq and beating the war drums against Syria and Iran. This alone should underscore the futility of appealing to the U.S. imperialists or the United Nations to come to the aid of Lebanon or the Palestinians. ***The myriad peoples of the Near East will not know peace, prosperity or justice until bourgeois rule in the region is overthrown through a series of socialist revolutions.***

Israeli Lt. Gen. Dan Halutz has ominously stated that Israel would “turn back the clock in Lebanon by 20 years,” a



**Demonstrators
in Haifa,
northern Israel,
protest assault
on Lebanon
and war on
Palestinians,
July 25.**

threat of total devastation recalling the 1975-90 civil war. Israel has called up thousands of reservists, having already made several incursions into southern Lebanon where they faced fierce fighting by Hezbollah forces. It is notable that amid the chauvinist frenzy whipped up by Israel’s rulers, some 2,000 people demonstrated in Tel Aviv on July 16 against the assault on Lebanon. As Trotskyists, we in the Spartacist League militarily defend Hezbollah against the Israeli military machine in this conflict, while maintaining our political opposition to this reactionary fundamentalist outfit. ***Israel out of Lebanon, Gaza and all the Occupied Territories! Defend the Palestinian people! Down with U.S. aid to Israel!***

Israel’s latest offensive comes in the context of the murderous U.S. occupation of Iraq. American imperial barbarism, which includes the torture chambers of Abu Ghraib and mass murders such as in Haditha, has also stoked and unleashed an orgy of ethnic and religious bloodletting there. A recent UN report on Iraq stated that in the month of June alone some 3,000 civilians had been slaughtered—100 per day. In the first half of this year, on average, nearly 80 civilians were killed each day. Now the U.S. is ratcheting up its saber rattling against Syria and Iran, claiming they are the real powers behind Hezbollah.

In the event of an attack on Iran or Syria, whether by the U.S. or by Israel acting as its proxy, it is the duty of the proletariat in the U.S. and around the world to stand for the military defense of Iran and Syria, without giving political support to either the Ba’athist dictatorship in Damas-

cus or the reactionary mullah regime in Tehran. In the face of imperialist nuclear blackmail, we say that Iran needs nuclear weapons and adequate delivery systems to defend itself and to deter an imperialist attack. Additionally, as part of our unconditional military defense of the North Korean deformed workers state, we support that country’s development and testing of nuclear weapons and delivery systems. ***Hands off Syria and Iran! No UN sanctions against North Korea! U.S. out of Iraq, Afghanistan, the Near East and Central Asia!***

While the Beirut government, which came to power last year with Washington’s support, appeals to the Bush administration to rein in Israel, the capitalist Democratic and Republican parties pledge their solidarity with the murderous Israeli rulers. For their part, the European imperialist powers and the United Nations debate whether or not Israel’s onslaught is “excessive” or “disproportionate,” and several bourgeois Arab leaders have condemned Hezbollah for “adventurism” after it seized two Israeli soldiers. In the face of Israel’s savage offensive, there are increasing calls for a UN “peacekeeping” presence in southern Lebanon. An undated Web statement by the liberal “antiwar” outfit United for Peace and Justice demands a “Security Council resolution calling for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire” and “an end to US blocking of UN action.” Beware illusions in the UN, an imperialist den of thieves and their victims.

From the Korean War to the starvation sanctions against Saddam Hussein’s Iraq, the UN has acted as a tool of imperialist depredation around the world. It was the UN that disarmed Palestinian fighters during Lebanon’s bloody civil war, setting up

the 1982 massacre of some 2,000 civilians in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps by Christian rightist forces directed by Israeli troops under the leadership of the now-comatose butcher Ariel Sharon. ***No to UN intervention!***

Israel and the U.S. state that their aim is to disarm and crush Hezbollah. This can in the end be accomplished only by the annihilation of southern Lebanon’s plebeian Shi’ite population, a larger of the numerous mutually hostile communities in the country. Far from being a nation, Lebanon is an artificial statelet carved out of Syria by the French imperialists following World War I. The civil war that ravaged Lebanon and killed over 150,000 people represented the bloodiest expression of the intercommunal strife that has always plagued the country.

The reformist Workers World Party, which prettifies Hezbollah as a “national resistance movement,” declares that Islamic fundamentalism “is the ideological form whose actual content is the struggle against imperialism” (*Workers World* online, 20 July). Far from it. During the period of the Cold War against the Soviet Union, U.S. imperialism (and Israel vis-à-vis Hamas) fostered the growth of Islamic reaction as a counterweight to Communism and secular nationalism. This was most clearly expressed in the billions funneled by the U.S. to the bloodthirsty *mujahedin* butchers fighting Soviet troops in Afghanistan in the 1980s. We said, “Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!” and called to extend the gains of the 1917 October Revolution to the Afghan peoples. It is an indictment of the political

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**New York City:
Spartacists at
protest against
Israel’s attack on
Lebanon, July 29.**

At Bay Area Rally for Mumia

Class-Struggle Defense vs. “New Trial” Reformists

On June 9, about 60 people gathered in San Francisco for an event sponsored by the Mobilization to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal. The reformist group Socialist Action (SA), which dominates this “Mobilization,” was, again, pushing its touching faith in the capitalist “justice” system. Thus, the slogans on its call for the June 9 event included: “One court decision from execution! One court decision from new trial & freedom!” SA and other reformist outfits have consistently appealed to the mainstream liberals who view Mumia’s conviction as an isolated “miscarriage of justice,” rather than what it is: a conscious racist frame-up of an innocent man. The death penalty hangs over the head of Mumia Abu-Jamal, an articulate spokesman for the oppressed and exploited, a former Black Panther member and a MOVE supporter.

Behind the slogan for a “new trial” stands an entire strategy *counterposed* to the necessary mobilization of the social power of the working class to fight for Mumia’s freedom now. As we wrote in “For a Class-Struggle Fight to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!” (WV No. 872, 9 June):

“The call for freedom for victims of the capitalist frame-up system has historically been a staple of the workers movement: Free Sacco and Vanzetti, Free the Scottsboro Boys, Free Huey Newton, Free Angela Davis. The demand for their freedom expressed the belief that their imprisonment for even an hour was an outrage. Since 1995, the call to free Mumia has been explicitly rejected as the basis for major mobilizations by the reformists of the Workers World Party (WWP), Socialist Action (SA) and the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), among others.

“At a January 1999 ‘Emergency Leadership Summit Meeting,’ representatives of SA, Solidarity, WWP, the RCP’s Refuse & Resist, International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal and others adopted a strategy and slogans for the April 24 ‘Millions for Mumia’ demonstrations and beyond. Following a debate, the ‘free Mumia’ slogan and oppo-



WV Photo

PDC representative speaking at San Francisco rally sponsored by Mobilization to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal, June 9.

sition to the death penalty were rejected in favor of calling for a new trial.”

Thus, while attending the June 9 rally, the Spartacist League and the Partisan Defense Committee took no political responsibility for its explicitly reformist character—i.e., we did not endorse it. Over the objections of SA honcho and Mobilization spokesman Jeff Mackler, a comrade from the PDC (a legal and social defense organization associated with the SL) was able to address this gathering. Powerfully counterposing a program for a class-struggle fight to free Mumia Abu-Jamal and abolish the racist death penalty to SA’s strategy of relying upon the good graces of the bourgeois state, comrade Carla Wilson explained:

“We place all our faith in the power of the masses and no faith whatsoever in the so-called justice of the capitalist courts. While favoring all possible legal proceedings for the cases we support, we recognize that the courts, prisons and police exist to maintain, to

organize violence and terror, for the rule of one class over others....

“In the summer of 1995, after a death warrant was signed, a powerful movement demanding that his life be saved erupted across the U.S. and around the world. His execution was stayed. But he is still in grave danger. Following this massive movement of millions in his defense, thousands of people were actually *demobilized* by reformist ‘socialist’ organizers of protests for Mumia—from Workers World Party to Socialist Action to the ISO [International Socialist Organization]. They tailored their appeals to what was acceptable to Democratic Party liberals who fled Mumia’s campaign in droves because they could not stomach that [Arnold] Beverly’s confession exposed the fraud of American ‘justice’ and showed the unity of purpose between the cops, the courts and the capitalist government—the same government responsible for killing Haditha civilians today in Iraq....

“What’s needed is a labor-centered fight, a mobilization of the labor movement and thousands and millions of others in the streets, built on the principle of political independence from the capitalist class enemy and its state. The labor tops’ allegiance to the capitalist system is one of the chief obstacles to this. And it’s important now that we try to mobilize to unleash labor’s power in defense of Mumia and all the oppressed. Millions of voices must once again be heard demanding Mumia’s freedom and the abolition of the death penalty. This is one of the struggles that will help to forge a revolutionary workers party that will fight for socialist revolution to get rid of this racist capitalist state.”

SA’s Mackler felt compelled to respond from the rally platform, and he fully confirmed the programmatic gulf that separates a class-struggle defense policy from that of the reformists:

“If there is a new trial even before a racist criminal justice system, the San Francisco Labor Council will have representatives there because it passed a resolution calling for a new trial and Amnesty International and the European Parliament and the president of the California State Senate and the American Federation of State and County Municipal Workers, the SEIU and the postal workers, they have all called for a new trial along with thousands of organizations and millions of others. Their representatives will be in the courtroom....

“We do not need to denounce anyone like the San Francisco City Council who six months ago passed a resolution for a new trial for Mumia or the National Education Association representing 1.8 million people or the California Labor Federation, 1.8 million.”

Let’s be clear: the difference between us and the likes of SA has nothing to do with “denouncing” other forces that have

gone on record in defense of Mumia. As Mackler & Co. are well aware, it was the work of the Partisan Defense Committee and the SL that first brought Mumia’s case to the international workers movement, liberal Democrats, civil rights organizations, death penalty abolitionists and the left, when many refused to come to his defense. Since taking up Mumia’s case in 1987, the SL and PDC have advocated pursuing all possible legal means in Mumia’s case and mobilizing the broadest possible forces on a principled united-front basis. At the same time, we realize that the courts will respond only if the pressure of the organized working class and its allies, organized independently and against the class enemy, is brought to bear.

We denounce the so-called socialists’ abasement before bourgeois public opinion and the damage they have done to the cause of freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal. A lesson can be gained by looking at the case of professional boxer Rubin “Hurricane” Carter, framed up in the mid 1960s on false murder charges because of his advocacy of the right of black armed self-defense. After an international protest campaign, Carter won a new trial. He was convicted anew, the liberals fled his cause and Carter spent another decade in prison. Today, many of the liberals to whom the reformists appealed for Mumia’s defense have fled, while the workers, blacks and youth who were the foot soldiers for Mumia are politically demobilized. Central responsibility for this rests with the strategy of reformists like Workers World and Socialist Action who rejected a class-struggle fight for Mumia, instead organizing activists on the basis that justice could be won from the capitalist courts.

Mackler & Co.: Reformist Demobilizers

The fact that, in a liberal enclave like San Francisco, the June 9 rally drew only 60 people speaks for itself. The reformists’ strategy demobilizes not only protest on the street, but on the legal front as well. Thus, while Mackler recounted much of the evidence that proves Mumia innocent, he deliberately avoided one key piece of that evidence—the sworn confession of Arnold Beverly that Beverly and not Mumia shot and killed Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner, the crime for which Mumia was framed up and sentenced to death.

Lebanon...

(continued from page 13)

bankruptcy of Arab nationalism and a sign of the reactionary political climate ushered in by the 1991-92 capitalist counterrevolution in the USSR that millions of Arabs today perceive the Islamic fundamentalists to be the best fighters against imperialism and Zionism.

Capitalist rule, which fuels national, ethnic and religious divisions, has driven the constant bloodshed that defines the Near East. As one after another “peace” plan heralds further massacre and immiseration of Palestinians, as every proclamation of “democracy” covers for bloody imperialist occupation and internecine bloodletting, it could not be clearer that there will be no equitable resolution to the conflicting claims of the peoples of the region until bourgeois rule is overthrown and imperialist subjugation ended. This is particularly the case in assuring the right of national self-determination for both the Palestinian Arab and the Hebrew-speaking peoples.

The fight for workers rule in the Near East crucially includes shattering the Zionist garrison state from within through Arab/Hebrew workers revolution. Key to this perspective is the forging of

Marxist workers parties throughout the Near East to unite the proletariat—Arab, Persian, Kurdish and Hebrew, Sunni and Shi’ite, Muslim and Christian—in struggle against imperialism and against the Zionists, mullahs, sheiks and all the other capitalist rulers. Such parties, sections of a reformed Trotskyist Fourth International, are essential to break the proletariat from fundamentalism and from all forms of nationalism in the struggle for a socialist federation of the Near East.

The conquest of power by the proletariat in the Near East does not complete the socialist revolution, but only opens it by changing the direction of social development. But that social development can only be consolidated through the international extension of the revolution, particularly to the advanced, industrialized imperialist centers. Defense of those subjugated by the imperialists around the globe demands the pursuit of class struggle in the U.S. and other imperialist centers, pointing toward a proletarian struggle for power. The Spartacist League, U.S. section of the International Communist League, is committed to the fight to forge a revolutionary workers party to lead the multiracial proletariat in the struggle to sweep away U.S. imperialism through socialist revolution. ■

Just Out!

This pamphlet arms activists in the struggle for Mumia’s freedom by presenting the political basis of the state vendetta against Mumia and the explosive evidence which completely destroys the more than two-decades-long frame-up of this eloquent fighter for black freedom.

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Mumia...
(continued from page 16)

Mumia’s trial that the Philly police used similar methods. Mumia’s frame-up was not only racist—it was politically driven as well. The police and FBI had Mumia in their sights since his Black Panther youth and continued their vendetta as he became known as “the voice of the voiceless” for his searing commentaries on racism, poverty and repression—a role Mumia continues to play through his writings from death row.

The three issues covered in Mumia’s new brief point to the racist and political bias that saturated his trial and appeals, proving that Mumia, like Dred Scott in 1857, has no rights that a court is bound to respect. One issue is the racist bias of the late hanging judge Albert Sabo, a member of the Fraternal Order of Police (F.O.P.) who presided over Mumia’s 1982 trial and again at his post-conviction (PCRA) hearings in the 1990s. The court filings highlight a 2001 affidavit of court reporter Terri Maurer-Carter, who disclosed that at the time of the trial she overheard Sabo say, “I’m going to help them fry the n---r.” During the 1995 PCRA hearings, Sabo routinely quashed Mumia’s subpoenas, sustained prosecution objections and found all of Mumia’s witnesses “incredible.” Sabo jailed PDC attorney Rachel Wolkenstein, then a member of Mumia’s legal team, and told another defense lawyer, “Counselor, justice is just an emotional feeling.”

The brief also exposes the prosecutor’s racist jury-rigging at the trial. Excluding black jurors was an official policy of the Philadelphia D.A.’s office, codified in a 1987 training video directing prosecutors to strike “blacks from the low-income areas” from juries because they have “a resentment for law enforcement.” Statistical studies prove that this was the practice throughout the 1980s. Mumia’s brief documents that for his trial “a black person’s odds of being struck were *ten*

times higher than someone who is white” (emphasis in original).

Mumia’s third challenge strikes at the prosecution’s outrageous closing argument that the jury should err on the side of convicting Mumia because he would have “appeal after appeal.” This argument blatantly erased the reasonable doubt standard, telling the jury that in case of doubt they should convict Mumia. Mumia’s

which has tried to intimidate Mumia’s supporters at every step.

On July 19, the day before Mumia filed his court brief, more than 130 British lawyers released a letter to the court calling to overturn his conviction. Their letter emphasizes that the courts’ blatant bias against Mumia must be seen “in the light of the Katrina hurricane disaster in New Orleans, when television viewers in



July 13: KfsV, PDC’s fraternal organization in Germany, during protest against Bush’s visit to Stralsund. Banner reads: “Mobilize the Power of the Working Class: Freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal, Now!”

brief also responds to the prosecution’s own appeal of Judge Yohn’s 2001 ruling, which seeks to reverse the overturning of Mumia’s death sentence. Yohn found the sentence to be unconstitutional because the sentencing form and jury instructions did not allow jurors to freely consider all the “mitigating circumstances” weighing against a death sentence. Yet Mumia has remained on death row this entire time.

Mumia’s case is what the death penalty is all about. It is a legacy of chattel slavery and the ultimate weapon in the government’s arsenal of repression aimed at the working class and oppressed. The capitalist rulers want to see Mumia dead because they see in him the spectre of black revolution, a voice of defiant opposition to their system of racist oppression. Acting as their spearhead is the F.O.P.,

every country of the world witnessed an unparalleled display of racism on a massive scale, allowed (some would say enabled) by the US government.” The National Lawyers Guild and the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund will be filing *amicus* (friend of court) briefs on Mumia’s behalf.

The frame-up of Mumia Abu-Jamal is an object lesson in the class character of the capitalist state—centrally the cops, courts, prisons and military—which is an apparatus of violence used to preserve bourgeois rule by suppressing the working class and oppressed. An international movement of millions stayed the executioner’s hand in 1995 after Mumia’s first death warrant was issued. But that movement was systematically demobilized by reformist organizations that tailored their appeals to the liberal

“mainstream,” to those who saw in Mumia’s case a “miscarriage of justice” that could be remedied if only he got a new, “fair” trial. As Rachel Wolkenstein stated earlier this year, in a talk printed in *The Fight to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal*:

“This meant tying Mumia’s defense to what Democratic Party politicians would accept, like the need for a new trial to clean up the image created by Sabo’s indisputably racially biased trial and PCRA proceeding. This meant denying the truth about the capitalist state and its vendetta against black militants, the COINTELPRO targeting of Mumia, the murderous attacks on the MOVE organization.

“Appealing to the ‘mainstream’ also meant ambiguity on the question of Mumia’s innocence—and on whether he lives or dies, is entombed for life or goes free—so long as there is a new trial. It meant rejecting the very reasons that millions around the globe had taken up Mumia’s cause: revulsion with the injustices inherent in capitalism—poverty, racial and ethnic bias, war. There was broad identification with Mumia’s fight against the ‘system’ and for justice for all of humanity.”

Every legal remedy must be pursued on Mumia’s behalf. But Mumia himself told the French Communist Party’s newspaper *L’Humanité* (25 April) that he had “very little hope in a favorable decision” by the Third Circuit court. Since first taking up Mumia’s cause in 1987, the PDC has warned against any illusions in bourgeois “justice,” placing *all* our faith in mobilizing the social power of the working class and the oppressed in defense of Mumia. If successful, the fight for Mumia’s freedom would, as Wolkenstein stated in her talk, “strike a blow against the government’s ‘anti-terror’ campaign and the evisceration of democratic rights. It would give labor a sense of its own power. The fight for Mumia is the fight for black liberation, for the liberation of us all, part of the struggle for socialist revolution.”

We must mobilize now to make Mumia’s fight once again a rallying cry against racist “legal lynching,” against black oppression, against government repression. *Free Mumia! Abolish the racist death penalty!* ■

Why? As comrade Wilson pointed out in her speech to the June 9 rally, the Beverly confession makes clear that Mumia’s case consists of a conscious, racist, political frame-up of an innocent man. This is an “inconvenient truth” for liberals and their reformist tails. Dave Lindorff—a regular contributor to the radical-liberal *CounterPunch*—was an early and loud voice trashing the Beverly confession. His book *Killing Time* (2003) has been lauded by, for example, the ISO. For its part, Socialist Action has totally disappeared the Beverly confession. (For more detail on the Beverly confession and the liberal left’s response, see the new PDC pamphlet, *The Fight to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal—Mumia Is Innocent!*)

In this same spirit, Mackler & Co. put a gloss on the capitalist courts’ placing Mumia’s case on a “fast track,” when in December the Court of Appeals ruled that Mumia could raise three issues on his appeal. For SA and Mackler: “The worst—but least expected—scenario would be one in which Sabo’s unconstitutional sentencing instructions are upheld, and Mumia faces execution” (*Socialist Action*, December 2005). Least expected? The harsh fact is that every court to which it has been presented has refused to hear the Beverly evidence, and the Court of Appeals—like every other court in this case—has refused to hear the countless other violations of Mumia’s rights. *That is what makes our efforts to bring Mumia’s case to the working class, the left and organizations of the oppressed and youth so urgent at this time.*

In the course of such a campaign, we seek “unity in action” while in no way compromising “freedom of criticism.” That means we will join with others to demand Mumia’s freedom and the abolition of the racist death penalty while

maintaining our political independence and programmatic integrity. Such a policy differs starkly from groups such as the Labor Action Committee to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal (LACFMAJ). At the June 9 rally, LACFMAJ’s speaker Carole Seligman did a credible job of dealing with the Beverly confession and raising the need for labor to take up the fight to free Mumia. However, she avoided any

explicit criticism of the SA-led Mobilization’s perspective. Thus, the LACFMAJ essentially provided a “left” cover for the reformists.

As against such political waffling, James P. Cannon, the first secretary of the International Labor Defense and founder of American Trotskyism, excoriated the reformists of his time and their “policy of ‘respectability,’ of the ‘soft pedal’ and

of ridiculous illusions about ‘justice’ from the courts of the enemy,” a policy that “seeks to blur the issue of the class struggle” (“Who Can Save Sacco and Vanzetti?” *Labor Defender*, January 1927; reprinted in *Notebook of an Agitator* [1958]). It is to this revolutionary tradition that we look when pursuing the fight to free Mumia now and to abolish the racist death penalty! ■

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, P.O. Box 2012, New York, NY 10159.

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 *The Fight to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal—Mumia Is Innocent!* This pamphlet arms activists in the struggle for Mumia’s freedom by presenting the political basis of the state vendetta against Mumia and 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 \$1. 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.

Partisan Defense Committee

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Freedom Now for Mumia Abu-Jamal!

New Legal Papers Filed

We print below a 1 August statement by the Partisan Defense Committee.

The fight to free Mumia Abu-Jamal is at a critical juncture. A prize-winning journalist, former Black Panther Party spokesman, supporter of the MOVE organization and defiant opponent of racist state terror, Mumia was railroaded to death row in 1982 on false charges of killing Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner. On July 20, Mumia filed his opening legal brief in the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit in Philadelphia, which last December put his case on a “fast track” for decision. The forces of the capitalist state have long been determined to carry out Mumia’s legal lynching as a warning to those who challenge racist cop repression, to fighters against U.S. imperialist depredations, to workers who stand up for their rights on the picket lines. The Partisan Defense Committee—a legal and social defense organization associated with the Marxist Spartacist

League—calls on all opponents of racist injustice, and in particular the labor movement, to mobilize for *freedom now* for Mumia!

Mumia’s life is in grave danger. The court is expected to rule in a matter of months whether he will live, die or have further legal proceedings. Both Mumia and the prosecution are appealing a 2001 ruling by U.S. District Court judge William Yohn, who overturned Mumia’s death sentence but upheld every aspect of his frame-up conviction. The Third Circuit has refused to hear any evidence of Mumia’s innocence and has only allowed him to challenge three of the more than two dozen constitutional violations in his case. For more than five years, state and federal courts have refused to hear the sworn confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Mumia, shot and killed Daniel Faulkner. In an affidavit reprinted in the PDC pamphlet *The Fight to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal—Mumia Is Innocent!*, Beverly says that he

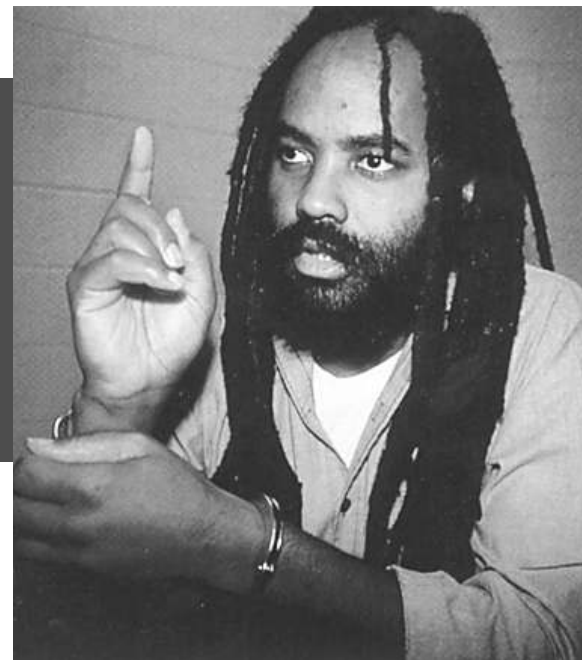
was hired to kill Faulkner, who was reportedly interfering with prostitution, gambling, drugs and police payoffs, and that “Jamal had nothing to do with the shooting.”

The courts have suppressed the Beverly evidence because it demonstrates that the injustice done to Mumia was not the work of one rogue cop, prosecutor or judge but the workings of a “justice” system whose purpose is to repress the working class, minorities and the poor on behalf of the capitalist ruling class. The fight to free Mumia must be waged on the basis that he is an innocent man, the victim of a political and racist frame-up. The need to mobilize around this understanding is underscored by the fact that Beverly’s confession and other proof of Mumia’s innocence—including the suppression and coercion of eyewitnesses by police and prosecutors and their fabrication, some two months after his arrest, of a phony “confession” by Mumia—cannot even get a

hearing in the capitalist courts.

The Beverly confession has been derided by liberals like the writer Dave Lindorff and all but ignored by reformist left organizations. Many liberals object to Mumia’s treatment in the courts but see it as at most an “aberration” in an otherwise fair and just legal system, and they regard the idea that the cops would frame up an innocent man as absurd. But to see that such frame-ups are routine procedure requires looking no further than a special prosecutor’s report released on July 19, which examines nearly **150 cases** in which Chicago cops used electroshock, suffocation and torture to beat bogus confessions out of black “suspects.” Although the Chicago report is mainly a damage-control job, it nonetheless confirms that there was widespread torture and that police brass knew about it and gave a commendation to the cops who were doing it. It was well-documented at the time of

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Terry/Gamma-Liaison

Free Abortion on Demand!

Defend Mississippi Abortion Clinic!

The fundamentalist fanatics of Operation Save America (OSA), a reincarnation of the murderous Operation Rescue, have completed an eight-day siege from July 15 through July 22 at the last remaining abortion clinic in Mississippi. In addition to targeting the Jackson Women’s Health Organization clinic, OSA rampaged at some two dozen other locations in the Jackson area, towing five-foot-tall posters of fetuses, screaming through loudspeakers, burning a Koran and a gay rights rainbow flag. A second week of intimidation and confrontation has been threatened by Oh Saratoga!, another crazed emanation from Operation Rescue.

Six clinics have been forced to close in the state during the past decade, leaving the Jackson clinic the sole survivor for the last two years. Groups like OSA have been emboldened by the bipartisan assault on abortion rights, and their stated strategy is to make Mississippi the “first domino to be tipped” in ending abortion in every state. OSA has similarly besieged

clinics elsewhere, from Colorado to Texas to North Carolina.

The Jackson clinic annually serves some 4,000 women. Many travel many hours to endure a 24-hour waiting period, which forces them to miss work, scramble for nonexistent day care and sometimes sleep overnight in their cars in the clinic parking lot. Teens whose only source of school “sex education” is ignorant “abstinence only” tirades must get signed consent from *both* parents. Mississippi also has the nation’s most sweeping “conscience clause,” which allows health workers to refuse to provide abortion-related services or referrals.

Jackson is a 70 percent black city in the poorest state in the nation, where over 20 percent of the population lives below the poverty level. Mississippi has been devastated even further by the racist capitalists’ abandonment of the victims of Hurricane Katrina. In the Mississippi Delta region, the poorest section of the state, there are no abortion options. The Jackson clinic

**Jackson, Mississippi:
Protester at July 15
rally against
targeting of state’s
only remaining
abortion clinic.**

regularly receives phone calls from women asking what they can do to end their pregnancies themselves. Some 87 percent of U.S. counties have no abortion clinics, making abortion virtually inaccessible in wide swathes of the country.

Groups including Anti-Racist Action, the American Civil Liberties Union, Feminist Majority Foundation, National Organization for Women (NOW), Radical Women, Unity Mississippi and World Can’t Wait have courageously participated in protests in Jackson against the anti-

abortion bigots, enduring death threats. But the political strategy of the protest organizers rests on appealing to the capitalist state’s courts, cops and politicians. On July 21 and 22, a coalition including NOW gathered to appeal to the legislators at the capitol, whose state flag incorporates the Confederate stars and bars, symbol of slavery. Michelle Colon of NOW invited anyone opposed to the “tactics” of OSA to join, even groups that are not “pro-choice”!

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Gauntt/Jackson Clarion-Ledger