

Right-Wing Government Threatens Crackdown

Mexico in Turmoil

MEXICO CITY, September 11—On September 5, Mexico's Federal Electoral Institute formally declared Felipe Calderón, candidate of the Catholic right-wing National Action Party (PAN), the victor in the hotly contested July 2 presidential election. Calderón supposedly won by a bare 0.58 percent margin over Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO) of the bourgeois-populist Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD), with the candidate of the once-hegemonic Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) running a distant third. Since the election, there have been immense pro-PRD demonstrations protesting Calderón's dubious victory and demanding a vote-by-vote recount.

The government's response to the protests clearly shows that Mexico's rulers are fearful of the social and class discontent that has rocked the country for the past several months. On September 1—the day that the current president, the PAN's Vicente Fox, was scheduled to deliver his last state of the nation address—the government turned large sections of Mexico City into a militarized zone. Thousands of soldiers and police were mobilized, including those of the PRD city government. Police-men were positioned on bridges over avenues that lead to the Legislative Palace of San Lázaro, and snipers were present on rooftops and even within the Palace itself. All metro stations leading to San Lázaro were closed, while the Legislative Palace was surrounded by metal barriers over two meters high and guarded by soldiers with guns drawn.

The PRD newspaper *La Jornada* had reported the previous day that federal authorities were forming "dissuasion" groups of some 1,200 people with the goal of carrying out arrests targeting organizations that oppose the PAN government. The article noted that these squads are to be trained by members of the Halcones (Falcons), plainclothes police who carried out a student massacre in 1971.

After the PRD announced that its legislators would attempt to impede Fox from giving his speech, the government prepared to shoot anyone who approached Fox. However, when PRD legislators took over the dais shortly before Fox was to speak, he chose to avoid direct confrontation. In the end, the outgoing president turned in a written copy of his address, marking the first time that a Mexican president has been prevented from presenting his report live before Congress. AMLO has now told his supporters to suspend their protest encampment—which has paralyzed the center of Mexico City for weeks—



Carlos Ramos



Reuters

Above: Massive Mexico City protest on September 4, the day before PAN's Calderón was declared winner over PRD's López Obrador in presidential election. Left: Riot police attack PRD supporters in Mexico City, August 14.

Break with López Obrador and the Bourgeois PRD!

Forge an Internationalist Revolutionary Workers Party!

early on September 16 in order to allow that day's traditional Independence Day parade of the bloody Mexican military.

While Mexico has a history of massive vote fraud and rigged elections going back generations, PRD leaders and many supporters see in the decision by the Electoral Court a repeat of their bitter experience in the 1988 elections. At that time, as electoral returns indicated a strong showing for populist candidate Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas (who had split from the PRI and would later found the PRD), the government suddenly announced that the computer system had crashed and the PRI candidate was declared the winner. Bitterness among AMLO's supporters is only deepened by the fact that the current electoral institute was chosen by a process that excluded the PRD.

To impose Calderón at any cost, the PAN is prepared to launch an onslaught against the masses of workers and poor

who support the PRD as well as against the PRD itself. The massive mobilization of the armed forces of the state on September 1 represented a mortal danger to the labor movement and left. Any crackdown by the government against the bourgeois PRD would be used to go after the trade unions and left and would represent an attack on everyone's democratic rights. Despite its political opposition to the PRD, in the event of a military crackdown the Grupo Espartaquista de México, section of the International Communist League, would defend the PRD and its supporters.

Mexican society is becoming even more deeply polarized, with the bourgeoisie itself divided and fearful that discontent—up to now efficiently channelled into support to the PRD—may turn into a social eruption. A pro-AMLO demonstration in Mexico City on July 30 mobilized over two million people in

what was the largest political demonstration in this country's history. The AMLO "mega-encampment" stretches from Mexico City's Zócalo (central square) down Reforma Avenue, one of the poshest avenues in the whole country.

The exploited and oppressed masses of Mexico have shown that they *want* to fight, but they currently see the PRD and AMLO as their representatives. The PRD itself is afraid it will lose control of the discontent. With the failure of its immense marches and encampment—as well as hundreds of legal challenges—to impose a full recount, the PRD is now attempting to steer popular anger into a "National Democratic Convention," which is supposed to result in an alternative "Government of the Republic" with AMLO at its head. The Grupo Espartaquista de México warns that the bourgeois PRD offers no alternative to the struggling and exploited working masses.

The following, translated and abridged from *Espartaco* No. 26 (September 2006), is based on an August 25 talk by GEM spokesman Sacramento Talavera at the Trotsky Museum in Coyoacán.

* * *

In the lead-up to the elections, we wrote in *Espartaco* No. 25 (Spring 2006):

"We Marxists of the Grupo Espartaquista de México say: not one vote to the bourgeois parties! No party or candidate represents the interests of the workers. The PRD, the PRI and the PAN, along with the smaller parties with their own candidates, are all bourgeois parties whose goal, independent of their conjunctural differences, is the perpetuation of the current system of exploitation, misery, injustice and social inequality."

As revolutionary Marxists, we defend tooth and nail the masses' democratic rights, such as universal suffrage, from a class perspective. We also understand that in countries of belated capitalist development, like Mexico, democratic struggles of the masses are a motor force for socialist revolution. That there was fraud isn't a secret to anyone, but we do not know who won the election. Certainly, we do not oppose a vote-by-vote recount, but we are not joining the current PRD campaign, whose objective is to put López Obrador in power.

We live in a society divided into two fundamental classes, the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, with mutually irreconcilable interests. Our goal is socialist revolution: the overthrow of the bourgeois order and the building of workers power, expropriating the capitalists and planning the economy to lay the basis for the eradication of poverty and oppression. The basic precondition for victory is the struggle for the political independence of the proletariat from the bourgeoisie and the building of the working class's own revolutionary party.

This past March and April, miners carried out work stoppages throughout the

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Condemn DSP Thug Attack on Spartacist Woman at Union Rally

Australia

The following leaflet was issued on September 5 by the Spartacist League of Australia, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

On 29 August, at the Melbourne union rally in support of 107 Western Australian unionists facing draconian fines under [Liberal Party prime minister John] Howard's vicious anti-union legislation, a male member of the Democratic Socialist Perspective (DSP) carried out a vicious physical assault against a long-time woman supporter of the Spartacist League.

Our comrade had offered the DSP

supporter a copy of *Australasian Spartacist*, which was headlined "Australian/UN Imperialist Troops/Cops Out of East Timor and Solomons Now!" He ripped the paper from her hand and threw it to the ground! Pushing the DSPer away, our supporter loudly protested this unprovoked attack and violent attempt at political censorship. Then, as she moved to pick up the paper, **he punched her in the face!** Momentarily stunned, our comrade managed to land a blow on the arm of the DSP assailant before the coward fled the scene. She began yelling loudly, "I've been punched in the face," alerting all those around to what had happened. One union supporter who witnessed the DSPer's assault accompanied her to the Socialist Alliance [with

which the DSP is affiliated] stall where she protested the outrageous attack to DSP members.

In fact the same day the DSP felt compelled to write a letter to the SL apologising for the "unfortunate incident." While the letter itself admits some responsibility, it **disappears the fact that their member punched our comrade in the face!** It seems the DSP cannot let it be known that they have a member who physically assaulted a woman—it would not go down well with their claims to be defenders of women's rights.

Acts of violence such as this attack have no place in the workers movement! Evidently some *Green Left Weekly* (GLW) salesmen/DSP members are willing to substitute the fist for the brain when los-

ing an argument. Just weeks earlier our comrade had had a sharp exchange with this individual over the DSP's refusal to oppose the current Australian military occupation of East Timor.

In 1999, in opposition to the bulk of the left who lined up behind the White Australia capitalist rulers, the Spartacist League campaigned in **word and deed** against Australian imperialist intervention and for independence for East Timor. Such implacable opposition to Australian imperialism flows from our revolutionary purpose of building an internationalist, proletarian party that can lead the working class to sweep away the racist Australian capitalist rulers through workers revolution. In contrast, the DSP **led** the social-chauvinist charge, building marches openly demanding "Send Australian/UN Troops NOW"! Today, tailing nationalist bourgeois forces such as the Greens and pro-capitalist ALP [Australian Labor Party] leaders who are pushing for a greater role for bloody Australian imperialism in the region, the DSP refuse to oppose the occupation of East Timor by Australian

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Letter

The BT and the Fight to Free Mumia

Toronto
6 September 2006

Dear comrades,

The article "For Class-Struggle Defense to Free Mumia Now!" in *WV* No. 875 (1 September) really nails the International Bolshevik Tendency (BT) for its attempts to smear the Partisan Defense Committee and its defense of Mumia, as well as the gross opportunism of the Labor Action Committee to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal (LAC), in which the BT has been a key player since its inception.

Their latest lying missive is on display in the BT website posting, "On Recent Spartacist League Polemics," complaining of the SL's "apparent desire to avoid working with us in defense of Mumia Abu-Jamal." This was posted on 1 September—one week after the PDC advised LAC in writing of its endorsement of their September 15 rally in Oakland.

An earlier *WV* article, "For a Class-Struggle Fight to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!" (*WV* No. 872, 9 June), noted that the May 2000 LAC-initiated Labor Conference for

Mumia adopted a resolution to lobby delegates at the Democratic National Convention to pass a motion calling for a "new trial" for Mumia and called on the Justice Department to investigate Mumia's case. In response, a 5 July letter to *WV* from Jason Wright of the BT takes umbrage at this.

It seems that we stung them in exposing the truth of the gross opportunism of the LAC. Wright pompously protests that BT supporters opposed calling for a new trial for Mumia Abu-Jamal, and voted against all such resolutions.

An extensive report on the May 2000 LAC conference, "Labor Conference Calls for Action: Justice for Mumia Abu-Jamal" (labournet.net/mumia/0007/labcnf1.html), by Howard Keylor, a well-known BT supporter, describes in detail how the LAC sought to shamelessly lobby the racist, capitalist, pro-death-penalty Democratic Party on the eve of the 2000 DNC convention in Los Angeles. Under a bold subheading, "For a Broad Labor Campaign," Keylor reports on the motion introduced by Bob Mandel (who for a long time was a BT supporter—not sure of his current proximity to the BT) and nary a breath of criticism from Keylor will darken the brows of these class-struggle heroes:

"Bob Mandel then presented a resolution condemning the appointment of Ed Rendell as the General Chair of the Democratic National Committee. Rendell was the Philadelphia District Attorney when Mumia was railroaded, and has continued to play an active role in seeking his execution. Rendell also turned a blind eye to the systematic exclusion of African-Americans for Philadelphia juries, and helped plan and execute the aerial bombing of the MOVE house which resulted in the deaths of 11 people, and the destruction of an entire city block.

"Rendell's ascension to power in the Democratic Party (he also aims to be governor of Pennsylvania) is emblematic of the pro-death penalty racism entrenched at the top of both capitalist parties. Republican front-runner George W Bush may have murdered more people as Texas governor, including the recent execution of Shaka Sankofa (Gary Graham); but Bill Clinton interrupted his presidential campaign in 1992 to preside over the execution of a black inmate in Arkansas who was mentally retarded. Al Gore and governors such as Gray Davis in California are also staunch death-penalty supporters. Without in any way endorsing support for the Democratic Party, the resolution on Rendell was amended to ask unions to call on any of their members who are delegates to the Democratic Party's August convention in LA to raise motions calling for a new trial for Mumia as well as condemning Rendell's appointment. "The motion was further amended with a

final resolved, 'that all locals and union members be urged to join the protests that will be held outside the Democratic Party Convention.' The resolution passed as amended."

Some "labor campaign"! The BT wants to distance itself from this, but it doesn't wash. Far from criticizing Mandel's lobbying of the racist, pro-death-penalty Democratic Party and urging trade unions to push the Dems for a new trial, Keylor **whitewashes** the motion, saying, "Without in any way endorsing support for the Democratic Party...." Pressuring the Democratic Party and lobbying for a new trial were the core of the political program that has demobilized the supporters of Mumia Abu-Jamal and the urgent struggle for his freedom; this program continues to be an obstacle. At its heart is reliance on the capitalist state and the forces that are arrayed against Mumia and aim to execute him.

Wright slaps on his own layer of white-wash whining that "the LAC did not put forward, or support, any such resolutions and the comrades of the IBT voted against all of them." As we pointed out in *Workers Vanguard*, in our exposure of this wretched conference (No. 740, 25 August 2000), the liquidationist conclusion of LAC's resolution boiled down to "begging delegates at the DNC to give their party—and the bourgeois state apparatus—a facelift by appointing a new DNC chairman. (This went a little too far for the IBT, which had supported an earlier motion just to 'condemn Rendell's appointment'—i.e., the IBT only wanted a facial.)"

Oh—lest we forget! Keylor did (cynically) report a few paragraphs later that in another resolution for a day of labor action to free Mumia, a "delegate wanted to substitute 'new trial' instead of 'free' Mumia, but, as was pointed out, there is no guarantee that a new trial will ever happen, or, if it does, that it wouldn't be a repetition of the same frame-up as happened the first time around." Meet the BT at play: new trial good, new trial bad. Who cares as long as questions of political principle don't disturb their cozy relationships with union bureaucrats and assorted very fake leftists of the Bob Mandel ilk.

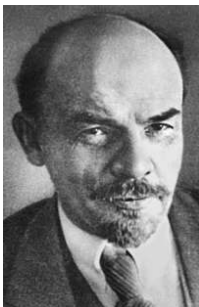
This is the dishonest and cowardly *modus operandi* so typical of the dubious BT and its friends. From their website and at our public events, which they attend obsessively, they portray themselves as oh-so-orthodox Marxists, but they swim comfortably in the reformist swamp, bowing and scraping to their labour reformist pals. Their monomaniacal hatred of our revolutionary Trotskyist party is, quite simply, their admission ticket.

Comradely,
Miriam McDonald

WORKERS VANGUARD

Bourgeois Democracy and Anti-Labor Repression

In a polemic against German Social Democrat Karl Kautsky, a renegade from Marxism and bitter opponent of the 1917 workers revolution in Russia, Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin explained that "democratic" government in the U.S. and other advanced capitalist countries serves to veil the nature of the bourgeois state as a machine of organized violence against the exploited and oppressed.



LENIN



TROTSKY

Take the fundamental laws of modern states, take their administration, take freedom of assembly, freedom of the press, or "equality of all citizens before the law," and you will see at every turn evidence of the hypocrisy of bourgeois democracy with which every honest and class-conscious worker is familiar. There is not a single state, however democratic, which has no loopholes or reservations in its constitution guaranteeing the bourgeoisie the possibility of dispatching troops against the workers, of proclaiming martial law, and so forth, in case of a "violation of public order," and actually in case the exploited class "violates" its position of slavery and tries to behave in a non-slavish manner. Kautsky shamelessly embellishes bourgeois democracy and omits to mention, for instance, how the most democratic and republican bourgeoisie in America or Switzerland deal with workers on strike.

—V.I. Lenin, *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* (1918)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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15 September 2006

1979 Massacre—Cop/Klan Collusion

Greensboro Commission: “Reconciliation” with Fascist Terror

On 3 November 1979 in Greensboro, North Carolina, five anti-racist activists and union organizers, supporters of the Communist Workers Party (CWP), were fatally gunned down by Ku Klux Klan and Nazi fascists. Nine carloads of Klansmen and Nazis drove up to a black housing project—the gathering place for an anti-Klan march organized by the CWP. In broad daylight, the fascists coolly pulled out their weapons and unleashed an 88-second fusillade that was captured on television cameras. They then drove off, leaving the dead and dying in pools of blood. From the outset, the Klan/Nazi killers were aided and abetted by the government, from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms agent who helped train the killers and plot the assassinations to the “former” FBI informer who rode shotgun in the motorcade of death and the Greensboro cop who brought up the rear. The Greensboro killers literally got away with murder, acquitted twice by all-white juries.

A nearly 600-page report issued this past May by the Greensboro Truth and Reconciliation Commission—an unofficial, foundation-funded body—serves to bury the hard truths and bitter lessons of the Greensboro Massacre. While acknowledging such well-documented facts as the role of police informants in the killings, the commission denies that there was any police-fascist conspiracy and baldly concludes that “the single most important element that contributed to the violent outcome of the confrontation was the absence of police.” No, the police *helped prepare* the fascist attacks and secure their getaway. The report despicably asserts that “some, albeit lesser, responsibility must lie with the demonstrators” due to their “violent” language and because some were armed in self-defense. This is nothing but a rehash of the bourgeois media’s vile slander that the massacre was a “shootout” between “extremists,” which has been promulgated since the day of the murders to whitewash the role of the fascists and cops.

We honor the memory of the Greensboro martyrs—César Cauce, Michael Nathan,

Bill Sampson, Sandi Smith, Jim Waller. As revolutionary Marxists, we had our differences with the CWP. But we understand that these courageous men and women were targeted because they were black and white comrades working openly together for black rights and union organizing in “right to work” North Carolina, where Klan terror has historically been

sacre was the opening shot of what would become the Reagan years’ war on labor and blacks. Greensboro survivors, one of whom was partially paralyzed for life, were jailed, fired and blacklisted from work, stalked by FBI and local police. The state put on an ominous show of force at the CWPers’ several-hundred-strong funeral procession. Five hundred National Guards-

tied the enormous crimes of the apartheid-era butchers and torturers and assisted the transition to neo-apartheid capitalist rule under the African National Congress regime. Likewise, the purpose of the Greensboro commission was to encourage “reconciliation” with the brutal racist reality of American society. In fact, the commission gave a platform to “Imperial Wizard” Klansman Virgil Griffin, who was in the car caravan of murderous fascists, to spew his racist filth.

Nevertheless, many hardline racist politicians opposed any revisiting of the November 1979 events. The white mayor and every white member of the Greensboro city council opposed the commission. Union members and others fearing retaliation refused to testify openly. Commission file cabinets were broken into. In the course of the hearings, it was revealed that police wiretaps were used to monitor the white director of the commission, Jill Williams, and several black community leaders, including Nelson Johnson, a survivor of the 1979 massacre who was a prominent backer of the commission.

The commission’s recommendations include standard liberal sops like “healing workshops,” “anti-racism training” for the cops and a “permanent police review board.” The intent of the commission’s police “reform” schemes is to repair “the damaged credibility of the police department”—i.e., bolster the authority of the police, who daily perpetrate racist terror. The Greensboro Massacre refuted in blood the liberal notion that the cops—the hired guns of the racist capitalist rulers—can be reformed to serve the interests of workers and the oppressed. In *Love and Revolution: A Political Memoir* (2002), Signe Waller writes that the CWP supporters themselves had fatal illusions in the neutrality of the capitalist state:

“We overlooked government and police complicity with the Klan....”

“Was it that the police are not supposed to do this sort of thing in a democratic society? In one of those third world dictatorships maybe, where the police collaborate with civilian death squads, but not in the democratic United States.”

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Greensboro, 3 November 1979: Nelson Johnson kneels by his dying comrade Jim Waller, gunned down by KKK and Nazis.

Greensboro Daily News



used by the bosses to keep out unions. Signe Waller, widow of Jim Waller, noted that “the FBI had men going around the textile mills and showing people pictures, asking for their identification. Many of the pictures were of people who were later killed...and one of them was Jim’s” (*The Carolinian Online*, 18 October 2004).

Carried out during the Democratic Carter administration, the Greensboro Mas-

men, 250 state troopers, 175 local cops and riot-clad police surrounded the mourners as helicopters hovered overhead. They arrested 34 people for carrying guns, 26 of whom were CWP comrades, according to the CWP newspaper, *Workers Viewpoint*.

The template for the Greensboro commission was South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Beginning in 1996, the South African hearings amnes-

Editorial Note

Bush, Democrats Wave “War on Terror” Flag

SEPTEMBER 12—The fifth anniversary of the September 11, 2001 attacks occasioned a barrage of “war on terror” tirades from Democratic and Republican politicians whose eyes are set on the November elections. Just as we warned five years ago, the U.S. rulers instantly seized on the criminal World Trade Center attack to rally support for their international imperialist adventures and for stepping up repression at home, first aiming at Muslim immigrants. As for the Pentagon, we have noted: “Unlike the World Trade Center, the Pentagon is the command and administrative center of the U.S. imperialist military, and being a military installation the possibility of getting hit comes with the territory. That recognition does not make the attack an ‘anti-imperialist’ act, nor does it change the fact that terrorism almost always gets innocent people—in this case, the passengers on the plane as well as the maintenance workers, janitors and secretaries at the Pentagon” (“Bush, Kerry Push ‘Anti-Terror’ Hysteria,” *WV* No. 830, 6 August 2004).

Bush continues to insist on the “rights” of the imperial presidency. That means no checks on the administration’s ability to bomb, slaughter and torture peoples abroad and to spy on and “disappear” its perceived opponents at home. In June, the Supreme Court, in *Hamdan v. Rumsfeld*, struck down Bush’s secretive Guantánamo military tribunals on the grounds that they were not authorized by Congress and also violate the Geneva Conventions. Last week Bush demanded that Congress authorize his warrantless wiretapping program and enact new laws for military commissions based on the practices of the Guantánamo tribunals—trial without the accused present; not allowing the accused to see evidence; use of hearsay evidence and evidence obtained through coercion (i.e., torture).

Bush finally admitted the existence of the CIA’s “secret” prison network as he announced the transfer to Guantánamo of 14 “suspected terrorists” deemed to be senior Al Qaeda members. Bush wants to run them through the military tribunals

so he can claim a “victory” in the “war on terror.” He also wants to retroactively shield CIA personnel involved in torture from prosecution under the U.S. War Crimes Act.

The Democratic Party has countered Bush with its own “Real Security Act of 2006.” The Democrats’ self-described “tough AND smart” proposal calls for redeploying U.S. troops from Iraq in order to “kill and capture the terrorists where they are,” expanding U.S. Special Forces and increasing funds for “the CIA’s overseas facilities” (7 September, *Democrats.senate.gov*). Their real complaint about Bush’s tribunals is that they haven’t been able to convict anybody and have “undermined America’s influence and power in the world.” Now John Kerry has chimed in by calling for sending 5,000 more troops to Afghanistan to prop up the U.S. puppet government in Kabul.

One of the detainees Bush bragged he would put on trial at Guantánamo, Abu Zubaydah, is the government’s source for its “dirty bomb” frame-up of U.S. citizen

Jose Padilla. Defense lawyers argued that Padilla’s arrest in 2002 as an “enemy combatant” was illegal, in part because it was based on information obtained through torture. The torture of Abu Zubaydah has now been confirmed by the *New York Times* (10 September).

Padilla was held incommunicado without charges in a military brig for three and a half years before being indicted on conspiracy charges, for which he is due to be tried in federal court. Three years ago, the Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee filed an *amici curiae* (friends of the court) brief on Padilla’s behalf, challenging the government’s attempt to disappear citizens at will. As we wrote in “Marxists Oppose Government Attack on Citizenship Rights” (*WV* No. 808, 29 August 2003): “What the U.S. capitalist rulers get away with will largely depend on the level of social and class struggle in this society. It is in the urgent interests of the integrated labor movement to mobilize in defense of immigrant rights and the democratic rights of the entire population.” ■

Critical Support to Socialist Action in Senate Election

California

In the run-up to the 2006 midterm elections, the working masses are again being subjected to the “choice” between the dual parties of capitalist exploitation, imperialist war and racist oppression. It is a choice between the justly feared and despised Bush-Cheney-Rumsfeld cabal in power and a Democratic “opposition” campaigning for a more effective plan for prosecuting the very bipartisan “war on terror” at home and abroad—in particular, how best to cut the losses of U.S. imperialism in the bloody occupation of Iraq in order to more efficiently deploy its forces against the peoples of the world.

We of the Spartacist League, as revolutionary Marxists, oppose on principle support to any capitalist party and stand for the complete political independence of the working class. While rejecting the notion that the working class can gain power through the vehicle of bourgeois electoralism, we recognize that there are times when the intervention of revolutionaries into the parliamentary/electoral arena can provide a useful platform from which to put forward our program and goals. Such tactics include the revolutionary party standing its own candidates and/or offering critical support to such parties as draw even a crude class line against the capitalist parties.

the SA candidate while at the same time exposing SA’s reformist program.

“Antiwar” Work: Socialist Action vs. Marxism

Socialist Action has adopted a somewhat left-sounding posture in its campaign material, wherein it writes: “To the reformist credo, ‘Anybody But Bush,’ we answer, ‘No to the twin parties of war and oppression!’ and ‘Yes to the independent organization and mobilization of working people!’” (undated SA campaign supplement). An excellent sentiment; one which, however, is utterly belied by SA’s deeds.

Thus, while Socialist Action raises the call for the immediate withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Iraq, SA has pushed, and continues to push, “antiwar” coalitions in which the interests of the exploited and oppressed are subordinated to those of the class enemy. SA has been among the “best builders” of exactly the “Anybody but Bush” credo it claims to abhor, for example, through its work in the class-collaborationist United for Peace and Justice (UFPJ). Seeking “unity” with anything that passed for an “antiwar” Democrat, UFPJ refused to raise the elementary call for *military defense of Iraq against the U.S. onslaught*. Ditto the ANSWER coalition of Workers World Party and Party for Socialism and Liberation, and the Not In Our Name (NION) initiative of the Revolutionary Communist Party.

The SL and Spartacus Youth Clubs



Socialist Action

Jeff Mackler, Socialist Action candidate for Senate.

“A fighting socialist campaign!” SA boasts of Mackler: “During the Vietnam War, he served on the National Committee of the National Peace Action Coalition.”

NPAC constituted the right wing of the movement against U.S. imperialism’s dirty losing war in Vietnam. While the best of the youth radicalized by the struggle against the Vietnam War stood for the military victory of the National Liberation Front/Democratic Republic of Vietnam (NLF/DRV) forces, NPAC was busy sealing its alliance with the defeatist wing of the bourgeoisie, which sought to cut U.S. imperialism’s losses in Indochina. This alliance was sealed with the blood of leftists. At a July 1971 NPAC conference, SWP goons viciously physically attacked members of the SL and Progressive Labor-SDS who protested Democratic Senator Vance Hartke, a keynote speaker at that conference.

Mythology about the “broad movement” that forced the withdrawal of American imperialism from Vietnam to the contrary, the U.S. was defeated on the battleground by the heroic Vietnamese workers and peasants—a victory for the world working class. We in the SL not only called for the military victory of the NLF/DRV forces, we also raised the call: “All Indochina must go Communist!” The SL and SYCs continue to fight today for revolutionary internationalist opposition to the depredations of U.S. imperialism, insisting that only with the victory of socialist revolution will its wars, invasions, occupations and counterrevolutionary machinations be brought to an end. We also fight for the *unconditional military defense of the deformed workers states against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution*—i.e., defense of those states where capitalism has been overthrown, namely Vietnam, Cuba, North Korea and China.

The Russian Question: Socialist Action vs. Trotskyism

SA’s campaign program contains the pacifist, anti-revolutionary demand: “No to nuclear power and nuclear weapons!” Pandering to the same eco-faddist, petty-bourgeois milieu from which the Greens

recruit, this demand is counterposed to the Leninist understanding of the *need* for dependent countries under imperialist threat, such as Iran, to have nukes for their defense. It is also counterposed to the Trotskyist position of unconditional military defense of the deformed workers states. Given U.S. saber-rattling against North Korea and hostility to China’s nuclear arsenal, this issue is posed pointblank.

Despite any formal pretensions to Trotskyism it may claim, SA’s support to the forces of capitalist counterrevolution in the former Soviet bloc is *programmatically* indistinguishable from the openly “Third Camp” reformists of the ISO. Thus, the masthead of its newspaper, *Socialist Action*, is designed to imitate that of Lech Walesa’s Polish Solidarność. Solidarność—the only “union” beloved by Ronald Reagan, Margaret Thatcher, the CIA, the Pope and Western bankers—consolidated in 1981 around a program of counterrevolution against the Polish deformed workers state. As Trotskyists, we forthrightly supported the suppression of its counterrevolutionary bid for power. In contrast, in 1981, when still in the SWP, future SA honcho Nat Weinstein demonstrated alongside “Captive Nations” anti-Communists at a rally for “poor little Solidarność.”

The capitalist counterrevolution that eventually prevailed in the former Soviet Union and Eastern bloc states represented a profound defeat for the proletariat worldwide, decimating the industrial-military powerhouse of the non-capitalist world. We Trotskyists fought tooth and nail against counterrevolution, from the former East German workers state to the USSR. Today, triumphalist U.S. imperialism has its sights set on counterrevolutionary overturn in China, Cuba, North Korea and Vietnam. While SA calls for defense of Cuba, their defense combines sloganeering for such supportable but minimal demands like “End the blockade and embargo of Cuba!” with uncritical political adulation of the Castro bureaucracy. But the Stalinist, nationalist policy of “socialism in one country” pursued by Castro has undermined the defense of the Cuban Revolution. In Cuba, as in the other deformed workers states, we raise the call for *proletarian political revolution* to sweep away the bureaucratic misleaders and return to the road of Lenin and Trotsky’s revolutionary internationalism.

Cuba is popular in rad-lib circles, and SA’s position costs it little. Rather it adds a little “left” gloss to SA’s stodgy, Stalino-phobic reformism. Not so popular is the Chinese deformed workers state, a chief target of U.S. imperialist encirclement and economic pressure, which SA has written off as capitalist. Thus, SA’s 2005 Political Resolution stated: “Among the Stalinists, of course, are the Maoists,

continued on page 11



Der Spiegel

Solidarność leader Lech Walesa praying in front of Gdansk shipyard, 1980. Socialist Action models newspaper logo on that of Solidarność, which spearheaded capitalist counterrevolution in Poland.

In his powerful book on communist principles and tactics, “Left-Wing” Communism—An Infantile Disorder (1920), Bolshevik leader V. I. Lenin explained: “It is entirely a matter of *knowing how* to apply these tactics in order to *raise*—not lower—the *general* level of proletarian class-consciousness, revolutionary spirit, and ability to fight and win.” Lenin advised the fledgling British Communists to extend critical support to the British Labour Party in order to expose the Labour traitors’ pretensions to “socialism” and to break workers’ illusions in them.

Socialist Action (SA) is standing Jeff Mackler as a candidate for the U.S. Senate in California, not only against the Democrats but also the bourgeois Green Party and its “socialist” candidate—Todd Chretien of the International Socialist Organization (ISO). Unlike the reformist Socialist Workers Party (SWP), which is also standing in the election but is not counterposing itself to the Green Party campaign that is popular in petty-bourgeois circles, Mackler’s campaign thus draws a crude class line. On that basis, we are extending critical support to Mackler in the California Senate race. We will actively campaign for a vote to

fought against this class collaboration and forthrightly called for defense of Iraq, making clear that such defense implied not an iota of political support to the capitalist regime of Saddam Hussein—an all-purpose tool of the imperialists and butcher of Communists, Kurds and many others in Iraq. Against the parties of U.S. imperialism, the trade-union bureaucrats, who are tied in the main to the Democrats, and the reformist left, we seek to win the working class to the program of revolutionary internationalism, to class struggle in “the belly of the beast” against the depredations of its “own” ruling class.

In its social-pacifist “antiwar” work, Socialist Action is virtually indistinguishable from the ISO and a host of other groupings in what passes for the American left. SA embraces not the revolutionary Trotskyist tradition of the early Socialist Workers Party of James P. Cannon, but the tradition of the latter-day SWP in full reformist flower. SA issued from the SWP many years after the SWP’s qualitative degeneration in 1965, which was marked not least by its work as “best builders” of the popular-frontist National Peace Action Coalition (NPAC) during the Vietnam War. In its statement



Reuters

Left: Democratic hawk Dianne Feinstein. Right: “Socialist” Todd Chretien (second from left), candidate of bourgeois Green Party. No support to capitalist parties!



Kentucky Air Disaster: Bitter Fruit of Union Busting

Early on the morning of August 27 at Blue Grass Airport in Lexington, Kentucky, a Comair regional jet took a wrong turn onto a short runway, barely got airborne and crashed into a nearby field. Engulfed by flames and smoke, 49 of the 50 people aboard the aircraft perished. Twenty-nine seconds had elapsed from the beginning of the takeoff roll until impact, but no warning was issued from the control tower. Why? The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) had violated its own rules by scheduling only *one* air traffic controller to perform all tower duties on the overnight shift.

This practice is all too routine in the nation's air traffic control system, with its chronic staffing shortages, critical equipment failures and deplorable working conditions. There have been net losses of controllers every year for the past three years, and the FAA is now short by at least 1,000 controllers nationwide. Nearly two years before the fatal crash, a prescient Lexington control tower supervisor warned in a memo that coverage was stretched so thin that it "can cost lives."

The chaos in air transport today is not only an example of the anarchy and decay that reigns in the capitalist economy, it is also the bitter fruit of the most massive union-busting attack since before the CIO was founded in the 1930s. Twenty-

five years ago, on 3 August 1981, the 13,000 members of the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization (PATCO) went on strike, demanding shorter hours, increased staffing and improved wages from the FAA. Putting into action a strike-



PATCO union leaders hauled off in chains during 1981 strike.

breaking plan drawn up under the Democratic Carter administration, Republican president Reagan two days later fired all the controllers and had PATCO leaders hauled off to jail in shackles. In short order, union members were blacklisted, PATCO's finances were seized and the union was decertified.

Labor could have beaten back the union-busters by shutting down the airports. A massive labor demonstration—half a million strong—in Washington, D.C., on 19 September 1981 showed that there was plenty of sentiment in labor's ranks to beat back the attack on PATCO. But from the outset of the strike, the response of the labor officialdom was to order union pilots, machinists, flight attendants and Teamsters to report to work. This betrayal set the stage for a ruthless capitalist offensive against the unions and the working class as a whole.

As part of its vendetta against PATCO, the government, including a Democratic-controlled Congress, imposed a ban on the rehiring of the strikers. While the Clinton administration lifted the ban in 1993, this token gesture has done nothing to reverse the blackballing of PATCO controllers. To date, only 846 strikers, out of more than 5,000 who have applied, have been offered jobs in their profession—and none since 1999.

Fatigue and stress, key concerns of the PATCO strikers, plague air traffic controllers no less today. The Lexington controller had slept only two hours, with just nine hours off between shifts. With the bottom line trumping air safety, this Labor Day weekend the FAA saddled controllers with new, more onerous work rules as well as a 30 percent wage cut and reduced pensions. The government will now force controllers who feel unrested to work anyway and has taken away critical break time. As a result, more than one-quarter of controllers are projected to retire within the year.

At the same time, the air traffic control system's infrastructure is dangerously outmoded and crumbling. A recent *New York Post* (4 September) exposé of the tower at LaGuardia Airport revealed that a crucial ground radar system fails during heavy rain and that this airport, too, often has only one controller on the midnight shift. At the Lexington airport, one time when the radar system wasn't working properly, management refused to bring in a repair technician because it would mean paying two hours of overtime! And now it comes out that at the time of the crash, Comair was using an out-of-date, FAA-provided chart of the airport.

Capitalist looting of this country's wealth and undermining of infrastructure are a recipe for disaster and have already cost countless lives, as everyone could see when the levees in and around New Orleans broke during Hurricane Katrina. The massive waste, danger and inefficiency of the airline industry under capitalism cries out for centralized economic planning, but that will only come about when the ruling class as a whole has been expropriated under a workers government. ■

Racist Minuteman Provocation Spiked

L.A. Labor Day

LOS ANGELES—Workers at the annual Labor Day march and picnic in Wilmington's Banning Park on September 4 stopped an attempted provocation against L.A.'s diverse working class by a dozen anti-immigrant Minutemen and Save Our State (S.O.S.) vigilantes. The racist bigots tried to get into the midst of the picnic, which is largely centered on the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU). But the vigilantes miscalculated.

When the bigots raised their signs—reading "Illegal Immigration Is Not Civil Rights," "Unions Embracing Illegals Are Selling Out Their Members—Support HR 4437" and "I.C.E. [Immigration and Customs Enforcement] Where Are You?"—angry individual unionists and members of immigrant rights groups started to surround them, chanting "Racists out!" and "Que viva el trabajador inmigrante!" (Long live the immigrant worker!). Union bureaucrats sent a team of 20 or so designated "Labor Day Security" people, mainly ILWU, to

stand between the Minutemen/S.O.S. and the angry crowd. Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Club supporters joined the workers, carrying a sign calling for "Full Citizenship Rights for Immigrants!" After unionists and immigrants still pushed forward, L.A. cops, some on all-terrain vehicles, escorted the Minutemen and S.O.S. out of the park to safety, as the crowd chanted, "Union! Union! Union!"

Immigrant workers, who have spearheaded militant union struggles in Southern California and elsewhere, are a vital factor for reinvigorating the labor movement in this country. But the crucial task of mobilizing labor to organize immigrant workers requires a fight against

**September 4:
Workers move
against anti-
immigrant bigots at
Labor Day picnic in
Wilmington,
California. Spartacist
sign reads: "Down
With La Migra Racist
Roundups—Full
Citizenship Rights
for Immigrants!"**

WW Photo



the policies of the pro-capitalist labor tops, whose chauvinist protectionism helps breed anti-immigrant prejudice among

workers. The multiracial labor movement must use its power to stop the sinister anti-immigrant racists! ■

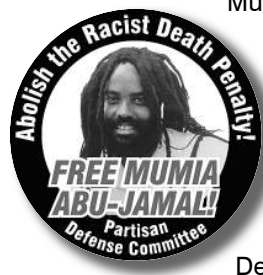
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Down With Reactionary “Age of Consent” Laws!

Canada: Anti-Sex Crusade Targets Youth, Gays

The following article is reprinted from Spartacist Canada No. 149 (Summer 2006), published by the Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste, Canadian section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

SPARTACIST

CANADA

Sex is a big part of being a teenager, but if you’re under 16 what was once fun and legal will soon be a crime. Waving the hoary “save our children” banner, the right-wing Conservative government plans to raise the age of consent from 14, which it has been since 1892, to 16. A recent survey showed that at least 25 percent of youth are having sex by the time they are 14. But if [Prime Minister] Stephen Harper and his justice minister Vic Toews get their way, these youth and their partners will become criminals. At the same time, the Tories have vowed to lower to 14 the age at which youth can be tried and sentenced as adults for some crimes. If these repressive plans become law, you’ll be too young for legal sex, but not too young for jail.

With brazen hypocrisy the Tories are renaming “age of consent” as “age of protection.” Harper & Co. have as much interest in protecting kids as they have in contracting genital herpes. Youth *could* use some protection—against the ruling class and its repressive state apparatus. It is the capitalist rulers who are the biggest abusers of children in this society. Today one in six children live in poverty, thanks to ever more layoffs, union busting and the destruction of social programs by provincial and federal governments of all stripes.

Now Harper is poised to gut daycare which, outside Quebec, is already costly and scarce. His caucus is rife with religious yahoos who think homosexuality is a plot to destroy the “traditional” family and that Christian holy writ is scientific truth. Attacking daycare, moving to overturn gay marriage, and now the early rumblings of an anti-abortion drive—this is the Tory social agenda. They’ve even resurrected the odious R.E.A.L. Women, using these anti-gay, anti-abortion bigots to promote an entirely bogus “childcare” program which aims to push women out of the workforce and back into the home.

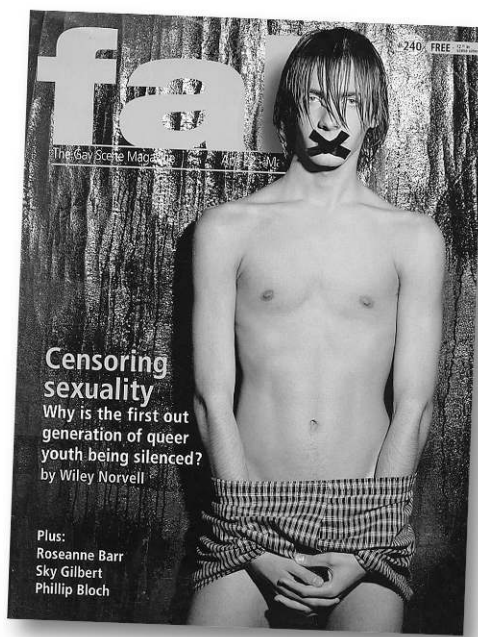
Raising the age of consent won’t stop kids from having sex, but it will make it a lot more dangerous and guilt-ridden. Youth will fear asking for information about birth control, abortion or diseases like AIDS. It is especially punitive for gay youth who, in coming to terms with their sexuality, often seek out older partners. Canada has one of the highest youth suicide rates in the world; little wonder, given the pervasive homophobic ugliness both in the schools and outside, that gay youth comprise a third of these deaths.

This crackdown on teen sexuality is another piece in the anti-sex panic which has swept North America over the last 25 years. In the 1980s and 1990s, people were force-fed the lie that there was an epidemic of child molestations and ritual abuse of children, while sexual predators supposedly lurked behind every teacher’s



no credit

Left: Right-wing Canadian prime minister Stephen Harper. Right: Toronto gay magazine *fab* (22 April 2004) protests state anti-porn crackdown.



desk. In 1994 Toronto artist Eli Langer was dragged through the courts on charges of producing “child pornography” for his paintings depicting children engaged in sex acts with each other and with adults. And it has only gotten worse. Private consensual acts are increasingly criminalized, and thousands have been victimized in a frenzy over internet porn. False allegations of child sexual abuse or possessing child pornography have destroyed lives, torn up families and led to suicides.

In April, the deadly logic of this was laid bare when a Cape Breton man obsessed with “sex offenders,” Stephen Marshall, drove down to Maine and murdered two men whose names appeared on an internet “sex offenders” registry. One of those killed by the Canadian vigilante was 24-year-old William Elliott. For having a sexual relationship with his girlfriend who was just two weeks shy of 16, Maine’s age of consent, Elliott was jailed for four months in 2002. Smeared as a “sex offender,” his picture and address were to be on this public registry for *ten years*—and that’s what got him killed. In a very direct way, these cold-blooded murders are a product of the bourgeoisie’s anti-sex hysteria.

“Family values” hypocrisy is hardly the exclusive preserve of Tory bigots. Harper’s move against teen sex picks up where the previous Liberal government [under Paul Martin] left off. The first act of Paul

Martin’s regime in 2004 was to introduce Bill C-2 which, among other measures, created a new crime of “sexual exploitation” that makes consent irrelevant. A witchhunter’s dream, the Criminal Code now says that a relationship between someone under 18 and another in a “position of authority” is by definition exploitative, a crime for which the latter could spend up to ten years in jail.

Even this is not enough for the NDP’s [New Democratic Party] federal justice critic, Joe Comartin. He backs a higher age of consent because it will be easier to win convictions for the “crime” of engaging in such relationships—consent be damned! In 2000, the ruling B.C. NDP was at the forefront of a witchhunting frenzy targeting several women teachers for entirely consensual relationships with younger people. And the NDP, like the Tories, wants to lower the age at which youth may be tried as adults, in their case to 16. Peddling such reaction is central to this social-democratic party’s role as a transmission belt for bourgeois ideology into the working class.

The State Anti-Pornography Witchhunt

Alongside the drive to regulate who people have actual sex with, the government also aims to bar everyone from even reading about or viewing depictions of sex, especially if youth are involved. After

many years of trials, in 2002 Vancouver resident John Robin Sharpe was acquitted of child pornography charges stemming from his fictional sexual stories and sketches portraying youth. Sharpe successfully used the defense of artistic merit. As an article in the Toronto gay magazine *fab* noted, this decision became “the legal umbrella under which the first generation of queer youth emerged. The ability to find and create works of art probing sexual taboos... were rights denied previous generations of queers” (22 April 2004).

Furious at Sharpe’s acquittal, the Liberals eliminated the defense of artistic merit. With Bill C-2 now law, the accused must now prove that their creations further the “public good” and have a “legitimate purpose.” As the *fab* article asked, “So what happens when kids exploring their sexuality through art become their own child pornographers?” Harper’s government plans to close even the shabby “public good” loophole. What next? Will everything from Nabokov’s *Lolita* to today’s mountain of steamy coming-of-age teen novels be consigned to the censors’ bonfires?

There has been some disquiet in the bourgeois media about the massive sweep of this state anti-porn dragnet. In recent years, thousands have been charged—in 2002-3 alone it was 303. Yet even in a witchhunting social climate the state secured convictions in fewer than half of these cases.

The necessarily arbitrary nature of “child pornography” laws lets the state ensnare almost anyone with this humiliating and fearful accusation. In April, racist border cops subjected Sikh immigrant Paramjit Singh to a terrifying ordeal. Caught in the crosshairs of two state crackdowns, the racist “war on terror” and the anti-porn hysteria, he was charged with possessing child pornography and denied entry to Canada, all for having a few pictures of his naked baby on his cell phone. The charges were dropped, but a chilling edict from the “Public Safety” ministry insisted that “the images of the prepubescent infant by definition is child pornography under the Criminal Code.”

Marxists oppose all laws against “crimes without victims,” such as prostitution, drug use or pornography. We utterly reject the practice whereby looking at pornography is equated with violent crimes such as rape, sexual assault and even murder. We also oppose the criminalization of those who look at child pornography which, like all pornography, is simply words and images designed for pleasure. And while we’re talking about the difference between images and acts, consider the very real *acts* of sadistic torture and sexual violence carried out on prisoners in Abu Ghraib and Guantánamo as U.S. imperialist policy.

State Out of the Bedroom!

From the start, we have been outspoken opponents of the anti-sex hysteria. For us Marxists, the guiding principle in sexual relations is that of *effective consent*, not age, relationship, sex, number or degree of intimacy. This means nothing more and nothing less than mutual agreement and understanding, as opposed to

Gosse/Globe and Mail



robinsharpe.ca



Wanda Young (far left) was put on “child abuse” registry for her term paper on juvenile offenders. John Robin Sharpe (left) was persecuted for years in state anti-porn vendetta.

Mexico...
(continued from page 1)

country, the most important of which was in the Sicartsa steel plant in the port of Lázaro Cárdenas following the tragedy of Pasta de Conchos [where 65 miners died in an explosion]. The miners were protesting the government’s removal of their leader and the imposition of a new leader more to the taste of Fox and his neo-Cristeros [referring to the 1920s reactionary clerical Cristero rebellion]. The government intervention was surely due to the fact that the miners union, in addition to having carried out many strikes and work stoppages over the last five years, was one of the few groupings within the Congress of Labor [main corporatist union federation affiliated with the PRI] that opposed the anti-worker “Abascal Law,” a reform of the Federal Labor Law.

The Federal Preventive Police, on orders from the PAN, and the Michoacán state police, under PRD governor Lázaro Cárdenas Batel—grandson of [1930s nationalist president] General Lázaro Cárdenas del Río—tried to break the Sicartsa strike. Fighting heroically, the workers succeeded in repelling the attack and maintained their strike for more than four months, at the cost of two workers dead.

This powerful strike, which caused immense losses for the bosses, was the most important workers’ struggle in



AP

Sicartsa brought the bosses to their knees and gave the state itself a black eye!

Some six weeks before the presidential elections, the teachers in Local 22 of the SNTE [National Union of Education Workers] in Oaxaca began a militant strike demanding pay raises. They also resisted a police attack on July 14 and successfully kept up their strike and an encampment in the main plaza of the city. In August, the state government, headed by the PRI hangman Ulises Ruiz, brutally escalated its terror campaign, assassinating two fighters for social justice who supported the teachers and arresting and/or kidnapping and torturing various others. The defense organizations set up by the teachers and their allies—organ-



Oaxaca teachers occupy town’s main square in June (left). Striking teachers have stood up to murderous repression under PRI governor Ulises Ruiz, vilified in poster (above).

cities like Monterrey and Guadalajara, enormous sectors of the petty bourgeoisie and, in fact, the most backward layers of the working class identify with this party, as do peasants in the Bajío and Los Altos of Jalisco, heartland of the Cristiada, to mention a few examples.

This shouldn’t surprise anybody in such an overwhelmingly Catholic country. Although sections of the PRD try to pose as “friends” of the oppressed, undoubtedly the majority of those who support the PRD also identify, in one degree or another, with some of the reactionary Catholic values that the PAN prominently pushes. Overall, what attracts large numbers of workers and the poor to the PRD—and to AMLO in particular—is their policy of greater state intervention in the economy and their nationalist rhetoric, in contrast to “free market” beliefs and outright servility to the imperialists on the part of the PAN and sectors of the PRI.

The Trap of Bourgeois Populism

We live in a period historically conditioned by the counterrevolutionary destruction of the USSR. The Soviet Union was the product of the first, and until today only, successful workers revolution. Despite its Stalinist bureaucratic degeneration, the USSR continued to embody the gains of the October Revolution of 1917. The restoration of capitalism in the counterrevolution of 1991-92 marked a world-historic defeat for the working class. The counterrevolution eliminated the powerful counterweight that the USSR represented to imperialist rapaciousness on a global scale and led to an enormous retrogression in the consciousness of the proletariat. Thus, the masses of workers and radicalized students who take part in defensive struggles no longer identify with the ideals of communism.

The history of Third World countries beginning with the 20th century oscillates between rightist regimes (often police dictatorships) that push economic starvation policies for the benefit above all of the imperialists, and “populist” regimes that introduce certain minimal democratic reforms and grant meager concessions to the workers. Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky analyzed this phenomenon, in the case of Mexico in particular, in his 1939 article “Nation-



December 1999: Mexico City police under PRD administration attack protest during UNAM student strike.

many years and demonstrates why communists base our strategy on the industrial proletariat, which has the power to bring the entire economy to a stop. Finally, the strike ended in victory on August 21 when the workers forced the bosses to concede, in addition to a wage increase, payment of all lost wages, the dropping of all charges against all the trade unionists and the recognition of Gómez Urrutia as their union leader, among other things. The workers of

ized in the so-called Popular Assembly of the People of Oaxaca and the Teachers’ Police of Oaxaca—successfully beat back several police attacks and infiltrations and apprehended several perpetrators of the murderous attacks.

The peasants of the town of Atenco also battled against the police on May 4, although in the end police forces were able to take the town, savagely beating peasants and raping at least seven women. In a police attack the previous day, a

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Below is a thumbnail image of the cover of Espartaco magazine, issue No. 26, September 2006. The cover features the title 'ESPARTACO' in large bold letters, with the subtitle 'Publicación del Grupo Espartaquista de México'. Below the title is the headline 'Amenaza de represión masiva ante repudio a dudosa victoria electoral del PAN' and another headline 'Los ataques del PAN contra los obreros y oprimidos y la lucha por la revolución socialista'. The cover also includes a small table with names and numbers.

alized Industry and Workers’ Management,” in which he explained:

“In the industrially backward countries foreign capital plays a decisive role. Hence the relative weakness of the *national* bourgeoisie in relation to the *national* proletariat. This creates special conditions of state power. The government veers between foreign and domestic capital, between the weak national bourgeoisie and the relatively powerful proletariat. This gives the government a Bonapartist character of a distinctive character. It raises itself, so to speak, above classes. Actually, it can govern either by making itself the instrument of foreign capitalism and holding the proletariat in the chains of a police dictatorship, or by maneuvering with the proletariat and even going so far as to make concessions to it, thus gaining the possibility of a certain freedom toward the foreign capitalists. The present policy [of the Mexican government of Lázaro Cárdenas] is in the second stage; its greatest conquests are the expropriations of the railroads and the oil industries.”

Thus, the PRD is what we call a bourgeois nationalist-populist party, similar to the PRM [Party of the Mexican Revolution] of Lázaro Cárdenas, predecessor of the PRI. In fact, the goal of the PRD is nothing more than to return to the “golden years” of the PRI, although, since it faces an international situation much more disadvantageous (above all the counterrevolution in the USSR), it is obvious that its policies are even more stingy than the policies of its predecessor more than 60 years ago.

In the context of generalized misery, the PRD’s minimal concessions to the workers and poor, as well as its criticisms of Fox’s servility to the imperialists, are a source of great illusions among the workers. But the PRD cannot fulfill its promises; nor does it want to. It cannot break with the imperialists; nor does it want to. This party doesn’t even oppose NAFTA—that treaty of imperialist looting of Mexico—but rather only wants to “renegotiate” it. Even though he talks about opposing the privatization of the energy sector, AMLO has declared, using intentionally confusing language, that he does not oppose the participation of national private capital in that sector.

It is no coincidence that Carlos Slim, the third-richest man in the world, publicly supported the PRD. The participation of the PRD in continual anti-union attacks in the DF [Mexico City Federal District], especially against the SUTGDF [municipal workers union] and the metro union, in the police breaking of the UNAM [National Autonomous University of Mexico] student strike in 1999, in the murderous repression in Lázaro Cárdenas and in Atenco, in the assassinations of Zapatista activists that the EZLN has documented, etc., are not isolated occurrences. They are a reflection of the PRD’s bourgeois and therefore inherently anti-worker nature.

As we wrote in a 7 April 2005 leaflet opposing the *desafuero* [stripping of immunity] of AMLO without giving him one iota of political support, if he achieves the presidency, “the very support he has among the workers movement would put him in a much better position to push forward the privatization of the electric and oil industries, which the ineffectual Fox has not been able to impose” [see “Mexico: Down With Fox’s Attack on Mayor López Obrador!” WV No. 846, 15 April 2005]. Even the meager concessions that exist, like subsidies to the elderly and single mothers, will be reversed tomorrow, when the bourgeois populists deem it prudent to expand their “republican austerity.”

The Permanent Revolution

The deeply felt democratic sentiments of the Mexican masses, like national emancipation and political democracy, cannot be satisfied under capitalism. No “progressive” wing of the bourgeoisie exists in the era of imperialist decay that is capable of breaking with the imperialists. Revolutionary Marxists, basing ourselves on the Trotskyist perspective of permanent revolution, do not have a democratic program distinct from a socialist one. In the struggle for democratic de-



Janet Jarman

Capitalist rule mires Mexico in bitter poverty: Slum area in Mexico City (above), shantytown near Salamanca in Central Mexico (right).

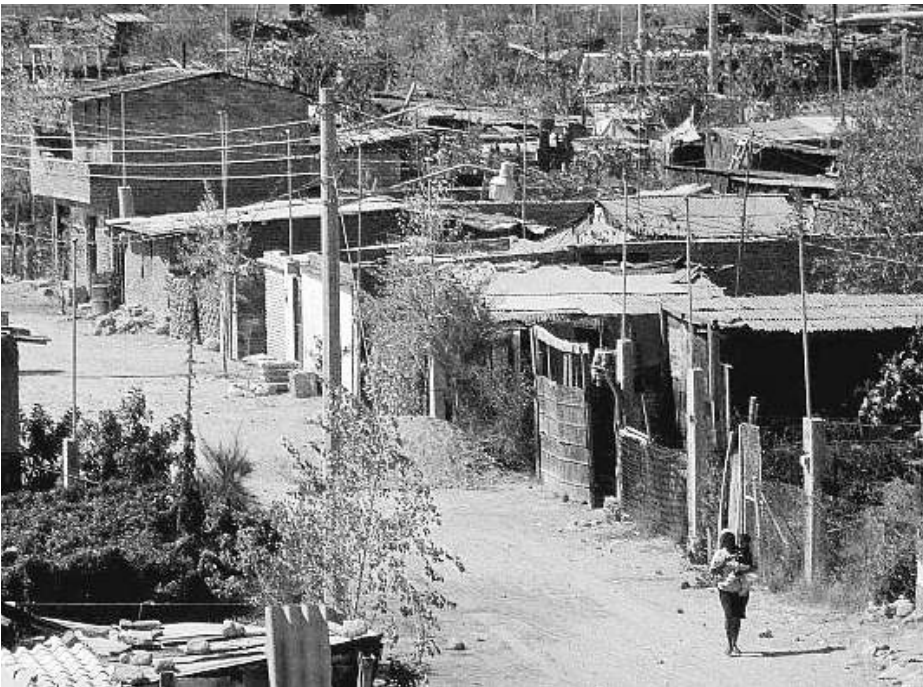
mands, we counterpose the proletariat to the bourgeoisie for the simple fact that these demands are only realizable under the dictatorship of the proletariat and, in fact, these struggles are a motor force for socialist revolution. The dictatorship of the proletariat would lay the basis for socialism—which is based on generalized abundance—and for the emancipation of all the oppressed: women, poor peasants, homosexuals, indigenous peoples.

Why is the hegemony of the working class necessary? It is true that all the poor struggle, at one point or another, against particular depredations of capitalism. But peasants, for example, struggle for land, to sell their products at the highest possible price and the lowest cost of production, etc. In the exceptional cases in which they triumph, they become small producers who exploit labor. Their objective interest is thus in the private ownership of the land. Isolated from the working class, their struggles, however just they might be, will not go beyond the framework of capitalism.

In contrast, the working class does not struggle to obtain markets for the boss, nor to make them more “profitable.” It fights collectively *against* the bosses for better salaries, benefits and working conditions. The workers have nothing but their own labor power on which to subsist, and they collectively produce the wealth of society. Therefore, as a class they have no objective interest in maintaining private property, and their strategic position in modern industry gives them the immense social power to paralyze the entire economy. In addition, the working class shares interests on the world level. Thus the working class is the only class with the objective interest to destroy capitalism across national borders, and its emancipation from the chains of capitalism carries the seed of the emancipation of humanity as a whole.

However, the economic struggle of the working class, in itself, does not go beyond the framework of capitalism, but is limited to struggles against individual bosses to renegotiate the terms of capitalist exploitation. Thus trade-union consciousness is still bourgeois consciousness. It is necessary to introduce into the working class revolutionary consciousness: the understanding of its own historic mission for universal emancipation. For that, a Leninist-Trotskyist party is needed which, armed with the historic experience of the class struggle, would combat the ideological influence of the bourgeoisie on the proletariat and would direct the masses in overturning the capitalist state.

For revolutionaries in Mexico, it is of utmost importance to combat the ideology of bourgeois nationalism: the myth of “unity” between the exploited and the exploiters of the same nationality and the consequent chauvinist hatred of foreigners, as if beyond the Río Bravo social classes did not exist. The future of a workers’ Mexico depends, in a very immediate sense, on the support of our class brothers and sisters in the U.S.,



Danny Lehman

especially the doubly oppressed black masses.

Proletarian internationalism is not an empty declaration of good intentions, but rather a reflection of the economic reality of imperialism and a political *necessity* for the proletariat. It is fundamental to combat the racist chauvinism that the capitalist rulers push in Mexico as well as in the U.S. to maintain divisions between black people and the millions of Latin American immigrants, who constitute a human bridge which is key for the proletariat. Therein lies the importance of our campaign for the freedom of Mumia Abu-Jamal, an activist for black rights known as “the voice of the voiceless,” who was sentenced to death in the U.S. in a totally racist frame-up trial. Among many other causes, this fight, in addition to its intrinsic justness, provides a concrete vehicle to combat chauvinism and strengthens the links among the workers of the world.

The IG: Centrists in a Strange World

The 1917 October Revolution—which fully confirmed Trotsky’s permanent revolution—is the fundamental experience for revolutionaries. The sharp contrast between our positions and those of other left groups will help to clarify the

content of genuine Trotskyism.

Most self-proclaimed Marxist groups have adapted, in one way or another, to the PRD. The Internationalist Group (IG), formed a decade ago by former Spartacists who defected from Trotskyism, deserves a special mention. The IG lives, as the song goes, in a strange world [a reference to *Un Mundo Raro*, a popular mariachi song]. Disoriented by counterrevolution in the USSR, the IG has devoted itself to fervently denying that counterrevolution had any significant impact on the consciousness of the working class, essentially holding that nothing has changed in social struggles since the 1970s or even before. This has led them to adapt to alien class forces, seeking shortcuts to the building of a Leninist-Trotskyist party of the workers’ vanguard.

In Mexico, the IG’s politics are characterized by renunciation of the perspective of permanent revolution and by adaptation to the current consciousness of the working class. According to the IG, the main obstacle to workers revolution in Mexico is a phantasmagorical “popular front” around the PRD.

The popular front is not a tactic, but the greatest of crimes, which has led to bloody defeats for the working class. But

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Mexico...

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it is not a synonym for all and every form of class collaboration. It refers to the political subordination of the mass parties of the working class to the capitalists, usually in order to administer the bourgeois state. In Mexico, such a party of the working class has never existed, not even a reformist bourgeois workers party in the style of British Labourism. The Mexican working class has been, since its early stages in the 1920s, tied to the nationalist populist wings of the bourgeoisie, and has not arrived at the understanding of the need for its own party—that is, an elementary class consciousness.

In its most recent publication (*El Internacionalista/Edición México*, August 2006), the IG focuses a polemic against us on the fact that we opposed the *desafuero* of López Obrador last year. In deeds, the IG supported Fox's plans, since it is opposed to "the executive *fuero* [immunity], which exempts capitalist rulers from being judged for their official acts (as opposed to the parliamentary *fuero*, which has the purpose [!] of protecting legislators from governmental intimidation)." Thus, according to the IG's logic, in stripping the populist López Obrador of his *fuero*, the neo-Cristero Fox was carrying out a truly democratic action!

We do not take a position on such precepts of bourgeois legislation in the abstract, but rather based on the interest of the *working class* in each *concrete* case. As we explained in our April 2005 leaflet:

"We communists of the Grupo Espartaquista de México are opposed to the attempt to strip Andrés Manuel López Obrador of his political immunity (a process called *desafuero*), while giving him no political support. The attempt by Fox and his PRI accomplices to prevent a bourgeois-nationalist candidate from running in the elections is a blow to the democratic rights of the population.... In opposing this *desafuero* we are defending our class's right to organize and fight against the capitalist class as a whole."

The IG's arguments regarding the *fuero* itself, abstracted from the real conditions of Fox's attack, are merely an absurd excuse to justify the fact that they turned their back on the struggle in defense of the democratic rights of the population. The line that they try to present as ultraradical (presumably to adapt to the politics of the UNAM Zapatista student milieu) is in reality profoundly rightist. And it is not a coincidence that the grotesque contortions that



April 11: Steel workers at Mittal plant in port of Lázaro Cárdenas following successful strike.

they have to make in order to justify their line end up apologizing for Fox himself.

In essence, they argue that the *desafuero* campaign was merely an intra-bourgeois quarrel in which the working class had no side. The IG asserted, over a year ago, in the most stupid manner: "When the ICL today says it defends democratic rights by supporting the legal immunity of López Obrador [!], when it asserts that the imperialists favor Fox over AMLO, they are repeating the PRD's electoral propaganda and participating in its campaign" (*El Internacionalista*, May 2005). It is difficult to think the IG believes its own words. In their new article they assert:

"But if the struggle transcends the framework of the electoral circus, if the capitalist state proclaims a winner by means of a massive fraud, imposing the candidate of a regime that can only maintain itself in power by means of heavy-handed repression, if instead of gigantic *pejemarchas* [AMLO demos] there are massive protests against actions that point in the direction of a military-police dictatorship, proletarian revolutionaries must call for a *proletarian mobilization against the bonapartist threat*."

Toward this end, the IG also calls for "workers' defense committees" and for the preparation of a "national strike against the murderous government" before what it sees as an imminent "civil war."

Certainly, the current deep polarization and the division within the bourgeoisie itself poses the threat of generalized repression. It has taken the IG over a year, with demonstrations of millions of people and constant attacks and threats by Fox, to recognize this fact. The point

is that the struggle in defense of the democratic rights of the population is *not counterposed* to the defense of the working class against a bonapartist threat; in reality, *they are one and the same*. Mexican workers are not indifferent to the result of the present dispute among their rulers. If López Obrador won the election, we communists would defend his democratic right to occupy the post. But we do not join our forces with the PRD political bloc. Instead, we defend democratic rights by proletarian means.

In 1916, Bolshevik G.L. Piatakov (P. Kievsky) rejected the struggle for democratic demands as a deviation from the struggle for socialism. V.I. Lenin replied:

"Capitalism in general, imperialism in particular, transforms democracy into an illusion—and at the same time capitalism generates democratic tendencies among the masses, creates democratic institutions, accentuates the antagonism between imperialism, which repudiates democracy, and the masses which strive toward democracy. Capitalism and imperialism cannot be overthrown through any reforms—not even the most 'ideal' democratic reforms—but only through an economic overturn. But the proletariat which has not been educated in a struggle for democracy is incapable of accomplishing an economic overturn."

—“Lenin's Reply to P. Kievsky,” printed in *The Bolsheviks and the World War*, Olga Hess Gankin and H.H. Fisher, eds. (1976)

To dismiss the democratic aspirations of the masses signifies the rejection of permanent revolution and, therefore, of the struggle for socialism. In reality, the supposedly "ultraradical" positions of the IG are a mere device to hide their *adaptation* to the PRD. Indeed, it takes a

lot of chutzpah for the IG to talk about "workers' defense committees" which, they say, would be the generalization of the struggles of the Sicarta workers and the Oaxaca teachers: the IG didn't even defend the miners union in the face of state attack! In line with its adaptation to the PRD, this group holds that the PRI-affiliated unions—like the miners union—are not workers organizations but the "*class enemy*" (*El Internacionalista/Edición México*, May 2001), which, by the way, would also extend to the SNTE and its Local 22 in Oaxaca. By a strange coincidence, according to the IG the only workers unions in Mexico are those tied to the PRD.

The IG accuses us, claiming: "The logic of their politics of last year should impel the GEM to join the LTS [Liga de Trabajadores por el Socialismo] and other organizations that follow the current of the 'anti-fraud' movement." "The logic of the politics" of the GEM is dictated by the perspective of permanent revolution. The same cannot be said of the IG. It is not a coincidence that this group has consistently refused, both in 2005 and in 2006, to distribute its propaganda in the immense PRD mobilizations, to which some tens of thousands of workers and youth showed up. The pretentious affirmations of the IG that they and only they have "swum against the stream" in the face of the social polarization that the country is living through are a sad joke. In reality, they are incapable of combatting the workers' illusions in populism, invoking instead phantasmagorical "popular fronts" and dismissing a large part of the heavy contingents of the proletariat for being affiliated to the wrong bourgeois party.

Mexican society looks like a powder keg about to explode, but here is the fundamental problem: the proletariat is strongly tied ideologically to the bourgeois PRD. It is necessary to intervene in class and social struggles with the program of revolutionary Marxism, struggling to break these ties. Only in this way can a Leninist-Trotskyist party be built in order to lead the working class to power. The task we have committed ourselves to is an enormous one. Breaking the ideological chains that tie the working class to their exploiters will mean many years of hard work. But there is no other road. As a section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist), we fight to reforge Trotsky's Fourth International with no interest, with no goal other than leading the proletariat to the seizure of state power through socialist revolution. ■

Spartacist Forums

Against Capitalists' Divide-and-Rule!

The Fight for Immigrant Rights and Black Liberation

Speaker: Don Alexander, Spartacist League Central Committee

Saturday, Sept. 16, 3 p.m.

Immanuel Presbyterian Church
Geneva Room, 3300 Wilshire Blvd.
(One block west of Wilshire/Vermont Red Line Station)

LOS ANGELES

For more information: (213) 380-8239
or e-mail: slsycla@sbcglobal.net

Saturday, Sept. 23, 4 p.m.

YWCA, Classroom 2
1515 Webster St. (at 15th St.), Oakland
(2 blocks from the Oakland City Center/12th St. BART Station)

BAY AREA

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

Capitalist Rulers Left Blacks, Poor to Die

New Orleans: One Year After Katrina Racist Atrocity Continues

Speaker: Barry James, Spartacist League
with a guest speaker from New Orleans

Update on the fight to free Mumia Abu-Jamal

Saturday, Sept. 16, 3 p.m.

6 Harrison Street, Manhattan
(Take the No. 1 subway to Franklin St.,
walk west on Franklin to Hudson,
one block south on Hudson to Harrison)

NEW YORK

For more information: (212) 267-1025
or e-mail: nysl@compuserve.com

Defend the Chinese Deformed Workers State! For Proletarian Political Revolution!

China's "Market Reforms": A Trotskyist Analysis

Saturday, Sept. 16, 5 p.m.

UIC Student Center East
White Oak Room, 750 S. Halsted St.
University of Illinois, Chicago

CHICAGO

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

Trotskyist League/Spartacus Youth Club Forum

For a Socialist Federation of the Near East!

Saturday, September 30, 7 p.m.

OISE, Room 2214, 252 Bloor St. West
University of Toronto
(at St. George Subway Station)

TORONTO

For more information: (416) 593-4138
or e-mail: spartacan@on.aibn.com

Australia...

(continued from page 2)

military and cop forces.

Such social chauvinism is evidently providing a culture medium within and around the DSP for violent anti-woman and anti-communist creeps. At the Melbourne May Day rally earlier this year we had to defend ourselves against an unhinged *GLW* salesman—known as “Alex”—who kicked over our literature table and attempted to bully a woman comrade. He has twice since threatened Spartacist salesmen, including screwing up the papers of a Spartacus Youth Club member at the 28 June mass union rally. “Alex” denounces our forthright defence of those, such as Melbourne schoolteacher Karen Ellis, who have been victimised under the reactionary age-of-consent laws. Like the cowardly assailant on 29 August, he also aggressively embraces the DSP’s support to the Australian imperialist military invasion of East Timor.

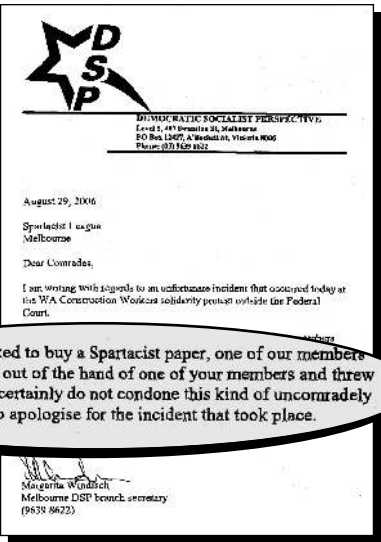
We note that these attempts at violent political censorship of the SL are taking place at the same time the bourgeois

is carrying out chilling state repression against Muslims, leftists and unionists under the bogus “war on terror.” More-over these *GLW* goons reek of anti-communist social-democratic nationalism, which glories in the anti-woman bigotry of this remote, white imperialist enclave. Their hostility towards the SL is fostered by the DSP’s touching faith in the capitalist state, which consists at its core of the military, police, courts and prisons and exists to enforce the rule of the capitalist class over the working class and oppressed. Unable to defend the politics of the DSP, they seek to silence communists who fight for the political independence of the proletariat and for class-struggle actions against the depredations of Australian imperialist oppression abroad and state repression at home.

We Trotskyists of the Spartacist League have a long and proud history as part of the working-class movement in this country and assert ourselves accordingly. In March 2004, mobilising support among trade unionists, we successfully defeated the attempt by the Victorian Trades Hall

Council, reportedly acting at the behest of the Police Association, to ban our forum at Trades Hall in defence of the besieged Redfern Aborigines following the cop killing of Aboriginal youth TJ Hickey in Sydney. Reversing this ban was a small but important victory for all defenders of Aboriginal rights and for the entire left [see “Trades Hall Ban Beaten Back,” *WV* No. 825, 30 April 2004].

In the polemical traditions of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky, we will continue to argue program and principle against pseudo-socialists like the DSP in order to openly and clearly expose and defeat their sellout politics. Political debate is necessary to clarify what program and leadership the working class needs to fight for its interests. For that purpose we will assert the rights of *any* tendency, including our own, against violence in the workers movement. Thus as an act of principle and a service to the left, we will widely expose and condemn the recent thuggery by *GLW* salesmen and DSP supporters. We call on other left-



Letter received by Spartacist League of Australia on September 1 following DSP attack on our comrade.

ists and trade unionists to do likewise. *We repeat: acts of violence such as those perpetrated by DSP members against political opponents on the left have no place in the workers movement! ■*

Election...

(continued from page 4)

whose legacy is the restoration of capitalism in China and the immiseration of hundreds of millions.” Such a position echoes not only rad-lib sentiment but also the protectionist, chauvinist China-bashing of the trade-union bureaucracy. In contrast, we advance the necessity to forge a Leninist-Trotskyist party to lead China’s huge and powerful working class, at the head of the peasants and urban poor, in a proletarian political revolution. In so doing, we seek to win working people in the U.S. to the necessity to defend the gains of the 1949 Chinese Revolution

against the machinations of the U.S. rulers and the labor traitors who serve them.

State and Revolution: Socialist Action vs. Leninism

Despite left-sounding verbiage in the SA campaign supplement that “We fight for a break with class-collaboration policies of both the AFL-CIO and the Change to Win national federations,” the fact is that among SA’s first political acts after emerging from the SWP was to serve as goons for the San Francisco labor bureaucracy when thousands of Bay Area workers took to the streets to stop scab buses during the 1983 Greyhound strike. As for the elementary principle of keeping the bosses and their courts out of union affairs, a prominent SA

supporter in New York City transit, Marty Goodman, was a longtime member of New Directions—a lash-up of union-suers—in TWU Local 100. SA’s words here are again contradicted by its deeds.

Then there are SA’s garden-variety reformist campaign demands to “tax the rich” and its utopian/Laborite call to “nationalize bankrupt corporations under workers’ control!” Marxists know that the interests of labor and capital are irreconcilable. But SA’s demands imply a touching faith in the existing system and its state to act in the interests of the working class, a stance counterposed to the revolutionary program of *expropriation of the bourgeoisie through workers revolution and the establishment of proletarian state power*.

Victory in the struggle for socialist revolution in the U.S. requires the recognition that a cornerstone of American capitalism is the oppression of black people, segregated at the bottom of society as a race-color caste. The unfinished tasks of the second American revolution—the Civil War which smashed the Southern slavery—must be finished by a third, proletarian revolution. The plight of death-row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal—award-winning journalist, former Black Panther and later a MOVE supporter—exemplifies the racist nature of the capitalist state, not least its use of the barbaric death penalty, a modern version of lynch-ropes terror. At every level the courts have declared that Mumia, framed up for the killing of Philadelphia cop Daniel Faulkner, has no rights they are bound to respect. Mountains of evidence of his innocence, including the confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Mumia, killed Faulkner, have been dismissed by the judicial system.

SA and Mackler have been among the most prominent and consistent advocates of mobilizing under the call for a “new trial” for Mumia. That call is consciously

tailored to appeal to mainstream bourgeois liberals who see Mumia’s case as an isolated “miscarriage of justice” rather than the conscious political frame-up it is. Such an approach demobilized millions who had earlier rallied to Mumia’s defense, including the worldwide outpouring of workers and youth in 1995 which stayed the executioner’s hand at that time. Recently, the misnamed, SA-led “Mobilization to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal” held a June 9 rally in the Bay Area that encapsulated this failed strategy in the demands: “One court decision from execution! One court decision from new trial & freedom!” While advocating the pursuit of all possible legal proceedings on Mumia’s behalf, we place no faith in the “justice” of the capitalist courts. Rather, we place our confidence in the power of the multiracial organized workers movement, which has every interest in fighting for Mumia’s freedom and must be mobilized independently of the very forces of the capitalist state that framed him up and seek his death.

In *The State and Revolution*, Lenin emphasized Marx’s point from the 1872 preface to the *Communist Manifesto*: “The working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made State machinery, and wield it for its own purposes.” Lenin’s work on this document was “interrupted” by the Russian October Revolution of 1917, led by the Bolshevik Party. Counterposed to the reformist SA, we seek to build a party on the model of the Bolsheviks, to lead the fight for *new Octobers!* The fake left longs to see the Democrats “fight”—including through the pressure tactic of support to the bourgeois Green Party. SA’s claim to stand as socialists against all the bourgeois parties is the basis for our extending critical support to it. At the same time, clearly, the reformist, “Anybody but Bush” content of SA’s program is an obstacle to revolution. *Vote Jeff Mackler! ■*

Greensboro...

(continued from page 3)

States. And so, although we were students of history, our democratic illusions disarmed us figuratively, so that the police could do so literally” (emphasis in original). The long, murderous history of police/Klan terror in the South includes the 1963 bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, which took the lives of four young black girls. FBI informant Gary Rowe was in on that—the same informant who, two years later, was in the car from which civil rights worker Viola Liuzzo was shot to death near Selma, Alabama. In 1964 Mississippi cops handed civil rights workers Andrew Goodman, James Earl Chaney and Michael Schwerner over to their Klan killers.

As we wrote in “Greensboro Massacre: We Will Not Forget!” (*WV* No. 835, 29 October 2004) concerning the Truth and

Reconciliation Commission: “‘Reconciliation’ with the forces of racist reaction and with the capitalist rulers who keep the fascist bands in reserve to unleash against the working class in times of social crisis can only serve to politically disarm and demobilize workers and the oppressed in the face of fascist terror.” The fascists can and must be stopped in their tracks. But that requires mass mobilizations drawing in the black masses and all those targeted by Klan/Nazi terror behind the social power of the integrated labor movement.

One week after the Greensboro Massacre, when the Klan announced it would “celebrate” the killings in downtown Detroit, the Spartacist League and militant auto workers made sure that did not happen, mobilizing 500 strong in a labor/black rally whose message was: “The Klan Won’t Ride in the Motor City!” We had to fight against liberal Democratic Party mayor Coleman Young, who threatened to arrest the anti-Klan protesters. Meanwhile, the response of the bulk of the left to Greensboro was silence. As Alexander Cockburn noted at the time in a *Village Voice* (19 November 1979) article titled “Silent as the Graves”: “Dignity would at least have required labor and its liberal allies to issue some proclamation of grief, some demand for justice, if not revenge. Courage would demand issuance of a call for anti-fascist demonstrations in every major city—like the one sponsored by the Spartacists in Detroit.... Action against native fascism is left in the hands of the Trotskyists and other sectarians, who at least can understand the meaning of murder when they see it.”

In the years since, the Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee have initiated labor/black mobilizations that have spiked Klan/Nazi provocations in a number of major cities. These mobilizations give a taste of the social power of the working class and point to the need to forge a workers party to lead the fight for a socialist revolution. That is the only way to get rid of the fascist murderers once and for all—by doing away with the racist capitalist system that breeds them. *No more Greensboros! ■*



Detroit, 10 November 1979: Labor/black mobilization initiated by SL stopped threatened Klan celebration of massacre in Greensboro.

Spartacus Youth Club Events

NEW YORK

Wednesday, September 20, 7 p.m.
Video Showing:
From Death Row,
This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal
Columbia University
Intercultural Resource Center
552 West 114th Street
For more information: (212) 267-1025
or e-mail: nysl@compuserve.com

LOS ANGELES

Saturday, September 30, 7 p.m.
Video Showing:
From Death Row,
This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal
Tia Chucha’s Café Cultural Bookstore
12737 Glenoaks Blvd., #22, Sylmar
For more information: (213) 380-8239
or e-mail: slsycla@sbcglobal.net

TORONTO

Wednesday, September 20, 6:30 p.m.
Marxism: Revolutionary Weapon of the Working Class
Sidney Smith Building, Room 2115
University of Toronto, 100 St. George St.
Information and readings: (416) 593-4138
or e-mail: spartacan@on.aibn.com

VANCOUVER

Thursday, September 21, 6 p.m.
Meet the Marxists—Students: Ally with the Working Class!
Student Union Building
UBC Room 211
Information and readings: (604) 687-0353
or e-mail: trotskyist_vancouver@shawcable.com

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

WORKERS VANGUARD

FREE MUMIA NOW!

The following rally call was issued by the Partisan Defense Committee on August 25.

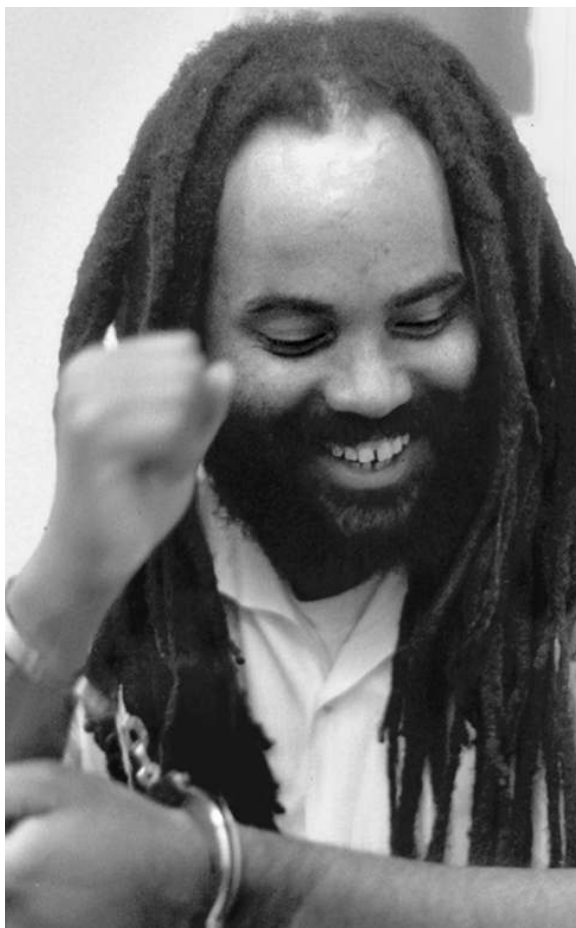
The fight to free Mumia Abu-Jamal has reached a crucial juncture. A former Black Panther Party spokesman, a MOVE supporter and award-winning journalist known as the “voice of the voiceless,” Mumia Abu-Jamal was framed up on false charges of killing Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner on 9 December 1981. In December, the U.S. Third Circuit Court of Appeals put Mumia’s case on a “fast track” for decision. A ruling by this court—the last stage before the U.S. Supreme Court—on Mumia’s fight against the racist frame-up and sentence of death could come by the end of this year. The Partisan Defense Committee is calling rallies in New York, Chicago, Oakland and Los Angeles to demand: Mumia Abu-Jamal is an innocent man! Free him now! Abolish the racist death penalty!

The threatened execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal is a warning to all who challenge vicious cop repression in the ghettos and barrios, to workers who stand up for their rights on picket lines, to those who protest the ravages of U.S. imperialism and its allies in Iraq, Afghanistan, Lebanon and around the world. Millions in the unions, on the streets and campuses must be mobilized now behind Mumia’s fight! A successful mobilization that wins Mumia’s freedom would strike a blow as well against the all-sided attacks on democratic rights carried out in the name of the “war on terror.”

Over five years ago, Arnold Beverly confessed that he, not Mumia, killed Officer Faulkner. Beverly stated he was hired to kill Faulkner, whose interference with prostitution, gambling and payoffs made him a problem for the mob and corrupt cops. But the courts have refused to consider 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 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.

Time is running short. With the execution of Tookie Williams last December, the bloody rulers sent a signal that they want Mumia next. The forces of “law and order” represented by both the Democratic and Republican parties are united in their determination to strap this innocent man onto an execution gurney. They see in Mumia the spectre of black revolution, a voice of defiant opposition to the oppression of black people that is a cornerstone of American capitalism. The frame-up of Mumia Abu-Jamal has come to symbolize what the racist death penalty in the U.S. is all about. A legacy of chattel slavery, capital punishment is the lynch rope made legal. We oppose the death penalty on principle—we do

Mumia Abu-Jamal Is an Innocent Man!



COC Productions

Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!

Sponsored by the Partisan Defense Committee

e-mail: partisandefense@earthlink.net

RALLY!

BAY AREA

Saturday, Oct. 21, 2 p.m.
YWCA
1515 Webster St.,
Oakland
(at 15th St., 2 blocks from 12th St./
City Center BART Station)
More info: (510) 839-0852

CHICAGO

Friday, Oct. 13, 7 p.m.
United Electrical Hall
37 S. Ashland
(at Monroe)
More info: (312) 563-0442

LOS ANGELES

Thursday, Oct. 19, 6:30 p.m.
UCLA Downtown
Labor Center
675 S. Park View St.
(4 blocks west of Westlake/
MacArthur Park Red Line Station)
More info: (213) 380-8897

NEW YORK

Saturday, Oct. 28, 3 p.m.
Salem United Methodist Church
2190 Adam Clayton
Powell Jr. Blvd.
(at 129th St., 2, 3 train to 125th St.
or A, C, D to 125th St.)
More info: (212) 406-4252

the n----r.” The three issues the appeals court allowed Mumia to raise—exclusion of black people from the jury, Sabo’s overt prejudice during the post-conviction hearings, and the prosecutor’s outrageous closing argument that the jury, if undecided, should convict Mumia because he would have “appeal after appeal”—point to the racist and political bias that saturated his trial and appeals.

Had Mumia not been a Black Panther spokesman in his youth and remained loyal to the cause of the oppressed, had he remained silent while the cops gunned down ghetto and barrio youth and U.S. troops marauded around the world, had he said not a word about his imprisoned and exiled brothers and sisters, he would not today be in the shadow of death. Mumia continues to write powerfully from Pennsylvania’s death row in commentaries such as “The Forgotten Ones: (Katrina),” “The United States of Torture” and “Ongoing War Against Workers: The TWU Strike.”

Worldwide protests, crucially involving trade unions, won a stay of execution for Mumia in August 1995. Millions rallied to Mumia’s cause out of revulsion with the injustices inherent in capitalism—poverty, racial and ethnic bias and war. They identified with Mumia’s fight against the “system” and for justice for all of humanity. But they were demobilized by a host of reformist and liberal organizations that appeal to bourgeois forces who see in Mumia’s case an isolated “miscarriage of justice” that could be rectified with a “new trial.” This meant rejecting the very reasons Mumia’s case won such broad international support.

That worldwide movement must be revived and infused with a new strength and militancy built on the understanding that *there is no justice in the capitalist courts*. The PDC, a class-struggle legal and social defense organization associated with the Marxist Spartacist League, fights to mobilize the social power of the multiracial labor movement—those who create the wealth of this society and who can shut it down.

The only pressure that will impact on the rulers and their courts is fear of the consequences of executing Mumia or entombing him for life. We are building these rallies as a crucial step toward the labor-centered mass united-front mobilizations that can bring that pressure to bear. Our rallies will send the court a message: we will not let Mumia die or rot another day in prison. These PDC rallies bring together, in defense of Mumia, speakers and organizations across a spectrum of political beliefs raising their own views. Within that framework, we seek to win activists to the understanding that Mumia’s defense must be based on a class-struggle perspective—organizing independently of the racist capitalist state that has framed him up.

We must mobilize 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! ■

not accord the state the right to say who lives and who dies.

Like Dred Scott in 1857, Mumia has no rights that a court is bound to respect.

At the time of Mumia’s trial, the judge who would send him to death row, Albert Sabo, was overheard by a court stenographer saying, “I’m going to help them fry



WV Photo

Revolutionary Contingent marches in San Francisco demonstration in defense of Mumia, 13 May 2000.