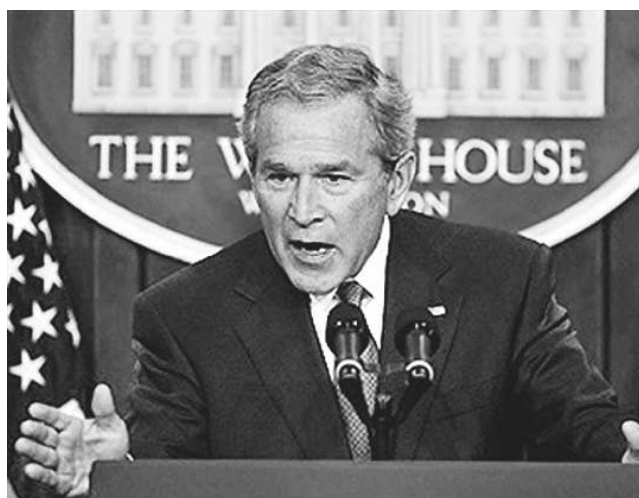


U.S. Torture Elections

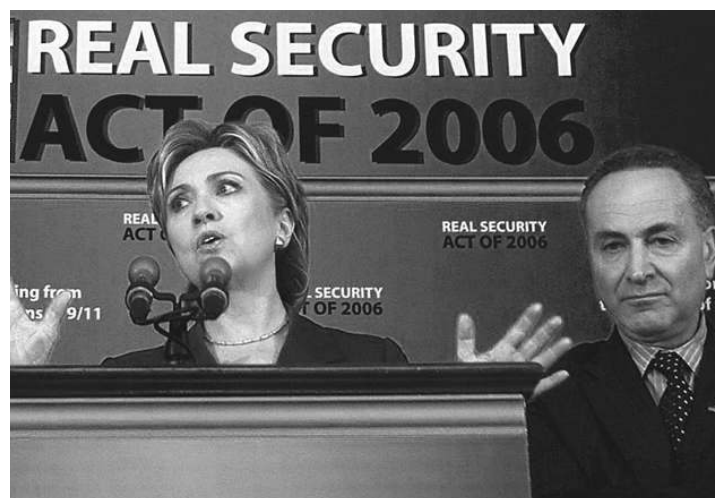
Bipartisan Assault on Bill of Rights



AFP



DeCrow/Newsday



Smialowski/Getty

As public support for Bush White House sinks, Democrats promise more effective prosecution of reactionary “war on terror.” Center: Member of NYPD “anti-terrorism” force outside New York Stock Exchange, August 2004. Right: NY Senators Hillary Clinton and Charles Schumer at September 7 news conference.

Tens of thousands of Iraqis have died since the invasion and occupation of Iraq, including in brutal massacres of civilian men, women and children by U.S. forces. From Abu Ghraib to Guantánamo Bay, torture and degradation are meted out to detainees in the “global war on terror.” The Military Commissions Act of 2006, passed by both houses of Congress, stipulates that the President can order the seizure of anyone deemed to be an “unlawful enemy combatant,” gives the President the right to decide what constitutes torture, and enshrines in law secret military tribunals. The law also retroactively exempts from trial any U.S. agent for post-September 11, 2001 violations of the Geneva Conventions or even the U.S. War Crimes Act.

Also on the home front, only a year ago black and poor people of New Orleans were left to die by the capitalist rulers in a man-made racist atrocity when Hurricane Katrina hit. The working class and the oppressed groan under falling wages, rising prices, police terror in the ghettos and barrios. Voting rights are under sustained attack, as are women’s right to abortion, democratic rights for homosexuals and the separation of church and state. Proposed draconian measures against immigrants sparked millions-strong protests last spring. All this is but a snapshot of the climate in which the 2006 midterm elections take place.

The justly despised and feared rule of the Bush-Cheney-Rumsfeld cabal, whose machinations give new meaning to the quip that you know they’re lying because their lips are moving, provides fertile ground for “Anybody but Bush” unity, with which the Democrats—the other party of imperialist war and racism—aim to recapture Congress. Bringing up the rear in this broad front of lesser evilism, which extends from disaffected sections of the ruling class to muckraking liberal journalists and workers and youth, is what passes for the U.S. left.

It is the task of the revolutionary Marxists of the Spartacist League, U.S. section of the International Communist League,

Break with the Democrats! For a Revolutionary Workers Party!

to put forward the elementary perspective of *class vs. class*. The racist obscenity of Hurricane Katrina revealed not simply ruling-class incompetence and indifference but the systemic oppression of black people in capitalist America. The depredations of this system—including its imperialist wars, its massacres, hideous torture and lies—can and will be ended only when capitalist rule is swept away through the seizure of state power by the working class.

The elephant-and-donkey show of American “democracy” is the means by which the bourgeoisie masks its bloody, racist class dictatorship. As Bolshevik leader V. I. Lenin put it in his 1917 work, *The State and Revolution*: “To decide once

every few years which member of the ruling class is to repress and crush the people through parliament—this is the real essence of bourgeois parliamentarism.” The working class, which has its hands on the means of production, is the only force with the social power and objective interest to carry out a social revolution that expropriates the bloodsucking capitalist class. But labor’s misleaders in both the AFL-CIO bureaucracy and Andy Stern’s “Change to Win” coalition tie the working class to its class enemy, centrally through their political support to the Democratic Party. Our task is to wage a political fight to break workers from the pro-capitalist program of the labor tops and to forge a revolutionary workers party—a tribune of

all the oppressed—committed to nothing other and nothing less than the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, a workers government where those who labor rule.

U.S. Hands Off the World!

It is the elementary duty of the U.S. working class to oppose its “own” bourgeoisie over the bloody occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan. Iraq under U.S. occupation has been turned into a hell-hole where scores of people are slaughtered daily, mainly through sectarian violence. Even the United Nations—that den of imperialist thieves and their victims—has reported that torture is now more rampant in Iraq today than under the brutal capitalist regime of Saddam Hussein, who served as an all-purpose tool of the imperialists and butcher of Communists, national minorities and others.

Having, in the main, given Bush & Co. a blank check for war with Iraq, the

continued on page 7

Imperialists Threaten Sanctions After Nuclear Test Defend North Korea!

OCTOBER 9—North Korea declared today that it had successfully conducted an underground nuclear test, providing a significant deterrent against military aggression by U.S. imperialism. Predictably, the U.S. and Japan responded by whipping up hysteria over the North Korean “threat.” Washington called for UN sanctions against Pyongyang, ultimately backed up by the threat of military attack. These renewed threats underline the duty of revolutionaries to stand for the *unconditional military defense* of the North Korean deformed workers state against imperialism.

Despite the rule of a nationalist Stalinist bureaucracy, the overthrow of capitalism in North Korea—as in China, Cuba and Vietnam—was a historic defeat for imperialism and a victory for the working people of the world. Though the U.S. rulers howl

menacingly over weapons of mass destruction in the hands of “rogue states,” it was the U.S. imperialists, under the auspices of the UN, who devastated the Korean peninsula in the 1950-53 Korean War, killing more than three million people. The U.S. is the only power ever to use atomic weaponry, incinerating some 200,000 Japanese civilians in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. Had the Soviet Union not developed a nuclear arsenal capable of deterring U.S. imperialism, Korea, China and Vietnam might well today be irradiated rubble. The international working class must support the deformed workers states’ possessing and testing nuclear weapons as a means of defense against imperialist blackmail.

Criminally, the Chinese Stalinist regime joined the imperialist-led uproar. On October 8, China joined imperialist

Japan in a common declaration that such a test “cannot be tolerated.” When North Korean officials informed their Chinese counterparts that the nuclear test was minutes away, Beijing rushed to give Washington the heads-up. Beijing has long sought to pressure Pyongyang to return to the “six-party talks,” whose aim is to disarm North Korea.

The Stalinists’ illusion that there can be “peaceful coexistence” with imperialism only undermines the defense of the deformed workers states, including China itself, which, after the destruction of the Soviet Union, is the imperialists’ prime target in the drive to “roll back Communism.” This underlines the necessity of proletarian political revolution to oust the nationalist Stalinist bureaucracies. *Beijing: Stop your craven appeasement of the imperialist drive against North Korea!*



Chávez, Chomsky and Bush UN Follies

The United Nations General Assembly last month featured some prime speechifying against the UN’s imperialist host. Instead of pounding a Khrushchevian shoe, Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez brandished a tome by Noam Chomsky, *Hegemony or Survival: America’s Quest for Global Dominance* (sales promptly soared), while crossing himself and noting President George Bush’s address the day before: “The devil came here yesterday.... It smells of sulfur still today.”

Bush-bashing is easy—we expect that

for most of our readers, already this devil wears *nada*. For Hugo Chávez and Noam Chomsky, their anti-Bush rhetoric is a cloak for bourgeois nationalism (Chávez) and “kinder, gentler” imperialism (Chomsky)—none of which stops them from being heroes of the reformist left. Chávez has some oil money to spend, including on social programs that relieve some of the misery of the poor in Venezuela, as well as good reason to oppose the U.S.: the Bush administration backed a failed coup against

him in 2002. But as we pointed out in “Venezuela: Populist Nationalism vs. Proletarian Revolution” (WV No. 860, 9 December 2005): “Chávez is no socialist. A former army colonel now head of the capitalist state, he is an *enemy* of the struggle for socialism—i.e., the fight for workers revolution to expropriate the bourgeoisie.”

Chávez’s routine brought down the house, the cheers eclipsing the previous lecture by Mahmoud Ahmadinejad—president of the Iranian clericalist state and a Holocaust denier—who complained about “some” who “seek to rule the world relying on weapons and threats while others live in poverty.” Naturally, all this rankled U.S. capitalist politicians, since the main purpose of the United Nations is to provide a fig leaf to cover naked slaughter by the imperialists and their underlings. The counterrevolutionary Korean War of 1950-53 was officially a UN “police action”; UN forces helped set up the 1982 massacre of Palestinians at the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in Lebanon; and UN-sponsored sanctions against Saddam Hussein’s Iraq caused the deaths of at least a million and a half Iraqis in the 1990s—sanctions which Noam Chomsky supported.

Occasional outbursts of anti-U.S. sentiment in the toothless General Assembly lend some window-dressing to the UN’s sordid purpose. This year’s podium-thumping resonated all the more loudly given how deep a disaster the imperialist invasion of Iraq has become, not only militarily but for the credibility of the U.S. ruling class as it aims to stamp its domination over the planet.

The Democratic Party rushed to defend the Republican Commander in Chief. Harlem Congressman Charles Rangel blustered, “You don’t come into my country, you don’t come into my congressional district and criticize my president”—never mind that the United Nations is *not* U.S. territory, and that his district might like some of that



Venezuela’s Hugo Chávez at UN General Assembly, September 20.

discounted oil Venezuela’s CITGO company is offering the poor. House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi called Chávez “an everyday thug.” A *Hartford Courant* (2 October) editorial writer shot back, “If he’s a thug, they should ask Exxon/Mobil for a 40 percent discount and see what happens.” Meanwhile, the Bush gang’s typically thuggish response was to grab Venezuela’s foreign minister at the airport for a few hours of intimidation.

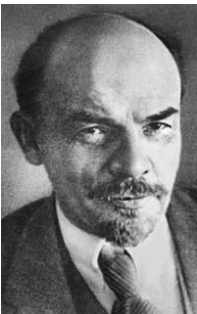
As for Noam Chomsky (who’s not actually dead yet, it just feels that way after plowing through his turgid books), his exposure of some of the crimes of U.S. imperialism collapses into the promotion of “pure” democracy through the agency of the UN and “international law.” He, too, is an enemy of the struggle for world working-class revolution, the only way to get rid of the imperialists and all capitalist exploiters once and for all. Chomsky actually bragged in 2003 on Radio Havana that “the United States, to its credit, is a very free country, maybe the freest country in the world” (see “Failed Anarchist on ‘Failed States’,” WV No. 874, 4 August). We expect the bound and hooded prisoners in Guantánamo didn’t quite catch that.■



TROTSKY

American “Democracy” and Colonial Oppression

Radical American journalist John Reed was won to Bolshevism while covering the Russian Revolution in Petrograd in 1917, after which he wrote his classic eyewitness account, *Ten Days That Shook the World*. We print below an excerpt from an undelivered speech Reed had prepared for the First Congress of the Peoples of the East, held in September 1920 in Baku, capital of Soviet Azerbaijan. Reed attended the Congress as a delegate from the U.S. and as a member



LENIN

of the Executive Committee of the Third (Communist) International, which was founded by Lenin and Trotsky’s Bolshevik Party as the necessary instrumentality to achieve world socialist revolution. Reed died of typhus after returning to Moscow from the Baku Congress.

The workers and peasants of the Philippines, the peoples of Central America and the islands of the Caribbean—they know what it means to live under the rule of “free America.”

Take, for example, the peoples of the Philippines. In 1898 the Filipinos rebelled against the cruel colonial government of Spain, and the Americans helped them. But when the Spaniards had been driven out, the Americans did not want to go away.

Then the Filipinos rose against the Americans, and this time the “liberators” started to kill them, their wives, and children, torturing and eventually conquering them. They seized their land and forced them to work and make profits for American capitalists.

The Americans have promised the Filipinos independence. Soon an independent Filipino republic will be proclaimed. But that does not mean that the American capitalists will leave or that the Filipinos will not continue to work to make profits for them. For the American capitalists have given the Filipino leaders a share of their profits; they have given them government jobs, land, and money. They have created a Filipino capitalist class that also lives on the profits created by the workers—and in whose interest it is to keep the Filipinos in slavery....

These same American capitalists incite the American workers and farmers against each other. They starve and exploit the peoples of Cuba and the Philippines. Savagely they kill American Negroes and burn them alive. And in America itself, American workers are obliged to work under frightful conditions, receiving low wages for a long workday. When they are exhausted and used up they are thrown out onto the street, where they die of hunger....

We appreciate the need for solidarity among all oppressed and toiling peoples, for unity of the revolutionary workers of all the countries of Europe and America under the leadership of the Russian Bolsheviks, in the Communist International. And we say to you, peoples of the East: Do not believe the promises of the American capitalists!

There is only one road to freedom. Unite with the Russian workers and peasants who have overthrown their capitalists and whose Red Army has beaten the foreign imperialists! Follow the red star of the Communist International!

—“Speech by John Reed,” *To See the Dawn: Baku, 1920—First Congress of the Peoples of the East* (Pathfinder, 1993)

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Victory to the Goodyear Strike!

OCTOBER 9—15,000 workers represented by the United Steelworkers (USW) struck Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. on October 5, shutting down 12 U.S. plants in ten states and four Canadian plants. The strike is against company plans to close plants in Tyler, Texas, and Gadsden, Alabama, and to slash wages and health care benefits, even after Goodyear raked in over \$200 million in profits last year and awarded top executives millions in bonuses. In 2003, the union agreed to a contract allowing the company to close a plant in Alabama and eliminate 6,000 jobs, while cutting wages, pensions and health care benefits. As one worker in Akron said, “Two billion dollars in concessions in 2003. Now they want more” (Associated Press, 6 October).

The company wants to reduce wages by some 40 percent through combining job classifications, changing work rules and outsourcing maintenance. A shop steward at the Goodyear plant in Fayetteville, North Carolina, told *Workers Vanguard*, “Cut and gut is what they want. They have fantasies of busting the union.” Many of the plants are in areas where union jobs, or jobs of any kind, are scarce, and a strike victory will be a blow against the capitalists’ vicious union-busting.

The union is planning for a long strike, and, according to *Today’s Trucking* online (6 October), the company has stockpiled its rubber products. Goodyear says it will supply its customers by using managers and overseas production. The strike by black, white and Latino Good-

year workers—who now include many women—must be supported by all labor. At Fayetteville, railroad workers are honoring picket lines set up on rail lines going into the plant. Militant picket lines to stop scabs, and the honoring of USW picket lines by unionized truckers and rail workers, can ensure that all production is stopped.

Defense of the unions that have a foothold in the region is an important part of the fight to organize the “open shop” South, where union-busting and anti-black terror have always gone hand in hand. Goodyear operates two non-union plants, one in Oklahoma and one in Ontario. A solid strike to beat back the company could provide an impetus to organize all the non-union plants in the tire and rubber industry.

The union says that Goodyear, the world’s third-largest tire manufacturer, wants to close the U.S. plants in order to build more plants overseas. Goodyear has more than 100 plants in 29 countries, pointing to the need for international labor solidarity. Goodyear has been attacking its workers and their unions from Colombia and Guatemala to Britain and Turkey, while fighting unionization drives in Thailand and Malaysia.

In 1999, under the aegis of the International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers’ Unions (ICEM), trade-union representatives from 16 countries met in Cleveland to form a network for Goodyear workers from around the world. The ICEM, which



October 5: Goodyear workers picket in front of company headquarters in Akron on first day of strike.

includes the USW, has called for elementary measures of international solidarity with the Goodyear strikers, including for “trade unions in the rubber industry—particularly at Goodyear plants in Central and South America—to monitor their inventories and production to ensure that they are not undermining the USW’s strike action.” Rubber workers internationally must fight against any attempts by Goodyear to break the USW strike by ramping up production, and all long-shoremen must refuse to handle any cargo meant to undermine the strike.

This year the USW campaigned in defense of the Mexican mine and steel workers union, which faced down union-busting in Lázaro Cárdenas, Mexico, winning a militant four-month strike with a plant occupation and pitched battles against the police. But the USW bureaucrats for decades have been at the forefront of the U.S. labor bureaucracy’s protectionist campaigns, forming a “Stand Up for Steel” alliance with the steel bosses to call for measures against imports. Protectionism in defense of “American” bosses

against “foreign competition” pits American workers against their class brothers and sisters abroad. It is poisonous to the international working-class unity that is needed to advance the struggle against the bosses in each country, including the U.S. A particular target of the USW tops’ protectionism is the Chinese deformed workers state. At the 1999 “anti-globalization” protests in Seattle, the Steelworkers tops grotesquely dumped mock Chinese steel into Puget Sound. Anti-Communist China-bashing only serves the counterrevolutionary interests of the U.S. imperialist rulers, who want to turn China into a giant sweatshop.

The United Rubber Workers, which merged with the USW in 1995, was a key component of the Congress of Industrial Organizations and waged some of the most hard-bitten strikes in the 1930s. Today, labor solidarity, and more than ever international class solidarity, is key to rebuilding industrial unions in the U.S. and reversing the bosses’ massacre of workers’ rights and living standards. ***Victory to the Goodyear strike! ■***

Sanitation Workers Battle for Union Rights

Fed up with long hours, low pay and regular abuse from supervisors and city managers, Raleigh sanitation workers staged brief wildcat strikes in mid-September. On two successive mornings, workers from all three sections of the department—garbage, recycling and yard waste—crowded the parking lot at the city’s Solid Waste Services facility instead of mounting their trucks, delaying pickups by a day or more. The evening of the second walkout, a majority of the more than 100 sanitation workers voted to join United Electrical (UE) Local 150, which represents around 3,000 public service workers statewide. The stand taken by these overwhelmingly black workers has sent ripples across viciously anti-union North Carolina and won them the support of other workers in the city and region.

North Carolina today is one of the most industrialized states in the U.S. but has the second lowest rate of unionization, after South Carolina. Going hand in hand with Jim Crow, reactionary “right to work” laws were enacted in North Carolina and elsewhere in the South following World War II to keep the region free of unions. The closed union shop in both private industry and public employment is banned by law and the 640,000 public employees are barred from striking. Collective bargaining for public employees is banned under a 1959 statute. With the rise of the civil rights movement, thwarting the unions was a means of reinforcing the segregation of black workers, who in North Carolina have historically held a large share of city and state jobs. The battle to organize the open shop South is intrinsically linked to the fight against racist discrimination.

Raleigh sanitation workers are outraged at having to toil under a “task”

Raleigh, North Carolina



Takaaki Iwabuchi/News & Observer

September 26: Sanitation workers rally for union recognition in front of Raleigh City Hall.

system in which they are paid for finishing a route whether it takes 14 hours or six. One striker told *Workers Vanguard* that the department was “run like a plantation.” During 100-degree heat over the summer, these workers suffered through marathon shifts with no additional compensation. In the days immediately before the walkouts, crews were still at work after nightfall. Though fast-growing Raleigh, the state capital, is one of the wealthiest cities in the state, the City Council had slashed the number of sanitation workers, intensifying the speedup.

In the aftermath of the work stoppages, the sanitation workers have picketed City Hall and continued to press their demands in meetings with the mayor. Their demands include an end to forced

overtime, time-and-a-half pay for overtime, immediate hiring of all temporary city workers as permanent employees, an end to harassment by the bosses and the right to organize. The city has granted some partial concessions. The city has added six jobs and pledged to maintain six others that had been targeted for elimination. The widely despised solid waste director and operations superintendent were removed from their posts. Department bosses were granted the authority to pay overtime, although at their discretion. Plans were announced to make temporary jobs permanent, but only after six months’ probation. The sanitation workers’ gains have not gone unnoticed by other city employees, who will also benefit from the work-rule changes.

Until now, no Raleigh mayor had ever met privately with union representatives. However, the mayor is also talking separately with non-union workers, a setup for driving a wedge into this combative work force and undermining the workers’ power. Some are reluctant to join UE Local 150 and pay monthly dues because the law forbids cities from forming contracts with unions. Such anti-labor laws must be fought and defeated, and the key to victory is united class struggle against the capitalists and their government. While local and state Democrats have issued pious statements posing as “friends of labor” in response to the mayor’s meetings with the sanitation workers, the Democrats and Republicans are in fact partner parties of capital that enforce the racist, anti-union status quo.

The battle for union rights must flow from the standpoint of class against class. This struggle must include organizing immigrant workers from Mexico and elsewhere in Latin America, who are increasingly employed in city jobs in North Carolina, into the unions with full rights and protections. The unions must mobilize in defense of immigrant workers and fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants. This is a crucial part of mobilizing labor’s power in struggle against capitalist exploitation.

To organize the South will require a labor leadership that actively champions black rights and fights in the interests of all the oppressed around a program of class struggle and the political independence of the working class. Such an organizing drive could give rise to a revolutionary workers party, showing the way forward in the fight to shatter the racist capitalist system. ■

Pack the Courtroom for October 16 Sentencing!

Fight Convictions of Lynne Stewart, Mohamed Yousry and Ahmed Abdel Sattar!

For over 30 years, attorney Lynne Stewart has been a thorn in the government's side—an outspoken and ardent courtroom advocate for black activists, leftists and others deemed enemies by America's racist rulers. For this, Stewart, along with her Arabic translator Mohamed Yousry and paralegal Ahmed Abdel Sattar, was convicted in February 2005 on frame-up charges of conspiracy to provide "material support to terrorism" and "conspiring to defraud" the U.S. government. The charges stem from Stewart's legal representation of Egyptian Islamic fundamentalist cleric Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman, who is serving a life sentence for conspiracy to blow up New York City area landmarks in the early 1990s.

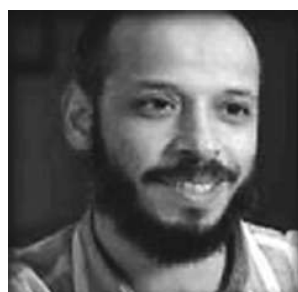
When Stewart, Yousry and Sattar step into court for sentencing on October 16, the government expects its pound of flesh. Prosecutors are demanding a 30-year sentence for Stewart—i.e., condemning the 67-year-old grandmother, who was diagnosed with cancer following her conviction, to spend the rest of her life behind bars. The persecution of Stewart, Yousry and Sattar is an attack on the democratic rights of us all. *We call on labor, defenders of black and immigrant rights, defenders of civil liberties and democratic rights to pack the courthouse to demand: Down with the McCarthyite "anti-terror" witchhunt! Freedom for Lynne Stewart, Mohamed Yousry and Ahmed Abdel Sattar!*

As we wrote in "Drop the Charges Against Lynne Stewart, Mohammed Yousry, Ahmed Abdel Sattar!" (WV No. 829, 9 July 2004):

"At issue is whether attorneys have the right to provide legal defense for anyone with unpopular views without being accused of the crime themselves. At issue is whether anyone accused of a crime has the right to legal defense, the right to free speech and association, to publicize their views to the world outside the jail cell, or even the right to receive news of the world



WV Photo



AhmedAbdelSattar.org
Top: Lynne Stewart (center). Above: Ahmed Abdel Sattar. Right: Mohamed Yousry with daughter.



Lisa Quiñones

beyond the prison walls. This case is being prosecuted by the same capitalist rulers who ordered torture and maintained that their victims in Abu Ghraib

and Guantánamo had no right to legal defense."

The only "crime" Lynne Stewart was guilty of was representing her client. In a *New York Times* (17 February 2005) op-ed piece, former New Jersey Superior Court judge Andrew Napolitano commented: "No doubt the outcome of this case will have a chilling effect on lawyers who might represent unpopular clients. Since 9/11 the federal government's message has been clear: if you defend someone we say is a terrorist, we may declare you to be one of them, and you will lose everything."

The evidence against Mohamed Yousry, a doctoral candidate in Middle Eastern Studies at New York University,

consisted of his notebooks of discussions with Sheik Abdel Rahman. Yousry's thesis adviser, Zachary Lockman, had suggested that he take advantage of his rare access to the sheik to develop a theme for his doctoral dissertation. An opponent of Islamic funda-

mentalism who never set foot in a mosque in his life, Yousry took notes on the Mubarak dictatorship and "Muslim totalitarianism" in Egypt. Yousry is facing two decades in prison for *doing his job* as a translator.

Writing of the trial of his student, Lockman noted that the prosecution "acknowledged that Mohammed had never advocated violence or Islamic fundamentalism. My guess is that the real reason they went after Mohammed was to get Stewart: She knew no Arabic, and Abdel Rahman knew very little English, so without including Mohammed in the alleged conspiracy, prosecutors wouldn't have had much of a case" ("Translating Arabic into Injustice," *Los Angeles Times*, 6 February). Ahmed Abdel Sattar, a postal worker and a supporter of the sheik, was convicted of conspiracy to "kill and kidnap persons in a foreign country." He faces life imprisonment essentially for making phone calls to the sheik's supporters in Egypt and Afghanistan.

The convictions of Stewart and her legal assistants are a frontal attack on the Sixth Amendment right to an attorney and on the free speech rights of us all. The prosecution was based on hundreds of hours of videotaped and recorded discussions between the sheik and Stewart—meetings that are supposed to be free from government snoops. Stewart's "material support to terrorism" consisted of making the views of her imprisoned client known to a Reuters journalist, in violation of the patently unconstitutional restrictions (Special Administrative Measures—SAMs) placed on Stewart as a condition of being allowed to meet with the sheik. To the prosecution, this simple exercise of First Amendment free speech rights constituted a "jail break." What next? Is publishing a column by Mumia Abu-Jamal, who was framed up in effect as a "terrorist" for his political views, "material support to terrorism"? What about signing a petition on behalf of the Irish nationalist IRA or Basque ETA prisoners?

This was an "anti-terrorism" show trial without any terrorists, which was precisely the point. Even the government admitted that not a single act of violence arose from this alleged terror conspiracy. But to assure a conviction, Judge Koeltl

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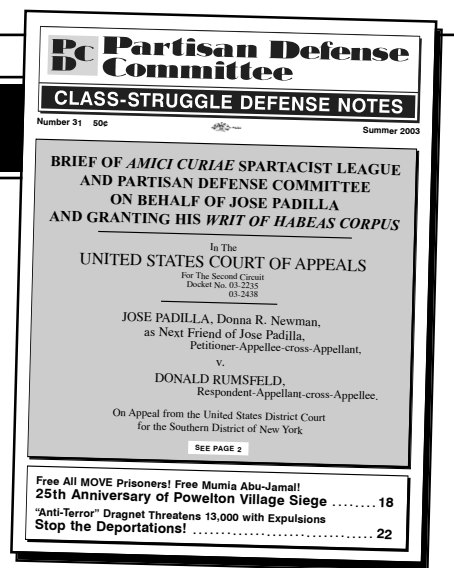
CLASS-STRUGGLE DEFENSE NOTES

No. 31, Summer 2003

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From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal

The United States of Torture



For several years now, since the inception of the US occupation of Iraq (and the installation of the Iraqi puppet regime), the American people have been treated to a plethora of promises of peace. Events were supposed to pacify the people, like various elections, the scribbling of a ‘constitution’, the arrest of Saddam Hussein, each was supposed to lead to the angelic choirs of peace, and the equally heavenly rise of ‘democracy.’

In fact, every event has led to more, not less, unrest, and violence is choking the country, leading it down the path of civil, sectarian war.

The behavior of the occupying power (the US) has helped lead to this dire end, in large part because of how many tens of thousands of Iraqis have been treated once they’ve fallen into the clutches of the Americans.

A recent book on American imprisonment and yes—torture, in Iraq, Afghanistan, and here at home argues that Americans have fueled the nationalist, and anti-occupation resistance, by their ignorance, their racism, and their treatment of Iraqi detainees.

One need only mention the notorious Abu Ghraib torture center to, in a mere name, tell a hundred stories, but the new book, *American Methods: Torture and the Logic of Domination* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, forthcoming May, 2006), by activist/writer Kristian Williams, tells us of how other people were treated, in other parts of the country, in other coun-

tries, and here, in the United States, to show us how central torture is to the American way of life.

Of course, if you are African or Native American, this is hardly a new idea. But, as most eyes are focused on the raging war in Iraq, Williams writes: “Torture is the technique of empire; empire, the ideological framework and political infrastructure of torture.”

Williams argues that torture is a state tool of domination, and is used to impress upon Iraqis the sheer power of the US.

For one relatively minor, but telling example, he cites the *Guardian* interview of an Iraqi woman, Huda Alazawi, who, with her entire family, were thrown into Abu Ghraib, where she worked picking up trash. She said:

Because I could speak a bit of English I was given the job of emptying the rubbish. There was never enough food and one day I came across an old woman who had collapsed from hunger. The Americans were always eating lots of hot food. I found some in a packet in a bin and gave it to her. They caught me and threw me in a one metre-square punishment cell. They poured cold water on me for four hours. [p. 14]

Miss Alazawi was held in solitary confinement for 157 days.

Again, relatively minor, but it reflects how average people were treated at the hands of the Americans. Of course, people were beaten to death, humiliated, raped, and forced to do foul things.

If there were no pictures, however, who would be

writing about it?

Occupations are about power, mass violence, and the terror of the occupying state against the invaded state.

To get some sense of that massive violence, I invite you to read Williams’ forthcoming work.

Williams writes that torture, whether in Abu Ghraib, in Unit 2, of the Chicago Police Station, or in any state institution, is a tool to create terror, and silence. He writes:

Torture...is not incidental to state power; it is characteristic of that power. Torture doesn’t represent a system failure; it is the system. [p. 3]

And of course, this way of treating people didn’t just happen.

It came from the highest levels of government—the White House, the so-called Department of Justice, the Defense Department—all sent messages in the field: ‘the gloves are off’; ‘do what you have to do’, etc.

That it doesn’t really work is almost beside the point.

In December, 2003, President George W. Bush (or, rather his speechwriters) claimed, in an address to the nation, “the torture chambers and the secret police are gone forever.” [p. 7]

Today, in the shadow of Abu Ghraib’s memory, we find secret prisons run by the puppet regime, and masked police swarming all over the cities.

Torture, and terror, has just changed management.

8 March 2006

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Send urgently needed contributions for Mumia’s legal defense, made payable to “National Lawyers Guild Foundation” and earmarked for “Mumia,” to: Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal, P.O. Box 2012, New York, NY 10159.

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

allowed prosecutors to inflame the jury with details of kidnappings of foreigners in the Philippines and the murder of tourists in Luxor, Egypt. Prosecutors claimed that these acts were inspired by supporters of the sheik, though they had nothing to do with the defendants. Fearing that wasn’t enough, as the trial proceeded in September 2004 the prosecution seized on the anniversary of the September 11 attacks, which patently had nothing to do with the case, by playing a videotape of Osama bin Laden—in a courtroom less than a mile from “Ground Zero”!

This case illustrates once again how “conspiracy” prosecutions provide legal cover for repression of the government’s political opponents when the state can find no evidence of criminal activity. The early trade unions in this country were outlawed as “criminal conspiracies” against “free trade.” Leftists, union organizers and opponents of U.S. entry into the First World War were imprisoned on charges of “seditious conspiracy.” In 1943, 18 Trotskyists and leaders of the Minneapolis Teamsters were thrown in jail under the Smith Act for conspiracy because of their opposition to U.S. imperialism in World War II.

Defense of Lynne Stewart takes on added significance with the passage in Congress last month of a bill sanctioning torture, affirming the president’s authority to designate anyone he wishes an “enemy combatant,” and eliminating *habeas corpus* for detainees in the “war on terror.” Shortly after news broke of the National Security Agency’s domestic wiretapping program, Stewart filed a motion seeking a new trial should it be shown that the Feds illegally subjected her strategy sessions with her lawyers to unlawful electronic surveillance. The government’s response was that Stewart and her attorneys couldn’t see the government response—it was too “classified.” Judge Koeltl has yet to rule on the motion.

The vendetta against Lynne Stewart is a centerpiece of the government’s “war on terror,” which is a pretext for U.S. imperialism’s rampages around the

world and for a modern-day witchhunt against all who are perceived as standing in the way of the aims of the capitalist government. Her prosecution and conviction represent an escalation of the rulers’ attacks on democratic rights won through massive struggle, including the English Civil Wars of the 1600s and two bourgeois revolutionary wars in this country, the War of Independence and the Civil War. Be sure: the attacks on civil liberties are not solely the work of Bush, Cheney & Co. The Democrats promote themselves as the more effective officers to lead the “war on terror.” The “anti-terror” law under which

Stewart was prosecuted was signed by Democratic president Clinton, and the SAMs that strip prisoners of elementary rights to communicate with the outside world were implemented under his administration.

Behind the facade of American “democracy” stands the capitalist state’s machinery of organized violence: armed bodies of men—the police and military, with their adjuncts of the courts and prisons—committed to defend and enforce capitalist class rule against workers and the oppressed. The fact that the government is going after lawyers signifies an ominous attempt to eviscerate the right

to effective counsel in the American legal system. The labor movement, fighters for black rights and all opponents of capitalist injustice have a direct interest in joining in defense of Stewart, Yousry and Sattar.

On October 15, the day before the sentencing, supporters of Lynne Stewart will be holding a rally at New York City’s Riverside Church, 4-7 p.m. The rally the next day will be held at 8:00 a.m. outside the federal courthouse at Centre and Worth Streets in lower Manhattan. Freedom for Lynne Stewart, Mohamed Yousry, Ahmed Abdel Sattar! ■

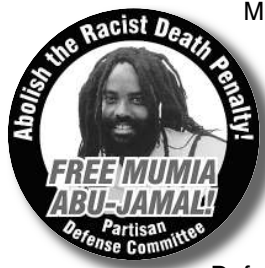
JOIN THE CAMPAIGN!

Funds are urgently needed for legal defense!

Make a contribution today, payable to “National Lawyers Guild Foundation” (earmarked for “Mumia”) and mail to: Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal, P.O. Box 2012, New York, NY 10159.

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

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



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NY TWU Local 100 Tops Endorse Spitzer

Toussaint Backs His Jailer

Talk about sleeping with the enemy. Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 100 president Roger Toussaint and the Local 100 Executive Board recently endorsed Eliot Spitzer, the Democratic New York state gubernatorial candidate. The same Spitzer who, as New York State Attorney General during the three-day transit strike last December against the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), slammed the union with injunctions and massive fines of a million dollars a day. The same Spitzer who threw Toussaint in jail for four days for leading Local 100 on strike in defiance of the state's anti-labor Taylor Law! The endorsement is no case of forgetfulness but a conscious policy of class collaboration by the craven, pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucracy.

Last year's strike by the nearly 34,000 transit workers sent shock waves throughout New York City, the world financial capital, showing the social power of labor and showing, in particular, the strategic power of Local 100. A barrage of threats and attacks by Republican governor George Pataki and mayor Michael Bloomberg couldn't undermine the support that many blacks, Latinos and other working people in New York City and beyond gave the strike. They saw in it a blow struck on their behalf against the racist capitalist rulers who continue to grind them down. But city labor leaders, from NYC Central Labor Council president Brian McLaughlin to United Federation of Teachers president Randi Weingarten, did their best to get the strikers back to work. The strike was called off after three days by Toussaint and the Local 100 leadership, and the TWU is still without a contract ten months later.

The pro-Democratic Party Local 100 leadership saved much of its ire in the post-strike period for MTA head Peter Kalikow and Governor Pataki. "Day of Action" protests by the union over the past few months, which have let workers angered over the

lack of a contract blow off some steam, have been touted by the union leadership as a way to pressure the MTA and the governor to settle the contract. In fact, they have been little more than pro-Spitzer rallies, with the union leadership banking on his election to get a contract. The last "Day of Action" is scheduled for November 7, with the "action" being, vote Spitzer. In Toussaint's own words, "If the MTA no longer has the Governor's Mansion backing for every last slap at workers and riders, then our fight has the possibility of gaining more traction and yielding broader results" (*Local 100 Express*, September 2006). Photos of Spitzer are all over the current "Special Issue" of *Local 100 Express*.

The so-called "opposition" leaders running against the current Local 100 leadership in upcoming union elections have said nothing against the union's support to Spitzer, which shows their own support for the capitalist system. Executive Board member Marty Goodman, who is supported by the reformist group Socialist Action, denounces Spitzer as a "fake progressive." But Goodman shows his own support for the capitalist system, its state and politicians by praising the capitalist Green Party candidates for state attorney general and governor who claim they would "never sign an injunction against Local 100." Maybe he should tell that to Socialist Action leader Jeff Mackler, who is running for U.S. Senate in California against the Greens as well as the Democrats.

By calling for a vote to Spitzer, the union tops are undermining the very purpose of the union: to defend the interests of the workers against the bosses. Spitzer enforced the Taylor Law fines, making workers shell out six days' pay as punishment for striking. But some workers have argued that he was just doing his job. As attorney general, Spitzer *was* doing his job by upholding the anti-union laws and try-

**No hard feelings:
TWU Local 100 president
Roger Toussaint (far
right) with state attorney
general Eliot Spitzer at
September 4 NYC West
Indian Day Parade.**



ing in the process to cripple this multiracial union, whose largely black and immigrant members stood shoulder to shoulder with their white co-workers during the strike. As governor, Spitzer will continue to defend the interests of the bosses.

Under capitalism there are two fundamental classes in society: the capitalist class and the working class, whose interests are irreconcilably counterposed. As we wrote in a *Workers Vanguard* supplement titled "NYC Transit Strike: Union Power vs. Class Collaboration" (reprinted in *WV* No. 861, 6 January):

"Like every major strike, this was a bull-headed battle between labor and capital. On one side are the bosses, their government, whether run by Democrats or Republicans, and the repressive capitalist state apparatus, mainly the courts and cops. The role of the courts and government officials during the strike starkly demonstrated that the 'democratic' trappings of the capitalist state are but a facade for the dictatorship of the exploiting class. On the other side, the workers have their own weapons: their numbers and power based on their collective labor at the workplace, and their union organization."

The arrogant MTA bosses underesti-

mated the determination of the TWU workers to fight back against union-busting attacks. The Local 100 leadership under Toussaint led a brief but powerful display of the social power of the TWU workers, but at bottom showed their pro-capitalist, class-collaborationist program. This program preaches the lie of the partnership between labor and capital and helps uphold the decaying capitalist system responsible for the racist and political frame-up of Mumia Abu-Jamal, the reactionary "war on terror," the brutal occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq and the racist atrocity of New Orleans, where masses of overwhelmingly black and poor people were left to die in the face of Hurricane Katrina.

A fight to forge a class-struggle leadership in the unions is necessary—a leadership that will fight for a workers party independent of and opposed to all the parties of the capitalist class, that will stand up for the interests of workers and all the oppressed. To end this racist capitalist system requires the building of a multiracial workers party to lead the struggle for socialist revolution, burying capitalism once and for all. ■

California: Vote Mackler!

Critical Support Is Not a Marriage Proposal

Workers Vanguard prints below in its entirety a letter received from Socialist Action (SA) "rejecting" our critical support to Jeff Mackler, who is running for U.S. Senate in California (see "Critical Support to Socialist Action in Senate Election," *WV* No. 876, 15 September).

SA is under the misapprehension that our electoral tactic requires its embrace (although, frankly, it could use the votes). As a comrade put it to Mackler at

an SA forum he gave in New York on September 24, we aren't proposing marriage and we don't need his consent. Our extending critical support to Mackler is premised on the fact that, standing as an avowed socialist against the capitalist Democratic Party and capitalist Green Party, SA's campaign draws a crude class line. Thus it furthers the fight for the complete political independence of the proletariat from the ruling class and its parties and the forging of a revolutionary workers party.

While calling for a vote to Mackler, we have in no way buried our political opposition to SA's deeply reformist program and practice, nor will we. Mackler does seem to understand *this* aspect of critical support, whining at the September 24 event that our support to him is like that of a rope supporting a hanging man. Until and unless Mackler withdraws his opposition to the capitalist Democrats and/or Greens, he has our vote.

* * *

25 September 2006

Spartacist League,

We read in the September 15 addition [sic] of "Workers Vanguard" that the Spartacist [sic] League has endorsed the Socialist Action candidacy of Jeff Mackler for the U.S. Senate seat in California.

This is to inform you that Socialist

Action rejects your support on the grounds that it would be detrimental in the extreme to advancing and popularizing the program and practice of revolutionary socialism.

Mark Ostapiak, Director, Jeff Mackler for U.S Senate Campaign for the Political Committee of Socialist Action
P.S. A hard copy of this letter was also

sent to your San Francisco address sometime last week.

Sincerely,
Mark Ostapiak, director, Mackler for U.S. Senate Campaign
415-255-1080

For more information about the Jeff Mackler for U.S. Senate Campaign, check out www.socialistaction.org/macklerforsenate/ ■



WV Photo

September 15: Spartacist table at Oakland rally for Mumia Abu-Jamal.

A Spartacist Pamphlet \$1

Black History and the Class Struggle
No. 18

WE WANT FREEDOM
A Life in the Black Panther Party
Review of a Book by Mumia Abu-Jamal
Page 24

How the Liberals and Reformists Derailed the Struggle for Integration
For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!
Page 8

Workers' control
manager's use of "liberalism" and "progressivism" to undermine the struggle for integration
Review of a Book by Mumia Abu-Jamal
Page 24

The "N" Word in Racist America
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No. 19

New Orleans: Racist Atrocity
Page 2

For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!
Page 8

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

No. 19 \$1 (48 pages)

Elections...

(continued from page 1)

Democrats are now calling for an “exit strategy” in order to cut U.S. imperialism’s losses and to be able to more effectively deploy its forces elsewhere. Among those Republican politicians who have also objected to Bush’s Iraq policies, John Warner, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, was quoted in the *New York Times* (6 October) as saying that if the situation in Iraq is not brought under control, “it’s a responsibility of our government to determine: Is there a change of course we should take?”

As the Bush White House flounders, the Democrats are ever more stridently promoting themselves as the party that can effectively wage the “war on terror,” not least by augmenting U.S./NATO forces in Afghanistan. Extricating U.S. forces from the Iraq quagmire could also give Washington more flexibility to pursue its threats against both neocolonial Iran and the North Korean deformed workers state, and to pursue as well the imperialists’ strategic goal of capitalist counterrevolution in China. The Democrats have support from some quarters within the Pentagon.

While many Democrats and liberal spokesmen denounce the Iraq war and occupation, they all embrace the murderous occupation of Afghanistan as a “just” war in retaliation for the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon. The pundits are coy at best about the fact that Osama bin Laden and the forerunners of the Taliban earned their stripes as CIA-financed Islamic reactionaries, armed to the teeth by the U.S. to fight Soviet troops following the USSR’s entry into Afghanistan in 1979.

We *hailed* the Red Army intervention, noting that this was one of the few genuinely progressive acts by the Soviet Stalinist bureaucracy and that it offered the possibility of extending the social gains of the 1917 Russian Revolution to the oppressed peoples and women of Afghanistan. Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev’s ignominious withdrawal in 1988-89 was the opening for the victory of imperialist-backed counterrevolution throughout East Europe and within the Soviet Union itself. Afterward, bin Laden turned on his former masters, waging a “holy war” against the U.S. “infidels” as well as their Israeli junior partners and their satrap Arab regimes in the Near East.



AP

Maher Arar, victim of U.S. “extraordinary rendition,” shown with wife at November 2003 press conference in Ottawa, where he described ten and a half months of torture in Syrian prison.

Accompanying the destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state in 1991-92, the imperialist rulers proclaimed the “death of communism” and opened a period of renewed attacks against working people and the oppressed. The U.S. has wielded its now-unchallenged military superiority to extend its power internationally. At the same time, the decades-long decline of the industrial base of the U.S. economy means that American imperialism has lost its overwhelming economic dominance—the underpinning of its military might. This contradiction is a key factor in the irrationality of the “faith-based” Bush regime, whose many debacles have increasingly turned more farsighted sections of the ruling class against the administration.

Nonetheless, the U.S. rulers are united in their intent to overturn the remaining deformed workers states of China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba and restore capitalist rule. In stark contrast to



AP

Guantánamo inmate being transported by U.S. guards.

the liberals and reformists who have served as ideological weapons in the imperialists’ drive for “democratic” counterrevolution, the Spartacist League stands for the *unconditional military defense* of the deformed workers states. We support China and North Korea’s possession of nuclear weapons as a deterrent against imperialist attack. To defend and extend the social gains of the workers states embodied in their collectivized economies, we call for proletarian political revolution against the nationalist Stalinist bureaucracies, whose dogma of building “socialism in one country” means the futile pursuit of “peaceful coexistence” with imperialism. We fight for the program of Lenin and Trotsky: for the rule of workers democracy and the pursuit of socialist revolution internationally.

In the case of dependent capitalist countries such as Iran, it is the duty of revolutionary Marxists to militarily defend them against imperialist attack, while giving not an iota of political support to the brutal regimes that preside over them. The Iranian regime says that it is not developing nuclear weapons. Whatever the case, in the context of imperialist military threats, we recognize Iran’s *need* for nuclear weapons and oppose any economic or other sanctions. The Iranian working class must overthrow the reactionary mullah regime, which has slaughtered leftists, workers, women and national minorities.

It is U.S. imperialism that is the main enemy of the world’s peoples. The U.S. is the only country to have used atomic weaponry, bombing Nagasaki and Hiroshima in 1945. From the annihilation of the Native American population to the enslave-

ment of *habeas corpus* protections for non-citizens. The law explicitly states: “No court, justice, or judge shall have jurisdiction to hear or consider an application for a writ of habeas corpus filed by or on behalf of an alien detained by the United States who has been determined by the United States to have been properly detained as an enemy combatant or is awaiting such determination.”

Washington Post

Sadistic Abu Ghraib prison guard Charles Graner pummeling helpless Iraqi detainees.



From the Latin meaning, “you shall have the body,” a writ of *habeas corpus* is a legal instrument requiring that a person detained by the authorities be brought before a court of law so that the legality of the detention may be examined. It is rooted in English common law dating back even further than the *Magna Carta* of 1215. In a landmark 1772 case, a slave named Somersett who had been brought to Britain by his American master was ordered set free after his abolitionist supporters obtained a writ of *habeas corpus* and brought his case before a British court.

As we warned in “‘Anti-Terror’ Law: Shredding Your Rights” (WV No. 770, 7 December 2001): “The new laws and directives that today target immigrants will ultimately be used against black people and the whole working class.” This warning was borne out the following year with the arrest of U.S. citizen Jose Padilla in Chicago and his detention as an “enemy combatant.” In a July 2003 *amici curiae* (friends of the court) brief submitted on Padilla’s behalf by the Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee (printed in *Class-Struggle Defense Notes* No. 31, Summer 2003), we noted that his case “poses the evisceration of the rights and privileges of citizenship embodied in the first ten Amendments to the Constitution and secured on the battlefield of the Civil War and in class and social struggle over the past hundred and more years.” We also stated:

“The ‘war against terrorism’ is a fiction, a political construct, not a military reality.... It is no more a ‘war’ in a military sense than ‘war against cancer,’ ‘war against obesity’ or a ‘war against immorality.’ Like the ‘war against communism’ and the ‘war against drugs,’ this ‘war’ is a pretext to increase the state’s police powers and repressive apparatus, constricting the democratic rights of the population. The Executive’s declaration that its ‘war against terrorism’ forfeits constitutional protections for designated individuals echoes the regimes of shahs and colonels and presidents ‘for life’ from the Near

East to Africa to Latin America, to justify the mass imprisonment and unmarked graves of political dissidents. Like them, the Executive is proclaiming the *right to disappear* citizens of its choosing.”

And in regard to attorney Lynne Stewart, her prosecution on conspiracy charges stemming from her legal work on behalf of an Egyptian Islamic fundamentalist cleric poses a direct attack on the rights to legal defense and free speech and association (see article, page 4).

The vote over the Military Commissions Act was largely partisan, with most Democrats voting against it. But make no mistake: this ominous measure was prepared by the overwhelming bipartisan support that the Patriot Act received in 2001 and again when it was renewed earlier this year. It was prepared by the near-unanimous support in Congress for the invasion of Afghanistan and the backing Congress gave for the Iraq invasion. It was also prepared by Bill Clinton’s 1996 “Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act,” which greatly curtailed *habeas corpus* rights.

The new law gives the Executive a green light for torture. David Cole commented in an article in the *Nation* (23 October) titled “Sanctioning Lawlessness”: “It’s so hard to be a satirist these days. When

reality outstrips even *The Onion*, what’s left for Jon Stewart?” Cole writes that the law “paves the way for the CIA to resume its practice of ‘disappearing’ terror suspects into secret ‘black sites’ and subjecting them to harsh interrogation tactics, including depriving them of sleep, forcing them to stand naked for long periods in frigidly cold rooms while periodically dousing them with cold water, and God knows what else.”

Is it any surprise that the likes of Cheney and Rumsfeld, who seek to reverse the humiliating defeat of the U.S. imperialists at the hands of the Vietnamese and to smash any vestiges of the “Vietnam syndrome” domestically, have led the charge to enshrine such torture techniques as were widely used during the Vietnam War? In so doing, they are acting in the interests of *their class*. Bob Woodward’s recent book *State of Denial* notes that Dr. Strangelove himself, Vietnam War criminal Henry Kissinger, is on board as a central adviser to the Bush White House. It should be no mystery that observing any niceties of bourgeois democratic rights is at most an inconvenience to this gang.

There is the case of Maher Arar, a Canadian citizen born in Syria who was detained by U.S. authorities in September 2002 during a stopover in New York on his way back to Canada. Accused of being a terrorist, Arar was deported to Syria under the notorious policy of “extraordinary rendition,” imprisoned there in solitary confinement, and tortured for nearly a year before being allowed to return to Canada. Arar’s case became known internationally as he courageously spoke out about his ordeal and pursued legal action against the U.S. government. His case is no aberration. The Associated Press (6 October) reports that tens of thousands of people are “mistakenly” linked to names on “terror watch lists”: “More than 30,000 airline passengers have asked just one agency—the Transportation Security

continued on page 8

Elections...

(continued from page 7)

Administration—to have their names cleared from the lists.”

Democratic Rights Are Indivisible

The success of the rulers’ attacks on the rights of the populace ultimately depends on the level of class and social struggle. To give a taste of what is needed, the Spartacist League actively built a February 2002 united-front mobilization in Oakland, California, initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee and Labor Black League, in opposition to the USA-Patriot Act and the Maritime Security Act and in defense of immigrant rights.

While fighting against every attempt by the government, whether administered by Republicans or Democrats, to reverse the hard-won gains of the working class and the oppressed, we Marxists have no illusions in the inviolability of reforms gained under capitalism. Take the example of voting rights. After massive integrated struggle during the civil rights movement to smash Jim Crow segregation in the South, and with the black power movements in Northern cities during the tumultuous 1960s, the expansion of voting rights and other concessions were wrested from the racist rulers. Attesting to the fleeting nature of such gains, Adam Cohen castigated Congress in a *New York Times* (8 October) column for a new bill requiring that voters produce a government-issued photo ID. Cohen notes that “the bill’s requirements are so onerous and inflexible that they could prevent millions of eligible voters without driver’s licenses—who are disproportionately poor, minority or elderly—from casting a ballot.” He went on:

“Poll taxes and literacy tests are unconstitutional today, but the forces of disenfranchisement have come up with creative new methods....

“This year, Florida adopted new rules for voter registration drives that were so onerous—and carried such draconian punishments for mistakes—that the League of Women Voters of Florida announced that for the first time in 67 years it would not register voters.”

The League of Women Voters on a voter registration strike in Florida! That says plenty about the times through which we are going.

Meanwhile, had you beamed down to Earth from another planet, you would be forgiven for thinking that the pivotal question facing the American populace in this election is...the Mark Foley scandal. The worst-kept secret in Washington was Foley’s homosexuality, despite this Republican Congressman’s record of hypocritical attacks on the rights of gays. But then stories emerged of his “toying” with Congressional pages in their late teens via e-mail and instant messaging. Reactionary “family values” moralism is being pushed by both capitalist parties, while “minor” questions like the legalization of torture, the evisceration of civil liberties, the steady decline of workers’ wages and racist attacks on black people and immigrants disappear off the front pages.

The Democrats are pushing the Foley “scandal” for all it’s worth, hoping among other things that much of the Republicans’ evangelical Christian base stays home in November. As Marxists, we very much



Left: *NY Times* (4 October) ad by RCP’s “World Can’t Wait” outfit. Right: Cover of ISO’s *Socialist Worker* (22 September). “Anybody but Bush” reformists act as handmaidens of Democratic Party of U.S. imperialism.

oppose the persecution of Foley on the basis of his sex life, as well as the entire “pedophilia” hysteria. We oppose the persecution of anyone who engages in consensual intergenerational sex and all reactionary “age of consent” laws. The only guideline that should exist is that of effective consent, regardless of age, gender or sexual preference. We defend Foley as we would any victim of sex witchhunts. Thus uniquely on the left we have defended the North American Man/Boy Love Association (NAMBLA) against persecution. *Government out of the bedroom!*

“Anybody but Bush” Reformists vs. Revolutionary Struggle

There is an urgent need for some hard class struggle against the capitalist rulers, whose broad-gauged attacks on democratic rights come on top of years of assaults on unionized jobs and on workers’ pensions and health care. The *New York Times* (28 August) reported that “wages and salaries now make up the lowest share of the nation’s gross domestic product since the government began recording the data in 1947, while corporate profits have climbed to their highest share since the 1960’s.” By one estimate, CEOs now make *more than 400 times* the typical worker’s wage. A recent census report showed that worker productivity rose 16.6 percent between 2000 and 2005—much of this due to simple speedup—while the median hourly wage has declined 2 percent since 2003. The investment bank UBS describes the current period as the “golden era of profitability.”

A break in the largely one-sided class war occurred when the New York City transit workers struck last December, closing down the financial center of U.S. imperialism for three days (see article, page 6). But the labor officialdom’s main response to the attacks of the Bush gang is to boost the Democrats’ electoral fortunes. Thus the AFL-CIO is pumping in some \$40 million toward the elections—the most it has ever spent on a non-presidential election. In doing so, the union tops show again that they are indeed the “labor lieutenants of capital.”

There is no “third road” to getting rid of the horrors of the capitalist status quo and achieving the revolutionary overturn of this system. The working people and oppressed masses of this country need their own, revolutionary party, completely independent of the bosses. As we wrote before the last presidential elections (“Break with the Democrats! For a

Workers Party!” WV No. 832, 17 September 2004):

“The fundamental problem, though, is political consciousness. It is commonplace for American workers to identify themselves as ‘middle class.’ This bourgeois ideology, or false consciousness, is transmitted to the working class by the conservative pro-capitalist AFL-CIO officialdom. It is reinforced by ostensible socialists who give open or backhanded support to the Democratic Party and capitalist politicians like Ralph Nader as ‘lesser evils’ or ‘realistic’ choices.”

In today’s post-Soviet climate of “death of Communism” ideology, what Karl Marx called “all the old crap” has been revived—from liberal-utopian schemes for a “just” capitalism to right-wing expressions of discontent, including increased religiosity. In the face of this reality, it is difficult to



Oakland, 9 February 2002: Labor-centered mobilization called in defense of immigrant rights and against “war on terror” repression.

imagine anything more pathetic than the reformist left, which operates mostly on the terrain of petty-bourgeois protest politics and by serving as assistants to the pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy.

Some may remember the Communist Party (CP). A 17 August article in its *People’s Weekly World* says it all about their redundant existence as cheerleaders for the other party of racism and war: “If, on the other hand, the Democrats regain control of the Congress, it will be interpreted as an unambiguous and massive repudiation of Bush’s strategy of occupation and a signal to the new Congress that the removal of U.S. troops [from Iraq] must be at the top of their legislative agenda.” The anti-Communist reformists of the International Socialist Organization (ISO) polemicized against the CP for this pandering to the Democrats. But the ISO’s “answer” to such overt Democratic Party lesser-evilmism is to run one of its leading spokesmen, Todd Chretien, as the candidate of the small-time capitalist Green Party for U.S. Senate in California (see “ISO Goes All the Way with Capitalist Greens,” WV No. 866, 17 March).

The Greens provide a way station for disgruntled liberals on the road back into the Democratic Party. Running for president as a Green in 2000 and as an independent in 2004, Ralph Nader made clear

that his purpose was to pressure the Democrats to take a “progressive” direction. The ISO shamelessly echoes this theme in a *Socialist Worker* (22 September) front-page headline: “From the ‘War on Terror’ to Immigrant Rights...Will the Democrats Ever Fight for What’s Right?”

Meanwhile, the Workers World Party (WWP) is stumping for Green Party candidate David Sole for U.S. Senate in Michigan. WWP’s International Action Center (IAC) has also issued a call for a vote to black Democratic Congressional candidate Charles Barron in Brooklyn, declaring that this capitalist politician would “help put one of our own in Congress” (*Workers World*, 27 July). But no amount of black mayors, governors, Congressmen or Senators—whether Democratic or Republican—will ameliorate the grinding conditions of the black population, whose oppression is rooted in the capitalist system that these politicians help oversee.

Not to be outdone, the “World Can’t Wait” operation of the misnamed Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) held scraggly rallies on October 5 to “drive out the Bush regime.” The RCP was equally blatant during the last presidential elections, calling in the 29 August 2004 issue of *Revolutionary Worker* (now named just *Revolution*): “Go ahead and vote for Kerry if you feel you really have to.” Like, whatever.

Offering its own plan to tinker with the capitalist system, the WWP’s erstwhile comrades in the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL) and its ANSWER coalition have called for nationwide rallies

on October 28 to “force the issue of the Iraq war onto the U.S. political stage... less than two weeks before the election.” ANSWER’s demand to “Cut the Pentagon budget! Double the education budget!” offers the timeworn reformist notion that popular pressure can convince the rulers of the imperialist capitalist system to meet the needs of the workers they brutally exploit.

In this desolate landscape, we came up with a single electoral tactic—critical support to Jeff Mackler. In running as the candidate of the reformist Socialist Action for U.S. Senate in California against both the Democratic Party and the Greens, Mackler is drawing a crude class line (see article, page 6). As Marxists, we oppose electoral support to any bourgeois party on principle. Thus, no matter how depraved the Bush regime is, we fight against the politics of Democratic Party lesser-evilmism.

As revolutionaries, our intervention into bourgeois elections, including by running our own candidates or through tactics such as critical support, is a means to put forward the Marxist program for the complete political independence of the proletariat from the bourgeoisie and for building a workers party capable of leading all the exploited and oppressed in socialist revolution. ■

Programmatic Statement of the Spartacist League/U.S.

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Organizational Rules and Guidelines of the Spartacist League/U.S.

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Opponents of the Revolutionary Internationalist Workers Movement

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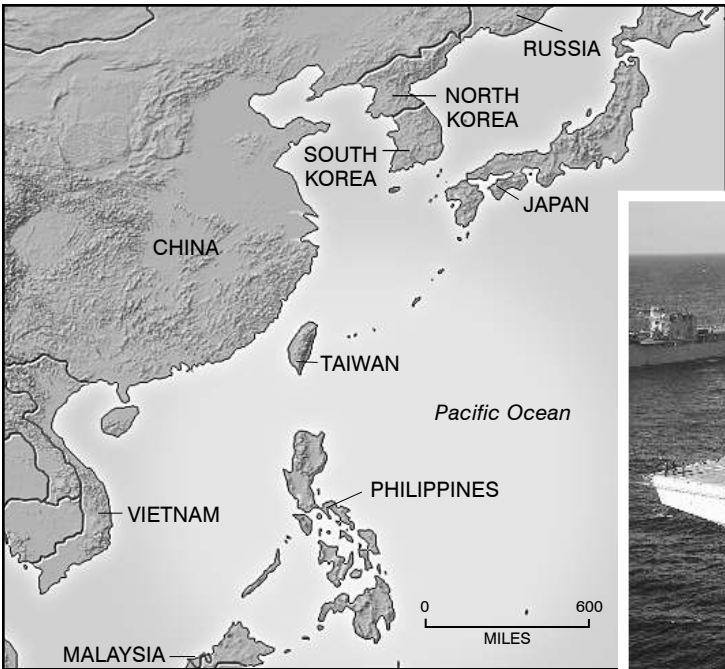
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Philippines...

(continued from page 12)

the left. Anyone alleged to have taken part in “rebellion,” including for acts carried out years ago, could be arrested at any time without a warrant—a threat against any group or individual deemed to be “subversive.” A case in point is that of leftist Congressman and veteran labor leader Crispin Beltran, who was arrested on the basis of a 21-year-old warrant. When lawyers challenged the arrest because the charges had been dropped in 1988, Beltran was then accused of “incitement to sedition” and subsequently charged with “rebellion” against the Arroyo regime.

Arroyo’s reign of terror is abetted and backed up by the presence of the U.S. imperialist military. Washington is intent on reinforcing the repressive apparatus of its Philippine bourgeois lackeys, enhancing imperialist exploitation and quashing social unrest in a country torn by a long-running Muslim secessionist rebellion, a protracted peasant insurgency and mass unrest over worsening economic conditions. Since 2001, the U.S. has provided the regime with \$1.2 billion in aid. Much of this goes toward arming and training elite killer forces and supplying the military with helicopters, transport planes and naval patrol craft.



WV Map

July 25: Amphibious Assault Ship, part of massive U.S.-led Rim of the Pacific naval exercise near Hawaii. American military expansion along Pacific Rim includes renewed presence in Philippines.



U.S. Navy

a hit list containing the names of 26 leftist and other opposition groups described as enemies of the state. Moreover, as Amnesty International (AI) noted in a 15 August report, “Philippines: Political Killings, Human Rights and the Peace Process,” the government made public the names and addresses of members of the CPP-led National Democratic Front and others who had taken part in “peace negotiations” with the regime and whose iden-

sita sugar workers in Tarlac (see “Protest Massacre of Unionists in Philippines!” WV No. 838, 10 December 2004). Other targets have included members of the CPP-linked national labor federation Kilusang Mayo Uno (May First Movement), the Negros Federation of Sugar Workers, and electric utility and bus company unions. Other victims linked to the CPP include 113 members of the Bayan Muna (Nation First) party and 86 activists from the Gabriela women’s group. And at least 42 journalists have been cut down during Arroyo’s presidency.

The Arroyo regime’s repression has particularly hit the countryside, long the site of massacres carried out by the state, the landlords and death squads. Some 70 peasants and peasant leaders involved in land disputes have been killed. In November 2005, the army in the Visayas region attacked peasants holding a public meeting, killing nine. In a March 2005 slaughter shown live on national television, security forces stormed a military prison where 26 unarmed Muslim detainees, mostly displaced peasants and fishermen, were shot dead as they protested their arbitrary and prolonged detention and horrific prison conditions.

In a sop to international pressure, on August 17 Arroyo announced the formation of the Melo Commission, which is supposedly meant to investigate the murders of leftists and labor leaders. Composed of longtime loyalists of both the Macapagal and Arroyo families, this whitewash commission includes a former Supreme Court justice, the Chief State Prosecutor and the director of the National Bureau of Investigation!

Meanwhile, the longstanding terror campaign against the oppressed Moro population continues unabated. Since 2001, when the U.S. opened a “second front” in the “global war on terror” by landing troops on the island of Mindanao, tens of thousands of Moro Muslims have been forcibly displaced and hundreds tortured, killed or disappeared. The sight of American soldiers roaming Mindanao and inflicting bloody repression is a haunting reminder of the atrocities meted out to the Muslim population under U.S. colonial

rule at the turn of the 20th century. This March marked the 100th anniversary of the methodical slaughter by American troops of some 900 Moro men, women and children who had taken refuge in the bowl of the volcanic crater of Bud Dahu mountain. No one was spared. “Not even a baby alive to cry for its dead mother,” wrote Mark Twain in denouncing this atrocity. President Theodore Roosevelt congratulated General Leonard Wood, who directed the bloodbath, and his men “upon the brilliant feat of arms wherein you and they so well upheld the honor of the American flag.”

The marginalization and expropriation of the Muslim population intensified in the postcolonial period, especially under Marcos, who attempted to put an end to the “Muslim question” by overwhelming the Moro population with Christian migrants. While in 1903 Muslims constituted 76 percent of the population of Mindanao, today they make up less than 20 percent. A Leninist-Trotskyist party would act as the tribune of the people, fighting for full equality for minorities and for the integration of the Muslim toilers into the working class. *Down with the military occupation of Mindanao! U.S. and Philippine troops out now!*

Arroyo Regime Aids Imperialists’ Anti-China Drive

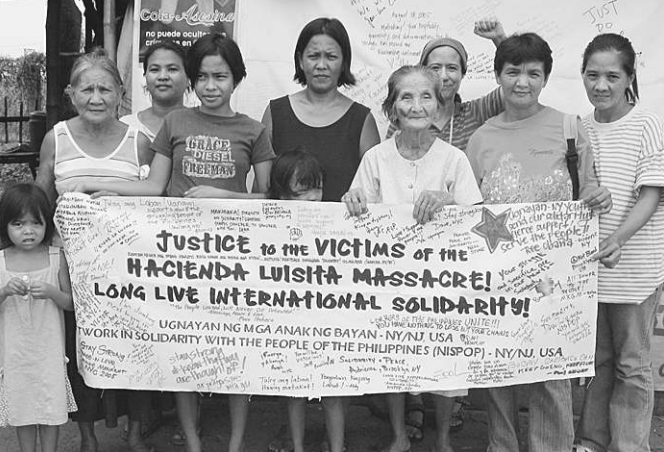
After gaining nominal independence following World War II, the Philippines remained a semicolonial vassal of the U.S., serving as a linchpin of the anti-Communist ASEAN alliance. In the 1960s and ’70s, Clark Air Base and the Subic Bay Naval Base were crucial platforms for U.S. imperialism’s counterrevolutionary war against the heroic Vietnamese workers and peasants.

The Arroyo government, a rabid supporter of the “global war on terror,” provided airspace and military facilities for U.S. warplanes en route to aircraft carriers and bases in the Indian Ocean during the invasion of Afghanistan, and it sent troops to Iraq. This March, the regime signed an agreement setting up the Security Engagement Board (SEB), which will increase U.S. forces in the

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AFF



NSPOP

Above: November 2004 funeral procession in Luzon for striking sugar workers killed in police massacre at Hacienda Luisita. Left: People of Hacienda Luisita display messages of solidarity, October 2005.

Despite our fundamental political differences with the Maoist CPP, we call on the workers movement internationally to defend them as the government again steps up its repression. The combative Filipino working class and its trade unions must mobilize their social power in class struggle against the bloody regime. But such a struggle requires politically combatting the class-collaborationist program of the CPP and others on the left who have repeatedly channeled plebeian anger and protests into support for a “progressive” wing of the bourgeoisie, waving the colors of Filipino nationalism. What is needed is the building of a Leninist-Trotskyist party—a Philippine section of a reformed Fourth International. Such a party, acting in concert with its comrades in the imperialist centers, is the necessary instrument to lead the proletariat, marching at the head of the oppressed, in the fight for socialist revolution.

Workers, Leftists, Muslims Under Attack

The death squads would not be able to operate without the complicity, direction and protective umbrella of regional military commanders. The Armed Forces of the Philippines circulated a June 2005 document called “Knowing Your Enemy,”

ties had supposedly been protected by a “safe conduct” agreement.

A notorious ringleader of the murderous repression is General Jovito Palparan, who was appointed the army’s Chief of Staff following his return from heading up Philippine detachments that took part in the U.S.-led occupation of Iraq until pulling out two years ago. After Palparan was assigned to Central Luzon in September 2005, the number of assassinations in the region reached 52 in four months. Palparan, who retired this September, has also been accused of perpetrating a spate of disappearances and assassinations of leftists during previous postings in Samar and Mindoro. The AI report quotes an Agence France Presse (3 February) article in which Palparan, known as “the Butcher of Mindoro,” coolly stated that the bloody repression would bring “collateral damage but it will be short and tolerable.... The killings, I would say, are necessary incidents in a conflict.”

Among those killed under Arroyo are 43 trade-union leaders and members, including Diosdado Fortuna, president of the Nestlé workers union, who was slain in September 2005 during a militant strike. The previous year saw the notorious massacre of striking Hacienda Lui-



The National Archives

March 1906: U.S. imperialist troops pose over Moros (Muslims) slaughtered in volcanic crater.

Philippines...

(continued from page 9)

Philippines under the pretexts of maritime safety, fighting “terrorism” and dealing with natural disasters and epidemics. The SEB is the latest in a series of military pacts drawn up since 1998 that effectively create a permanent U.S. military presence in the country. Manila has also invited the U.S. to reoccupy the bases it abandoned at the time of the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92.

The growing U.S. military presence in the Philippines over the past decade is part of a broader strategic shift of American military forces to the Asia-Pacific region. This shift is aimed squarely at China, as the imperialists stoke their drive for capitalist counterrevolution in the largest and most powerful of the remaining deformed workers states, as well as at North Korea. A U.S.-Japan joint policy statement issued in February 2005 that declared capitalist Taiwan a “mutual security concern” signaled the imperialists’ intention to strengthen their military agreements and reposition their forces against China.

The Pentagon’s 2002 “Nuclear Posture Review” lists China as one of seven potential targets of a U.S. nuclear first strike. The U.S. has infested the Pacific Ocean with a massive armada of warships, aircraft carriers and nuclear submarines. Barely a month passes without a military exercise conducted in the Pacific Rim involving thousands of American troops from different branches of the military, at times carried out jointly with U.S. allies. Near Guam this June, the Pacific Command’s “Valiant Shield” exercise, one of the largest in decades, involved some 30 warships, including three aircraft carriers, hundreds of warplanes and 22,000 troops.

Washington is seeking once again to turn the strategically located Philippine archipelago into an unsinkable aircraft carrier and add it to the string of countries around China’s perimeter that provide the U.S. with military bases, from Kyrgyzstan on China’s western flank to South Korea, Taiwan and Japan along the Pacific Rim. The Bush administration announced a nuclear pact with India in March as a step toward bringing that country into Washington’s anti-China alliance. In Australia, the southern arm of this encirclement, the U.S. is building huge bases at Bradshaw and at Yampi Sound.

Internationally, almost the entire left refuses to defend China against imperialism under the pretense that it is a capitalist country, pointing, for example, to the Beijing bureaucracy’s “market reforms” and the significant amount of investment by offshore Chinese and imperialist capital on the mainland. In fact, the imperialists have a two-pronged strategy for capitalist counterrevolution, combining

ILWU Support Key Filipino Seamen Win Strike in L.A.

Eighteen Filipino crewmen aboard the M/V *Endless*, owned by a Greek company and registered in Panama, went on strike in the L.A. area Port of Long Beach for four days last month, and they won with the support of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU). The seafarers set up a picket line at the top of the gangway, carrying signs that read: “Seamen on Strike for Wages, Hours and Conditions.” The company had cheated them out of \$362,000 in back wages and refused them break time, with most of the crew not having been home for two or three years.

The strike began on September 7 after an inspector for the International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF)—a global organization of dockers, seamen, truckers and rail and aviation unions—investigated the books and confirmed the crew was owed back wages. ILWU Local 13 members, backed by the ILWU International, honored the picket line and stopped loading the ship. With the *Endless* para-



International Transport Workers’ Federation
Filipino seamen celebrate victory at Los Angeles area seafarers’ center.

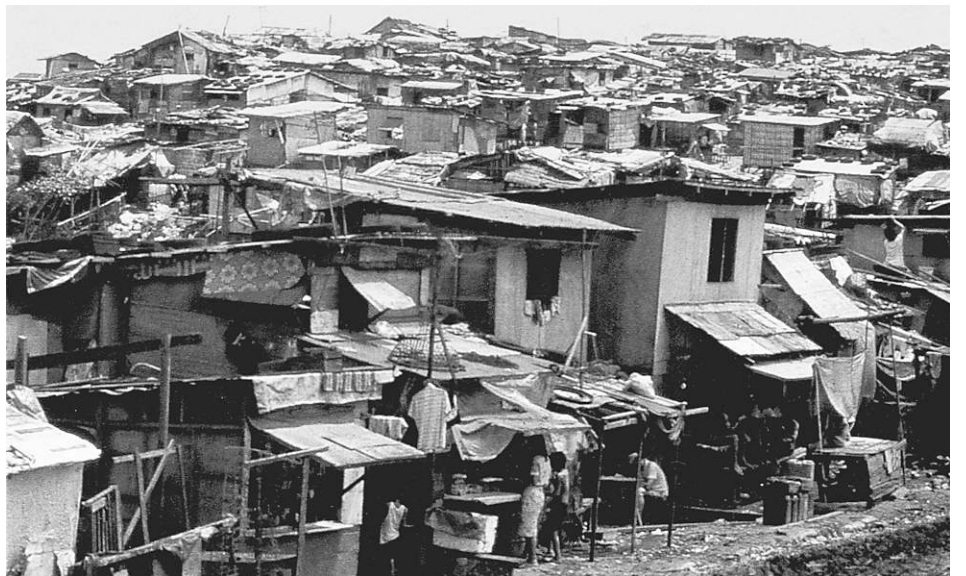
lyzed and another ship blocked from the berth, the owners granted \$227,000 in back pay, and acceded to the crew’s demands for repatriation at company expense and the promise that they would not be black-listed. This victory gives a taste of the power of international labor solidarity in action. ■

The impact of capitalist restoration on the Chinese population would be even more devastating than what befell the working people of the former Soviet Union, which had been a global industrial

military pressure with economic penetration. Currently, the U.S., European and Japanese capitalists are putting enormous pressure on China to open up its state-owned financial system to foreign banks, while the IMF “advises” Beijing to reduce its budget deficit by cutting back on investment in infrastructure, an austerity measure that would destroy the livelihood of millions of Chinese toilers.

Ever since the destruction of the Soviet Union, the imperialists have set China as the main target for counterrevolution, aiming to reverse the gains of the 1949 Revolution. Despite profound bureaucratic deformations, the Chinese Revolution was of world-historic significance, overthrowing the rule of the imperialist-backed Chinese bourgeoisie and creating a collectivized economy that laid the basis for an enormous leap in social progress. A nation that had been ravaged and divided by foreign powers for a century was unified and freed from imperialist subjugation. In a country defined by abject peasant backwardness, the revolution enabled women to advance by magnitudes over their previous status.

These gains, however, have been undermined by Stalinist misrule. Following the Stalinist dogma of “socialism in one country” and its corollary, “peaceful coexistence,” the Chinese Communist Party regime, from Mao Zedong up through today, has conciliated imperialism, not least through selling out revolutions in other countries. And one effect of “market reforms” has been the strengthening of domestic counterrevolutionary forces.



Gamma

Slum neighborhood in Manila.

and military power. It is in the direct interest of the international proletariat to defend China and the other remaining deformed workers states—North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba—against imperialism and internal counterrevolution. What are necessary are proletarian political revolutions to oust the nationalist Stalinist bureaucracies. Such a perspective must include the fight for socialist revolution internationally, crucially extending to the U.S., Japanese and European imperialist centers.

Class Collaboration vs. Proletarian Independence

Arroyo, like her predecessors, presides over the grinding immiseration of the Filipino population, imposing one IMF-dictated austerity program after another to pay for usurious loans, otherwise known as the “foreign debt.” Over eleven million of the Philippines’ 33 million people of working age are unemployed or underemployed. And some eight million Filipinos are currently working abroad, including in such dangerous places as Iraq, where an estimated 6,000 are working. At the same time, the large diaspora of overseas workers, along with Filipino seamen, who make up roughly one-fifth of the international maritime workforce, form a living bridge linking the struggles of the proletariat in the Philippines to those of its class brothers and sisters around the world.

Over 40 percent of households in the Philippines lack adequate shelter and food. Tens of thousands of Manila slum dwellers eke out a living scavenging mountains of garbage dumps. The public education and health systems

have sharply deteriorated as a result of stepped-up privatization and slashing of public spending. In February, a devastating landslide, largely caused by deforestation, buried 1,800 people on the island of Leyte. The incompetence of the regime and its failure to provide the most basic relief was a cause of anger and indignation across the country. And in the slums around Manila, massive fires are now commonplace, as steep increases in power rates force people to use kerosene and candles for lighting. Thousands have been left homeless there.

Bent on reversing some measures instituted after the fall of the Marcos dictatorship, the Arroyo regime has launched a campaign for constitutional “Charter Change,” or “Cha-Cha.” The proposed changes to the constitution include removing restrictions on the operation of foreign capital in the country and eliminating provisions for the right of workers to organize and bargain collectively. It also calls for replacing the current electoral system, under which leftist parties have won a number of Congressional seats. If Arroyo succeeds in ramming through this scheme, the 2007 legislative elections will be postponed. There is plenty of opposition to “Cha-Cha” among sections of the bourgeoisie. But one thing the competing wings of the ruling class agree on is the need to repress the workers and the poor. As Arroyo told her cabinet, “The fight against the Left remains the glue that binds” (*Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 18 June).

Resistance is growing among workers, farmers, students and minorities fighting for justice for the victims of the regime’s terror, an end to the U.S. military presence, the repeal of value-added taxes, land reform, an increase in the minimum wage and other demands. But the Filipino left, centrally Sison’s CPP, is attempting to channel this plebeian anger into a broad “anti-imperialist united front” with those sections of the domestic bourgeoisie that fear foreign investment rivalry and are uneasy with the Arroyo regime’s hawkish posture and open embrace of its American imperialist master.

While pursuing on-and-off peace talks with the government, the Sisonites taunt Arroyo as “anti-Filipino” and seek to broker alliances with disaffected military officers and the shadowy MKP (Nationalist Filipino Soldiers). In a March 12 statement, Sison called for the “legal and non-violent ouster of the Arroyo regime” through a “broad united front of patriotic, progressive and anti-Arroyo forces” that would be “open to the participation of civilian and military officials and personnel of the reactionary government.” The statement called for the formation of a “Transition Council” that would include “the representatives of all major coalitions, political parties, mass organizations and groups of retired military and police officers.” The Sisonites thus seek an alliance with some of the very forces trained by the U.S. to hunt down leftists and Muslim militants.

Underlying this class-collaborationist policy is the Menshevik-Stalinist program of “two-stage revolution”: fighting for a “democratic” revolution in league with

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L.A. Times

Left: As Marcos dictatorship tottered in 1986, “People Power One” brought U.S.-backed Cory Aquino to power. Right: 2001 “People Power Two” coup ousted corrupt president Joseph Estrada, brought bloody Arroyo regime to power.



AP

a mythical “progressive” and “anti-imperialist” wing of the bourgeoisie while relegating the struggle for socialism to an indefinite future. From the Chinese Revolution of 1925-1927, which was drowned in blood by Chiang Kai-shek, to the massacres of Indonesian Communists by General Suharto in 1965, history has repeatedly demonstrated that the first “stage” of “two-stage revolution” ends in the blood of the working class and the oppressed.

Against this Stalinist program of betrayal, revolutionary Marxists fight for the political independence of the proletariat from all wings of the bourgeoisie. In regard to the Philippines and other countries of belated capitalist development, the International Communist League is guided by the Trotskyist program of permanent revolution, whose validity was borne out by the proletarian Russian Revolution of 1917.

As explained by Leon Trotsky, co-leader with V.I. Lenin of the October Revolution, the evolution of backward countries that came to capitalist development in the epoch of imperialism reflects the process of “combined and uneven development”: cottage industries and other backward forms of production exist side by side with massive industrial plants, funded by imperialist capital, employing the most advanced technique. Thus in the Philippines, production for the world market has led to the emergence of a modern, concentrated proletariat working for electronics giants like Hitachi and Philips, Japanese automakers and other major corporations, while the peasantry has been robbed of its lands to make way for sugarcane, coconut and banana plantations dominated by the likes of Dole and Del Monte. Facing this huge propertyless, impoverished mass is a sliver of a domestic bourgeoisie that acts as compradors for the imperialists.

Too weak to confront its imperialist overlords, on whom it depends for securing its class rule, and living in fear of a revolutionary upheaval of the exploited masses, the stunted Philippine bourgeoisie is incapable of achieving the democratic gains associated with the bourgeois revolutions of the 17th and 18th centuries, such as national liberation, agrarian revolution, political democracy and the separation of church and state. For the Stalinists’ mythical “progressive” national bourgeoisie, even a moderate agrarian reform is enough to give them apoplexy, and democracy is a “luxury” they cannot afford. They prefer death squads.

As Trotsky wrote in *The Permanent Revolution* (1930), “With regard to coun-

tries with a belated bourgeois development, especially the colonial and semi-colonial countries, the theory of the permanent revolution signifies that the complete and genuine solution of their tasks of achieving *democracy and national emancipation* is conceivable only through the dictatorship of the proletariat as the leader of the subjugated nation.” Once in power, the proletariat of necessity must move toward building a collectivized

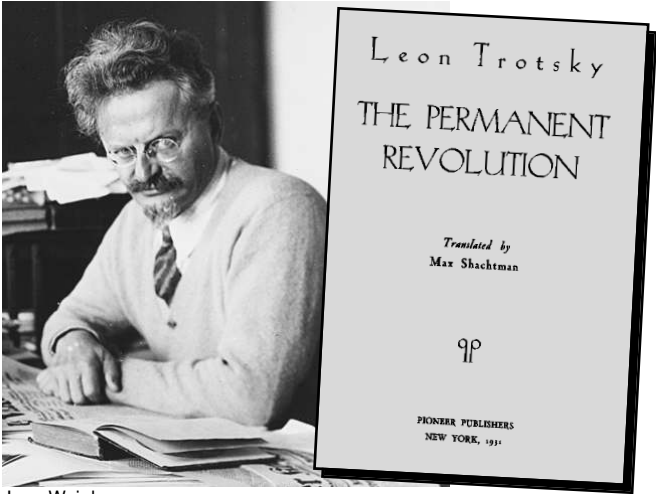
stances: the flight of the national bourgeoisie, the absence of the working class as a contender for social power in its own right, and, most importantly, an economic and military lifeline thrown by the Soviet Union. Even so, the Cuban Revolution placed in power an *anti*-proletarian, nationalist regime, requiring a fight for proletarian political revolution. With the destruction of the Soviet Union, and consequently no readily available lifeline

are inspired by Felimon Lagman, a labor leader assassinated a month after Arroyo took power, demands a “transitional revolutionary government” to replace Arroyo. A current vehicle for the PM’s class-collaborationist politics is the Laban ng Masa (LnM—Struggle of the Masses) bloc, whose components range from the social-democratic BISIG party to the Revolutionary Workers Party-Mindanao, which is affiliated with the fake-Trotskyist United Secretariat.

In February, the PM/LnM advocated alliances with “patriotic” elements within the military and police. In particular, PM/LnM hailed a group of officers who had rebelled against Arroyo, declaring: “We are united with the Magdalo officers and rebel soldiers in their cause to overthrow an illegitimate regime” (Laban ng Masa Web site, 22 February 2006). This line was a continuation of PM honcho Sonny Melencio’s 2002 call for a “revolutionary united front” that was to include such “non-socialist groups” as the Young Officers Union, a nationalist military formation that called for a coup d’état against Arroyo (*Links*, January-April 2002).

In their appeals to the military officer corps and the police, the CPP and PM trample on the Leninist understanding of the capitalist state. Consisting at its core of the cops, courts, prisons and army, the capitalist state is a machinery of violence that exists to defend the profits and rule of the bourgeoisie against the working class and the oppressed. The struggle against repression, exploitation and poverty requires a fight to sweep away capitalist rule through a proletarian revolution that shatters the bourgeois state and replaces it with a workers state, supported by the peasantry and other oppressed plebeian layers.

Key to a victorious socialist revolution in the Philippines is the forging of an internationalist Leninist-Trotskyist party, centrally through polemical struggle against all variants of nationalism and class collaboration promoted by the opportunist left. Reforge the Fourth International—world party of socialist revolution! ■



Jean Weinberg

Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky, photographed in exile in Turkey in 1931. *The Permanent Revolution* (1930) applies lessons of 1917 Russian Revolution to countries of belated capitalist development.

economy through the expropriation of capitalist property. This in turn requires a fight to extend proletarian revolution to the imperialist centers in order to set the stage for an internationally planned economy—the basis for building a socialist society based on material abundance.

Forge a Trotskyist Party!

It is crucial that the Filipino proletariat champion the just struggles of the rural poor against the landlords and agribusiness interests. Rejecting the vanguard role of the working class, the Maoist CPP and New People’s Army have been waging peasant-based guerrilla warfare for almost four decades. Such guerrilla movements represent the class interests of the petty bourgeoisie and of necessity must seek to attract and make compromises with one wing of the bourgeoisie. Fundamentally, the CPP’s guerrilla struggles have served as a pressure tactic on the bourgeoisie, aimed at forcing concessions at the negotiating table.

Even under the most favorable historical circumstances, guerrilla warfare has been capable at most of creating bureaucratically deformed workers states. Thus in Cuba, Castro’s guerrilla movement, based on the petty-bourgeois peasantry, was able to take power in 1959 and smash capitalist property relations in 1960-61 due to extremely exceptional circum-

against imperialist encirclement, the narrow historical opening that made it possible for petty-bourgeois forces to overturn the capitalist order has been closed.

What is necessary is a programmatic break with all variants of the Menshevik-Stalinist dogma of “two-stage revolution” that dominates the Filipino left. Both the CPP and its breakaway groups, including the Workers Party (PM), hailed “People Power Two,” the 2001 coup that ousted corrupt populist president Joseph Estrada and installed Arroyo with the blessing of the Catholic church and the backing of the Makati Business Club (see “For Workers Revolution in the Philippines!” WV No. 763, 31 August 2001). The Sisonite Bayan Muna party even campaigned for Arroyo’s senatorial ticket in the 2001 elections after her regime bloodily suppressed a May Day demonstration by Estrada’s plebeian supporters.

Like the CPP, the PM, whose policies

Spartacus Youth Club Events

BAY AREA

Thursday, November 2, 6 p.m.
The Russian Revolution
San Francisco State University
Cesar Chavez Student Center, Room T-153
Information and readings: (510) 839-0851
or e-mail: sycbayarea@sbcglobal.net

LOS ANGELES

Saturday, November 4, 2 p.m.
The State and Revolution
3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215
(across from the Beverly/Vermont
Red Line Station)
Information and readings: (213) 380-8239
or e-mail: slsycla@sbcglobal.net

NEW YORK

Thursday, October 12, 7:30 p.m.
**New Orleans: One Year After Katrina
Racist Atrocity Continues**
Columbia University
Kent Hall, Room 522A
Information: (212) 267-1025
or e-mail: nysl@compuserve.com

TORONTO

Wednesday, October 18, 6:30 p.m.
**Imperialism: The Death Agony
of the Capitalist System**
University of Toronto
Sidney Smith Bldg., Room 2115
100 St. George Street

Information and readings: (416) 593-4138
or e-mail: spartcan@on.aibn.com

VANCOUVER

Wednesday, October 25, 6 p.m.
**Imperialism and War—
U.S./UN/Canadian Imperialism:
Hands Off the World!**
Out of Iraq, Afghanistan and Haiti!
University of British Columbia
Student Union Building, Room 211
Information and readings: (604) 687-0353
or e-mail: trotskyist_vancouver@shawcable.com

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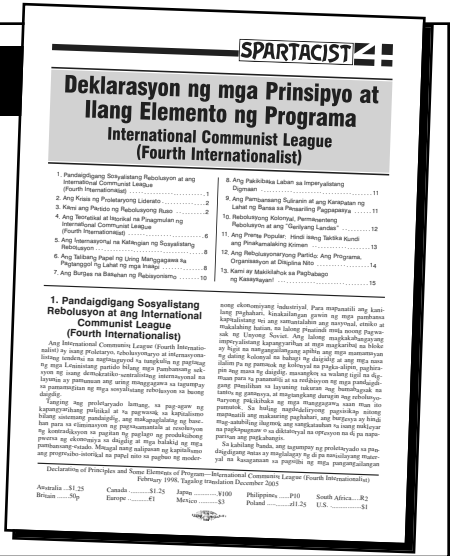
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Philippines: Down With Arroyo's Reign of Terror!



White House



AFP

Left: U.S. imperialist chief Bush reviews troops with Philippine president Arroyo in Manila, October 2003. Right: Thousands of Manila protesters demand Arroyo's resignation in February, defying ban on demonstrations during state of emergency.

Declaring "all-out war" against the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and the New People's Army (NPA), the government of president Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has unleashed a renewed campaign of terror, vowing to "crush" them in two years. While the stated goal of this offensive, which was announced on June 16, is the destruction of Jose Maria Sison's CPP and its affiliated organizations, the repression targets all who speak out for social justice or any improvement in the miserable conditions of the Filipino masses.

The new campaign is the latest chapter in an ongoing drive by the Arroyo regime against leftists and other oppositionists. Since Arroyo was installed in power in

U.S. Troops Out Now!

2001, the police, the military and death squads have run rampant. The Philippines has become the site of an unrelenting wave of abductions, torture, disappearances and assassinations of not only leftists and labor and peasant activists but of women's rights leaders, Moro (Muslim) leaders, lawyers and journalists, with over 700 killed under Arroyo. Even before Arroyo announced the new crackdown, the *Asia Times* (2 June) observed, "That the activists are not being killed en masse, but rather at a slow-motion rate of

one every other day, seems calculated to maximize the chilling effect while also minimizing public outrage."

A state of emergency was declared in late February on the eve of the 20th anniversary of "People Power One"—the movement that signaled the end of the hated Marcos dictatorship and resulted in the installation of Corazon Aquino as president. This crackdown, which followed a rumored coup attempt, fit seamlessly into the ongoing repression. Arroyo banned all demonstrations celebrating the

fall of Marcos, raided opposition media offices and ordered the police and armed forces to suppress "any act of insurrection or rebellion." Nevertheless, public protests broke out against the state of emergency, which was lifted after a week. And in March, more than 10,000 women defied a police ban and marched on International Women's Day in Manila and other cities.

Fifty-nine individuals, ranging from leftist members of Congress to military officers, were arrested during the state of emergency on bogus charges of rebellion and planning a Communist/rightist coup d'état. Fifty of those arrested were prominent figures from across the spectrum of

continued on page 9

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BAY AREA
Saturday, Oct. 21, 2 p.m.

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

LOS ANGELES
Thursday, Oct. 19, 6:30 p.m.

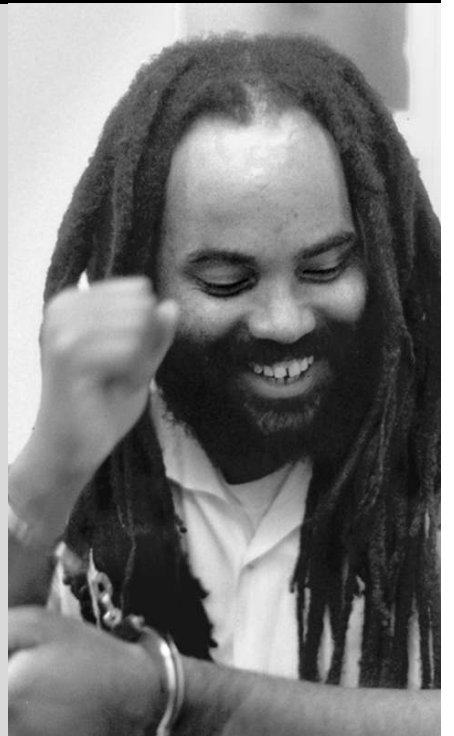
UCLA Downtown
Labor Center
675 S. Park View St.
(4 blocks west of Westlake/
MacArthur Park Red Line Station)
More info: (213) 380-8897

CHICAGO
Friday, Oct. 13, 7 p.m.

United Electrical Hall
37 S. Ashland
(at Monroe)
More info: (312) 563-0442

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



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