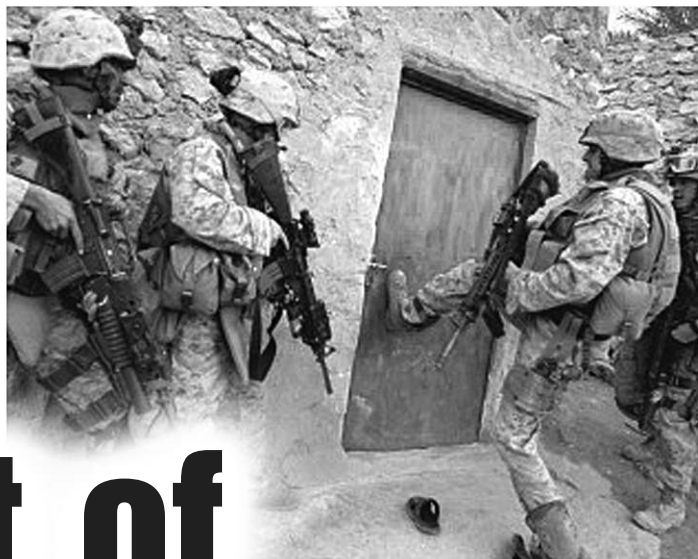




Reuters



AFP

U.S. Out of Iraq, Afghanistan Now!

NOVEMBER 6—Blood has come to define U.S.-occupied Iraq, once one of the more advanced countries of the Near East. And now the Iraq occupation has come to define U.S. politics in the 2006 Congressional elections. With the imperialist butchers and their Iraqi puppet government unable to ensure a modicum of stability even in Baghdad, preponderant sections of the U.S. capitalist ruling class see the occupation as a losing venture and demand a “change in course.” The Democratic Party, which gave Bush a blank check to pursue the bloody “war on terror” in Afghanistan following the September 11 attacks and then gave the go-ahead for

Break with the Democrats— For a Class-Struggle Workers Party!

Top left: Residents of Baghdad’s Sadr City celebrate after U.S. military abandons cordon around area, October 31. Top right: U.S. Marine raid in Iraqi town of Haklanyah, November 2005.

the Iraq war, now aims to recapture Congress by running candidates as “not Bush.”

George W. Bush touted the death sentence meted out to former Iraqi strongman Saddam Hussein by a show-trial tribunal—conveniently handed down two days

before American voters go the polls—as a “milestone” in Iraqi “democracy.” Would anyone expect anything different from a man who, as governor of Texas, oversaw the deadliest machinery of state executions in the U.S., and who more recently

signed into law the use of torture in handling “terror” suspects?

Saddam Hussein was indeed a butcher—but he was the *imperialists’* butcher and Washington’s bloody bastard as he arrested, tortured and executed thousands of Iraqi Communists, union leaders, Kurds and other ethnic minorities and religious opponents. In 1983, U.S. president Reagan sent an emissary—one Donald Rumsfeld—to meet with Saddam Hussein in the midst of the bloody eight-year war between Iraq and predominantly Shi’ite Iran. It was only after Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait in 1990 that he became

continued on page 11

Mexican Trotskyists Say: Defend Teachers, APPO!

Down With Bloody State of Siege in Oaxaca!

No Illusions in the PRD, Party of Capital!

NOVEMBER 6—For more than a week, the city of Oaxaca in Southern Mexico has been under a state of siege. On October 27, gun-toting thugs, some of them believed to be police, shot down four people in an attack on striking teachers and their supporters in the Popular Assembly of the Peoples of Oaxaca (APPO). Two days later, some 4,000 Federal Preventive Police (PFP) forces backed by the military attacked the APPO’s encampment in the center of Oaxaca City at dawn, killing three more people. Protesters retrenched at Oaxaca’s Benito Juárez Autonomous University, where thousands stood off a brutal attack on November 2 by the PFP,

which is formally barred from entering the university without permission from the campus administration. Dozens of APPO members, teachers and others remain in jail, and more than 60 people were “disappeared.”

Protests continue in the face of the state of siege. Tens of thousands of APPO supporters marched in Oaxaca yesterday, demanding that the PFP get out of the city and that the governor, Ulises Ruiz, be removed. There is an urgent need for solidarity with the Oaxaca protesters—in Mexico and internationally. At Mexico City’s UNAM campus, comrades from the Juventud Espartaquista, youth group of the Grupo Espartaquista de México, section of the International Communist League, helped shut down the School of Political Science on October 31 as part of a student strike and

continued on page 6



AP

Using water cannons, federal police backed by heavily armed troops lay siege to Oaxaca encampment, October 29.



On “Age of Consent” Laws

5 October 2006

Just wanted to call your attention to a confusing way of putting things that I found twice in the otherwise very good article reprinted from Spartacist Canada against the repression of youth sexuality.

Spartacist Canada writes: “[W]e do not think intergenerational sex is by definition abusive, nor do we think incest is *a priori* a crime to be punished by the bourgeois state” and, further down, “We do not accord the capitalist state the right to decree the age at which youth may engage in consensual sexual activity.”

I don’t understand what the words “bourgeois” and “capitalist” are doing qualifying “state” in these two sentences. Naturally, we would be no less intransigently opposed to the criminalization of consensual sex by a (presumably deformed) workers state. I understand that the legal age of consent in Cuba is 16 for Cubans and 18 if the older partner is a foreigner, and that’s just for male-female sex—homosexual activity at any age can mean prison.

Elsewhere the article spells out the basic line quite clearly: “As long as those who take part agree to do so at the time, no-one, least of all the state, has the right to tell them they can’t do it.”

Hands off Mark Foley!

CGs,
Alan H.

WV replies:

Our article “Canada: Anti-Sex Crusade Targets Youth, Gays” (WV No. 876, 15 September) was written about the Canadian government’s plan to raise the age of consent from 14 to 16. Alan H. asks why we specified our opposition to *capitalist* and *bourgeois* state interference in private sexual matters between consenting individuals. The state is not an abstraction; the reactionary “age of consent” laws are the work of the capitalist state in all its concreteness. Just to be clear: the other references to the state in this article are also to the capitalist state. Indeed, in opposing the capitalists’ laws criminalizing sexuality, we point toward a future social-

ist society. And as our article states, this is “part of the struggle to lay bare the ways in which the bourgeoisie maintains its grip on the working people.”

Alan H. writes that “we would be no less intransigently opposed to the criminalization of consensual sex by a (presumably deformed) workers state.” Indeed, we oppose Cuba’s “age of consent” laws. A healthy workers state would, as the Bolsheviks did following the 1917 Russian Revolution, move swiftly to eliminate the web of laws that enforce the oppression of women and buttress the repressive institution of the family. But a workers government would have to reckon with the legacy of the capitalist society that went before:

“Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past.”

—Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (1852)

Our reader is quite correct that Marxists oppose state interference in private consensual sexual matters on principle. At the same time, Marxists differentiate between private sexual relations and institutionalized practices that are oppressive to women. Thus, social reality varies greatly from country to country, presenting special problems and tasks for proletarian revolutionaries. In countries that never experienced bourgeois revolutions, where women are held to be little more than the property of their patriarchal masters, women’s liberation requires fighting to end such institutions as the bride price and the veil. In Iran, for example, where child marriage is legal and common, a workers government would prohibit child marriage, along with the buying and selling of women.

The heavy burden of the tsarist past confronted the Bolsheviks as they sought to make their liberating program a reality in a terribly backward, overwhelmingly peasant country. We explored this in depth in “The Russian Revolution and the Emancipation of Women” (*Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 59, Spring 2006). We’ll cite but one example here. The Bolsheviks’ new marriage and divorce laws were very popular, but as we wrote:

“Given women’s traditional responsibilities for children and their greater diffi-

culties in finding and maintaining employment, for them divorce often proved more problematic than for men. For this reason the alimony provision was established for the disabled poor of both sexes, necessary due to the inability of the state at that time to guarantee jobs for all.”

As our *Spartacist* article explains, the Stalinist bureaucracy abandoned the communist commitment to fight for women’s liberation. The official glorification of family life and the retreat from Bolshevik policies on divorce and abortion were products of the political counterrevolution that usurped political power from the working class. But despite bureaucratic degeneration, the central gains of the Russian Revolution—embodied in the overthrow of capitalist property relations and the establishment of a planned economy—remained until the counter-revolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union, and those gains were reflected in the material position of women.

As for Cuba, a bureaucratically deformed workers state, it is not the case that “homosexual activity at any age can mean prison.” For decades, homosexuals were persecuted by the Stalinist Castro bureaucracy, at times viciously. But in 1997 the laws against homosexuality were removed from Cuba’s penal code. Today there is greater tolerance for homosexuality, although homophobia remains widespread. The Cuban Stalinists uphold the family, which in turn reinforces *machismo* nationalism, as opposed to the revolutionary Bolsheviks, who deplored the institution of the family and sought to replace it.

As we wrote many years ago in “Women in Castro’s Cuba” (*Women and Revolution* No. 6, Summer 1974):

“The creation of a revolutionary international capable of leading revolutions in the advanced countries as well as in the underdeveloped ones is necessary for the victory of socialism. The Spartacist League therefore works for the rebirth of the Fourth International. Until Cuba is able to industrialize fully, without the pressures of world imperialism and without the betrayals of the bureaucracy, the full emancipation of Cuban women cannot be achieved....

“A genuine socialist society in Cuba, whose construction will require a political revolution in Havana to overthrow the Stalinist Castroite regime, will be profoundly different from the society which we see there today. Workers democracy will take the place of the present cliquist bureaucracy, and the conditions of material abundance will provide the basis for women’s emancipation and equality for the first time in modern history.” ■



TROTSKY

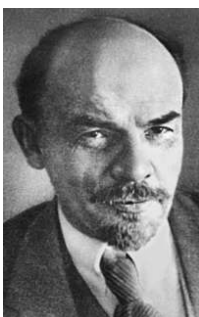
For New October Revolutions!

November 7 (October 25 according to the old Russian calendar) marks the 89th anniversary of the Russian Revolution of 1917, the greatest historic victory for the world proletariat. Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky stressed the importance of studying the lessons of the October Revolution, particularly following the failure of the German Communist Party to consummate a proletarian revolution in 1923 despite exceptionally favorable objective circumstances. As Trotsky described, political struggle within the

Bolshevik leadership against pressures to accommodate to the bourgeois order played a crucial role in enabling the party to lead the working class to power.

The fundamental controversial question, around which everything else centered, was this: whether or not we should struggle for power; whether or not we should assume power. This alone is ample proof that we were not then dealing with a mere episodic divergence of opinions but with two tendencies of utmost principled significance. The first and principal tendency was proletarian and led to the road of world revolution. The other was “democratic,” i.e., petty bourgeois, and led, in the last analysis, to the subordination of proletarian policies to the requirements of bourgeois society in the process of reform. These two tendencies came into hostile conflict over every essential question that arose throughout the year 1917. It is precisely the revolutionary epoch—i.e., the epoch when the accumulated capital of the party is put in direct circulation—that must inevitably broach in action and reveal divergences of such nature. These two tendencies, in greater or lesser degree, with more or less modification, will more than once manifest themselves during the revolutionary period in every country. If by Bolshevism—and we are stressing here its essential aspect—we understand such a training, such a tempering and such an organization of the proletarian vanguard as enables the latter to seize power, arms in hand; and if by Social Democracy we are to understand the acceptance of a reformist opposition activity within the framework of bourgeois society and an adaptation to its legality—i.e., the actual training of the masses to become imbued with the inviolability of the bourgeois state; then, indeed, it is absolutely clear that even within the Communist party itself, which does not emerge full-fledged from the crucible of history, the struggle between social democratic tendencies and Bolshevism is bound to reveal itself in its most clear, open and uncamouflaged form during the immediate revolutionary period when the question of power is posed point-blank.

—Leon Trotsky, *Lessons of October* (1924)



LENIN

WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League of the U.S.

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The closing date for news in this issue is November 7.

No. 880

10 November 2006

21st Annual Holiday Appeal Fundraiser for Class-War Prisoners

Bay Area

Sunday, December 10
1 to 4 p.m.

YWCA Tea Room
1515 Webster St., Oakland
(City Center Bart Station)

For more information:
(510) 839-0852

pdcbayarea@sbcglobal.net



Labor Defender

Chicago

Sunday, December 10
3 to 7 p.m.

United Electrical Hall
37 S. Ashland (at Monroe)

For more information:
(312) 563-0442

chicagopdc@sbcglobal.net

Los Angeles

Saturday, December 2
2 to 6 p.m.

Mount Hollywood
Congregational Church
4607 Prospect Avenue
Hollywood

For more information:
(213) 380-8897

partisandefense-la@sbcglobal.net

New York City

Sunday, December 17
5 to 10 p.m.

Southpaw
125 Fifth Ave.
(at Sterling Pl.)
Brooklyn, NY

For more information:
(212) 406-4252

partisandefense@earthlink.net

Toronto

Friday, December 15
7 to 10 p.m.

Steelworkers Hall
25 Cecil Street
(near Queens Park Sta.)

For more information:
(416) 593-4138

pdctoronto@bellnet.ca

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

Sponsored by the Partisan Defense Committee

Subscription Drive Success

WV Welcomes New Readers!



WV Photo

Comrades and sympathizers of the Spartacist League, Spartacus Youth Clubs and Labor Black Leagues spent six weeks from late August through early October engaged in the annual *Workers Vanguard* subscription drive campaign, exceeding our national quota of 2,650 with a total of 2,955.5 points. Every local surpassed its own quota. These points represent 1,345 subscriptions to WV and 119 subscriptions to *Espartaco*, newspaper of the Grupo Espartaquista de México, with 85 subscriptions to other International Communist League sectional newspapers and placements of WV in bookstores.

WV welcomes its new readers and greets those who renewed their subscriptions. A Marxist, working-class biweekly, WV seeks to propagate our full revolutionary program and to make this program concrete by addressing the struggles of workers and the oppressed and our interventions into these struggles. The SL is a fighting propaganda group whose aim is to build a revolutionary vanguard party of the kind that V.I. Lenin and the Bolsheviks forged in order to lead the working class to power in the October Revolution of 1917 in Russia. In arguing for the founding of a regular party press in his 1899 article “Our Immediate Task,” Lenin wrote:

“In speaking of the necessity to concentrate *all* Party forces—all literary forces, all organisational abilities, all material resources, etc.—on the foundation and correct conduct of the organ of the whole Party, we do not for a moment think of pushing other forms of activity into the background—e.g., local agitation, demonstrations,...etc., etc. On the contrary, we are convinced that all these forms of activity constitute the *basis* of the Party’s activity, but, *without* their unification through an organ of the whole Party, these forms of revolutionary struggle *lose nine-tenths of their significance*; they do not lead to the creation of common Party experience, to the creation of Party traditions and continuity. The Party organ, far from competing with such activity, will exercise tremendous influence on its extension, consolidation and systematisation.”

We make a special effort to sell subscriptions to our press because it is our main tool for seeking to influence and lead struggles and for winning workers and youth to our ranks. Our annual subscription drive is crucial to maintaining an ongoing readership and reaching out to new layers and to regions where we do not have branches. The campaign also serves to give us a picture of current political consciousness and moods, from the campuses to the workplaces and union halls.

Racial Oppression and the Fight to Free Mumia

A central part of this year’s subscription drive was building the urgent campaign undertaken by the Partisan Defense Committee to free death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, a former Black Panther and later an award-winning journalist and supporter of the MOVE organization. Our efforts included building rallies demanding freedom for Mumia that were called by the PDC and LBLs and took place in four cities during October (see page 12). Around the country, SYCs held showings of the PDC video “From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal,” often at the invitation of other student

groups and professors on regional trips. Comrades on subscription drive trips to the South were able to bring the case to trade unionists there, garnering a number of signatures on the PDC’s statement of support for Mumia (see page 8). A PDC spokesman addressed hundreds of trade unionists on the fight to free Mumia at the Labor Day picnic in Charleston, South Carolina.

Just as the capitalist state’s attempt to execute Mumia, who represents the spectre of black revolution to the ruling class, is emblematic of the special oppression of black people in the U.S., the atrocity around Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans just over a year ago stands as a searing indictment of the racist capitalist system. Our pamphlet *Black History and the Class Struggle* No. 19, which features key WV articles on New Orleans, was a big draw in

throughout the South (see “Sanitation Workers Battle for Union Rights,” WV No. 878, 13 October). A student organization at historically black North Carolina Central University in Durham organized a forum for us to speak on New Orleans, at which there was a lively discussion. A common theme in discussions with students in the region, as in other parts of the country, was the search for a “third road” between the horrors of capitalism and the fight for socialist revolution. Often cited as an example of such a “third road” was the bourgeois-populist regime of Hugo Chávez in Venezuela, which is administering the exploitative, class-divided capitalist system but is hailed as supposedly “socialist” because high oil prices have enabled it to throw some crumbs to the poor.

In this context, it was particularly use-

scription drive motivating the Trotskyist program in defense of the deformed workers states of China and North Korea—a program that the ICL uniquely upholds—also helped to illustrate the gains of social revolutions for new readers.

U.S. Imperialism and the Elections

Our articles opposing both the U.S.-backed Zionist onslaught against Lebanon—and the ongoing murderous oppression of the Palestinians—as well as the subsequent imperialist intervention into Lebanon by UN “peacekeepers” were of much interest in the early part of our subscription drive. Likewise, our coverage of struggles in Mexico, from the mass protests around the presidential election results to the teachers strike in Oaxaca, drew a lot of interest not only in WV but also in *Espartaco*. We sold a number of *Espartaco* subscriptions at immigrant rights protests held around the country in early September, as well as a number of WV subs to young activists who had been involved in the massive immigrant rights protests last spring.

WV’s staunch opposition to the capitalist Democratic Party of racism and war was a major question discussed with youth and workers in relation to everything from immigrant rights and the racist atrocity around Hurricane Katrina to the U.S. imperialist occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan and Washington’s threats against Iran and the North Korean deformed workers state. In the lead-up to the midterm elections, “Anybody but Bush” sentiment is running high, given the prospect of an improvement in the Democrats’ electoral fortunes, such as they are. In this situation, a number of organizations claiming to be revolutionary Marxist have continued their sordid practice of seeking to channel discontent with racist U.S. imperialism into the dead end of pressuring the capitalists through the bourgeois elections.

Perhaps most energetic in this regard is the reformist International Socialist Organization (ISO), which is running its member Todd Chretien as a candidate for U.S. Senate in California on the ticket of the capitalist Green Party. Drawing a crude working-class line against the capitalist candidacies of Todd Chretien and

continued on page 5



WV Photo

Spartacists at July 29 New York protest against Israeli assault on Lebanon.

the sales of subscriptions across the country. SL comrades undertook two trips to New Orleans during the subscription drive, and despite the overwhelming difficulties for people trying to pick up their lives in a still largely devastated city, we were able to engage politically with workers at the ports and shipyards as well as with students, selling 73.5 points in subscriptions.

Comrades on our trip to North Carolina intersected sanitation workers in Raleigh battling for union recognition in the face of anti-labor “right to work” laws that exist

ful to have our series of articles under the *Young Spartacus* masthead on the history of the Russian Revolution of 1917, as well as the article “The Russian Revolution and the Emancipation of Women” from the current issue of the ICL’s international theoretical journal, *Spartacist*. These articles helped comrades explain what a true social revolution looks like and to concretize the revolutionary program that working people need to fight to end capitalist exploitation and oppression. WV articles that ran during the sub-

Spartacus Youth Club Classes

CHICAGO

Tuesday, November 21, 7 p.m.
**The Bolshevik Revolution:
How the Working Class Took Power**
University of Chicago
Harper, Room 102, 1116 E. 59th St.
Information and readings: (312) 563-0441
or e-mail: chicagospartacist@sbcglobal.net

TORONTO

Wednesday, November 15, 6:30 p.m.
**Defend the Gains of
the Chinese Revolution!
Why China Is Not Capitalist**
University of Toronto
OISE, Room 4420, 252 Bloor St. West
Information and readings: (416) 593-4138
or e-mail: spartacan@on.aibn.com

LOS ANGELES

Thursday, November 16, 6:30 p.m.
Introduction to Marxism
UCLA, Ackerman Union
Meeting Room 2410
Information and readings: (213) 380-8239
or e-mail: slsycla@sbcglobal.net

NEW YORK

Thursday, November 16, 7:30 p.m.
**Trotskyism vs. Stalinism:
The Revolution Betrayed—
Defend China, North Korea, Cuba
and Vietnam!**
Columbia University
Kent Hall, Room 522A
Information and readings: (212) 267-1025
or e-mail: nysl@compuserve.com

VANCOUVER

Wednesday, November 22, 6 p.m.
**Anglo Chauvinism and
Nationalism Are Poison
to Class Struggle!
Independence for Québec!**
University of British Columbia
Student Union Building
Room 211
Information and readings: (604) 687-0353
or e-mail: trotskyist_vancouver@shawcable.com

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

Vote No on “Sex Dragnet” Prop 83!

The following leaflet was issued by the Bay Area Spartacist League on November 5.

On the ballot this November 7 is Proposition 83, “Jessica’s Law” (named for a Florida girl who was raped and murdered in February 2005, allegedly by a released sex offender), a draconian measure ratcheting up yet again the government dragnet against “sex offenders.” Publicized under the politically charged name of “Campaign for Child Safety,” this proposed law has nothing to do with protecting children and everything to do with legitimizing and augmenting the powers of the bourgeois state, as part of the massive assault on democratic rights and civil liberties in the “war on terrorism.” Such measures, putatively aimed at “sex crimes” (as defined by the morality code of this racist, anti-woman, anti-gay bourgeois society), can be used to build the legal justification and climate of hysteria for attacks against the left, militant workers, immigrants, minorities—anyone deemed “deviant” by the capitalist rulers.

If passed, Prop. 83 would impose life-long GPS (Global Positioning System) monitoring on “sex offenders” (a kind of 21st-century branding); further deny or restrict probation and parole; and increase the ban on their living near a school or park, thus rendering most urban areas off limits. *One conviction* on any “sex offense” could lead to a lifelong electronic jail sentence and lifetime registry on the state “sex offenders” list. The law makes possession of *one piece* of child pornography liable to felony prosecution.

Like most states, California has reams of “sex crimes” legislation, much of it the product of years of witchhunting that has tried to demonize sexuality by grossly conflating vicious serial rape and murder with wholly consensual acts. But even the already stringent laws are not enough for this bipartisan “family values” crusade. On September 20 Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed into law SB1128, originated in the state legislature by Democratic Senator Elaine Alquist, which toughens the original “sex predator” law, “Megan’s Law,” in effect since 1996. The law passed the state legislature unanimously.

The national hysteria over “sex offenders” has grown to such an extent that in at least six states officials slapped down curfews, surveillance and other punitive measures against them for Halloween. These Kafkaesque acts followed the weeklong Operation Falcon III, a U.S. Marshals Services roundup of 10,733 fugitives, including 971 “sex offenders” who had failed to register with their communities. Under the 2006 Adam Walsh Act, this is now a federal offense. “Sex predator” laws are a call for vigilante terror, as in the case of 24-year-old William Elliott in Maine, murdered by a vigilante after he spent time in jail for having a sexual relationship with his girlfriend when she was just days shy of 16 (Maine’s age of consent). Such murders can be laid squarely at the

California Ballot

feet of the bourgeoisie’s anti-sex bigots.

Prop. 83 is so sweeping and arbitrary that even capitalist newspapers like the *Sacramento Bee*, *San Jose Mercury News*, and *San Francisco Chronicle* call for its defeat, as do San Francisco Democrat Mark Leno, the San Francisco Labor Council, and the capitalist Green Party. Of course, most opposition rests solidly on support to the principle of persecution for “sex crimes,” while eschewing this particular piece of legislation as “ineffective” or “too expensive.”

Government Out of the Bedroom!

The Spartacist League calls for a “no” vote on Prop. 83 because it increases the powers of the bourgeois state and its cops and courts, including the sentencing of “sex offenders” to indefinite involuntary confinement, a stark violation of the U.S. Constitution, and because we oppose the criminalization of consensual sex. As Marxists we seek to build a revolutionary party as *“the tribune of the people,”* able to react to every manifestation of tyranny and oppression, no matter where it appears, no matter what stratum or class of the people it affects,” in the words of V.I. Lenin (*What Is To Be Done?* [1902]). We have spoken out in opposition to Prop. 83, including at the October 21 Partisan Defense Committee rally to free Mumia Abu-Jamal and on college campuses.

Prop. 83’s actual target is youth, especially gay youth, already subject to harassment and worse. In California, as in many states, the age of consent is a ridiculous 18, making sex with or even “touching” anyone 17 or under a crime. As the *Bay Area Reporter* quoted gay activist Howard Wallace, “Lewd conduct is often charged after high-profile ‘bathroom busts’ in public parks, many of which are police stings that result in false arrests and convictions.” Down with the reactionary “age of consent” laws!

And the ostensible left—what do they say? You’d think it would be a no-brainer. How can any group claiming to stand for socialism or any kind of human liberation *not* oppose this manifestly oppressive measure? We looked, but not a word of opposition could be found in the programs of two ostensible leftist candidates running for U.S. Senator from California. Green Party candidate Todd Chretien, a supporter of the International Socialist Organization (ISO), does not mention Prop. 83 on his Web site (www.todd4senate.org) or in any of the campaign material that we have seen, even though the Green Party itself has called for a “no” vote to Prop. 83. Socialist Action (SA) candidate Jeff Mackler is similarly mum on this barbaric proposition, despite his call to “repeal the Patriot Act, the Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, and all other legislation restricting democratic rights and civil liberties.” Both Mackler and Chretien are running against the longtime incumbent, Democratic Senator Dianne Feinstein, a gung-ho supporter of anti-sex witchhunt legislation, but neither one has spoken up on what should be an elementary question for any so-called socialist.

SA’s silence is in line with their program of seeking reform, not revolution, through pressuring the capitalists to adopt “progressive” policies. Far from acting as a “tribune of the people,” with its silence this group capitulates to bourgeois morality and gross police interference in private life. Nevertheless, Mackler’s program demands, “To the reformist credo, ‘Anybody But Bush,’ we answer, ‘No to the twin parties of war and oppression!’ And ‘Yes to the independent organiza-

tion and mobilization of working people’” (undated SA campaign supplement). Importantly, Mackler is running explicitly against the capitalist Greens. Because of this crude class line, the Spartacist League has extended critical support to Mackler in the election as a measure to advance the consciousness of the proletariat that it must *organize independently of all capitalist parties*.

For its part, the ISO is gloating over the disgrace of Republican Congressman Mark Foley in the seemingly endless



Boston Globe

Electronic tracking of “sex offenders,” similar to program announced by Massachusetts governor Romney in 2004, is among repressive measures contained in California Prop. 83.

scandal over his approaches to congressional aides in their late teens. In this they join the Democrats, hoping the fall of this reactionary Congressman with a long record of attacks on the rights of gays will motivate much of the Republicans’ evangelical Christian base to stay home on election day. The ISO terms Foley’s act “a criminal outrage” (“Which Side Are You On? The Democrats’ Pathetic Display,” *Socialist Worker*, 6 October). Says the ISO, pushing all the same buttons for social hysteria and bigotry, “After all, what sane person doesn’t oppose pedophilia?” By supporting the state’s right to legislate morality, they also support this decaying social order that produces genuinely horrific crimes against women and children. The ISO willfully conflates consensual sexual activities with vicious abuse. Their embrace of bourgeois “morality” reflects a fundamental loyalty to the current social order.

As Marxists, we oppose the efforts of the state to regulate the manifold expressions of human sexuality. We oppose the persecution of *anyone* who engages in consensual intergenerational sex. The only guideline that should exist is that of effective consent, regardless of age, gender or sexual preference. We oppose all laws against “crimes without victims” such as prostitution, drug use or pornography. We oppose the persecution of Mark Foley on the basis of his sex life, as well as the entire “pedophilia” hysteria. Thus we have defended against state persecution the North American Man/Boy Love Association (NAMBLA), an organization that defends the right of men

and boys to engage in consensual sex.

The witchhunters want to equate looking at pornography with violent crimes such as rape, sexual assault and even murder, singling out child pornography as especially pernicious. Like all pornography, it is simply words and images designed for pleasure. But the U.S. imperialists—whose bloody invasion and occupation of Iraq included the *acts* of sadistic torture and sexual violence carried out on prisoners in Abu Ghraib and Guantánamo—would like you to forget Abu Ghraib, and put “child pornographers” away for life.

Democratic Rights Are Indivisible

The “sex predator” hysteria is of a piece with the vicious persecution of gays and the wholesale assault on women’s basic right to abortion. This November’s California ballot includes the anti-abortion “squeal rule” Proposition 85, which would impose parental notification and a 48-hour waiting period on women under 18 before an abortion. Supporters of Prop. 85 appeal to the “sex predators” hysteria with statements like that from spokesman Albin Rhomberg, who said that minors “need to be protected from their immaturity and vulnerability.... These girls who think these sexual predators on the Internet are Prince Charming” (*Los Angeles Times*, 17 October). Their statement in the official California voter information guide says that “these pregnancies are *evidence* of statutory rape and sexual abuse.” No on Prop. 85! For free abortion on demand!

In this capitalist society all repressive measures come down hardest on blacks, gays, women, immigrants—all those deemed outside the bourgeois “mainstream.” Under “Jessica’s Law,” what will lie in store for blacks, who already make up a portion of the prison population vastly out of line with their numbers in the population as a whole? Look at the case of Cary Verse, a black man, who was released from prison in 2004 after having served his full sentence for rape. Barbarically, he was chemically castrated before his release. “Megan’s Law” vigilante terror hounded him through three counties before a Catholic priest in Oakland, Father Weeks, had the courage to give him shelter at his abbey. Oakland Democratic Party honcho Ignacio De La Fuente mobilized a nearby school and its staff for a “protest,” including elementary schoolchildren, manipulating fears among Latino families against a black ex-con who had never been convicted of molesting children.

The anti-sex witchhunt has also proved a useful tool in the crusade for anti-immigrant bigotry. A worldwide U.S./UN campaign against “human trafficking” attempts to smear all illegal women immigrants as “sex slaves,” leading to their deportation (see “U.S./UN Crusade Against ‘Sex Trafficking,’” *Spartacist* No. 58, Spring 2004). Recently the *San Francisco Chronicle* ran a sensationalist series about “sex slavery” in the city, prompting a crackdown on largely Asian-staffed massage parlors. In July 2005 a federal raid led to arrest of 45 people statewide for running a sex-trafficking ring between South Korea, Los Angeles and San Francisco. Harassment and deportation of immigrants is repackaged as “defending the victims.”

At bottom, the anti-sex witchhunt serves to bolster the capitalist order through propping up its three key supports: the state, organized religion, and the institution of the family, the central source of women’s oppression. It will take a socialist revolution to sweep away the capitalist system and replace the family with socialized childcare and housework, freeing women to play a full role in social and political life. For women’s liberation through socialist revolution! ■

SPARTACIST English Edition

SPRING 2004

Women and Revolution

Sex Slaves On Main Street

Anti-Immigrant, Anti-Woman, Anti-Sex: U.S./UN Crusade Against “Sex Trafficking”

Spartacist (English edition)
No. 58, Spring 2004
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Papers Filed...

(continued from page 12)

supporter and eloquent spokesman for the oppressed—a threat who must be silenced.

The state’s venom is on display in the very first pages of the D.A.’s current brief, in which they sneer at the description of Mumia as a “renowned journalist.” In fact, it was Mumia’s prominence in his youth as Minister of Information of the Philadelphia Black Panther Party chapter and later as a journalist who exposed the racist Philly cops’ vendetta against the MOVE organization that kept him in the state’s cross hairs. As Mumia’s brief points out, at the time of his conviction he was an award-winning broadcast news reporter known as the “Voice of the Voiceless” and head of the Philadelphia chapter of the National Association of Black Journalists, having been named by *Philadelphia Magazine* as “one of the people to watch in 1981.” Mumia has continued to speak out courageously and powerfully from his prison cell.

Giving a flavor of the lynch mob atmosphere at the 1982 trial, Mumia’s papers quote the prosecutor as saying that he was willing to allow a black woman on the jury because “she hates” Mumia, to which Sabo commented approvingly, “She’ll hang him.” Mumia’s history with the Black Panther Party and MOVE organization was raised repeatedly by the prosecutor to whip up racist prejudice, not only during sentencing but as early as a pretrial bail hearing. It was in this climate of Jim Crow “justice” that a court stenographer, Terri Maurer-Carter, overheard Sabo obscenely boast, “I’m going to help them fry the n----r.”

Significantly, the D.A.’s current brief cites the U.S. Supreme Court’s 1987 ruling in *McCleskey v. Kemp*. Presented with an exhaustive study showing that blacks are far more likely than whites to be sentenced to death, the highest court in the land affirmed its commitment to racist lynch law by assuming the validity of the study and then ruling that McCleskey could be executed anyway. The court rejected McCleskey’s argument on the grounds that, “taken to its logical conclusion, [it] throws into serious question the principles that underlie the entire criminal justice system.” Indeed! The barbaric death penalty, which in the U.S. is rooted in black chattel slavery, is the pinnacle of the whole system of racist capitalist repression. Warren McCleskey—convicted solely on the testimony of a jailhouse informant promised leniency in return for his services—was executed by the State of Georgia on 25 September 1991.

The Third Circuit Court that is now supposed to review the briefs in Mumia’s case sent many of its members to testify for the reactionary Samuel Alito during his Supreme Court confirmation hearings in January. Among the members of this court is Marjorie Rendell—wife of Democratic Pennsylvania governor Ed Rendell, who as Philly D.A. oversaw Mumia’s frame-up prosecution. In an interview with the French Communist Party newspaper *L’Humanité* earlier this year, Mumia commented that he has “very little hope in a favorable decision” from this court.

Mumia’s case graphically demonstrates that there is no justice in the capitalist courts. While all legal proceedings and legal remedies must be pursued on his behalf, what is crucially needed is mass protest, centered on the social power of the labor movement, in the U.S. and inter-

JOIN THE CAMPAIGN!

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

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

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

Partisan Defense Committee

e-mail: partisandefense@earthlink.net • Web site: www.partisandefense.org
P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013 • (212) 406-4252
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nationally to demand Mumia’s freedom. In the 1930s, the American Communist Party and International Labor Defense led mass protests calling for freedom for the “Scottsboro Boys”—nine black youths framed up on false charges of raping two white women, with eight of them sentenced to death. It was due to this international protest campaign that the Supreme Court was compelled to recognize that

the wholesale exclusion of black jurors violated the constitutional right to a “jury of one’s peers.”

In 1995, an international protest movement stayed the executioner’s hand after a death warrant for Mumia was signed. Today, it is urgently necessary to revitalize mass, labor-centered protest on Mumia’s behalf. Mobilize now to free Mumia! Abolish the racist death penalty! ■

Subscription...

(continued from page 3)

Democrat Dianne Feinstein in the Senate race is Jeff Mackler of Socialist Action, to whom the SL has extended critical support. We call for a vote to Mackler while pointing out that the reformist politics of Socialist Action are an obstacle to the necessary task of forging a workers party that fights for socialist revolution. We had many debates with youth in and around the ISO in the course of our subscription drive over this issue and continued to campaign for a vote to Mackler despite his farcical “rejection” of our critical support at several events we attended and in a letter from Socialist Action (see “Critical Support Is Not a Marriage Proposal,” WV No. 878, 13 October).

Local and Regional Highlights

Congratulations to comrade Martin of the Bay Area, who with 112 points sold the most subscriptions! Comrades from the Bay Area undertook a number of regional trips, including Colorado (102 points), a Northern Tour covering Washington and Oregon (189 points), Texas (48 points) and UC Santa Cruz (156 points). Comrades sold 49 points between the two major Bay

Area campuses, San Francisco State University and UC Berkeley.

In addition to assisting with the Northern Tour and the Texas trip, L.A. comrades undertook regional trips to Arizona (33 points), San Diego (38.5 points) and UC Santa Barbara (21.5 points). Comrades sold 24 points at UCLA and SYCers sold 144.5 points, representing over a third of the local’s points. Comrades intersected an Engineers and Architects strike and participated in the repulsion of a Minuteman provocation at the annual Labor Day union gathering in Wilmington.

The Chicago Local made trips to the University of Illinois-Urbana/Champaign, where we also held two successful video showings on Mumia’s case. Chicago comrades traveled to Minneapolis, the University of Wisconsin-Madison (62 points) and to Ann Arbor and Detroit (57 points), where comrades intersected a teachers strike. Chicago comrades also assisted with trips to North Carolina, New Orleans and Colorado.

The New York Local covered a large swath of the East and Gulf Coasts, from Boston to New Orleans. Comrades made trips to North Carolina (111 points), Charleston, South Carolina (54 points), Norfolk, Virginia (31.5 points), Western Massachusetts (72 points), Washington,

D.C. and Baltimore (28 points). Comrades from New York were greatly assisted by our many sympathizers in Boston in covering a number of campuses there. New York comrades traveled to a number of State University of New York campuses, selling some 81 points, on top of 47 points at various campuses in New York City, including 28 points at Columbia University.

The “at large” points included subscriptions to WV sold by our Canadian comrades of the Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyiste as part of their annual *WV/Spartacist Canada* subscription drive. Subscriptions mailed in from locations not serviced by a local make up the remainder of that category. Congratulations to all comrades for their very hard work in making this subscription drive a success! We encourage our readers to let us know what they think of our press and to contact us to discuss its contents and get involved in the activities of the SL, SYCs and LBLs. ■



WV Photo

Xavier University, September 8. Trips to New Orleans were a highlight of WV subscription drive.

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Oaxaca...

(continued from page 1)

also organized a speakout denouncing the attacks in Oaxaca. As students throughout the UNAM system joined in protest actions, right-wing thugs called *porros*, who are supported by the UNAM administration, waged an attack on students at the CCH-Naucalpan high school, killing one.

Protests have been held outside Mexican embassies and consulates in Italy, Brazil, Canada, Spain, Britain, Greece and Germany, with several arrests reported. Last week, the Spartacist League/U.S. joined protests in cities throughout the country, while the Spartacus Youth Clubs held rallies at the University of Chicago and the University of California at Los Angeles. After 12 people were arrested outside the Mexican Consulate in New York City on October 30, the Partisan Defense Committee sent a protest letter to the mayor demanding the dropping of all charges and noting that “defenders of civil liberties and rights of working people have every right, indeed, the duty to protest the murderous repression in Oaxaca.”

The latest crackdown in Oaxaca began the day after teachers voted to end a strike that had begun in May, when thousands of members of National Educational Workers Union (SNTE) Local 22 walked out demanding higher wages. In June, an attack by hundreds of riot cops ordered by Oaxaca state governor Ulises Ruiz of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) galvanized mass opposition to his regime, and striking teachers and protesters began demanding his resignation. Teachers and their supporters occupying the center of the city set up their own security forces and ran their own radio station.

Mexico’s rulers are increasingly fearful that the PRI has lost control in Oaxaca and that outrage over the repression threatens a broader social upheaval in a country that already this year has seen powerful strikes by industrial workers and mass protests, including over the disputed July presidential elections. On October 30, members of the ruling right-wing National Action Party (PAN) and the left bourgeois-nationalist Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) voted in the Senate, where the two parties hold a majority, to urge Ruiz to resign. Even sections of the PRI are abandoning Ruiz. The Mexico City paper *La Jornada* (4 November) quoted government sources as saying that despite his resistance, Ruiz is being pressured to resign and accept a government sinecure out of the spotlight.

We reprint below a translation of an October 29 leaflet issued by our comrades of the GEM that has been distributed by the ICL at protests internationally.

* * *

After more than four months of the teachers strike—heroically maintained in the face of continuous, murderous state attacks—and despite the fact that teachers had already voted to end the strike, the brutal capitalist state has unleashed massive repression to smash the struggle of the teachers of Oaxaca and their allies of the APPO (Popular Assembly of the People of Oaxaca). While we write these lines, there are reports that the PFP have already taken the Zócalo [main plaza] of Oaxaca City. There are also reports, after the repression has barely begun, that a 15-year-old youth has been shot to death. Already dozens have been arrested. The bloody repression of October 27 cost four more lives: teacher Emilio Alonso Fabia, the American photographer from Indymedia, Bradley Roland Will, the communal peasant (*comunero*) Esteba Ruiz and a person still unidentified were killed in government and federal police attacks together with PRI paramilitaries.

There are also reports that during this period, 23 people have been injured, 20 people detained, and 50 teachers are missing. Since June, at least 14 teachers and social justice activists have already been



AP photos



Oaxaca City: Protesters aid video documentary journalist Brad Will (top), fatally wounded by gunman on October 27. Mourners for teacher Emilio Alonso Fabian (bottom), also shot down that day during attack on protesters.

killed by police or gunmen, while many others have been either arrested or kidnapped. Every day more police provocations and attacks are reported. ***The teachers and the APPO must not stand alone against the murderous repression of the capitalist state.*** The attack against the teachers is an attack aimed at the entire workers movement, and it is in the interest of the workers movement to defend the teachers in Oaxaca. ***The industrial working class must flex its powerful muscle through strike actions in defense of the Oaxaca teachers and the APPO.***

We Trotskyists in the Grupo Espartaquista de México protest in the most vigorous way possible the attacks by the state and their gangs of gunmen, and we solidarize with the struggle of the teachers and the students and peasants who support them. We say: Free all the arrested now! Drop all the charges! PFP and army out of Oaxaca! For workers strike action against state repression! Defend the teachers and the APPO!

For their support to the struggle in Oaxaca, students at the CCH-Naucalpan were brutally attacked last Thursday by *porros* in the service of the authorities and the state. One of the students was killed and five more required hospitalization. For worker and student action to drive the *porros* from UNAM!

The massive discontent over the rightist attacks carried out by the PAN and sections of the PRI has led to a sharp social polarization and the rise of populism, represented prominently by the bourgeois PRD. Since 2005, there have been massive demonstrations of up to 1.2 million people in defense of democratic rights against Fox’s *desafuero* [stripping of political immunity] scam against [PRD presidential candidate Andrés Manuel] López Obrador. The PRD demonstrations in July, August and September of this year drew millions of people onto the streets to protest the dubious [presidential] election victory of Felipe Calderón of the clericalist PAN. Fox responded by putting a large part of Mexico City under a virtual state of siege on September 1, the day of his last state of the union address. The bourgeoisie itself is divided and fearful that the discontent will turn into a social explosion. Thus the brutal capitalist rulers intend the attack against the combative Oaxacan teachers as a warning to the entire population, especially the working class.

Oaxaca is one of the poorest states in the country and one of the most rural, and has the largest numbers of indigenous people. More than a fifth of the population over 15 is illiterate; more than a quarter lack drinking water. The state has the lowest per capita income and the highest

poverty rate in the country, forcing many to migrate either to the U.S. or to urban industrial centers in Mexico, desperately searching for a way to survive. Teachers, earning starvation wages, are struggling to give education to students who often have nothing to eat.

The current militant struggle reflects the level of anger, which has been contained for a long time, of the Oaxacan masses who are submerged in misery and racist oppression. After the strike had started, initially demanding increased wages, the brutal repression against the teachers’ encampment in the center of Oaxaca City on June 14 pushed Local 22 of the SNTE to adopt more radical methods and demand the removal of PRI hangman, state governor Ulises Ruiz. Since then, the teachers and the APPO—formed some days later—have maintained control of the city center, having constructed barricades throughout the city. Their security forces successfully broke up various police provocations and captured some of their perpetrators. Isolated in Oaxaca, and lacking social power, the struggle had arrived at an impasse. The industrial working class must lead all the exploited and oppressed in struggle against this bourgeois state repression, which can only be stopped, once and for all, through the overthrow of the capitalist system through socialist revolution.

Our vigorous defense of the APPO and the teachers against the state does not imply embracing their political perspective that is dominated by illusions in the PRD and limited to the militant petty-bourgeois populism that also characterizes

the EZLN [Zapatistas]. On the eve of the July 2 [presidential] elections, the Oaxaca teachers called for a “punishment vote” against the PRI and the PAN—i.e., for the PRD. Today, the main demand by the teachers is the removal of Ulises Ruiz. Of course this thug should be thrown out. But what is important is to understand that capitalism, independently of who administers it, is a system based on the exploitation of labor and the systematic repression of the workers and oppressed by the bourgeois state—the police, army, courts and prisons. Taking up the lessons of Engels against those who argued that the bourgeois state could be reformed, Lenin explained in *The State and Revolution* that the special forces of repression “of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie, of millions of working people by handfuls of the rich, must be replaced by a ‘special coercive force’ for the suppression of the bourgeoisie by the proletariat (the dictatorship of the proletariat). This is precisely what is meant by ‘abolition of the state as state.’ This is precisely the ‘act’ of taking possession of the means of production in the name of society.”

The PRD is a bourgeois nationalist party. Its differences with the PAN and the PRI simply lie in the manner of administering capitalism. To obtain some more crumbs from the table of their imperialist masters, the PRD needs to prop itself up on the working class, and this is why it tries to pose as a “friend” of the workers and oppressed. Illusions in the nationalist bourgeoisie are truly *suicidal*. As we wrote in *Espartaco* No. 26 (September 2006):

“The participation of the PRD in continual anti-union attacks in Mexico City—especially against the SUTGDF [municipal workers union] and the Metro [subway] union—and in the breaking of the 1999 UNAM strike by police, the murderous repression in Lázaro Cárdenas and in Atenco, in the killing of Zapatista activists that the EZLN has documented, etc., are not isolated incidents: they are a reflection of its bourgeois, and therefore inherently anti-worker, nature.”

The PRD—and the trade-union bureaucracies tied to it, not to mention those tied to the PRI—has carefully kept its distance from the Oaxaca struggle, which has slid out of its direct control. Even though the PRD says that they oppose the repression against the teachers, tomorrow they will attack the struggling masses, as they have done so many times before.

For Permanent Revolution!

The only perspective for fundamental change in the situation of the working class and the mass of impoverished petty-bourgeois is the struggle for socialist revolution. The youth that identify with the combative teachers and social activists in Oaxaca must understand that the working class is the only class with the social power and class interest to destroy the capitalist system through socialist revolution, leading all the exploited and oppressed. Because of its role in setting in motion the means of production, the urban industrial proletariat has the power to paralyze the entire economy. An exam-



Bradley

September 1: Hundreds of thousands marched and rallied in Oaxaca demanding ouster of Oaxaca state governor Ruiz and freedom for political prisoners.

ple of this immense social power was the recent successful strike of the miners and metalworkers in Lázaro Cárdenas, Michoacán, which brought the bosses to their knees—they finally had to give in to all the union’s demands—and dealt a heavy blow to the government itself. Because the workers toil collectively and have nothing but their own labor power to live off, their objective class interest is the abolition of private property and therefore the destruction of the capitalist system.

Fundamental to achieving this is unceasing struggle against all illusions in the bourgeoisie—which are prominently pushed by the pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucrats who run all the unions today—and struggle for the *political independence of the proletariat* and for the construction of a Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party with the purpose of leading the working class to take power. The bourgeoisie, regardless of its political perspective, is unable to resolve even democratic questions like the agrarian problem, which keeps the bulk of the peasantry—in Oaxaca and the entire country—in the most complete misery. As Leon Trotsky, the co-leader of the October 1917 Russian Revolution with Lenin, explained in *The Permanent Revolution*:

“With regard to countries 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, above all of its peasant masses.”

An essential part of combatting the influence of the bourgeoisie in the working class is struggling against nationalist ideology, which only serves to keep the



Steel workers at Mittal steel plant in port of Lázaro Cárdenas after successful strike, April 11.

socialist revolution, has always, in reality, consisted of a massacre of the workers. Thus the PCM calls for “All power to the people” (*Vanguardia Proletaria*, second fortnight of October 2006), which power, according to Florentino López, a spokesman for the APPO and a member of the FPR, will come “through a New Constituent [Assembly], to give form to a democratic and popular government which opens the road to a truly free and sovereign state of Oaxaca.” A “democratic and popular” government is a *bourgeois* government. To “justify” his abandonment of the Bolshevik program of struggling for world socialist revolution, Stalin upheld the anti-revolutionary dogma that the USSR could build “socialism in one country.” *Vanguardia Proletaria* gives a new

Provisional Government and the workers soviets—a situation that was deeply and necessarily unstable and brief—was resolved by the Bolshevik Revolution which overthrew the bourgeoisie and created the dictatorship of the proletariat based on the soviets.

The LTS-CC calls for a “provisional government of the APPO and other workers, peasants and people’s organizations of the state. This government must call a Revolutionary Constituent Assembly [that is, a *bourgeois parliament*] upon the ruins of the current regime, to discuss and push demands of the people on the state, as part of a national struggle against the regime of alternating parties.” The call of LTS-CC is reduced to the APPO’s administering the capitalist state in Oaxaca,



Spartacist

November 4: Spartacists at protests in Berlin (left) and Los Angeles raise call for workers strikes against repression in Mexico, warn against illusions in bourgeois PRD.

workers tied to “their own” bosses, lackeys of the imperialists. The working class is an international class with common interests, and a proletarian revolution in Mexico could not survive without the assistance of our class brothers in the United States. Marxists counterpose proletarian internationalism to bourgeois nationalism and fight for new October Revolutions throughout the world.

The Left Tail of Populism

The majority of the left has adapted politically to the APPO and the Oaxacan teachers (although some, such as “Militante,” a fake-Trotskyist group that is part of the bourgeois PRD, criticize the APPO from the right because a section of the APPO refused to participate in the “National Democratic Convention,” whose only purpose was to name AMLO [López Obrador] as the “legitimate president” [“La Insurrección Revolucionaria de Oaxaca,” undated pamphlet]). The Stalinists of the Communist Party of Mexico (Marxist-Leninist)[PCM] base their entire strategy on building their “Revolutionary Popular Front” (FPR) with the goal of subordinating the working class to the bourgeoisie through the Menshevik scheme—later plagiarized by Stalin—of “two stage revolution.” The first stage consists of a supposed bourgeois democratic revolution; the second stage, supposedly the fight for

twist to this absurdity, fighting now for “popular democracy” in just one state.

Not far from the Stalinists are the politics of the fake Trotskyists of the Liga de Trabajadores por el Socialismo-Contracorriente (LTS-CC). In their paper *Estrategia Obrera* No. 54 (2 October), they state: “That there is a dual power is shown by the fact that the media coordinate the struggle, extend solidarity and express the discontent of the oppressed.” This statement is absurd.

The classic example of dual power was given by the 1917 Russian Revolution. The workers carried out the February Revolution, which brought down the tsar and led to the formation of a bourgeois republic run by the Provisional Government. But that revolution also created the soviets, or councils, organs of *workers* power counterposed to the capitalists’ power. The Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionaries (a populist party based on the peasantry) supported the Provisional Government, and participated in it, and at first led the soviets with a class-collaborationist policy. In contrast, Lenin’s Bolsheviks strongly opposed the Provisional Government and called for “All power to the soviets!”, polemicalizing strongly against the Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionaries and thus preparing the October Revolution. The contradiction between the two powers (the bourgeois



WV Photo

adopting the illusion—which has also made the Zapatistas very popular—of some type of democratic island of “self-management” in the midst of the brutal capitalist regime. In deeds, the LTS-CC also adopts the “revolution by stages” Menshevik scheme. It is not a coincidence that the LTS takes up the name of the *bourgeois and imperialist* Provisional Government in Russia in 1917.

Although the Internationalist Group (IG) tries to use Marxoid phraseology more often than the groups mentioned above, it shares with them an adaptation to the consciousness of the masses in struggle. Unable to respond to our polem-

ics, the IG has resorted to the grossest falsifications and recently launched the vile slander that we Spartacists are “apologists for death squads.” The reason for their desperate recourse to such slander is our principled defense of the miners union against the attack by Fox and the PRD, and our denunciation of the pro-PRD and union-busting position of the IG that the corporatist unions in reality represent the “class enemy” (and thus “death squads”), while only those tied to the PRD are genuine workers organizations, as well as their subsequent renunciation of the basic defense of the miners union against state attack (see “IG: Dangerous Lies and Cynical Slanders,” WV No. 879 [27 October]).

The founding cadre of the IG came out of the ICL a decade ago, despairing before the arduous task of forging Leninist-Trotskyist parties to struggle for socialist revolution. Since then, they have devoted themselves to searching for substitutes for the proletariat as the fundamental agency for proletarian revolution. Their positions on Oaxaca clearly demonstrate this. The IG characterizes the APPO as “an organization with a popular-frontist orientation, although still in the process of formation. That is, it points in the direction of a class-collaborationist coalition that seeks to chain the working class to sections of the bourgeoisie, to derail explosive class struggle and thus avoid a ‘revolutionary danger.’” (*El Internacionalista/Edición México* No. 2, August 2006).

The popular front is a class-collaborationist coalition in which one or more workers parties is subordinated to the bourgeoisie, generally to administer the capitalist state. The APPO is not a workers organization, but is based on unionized teachers and sectors of the petty-bourgeoisie, such as students and peasants. By its social composition as well as its political perspective—which dilutes the proletariat in the mass of the “people” and is based on illusions in the democratic reform of the capitalist state, looking directly to the PRD to carry this out—the APPO is not a popular-frontist organization but, as we have already seen, simply populist. Although the struggle in Oaxaca could serve as a spark to ignite workers struggle, in itself it does not pose a “revolutionary danger.” The IG is incapable of recognizing that the industrial proletariat, in any case tiny in Oaxaca, is not a relevant force in the current struggle, and has found, in the teachers, students and peasants, its substitute.

In any event, the IG’s blather about the APPO’s “popular frontism” is designed to give a somewhat “leftist” covering to their adaptation. On the ground, when it matters, they prefer to silence any criticism of the struggling masses. Thus, in a student assembly called by the IG at CCH Sur [another UNAM high school] recently, their speakers left out all criticism, all reference to Marxism or even to their own organization, in order not to alienate their fellow travelers in the “movement.”

We Spartacists fight to forge a revolutionary, proletarian and internationalist party as the fundamental instrument for socialist revolution—the only solution to the exploitation, oppression and misery inherent to capitalism. The working class must not allow the capitalist repression to pass with impunity. *Defend the teachers and their allies against state attack!* ■

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We Demand the Immediate Freedom of Mumia Abu-Jamal, an Innocent Man.



COC Productions

Mumia Abu-Jamal’s appeal is now on the “fast track” in the federal appeals court and the state is determined to carry out his execution.

Mumia Abu-Jamal is an innocent man. A former Black Panther Party spokesman, supporter of the MOVE organization and award-winning journalist known as the “voice of the voiceless,” Mumia was framed up in 1982 on false charges of killing a Philadelphia police officer. Sentenced to death based on his political history and beliefs, Mumia has spent 24 years on death row for a crime he did not commit. The frame-up of Mumia Abu-Jamal shows what the death penalty is all about. It is a legacy of chattel slavery and a barbaric outrage, it is the lynch rope made legal.

The case of Mumia Abu-Jamal exemplifies the race and class bias of the U.S. justice system against workers, black people, the poor and all the oppressed. The notorious trial judge, Albert Sabo was overheard at the time promising, “I’m going to help them fry the n----r.” Racist jury-rigging, false testimony coerced through police threats, and prosecutorial cover-up were the basis for Mumia’s conviction. Both the Pennsylvania state courts and the federal courts have refused to consider the reams of documented evidence that prove Mumia’s innocence. Foremost is the sworn confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Mumia, shot and killed the police officer, and that Mumia had nothing to do with the shooting.

We stand with the millions around the world—workers, students, death penalty abolitionists, fighters for black rights and immigrant rights, socialists—who have taken up the fight to free Mumia Abu-Jamal now!

An injury to one is an injury to all! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal now! Abolish the racist death penalty!

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*Organization listed for identification purposes only

This statement was initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee. Partial list. For full list of signatories, visit www.partisandefense.org.

The time to act is now! Join the campaign to free Mumia Abu-Jamal now!

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PDC Rally...

(continued from page 12)

campuses. It pointed toward the kind of united-front action that is necessary to mobilize broad social forces, particularly the trade unions. The watchword must be unity in action with full freedom of criticism for participating organizations.

The PDC’s Erica Williamson, who chaired the event, opened her remarks by condemning the killing of four protesters in Oaxaca the night before and calling for “international solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Mexico who are being victimized by vicious government repression” (see article, page 1).

Williamson addressed the urgency of the fight for Mumia’s freedom, stating, “If Mumia is to be freed, it will take the mobilization of the masses, centrally labor, to champion his cause in outrage and on the basis that this was a case of a political frame-up through and through.” Williamson placed Mumia’s case in the context of the “increased bipartisan attacks on civil liberties and the frame-up conviction and sentencing of leftist lawyer Lynne Stewart to 28 months and her co-defendants Mohamed Yousry to 20 months and Ahmed Abdel Sattar to an outrageous 24 years,” as well as the attacks by the Bush administration on defendants’ *habeas corpus* right to challenge evidence. She stressed that “while all legal proceedings and legal remedies should be pursued on Mumia’s behalf, we cannot have any illusions or reliance in the capitalist courts.” Williamson continued:

“There is no need for a trial to prove that Mumia is innocent—the facts speak for themselves. The evidence of Mumia’s innocence is overwhelming. The PDC has fought to get this evidence out, well before the conclusive piece of evidence that helps

Mumia’s Greetings to PDC Rallies

The following recorded greetings from Mumia Abu-Jamal were played at the PDC rallies last month.

Ona MOVE! Long live John Africa! Dear friends and comrades of the PDC:

Thank you for your hard and arduous work in the unions and the streets on behalf of my life and freedom. I, *we* thank you all. This struggle for justice has been long and bitter, yet we struggle on, as we must. The law, Marx said, is but the will of one class made

into the law for all. We have seen how the law is made and unmade, how legal precedents become suggestions, and how the law changes from case to case—all in support of repression. We’ve seen the racial exclusion of jurors and the racist comments of judges, false confessions and more. Yet, the struggle continues. I thank you all for the part you play in that struggle.

Ona MOVE! Long live John Africa! From death row, this is Mumia Abu-Jamal.

is we are in the class struggle” and referred to the TWU strike last December. An immigrant from Mexico, Arroyo described his horror at watching the news of the May 1985 firebombing of MOVE, saying that he “saw how the government was burning an entire block of people, with children inside!” The audience was read a statement from Leonard Riley Jr. of International Longshoremen’s Association Local 1422: “Coming from South Carolina and coming out of the ‘Charleston Five’ experience, I know first hand the full potential and extent to which the government will go to act against those that openly challenge their policies.... It was only through national and International solidarity of the labor movement that the Charleston 5 were eventually freed.” Riley’s statement concluded: “We Can and We must use the collective forces of the Labor Movement to free this innocent man. Free Mumia Now!”

Addressing the rally less than two weeks after her sentencing, Lynne Stewart expressed her determination to chal-

over to Mumia’s side and tying the masses to have faith in the courts, instead of fighting on the basis of winning the masses to the fight for the freedom of an innocent man. And now that Mumia stands on his last legal legs in court, with small exceptions you hardly hear a peep from most of these groups.”

In fact, the organizations mentioned by Williamson were notable for their absence from this rally.

Speaking for the New York Labor Black League, which was initiated by and is fraternally allied with the Spartacist League, TWU Local 100 member Tom Cowperthwaite declared, “Black liberation cannot succeed apart from united class struggle against the capitalists; working-class emancipation cannot succeed without an implacable fight against anti-black racism. Taking up the fight for Mumia’s freedom is part of the fight against racial oppression *and* working-class exploitation.”

Cowperthwaite was loudly applauded when he championed the TWU’s strike action, saying, “I’m proud that we showed our union power for three days last Decem-



August 1995: Trade unionists join Philadelphia demonstration for Mumia, part of international protest movement that stayed executioner’s hand.

tie it all together—the confession of Arnold Beverly—was exposed. Mumia has been in prison or on death row for nearly 25 years. He doesn’t need another ‘day in court.’ He needs his freedom.”

Powerfully supporting this appeal, just days before the rally, a full-page statement calling to free Mumia and signed by more than 200 black and labor activists and prominent individuals around the world appeared in the major Harlem-based black newspaper the *Amsterdam News* (26 October). The statement (printed in this issue with an updated list of signatures on page 8) specifically points to the confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Mumia, shot the policeman; it is titled: “We Demand the Immediate Freedom of Mumia Abu-Jamal, an Innocent Man.”

The rally heard taped greetings from Mumia and a recording of a moving speech by his sister Lydia Barashango at the Oakland rally. A statement was read out from New York’s 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East union declaring: “We support the demand to free Mumia Now!” Besides speakers from the PDC and LBL, the audience was addressed by Jose A. Arroyo, vice chair of Section 115 of Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 100, Lynne Stewart and Pam Africa of the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Arroyo described the rally as being “united with one common cause, and that

lenge her frame-up conviction and sentencing for the “crime” of being a zealous advocate on behalf of her client, the Islamic fundamentalist cleric Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman. She received a standing ovation. Later in the program, Monique Code read a statement from Mumia’s son Jamal Hart, who was framed up and sentenced in 1998 to 15 and a half years on bogus firearms possession charges for speaking out in his father’s defense.

Free Mumia: Which Way Forward?

The core debate at the rally tackled the question of why support for Mumia was demobilized over the years, which must be understood in order to build the kind of militant mass protest movement that can win his freedom. As Williamson said in her opening remarks, “The fact that people are not mobilizing and filling the streets now like they once did for Mumia does not go unnoticed by the courts.” She continued:

“Many so-called socialist organizations such as Workers World Party, Socialist Action, the Revolutionary Communist Party and the International Socialist Organization have at one point or another taken up Mumia’s case. But it is a question on what basis they take it up. It boils down to a difference between reforming the capitalist state and organizing working people independent of it and to fight it. Many of these leftist groups were fighting on the basis of winning the courts

ber. We paralyzed the racist, union-busting MTA and the city itself. That’s the same power we need to *free Mumia* and all class-war prisoners.” He continued, “In every workplace, the words ‘Strike!’ and ‘Free Mumia!’ should ring out in the same breath.”

Cowperthwaite illustrated the capitalist state as a machine of class repression by pointing to its role in the transit strike: “The government and courts only intervene into the unions to hogtie and destroy them as fighting organizations. Just look at the recent court injunctions, fines and prison time imposed on TWU Local 100.... The LBL says: ‘For complete and unconditional independence from the capitalist state! Cops and security guards out of the unions! No to union-suing! Labor must clean its own house!’” He said:

“A host of phony socialist groups, liberals and black nationalists derailed the struggle for Mumia in the late ’90s by pushing the demand for a ‘new trial’ and sowing illusions in the same government that framed him up. During every political show trial in this country’s history—Sacco and Vanzetti, the Scottsboro Boys, the Rosenbergs—the liberals and reformists have sown false hopes in the supposedly evenhanded scales of justice.”

In her remarks, Pam Africa gave credit to the PDC for its many years of work on behalf of Mumia. She has often cited the legal efforts of PDC attorneys on behalf of Mumia, including bringing out the

Beverly evidence, which is but one part, although a crucial part, of the massive evidence of Mumia’s innocence. As Erica Williamson noted in her address, the PDC first learned of Mumia’s case from MOVE member Ramona Africa, the sole adult survivor of the government’s firebombing of the MOVE commune on 13 May 1985, in which eleven men, women and children were burned to death. The PDC defended MOVE and for 20 years has included MOVE members in its program of monthly financial stipends to class-war prisoners.

Directly responding to Williamson’s and Cowperthwaite’s criticism of the role played by the liberal-reformist left in demobilizing support for Mumia, Pam Africa stated: “I want to dispel the myth that people who call for a trial for Mumia is the cause of the movement being splintered.” Speaking of those who might support the death penalty and don’t know whether Mumia is innocent but see that he “didn’t have a fair trial,” she said that “you don’t run these people off.” Her comments were applauded by many, underlining the range of political views of those in attendance.

Pam Africa defended the Workers World Party (WWP) and Jeff Mackler of Socialist Action (SA), saying “they do work” on behalf of Mumia. She continued by saying that “a lot of people aren’t here tonight because we do not understand how we offend each other and you cannot pull people in offending them.” She pointed to the 24 April 1999 “Millions for Mumia” protests, which the WWP and SA heavily built, as a high point in mobilizing for Mumia and mentioned as well the ILWU stop-work action that shut down West Coast ports that day. She went on, “You know what broke this movement up? It’s fear. It’s racism. It’s classism. And the terrorism that was in the hearts of this government, when they looked out there on April the 24th, 1999, when they saw the people united, moving up against them.... They had to stop that.”

She also took issue with the PDC and LBL speakers’ assertion of the strategic importance of mobilizing the labor movement in this struggle, asking about the poor and the unemployed: “They stood beside the workers. I’m saying we must give credit to all those people who worked to free Mumia.” She spoke of Italian Americans, Mexican Americans and black nationalists who came out for Mumia at that time. She also pointed to “black policemen” who were “there for Mumia.”

The PDC’s Rachel Wolkenstein, who was on Mumia’s legal team from 1995 to 1999 and led the investigation that turned up evidence of Mumia’s innocence, including the Beverly confession, responded from the platform: “I want to begin by really genuinely thanking Pam for raising her criticisms here at this meeting.... I’m not offended by that. And neither should anyone who we criticize be offended. It’s a question of how best to fight forward for Mumia’s freedom as part of the broader struggle for the liberation of us all.” “What the capitalist class sees in Mumia,” Wolkenstein said, “is the spectre of black revolution. And because of that they will stop at nothing, *nothing*—lies, coercion, falsifying evidence, disappearing evidence of Mumia’s innocence, campaigns of all sorts to create dissension and all of that. I couldn’t agree more that our main enemy is the capitalist state. Now the question is, how do you fight it?”

For Class-Struggle Defense!

As Wolkenstein explained, the first step is understanding the nature of the capitalist state as “the instrument of repression for those rulers of this country, the capitalist class,” who “will stop at nothing against a possible unity of the working class, against the consciousness...that they must struggle for socialist revolution and not accept the parameters of capitalism.” Wolkenstein noted that it was very important that the 1199 union leadership came

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PDC Rally...

(continued from page 9)

out in defense of Mumia and that they had signed the statement that appeared in the *Amsterdam News*. “But they would do better,” she said, “if they were here today as a first step fighting for Mumia.” She won applause for saying that they should have “been prepared to bring out their membership in defending the transit workers when they were out on strike” and “to commit themselves along with every other union here, that labor will *stop* in this city until Mumia is free.”

Wolkenstein continued, “That consciousness is the consciousness that *we must win people to.*” “Our numbers on a street in a demonstration show our desire to stand for something.... But that is not the same thing as being able to stop this system, *shut it down!* These are very different things. And that is why we talk about the power of the working class. It is not a dismissal of the good will, the heart, the needs and the oppression that otherwise exists in society. It is not a statement that those people who are unemployed



San Francisco, 24 April 1999: “Millions for Mumia” rally mobilized around call for new trial, catering to illusions in racist “justice” system that railroaded Mumia to death row.

They haven’t gotten there yet. We can’t go too far in advance of people yet. We must bide our time’.”

Wolkenstein continued, “I want to make a point that the *more* evidence that came out of the frame-up, from 1995 to 1999, the *more* those so-called left organiza-

fully. And he does. And that the trial was unfair. Which it was. And they will mobilize on that basis. But that’s not enough. And you know what? *That will not get Mumia free.*” She emphasized, “There is no way, given the determination of this state to execute Mumia, that he could be freed short of a mobilization that recognizes the depth of the hatred the state has for him.”

Holding up the *Amsterdam News* ad, Wolkenstein said, “There are accusations being made that to raise the Beverly evidence, to raise the demand for Mumia’s immediate freedom, to raise the demand that he is an innocent man is divisive, that it’s sending decent people away. Well, there are plenty of decent people who do not have our politics who signed onto this statement. Because they can when it’s presented to them.... They were ready to do this years ago. Who didn’t allow them to do that is the so-called left that decided that the only way that you could build a mass movement was by taking people *back*, retarding their consciousness, stopping them from drawing the lessons of Mumia’s case.”

Wolkenstein also answered charges often raised by liberals that Mumia never told the courts that he was innocent. “Mumia said he was innocent the night he was shot.... He said he was innocent during his trial. He said he was innocent in his 2001 affidavit that accompanied the legal pleadings along with the Beverly evidence.” Mumia’s statement to the court that he was not guilty of the crime he was charged with “were the words that Sacco and Vanzetti used.” She continued, “Mumia knew why he was in court.... He was guilty of being a Black Panther Party member, a MOVE supporter, a black revolutionary. He was guilty of being a journalist who reported the truth. He was guilty of not doing the bidding of the police and the government.”

Mobilize Now!

The questions posed in the debate from the podium continued in the floor discussion. A supporter of the Free Mumia Coalition asked the audience to sign a petition to name a Harlem street in honor of Mumia. But as Williamson explained, the PDC regretfully was unable to sign the petition because it called for a “new and fair trial” and did not call for his free-

dom or say that he is innocent.

A supporter of the PDC described her work with another group supporting Mumia that was going to put out a fund-raising letter. She said she asked them, “Why don’t we put in the letter that he’s innocent? Well, all hell broke out. ‘We can’t do that, we’ll alienate people. Some people think he’s guilty.’”

SL spokesman Don Alexander countered our revolutionary integrationist program for black liberation to the dead end of black nationalism. Referring to the overthrow of capitalist rule in Russia in 1917, he said, “One of the important components of that revolution was its internationalism. And it was the fight of the Russian Bolsheviks that actually won the early Communist movement to understand the need to fight against black oppression in the U.S. as central to the struggle for working-class revolution, not separate from it.” The Black Panthers “represented the best of a generation of black militants that wanted to make a social revolution. But their so-called program of revolutionary nationalism rejected mobilizing the multiracial working class as an ally of the struggle for black freedom. That made them easy pickings. It wasn’t just the FBI that smashed them, but it was the fact that they did not have a program that was capable of uprooting black oppression, which is rooted in the capitalist system.”

In a brief outburst in the midst of the discussion period, Pam Africa charged that there was “racism” in the room. This attempt to deflect the vigorous debate drew a sharp rebuke from Rachel Wolkenstein: “What we have here is a bunch of demagoguery because there’s differences, and we’re going to have differences. But I am not going to tolerate an attack on our organization as being racist because you have a disagreement.”

Another Spartacist speaker pointed out that the Harlem rally took place in the midst of one of the capitalists’ periodic “elephant-and-donkey show” electoral farces, which “serve to perpetuate the myth that this country is democratic or can be fair for working people and the oppressed.” She pointed to “the agents of the capitalist class in the labor movement” as well as leftists “who push the lie that this system can be reformed to serve the interests of workers and the oppressed. And I’ll give you a stellar example of that. Millions of people protested the racist imperialist war against Iraq.... And where did that go? That got channeled in this country into the dead end of ‘Anybody but Bush.’” She continued, “The best way that we arm people to fight racism, exploitation and war is by telling the truth about what this system is about and what program it’s going to take to fight to get rid of it and organize the working class.”

The debate at the rally was a welcome example of the kind of political struggle that must take place to drive the fight to free Mumia forward. As Erica Williamson stated in concluding her opening remarks: “Everyone here must take this case back to their unions, to their campuses, to their community groups.” The rally concluded with the chant: “Free Mumia Now!” ■



Government-ordered firebombing of Philadelphia MOVE’s Osage Avenue home on 13 May 1985 killed eleven people, including five children, and destroyed entire black neighborhood.

are not part of the struggle. But that is the duty of the labor movement: to *organize* the unemployed, to *fight* for jobs for the unemployed, to *unionize* people across the board.”

Wolkenstein answered Pam Africa on the role of black cops, some of whom, like the Black Guardians, had been welcomed into Mumia protests in the past: “You know what I want those black cops to do? I want those black cops to *tell me what they know* about the frame-up of Mumia Abu-Jamal, because there were tons of black cops involved in the frame-up.” Wolkenstein insisted that those cops, precisely “because they’re cops” who “defend the capitalist system, and are part of the gunning down of blacks and immigrants and poor and strikers, are just as much the enemy of all of us here as a white cop!”

The PDC’s polemics, Wolkenstein said, were directed not at individuals who came out for Mumia protests because of their particular liberal or religious beliefs, or even centrally at bourgeois organizations like Amnesty International, whose views are antithetical to the Marxist understanding of the state. “Who we are addressing our criticisms to,” she emphasized, “are those organizations that say they are socialist. That say they are for the workers. That say they’re for black revolution and for black freedom. It’s those organizations that play the game that has been played for decades and decades and decades, which is to say, to use the excuse: ‘People aren’t ready for this yet.

tions decided to hold people *back* from their understanding of the nature of the courts. Because it was clear that there was a frame-up.... The more the evidence came out, the more those organizations said: ‘We are *not* going to argue for Free Mumia, that Mumia is innocent. We are *not* going to argue that people need to understand that this is a racist system, that we cannot have any illusions in the court and that we’ll need a mass mobilization on the streets, and that’s the only way we will get the courts to respond’.”

Pointing to a January 1999 “Emergency Leadership Summit Meeting” that included among its 70 participants representatives of the WWP, SA and Refuse & Resist, Wolkenstein stated, “I’ll give a criticism of the Partisan Defense Committee. We weren’t there at that meeting fighting for what we should have been fighting for.” She continued, “What did they decide to do at this leadership meeting? They decided they would consciously make the demand for ‘Millions for Mumia’ be ‘new trial for Mumia.’ Not ‘Free Mumia.’ And not anything that opposed the death penalty. And this was already after there was a worldwide campaign where millions and millions of people...had signed onto statements and demands and rallies and resolutions that said ‘End the racist death penalty. Free Mumia’.”

“There are going to be liberals who are going to organize on the basis that Mumia is a wonderful man,” Wolkenstein continued. “And he is. And he writes beauti-

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New Orleans: Racist Atrocity

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U.S. Out!...

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Washington's all-purpose bogeyman.

The main enemy of the world's working people, the U.S. imperialist state—murderer of hundreds of thousands of Japanese in the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, butcher of over three million Koreans and three million Vietnamese, enforcer of the UN sanctions that starved 1.5 million Iraqis to death and perpetrator of the Haditha slaughter and other war crimes in Iraq—hails the death sentence handed out by its puppet court. It is the “lesser evil” Democratic Party that has overseen the bulk of the atrocities perpetrated by U.S. imperialism. As we wrote in “Imperialists Gloat over Capture of Former Henchman Saddam Hussein” (WV No. 816, 26 December 2003): “When workers tribunals of a victorious socialist revolution in the United States try America's capitalist exploiters for their crimes against the oppressed masses of the world, black America, labor, immigrants and the poor, and when Iraqi Kurds, leftists and workers rip the oil wealth out of the hands of the military occupiers and judge them and their former henchmen, *then* we can start talking about justice.”

The faith-based Bush gang is selling the death sentence as a major step toward “stability” in Iraq. But the predictable reaction in Iraq tells a different story: Sunnis protested in fury against the sentence, arms in hand, while Shi'ites and Kurds celebrated, arms in hand. U.S. Central Command planners last month produced an “Index of Civil Conflict” chart, which as reported by the *New York Times* (1 November), shows

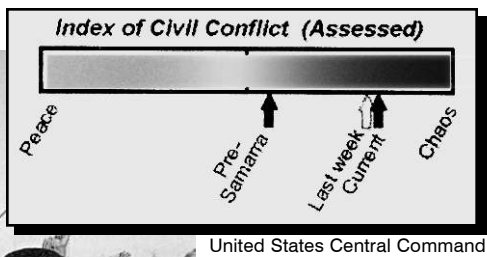


AP

oppressed in a socialist revolution that smashes the U.S. imperialist order.

Imperialist Thieves Fall Out

Pre-election polls show that over 70 percent of the U.S. population believes that Iraq is in a state of civil war. More than 2,800 U.S. troops have been killed since the March 2003 invasion and over 20,000 wounded. General William Odom, former head of the National Security Agency, has called the Iraq war and occupation “the greatest strategic disaster in American history.” A preview of an upcoming *Vanity Fair* article posted on the Internet speaks of neocons Richard Perle and Kenneth Adelman, among the ideological architects of the war, now blaming the Bush administration's incompetence for the Iraq quagmire. An “Iraq Study Group” approved by the White House and headed by James Baker, a leading policy-maker under Bush Sr.,



United States Central Command

U.S. military chart produced in October gauges Iraq's descent into “chaos.” Supporters of Shi'ite cleric Moktada al-Sadr rally in Baghdad, October 31.

For the Democratic Party of U.S. imperialism, Iraq was a “mistake” only because it was not successful. Meanwhile, the murderous U.S./NATO occupation of Afghanistan has led to the resurgence of the Taliban. In a *New York Times* (27 October) op-ed piece, liberal columnist Paul Krugman declared Iraq “a lost cause.” He continued:

“The moral is clear—we need to get out of Iraq, not because we want to cut and run, but because our continuing presence is doing nothing but wasting American lives. And if we do free up our forces (and those of our British allies), we might still be able to save Afghanistan.”

The Afghanistan war embraced by Krugman and other liberals as a just and noble response to the September 11 terror attacks means imperialist slaughter and reinforces the barbaric oppression of women. On October 24, air strikes carried out by NATO forces killed up to 85 villagers in Kandahar province. Soon after, Pakistan, with U.S. backing, bombed an Islamic school near the Afghan border, killing 80. Just as we called for the military defense of Afghanistan against the U.S. invasion in 2001 despite our proletarian opposition to the bloody Taliban reactionaries, today we demand: **U.S./NATO out of Afghanistan now!**

Imperialist Occupation Foments Bloody Chaos

As proletarian-internationalist opponents of U.S. imperialism, we recognize that when the insurgents in Iraq carry out strikes against the U.S. occupiers, such acts coincide with the interests of the international proletariat. However, we do not imbue these forces with “anti-imperialist” credentials and we stand in intransigent opposition to the murderous communal violence that is often carried out by the very same forces fighting the occupation armies. Should the Iraqi proletariat raise its head, it would face not only the savagery of the imperialists but also the brutality of the reactionary Islamic fundamentalists and bourgeois nationalists that dominate the “resistance.”

In August, as Iraq spiraled ever more quickly into chaos, Washington redeployed troops to Baghdad, aiming to at least control the capital. But the communal bloodshed only increased. Then, after the U.S. accused Moktada al-Sadr's Mahdi Army militia of kidnapping a U.S. Army translator, American and Iraqi troops threw a cordon around Baghdad's Sadr City on October 25, sealing off the massive Shi'ite slum and stronghold of al-Sadr's forces. That same day, U.S. air strikes on the area killed five. As outrage mounted over the siege and checkpoints, Iraqi prime minister Nuri Kamal al-Maliki demanded the lifting of the siege, and the U.S. complied.

That Washington's own puppet regime in Iraq is increasingly defying its imperialist paymasters only gives more impetus to Bush's bourgeois opponents to push cutting U.S. losses there. At the same time, the imperialists fear that a withdrawal would only strengthen the growing influence of Shi'ite Iran over the government in Iraq and the now-dominant Shi'ite population. In late October, the U.S. carried out naval exercises in the Persian Gulf as a further provocation against Iran, which is in the imperialists' cross hairs over its development of nuclear technology. In response, Iran began ten days of military exercises. The latest brazen

American provocations against Iran, which has not violated any nuclear proliferation agreements, further demonstrate that Iran *needs* nukes as a deterrent to imperialist attack.

Meanwhile, Israel, on the heels of its murderous assault on Lebanon, has again ratcheted up its terror against the Palestinian people, slaughtering more than 50 people in the Gaza Strip in the past week. Over 300 Palestinians have been killed in the four-month Zionist offensive. Both the Democrats and Republicans are fulsome supporters of the bloody Zionist regime, including backing its recent bombardment and invasion of Lebanon. **Defend the Palestinian people! Zionist troops and settlers out of all the Occupied Territories!**

The Democrats have long complained that Bush's Iraq policy has overstretched the military to the extent that the U.S. cannot pursue more important targets, such as capitalist Iran or the North Korean deformed workers state. In fact, since September 11, 2001, U.S. imperialism's military attentions have largely been diverted from its key strategic target of China, the most powerful of the remaining societies where capitalism was overthrown, as well as from North Korea. It is the duty of the international proletariat to defend the Chinese, North Korean, Cuban and Vietnamese deformed workers states against military attack and capitalist counterrevolution. As part of our defense of North Korea, we support Pyongyang's testing and development of nukes as a deterrent against imperialist blackmail. **Down with UN sanctions against North Korea!**

Defeat U.S. Imperialism Through Workers Revolution!

When Democratic Congressman and longtime hawk Jack Murtha came out last year with his call for a speedy redeployment out of the Iraq quagmire, we wrote in “Iraq: U.S. Occupiers Out Now!” (WV No. 860, 9 December 2005):

“Ultimately, the solution to the suffering of U.S. imperialism's victims depends on the struggle of the American proletariat to overthrow the capitalist order through socialist revolution. From the onset of the Iraq antiwar protests in 2002, we have stressed the need for class struggle against the capitalist rulers at home. This perspective requires a political fight against the pro-capitalist labor misleaders who chain the proletariat to its capitalist class enemy, not least through supporting U.S. ‘national interests’.”

True to form, with Bush's Republicans on the ropes, the labor misleaders in the AFL-CIO and Change to Win coalition have poured in tens of millions to support the Democratic Party “lesser evil” in the Congressional elections. Following suit, the U.S. reformist left has worked its own “Anybody but Bush” shell game. Thus, International Socialist Organization (ISO) spokesman Todd Chretien has run on the capitalist Green Party ticket for U.S. Senate in California, while elsewhere the ISO has campaigned for Greens like Senate candidate Howie Hawkins in New York. Workers World Party (WWP) member David Sole is also running for Senate on the Green Party ticket in Michigan. Far from an alternative to the major parties of U.S. imperialism, the Greens provide a way station for disgruntled liberals on the road back into the Democrats' fold.

The ISO and WWP are plainly crossing the class line with these bourgeois electoral efforts. But these campaigns are in fact the continuation of their building of a liberal-pacifist Iraq “antiwar movement” that reinforced the illusion that the murderous, profit-driven capitalist system can be reformed to serve human needs. They promote such slogans as money for jobs and health care, not war—as if the task is to convince the capitalist rulers to reorder their priorities. The reformists act to retard the political consciousness of the working class and radical-minded youth, opposing the road of proletarian revolution as the way out of imperialist war, racist oppression and poverty.

The Spartacist League fights intransigently for the political independence of the proletariat from the capitalist class enemy. **Break with the capitalist parties! For a workers party that fights for socialist revolution! ■**



Reuters

Gaza, November 3: Palestinian women flee as Israeli tank fires on march, killing two.

Iraq “moving steadily toward the far right of the chart,” i.e., toward “chaos.”

By any measure, Iraq under U.S. subjugation is a devastated country. A recently published study by Johns Hopkins University estimated that **650,000** Iraqis have died as a result of the occupation, including 600,000 in violent deaths. Every week, hundreds of Iraqis are slaughtered in the ethnic and communal warfare that the imperialist occupation has unleashed. Sunnis and Shi'ites have fled once-mixed neighborhoods to escape murderous militias and death squads, many of which work right out of army bases and police stations. The small Christian population is under siege. The United Nations estimates that at least 914,000 Iraqis have fled their homes since the occupation began. Thousands stream into Syria or Jordan each day. One hundred lecturers at Baghdad University have been murdered. In areas under the control of the clerics (Sunni or Shi'ite), women who step outside their homes dare not do so without draping themselves in the veil.

As revolutionary Marxists, the Spartacist League/U.S. stood for the military defense of Iraq against the imperialist invasion without giving any political support to Saddam Hussein's bloody bourgeois regime. We called on the U.S. proletariat to wage **class struggle at home** against the U.S. capitalist rulers. Today we demand the **unconditional, immediate withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Iraq!** Against the trap of Democratic Party lesser-evilism, we fight to forge a workers party that will lead the exploited and

will likely come out following the elections with recommendations for “disengagement” from Iraq.

An editorial that appeared in the *Army Times* (4 November) and related publications of the military branches demands: “Time for Rumsfeld to Go,” bluntly expressing the growing opposition to the White House over Iraq among the officer corps as well as ranks. Last month, over 200 active-duty soldiers in Iraq signed a petition calling for the withdrawal of all U.S. forces from Iraq.

While the Democrats are seizing on the chance to bash Bush over his lacking an “exit strategy,” the Democrats are in fact *not* calling for withdrawal from Iraq, where the U.S. now has military bases. What Hillary Clinton et al. demand is a “redeployment” of forces to surrounding areas, the better to prosecute the “global war on terror.” What worries the Democrats and all other bourgeois critics of the administration is that White House policies are harming U.S. imperialism's long-term strategic and military interests.

The *New York Times* (24 October), which in the lead-up to the 2003 invasion promoted the government's lie about WMDs in Iraq, editorialized that the best that can be hoped for is to try to “contain the Iraq disaster.” The *Times* declared that the U.S. cannot “win in Iraq. The only question is whether the United States can extricate itself without leaving behind an unending civil war that will spread more chaos and suffering throughout the Middle East, while spawning terrorism across the globe.”

WORKERS VANGUARD

Debate at Harlem PDC Rally

For a Class-Struggle Fight to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!



As part of the urgent effort to revitalize mass protest on behalf of Mumia Abu-Jamal, more than 250 people turned out for an October 28 rally at Harlem's Salem United Methodist Church called by the Partisan Defense Committee and the New York Labor Black League for Social Defense. Framed up on false charges of killing a Philadelphia policeman on 9 December 1981, Mumia is on death row for having been a leader of the Black Panther Party, a MOVE supporter and an eloquent and effective opponent of racist oppression.

Recognizing that Mumia's case is now at a critical juncture, the PDC and Labor Black Leagues organized the Harlem rally and others in Los Angeles, Chicago and Oakland in October under the slogans: "Free Mumia now! Mumia is an innocent man! Mumia Abu-Jamal's life is in danger—Mobilize now! Abolish the racist death penalty!" The rallies brought together speakers and organizations across a spectrum of political beliefs raising their own views on which way forward in the fight to free Mumia. That crucial debate



Harlem rally, October 28. Above: PDC's Rachel Wolkenstein (left) shows *Amsterdam News* ad with statement signed by over 200 people demanding Mumia's freedom. Pam Africa (right) of International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!

was the defining feature of the Harlem rally.

The PDC's August 25 rally call (printed in WV No. 876, 15 September) laid out

our perspective to "win activists to the understanding that Mumia's defense must be based on a class-struggle perspective—organizing independently of the racist

capitalist state that has framed him up." The call stated:

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

"That worldwide movement must be revived and infused with a new strength and militancy built on the understanding that *there is no justice in the capitalist courts.*"

Harlem Rally: United Struggle for Mumia

The Harlem rally drew a wide range of activists, including members of the New York Free Mumia Abu-Jamal Coalition and Black Panther Party veterans, as well as students from an array of NYC-area

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Mumia's Case at Critical Hour

Highlighting the urgency of the fight for freedom for death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, in a matter of months the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit in Philadelphia is expected to issue what could be the final decision in his case. Last month, Mumia filed a concluding legal brief in the court, following the filing of the prosecution's brief. It is not clear whether the court will hear oral argument on these briefs. The court decision will determine what lies next for Mumia: the reimposition of his death sentence and the threat of a new death warrant, his entombment for life in Pennsylvania's prison system, a new trial or further legal appeals.

Defense Papers Filed

The court has agreed to hear only three of the dozens of constitutional violations in Mumia's blatant frame-up on false charges of killing Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner. One is the racist jury-rigging that kept black people off the jury in his 1982 trial. Mumia is also challenging the prosecutor's closing argument that the jury should err on the side of convicting Mumia without worrying about the consequences because Mumia would

have "appeal after appeal," vitiating the legal principle of "reasonable doubt." The last issue is the notorious bias of racist hanging judge Albert Sabo during the 1995 post-conviction hearings.

Any one of these aspects of Mumia's frame-up legal proceedings should mandate that the conviction be overturned. But the courts have repeatedly rubber-stamped Mumia's false conviction and ignored the mountain of evidence prov-

ing his innocence, including by refusing to hear the confession of Arnold Beverly that he shot Faulkner and that Mumia had nothing to do with it. The Court of Appeals will also not hear how the Philadelphia cops coerced individuals into testifying as witnesses against Mumia and, working with the D.A., manufactured a bogus claim that Mumia had confessed to the killing.

In the fight for Mumia's freedom, it is crucial to understand the depth of the state's determination to kill Mumia or to keep him locked up for life. The racist capitalist rulers see in Mumia—a former Black Panther Party member, a MOVE

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