

## No to UN Sanctions!

# Down With U.S. War Moves Against Iran!

FEBRUARY 27—Having already reduced Iraq to a living hell under the U.S. occupation, the Bush administration is carrying out one provocation after another against Iran while steadily beefing up military forces in and around the Persian Gulf. Two U.S. aircraft carriers have been positioned near the Iranian coast. *BBC News* online (20 February) reports that the U.S. has readied plans for attacks on Iran, to be triggered either by “confirmation that Iran was developing a nuclear weapon” or “a high-casualty attack on US forces in neighbouring Iraq...if it were traced directly back to Tehran.” A U.S. bombing campaign “would target Iranian air bases, naval bases, missile facilities and command-and-control centres.”

At Washington’s behest, the UN Security Council in December demanded that Tehran halt its uranium enrichment program and imposed a first round of sanctions on Iran, barring technology sales that could be used for nuclear or missile development. Washington imposed additional sanctions targeting specific Iranian banks and other companies. This came after almost three years of inspections in which the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) found no evidence of a nuclear weapons program.

U.S./UN sanctions are having a marked impact on the Iranian economy, especially on oil production, its lifeline. A number of oil fields are in dire need of modern technology to reverse their normal decline (such as by reinjecting natural gas to flush out more oil), for which Iran needs foreign technical expertise. U.S. officials have warned oil companies that they risk financial sanctions if they help promote Iran’s oil development. American military threats are also having an economic impact. “Oil companies are simply assessing risk, including what some see as the real risk of a military strike against Iran,” said a former State Department official. “Some are deciding it’s not worth it” (*New York Times*, 13 February).

As we go to press, stock markets around the world have taken a huge hit, with U.S. shares marking their greatest losses since markets were reopened after the September 11, 2001 attacks. While the sell-off was triggered by a large drop in Shanghai’s stock index, the London *Financial Times* online reported today that “concerns over Iran, worries about the US subprime mortgage market and a warning from Alan Greenspan, former chairman of the Federal Reserve, about a possible US recession punctured recent market optimism.”

As revolutionary opponents of U.S. imperialism, the Spartacist League opposes



## Imperialists Out of Iraq, Afghanistan Now!



U.S. Navy (top), AFP

**Top: USS John C. Stennis has been sent to Persian Gulf, part of U.S. war provocations against Iran. Above: U.S. troops carry out assault in northern Baghdad, February 10.**

any economic sanctions against Iran, which are acts of war. Both the 1991 and 2003 wars against Iraq were preceded and prepared by UN-imposed sanctions. In the event of military attack against Iran by U.S. imperialism or by Israel—the only nuclear-armed country in the Near East—or by any other force operating on behalf of the imperialists, our stand as Marxists is one of revolutionary defensism: for the military defense of Iran against imperialist attack without giving an iota of political support to the reactionary Tehran regime. As we

wrote last year in “Imperialists Threaten Iran” (WV No. 869, 28 April 2006):

“As the bipartisan threats demonstrate, the greatest menace to the workers and oppressed of the world is the U.S. imperialist rulers—who have not only acquired the means to destroy the world several times over, but who have actually carried out nuclear holocaust, incinerating some 200,000 Japanese people in the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. The Iranian regime says that its nuclear energy program does not include plans to develop the bomb. The fact of the matter is that in the context of threats

by the nuclear-armed imperialists, Iran clearly *needs* nukes to defend itself and deter a U.S. attack. In today’s world, possession of nuclear arms has become the only real measure of national sovereignty.”

It takes some chutzpah for the U.S. rulers to complain about Iranian interference in Iraq. The destruction of Iraqi society under U.S. occupation has engendered the horrors of mass murder and population expulsions. Almost daily, scores of civilians die in the ethnic and communal slaughter unleashed by the war and occupation. Bodies, often showing signs of hideous torture, turn up constantly in sewers and garbage dumps, victims of murderous militias and death squads that often overlap with the police and military. The flight of Sunnis and Shi’ites from once-mixed neighborhoods has turned into the greatest refugee crisis in the Near East since the Zionists’ 1948 expulsion of Palestinians and the creation of Israel. According to the UN, two million Iraqis—about 8 percent of the prewar population—have fled the country, mostly to Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. Iraq’s smaller Christian and other minorities are threatened with being eradicated from their homeland.

In the leadup to the U.S. invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, we called for the military defense of both countries without giving any political support to the reactionary Taliban cutthroats or the bloody capitalist regime of Saddam Hussein, which had slaughtered thousands of Communists, trade unionists, Kurds and others. Today, we call for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. and allied troops from Afghanistan, Iraq and Central Asia. As we did when Bush launched these wars, with bipartisan support, under the rubric of the “war on terror,” we call on the U.S. proletariat to wage class struggle against the capitalist rulers at home.

Mass slaughter is the concentrated expression and ultimate logic of the “normal” brutal workings of the capitalist system. The atrocities visited on the peoples of Iraq and Afghanistan, the pounding attacks on the lives and livelihoods of working people and minorities in the U.S. and around the globe—this is the face of imperialism, of the irrational, anarchic, profit-driven capitalist system in its epoch of decay. The only road to putting an end to the horrors engendered by this system is that of socialist revolution. To lead the U.S. proletariat in smashing the American imperialist order requires a revolutionary workers party, forged through the struggle to break the working class from its allegiance to the Democratic Party, the other party of war and racism.

### Democrats’ “Left” Camp Followers

Bush’s Iraq debacle has had as a consequence the growth of Iranian influence in Iraq and the region. As a University of

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# INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY: A PROLETARIAN HOLIDAY

This year for International Women's Day, March 8, we are reprinting an article from the Spartacist League's journal *Women and Revolution* on the working-class origins of this holiday. *W&R* began in 1971 as the publication of women's circles, which included men, that were initiated by the Spartacist League to intervene with a revolutionary socialist program into the New Left radical women's movement. In 1973 *W&R* became the journal of the Spartacist League Central Committee's Commission for Work Among Women, expressing our understanding that the struggle for the liberation of women is the work of the revolutionary vanguard as a whole. Based particularly on our appreciation of the work of Lenin and Trotsky's Communist International, we uphold the need to build a women's section of the vanguard party of the proletariat in order to extend its influence to broad layers of working-class and minority women and draw them into the revolutionary movement.

The contents of *Women and Revolution* reflected the Marxist materialist under-

**International Women's Day demonstration in Petrograd, 1917, touched off February Revolution. Banner demands increase in rations for soldiers' families.**



standing that women's oppression is rooted in class society. *W&R* dealt with a broad range of social questions, from human sexuality and culture to the acute degradation of women in countries of belated capitalist development, where the fight for

women's rights is a motor force of revolutionary struggle. While *Women and Revolution* was suspended as an independent publication in 1997 as a necessary measure to consolidate scarce party resources, *Women and Revolution* pages are published today in *Spartacist*, journal of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist), as well as in the ICL's sectional press.

The following article is reprinted from *W&R* No. 8 (Spring 1975).

\* \* \*

Bourgeois feminists may celebrate it, but March 8—International Women's Day—is a *workers'* holiday. Originating in 1908 among the female needle trades

Under the lead of the Third International, the day of the working women shall become a real fighting day; it shall take the form of practical measures which either solidify the conquests of Communism...or prepare the way for the dictatorship of the working class.

—Alexandra Kollontai

workers in Manhattan's Lower East Side, who marched under the slogans "for an eight hour day," "for the end of child labor" and "equal suffrage for women," it was officially adopted by the Second International in 1911.

International Women's Day was first

celebrated in Russia in 1913 where it was widely publicized in the pages of the Bolshevik newspaper, *Pravda*, and popularized by speeches in numerous clubs and societies controlled by Bolshevik organizations which presented a Marxist analysis of women's oppression and the program for emancipation.

The following year the Bolsheviks not only agitated for International Women's Day in the pages of *Pravda* (then publishing under the name *Put' Pravdy*), but also made preparations to publish a special journal dealing with questions of women's liberation in Russia and internationally. It was called *Rabotnitsa* (*The Working Woman*), and its first issue was scheduled to appear on International Women's Day, 1914 (see "How the Bolsheviks Organized Working Women: History of the Journal *Rabotnitsa*," *Women and Revolution* No. 4, Fall 1973).

Preparations for the holiday were made under the most hazardous conditions. Shortly before the long-awaited day the entire editorial board of *Rabotnitsa*—with one exception—as well as other Bolsheviks who had agitated for International Women's Day in St. Petersburg factories, were arrested by the Tsarist police. Despite these arrests, however, the Bolsheviks pushed ahead with their preparations. Anna Elizarova—Lenin's sister and the one member of the editorial board to escape arrest—single-handedly brought out the first issue of *Rabotnitsa* on March 8 (or, according to the old Russian calendar, February 23) as scheduled. Clara Zetkin, a leading figure in the German Social Democratic Party and in the international working women's movement, wrote:

"Greetings to you on your courageous decision to organize Women's Day, congratulations to you for not losing courage and not wanting to sit by with your hands folded. We are with you, heart and soul. You and your movement will be remembered at numerous meetings organized for Women's Day in Germany, Austria, Hungary and America."

—Quoted in A. Artiukhina, "Proidenniy Put'," *Zhenshchina v revoliutsii*

By far the most important celebration ever of International Women's Day took place in Petrograd on 8 March 1917 when the women textile workers of that city led a strike of over 90,000 workers—a strike which signaled the end of the 300-year-old Romanov dynasty and the beginning of the Russian Revolution. One week afterward, *Pravda* commented:

"The first day of the revolution—that is the Women's Day, the day of the Women Workers' International. All honor to the

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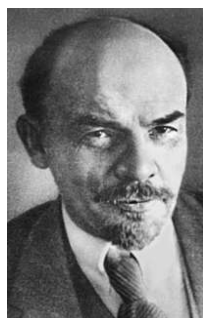
## The 90th Anniversary of the February Revolution

*Sparked by an International Women's Day demonstration on March 8 (February 23 by the old Russian calendar), where women workers in St. Petersburg (Petrograd) demanded bread and opposed the imperialist First World War, the February Revolution toppled the autocratic rule of Tsar Nicholas II. Alongside the new bourgeois Provisional Government arose workers and soldiers soviets (councils), posing a situation of dual power. Writing before his return*



TROTSKY

*from exile in Switzerland, Bolshevik leader V. I. Lenin outlined a course toward the seizure of power by the working class, supported by the peasantry, which he would elaborate in Letters from Afar and the "April Theses." Lenin's struggle for this strategy, not least against leading Bolsheviks who urged critical support to the bourgeois regime, prepared the way for the proletarian socialist October Revolution.*



LENIN

The new government that has seized power in St. Petersburg, or, more correctly, wrested it from the proletariat, which has waged a victorious, heroic and fierce struggle, consists of liberal bourgeois and landlords whose lead is being followed by Kerensky, the spokesman of the democratic peasants and, possibly, of that part of the workers who have forgotten their internationalism and have been led on to the bourgeois path. The new government is composed of avowed advocates and supporters of the imperialist war with Germany, i.e., a war in alliance with the English and French imperialist governments, a war for the plunder and conquest of foreign lands—Armenia, Galicia, Constantinople, etc....

The new government cannot give the people peace, because it represents the capitalists and landlords and because it is tied to the English and French capitalists by treaties and financial commitments. Russian Social-Democracy must therefore, while remaining true to internationalism, first and foremost explain to the people who long for peace that it cannot be won under the present government....

The new government cannot give the people bread. And no freedom can satisfy the masses suffering from hunger due to shortages and inefficient distribution of available stocks, and, most important, to the seizure of these stocks by the landlords and capitalists. It requires revolutionary measures against the landlords and capitalists to give the people bread, and such measures can be carried out only by a workers' government....

The truth about the present government and its real attitude on pressing issues must be made known to all working people in town and country, and also to the army. Soviets of Workers' Deputies must be organized, the workers must be armed. Proletarian organisations must be extended to the army (which the new government has likewise promised political rights) and to the rural areas. In particular there must be a separate class organisation for farm labourers.

Only by making the truth known to the widest masses of the population, only by organising them, can we guarantee full victory in the next stage of the revolution and the winning of power by a workers' government.

Fulfillment of this task, which in revolutionary times and under the impact of the severe lessons of the war can be brought home to the people in an immeasurably shorter time than under ordinary conditions, requires the revolutionary proletarian party to be ideologically and organisationally independent. It must remain true to internationalism and not succumb to the false bourgeois phraseology meant to dupe the people by talk of "defending the fatherland" in the present imperialist and predatory war.

—V. I. Lenin, "Draft Theses, March 4 (17), 1917"

## WORKERS VANGUARD



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# Young Spartacus

## Britain: Down With Anti-Muslim Witchhunt on Campuses!

We reprint the following article from the *Young Spartacus* pages of *Workers Hammer* No. 197 (Winter 2006-2007), newspaper of the Spartacist League/Britain, section of the International Communist League.

### WORKERS HAMMER

The racist Labour government, with its hands soaked in the blood of the people of Iraq and Afghanistan, is ratchetting up the “war on terror” on university campuses. An article in the *Guardian* (16 October 2006) revealed leaked government plans, according to which “lecturers and university staff across Britain are to be asked to spy on ‘Asian-looking’ and Muslim students,” while admitting that “universities will be anxious about passing information to special branch,” for fear it amounts to “‘collaborating’ with the ‘secret police’.” A month later Bill Rammell, minister of state for higher education, issued a widely publicised report on universities, stating that “there is a real, credible and sustained threat to the UK from violent extremism in the name of Islam” and issuing guidelines on “tackling extremism in the name of Islam” (“Promoting Good Campus Relations,” 17 November 2006). These “guidelines” amount to a state-

**London: Spartacus Youth Group literature table at student fair on SOAS campus, 30 September 2006. SYG defeated attempt by Clifflite SWP to enforce administration’s ban on non-English literature.**



and most importantly the university unions to oppose this witch hunt of Muslim students. We say: **Down with Labour’s racist “war on terror”!**

### SOAS Student Union Bureaucrats Enlist in “War on Terror”

Ominously connecting foreign-language leaflets with “suspected extremist litera-

ture on campus) that we would have to remove foreign-language material from our literature table or leave. This included a Chinese-language placard defending the 1949 Chinese Revolution as well as literature in Arabic, Tagalog, Japanese, Polish and other languages. We vigorously protested this anti-communist censorship, an outrageous attempt to prevent the multilingual student population from reading communist propaganda. On this occasion these bureaucrats backed down.

The chauvinist “English-only” rule for societies’ literature is the thin end of the wedge of the government’s “war on terror” on universities. Zionists on campus have been acting as auxiliaries of the U.S., British imperialists and the state of Israel, targeting the lecturers union, Muslim students and Palestinian activists. Some months ago, the UCU faced a vitriolic Zionist backlash when the union adopted various resolutions calling for a boycott of Israel in protest against Israeli repression of the Palestinians. We defend the UCU against this witch hunt, while disagreeing with open-ended boycotts of Israel (see “Zionist Backlash Over ‘Boycott Israel’,” *Workers Hammer* No. 196, Autumn 2006 [also printed in *WV* No. 875, 1 September 2006]).

### Defend Nasser Amin!

Nasser Amin, a Muslim student at SOAS was viciously witch-hunted for an article he wrote in the March 2005 *soasspirit* entitled “When Only Violence Will Do,” advocating the Palestinian people’s right

to defend themselves with violence against murderous Israeli terrorism. In an exchange with Sheikh Hamza Yusuf, Amin wrote:

“Those peoples who are being denied a right to self-determination in their native soil by foreign colonialist occupations—a right their tormentors take for granted with respect to themselves—and suffer as a result, have a right to armed resistance, if no other way is available. By contrast, there is **no** right to violence if the objective is ultimately to exploit further, conquer even more and steal more land, as is the case with Israeli violence.”

This sent the handful of Zionists at SOAS into a frenzy, while revealing their well-placed connections to the right-wing gutter press in Britain and to forces connected to the Bush administration. In Parliament, Labour MP David Winnick howled for Amin to be prosecuted for incitement to racial hatred while rabidly reactionary *Daily Mail* columnist Melanie Phillips called for Amin’s article to be “brought to the attention of the police.” Amin says he received death threats and was slurred as an “Islamofascist” and “anti-Semite.” Equating criticism of the Israeli state with anti-Semitism is a standard smear of the Zionists; Melanie Phillips brands SOAS itself as the “School of Orchestrated Anti-Semitism.”

Gavin Gross, a prominent Zionist at SOAS who was instrumental in the witch hunt of Amin, was sympathetically interviewed in *FrontPage Magazine* on 27 June 2005. *FrontPage* is the mouthpiece of racist ideologue David Horowitz who is part of a reactionary cabal in the U.S. that includes Daniel Pipes and his Campus Watch website and has orchestrated witch hunts against Middle Eastern studies departments and pro-Palestinian professors such as Joseph Massad at Columbia University. Horowitz is high in the councils of the Republican Party and Pipes is part of the neo-conservative Project for the New American Century, which has even included Vice President Dick Cheney and former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld.

Describing the intimidation he faced as an opponent of Zionism at SOAS, in a 29 January 2006 interview with the Muslim Public Affairs Committee, Nasser Amin said:

“There has been a feeling of extreme fear and trepidation amongst all students critical of Israel at SOAS, whether Muslim or non-Muslim. People are terrified of being defamed in the media, threatened

*continued on page 4*



**July 2005: British police patrol train in aftermath of criminal subway bombing. “War on terror” is pretext for increasing police powers.**

sponsored witch hunt of Muslim societies. Make no mistake, this is an attempt to silence or purge any student, campus organisation or lecturer who speaks out against the brutal colonial occupation of Iraq or Afghanistan, or defends the Palestinians against murderous assault by the Zionist state, by branding them as potential “terrorists.”

Paul Mackney, joint general secretary of the University and Colleges Union (UCU) has stated that UCU members “will not be police informers” and warned that lecturers “may be sucked into anti-Muslim McCarthyism.” State repression is a daily fact of life for Muslims, blacks, Asians and other minorities. For supposedly “looking Asian,” Brazilian electrician Jean Charles de Menezes was executed by the cops in July 2005; the “war on terror” targets Muslims in the first instance but it will also be used to regiment the whole population and to repress social struggle. It is essential for students

ture on campus,” the guidelines give a scenario in which “some leaflets were written in English, and others appeared to be in Arabic” and suggest that such material could “constitute a criminal offence.” However, well before these guidelines were issued, a crackdown on campus societies distributing foreign-language material was underway at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) and is being enforced by student union bureaucrats and the ostensible leftists of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP). At the 30 September 2006 freshers fair, Spartacus Youth Group members were informed that “all information/leaflets/handouts **must** be in English.” This was specified in an e-mail sent by Jack Footitt (SOAS Student Union, Co-President: Sports and Societies) to all SOAS societies. Our comrades were promptly informed by all three student union Co-Presidents, including Lauren Evans and Clare Solomon (a prominent representative of the SWP on



**New York City police terrorize British tourists of South Asian descent, July 2005.**

## Britain...

(continued from page 3)

in Parliament with arrest, bullied by the British Board of Deputies with a lawsuit or being sent death threats."

### For a Socialist Federation of the Near East!

Key to defeating this campaign on campuses is forthrightly taking up the defence of the Palestinian people. The SYG intransigently defends the Palestinian people in their just struggle against Zionist state terror. However, as Marxists we insist that as long as the conflict remains one of nation against nation, the Palestinians can only lose out to the far wealthier, heavily armed Zionist state. The Palestinian nationalist PLO have tried nearly everything to beat the Israeli garrison state: from fighting to negotiating to appealing to the UN and Western imperialists, and it has all been futile. Despair amongst the Palestinian population has led to growing support for reactionary Islamic fundamentalist forces such as Hamas and Hezbollah.

Whilst we defend Nasser Amin against the right-wing backlash, we have fundamental disagreements with his outlook. We vehemently oppose Amin's equation of the Israeli civilian population with the armed forces. He states that all Israelis "benefit from the immoral actions of a colonial state in which they have chosen to reside" and therefore, according to Amin, Israeli civilians "cannot be considered as innocent." This amounts to a denial of the Hebrew-speaking people's very right to exist as a nation. It is a mirror-image of the Zionists' denial of the national rights of the Palestinians and illustrates the genocidal logic of all nationalism.

What drives the bloody cycle of Zionist slaughter and Palestinian defiance and despair is the root cause of this conflict: two peoples lay claim to the same land. There can be no equitable resolution to the conflicting national claims of the Palestinian Arab and Hebrew-speaking peoples under capitalism. So long as the national axis is emphasised, the situation will always be bleak and hopeless. But if the *class axis* is emphasised there is at least a chance of a just solution. Against all variants of nationalism, we counterpose a programme of proletarian revolutionary internationalism. The road to the social and national liberation of the Palestinian people lies through common class



UK Indymedia

**London, July 2005: Protest against cop killing of Brazilian immigrant electrician Jean Charles de Menezes.**

struggle by the Hebrew-speaking and Arab workers against both the Israeli and Arab ruling classes, who likewise are oppressors of the Palestinians. Only within a socialist federation of the Near East can the right to national self-determination for both the Palestinian and the Hebrew-speaking peoples be equitably realised. This requires the revolutionary overthrow of the Zionist state and all capitalist regimes in the region. *For a socialist federation of the Near East! Down with the U.S./British occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan! All Israeli troops and settlers out of the Occupied Territories! UN troops out of Lebanon now!*

### Protest the "War on Terror" at SOAS

The extent to which the Blair government can succeed in enforcing the "war on terror" depends on the amount of class struggle opposing it; that is, whether the multiethnic working class is mobilised to defend itself, including immigrants and minorities who are in the cross-hairs of increased state repression. At the same time, racism and violent repression of workers and minorities is intrinsic to the capitalist state and cannot be eradicated short of proletarian revolution. Those students who still make it to university in

this racist, capitalist society, despite tuition fees, high living costs and enormous debts, are being threatened that if you oppose the occupation of Iraq or Afghanistan or defend the Palestinians, you do not belong there. But the Achilles heel of this racist Labour government and all its armoury of state repression and violence is the exploited multiethnic working class, on which this "flexible" economy depends. Militant protest by students against the latest proposals for spying on Muslim students and political societies could be the spark for a protest by workers against the Labour government's racist "war on terror" more generally. On 13 March 2002, the SYG held a united-front protest at SOAS against the "war on terror" in defence of Fahim Ahmed, a member of the Socialist Labour Party Youth who was detained and tortured under the Terrorism Act. The protest demanded: "Down with the Labour government's anti-terrorist laws and anti-immigrant witch hunt!" We also emphasised that "Anti-terrorist laws target immigrants, minorities, the working class and the left!" This is amply proven by the fact that the "English-only" rule for societies' literature was used against us communists at SOAS.

Through our protest in 2002 we sought to explain to youth and students that the working class must take up the fight against the "war on terror" and anti-immigrant hysteria because only the working class has the social power and historic interest to lead the struggle to smash the capitalist system through proletarian revolution and the establishment of a socialist society. This forthright revolutionary perspective is counterposed to that being offered by the reformist left. At a 15 November 2006 SOAS student union general meeting, the SWP's Clare Solomon put a motion "to oppose the current racist and Islamophobic backlash" and "to defend the right for Islamic societies and other groups to organise politically

on campuses." Not surprisingly, Solomon's motion neglected to oppose the chauvinist "English-only" rule for societies' literature, since Solomon herself is enforcing the ban! A separate motion at the same meeting opposed the ban, not because it augments the "war on terror," but because it "infringes on the school's image," and it proposed "to allow banners containing any language that we have the resources to translate." Translate for whom, Special Branch? In fact, this mere amendment to the foreign-language gag, facilitating the work of the secret police, is entirely within the framework of the new government guidelines.

Central to Solomon's motion was a call to back the Stop the War Coalition's (StWC) "'Islamophobia and the War on Terror' people's assembly" on 18 November 2006. The SWP opposes Islamophobia but this goes hand-in-hand with a wholesale capitulation to Islam and religious obscurantism. This is nothing new: during the 1980s the SWP stood with the imperialists in their anti-Soviet crusade. In response to the December 1979 Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, we said "Hail Red Army!" and "Extend the gains of the October Revolution to Afghan peoples!" whilst the SWP along with most of the left supported the reactionary, imperialist-backed *mujahedin* cut-throats who threw acid in the faces of unveiled women and shot school teachers who dared to teach girls to read.

Against the occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan today, the StWC's strategy is to echo bourgeois-defeatist voices that it is in British imperialism's best interest to get out of Iraq and to be less slavish to the Bush White House, including General Sir Richard Dannatt, the *head of the British Army*, whom the StWC even invited to join their platforms. The open letter for the "People's Assembly" complained that the "disastrous 'war on terror', of which this government has been such a prominent supporter...has made Britain more vulnerable not less to terrorist attack" and argues that the government should "abandon its support for the foreign policy of the US administration, including the occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan." Such craven appeals to the Blair government, butchers of Iraq and Afghanistan, to introduce a kinder, gentler imperialism is what reformism boils down to. British imperialism is no less savage and brutal than U.S. imperialism, simply weaker and more decrepit.

In contrast to the reformists and opportunists of all shades, we stand in the tradition of the Bolsheviks who led the working class to power in Russia in October 1917, taking proletarian revolution out of the realm of theory and into flesh and blood reality. As the SYG speaker at our March 2002 protest made clear:

"British imperialism is not a policy that can be changed; Blair cannot be pressured to be kinder to workers and minorities. For us imperialism is a system that must be replaced by a socialist society where all those who work, who produce the wealth of this country, must rule!"

If you want to fight against imperialist war and to see a world free from racism and oppression, join us! ■

## Spartacus Youth Club Events

### BAY AREA

**Thursday, March 15, 7 p.m.**

**U.S. Out of the Near East!  
Defend the Palestinian People!  
For a Socialist Federation  
of the Near East!**

Rosa Parks D

San Francisco State University

Information and readings: (510) 839-0851  
or e-mail: sycbayarea@sbcglobal.net

### LOS ANGELES

**Thursday, March 8, 6 p.m.**

**Defend China, Cuba, North Korea  
and Vietnam Against Imperialism  
and Capitalist Counterrevolution!**

University of California, Los Angeles  
Haines Hall, A78

Information and readings: (213) 380-8239  
or e-mail: slsycla@sbcglobal.net

### NEW YORK CITY

**Thursday, March 8, 7:30 p.m.**

**The Fight for Black Liberation: Key  
to Socialist Revolution in America**  
Kent Room 511, Columbia University  
(1 train to 116th St.)

Information and readings: (212) 267-1025  
or e-mail: nysl@compuserve.com

### TORONTO

**Wednesday, March 14, 6:30 p.m.**

**The Russian Revolution and the  
Emancipation of Women**

University of Toronto, OISE Rm. 2279  
252 Bloor Street West

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

### VANCOUVER

**Wednesday, March 7**

**Mumia Abu-Jamal Is an  
Innocent Man—Free Him Now!**

**11 a.m.: Speakout**

UBC, Student Union Building  
outside Lower Plaza (south)

**1 p.m.: Video Showing**

**From Death Row,  
This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal**

UBC, Student Union Building, Room 214

**Wednesday, March 21, 6 p.m.**

**Why China Is Not Capitalist:  
Defend, Extend the Gains of the  
1949 Chinese Revolution!**

UBC, Student Union Building, Room 215

Information and readings: (604) 687-0353  
or e-mail: trotskyst\_vancouver@shawcable.com

## WORKERS VANGUARD

**Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League**

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# Archive...

(continued from page 2)

International! The women were the first to tread the streets of Petrograd on their day.” As the position of Soviet women degenerated under Stalin and his successors, as part of the degeneration of the entire Soviet workers state, International Women’s Day was transformed from a day of international proletarian solidarity into an empty ritual which, like Mother’s Day in the United States, glorifies the traditional role of women within the family.

## Women and Revolution

### Bound Volume

Journal of the Women’s Commission of the Spartacist League/U.S.

Now incorporated into *Spartacist*, the theoretical and documentary repository of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist), *Women and Revolution* reflects our commitment to the fight for women’s liberation through socialist revolution.

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But International Women’s Day is a celebration neither of motherhood nor sisterhood; to ignore this fact is to ignore the most significant aspects of its history and purpose, *which was to strengthen the ranks of the revolutionary proletariat*. Unlike the pre-war Mensheviks who wanted to conciliate the feminists of their day by limiting the celebration of International Women’s Day to women only, the Bolsheviks insisted that it be a holiday of working women and working men in struggle together. As Nadezhda Krupskaya wrote in the lead article of the first issue of *Rabotnitsa*:

“That which unites working women with working men is stronger than that which divides them. They are united by their common lack of rights, their common needs, their common condition, which is struggle and their common goal.... Solidarity between working men and working women, common activity, a common goal, a common path to this goal—such is the solution of the ‘woman’ question among workers.”

Today the Bolshevik program for the full emancipation of women is carried forward by the Spartacist League. We are proud to publicize the real history of International Women’s Day, a part of our revolutionary heritage, and we will celebrate it with public forums around the country presenting the Marxist analysis of women’s oppression and the program and strategy to smash it.

As we deepen our influence in the



Corbis

Women march in 1910 May Day parade in New York City.

working class, we look forward to celebrating future International Women’s Days not only through the dissemination of propaganda, but also through the initiation of the full range of activities traditionally associated with this proletarian

holiday—*general strikes, insurrections, revolution!*

*Forward to a Women’s Section of the Reborn Fourth International!*

*For Women’s Liberation through International Proletarian Revolution! ■*

## Young Spartacus

# Free Wilson...

(continued from page 12)

indiscretions, the ‘Romeo and Juliet’ exception. And since Mr. Wilson’s conviction, the law has been changed to exempt oral sex as well. But the courts say that can’t help Mr. Wilson retroactively.” *Overturn the conviction! Free Genarlow Wilson now!*

Racist forces in the Georgia legislature are blocking a bill that would allow Wilson and others to reopen their cases to take advantage of the recent revision in the law. Leading this effort is state senator Eric Johnson, who rails that Wilson’s acts constituted “rape” and vows to “stand with future possible victims of politically correct apologists who want to turn loose convicted sexual predators.” This racist bigot had earlier promoted a referendum to enlarge the Confederate battle flag that appears on the state flag. Only in 2003 did Georgia overturn a law against “fornication” (banning sex outside marriage) that dated back to the slaveholding era of the 1830s and was used historically against black men and interracial couples.

Dixon and Wilson were sentenced under Georgia’s SB440 law authorizing youth from 13 to 17 to be charged as adults for committing the so-called “seven deadly sins” that include “aggravated child molestation” and “aggravated sodomy.” According to the Georgia Public Defender Standards Council, black teens are five times more likely than whites to be sentenced under this law, while white youth are 84 percent more likely to have their cases transferred back to juvenile court than blacks. Similar laws across the country were adopted throughout the 1980s and ’90s as the racist capitalist rulers deemed a generation of black youth to be innate criminals who must be swept off the streets and warehoused in prisons, mainly through the “war on drugs.” The same 15-year-old who is deemed too immature to consent to the pleasurable activity of sex is mature enough to be tried, convicted and sentenced to up to life in prison as an adult!

Along with Wilson, five others were charged following the New Year’s Eve party. The five pleaded guilty to lesser crimes to avoid long prison terms but are now forced to spend their lives as “registered sex offenders,” targeted for vicious state repression and vigilante violence.



Shalit/L.A. Times

California youth inmate taking “class” while locked in a cage.

Wilson refused such a plea deal, saying it would be “a lifelong sentence in itself.” Even if Wilson could win early release, he would be barred as a “sex offender” from living with his mother, where his eight-year-old sister lives.

Under the 1996 “Megan’s Law” signed by Democratic president Clinton, “sex offenders” must register permanently with local authorities upon release from prison. Their names and addresses are made public, including postings on the Internet, setting them up for assault and murder. More than 370,000 names are on the national registry. A Georgia law enacted in July 2006 forbids “sex offenders” from living within 1,000 feet of a school, playground or church. Terminally ill people, others suffering from Alzheimer’s and even people living in nursing homes have been ordered evicted. Georgia is also among those states that allow the barbaric measure of chemical castration.

Georgia’s reactionary “child molestation” law was one of a raft of measures enacted nationally over the last couple of decades that aimed at both increasing the repressive reach of the capitalist state and bolstering the institution of the family. Along with religion, the family, the principal source of women’s oppression in class society, serves to instill obedience to authority and promotes puritanical morality. This is at the heart of crusades against pornography, youth sexuality, homosexuality and abortion. The Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Clubs have consistently opposed the intrusion of the government into private life and demand an end to all laws

against “crimes without victims,” such as prostitution, drug use and pornography. We oppose reactionary “age of consent” laws, which deny the fact that young people are, and have always been, sexually active. Our guiding principle is simply that of mutual effective consent. Government out of the bedrooms!

In his 1845 *Narrative of the Life of*

*Frederick Douglass*, this great abolitionist and former slave denounced “the corrupt, slaveholding, women-whipping, cradle-plundering, partial and hypocritical Christianity of this land.” Indeed, religious reaction has historically been bound up with attacks on black rights in the U.S., where the oppression of black people as a race-color caste is rooted in the foundations of the capitalist economy. The desperate conditions facing black youth—police terrorizing the ghettos, mass unemployment and incarceration, the rollback of affirmative action and re-segregation of urban schools—can be eliminated only through the overturn of capitalist class rule by the multiracial working class. We fight to build the revolutionary workers party that is essential to lead the proletariat in this struggle. Black liberation through socialist revolution!

\* \* \*

Contributions for Genarlow Wilson’s legal defense should be made payable to the Genarlow Wilson Defense Fund and sent to Scott Kaye, 729 Piedmont Ave., Atlanta, GA 30308. ■

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Black Liberation...
(continued from page 12)

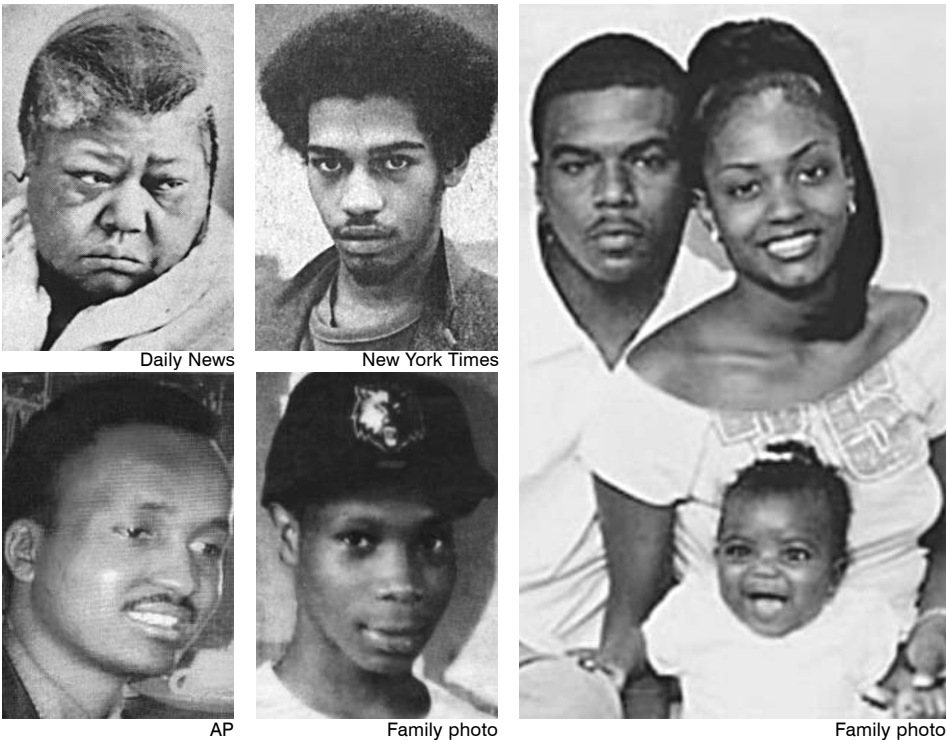
can somehow be pressured to serve the interests of its victims. But the capitalist state—made up of the cops, armed forces, courts and prisons—is the violent enforcer of the exploiting class’s rule over the workers. This state cannot be reformed; it has to be smashed and replaced with a workers state. The black Democratic Party hustlers are enemies of black liberation, serving as front men for the white ruling class. Militant, independent class struggle requires a political fight against the pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy, which chains workers to the Democratic Party and the brutal capitalist system. We need a new, class-struggle labor leadership!

The rally participants were overwhelmingly black—a snapshot of how racially segregated this country is, how deeply racism is embedded in American capitalism. But the massive outpouring also showed that although the determination of the oppressed for a real fight is palpable, the front men for capitalism work overtime to derail struggle. Our task is to build a multiracial revolutionary vanguard party, like the Bolshevik Party that led the October 1917 workers revolution in Russia, to lead the fight for working-class power, for international proletarian socialist revolution.

Capitalist Rulers’ War on Blacks

On February 2, the NYPD reported that they had stopped and frisked over a half-million individuals in 2006—a more than 400 percent rise from what was reported for 2002. Over 55 percent of those stopped were black and over 30 percent were Hispanic. And that’s just what was recorded. The 1991 sadistic LAPD beating of Rodney King seen by all on video cameras captured what goes on all the time. “Stop and beat” has always been part of life on the city streets. In the weeks after the killing of Sean Bell, the NYPD shot five more men, killing Timur Person and Anatoly Dmitriev. And on January 7, 38-year-old black Brooklyn resident Blondel Lassegue died after police shocked him with a high-voltage Taser gun.

The New York Times cited commentators saying that perhaps the cops hadn’t been reporting stop-and-frisk stats because this is not a priority in the “age of



Victims of NYPD racist terror, with years of their deaths; clockwise from top left: Eleanor Bumpurs (1984), Michael Stewart (1983), Sean Bell (2006) with fiancée and daughter, Timothy Stansbury Jr. (2004), Amadou Diallo (1999).

terrorism.” Cops have been given even more leeway to assault people on the street, recalling the 1857 Dred Scott decision that black people “had no rights which the white man was bound to respect.” We said that the American ruling class’s never-ending “war on terror” that first targeted the most vulnerable and isolated immigrants would ultimately target black people and the entire working class. The mounting attacks on the rights of immigrants, blacks and workers are the domestic reflection of the brutal, racist occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan by the U.S. imperialists, the world’s biggest terrorists.

This past June in Miami’s impoverished Liberty City ghetto, cops set up and then arrested seven poor young black men on bogus terrorism-related charges. Regarding the racist frame-up legal system, a Florida lawyer observed: “We used to have agents and confidential informants creating drug deals in Liberty City. Now it looks like they are creating homegrown cells.”

We must burn into the consciousness of the working class the hideous examples of barbaric capitalist class rule and the urgent necessity for class struggle against the entire capitalist system. One of the most outrageous displays of capitalist state violence in the U.S. was the firebombing

of the Philadelphia MOVE house on May 13, 1985, in which eleven men, women and children were burned to death. This occurred under black Democratic mayor Wilson Goode in collusion with the FBI, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and the Philly cops. It was a bloody signature of the Reagan years.

Today we continue to raise the racist atrocity of New Orleans in the aftermath of Katrina as an expression of the need for black liberation through socialist revolution. In the period immediately following Katrina, the dispossessed survivors who weren’t left to die were shot at and criminalized. Now the people who managed to make it back barely have any jobs, hospitals, schools and housing, and black Democratic Party mayor Nagin is beefing up the police, including by having more sheriffs patrol the streets, and setting up police checkpoints, while cops randomly beat and shoot black men.

We have called on the labor movement to fight to win union jobs at union wages for all, to organize the unorganized, to fight against the oppression of black people, and to enlist the victims of Hurricane Katrina in the rebuilding of New Orleans alongside immigrant workers. A massive program of federally funded public works is required to rebuild New

Orleans and the rest of the devastated Gulf Coast. Katrina’s aftermath exposes that the capitalist profit system is irrational, anarchic and a barrier to human progress—there is an urgent need for an international socialist planned economy.

U.S. “Democracy”: Capitalist Dictatorship

The liberals and reformists chant, “No justice, no peace.” We live in a society based on the private ownership of the means of production, where capitalists squeeze all they can out of the exploited, non-possessing workers. So the question is posed: justice for whom and peace on whose terms? There is no justice from the capitalist state because its job is to hold down the masses so the capitalists can freely exploit. “American democracy,” which the reformists embellish and plead for the capitalists to “live up to,” in reality is the two-party political shell for the dictatorship of the U.S. capitalist class over the working class and the poor.

Friedrich Engels explained in 1884 in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* how the rise of state power was bound up with the development of class society, noting that the state arose as an instrument by which the exploiters suppress the exploited. As Engels wrote, the state “is a product of society at a certain stage of development; it is the admission that this society has become entangled in an insoluble contradiction with itself, that it has split into irreconcilable antagonisms which it is powerless to dispel.”

Engels explains how class society needs a state apparatus, pointing to “the establishment of a public power which no longer directly coincides with the population organising itself as an armed force. This special public power is necessary because a self-acting armed organisation of the population has become impossible since the split into classes.... This public power exists in every state; it consists not merely of armed men but also of material adjuncts, prisons and institutions of coercion.”

The capitalists maintain class domination not only through their control of cultural, religious, educational institutions and through the bourgeois family, but ultimately with raw violence.

Lenin took this up again in 1917 in *The State and Revolution*. Lenin was fighting anti-revolutionary opponents in the workers movement, like the Mensheviks and the bulk of the Social Revolutionaries and anarchists who opposed the struggle for proletarian revolution. Lenin pointed out that Marx only found one point from the 1848 *Communist Manifesto* that he considered out of date. Based on the experience of the Paris Commune of 1871, Marx wrote that “the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery and wield it for its own purposes.” Lenin continued, “The working class must break up, smash the ‘ready-made state machinery,’ and not confine itself merely to laying hold of it.” The working class must rule with its own state, the dictatorship of the proletariat; that is, workers soviet democracy—democratically elected workers councils that administer a collectivized socialist property system. Lenin had to interrupt completing *State and Revolution* to help lead the Bolshevik Revolution.

American Capitalism and Black Oppression

Under capitalism, workers are compelled to sell their labor power or starve. One story: the U.S. Department of Agriculture has purged the word “hunger” from all their reports. Now according to official statistics, eleven million people who face a constant struggle with hunger are people with “very low food security.” Some of you remember when Reagan was president they called ketchup a vegetable. Joblessness, a crumbling infrastructure, homelessness and imperialist wars are all inherent within the boom-bust system of capitalist exploitation—that is, the exploitation of the many by the few. This is not a matter of “misplaced priorities,” as liberals and reformists put forward.

In America, class exploitation has always been wrapped in the envelope of racism. Black people in the U.S. are a

Join the Campaign to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!

The case of death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal is at a critical juncture. Final legal papers have been filed with the Third Circuit Court of Appeals and a legal decision could come without notice in weeks or months. We must mobilize now to win his freedom.

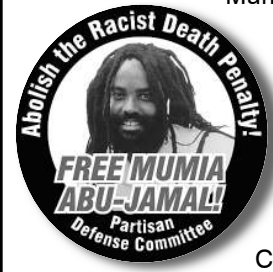
Funds are urgently needed for legal defense!

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

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

Spread the word! Contact the PDC for copies of *The Fight to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal—Mumia Is Innocent!* This pamphlet arms activists in the struggle for Mumia’s freedom by presenting the political basis of the state vendetta against Mumia and the explosive evidence which completely destroys the

more than two-decades-long frame-up of this eloquent fighter for black freedom. It is available for \$1. Get the PDC button: “Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!”—\$1 each. Order the PDC video, *From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal*—\$10 for DVD, \$15 for VHS. Bundles of the 4-page brochure, *Mumia Is an Innocent Man: Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!*—\$2 for 25 copies. Order from/make checks payable to Partisan Defense Committee at our New York City address below.



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# From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal

## Saddam on the Gallows

Saddam Hussein is gone.

The President of Iraq, who fell out with his imperial paymasters in Washington, was hanged for his hubris, amidst taunts by hooded supporters of Muqtada Al-Sadr, head of the Shi'a Mahdi Army.

His crime? Surely not the killing of his Shi'a opponents, nor his torture of Iraqis; for in the grim aftermath of these events, US envoys continued to skin and grin with him, shaking his hand (as did the then-Reagan Administration's Donald Rumsfeld), and sending him more tools of war and weapons of mass destruction.

If he was guilty of crimes against humanity, what of those many Americans who aided and abetted him? What of those many Western businesses which armed him (and greatly profited from such arms deals)?

It is a sign of our cynical times that the nation that egged on and armed Saddam during his long and brutal war with Iran, that looked the other way when he waged his reign of repression against the Shi'a majority, now deigns to punish him for doing their bidding.

Saddam was sentenced to death for human rights violations that happened in 1982, right? Well, why did the US sign diplomatic treaties with Iraq in 1984? In the remarkable book, "Behind the Iraq War", written by the Indian activist group, Research Unit for Political

Economy (New York: Monthly Review, 2003) we learn that diplomatic relations between Iraq and the US were formally restored "well after the United States knew, and a U.N. team confirmed, that Iraq was using chemical weapons against the Iranian troops" [p. 31]. In fact, in 1986, when the U.N. Security Council tried to condemn Iraq for using mustard gas against Iran's troops, the US blocked the resolution!

As RUPE writes, arming Iraq against Iran was good business:

"Brisk trade was done in supplying Iraq. Britain joined France as a major source of weapons for it. Iraq imported uranium from Portugal, France, and Italy, and began constructing centrifuge enrichment with German assistance. The United States arranged massive loans for Iraq's burgeoning war expenditure from American client states such as Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. The U.S. administration provided 'crop-spraying' helicopters (to be used in chemical attacks in 1988), let Dow Chemicals ship its chemicals for use on humans, seconded its air force officers to work with their Iraqi counterparts (from 1986), approved technological exports to Iraq's missile procurement agency to extend the missiles' range (1988). In October 1987 and April 1988 U.S. forces themselves attacked Iranian ships and oil platforms." [p. 31]

If that ain't aiding and abetting, what is?

But those who aided Iraq have since joined hands to condemn him, and to rip the nation into strips (a Shi'a strip, a Kurd strip, and a Sunni strip). They

could care less about the Iraqi people, or even such canards as "democracy". For the farthest thing from American and Western concerns is the will of the Iraqi people. According to every reputable poll, Iraqis are sick and tired of their occupiers, the Americans.

The U.S. loved Iraq during 'The War of the Cities' when almost a million people on both sides were slaughtered. But Saddam got too big for his britches. He thought he could act with impunity in his region of the Middle East.

Saddam didn't know that this was a pleasure reserved to the US Empire. For only the US could start a war on this scale, cause the death of over a 1/2-million people, use false pretexts to invade a sovereign state, torture its people, ravage cities like Fallujah, almost shatter the nation into threes, wreak untold national and regional havoc—and call it liberation.

The execution of Saddam Hussein was purely an exercise of raw American power.

History will prove this is but a minor blip on the road to oblivion.

©2006 Mumia Abu-Jamal

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

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

For the ICL's position on national/religious divisions in Iraq, see, for example, "The U.S. Occupation and the Kurdish Question" (WV No. 871, 26 May 2006) and "Imperialist Occupation: Hell for Iraq" (WV No. 882, 8 December 2006). Both articles are available on the ICL's Web site, [www.icl-fi.org](http://www.icl-fi.org).



Edward Reed

**From right: Charles Barron, Al Sharpton with NYC mayor Bloomberg at November 27 press conference where city rulers appealed for calm following cop killing of Sean Bell.**

race-color caste segregated at the bottom of society. At the same time, black people are disproportionately part of the organized working class. Won to a revolutionary Marxist program, black workers will play a leading role in the struggle to emancipate the black masses and all working people through sweeping away the entire system of capitalist exploitation.

We fight for revolutionary integrationism. This is a fighting program counterposed to both liberal integrationism—the false view that black people can achieve social equality within the confines of American capitalism—and black nationalism. The struggle for integration of black people into American society on the basis of full economic, social and political equality can only be realized through a proletarian revolution that uproots the rotting capitalist system and ushers in an egalitarian socialist society.

Race-color caste oppression will exist as long as capitalism exists—whether you are Fred Weary, the Houston Texans lineman who was tasered to the ground in November for changing lanes without signaling, or you are Michael Jackson or Barack Obama. Obama, the "articulate" and "clean" black candidate according to Democratic Senator Joseph Biden's condescending racist statement, first earned these "credentials" at the 2004 Democratic Party convention, where his keynote address blamed black parents for the misery and hopelessness of black youth because, as he said, they don't "turn off the television sets." Obama just voted in September for a 700-mile fence for the Mexican border.

Barack Obama's rapid career rise is based on the capitalist lies: the so-called "end of racism," "it's a level playing field

now" and "if you're poor, it's your fault." The resurgence of arguments in favor of accommodation to the racist status quo comes from both the white racist ruling class and their black lackeys and has been in the works since the rollback of the gains of the civil rights movement starting in the 1970s. It has accelerated with the bourgeois triumphalism over the capitalist counterrevolution in East Europe and the Soviet Union that was supposed to mean the "end of history" and the "death of communism." The final undoing of the USSR, the world's first workers state, was a huge defeat and has meant a global capitalist offensive against workers and oppressed. Working-class consciousness has been thrown back, and masses of workers around the world no longer identify their struggles with the struggle for socialism.

There is an inextricable link between the fight for black liberation and the question of socialist revolution. The 1917 October Revolution, led by Lenin and Trotsky, was the greatest 20th century victory for the world's workers and oppressed. The Third (Communist) International, which came out of that revolution, insisted that the struggle for black liberation was key to the American revolution and demanded that the American Communist Party address the special oppression of black people. James P. Cannon, founder of American Trotskyism, said that the Bolsheviks instructed them that "the Negro question [is] a *special* question of doubly-exploited second-class citizens, requiring a program of special demands as part of the over-all program—and to start doing something about it" (*The First Ten Years of American Commu-*

*nism* [1962]). In those early years, the Communist Party's aggressive struggle for racial equality and against the exclusion of blacks from the unions laid the foundations for the later successes of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in organizing mass, integrated industrial unions.

Despite its degeneration under the Stalinist bureaucracy, we unconditionally militarily defended the Soviet workers state and the East European deformed workers states against internal counter-revolution and imperialist attack and called for proletarian political revolution. Today we call for the unconditional military defense of the remaining deformed workers states of China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba. We fight to forge Trotskyist parties to struggle for workers political revolution to oust the parasitic Stalinist bureaucracies and establish regimes based on workers democracy and revolutionary internationalism.

Today the mass of black youth are no longer even a reserve army of labor but, in the eyes of the racist rulers, constitute a surplus population. Decrepit, overcrowded, segregated schools are the holding cells on the way to prison. Under Democratic president Clinton, the prison system population soared, today reaching over two million. Others are recruited to be cannon fodder in U.S. imperialism's wars, like the murderous occupation of Iraq. In the name of the "war on drugs,"

black youth are swept into the prison system and, if they get out, they can't get jobs, they're ineligible for education aid and in many cases can't vote. Their families have been destroyed.

The capitalists are determined to have a monopoly of violence, and that's why they push gun control as a supposed solution to the misery and desperation of urban life. In November in Atlanta, 88-year-old Kathryn Johnston managed to fire several shots in self-defense before cops with a "no knock" warrant broke down her door supposedly "looking for drugs" and killed her. We are for the decriminalization of drugs. We oppose gun control and are for the right of self-defense.

Black women workers face triple oppression. Between 1977 and 2001, there has been an almost 600 percent increase in the number of women jailed; a third are black and 16 percent are Hispanic. The California state assembly is discussing building 15 new so-called "mini" women's prisons. Both black men and women are disproportionately the victims of neglect and prejudice over HIV/AIDS, as well as the mass destruction of public housing, the axing of welfare and the attacks on health care. Attacks on abortion rights hit young black women hard. We are for free abortion on demand as part of free quality health care for all and fight anti-gay bigotry. For women's liberation through socialist revolution!

*continued on page 8*



AP

**New Orleans, September 2005: Hurricane Katrina survivors abandoned by racist capitalist rulers.**

# Black Liberation...

(continued from page 7)

Racism and anti-immigrant chauvinism are essential weapons in the ideological arsenal of the ruling class to divide and weaken workers. White workers as well as black workers and immigrant workers lose when the bosses pit sections of the working class against each other, aiming to choke off joint action against their common enemy, the capitalist class. In the course of militant class struggle, like on the picket lines, workers learn who are their real allies and enemies, and the need to rely on their own strength.

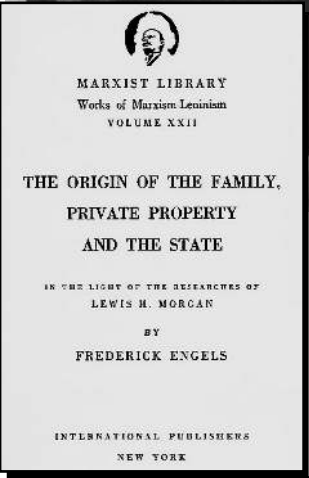
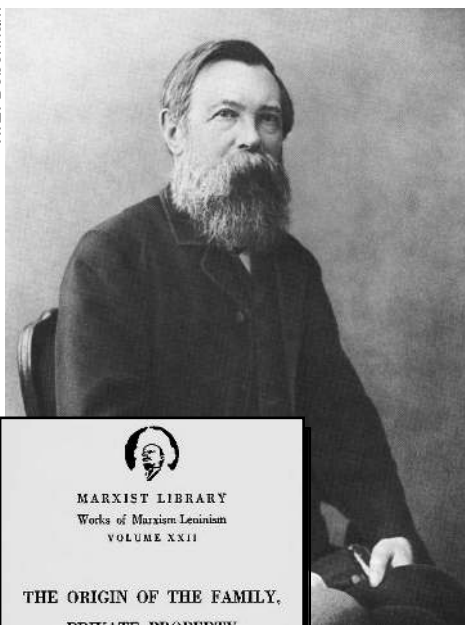
Many immigrant workers have a history of social struggle in their countries of origin and are a living link to desperately needed international working-class solidarity. The working class as a whole must take up the fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants. At Smithfield Foods in Tar Heel, North Carolina, there has been more than a decade of struggle by the United Food and Commercial Workers to organize the largely black and Latino workforce. Up to 500 black and Latino workers walked out or didn't come to work on Martin Luther King Day this year demanding that it be made a company holiday. Black rights, immigrant rights and the rights of the entire working class go forward together or go backward. Working people need a party that fights for *their* interests, a workers party that fights for a workers government.

## Finish the Civil War!

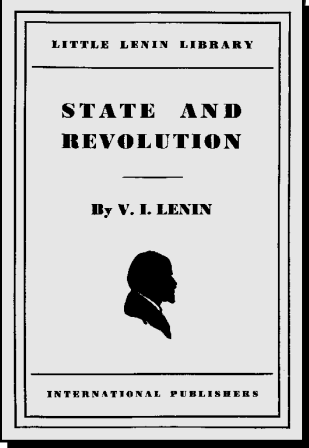
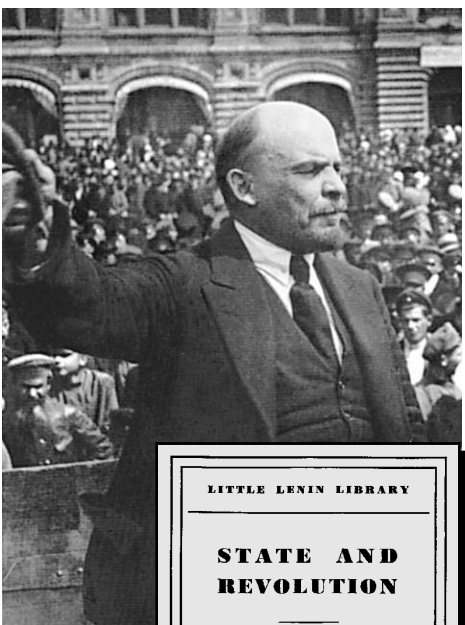
The American bourgeois order was born in violence against the indigenous population, which was largely exterminated, and continued through indentured servitude and the brutal forced-labor system of black chattel slavery. In the South before the Civil War, policing was geared almost entirely toward the maintenance of slavery. "Patrollers" were the most visible police force, employed to track down fugitive slaves. They could search slave dwellings for weapons, break up gatherings and look out for so-called "suspicious" activity. Any adult white male could be conscripted to put down a slave revolt. The violent punishment of the black population was codified, for example, in a 1723 Maryland law that called for cutting off the ears of blacks—slave or free—who struck a white person.

Some 200,000 ex-slaves and Northern black freedmen fought in the Union Army in the Civil War. And, following the defeat of the South, Radical Reconstruction was the most democratic period in U.S. history. But the victorious Northern capitalists betrayed the promise of black equality. They looked at the devastated South and saw opportunity for profitably exploiting both resources and the freedmen. With the Compromise of 1877, the last of the federal troops were pulled from the South, symbolizing the end of Reconstruction. Black people were disenfran-

W.E. Debenham



**Engels' *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1884) and Lenin's *State and Revolution* (1917) explained nature of the state as instrument of class rule.**



K.A. Kuznetsov

police force in the city's history. The character of the police doesn't change no matter who runs them. In 1992, in response to his call for yet another version of a civilian review board, he was treated to 10,000 armed cops rabidly besieging City Hall, an event that launched Rudy Giuliani's mayoral campaign.

## Self-Defense Against Racist Terror

Black people are not just victims and have organized to fight against racist attacks. After World War I, masses of black people were moving out of the South into Northern cities. Racist mob and cop attacks exploded, some sparked by racists horrified at the sight of armed black soldiers returning. Black people began to organize self-defense, many inspired by the recent victorious Russian Revolution. In 1920, at the Second Congress of the Communist International in Moscow, John Reed, one of the founders of the American Communist Party and author of *Ten Days That Shook the World*, reported that "among the negroes themselves a great racial consciousness arose." Reed noted, "Defense societies were organized everywhere by the returned negro soldiers for resistance to white lynchers" (see "Early Communist Work Among Blacks," *Young Spartacus* No. 21, January-February 1974).

The racist rulers are okay with begging, weeping and praying, but when they see black people defending themselves, they treat it like a slave revolt. In the late 1950s and early '60s, black veterans and others organized. These included the courageous Robert F. Williams, Marine veteran and author of *Negroes With Guns* in Monroe, North Carolina, and the Louisiana-based Deacons for Defense and Justice. They armed themselves against the Ku Klux Klan lynchers, saving black lives. Williams' NAACP chapter was expelled by the national office because he organized black self-defense. The Spartacist League raised money for the Deacons for Defense, an effort embodied in the slogan "Every Dime Buys a Bullet." While we supported self-defense, we pointed out the contradiction in the political programs of these groupings. For example, Charles Sims, leader of the Bogalusa Deacons, looked to the federal courts and government and the Democratic Party.

The history of the civil rights movement has been rewritten to make icons of the pro-Democratic Party liberal-pacifist wing of that movement led by Martin Luther King Jr. and others, who relied on the federal government and the Democratic Party. What is buried or distorted is the history of those who opposed cringing appeals to the racist rulers, those like the Deacons, Williams, Malcolm X and many militants attracted to the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and the Black Panthers. When the civil rights movement swept into the North, the bankruptcy of the liberal legalistic perspective of its leaders was quickly exposed, as it collided head-on with the cold, hard reality that black oppression is rooted in the foundations of American capitalism. The important and real but partial gains for black people during this period were largely in the realm of formal legal equality. But the Northern ghetto masses had lived for some time with so-called "equality under the law"—at the end of the unemployment lines and the barrels of cops' revolvers.

The bankruptcy of the liberal-led movement led to the explosions of black anger across the Northern cities. In Harlem in 1964, an off-duty police lieutenant shot and killed a 15-year-old black youth. The cops used the resulting protest as an excuse to launch a pre-emptive strike against unrest in the ghetto. A demonstration at Harlem's 28th Precinct two days later was repeatedly pressed back by the cops, who hurled racist slurs and eventually charged into the main body of the protest. In the ensuing days, wave after wave of tactical cops swept through Harlem beating and terrorizing all who crossed their paths.

Afterwards, black nationalist groups,

chised, politically expropriated and kept at the bottom of society.

The institution of Jim Crow segregation began to take shape, marked by strict racial codes that returned the black population to a position of subservience. State repression was supplemented by the racist terror of the Ku Klux Klan. This was the era of lynch law. In many cases, police would release prisoners to lynch mobs, and then participate. Racist police terror in the U.S. is the legacy of slavery and lynch mob violence, and the death penalty is legal lynching. We say: Finish the Civil War—for a third American Revolution, a workers revolution!

## NYC and Police "Reform"

The history of the New York City police underscores the "liberal" North's key role in perpetuating black oppression. The NYPD was established in 1845 as the city's growing economy attracted new immigrants who were squeezed into tenement districts. Irish and German immigrants battled with police.

There is a long history of anti-labor violence and repression in America, like the 1886 Haymarket massacre in Chicago. In New York, the cops attacked organized workers in the "Eight Hour strikes" of 1872, and in 1874 immigrant workers protesting joblessness were attacked by cops on horses in the Tompkins Square Riot. Is this just ancient history? No. In Houston, Texas, cops mounted on horses attacked striking immigrant SEIU janitors in November, severely injuring at least five people, including an 83-year-old New York janitor who had come to Houston in solidarity. But the janitors

prevailed, winning a three-year contract. Cops and security guards—scab herders during strikes—as well as prison guards are not workers and should be ousted from the unions. Phony socialists like the Socialist Alternative group, which considers cops and security guards part of the labor movement, are feeding deadly illusions in the class enemy.

Special commissions and civilian review boards, committees and investigations, petitions and community speakouts against cop brutality—they have all happened time and time again. The underlying purpose of such "reforms" is to bolster the police and clean up their bloody image, and the reformist left keeps pushing such schemes. In the protests over the Sean Bell killing, the International Socialist Organization (ISO) has repeatedly called for the firing of Police Commissioner Ray Kelly, fostering the illusion that if the city's top cop changed names that would be a victory. That's a lie. Some time after the Amadou Diallo shooting, Giuliani appointed a new police commissioner, his thoroughly vile and corrupt crony Bernard Kerik. The ISO even claims that replacing Kelly would be comparable to the "victory" of Donald Rumsfeld resigning. But that just cleared the way for Bush to increase the number of troops in Iraq.

New York has had no lack of investigations into "police misconduct," starting in 1894 with the Lexow Committee, continuing with the 1970 Knapp Commission and the 1994 Mollen Commission. Civilian complaint review boards date back to 1953. Democrat David Dinkins, NYC's first and only black mayor, bragged that he carried out the largest increase in the



**July 1964: In response to NYC cop riot, Spartacist-initiated Harlem Solidarity Committee held rally in garment district (right) calling on labor to defend ghetto masses.**





the NAACP and the Democrats joined together in a Unity Council. With our small forces we worked for a while in the Harlem Defense Council, a group led by Progressive Labor's Bill Epton, urging residents to organize block by block for self-defense. We initiated the Harlem Solidarity Committee, which organized a mass rally in the downtown garment district around the slogans: "Remove the rioting cops from Harlem" and "Support the right of the citizens of the ghetto to defend themselves." In 1964 as now, we have consistently sought to link the anger of the ghettos and barrios to the labor movement's enormous potential power.

The Black Panther Party formed in 1966, describing themselves as "revolutionary nationalists," a contradiction in terms. The Panthers shared with the rest of the (predominately white) New Left a rejection of the centrality and strategic social power of the integrated labor movement in the struggle against oppression and capitalism. This further isolated the Panthers and facilitated their destruction.

These days you will not hear how the Panthers offered to send their members to Vietnam to assist in the fight against U.S. imperialism, about how they initially organized independently of the Democrats and Republicans. Now they are portrayed either as good guys who organized breakfast programs or as a bunch of criminals. The Panthers represented the best of a generation of black militants who courageously stood up to the racist ruling class. They sought to strip away the deeply felt powerlessness of the black population in relation to the



Left: Armed self-defense organized by Robert F. Williams in Monroe, North Carolina, 1957. Above: Black Panther Party march, 1969.

more railroaded to decades in prison hell-holes, including Mumia Abu-Jamal. Others made their way into the Democratic Party, like New York's Charles Barron.

Mumia Abu-Jamal has been imprisoned for over 25 years, sent to death row after being falsely convicted of killing Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner. Mumia is an innocent man, and the struggle for his freedom is central to the interests of the entire working class. He must be freed now! Abolish the racist death penalty!

### Build a Revolutionary Workers Party!

We do not simply decry the cruelty of the capitalist system. We fight to forge a revolutionary vanguard party that will bring a communist program based on the

making appearances at protests against cop terror, they have not lifted a finger to lead their membership in class action in defense of the besieged ghettos and barrios. Toussaint and the leadership of the TWU are closely allied with the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association head Patrick Lynch! Trotsky wrote in 1940 in *Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay* about reformist-led unions "drawing closely to and growing together with the state power."

The reformist Workers World Party offers its newspaper as a press release vehicle for Democratic city councilman Charles Barron, who has been using his credentials as an ex-Black Panther as a cover for feeding illusions that you can reform the cops. Workers World openly supported this capitalist politician for Congress in 2006. Barron has been mainly calling for Ray Kelly to be fired and has also pitched an appeal to the UN, portraying that den of imperialist thieves and their victims as a vehicle for justice. Trailing right behind Barron are the nationalist December 12th Movement and the Black Men's Movement, which was formerly called the Black Men's Movement Against Crack. The late Sonny Carson, who led a poisonous bigoted boycott of Korean grocers in Flatbush in 1990, had a hand in founding these groups.

A group called the New Black Panther Party has called for boycotting "non-black" businesses. This separatist outfit is an offspring of the anti-woman, anti-Semitic demagogue Louis Farrakhan, whose reactionary 1995 "Million Man March" for "atonement" was lauded by the racist bourgeoisie because it forgave the oppressors and exploiters for their enormous crimes against black people, working people and the poor while blaming the oppressed for their oppression. The New Black Panthers have a record of poisonous denunciations of Korean shopkeepers. Farrakhan, the man who wanted Malcolm X dead, has his own security company, X-Men Security, offering his services to police housing projects. All black nationalist groups see the primary division in society as race, not class. Farrakhan and his ilk live off the despair of the ghettoized black population and sneer with contempt at the multiracial working

class while pursuing their petty "black capitalist" schemes.

The Party for Socialism and Liberation, Workers World Party and Socialist Alternative all call for variations on "community control" of the police. Such calls are an echo of the 1960s. This demand combines liberal illusions in the nature of the bourgeois state with illusions that the oppression of black people can be ended through "control" of ghetto institutions. Community control is a cruel hoax, amounting to quibbling over "control" of the rotting carcasses of the inner-city ghettos.

The nationalist and reformist groups embrace sectoralism, an anti-working-class perspective that blacks, Latinos, immigrants—all sectors of the oppressed—must organize separately. This is a gift to the capitalist exploiters because it assists in perpetuating divisions in the working class. They accept the racial, ethnic and sexual divisions of capitalist society as unalterable. In practice, this means confining struggles to the boundaries of capitalism and fighting over pieces of a shrinking pie.

The U.S. is one of the most unequal industrialized countries in the world. To begin to put an end to poverty will require the expropriation of the bloodsucking capitalist class. Workers uniquely have power at the point of production. They can shut down capitalist production, pointing to their ability to seize the means of production and run society in the interests of all. When the profit system is swept away and replaced with a rational planned economy based upon workers councils, the vast wealth of this country can be utilized for human need instead of capitalist greed. Then we'll be on the road to black freedom and the liberation of all the exploited and oppressed.

We are revolutionary internationalists. We stand in the communist tradition of the Bolshevik Party that led the Russian Revolution of 1917. Beset by civil war and faced with imperialist encirclement, the leaders of the Soviet workers state immediately sought to spread that revolution internationally. The Spartacist League, U.S. section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist), stands for new October Revolutions, here and everywhere. Join us! ■



23 October 1999 labor/black mobilization initiated by Partisan Defense Committee rode KKK out of New York City.

cops, who were gunning down black people in the streets of Oakland and the rest of the U.S. with impunity. Mumia Abu-Jamal, America's foremost class-war prisoner, says in the video *From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal* that as a teenager he was beaten by the police into the Black Panthers.

In his 1973 autobiography *Revolutionary Suicide*, Huey Newton describes how the Panthers were inspired by the Louisiana Deacons and Robert F. Williams. He wrote that his comrade Bobby Seale had collected Malcolm X's speeches from the Nation of Islam's *Muhammad Speaks* and from the *Militant*, the newspaper of the once-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP). The rightward-moving SWP during that period was tailing uncritically both Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr. and abstaining from actively intervening in the civil rights movement. In the '60s, militant black youth were reading everything they could get their hands on to find a strategy to fight black oppression. The SWP's criminal abstention meant that a historic opportunity to recruit young black militants to fight for authentic communism and socialist revolution was squandered.

In 1968, FBI director J. Edgar Hoover vowed, "The Negro youth and moderate[s] must be made to understand that if they succumb to revolutionary teachings, they will be dead revolutionaries." Under the ruthless FBI COINTELPRO program, 38 Panthers were killed and hundreds

history of working-class struggle to the workers, a revolutionary program based on their objective interests in liberating all mankind. Wage workers engaged in particular struggles against their employers will not spontaneously see the necessity for overthrowing capitalism. History proves that the party must bring that consciousness to the working class. In explaining the necessity of a revolutionary party, Lenin wrote in *What Is To Be Done?* (1902):

"The Social-Democrat's ideal should not be the trade-union secretary, but *the tribune of the people*, who is 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; who is able to generalise all these manifestations and produce a single picture of police violence and capitalist exploitation; who is able to take advantage of every event, however small, in order to set forth *before all* his socialist convictions and his democratic demands, in order to clarify for *all* and everyone the world-historic significance of the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat."

The Spartacist League is dedicated to building such a party, based on the fusion of declassed revolutionary intellectuals and class-conscious workers. And such a party can only be built through sharp political struggle against the misleaders of the working class.

Cases in point are the treacherous pro-Democratic Party NYC labor tops, like teachers union head Randi Weingarten and the TWU's Roger Toussaint. While

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Iran...

(continued from page 1)

California professor—and cousin of the king of Morocco—described the situation in an article titled “All the Ingredients for a Strategic American Disaster” (*Le Monde Diplomatique*, February 2007): “The winner is obviously Iran. The American strategy of dismantling the army and Baathist structures of the Iraqi state led to the elimination of Tehran’s traditional enemy, while American confidence in the Shi’ite clerics has helped Iran’s allies inside Iraq. Washington has thus strengthened the very state it claimed to be fighting.” The *New York Times* (18 February) chipped in: “Iran has strengthened ties with Syria, built the militia Hezbollah into a state within a state in Lebanon and offered support to the radical Palestinian group Hamas. But the cornerstone to its regional plans lies in Baghdad.”

Bush’s Democratic Party opponents are voicing skepticism about his claims against Iran—as are governments and editorial writers around the world. But the Democrats portray Iran and its developing nuclear capacity as a “threat” just as starkly as do the Bush gang, differing only in the means to contain it. Among the contenders for the Democratic presidential nomination, New Mexico governor Bill Richardson called in the *Wash-*



Iranian uranium conversion facility near Isfahan.

the interests of those they exploit and oppress.

The reformist left’s fundamental allegiance is to bourgeois democracy: the political shell for the dictatorship of the capitalist class. Thus the ISO’s *Socialist Worker* (8 December 2006) wrote following the Democrats’ electoral victory: “The long dormant antiwar movement must take to the streets to remind this country’s ruling elite that they ultimately must



Young Spartacus

SYC at Columbia University antiwar walkout, February 15.

ington Post (24 February) for “directly engaging the Iranians about their nuclear program,” noting that “saber-rattling is not a good way to get the Iranians to cooperate.” Richardson is here repeating the line of the bipartisan Baker commission, which also complained about the Bush government’s “unilateralism” in attacking Iraq without the support of the “international community.” Nevertheless, Richardson’s bottom line was: “For the United States to attack Iran without exhausting all diplomatic options would be a terrible mistake.”

For his part, John Edwards has parroted Bush’s warning that “all options are on the table” in regard to Iran, while a February 14 statement by Hillary Clinton called for Bush to seek Congressional approval before any military action. Barack Obama, who has cast himself as the “antiwar” candidate, earlier told the *Chicago Tribune* (25 September 2004): “Launching some missile strikes into Iran is not the optimal position for us to be in. On the other hand, having a radical Muslim theocracy in possession of nuclear weapons is worse. So I guess my instinct would be to err on not having those weapons in the possession of the ruling clerics of Iran.”

The Democrats rode to victory in the November Congressional elections largely because of popular opposition to the Iraq occupation. In this they were aided by the “antiwar movement” built by the reformist left. The various antiwar coalitions supported by the Workers World Party (WWP), Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL), International Socialist Organization (ISO), Socialist Action et al. pleaded with the imperialist rulers to bring peace to the Near East and to reorient their priorities. With their timeworn calls for money for schools and jobs and not war, these reformists demand that the rulers of the capitalist profit system serve

answer to the people they govern.” Now comes the obvious next step: directly appealing to the Democratic Party, which has dutifully voted funding for both the Iraq and Afghanistan wars/occupation, to now use the “power of the purse” against the White House.

At a February 11 rally for Barack Obama at the University of Illinois-Chicago, protesters including ISO members unfurled a banner that read: “Obama: Stand Up! Cut the Funding!” Chiming right along are the calls issued for the March 17 “March on the Pentagon” by the PSL’s ANSWER coalition and the WWP’s Troops Out Now Coalition (TONC). Where ANSWER pleads, “From Iraq to New Orleans, Fund People’s Needs Not the War Machine,” TONC intones,

Chicagoist



“We Must Force Congress to Cut Off War Funding.”

Promoting themselves as the party that can best wage the “war on terror,” the Democrats who oppose Bush’s Iraq occupation all embrace the murderous occupation of Afghanistan as a “just” war in retaliation for the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon. Congressman Tom Lantos, Chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, opposed Bush’s troop increase in Iraq by declaring that the president should “send all of the 22,000 troops of the Iraqi surge to Afghanistan.” Extricating U.S. forces from the Iraq quagmire could also give Washington more flexibility to pursue its threats against both neocolonial Iran and the North Korean deformed workers state, and to pursue as well the imperialists’ strategic goal of capitalist counterrevolution in China, the most powerful of the remaining societies where capitalism was overthrown.

Thousands more U.S. troops are now being redeployed to Afghanistan. Britain is adding its own extra contingents, even as it pulls out a quarter of its forces from southern Iraq. With the capitalist media braying about the resurgence of the Taliban and Al Qaeda, even Pakistan, a long-time U.S. asset in the region, is feeling heat from Washington. According to press reports, on his recent trip to Pakistan, Vice President Cheney threatened the Musharraf regime with a cutoff of aid if it did not move against Taliban-linked forces near the Afghan border. Citing unnamed U.S. officials, a *New York Times* (26 February) article stated that “the White House has ruled out unilateral strikes” in the area “for the time being.”

When the U.S. invaded Afghanistan and Iraq, none of the reformist groups raised the elementary call for the military defense of those countries. Now, an ANSWER statement on its March 17 protest does not even mention the occupation of Afghanistan, not to speak of Bush’s threats against Iran. This is a good measure of the U.S. left’s capitulation to the

rulers’ “war on terror” as it tails the Democratic Party of U.S. imperialism.

War Lies, and More

In January, Bush threatened that U.S. forces would “seek out and destroy” Iranians supposedly arming and training insurgents in Iraq. In a calculated provocation, American troops the next day seized five Iranians who even Iraqi officials maintained were diplomats. U.S. officials then upped the ante by revealing that Bush had authorized the military to “kill or capture” Iranian agents in Iraq. A *New Yorker* online article (25 February) by Seymour Hersh quotes a former senior intelligence official saying that “the word went out last August for the military to snatch as many Iranians in Iraq as they can” and that “they had five hundred locked up at one time.” A former National Security Council official told Hersh: “This is all part of the campaign of provocative steps to increase the pressure on Iran. The idea is that at some point the Iranians will respond and then the Administration will have an open door to strike at them.”

Hersh noted that with the two carrier strike groups near Iran due to be relieved in the spring, there is worry within the military that the two groups “may be ordered to stay in the area after the new carriers arrive.” The former intelligence official told him that contingency plans “allow for an attack order this spring.” Many commentators have said that the U.S. is looking for a new “Tonkin Gulf” incident, referring to the cooked-up 1964 “attack” on a U.S. warship by North Vietnamese forces that provided the pretext for a massive escalation of American forces in Vietnam.

To bolster Washington’s claims that “the highest levels of the Iranian government” were targeting U.S. forces in Iraq, American officials pointed to captured armor-piercing explosives that they said were fabricated in Iran. But attempts to whip up anti-Iran sentiment are falling flat. First it was revealed that a press conference originally scheduled for late January had been repeatedly postponed because the “evidence” was so dubious that no official in Washington would take responsibility for it. (The briefing was finally presented off-camera by anonymous officers in Baghdad.) Then the chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff contradicted the “revelations,” insisting that he saw no evidence of Iranian government involvement. Bush had to admit that he did not really know if attacks “were ordered from the top echelons of the government” in Tehran (*New York Times*, 15 February).

Having retailed the lies about “weapons of mass destruction” that served as a pretext for the Iraq war, even the pliant bourgeois press has expressed skepticism about the administration’s claims concerning Iran. But they did not pursue such obvious questions as why the supposed Iranian weapons displayed for reporters had English markings. An Iranian UN official aptly noted in a letter to the *New York Times* (26 February), “The evidence that has been produced is preposterous (the dates on the evidence are in American date format—month first, day second—whereas the rest of the world does not use this format).” And, as Paul Krugman wrote in the *Times* (12 February), close U.S. ally Saudi Arabia “is believed to be a major source of financial support for Sunni insurgents—and Sunnis, not Iranian-backed Shiites, are still responsible for most American combat deaths.”

In any case, as revolutionary 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 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



Camp followers of Democratic Party of U.S. imperialism: ISO-led protesters unfurl banner at Barack Obama campaign rally, University of Illinois-Chicago, February 11; leaflet by WWP’s Troops Out Now Coalition.





**Left: Russian president Putin and U.S. defense secretary Gates at Munich conference, February 10, where Putin denounced Washington's plan to place "missile defense shield" in Poland and Czech Republic. Right: February 3 protest against U.S. plan in Czech village of Jince.**

# WORKERS VANGUARD

**We Will Not Forget Sean Bell, Victim of NYPD Terror**

## For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

*We print below a presentation, edited for publication, by Karen Cole at a February 17 New York Spartacist League forum.*

On December 16, comrades of the Spartacist League and the Labor Black League for Social Defense joined the huge Fifth Avenue rally to protest the November 25 undercover cop killing of 23-year-old Sean Bell on his wedding day and the wounding of Trent Benefield and Joseph Guzman in a storm of 50 bullets. Nicole Paultre Bell, Sean Bell's fiancée, told the truth when she said, "They barricaded him in and they executed him." In racist capitalist America, another young black man has been cut down by the cops, the thugs in blue, in the prime of his life. In the aftermath of the killing, the cops rampaged through Queens and the Bronx, lying about looking for a gun in a frenzied attempt to blame the victims while the killer cops were put on a paid vacation.

Tens of thousands of working people and youth came out because they were furious at the kill-crazy cops who maraud through the crumbling inner cities terrorizing black and Latino men, women and children. The ruling class grinds down poor, minority and working people and then unleashes their cops to harass, humiliate, beat and kill—on the street like Sean Bell, in their building lobby like Amadou Diallo, where they work like Ousmane Zongo, on the rooftop like Timothy Stansbury, and in their home like Alberta Spruill. The hard truth is that the only way to eliminate police brutality is to do away with the whole system of racist American capitalism. The Spartacist League fights for a class-struggle program for black liberation as an inseparable

**December 2006:  
Queens protest  
against racist  
cop killing  
of Sean Bell.**



part of the fight for the emancipation of the entire working class from capitalist exploitation.

What's called for is mass protest headed by New York City's integrated labor movement—independent from the capitalist bosses and their political parties. A small taste of the kind of working-class action that's necessary was seen in New York City in 2005, a little over a year ago, when the Transport Workers Union (TWU) defied the no-strike New York state Taylor Law and crippled the finance capital of the world for three days. That

strike was enormously popular with working people in New York who wanted to see a real fight, and workers watched it across the country. Wall Street billionaire and NYC mayor Bloomberg denounced the heavily black and immigrant striking transit workers as "thugs."

The transit workers demonstrated the social power that can be mobilized in defense of the oppressed. But just as the transit workers were crippled by the pro-capitalist, pro-Democratic Party TWU bureaucracy that demobilized the strike, workers as a whole are held back by the

existing labor misleadership from striking a labor-centered blow against racist cop terror. Mass labor-led protest—for example, a one-day citywide strike—would send a much more powerful message to the capitalist rulers than any number of photo-ops for Democrats Al Sharpton and Charles Barron.

The Democrats and union bureaucrats who organized that December 16 rally and their reformist hangers-on peddle cop reform schemes and thus reinforce dangerous illusions that the capitalist state

*continued on page 6*

## Serving Ten Years for Oral Sex

## Free Genarlow Wilson!

In a case exemplifying racist and anti-sex bigotry in the U.S., Genarlow Wilson, a 20-year-old black man, languishes in a Georgia prison on a mandatory ten-year sentence with no hope of parole for engaging in consensual oral sex three

### Young Spartacus

years ago with a younger schoolmate. In December, the Georgia Supreme Court refused to reconsider Wilson's conviction for "aggravated child molestation" after earlier turning down his appeal by a four-to-three vote in which each of the court's four white justices voted to keep him locked up. Wilson faces spending the rest of his young adulthood behind bars.

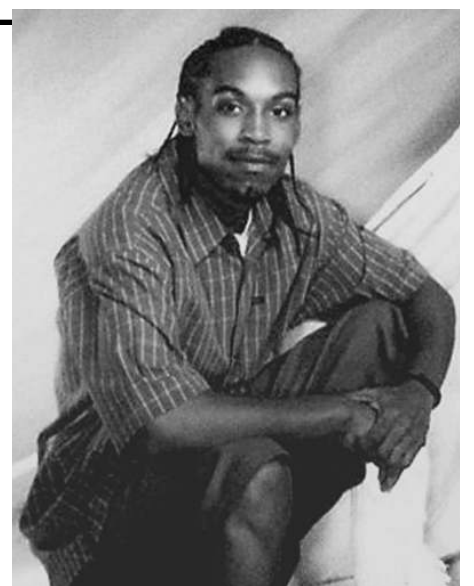
As Wilson and a group of friends were celebrating New Year's Eve in 2004 in a

hotel room, he and others were caught on videotape having oral sex with a 15-year-old girl. Even the girl's mother testified in court that her daughter initiated the activity. But under Georgia law, where the age of consent is 16, she could not be considered to be "legally consenting." Jury foreman Marie Manigault has complained bitterly about the jury being misled to believe that they had to convict Wilson. She told *Atlanta Magazine* (January 2006) that only after announcing the verdict was the jury informed that Wilson would spend at least ten years behind bars. "I just went limp. They had to help me to a chair." She added, "Because we were ignorant we sent this child to jail."

The son of a single mother, Wilson was an honor high school student with a 3.2 grade point average, an all-conference football player and track star who was

being recruited by Ivy League colleges like Columbia and Brown. His case recalls that of Marcus Dixon, an 18-year-old black high school athlete and an A student who was thrown into prison in 2003 under the same law for having consensual sex with a white girl just shy of 16 (see "Racist Frame-Up in 'New South': Free Marcus Dixon!" WV No. 819, 6 February 2004). Even Tyrone Brooks, a black Democratic state legislator who co-sponsored that law, had to admit that the Dixon case was used to send a message that "young black boys better not have sexual relationships with young white girls."

Amid much publicity over Dixon's blatantly racist prosecution, the Georgia Supreme Court reduced his conviction to "statutory rape," cutting his sentence to the 15 months he had already served. Dixon's case has helped to call attention to Wilson's imprisonment, which has been



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widely denounced. A *New York Times* (21 December 2006) editorial calling for Wilson's freedom noted: "What makes this case more absurd is that if Mr. Wilson and the young woman had sexual intercourse, he would have been guilty only of a misdemeanor and not required to register as a sex offender, thanks to a provision in the law meant to avoid just this type of draconian punishment for consensual youthful

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