

## Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!

# Factory Raids, Deportations Sweep U.S.

## Labor: Fight Anti-Immigrant Attacks!

In cities and towns from coast to coast and for hundreds of miles along the U.S.-Mexican border, the government has been escalating its racist, anti-immigrant campaign. Workers are seized on the job, while scores of Latino residents are arrested by Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents in neighborhood sweeps. Thousands of National Guard troops have been deployed along the border, supplemented by fascist Minutemen vigilantes. Some 190,000 people were deported last year, while 100,000 are currently held in federal, state and county jails for supposedly violating immigration law.

The viciousness of the government's crackdown was on full display in New Bedford, Massachusetts, on March 6 when 300 federal agents backed up by helicopters raided a textile sweatshop and detained 361 mainly Guatemalan and Salvadoran women workers. Many were sent to a detention center in Harlingen, Texas, some 2,000 miles away. Young children, many of them U.S. citizens, were suddenly without their mothers. As public outrage mounted, immigration authorities released dozens of the workers, who still, however, await deportation hearings.

On March 12, when imperialist chief George Bush reached Guatemala on his recent tour of Latin America more than 5,000 soldiers and police surrounded the National Palace in Guatemala City to keep away protesters outraged particularly by the New Bedford raid. Even Guatemalan president Oscar Berger, an American toady, felt compelled to lecture Bush about immigration policy. Bush was met with mass protests throughout his tour, including its final stop in Mexico, where even right-wing Mexican president Felipe Calderón called U.S. border policies "absurd."

Calderón is well aware that he sits atop roiling social discontent, as was seen when some 100,000 people marched in downtown Mexico City in January to protest massive increases in prices of tortillas (see "Mexico: Tortilla Price Hike Condemns Poor to Starvation," WV No. 886, 16 February). About 10 percent of both the Guatemalan and Mexican population lives in the United States. Money sent back to Mexico by immigrants in the U.S. exceeds \$20 billion, second only to oil as a source of foreign revenue.

The massive migration is largely a result of the economic ruin wrought by the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which we have always denounced as U.S. imperialism's "free trade" rape of Mexico, and the more recent Central American Free Trade Agreement.

It is in the vital interest of the U.S. labor movement to mobilize in defense of immigrants, who form a key and vibrant component of the U.S. working class and a living bridge to the struggles of working people in Mexico and elsewhere. One key labor battle is the years-long effort by the United Food and Commercial Workers to organize the Smithfield pork processing plant—the largest such plant in the world—in Tar Heel, North Carolina. In a "right to work" state where the racist color bar has historically been wielded by the bosses to keep unions out, pro-union Smithfield workers have long faced company violence. More recently, management has collaborated with ICE to target militant immigrant workers, who along with black workers make up the bulk of the workforce. In January, 21 workers were arrested and then deported. At Smithfield and other plants, the Feds have issued "no match letters," setting up workers whose Social Security numbers do not match government records to be fired—an open invitation to get rid of union activists.

As Marxist opponents of racist Ameri-

**New Bedford: Distraught worker outside leather goods plant where hundreds of immigrants were rounded up by federal agents, March 6.**



Pereira/Standard-Times

can capitalism, we seek to mobilize the labor movement to fight deportations and ICE raids through class-struggle means. We demand full citizenship rights for all immigrants! We call on the unions to organize immigrant workers with full rights and protections. It is particularly important to combat anti-immigrant chauvinism in the working class, while the immigrant-derived proletariat and all workers must grasp that anti-black racism remains the touchstone of social reaction



Terry/Rocky Mountain News

**Angry family members and supporters confront immigration agents after raid at Swift meatpacking plant in Greeley, Colorado, in December.**

in this country. What is urgently needed is the forging of a workers party to lead all the exploited and oppressed in the struggle for a workers government that will seize the productive wealth of this society from the capitalists and create a planned, socialized economy. For social-revolution from the Yukon to the Yucatán!

This perspective requires battling the pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy and its American chauvinism. The labor tops' opposition to NAFTA and similar "free trade" pacts is based on protectionism and economic nationalism. In a blatant expression of this poisonous chauvinism, the Teamsters bureaucracy brags in a March 23 statement that it pressured a Senate committee into blocking plans to open the border to Mexican trucks, declaring: "The Teamsters Union has successfully led the battle to keep our border closed for the past 12 years, and we will not let up in our fight."

The Change to Win federation, which includes the Teamsters, as well as the SEIU service workers and other heavily immigrant unions, has pushed immigration "reform" bills with provisions to expand so-called "guest worker" programs. Congress last year reached an impasse. On the one side were those who wanted to virtually seal the border and criminalize masses of immigrants. On the other were politicians who, speaking for employers reliant on exploiting desperate immigrants, sought to increase the number of "guest workers" while offering some a (protracted) "path to citizenship." Democratic

*continued on page 9*



# Oct. 22 Coalition Meeting on Cop Brutality

## LBL vs. “Anybody but Bush” Maoists

NEW YORK CITY—In the months following the police killing of Sean Bell, the 23-year-old black man gunned down in a storm of 50 cop bullets on his wedding day last November 25, various leftist organizations have joined protests against cop terror, raising such reform schemes as “community control” of the police. The widespread anger over the Sean Bell killing was seen when tens of thousands of people, predominantly black, marched down Manhattan’s Fifth Avenue on December 16. On March 16, with the city poised on edge, a Queens grand jury handed down indictments against three of the five cops involved in the killing, two charged with manslaughter and one with reckless endangerment.

On March 3, a meeting held by the October 22 Coalition, a group initiated by the Maoist Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), afforded an unusual opportunity for counterposing our revolutionary socialist program to the reformist program put forward by the RCP and others. The meeting was addressed by several parents of victims of cop terror, who spoke movingly about the tribulations, abuse and persecution they experienced while vainly seeking justice for their children’s deaths. Juanita Young spoke of her son, Malcolm Ferguson, who

was shot dead by the cops in March 2000. Young herself was evicted from her apartment and arrested for “criminal trespass” in retaliation for her activism following her son’s death. Nicholas Heyward Sr., whose 13-year-old son Nicholas had been playing cops-and-robbers with a toy pistol when shot dead by the cops in September 1994, also spoke.

Speaking on behalf of the RCP and as cofounder of the October 22 Coalition, Carl Dix repeated an earlier speaker’s call for “revolution” and said that police brutality is “built into the fabric of the racist white supremacist capitalist system.” While Dix appealed for unity with the ghetto and barrio population and for “seeking allies throughout society,” the RCP’s coalition made clear what kind of “allies” Dix meant by giving Democratic Party city councilman Charles Barron star billing for the event. (Barron didn’t show.)

Barron has some “street cred” due to his former membership in the Black Panther Party and his occasional radical rhetoric. But he showed his true colors when, along with Al Sharpton and other bourgeois politicians as well as preachers, he appeared at Mayor Bloomberg’s side as City Hall appealed for “dialogue” following the Sean Bell killing. Barron

has mainly been demanding the firing of Police Commissioner Ray Kelly. As capitalist politicians, Barron and Sharpton’s aim is to get ahead of any social explosion in order to contain it.

A representative of the New York Labor Black League for Social Defense, which is allied with the Spartacist League, intervened during the discussion period to counterpose a strategy based on mobilizing the social power of the working class. The LBL spokesman, who is a member of Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 100, emphasized that police brutality was not an aberration, and that the cops, courts and prison system are the core of capitalists’ repressive state apparatus. He pointed out that racial oppression is a pillar of U.S. capitalist society, whether the government is led by Democrats or Republicans.

The LBL speaker called for labor-led, integrated mass protest against police killings. He cited the December 2005 transit strike as an example of labor’s potential power, in contrast to photo ops for Charles Barron. The cops executed Sean Bell on

the street because he was black, and the same state power seeks to execute Mumia Abu-Jamal, a former Black Panther and MOVE supporter, because they see in him the spectre of black revolution. The transit strike, he remarked, demonstrated the social power that must be mobilized to free Mumia.

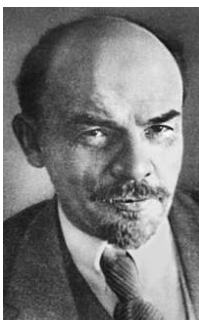
The RCP has demonstrated its lack of a proletarian perspective by even dropping the word “worker” from its newspaper’s masthead (formerly *Revolutionary Worker*, now *Revolution*). The LBLer stated that World Can’t Wait, one of the pro-Democratic Party outfits created by the RCP, is part of the “Anybody but Bush” crowd (see “Down With U.S. Imperialism! For Class Struggle at Home!” WV No. 888, 16 March). In response to those who spoke of “revolution,” he said that the question is how to fight for it. As against the RCP’s class collaborationism, we fight to build a proletarian party, independent of and in opposition to the capitalist political parties, to lead the struggle for socialist revolution. ■

### For Class-Struggle Defense!

*In advancing a class-struggle strategy in the fight to free death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, we follow in the tradition of the early International Labor Defense (ILD) led by James P. Cannon, a founder of the Communist Party and later of American Trotskyism. In an article written just days before the execution of anarchist workers Sacco and Vanzetti, the ILD emphasized the need to combat illusions sown by liberals in the “justice” of the capitalist framework system. Today, as Mumia’s fight enters a*



TROTSKY



LENIN

*new critical stage on the legal front, it is all the more urgent that his supporters around the world mobilize in mass protest centered on the power of the labor movement.*

In the many years of struggle for the liberation of Sacco and Vanzetti, tens of thousands of workers have learned this: that there is one power that is irresistible, one upon which they can rely for base, militancy and strength—the organized might of the working masses.

They have learned that the liberals, with their counsels for moderation and exclusive reliance upon the essentially just nature of the courts and the machinery of the law, with their faith in the efficacy of wire-pulling, interviews, *have accomplished nothing but the weakening of the movement for Sacco and Vanzetti.* The liberals, inside and outside the labor movement, have only spread illusions in the ranks of the workers, and kept them acquiescent and in leash until the last moment when the executioners reach out to turn the electric switch of death....

We do not ask for mercy for Sacco and Vanzetti from the corrupt reactionaries of Massachusetts. We call upon the workers to exert their invincible power to obtain their release so that they can rejoin actively the ranks from which they were seized.

—“‘Friends’ of Sacco and Vanzetti,” *Labor Defender*, September 1927



WV Photo

NEW YORK CITY—Spartacist banner at March 18 antiwar demo, part of nationwide protests that weekend called by the ANSWER, United for Peace and Justice (UFPJ), World Can’t Wait (WCW) and Troops Out Now (TONC) coalitions. From UFPJ and TONC’s appeals that Congress stop war funding to WCW’s call to “drive out the Bush regime” and ANSWER’s plea that Washington “fund people’s needs, not the war machine,” the reformist left allies with the Democratic Party of U.S. imperialism and preaches that the blood-soaked capitalist system can be pressured to be more “humane.” The Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Clubs intervened into the protests with our Marxist propaganda, combatting illusions in the reformability of the “democratic” capitalist state and raising the call for a workers party that fights “in the belly of the beast” for the overthrow of the imperialist order through socialist revolution.

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### Just Out in Russian!

*Byulleten' Spartakovtsev Supplement*  
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## Why We Fought to Defend the Soviet Union

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SPARTACIST

Двенадцать лет спустя после контрреволюции в СССР

## Почему мы боролись в защиту Советского Союза

Мы перепечатаем ниже из газеты *Лига Спартаковцев США* (№ 809 и 810 (12 и 26 сентября 2003) первой переизданием) и в качестве первого переиздания *Бюллетень Спартаковцев* в Нью-Йорке 27 апреля 2007 г. В частности, мы публикуем статью об общем оптимизме и оптимизме Интернационала Тройского (ИКТ) в СССР в первой половине 1990-х гг., когда на фоне победы коммунистической революции в Китае и в странах Восточной Европы ИКТ добился для своего времени в Советском Союзе и в этом критический момент в мировой истории.

Миллионы во всем мире горят гневом, что империализм Ирана, Ирака, Афганистана, Косово, Чечни, Грузии, США, растаптывая страсти, козачи голодом, морем, войной, бомбят и воюют, пытаясь в качестве «спасения» мировой цивилизации, действительно возмужавшей. Это оправдание, которое должно быть подано до политического понимания, что империализм Ирана является еще другой, которую неуживчивый рабочий класс и угнетенные народы Глобального Юга несут на себе, разрушение Советского Союза через капитализацию.

Империалистический глобальный разгул был невозможен, когда СССР все еще существовал. Это особенно важно помнить, потому что среди главных организаторов текущих антиглобальных

MARCH 26—Some 7,000 Ingalls shipyard workers in Pascagoula, Mississippi, are standing firm as they enter their fourth week on strike against Northrop Grumman, the world's largest naval shipbuilder. At a company where skilled workers make less than \$20 per hour, workers walked out after the company offered to raise wages a measly \$2.50 by 2009 and demanded that workers' contributions to their health plan be hiked 50 percent. This was a direct provocation against the workers, who were among the hundreds of thousands of victims of Hurricane Katrina. Federal mediators intervened last week to put pressure on the 14 striking unions, most of which belong to the AFL-CIO Metal Trades Council, to settle. Picketers told a *Workers Vanguard* reporting team about rumors that the Navy was getting ready to intervene to force an end to the strike, which has idled one of U.S. imperialism's key military contractors.

We stressed last issue (WV No. 888, 16 March) that this strike is a crucial battle for labor throughout the open shop South. It's also a chance to fight back against the capitalist rulers who viciously abandoned Gulf Coast residents, especially black people and the poor, to their fate following Katrina. "We didn't have enough time to get our houses fixed up before they wanted to write people up and fire them," one worker told us. "We felt that the company should give the people enough time to do what they had to do. When they didn't, that had a lot of impact on it." He continued, "Katrina dealt us a blow and our insurance wasn't paying—still not paying. It's most all about Katrina."

Workers described staying in the shipyard during the hurricane in order to save the facility, risking life and limb while sunk into water up to their necks. Then they started cleaning up muck in an area reeking of human feces and dead snakes, alligators and birds. The company gave them a pathetic two weeks off with pay. Only a few weeks later, management threatened to fire those who could not immediately get back to work. One striker told WV: "We had workers who had that dilemma, coming back to work and keeping their jobs right after Katrina, while trying to find a place to stay for their families."

Some workers had to live in cars and tents outside the plant gates—and many still live in FEMA trailers today. Workers are faced with skyrocketing costs for everything from milk to rent. The workers' hardships are compounded by the loss of cost-of-living raises in their last contract. And none of the production workers get sick leave. But the same company that squeezes its workers received billions of dollars in handouts from the Navy and FEMA after Katrina hit. Last year alone it did over \$30 billion in business. Workers revile the company's nepotism and its grossly overpaid managers, who collect huge bonuses when ships are commissioned while the workers only get told to work faster.

The company's war profiteering and wage-gouging give the lie to the notion pushed by the pro-capitalist labor misleaders that American workers have common "national interests" with their bosses. The U.S. proletariat must oppose

# Pascagoula Strike

## Key Battle for Labor in the Open Shop South

### "It's Most All About Katrina"



WV Photo

March 19: Strikers man picket line at Northrop Grumman's Ingalls shipyard.

the imperialist pillage carried out by "its own" government, from the occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan to the mounting military provocations against Iran, and fight tooth and nail against the attacks on democratic rights at home carried out in the name of the "war on terror." The military, police, courts and prisons form the core of the bourgeois state, whose role is to protect the profits and rule of the capitalists against the working class at home and against their rivals and challengers abroad.

The racist malice and class contempt displayed during Katrina by the capitalist rulers—represented by both the Democratic and Republican parties—continue apace. Earlier this month, FEMA agents ordered everyone living at the Yorkshire Mobile Home Park in Hammond, Louisiana, to pack up and go within 48 hours. "It was like shock and awe," one tenant told the *Washington Post* (12 March). "We called it Hurricane FEMA." But the Ingalls workers are not just victims. This unionized workforce is showing that labor has power to *fight back* by shutting down production and the flow of profits. This social weight exercises a powerful pull in the surrounding community, as evident in the widespread sympathy for and identification with the strikers.

Although this is about as deep as you can get in the Deep South, the industrial concentration and the presence of strong, integrated unions make the area feel much less like an oppressive backwater. The current strike has the potential to spur unionization in the "right to work" South, just as earlier strikes at Ingalls helped to organize other Gulf Coast shipyards. Due to a "me too" contract clause, gains at Ingalls would be passed on to workers at other Northrop Grumman Gulf Coast yards in Avondale and Tallulah, Louisiana, and Gulfport, Mississippi.

Particularly in the South, where the racist color bar has historically been used to drive out unions, the labor movement must actively champion the fight for black rights. Mississippi put a "right to work"

amendment in its state constitution in 1960. As University of Mississippi journalism professor Joe Atkins wrote in the *Hattiesburg American* (25 March), Dixiecrat governor Ross Barnett "pushed it with the same fervor" he gave to fomenting a racist frenzy against attempts to integrate the University of Mississippi in 1962. Mississippi's state flag still incorporates the battle flag of the slaveowning Confederacy.

The Ingalls shipyard is notorious for vicious harassment of black workers. One striker showed us a 2001 lawsuit by black workers against the company that documented racist graffiti blanketing restrooms, hangman's nooses left in black workers' areas and even mock lynchings.

In 2000, Ingalls worker Earlean Bell, two of whose relatives had been lynched in the 1930s, sued the company after a white supervisor placed a noose around her neck and pulled on it. The union tops did nothing to mobilize the workforce in her defense. Such capitulation to the racist status quo can only cripple the cause of labor.

Strikers told WV about a column on the shipyard by New York City's Jimmy Breslin in *Newsday* (27 December 2002), titled "Shipping Out Name of NY." "They fly the rebel flag in our faces," Breslin quoted the head of the area NAACP saying. "At the shipyard? Oh, they fly it all around there.... They still got the rebel flag to let us know who they think we are."

Several workers said that there is more unity and cohesion in this strike than the one in 1999. A white pipefitter credited this to the black trade unionists and remarked that too many white workers were still hanging back, to the detriment of the union. It is through united class struggle that workers can overcome the racial divisions sown by the capitalists to weaken labor. In the first week of the strike, at least 2,000 workers, black and white, marched from the shipyard to downtown Pascagoula in a powerful show of their determination. In fact, the WV team found out that the march was twice the size we reported last issue. Before the strike, the workforce had voted twice, by as much as 90 percent, to reject the contract proposed by the union tops.

One former head of the Ingalls shipyard has brought management's plantation mentality to nearby non-union Signal International, a major marine fabricator servicing and repairing oil rigs. Some 300 workers from India were enticed to Signal, each paying recruiters as much as \$15,000, only to find themselves jammed into cramped bunkhouses on company property, denied the residency they had been promised and getting far lower wages than they had been told they would get. "We were like pigs in a cage," an Indian pipefitter told the *Los Angeles Times* (14 March). A number of workers who complained were fired without notice. Under the H-2 work program, some 100,000 such "guest workers" are effectively trapped in indentured servitude. And a new bill being proposed mainly by Democrats like Senator Ted Kennedy as an immigration "reform" would expand this

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Devastation in Pascagoula after Hurricane Katrina. Below: FEMA trailer park near Ingalls shipyard.

WV Photo



City of Pascagoula

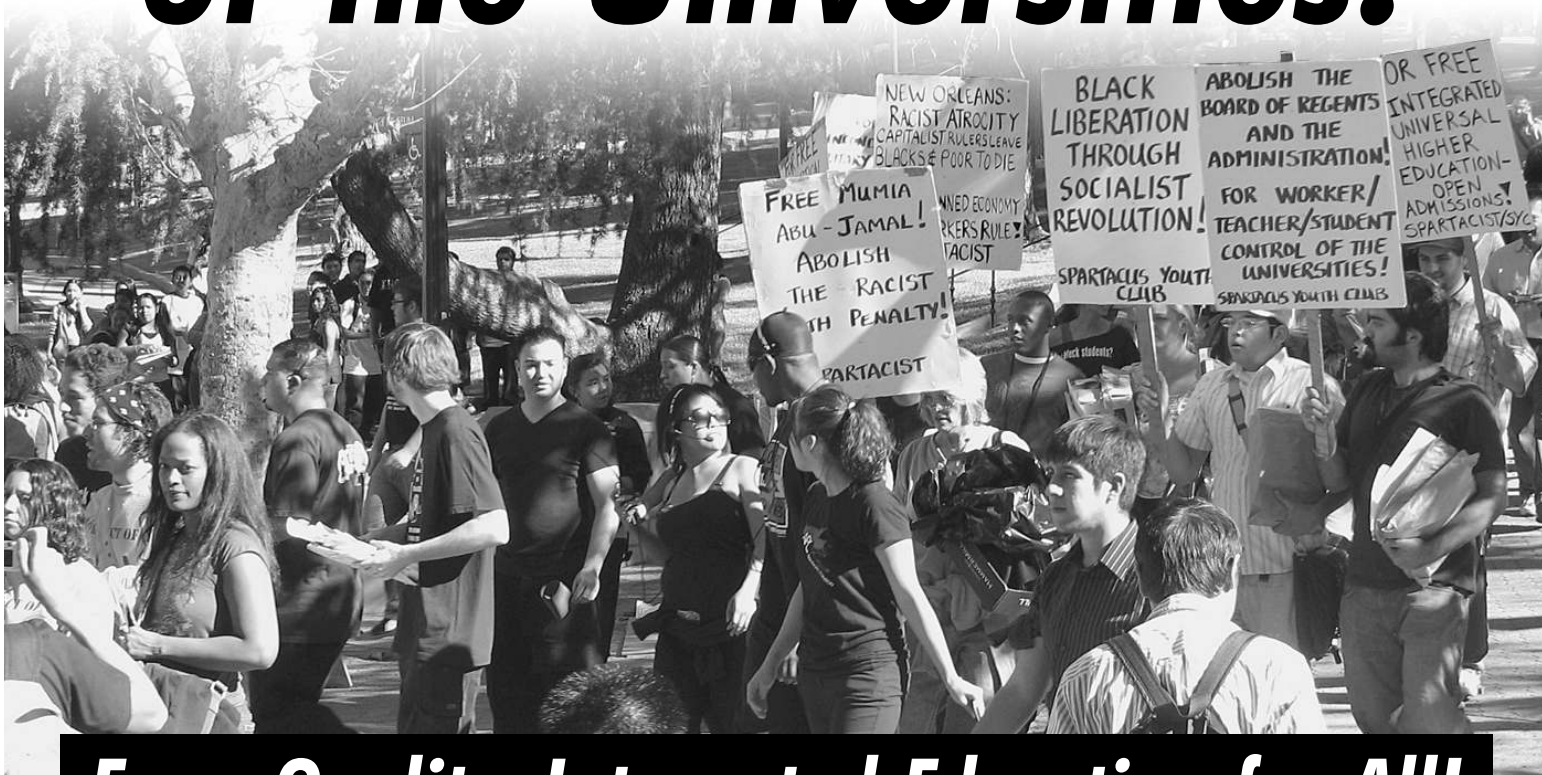


#### CORRECTION

In the article headlined "Trotskyists Say: Independence for Quebec!" in WV No. 888 (16 March), which was reprinted from *Spartacist Canada*, WV incorrectly added that the initials NDP stood for the "social-democratic National Democratic Party." The party's name is the New Democratic Party.



## Down With the Racist Purge of the Universities!



### Free, Quality, Integrated Education for All!

15 November 2006: SYC contingent at UCLA march for affirmative action.

The following article is based on a February 24 Los Angeles Spartacist League Black History Month forum given by Mike Gaston.

As Marxists, we in the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Clubs understand that the system of capitalism in America, built on the backs of black slaves, will always be premised on the oppression and segregation of black people at the bottom of society. The racist atrocity in New Orleans, where the capitalist rulers left blacks and the poor to die in the face of Hurricane Katrina, showed the naked reality of exploitation and oppression in the U.S. Full political, social and economic equality for black people requires that the multiracial working class rip the economy out of the hands of the capitalists and reorganize it on a socialist basis, where production is for human need, not profit.

A fundamental expression of black oppression in America is the racist rulers' conscious and systematic denial of quality education to the mass of the black population. Once a source of surplus labor to be minimally maintained, the black ghetto poor are increasingly seen by the racist rulers as an expendable population not worth "wasting" money on even to keep alive, much less educate. Since the capitalists have taken the wrecking ball to the auto factories, gutted the steel mills and closed many of the mines, there are fewer jobs left for which to educate the children of working people and the poor. By 1999 there were more people imprisoned in California than there were University of California undergraduates and graduates combined.

Half a century after the outbreak of the mass struggles of the civil rights movement, the conditions of black life in this country have worsened in many respects, from unemployment and the lack of decent education and housing to rampant police terror and the massive imprisonment of blacks as well as Latinos carried out in the name of the "war on drugs." The public school system has

been so starved for funds by the capitalist rulers that many inner-city schools are grossly overcrowded, with buildings falling apart and no money for new books or supplies. This decline was exacerbated in California by Proposition 13—the 1978 "tax revolt" by largely white middle- and upper-class homeowners to cut the property taxes that fund schools and other social programs seen as largely benefiting the black ghetto poor. Today a predominantly black and Latino school with about 1,000 kids typically receives \$1 mil-

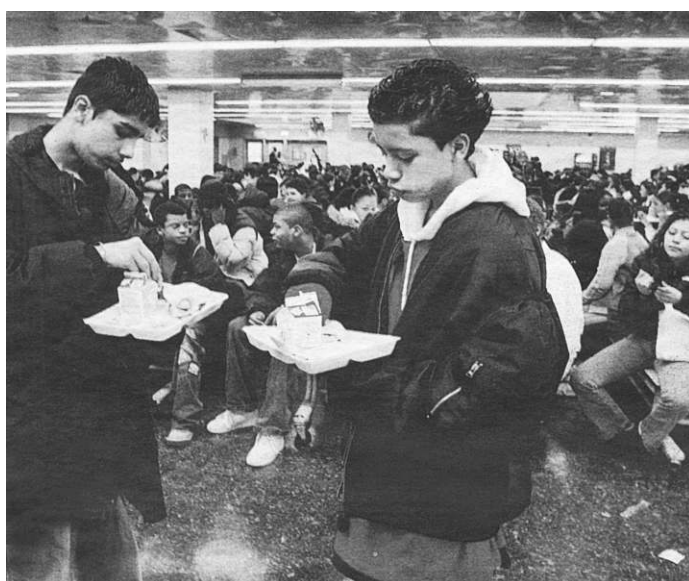
lions in the Deep South, with blacks and Latinos attending inner-city schools that are more like holding pens. Busing and other programs to desegregate the schools have faced continual assault, and massive "white flight" to private schools and the suburbs has reinforced segregation. During the 1990s, the proportion of black students in majority white schools decreased to a level lower than in any year since 1968; now almost three-fourths of black and Latino students attend schools that are predominantly

the separation of church and state. In fact, in 2003, three-quarters of black charter school students were enrolled in 27 percent of charter schools, and these schools were, on average, 80 percent black, as opposed to 54 percent black for public schools."

### Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

The special oppression of black people as a race-color caste in American society is a legacy of chattel slavery. It took a bloody Civil War to smash the slave system, under which teaching slaves to read was a crime punishable by death. Most of the first Southern free public schools were established following the Civil War during Radical Reconstruction, the turbulent decade of Southern interracial bourgeois democracy carried out by the freedmen and their white allies and protected by federal troops, many of them black. However, the Northern capitalists betrayed the promise of black equality in favor of an alliance with the former slaveowners. The Compromise of 1877 sealed this betrayal with the withdrawal of the last of the federal troops from the South, leaving black people at the mercy of the former slaveowners. As symbols of black equality, schools became targets of racist terror. Funding for black education was slashed and Jim Crow segregation became law in the South. Nonetheless, black teachers continued to struggle against enormous hardship to operate schools for black children.

The struggle for quality, integrated education was an important part of the fight against the Jim Crow system in the civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s. The eyes of the world were riveted on the American South in 1957 as mobs of howling racists, backed up by local cops and the National Guard, mobilized to stop the desegregation of Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas. In the USSR, the newspaper *Pravda* stated: "The reports and pictures from Little Rock show graphically that [Secretary of State John Foster] Dulles' precious



NYC high school students forced to eat while standing due to overcrowding.

lion less every year than a white school of the same size.

Jonathan Kozol's books, *Savage Inequalities: Children in America's Schools* (1991) and *The Shame of the Nation: The Restoration of Apartheid Schooling in America* (2005), powerfully document the grotesque segregation and inequality of U.S. public schools. In an interview with *Catalyst* magazine (November 2005), Kozol, a former Boston schoolteacher, described how, five decades after the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court ruling formally ended Jim Crow segregation in the public schools, Northern schools are more segregated than

minority. More than two million black and Latino students attend what Kozol calls "apartheid schools," in which 99 to 100 percent of students are non-white.

The ruling class also pushes union-busting charter schools as part of its attack on public education (see "How L.A. Charter School 'Celebrated' Black History Month," page 7). As we wrote in "Charter Schools: An Attack on Public Education" (WV No. 825, 30 April 2004):

"Charter schools have *increased* racial segregation and class inequality, *increased* the gap between the education available to inner-city black youth and that available to white suburban youth, and have gone a long way in destroying

morals are in fact bespattered with innocent blood.”

The mass of black and white activists who were the foot soldiers of the civil rights movement wrote a heroic chapter in the fight for black equality. Jim Crow did not die easily. Protesters faced vicious police repression and a campaign of Klan terror. Federal troops were dispatched to Little Rock ostensibly to defend school integration, but in reality to suppress a potential mass black movement against segregation that could challenge the racist status quo. The issue was posed point-blank—reliance on the capitalist state or independent proletarian-centered struggle by the black masses.

While the civil rights movement shattered the Jim Crow system of legal segregation in the South and won formal legal equality for black people, it was from its inception dominated by Democratic Party liberalism. The entire strategy of the leadership of the civil rights movement was based on appealing to Northern Democrats and the federal government. By the late 1960s, the bourgeoisie acquiesced to the demand for legal equality in the South, not least because Jim Crow was an embarrassment overseas for U.S. imperialism as it postured as the champion of “democracy” in the Cold War against the Soviet Union. However, as the movement went North, it ran into a brick wall—it

**Little Rock, 1957: Elizabeth Eckford passes through cordon of National Guardsmen and jeering racists to enter Central High School.**



requires the full integration of black people into an egalitarian, socialist society that provides jobs, housing and education for all. At the same time, the fight for black liberation is the strategic task in the struggle for workers revolution in America:

“Any organization which claims a revolutionary perspective for the United States must confront the *special oppression* of black people—the forced segregation of blacks at the bottom of capitalist society and the poisonous racism which divides the working class and

symbol in the struggle against black oppression in general, and its defeat would encourage the forces of racist reaction at every level. We called on the labor movement to organize labor/black defense of black children being bused, and fought to extend busing to the suburbs, so that poor kids, black and white, could have access to quality education.

In contrast, the SWP called for “federal troops to Boston,” peddling the criminal lie that the same capitalist state which gunned down Black Panther activists could be relied on to defend black rights (see “Not Federal Troops, But Labor-Black Defense!” *Young Spartacus* No. 27, December 1974). Disgustingly, some supposed “leftists” like the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP, then known as the Revolutionary Union) rallied behind the racist mobs! Their newspaper *Revolution* (October 1974) carried the obscene headline, “People Must Unite to Smash Boston Busing Plan.” The International Socialists, predecessor to the International Socialist Organization (ISO), sought to carve out a non-existent “third camp” with the line that “socialists oppose both the ‘pro’-busing and ‘anti’-busing forces, both of whom use racism to further their own ends” (*Workers Power*, 10 November 1972).

Barely four years after busing was smashed on the streets of Boston came the first of many blows against affirmative action, the 1978 Bakke decision, in which the Supreme Court outlawed quotas for black and other minority students at the University of California. Bakke quickly became the leading edge of racist reaction aimed at rolling back every gain made by blacks during the civil rights struggles. The bourgeoisie’s attempts to

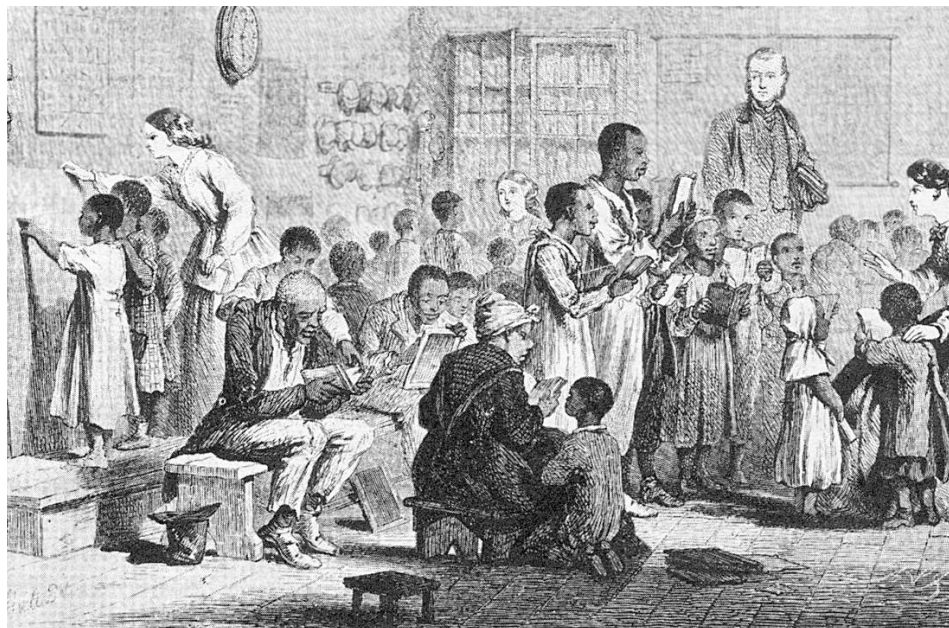
destroy affirmative action intensified in the 1990s. The University of California Regents voted in 1995 to end affirmative action. In 1996, the grotesquely misnamed California Civil Rights Initiative (Proposition 209) passed, eliminating affirmative action in public education and in government contracting and hiring. Prop. 209 also slashed financial aid and special programs for minorities and women, including remedial and counseling programs.

The racist backlash in education has spread nationwide. In 2003, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the University of Michigan point system for minority applicants. Measures have passed in Texas, Florida, Washington and Michigan banning affirmative action. Similar initiatives are on the agenda in at least ten other states. One of the main forces behind these anti-affirmative action measures is Ward Connerly, the former UC Regent who acts as the black front man for ruling-class reaction. Emboldened, the campus right-wingers have held racist, anti-affirmative action protests on campuses across the country to whine about fictitious “reverse discrimination” and send the message to minority students that they don’t belong.

This spring the U.S. Supreme Court, which now includes Bush’s two reactionary appointees, John Roberts and Samuel Alito, is set to decide a series of cases filed against the few remaining affirmative action and public school desegregation programs. The racist forces behind these lawsuits cynically cloak themselves in the rhetoric of a “color-blind” society. This matches perfectly the ideology of Roberts and Alito, whose legal philosophy of “originalism” aims to overturn the gains of the civil rights movement, especially *Brown v. Board of Education* (see “Racial Oppression and the Supreme Court Hearings,” WV No. 864, 17 February 2006).

Meanwhile, the impact of the ruling-class assault on affirmative action has been devastating to black and minority enrollment. The admission of black undergraduates to UCLA has plummeted 65 percent over the last decade, while admission of Latinos and Native Americans has also declined. Only 96 (just 2 percent!) of all students admitted to UCLA last fall were black, the lowest number in over 30 years. At UC Berkeley in the five years preceding the passage of Prop. 209, skyrocketing tuition costs had led black undergraduate enrollment to drop by nearly a third. It fell an

*continued on page 6*



Library of Congress

**Southern school for freed slaves during Radical Reconstruction.**

could not address the desperate conditions of the Northern black ghettos, which were not the product of legal segregation but of the very functioning of American capitalism.

No victory for blacks, immigrants or working people was ever granted by the good graces of Congress or the courts—these gains were won through hard class and social struggle against the racist rulers and their profit system. The integration of black workers into the working class as its most oppressed but also most conscious section means that black workers will play an exceptional role in the socialist revolution in the U.S. Black workers form a strategic component of unionized labor, such as in longshore, mass transit and auto, and can play a leading role in the struggle against the capitalist rulers. Crucially, black workers can be the bridge linking the power of the multiracial labor movement to the anger of the oppressed ghettos.

Our program for black liberation is revolutionary integrationism. It is premised upon mobilizing the working class to take up the fight for black liberation through socialist revolution. It is counterposed to both liberal integrationism, which pushes the illusion that racial integration and black equality can be achieved through reforms within capitalism, and to all forms of black separatism, which, at bottom, are expressions of despair over the prospects for integrated class struggle and labor taking up the fight for black rights. In America, separate can never be equal. The elimination of the material basis for black oppression

cripples its struggles. There will be no social revolution in this country without the united struggle of black and white workers led by their multiracial vanguard party. Moreover, there is no other road to eliminating the special oppression of black people than the victorious conquest of power by the U.S. proletariat.”

—Preface, *Marxist Bulletin* No. 5 (Revised), “What Strategy for Black Liberation? Trotskyism vs. Black Nationalism” (September 1978)

## Education U.S.A.: Segregated and Unequal

The racist rulers will always try to take back concessions won by working people and the oppressed. The plans to integrate Boston’s public schools through busing were defeated in 1974 by an alliance of liberals in Congress and howling mobs of racists in the streets, opening the floodgates to a nationwide assault on school desegregation. Reformists like the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) helped set up busing for the kill, channeling the fight to defend busing into dead-end appeals to the Democrats and for federal intervention. In fact, busing of black students was purposely limited to neighborhoods like South Boston, one of the poorest white areas in the U.S. outside of Appalachia, in order to pit poor and working-class whites against blacks.

While recognizing that busing was an inadequate solution to school segregation, we intervened into the struggles to defend busing as a minimal application of the elementary democratic right of black people to equality in education. We recognized that busing had become a

## Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

### BAY AREA

**Saturday, March 31, 3 p.m.**

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

1634 Telegraph Ave., 3rd floor, Oakland  
(near 19th St. BART)

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

### LOS ANGELES

**Thursday, April 12, 6 p.m.**

**Down With the Racist Purge  
of Higher Education!  
For Free, Quality,  
Integrated Education for All!  
Nationalize the  
Private Universities!**

UCLA, Kerkhoff 152

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

**Visit the ICL Web Site:  
[www.icl-fi.org](http://www.icl-fi.org)**

### CHICAGO

**Tuesday, April 3, 7 p.m.**

**Basic Marxism:  
The Fight for Socialist Revolution**  
University of Chicago, Bartlett Lounge  
5640 S. University Ave.

Information and readings: (312) 563-0441  
or e-mail: chicagospartacist@sbcglobal.net

### NEW YORK

**Thursday, April 12, 7:30 p.m.**

**Lessons from the  
Russian Revolution and the Fight  
for New Octobers!**

Columbia University, Kent Hall, Rm. 511  
(take #1 train to 116th St.)

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

### VANCOUVER

**Wednesday, April 4, 6 p.m.**

**Break with the Pro-Imperialist NDP!  
For a Revolutionary Multiracial  
Workers Party!**

UBC, Student Union Building, Rm. 215

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



Universities ...

(continued from page 5)

additional 33 percent in the first five years after Prop. 209. At the same time, the California State University system and the California Community Colleges, which are more heavily black, Latino and working-class, have all seen state funding cutbacks and hikes in tuition and fees which have led to the intended outcome: large decreases in enrollment. These ruling-class attacks amount to nothing less than a conscious racist purge of the universities to exclude blacks, minorities and working-class students from higher education.

In the context of the destruction of many of the gains of the civil rights movement, many liberal activists today have abandoned even talk of black equality in favor of the rhetoric of “diversity.” Ten years after Prop. 209, the situation is so desperate that student activists aren’t even fighting for affirmative action, but for some watered-down version where a student’s “life challenges” are given consideration in the admissions process, known as the “holistic” method. UC Berkeley, which uses a “holistic” method, has only admitted 44 more black students than UCLA.

As part of our fight for full equality for black people and other minorities, we oppose the reactionary assault on affir-

Young Spartacus

Number 20

November 1974

Stop Racist Terror in Boston!

Implement and Extend the Busing Plan!  
Not Federal Troops, But Labor/Black Defense!

RU Calls for  
Smashing Busing  
CP, SWP Demand  
Federal Troops

FOR A LABOR-BLACK  
MOBILIZATION TO  
DEFEND BLACK-CHILDREN  
AND COLUMBIA POINT!  
SPARTACIST LEAGUE-STL

November 1974

REVOLUTION

People Must Unite To  
Smash Boston Busing Plan

October 1974

Spartacists fought to defend  
and extend Boston busing  
plan. Predecessor of  
Revolutionary Communist  
Party sided with racist  
backlash against school  
integration.

1880s, Chinese and other Asian immigrants were subject to vicious exclusionist laws and during World War II Japanese Americans were thrown into concentration camps. The racist opponents of affirmative action particularly try to use the Asian population to go after blacks and Latinos in a cynical game of “divide and rule.” However, many Asian students have been involved in protesting the attacks on affirmative action, recognizing that the bigots will necessarily target them as well.

While defending affirmative action against racist attacks, we are opposed to the use of affirmative action schemes to

the administration! Those who work, study and teach at the universities should run them—for worker/student/teacher control!

The liberal leadership of the campus pro-affirmative action demonstrations looks to the wing of capitalist rulers that wants to retain at least a few “black faces in high places.” They push electoral pressure politics while trying to corral votes for the Democratic Party, the other party of racism and war. This is the same losing strategy that led protests against the attacks on affirmative action in the mid ’90s, and those before them around Bakke and busing in the mid 1970s, to defeat. The UCLA African Student Union has set up voter registration tables at the protests. Its leaders worry that the scarcity of black students will mean that there won’t be future black “leaders” like Democratic Congresswoman Maxine Waters, the same capitalist politician who is now ramming through cuts in vital services at King/Drew hospital in Watts and scapegoating hospital workers as “incompetent.”

The Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action by Any Means Necessary (BAMN), whose main call is to build a “new civil rights movement,” has done its part over the years to derail student protest by pushing illusions in Jesse Jackson, the Democratic Party and university administrations. During the protests against the UC Board of Regents’ 1995 decision to ban affirmative action, BAMN put out a leaflet demanding, “1. Regents rescind the vote to destroy affirmative action. 2. Chancellors, administrators, and faculty, maintain current affirmative action policies.” Around the same time, BAMN’s partner group, the National Women’s Rights Organizing Coalition (NWROC), gushed that it “supports Jesse Jackson joining this critical fight to save affirmative action.”

As a Democrat, Jackson’s job is to win back to the fold blacks and Latinos who become discontented with the Democratic Party. Jackson in past years has egged on the racist “war on drugs.” He also acts as the bourgeoisie’s all-purpose fireman to douse the flames of class struggle. He played a key role in defusing the L.A. transit strike in 2000 and helped to demobilize black workers in

the ILA longshore union who were marching in defense of busing in the early ’80s in Norfolk, Virginia.

With the Democrats winning control of Congress, many student protesters think they now have friends in high places. Don’t believe it. The Democrats ran as more effective military strategists for U.S. imperialism and better prosecutors of the “war on terror.” The “war on terror” means imperialist wars and occupations from Afghanistan to Iraq and a reactionary war at home on blacks, immigrants and labor that has shredded the rights of us all. The Democratic and Republican parties are both parties of the capitalists, whose class rule is based on the exploitation of labor and the oppression of blacks, immigrants and other minorities. The Democrats posture as the “friends of labor and blacks,” making them all the more dangerous because of the illusions working people have in them.

Racist reaction didn’t just begin with the Republican Bush. The attacks on affirmative action started during the Democratic Carter administration and continued through Prop. 209 enacted during the Clinton years. Under Clinton, the gap between rich and poor increased massively as did the wealth gap between blacks and whites. Clinton ended “welfare as we know it,” presided over the gutting of affirmative action and the huge incarceration of black and Latino youth in the 1990s, and accelerated the racist death penalty with his 1996 Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act that gutted *habeas corpus* appeals for death row inmates.

Reading, Writing and Revolution

Students need to realize that there is only one class in society that has the social power and objective interest to fight this capitalist system: the multiracial working class. Workers have their hands on the means of production, which also means that they have the power to stop the flow of profit by shutting down production through strike action. By the same token, they have the potential power to seize the means of production through social revolution and put the enormous resources of society to use not for the profit of a handful of capitalists, but for the needs of society. We seek to mobilize students behind the power of the working class in the struggle against the bourgeoisie’s maintenance of the universities as elite bastions for the privileged few.

Whipping up racial and ethnic hatred has long served the U.S. ruling class in furthering the exploitation of all workers. In L.A., for example, the capitalist rulers have worked overtime to pit blacks and Latinos against each other, particularly since the 1992 multiracial upheaval following the acquittal of the cops who beat Rodney King. Against the capitalist rulers’ attempts to pit white workers against black workers and native-born against immigrant, we fight for the unity and integrity of the whole of the working class. We call on the unions to organize the unorganized, including the masses of



May 1983: ILA longshore workers in Norfolk, Virginia, march at 10,000-strong protest against school board attempt to eliminate busing.

mativ action. However, unlike liberals and reformists who uncritically hailed these programs, we understand that there is no way to overcome entrenched racial oppression within the framework of capitalism, in the universities or elsewhere. Even at its peak in the ’70s, affirmative action only barely addressed racial inequality. While supportable as minimal reforms, affirmative action programs were set up in the 1960s in order to defuse social struggle and co-opt a small layer of black middle-class professionals. But these paltry efforts never made a dent in the deep-seated oppression of the black ghetto masses, whose condition has continued to deteriorate.

At best, affirmative action in education represented token measures which accepted racial discrimination as a given. To provide real access to higher education, we call for nationalizing the private universities and for open admissions and free tuition with a state-paid living stipend for students. We demand the reinstatement and expansion of remedial programs so that students in inner-city schools can catch up with those who had the advantage of well-funded suburban and private schooling.

Quotas have also been used to restrict the admissions of certain minorities, as is the case for Asian Americans today and Jewish people before them. Asian students are often told that affirmative action doesn’t apply to them because they allegedly do not experience racial discrimination. This is a particularly obscene assertion in California where, beginning in the

bust unions. These schemes have been used by the capitalists to pit black, minority and women workers against each other and against white workers in a struggle over jobs. Most of the significant early affirmative action programs were set up in the 1960s and ’70s under the Nixon administration to attack hard-won union gains like seniority and to pave the way for state intervention in the unions. We emphasized from the beginning that those who looked to the American capitalist state to eliminate racial and sexual discrimination were living in a fool’s paradise. In opposition to the capitalists’ union-busting schemes, we seek to mobilize the working class in a fight for jobs for all and for a shorter workweek with no loss in pay. We call for special union recruitment and training programs to reach out to the masses of unemployed minority youth and women.

Dead End of Reformism

In joining the recent campus protests at UCLA, we have warned against the losing strategy of promoting the Regents or campus administrations as the agency for providing access to higher education for black and minority youth. The millionaire-dominated UC Regents are the capitalist class’s watchdogs whose job is to ensure that the universities serve the needs of the rulers. Most are themselves capitalists or executives of corporations, banks, investment houses and the like: Wachovia Bank, Blum Capital Partners, Paramount Pictures, etc. We say: Abolish the Board of Regents! Abolish

Democratic  
president Clinton  
signing 1996  
bill to “end  
welfare as we  
know it.”

A New Beginning

Welfare to Work

# How L.A. Charter School “Celebrated” Black History Month

LOS ANGELES—Last month, administrators at the overwhelmingly black Celerity Nascent Charter School in L.A.’s Jefferson Park district prohibited pupils from reciting a memorial poem and laying a wreath for Emmett Till, 14-year-old victim of an infamous 1955 Mississippi lynching, as part of Black History Month. Intoning that the presentation was “unsuitable” for the elementary- and middle-school children and that it lacked “positive images,” the school administration then fired Latina seventh-grade teacher Marisol Alba, organizer of the reading, and Sean Strauss, a white math teacher, for signing one of several letters from pupils protesting the ban.

We demand that the teachers be reinstated immediately, with no disciplinary action against them. Also calling for their reinstatement is renowned black poet and University of Connecticut professor Marilyn Nelson, author of “A Wreath for Emmett Till,” the poem on which the presentation was based. In a stinging rebuke to the school’s censorship, Nelson asked: “Do you allow the students of Celerity Nascent Charter School to know that slavery existed?”

Emmett Till is a symbol of the long history of racist lynching in America. The young Emmett had left his home in Chicago on a trip to stay with relatives in Mississippi. Within days of his arrival, he was kidnapped, tortured and murdered for allegedly whistling at a white woman. The two white men who boasted of the crime were never convicted. Till’s mother wanted everyone to see firsthand the stark reality of race-terror, displaying her son’s mutilated body openly at his Chicago funeral and undertaking a speaking tour of the country. Emmett Till’s gruesome murder and his mother’s courageous campaign helped galvanize thousands to join the burgeoning civil rights movement. Mass rallies against lynching were held nationwide, including in Los Angeles (see “The Lynching of Emmett Till and the Fight for Black Liberation,” WV No. 852, 5 August 2005).

Alba and her students heard the school

## Teachers Fired for Honoring Emmett Till

principal, Grace Canada, stating that Till’s actions could be viewed as “sexual harassment.” Sexual harassment?! Till’s racist murderers would have said that he had violated white womanhood. The black executive director of Celerity, Vielka McFarlane, explained how the presentation was not compatible with the school’s “educational mission,” saying, “We don’t want to focus on how the history of the country has been checkered but on how do we dress for success, walk proud and celebrate all the accomplishments we’ve made.” Spoken like a latter-day Booker

T. Washington, who over a century ago preached accommodation to the racist status quo by telling impoverished blacks to pull themselves up by their bootstraps.

Erin Aubry Kaplan wrote in the *L.A. Times* (23 March): “Black people excising, or glossing over parts of our history for the sake of uplift, commit the same crime of denial as whites excising those same parts because they’d rather not think about black history at all.” But a number of black liberal spokesmen have supported the Celerity administration. At a press conference held at the school on

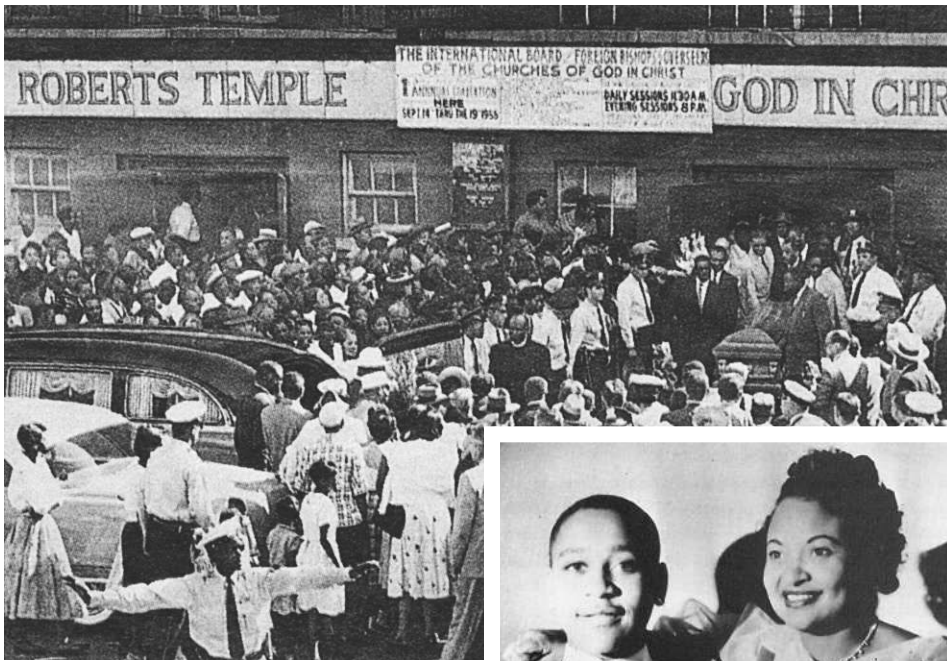
March 20, the day after the *L.A. Times* broke the story, Reverend Eric Lee of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference railed that the newspaper had “engaged in irresponsible reporting” based on the “disgruntled” teachers’ complaints. While pro-Democratic Party commentator Earl Ofari Hutchinson initially called for rein-

stating the teachers, he dropped this demand after meeting with the school administration, stating that he had been reassured that the fired teachers’ “rights” to a hearing and appeal had been protected. In fact, the teachers had no rights: their work contract stated that they could be fired without cause.

This outrageous incident highlights the reactionary nature of charter schools, which are publicly financed but independently run, mostly by union-busting, for-profit corporations. As we wrote in a *Young Spartacus* article titled “Charter Schools: An Attack on Public Education” (WV No. 825, 30 April 2004): “We oppose charter schools because they are an attack on the democratic right of public education and the separation of church and state; they increase racial segregation and class inequality in education and are utilized as a tool to smash the teachers unions.”

According to a July 2002 study by the Civil Rights Project, 70 percent of all black charter school students attend intensely segregated schools, compared with 34 percent of black public school students. Celerity Nascent in Los Angeles is itself 80 percent black and 19 percent Latino. As for the status of charter school employees, according to the California Teachers Association (CTA), unions represent staffs at fewer than 10 percent of the state’s charter schools. The CTA leaders talk about the importance of organizing these teachers. But their program of reliance on the capitalist Democratic Party is an obstacle to the hard labor struggle that is necessary to organize unions.

Honor the memory of Emmett Till! Celerity Nascent: Reinstate Marisol Alba and Sean Strauss! ■



AP photos  
Up to a quarter million people turned out in Chicago for 1955 funeral of Mississippi lynching victim Emmett Till, shown in inset photo with his mother, Mamie.

immigrant workers, and to fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants. Black rights, immigrant rights and union rights will either go forward together or fall back separately. Remember the anti-immigrant Prop. 187, which sought to deny basic social services to undocumented immigrants. That was immediately followed by Prop. 209 banning affirmative action, the three-strikes law, which imposes draconian sentences on “repeat offenders,” and the racist “English only” overturn of bilingual education with Prop. 227.

As Marxists, we direct all of our activity toward organizing, training and steeling the workers party necessary to lead the struggle to sweep away the capitalist order through socialist revolution. In our interventions into the protests for affirmative action at UCLA, we have argued sharply against the reformist “politics of the possible” which counsel reliance on the class enemy represented by the Democratic Party. The politics of our reformist opponents consist of oppositional activity defined by the framework of the bourgeois system, and represent an obstacle to making the working class conscious of the need for independent, revolutionary struggle. The call raised by reformist “socialists” including the ISO and Workers World Party, “money for jobs and education, not for war,” is an appeal to the capitalist rulers to reform their system to serve the interests of working people and the oppressed. But so long as capitalism exists, exploitation, racial oppression and

imperialist war will exist.

Our model is the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky, which led the October 1917 Russian Revolution, the world’s only victorious workers revolution. Despite its subsequent degeneration under Stalinist bureaucratic misrule, the Soviet Union remained a workers state until its destruction through capitalist counter-revolution in 1991-92. The overturn of capitalism made possible enormous economic and social gains for working people in the USSR, including in education. For example, the literacy rate, which was 44 percent in 1920, climbed to 87 percent by 1939 and to 99.7 percent by 1970. The USSR was at the cutting edge of world science in mathematics and in several branches of physical science, notably theoretical and nuclear physics, chemistry and astronomy. In fact, one of the biggest spurs to math and science education in the U.S. was the 1957 Soviet launch of the Sputnik satellite, after which U.S. imperialism felt it had some catching up to do.

We Trotskyists fought for the unconditional military defense of the Soviet degenerated workers state against imperialist attack and capitalist counterrevolution. At the same time, we fought for workers political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy and institute a regime based on workers democracy and revolutionary internationalism. Today we apply the same Trotskyist program to the remaining deformed workers states of China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba.

In contrast, the ISO, RCP and SWP all stood with their “own” bourgeoisie and hailed the destruction of the Soviet Union. Capitalist counterrevolution was a world-historic defeat for working people internationally. The bloody U.S. invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan, the increased attacks on living standards of working people, blacks and minorities, the intensified gutting of education—all these take place in a post-Soviet world where the U.S. imperialists feel emboldened to ride roughshod over the planet. The reactionary impact of “death of communism” ideology has meant an increase in attacks on the teaching of basic science such as evolution and a

general rise in religiosity in society and the schools.

To unleash the social power of the working class requires a sharp political struggle against the pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucracy and for the political independence of the labor movement from all capitalist political parties and the capitalist state. This is a key task on the road to building a Leninist vanguard party to lead the third, socialist, American revolution that will finish the unfinished tasks of the Civil War, achieve complete freedom and equality for black people in this country and establish the right to quality education for everyone. Join us in this fight! ■

## WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League

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# Join the Labor Black Leagues!

The Labor Black Leagues stand for mobilizing the masses of black and working people for militant integrated struggle against the brutal system of racist oppression that is capitalist America.

Initiated by and fraternally allied to the Spartacist League, a multiracial revolutionary Marxist organization, the Labor Black Leagues are part of the revolutionary movement of the workers and the oppressed against the bosses and for socialism.

Since they were brought to this country in chains and enslaved, black people have been an integral part of American class society while at the same time forcibly segregated at the bottom. It took the Civil War to emancipate black people from chattel slavery. But the Civil War was not carried to its completion, and black people were freed from slavery only to be stripped of political rights and economically subju-

gated. The civil rights movement, tied to pro-Democratic Party pressure politics and sold out by liberal reformism, failed to complete the unfinished business of the Civil War. We fight to win the entire working class, including white workers as well as the growing number of Latino and other immigrants, to the fight for black liberation, strategic to the American revolution. Black and working-class militants must stand for full citizenship rights for all immigrants and in their defense against racist and chauvinist anti-immigrant attacks. An injury to one is an injury to all!

The Labor Black Leagues raise the call: Finish the Civil War! Forward to a workers state! It bases its perspectives on the realization that it will take a third American revolution, a workers revolution, to finally liberate black people.



WV Photo

**LBL at March 13 S.F. courthouse demonstration in defense of former Black Liberation Army/Black Panther members arrested in January government roundup.**

## If You Stand For —

**1** Full rights for black people and for everyone else in jobs, housing and schools! Defeat the racist assault on affirmative action! For union-run minority job recruitment and training programs! For union hiring halls! Open up the universities to all—for open admissions, free tuition and a full living stipend for all students. Free, quality, integrated public education for all!

**2** A fighting labor movement—picket lines mean don't cross! Defeat police scabberding and strike-breaking through mass pickets and union defense guards! For sit-down strikes against mass layoffs! Fight union-busting; keep the capitalist courts out of the unions! Organize the unorganized, unionize the South! Jobs for all—for a shorter workweek at no loss in pay with full cost-of-living escalator clause! Cops, prison guards and security guards out of the unions!

**3** Fight for women's rights! Defend abortion clinics! Free abortion on demand; free, quality 24-hour child-care! Equal pay for equal work! For free, quality health care for all!

**4** Full citizenship rights for all immigrants; everyone who made it into this country has the right to stay and live decently! Stop deportations! No to racist "English only" laws! Down with anti-Hispanic, anti-Semitic, anti-Arab and anti-Asian bigotry!

**5** Defend the separation of church and state! Full democratic rights for homosexuals! Down with the anti-sex witchhunt—cops and courts out of the bedroom! Down with all laws against consensual activities such as

"crimes without victims" like pornography, gambling, drugs and prostitution!

**6** Mass labor/black/Hispanic mobilizations drawing on the power of the unions against the racist terrorists. Stop the Nazis! Stop the KKK!

**7** Abolish the racist death penalty! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Free all victims of racist capitalist repression! No faith in the capitalist courts! No to gun control! Defend victims of cop terror and racist police frame-up! No illusions in civilian review boards or community control of the police! Down with the racist and anti-labor "war on drugs"! For decriminalization of drugs! For class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense; support the work of the Partisan Defense Committee!

**8** Unconditional opposition to every attempt to abolish welfare! Down with slave-labor, union-busting "workfare" schemes! Fight any and every attempt of the government to take away or cut back even more social programs such as Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, public health and aid to education and housing! For a massive program of public works—high-quality integrated housing, schools, libraries, hospitals for the working people and the poor!

**9** Down with the chauvinist poison of protectionism! For international working-class solidarity! Support revolutionary struggles of working people abroad! Defend the deformed workers states—Cuba, Vietnam, China and North Korea —against capitalist restoration and imperialist attack! For proletarian political revolution to oust their Stalinist bureaucracies! For labor action against U.S. imperialist war moves and military adven-

tures! For the right of independence for Puerto Rico! U.S. troops out of Puerto Rico and the Caribbean!

**10** Down with the Democrats and Republicans! For a revolutionary workers party that champions the cause of all the oppressed! Finish the Civil War! Those who labor must rule! For a workers government to take industry away from its racist, incompetent and corrupt owners! Rebuild America on a socialist planned economy!

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## Mumia...

(continued from page 12)

the racist death penalty! As Mumia faced a death warrant in 1995, an outpouring of international protest, crucially involving trade unions internationally, helped stay the executioner's hand. But that movement was politically demobilized by liberals and reformist left organizations that for years subordinated the demand for Mumia's freedom to the call for a new trial, peddling illusions in the 'justice' of the capitalist courts."

Herson continued, "With Mumia's case in its final legal stages, the need for mass, labor-centered protest is more urgent than ever." PDC counsel Rachel Wolkenstein, who was on Mumia's legal team from 1995 to 1999 and led the investigation that turned up the Beverly confession and other evidence of Mumia's innocence, remarked, "It is good that the court is having oral argument and hearing these claims. But we cannot rely on the courts that have railroaded Mumia to give him justice. We must redouble efforts to stop the state from executing Mumia or keeping him entombed for life in prison." Wolkenstein continued, "There is no way that Mumia can be freed short of a mobilization that recognizes the depth of the hatred the state has for him."

Wolkenstein resigned from the legal team when Mumia's then-lead attorney Leonard Weinglass suppressed the Beverly confession. In an affidavit printed in the PDC pamphlet *The Fight to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal—Mumia Is Innocent!*, Beverly states that he was hired to kill

Faulkner, who was reportedly interfering with prostitution, gambling, drugs and police payoffs. The Beverly evidence demonstrates that the injustice done to Mumia was not the work of one rogue cop, prosecutor or judge but the workings of a legal system whose purpose is to repress the working class, minorities and the poor on behalf of the capitalist ruling class. As Wolkenstein stated, "the case against Mumia was a transparent fake from start to finish: faked evidence, perjured witnesses, prejudiced judges, newspaper lies and misrepresentations."

Wolkenstein continued, "The capitalist rulers *know* Mumia is innocent of the killing of Officer Faulkner. And they know that from the age of 15, he has been a voice of defiant opposition to the system of racist oppression that is a cornerstone of American capitalism. That is a capital crime in their eyes. That is what they will not forgive." The forces of racist "law and order" make no secret of their determination to push through Mumia's legal lynching. This was seen in the decision of the Fraternal Order of Police to boycott the St. Patrick's Day parade in Newark, New Jersey, which honored black Democratic Congressman Donald Payne. Payne was one of only 31 Congressmen to vote against a December House resolution condemning the Paris suburb of Saint-Denis for naming a street after Mumia.

The potential to mobilize mass protest on the basis that Mumia is innocent and that he is the victim of a racist and political frame-up is seen in the broad range of signatories to a PDC statement, titled "We Demand the Immediate Freedom



# Immigration...

(continued from page 1)

Senator Ted Kennedy has lately been reworking a “guest worker” bill, as have House Democrat Luis Gutierrez and Republican Jeff Flake.

“Guest worker” programs are the modern equivalent of indentured servitude, tying immigrants’ visas to their employers and depriving them of any rights. Some 300 such workers from India at a Mississippi shipyard have been engaged in a desperate protest against their brutal exploitation (see article, page 3). While the Change to Win leaders’ rivals in the AFL-CIO bureaucracy oppose expanding “guest worker” programs, they refuse to demand full citizenship rights for all immigrants or to condemn plans to further militarize the border. As the SL/U.S. and the Grupo Espartaquista de México declared in a joint statement printed in WV No. 867 (31 March 2006):

“Instead of mobilizing union power in defense of immigrants, the union tops embrace one or another of the capitalists’ anti-immigrant ‘reforms,’ particularly favoring their so-called ‘friends’ in the capitalist Democratic Party. This policy of class collaboration, sacrificing labor’s interests on the altar of capitalist profitability, flows from the labor bureaucracy’s support for the capitalist system and its identification with the ‘national interests’ of U.S. imperialism. This program has led to defeat after defeat, leaving the U.S. labor movement weaker today than at any time since the early 1900s.”

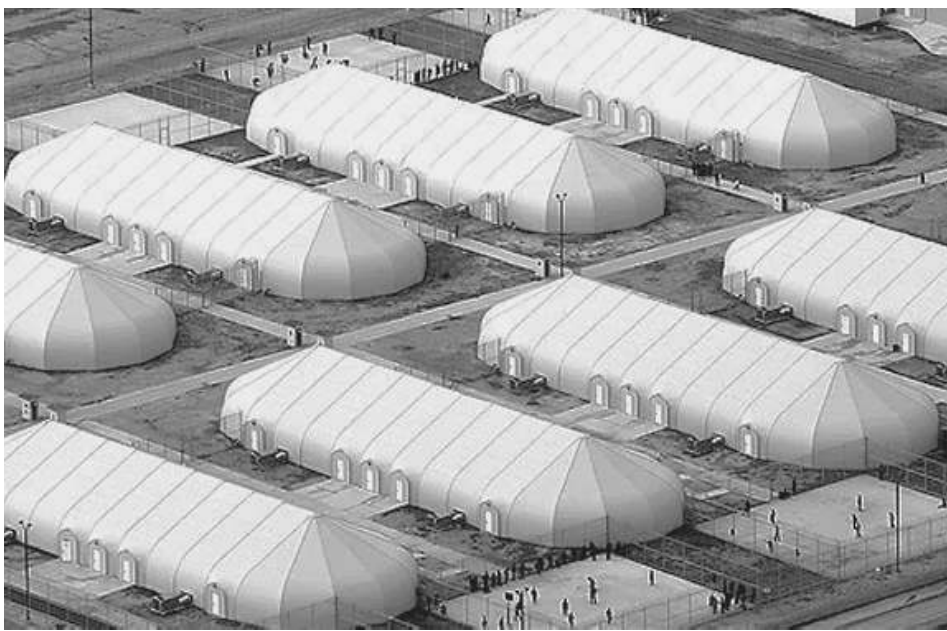
Anti-immigrant repression has been the leading edge of the bourgeoisie’s evisceration of democratic rights as part of the “war on terror.” In this never-ending “war,” the imperialists have pounded the peoples of Afghanistan, devastated Iraq and are now engaged in military provocations against Iran. On the home front, the government is massively expanding its spying on the population, building huge databases ostensibly to track “terrorist suspects.” And a sinister 2006 law allows the Feds to take DNA samples from not only any detained “illegal” immigrant but *anybody* under criminal arrest by federal authorities.

Washington is also giving local police agencies broader repressive powers. A program launched by ICE a year ago gives county sheriffs the authority to initiate deportation proceedings and carry

out the deportations—powers that had previously been reserved for the Feds. In Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, local authorities have started deportation proceedings against 1,530 people. Counties can be reimbursed for each immigrant imprisoned, adding another incentive for local cops to hunt down “illegals.”

Other measures against immigrants are also bearing down on the rest of the population. The government’s exclusion of “illegal” immigrants from Medicaid benefits has “shut out tens of thousands of United States citizens who have had difficulty complying with requirements to show birth certificates and other documents proving their citizenship” (*New York Times*, 12 March). Such measures hit particularly hard at black people, the elderly and the poor.

Last year’s huge protests and job actions against anti-immigrant legislation showed that immigrants were not willing to passively accept the rulers’ attempts to criminalize them. At the same time, the bourgeois politicians, church officials and labor bureaucrats who led the protests consciously directed them into Democratic Party electoralism. A common chant went, “Today we march, tomorrow we vote.” At the time, the International Socialist Organization pointed in *Socialist Worker* (31 March 2006) to the potential to “break the logjam of U.S. politics, in which the Republicans launch attack after attack



Luce/Washington Post

**Some 2,000 immigrants are incarcerated in Raymondville, Texas, detention center awaiting deportation.**

with little or no response from the Democrats.” This sentiment aptly expresses the reformist left’s program of pressuring the “lesser evil” party of U.S. imperialism.

Now, as Congress is again wrangling over which anti-immigrant “reform” to push through, *Socialist Worker* (16 March) demands “true immigration reform.” And a statement by the National May Day Movement for Worker and Immigrant Rights,



WV Photo

**Los Angeles: Spartacist banner at massive March 2006 demonstration for immigrant rights.**

of Mumia Abu-Jamal, an Innocent Man,” that highlights the Beverly confession and other evidence. The statement appeared last fall in the *Nation*, NYC’s *Amsterdam News*, the *Chicago Defender* and the *San Francisco Bay View* and was subsequently printed in the French Communist Party newspaper *l’Humanité*, the *Morning Star* in Britain and other papers in Germany and Canada.

Labor organizations in Italy, Canada, Britain, Germany, Mexico, South Africa and Australia have signed the statement, as have Nobel Prize winners Nadine Gordimer of South Africa and Dario Fo of Italy and Subcomandante Marcos, leader of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation in Mexico. In the U.S., the New York chapter of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, various Amalgamated Transit Union and International Longshoremen’s Association (ILA) locals and NYC’s 1199 SEIU East have signed on. Recent additional signatories include former

Georgia Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney, prominent black academic Cornel West, South African poet Dennis Brutus and hip-hop artist Chuck D. In a statement received today by the PDC, Darryl “Mike D.” Payne, vice president and business agent of ILA Local 1526 in Fort Lauderdale, noted that “Mumia Abu-Jamal is an innocent man and should never have spent a single day in jail.” Payne declared, “We must all stand in SOLIDARITY and fight to free him now!”

If successful, a labor-centered fight for Mumia’s freedom would strike a blow against the U.S. rulers’ wholesale attacks on our rights and give labor a sense of its enormous potential social power. The fight for Mumia is a crucial part of the fight for black liberation, which will be achieved only through a proletarian socialist revolution that destroys the entire machinery of racist capitalist injustice. *Free Mumia! Abolish the racist death penalty!* ■

## Pascagoula...

(continued from page 3)

brutal exploitation (see article, page 1).

The plight of the workers at Signal puts a sharp focus on the need for the unions to champion the cause of immigrant and foreign workers. Subcontractors at Ingalls employ Mexican immigrants and others in non-union jobs. Labor must oppose all racist anti-immigrant measures and actively organize immigrant workers, legal and “illegal,” into the unions. We demand: Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! Union-run recruitment and skills programs for blacks, women and immigrants would be a powerful way to break down the divisions in the workforce. Such divisions are reinforced by the separation of the shipyard into more than a dozen craft unions. Unity in struggle can open the road to industrial unionism. We say: one shipyard, one union.

Although the strike has shut down shipbuilding, large numbers of office workers organized in OPEIU and some other workers are scabbing by going into the plant along with management, and owner-operated tractor trailers are entering the yard. Meanwhile, there is some “fraternization” between strikers and the cops. IBEW Local 733, which represents electrical workers at Ingalls, also includes Pascagoula County deputy sheriffs, while plant security guards are represented in the Metal Trades Council. Let’s be clear: The role of the police and security guards is to protect capitalist property and profits and to enforce racist repression against black people and other minorities. In the

struggle between labor and capital, the cops are on the side of the bosses. Cops and security guards, out of the unions!

The WV team heard a number of pointed comments about Mississippi Republican Senator Trent Lott, who a few years ago openly praised Strom Thurmond, the late arch-segregationist Senator from South Carolina. The Republican Party does not pretend to be friends of labor or of black people. But that does not mean that the Democrats are.

Quoting leftist writer Mike Davis, we wrote last issue in “Down With U.S. Imperialism! For Class Struggle at Home!”: “‘Pressure from conservative white Democrats’ led the party’s strategists ‘to deliberately delete any mention of New Orleans from 2006 campaign advertising.’” We left out that Davis had also noted that the Congressional Black Caucus “has been surprisingly listless in its response to an unending series of Bush administration provocations,” such as ending housing aid to Katrina survivors and tearing down public housing in New Orleans. The labor movement needs a leadership that will mobilize workers independently of, and in opposition to, the capitalist government and its Democratic and Republican parties. We fight to build a workers party that can lead the struggle for a workers government.

The labor movement can win only by relying on the workers’ own strength, drawing on the support of the impoverished and oppressed. The strike at Ingalls is an important battle for labor in the South and for the rights of the dispossessed. *Victory to the Pascagoula shipyard strike!* ■

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# Airbus...

(continued from page 12)

workers were not mobilized in their own class interests. Instead, union tops in Germany, France and elsewhere pushed class collaboration with their “own” capitalist government and employer. In Hamburg, this was highlighted by the fact that IG Metall union head Jürgen Peters stood on the platform with regional presidents belonging to the right-wing Christian Democratic Union (CDU). The CDU is a party of the bosses, and together with the Social Democrats—a reformist workers party with a thoroughly pro-capitalist leadership—it carries out daily attacks on workers in the public sector and more broadly. Lower Saxony’s CDU president Christian Wulff stressed that the politicians would do anything to save the high technology plants in Germany (*Hamburger Morgenpost*, 17 March). This was echoed by Peters, who called for a “national industrial policy” (*Frankfurter Rundschau*, 17 March).

The workers were furious with management, but many still identified with the company. While workers exhibited illusions that working together with the German bosses would get them out of the crisis, there were also many expressions of solidarity with their colleagues in the other European plants. Workers told *Spartakist* salesmen that they would stand against any attempts to divide them and play them off against each other. Many workers were open to our internationalist class-struggle perspective and criticized the union tops for not having organized a single mass protest bringing together workers from across Europe. On the other hand, they also raised the bosses’ arguments, for example that Airbus should not be weakened so that it could still compete with Boeing. As Trotskyists, we are for the unity in struggle of workers not only in Europe but extending to the U.S. and elsewhere.

While the Airbus crisis threatened mass layoffs of its workforce, some 500 workers at a major Peugeot-Citroën factory in the Paris suburb of Aulnay began a strike on February 28, demanding higher wages, permanent jobs for temporary workers and a retirement age of 55. Inspired by a successful work action in another part of the plant, the strikers stalled the assembly of thousands of cars. Our comrades in the LTF have been raising with strikers, who are largely of North African origin, that their union leaders’ policy of seeking support for the strike from the courts and local bourgeois state authorities sows illusions in the racist capitalist state and undermines the workers’ fighting capacity.

Ironically, as the bosses are enmeshed in the Airbus crisis, European leaders are celebrating the 50th anniversary of



Pierre Pytkowicz

**March 6: Striking auto workers from Peugeot-Citroën plant in Aulnay demonstrate at company plant in Saint-Ouen near Paris.**

the signing of the Treaty of Rome that led to the foundation of the European Union (EU)—an imperialist consortium. As our European comrades’ joint statement explained, we fight for workers revolutions to establish a Socialist United States of Europe. We print the statement below.

\* \* \*

The Airbus bosses’ “Power 8” restructuring plan, announced at the end of February, would mean eliminating 10,000 jobs at Airbus factories throughout Europe. Factories would be sold and the remaining workforce would face speedup. Airbus, the “daughter company” of the joint German-French military aeronautics concern EADS, has been rocked by crises over the past year, with delivery delays and cost overruns on the prestigious A380 jumbo jet. Orders have dropped off sharply in comparison with American competitor Boeing. The essence of “Power 8” is that the Airbus bosses—French and German—are seizing the opportunity provided by the company’s difficulties and using them as a club against the workers throughout Europe, ramming through layoffs and “streamlining” of all kinds to secure their fabulous profits at the expense of the workers. This attack, and the whole crisis shaking the supposedly “European” firm Airbus, show the irrationality of this capitalist system and the need for the workers to struggle against the capitalists in defense of every gain. Airbus workers should beware of the trap of nationalist protectionism set by the trade-union misleaders and the bourgeoisie, which pits them against each other in the interests of the respective national capitalist classes. Be guided by the words of the *Communist Manifesto*: “Workers of the world, unite!”

The situation at Airbus cries out for

solid, coordinated class struggle by the workers in Britain, France, Germany and Spain to hit the Airbus bosses where it hurts them, by stopping production and the flow of profit. The Airbus bosses, whose order books remain full despite their difficulties of the past year, are “highly vulnerable” to strikes, as the German co-chief executive Thomas Enders himself said in a comment to the German magazine *Focus*: “Longer strikes would hit us very hard and set us back even further.” With vile cynicism, this capitalist, who had just announced a “restructuring”

which production site will be sacrificed, actual protest against the Airbus bosses’ plans has been sabotaged. While tens of thousands protested in Germany on February 2, there were only 100 in Toulouse. Later, when protests were called in France for March 6, the German bureaucrats responded by persuading workers at Airbus factories in Varel, Nordenham and Laupheim—where there had been spontaneous work stoppages following the company’s announcement that these plants were to be sold off under the “Power 8” plan—to go *back to work!* A “Europe-Wide Airbus Day of Action” on March 16, originally planned to be held in Brussels, was abandoned in favor of separate, national demonstrations. Despite occasional lip service by the bureaucrats and their left water boys about “not letting the workers be played off against each other,” this is nothing but ass-covering. The clear political thrust of these demonstrations in the different countries remains simply to build “national unity” with their “own” capitalists and their government *against* the workers in other countries. For example, the speakers list for the IG Metall protest in Hamburg is filled with mostly CDU heads of the capitalist governments of German Länder [states] where Airbus sites are located. The demonstration call, “We’re fighting for our future,” explicitly refers only to *German* Airbus factories.

This nationalist protectionism is 100 percent counterposed to the international class struggle which is urgently needed against “Power 8” and the capitalists’



Bengt van Beuningen

**Chinese container ship docked at Hamburg port.**

plan condemning thousands to unemployment, adds: “That can’t be in the interests of the employees.”

The trade-union bureaucracies agree with Enders on this. Their whole perspective in the Airbus crisis is defined by class collaboration and protectionism—the policy of allying themselves with their “own” bourgeoisies and their governments to intervene against foreign capitalist competitors and “save” national industry. They have been working overtime to divert Airbus workers’ anger and opposition into protectionist appeals to their respective capitalist governments in order to maintain the influence of their own national bourgeoisie in Airbus and its parent company EADS. The IG Metall [metal workers union], for example, mobilized some 24,000 workers in all German Airbus plants for protests on February 2, which were dominated by chauvinist protectionism. At the protest in Hamburg, EADS *Gesamtbetriebsrat* [plant council] head Rüdiger Lütjen ranted: “My impression is that England and Spain are getting extra work, and we Germans have to foot the bill” (quoted in *Hamburger Abendblatt*, 3 February). The union tops in France and Britain have responded with similar chauvinist poison. After “Power 8” was made public, a representative in Toulouse of the Force Ouvrière union blustered: “Hamburg alone would profit from an increase in production of up to 45 planes from the A320 family. That’s unacceptable.”

With the union bureaucrats engaged in a treacherous nationalist tug-of-war over

many other attacks. Nationalism is inherent to the capitalist system, which operates by setting one national capitalist class against another, constantly creating unevenness and crises. The international character of the working class, on the other hand, gives it a potentially enormous superiority over the bourgeoisie if mobilized across national and other divisions to coordinate its interdependent struggles. This is exactly what the union bureaucrats refuse to do out of loyalty to the capitalist system, which is based on the exploitation of one class—the proletariat—by a tiny, fabulously rich ruling class—the bourgeoisie. A class-struggle strategy, in stark contrast, means mobilizing the unions’ social power to fight for the burning needs of the working and poor masses *independently* of and *against* the interests of the national bourgeoisie.

While the French and German bosses of EADS/Airbus are divided over where to cut costs on investment and development, they are united in the desire to squeeze as much profit out of the workers of all countries as they can. The unions need to present a unified front. The losses for Airbus—whether caused by the screw-ups with the A380 delivery or other problems—are the problem of the capitalists, and could come out of their enormous profits. A class-struggle union leadership would demand that the Airbus capitalists open the books, exposing their enormous profits and demonstrating just how they are trying to pass off their current crisis onto the workers. Such a lead-

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ership would also fight for the principle of equal pay and working conditions for equal work—whether it is done by temporary workers, employees of German- or French-owned Airbus/EADS subcontractors, or workers in plants owned by capitalists from Russia, India or the United Arab Emirates. This would be an important step, not least in restoring the power of the unions, which have been undermined by years of sellout deals by the union bureaucrats, who have introduced two-tier contracts and split the workforce, with the justification of “maintaining the production site.” *Organize the unorganized!*

If the Airbus factories are all producing at capacity, then that is a good argument for union-controlled hiring and training programs in all plants to fill the demand. More broadly, the unions have a vital interest in taking up a fight against unemployment, for jobs for all with decent pay through a shortened workweek with wages adjusted to prices. That this basic need runs beyond the limits of what the capitalists and their governments can offer shows that this system has long become a fetter on developing the productive forces in the interests of humanity. The burning needs of international working-class struggle against capitalist attacks lead inexorably to the need to overthrow this irrational system of exploitation and replace it with a socialist planned economy based on workers power. Unleashing the massive potential power of the trade unions in Europe is thus integrally linked with fighting for revolutionary socialist leadership of the working class, which is our perspective. As Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky posed it in *Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay* (1940), either the unions will become organs for subordinating the working class to the capitalists and their state, or they will be transformed into weapons in the revolutionary class struggle.

The current conflicts within Airbus and EADS, which was founded as a counterweight to Boeing to give the European imperialists more military independence, highlight the nature and contradictions of the European Union. The EU is a reactionary capitalist alliance of the European imperialists and smaller capitalist countries, founded to support NATO’s anti-Soviet war drive during the Cold War and later extended and restructured for the purpose of attacking the working class and immigrants at home and for competing with the European imperialists’ rivals, the U.S. and Japan. Within this coalition, the imperialist powers—France and Germany of “Core Europe,” as well as the historic U.S. ally Britain—also jostle for influence. These conflicting interests lie behind the wrangling about influence over strategy decisions and access to key technology in EADS. As revolutionary, proletarian internationalists, the ICL and its European sections are opposed on principle to the capitalist EU and racist Fortress Europe. We counterpose the fight for workers revolution and the Socialist United States of Europe.

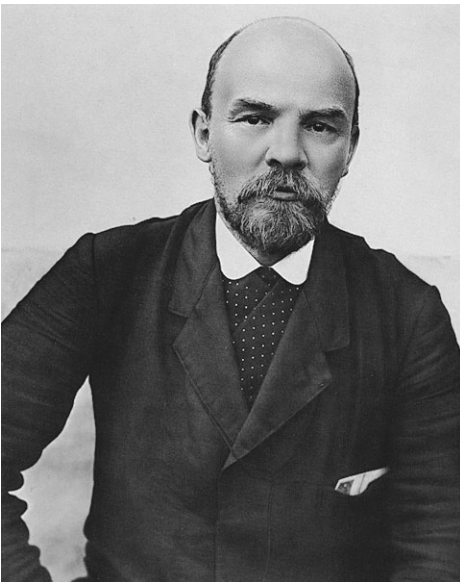
All wings of the union bureaucracy and the social democracy that dominates it—the PS [Socialist Party] and PCF [Communist Party] in France, SPD and Linkspartei/WASG [Left Party/Electoral Alternative for Work and Social Justice] in Germany, the Labour Party in Britain, the PSOE [Socialist Workers Party] in Spain—utterly oppose this perspective, subordinating the interests of their working-class base to those of their “own” imperialists. While opposing certain aspects of the EU, they fundamentally support this capitalist coalition, demanding at most a “social” gloss for this instrument of capitalist oppression and imperialist exploitation. As for the WASG, in opposition to “neo-liberalism” and to preserve, in some form, the status quo of the capitalist “welfare state,” it supports a protectionist alternative for the capitalists, with intensified state intervention and a coalition of French and German imperialism. Thus, WASG speaker Herbert Schui appealed to the CDU/SPD government on February 20 to stop “looking on as Airbus Germany is left behind,” and instead, as a partner, “to get

involved in Airbus and drive forward technological development in civilian airplane production.”

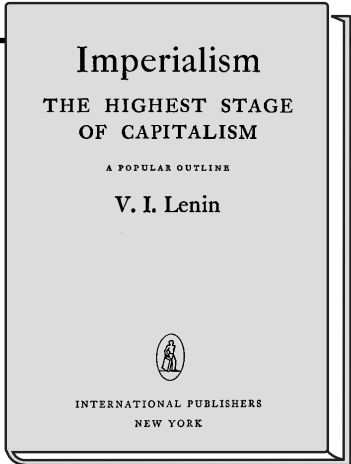
A joint statement by WASG chief Lafontaine with PCF leader Buffet, cited in *l’Humanité* (7 February), makes the same basic point: “The states should have a direct influence on the corporate strategy of EADS.” If they appeal against splitting French and German workers, it is only because they support closer cooperation between the French and German governments against Boeing, thus playing Airbus workers against their American colleagues. As opposed to the social-chauvinism of the PCF and Lafontaine, we fight for workers revolution in the belly of the U.S. imperialist beast. Key is winning the workers to a revolutionary, internationalist perspective and combating protectionist chauvinism. As our comrades in the SL/U.S. wrote in an article on a strike by Boeing workers in 2005: “The labor bureaucracy’s response is to try to set workers in the U.S. against their brothers and sisters overseas through protectionist campaigns to keep ‘our jobs’ in the U.S. What’s needed instead is to unite workers across national lines in struggle against their common enemy, the capitalists” (WV No. 854, 16 September 2005).

The trade-union bureaucrats’ protectionist chauvinism is aimed today for the most part against “cheap wage competition” from East Europe and Asia (especially China). For example, an article in *Welt Online* (26 October 2006) reports: “Following the agreement on a final assembly plant for Airbus in China, the French CGT union, which is closely associated with the Communists, fears the elimination of jobs in Europe. ‘The union is especially worried about the production sites in Germany, as well as in Nantes and Méaulte,’ said a union spokesman in Toulouse.” While a German BR [plant council representative] in Stade disagreed that there was an immediate threat to German jobs, he echoed the German bourgeoisie’s complaints about China’s “stealing know-how”: “But he warned against transferring too much technical know-how to China. ‘Then positions in Germany could also be threatened.’”

Just like the chauvinist protectionism aimed against other Airbus sites within Europe, this is aimed at rallying the workers in Europe behind the particular interests of their “own” imperialists. It is doubly treacherous, because it serves to advance the German and other European imperialists’ aim of undermining the Chinese deformed workers state and fomenting capitalist counterrevolution. We oppose the labor bureaucracy’s efforts to deny China the elementary right of any state to engage in commerce, to buy and sell on the world market. The protectionism against China goes hand in hand with the anti-Communist agitation of bourgeois commentators like Gabor Steingart from *Spiegel*, who advocates an imperialist alliance against China under the pretext



B. D. Vigliet



**Bolshevik leader V. I. Lenin wrote classic Marxist analysis of imperialism amid slaughter of World War I.**

of defending workers’ living standards. He cries: “Protectionism! The West must defend itself.”

European workers roped in by this need only look at the effects of capitalist counterrevolution in East Europe and the Soviet Union. The capitalists have used this to ride roughshod over the workers and oppressed worldwide, slashing social gains including in West Europe, increasing racist terror and launching a string of imperialist wars and colonial occupations. This world-historic defeat for the international working class would be multiplied many times if the imperialists were to succeed in restoring untrammled capitalist exploitation in China. That is why we Trotskyists fight for the unconditional military defense of China against imperialism and capitalist counterrevolution, and for proletarian political revolution to oust the parasitic Stalinist bureaucracy and replace it with the rule of workers and peasants councils.

The “far left” tails of the social democracy echo the union bureaucracy’s protectionism with reformist appeals to the capitalist governments to save Airbus. Thus, the Pabloite LCR [French Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire] wrote: “Not one more cent for the big shareholders. We propose that the state take on its responsibilities. What is necessary is to ‘renationalize’ Airbus, under the control of the workforce and their trade-union organizations, as part of a public, European aeronautical company” (*Rouge*, 8 March). The “left” capitalist governments which the LCR voted for, like the [PS’s] Jospin-led popular front [voted out in 2002] that included the PCF, have carried out massive attacks on the working class. Today, the PCF and a coterie of left groups are working to prepare the next betrayal, supporting [PS presidential candidate] Royal’s campaign for top cop of the French state.

The WASG has the same aim, as Lafontaine recently confirmed by announcing his desire to govern in coalition with the SPD (which the PDS [Party of Democratic Socialism] already does at the regional level). The “left” tails of

these parties, such as the SAV [Socialist Alternative] in Germany (section of Peter Taaffe’s CWI [Committee for a Workers’ International]), have no problem with entering a bourgeois government, as long as it gives lip service to not worsening (!) the workers conditions, while the LCR makes clear that it is ready to take “its responsibilities” in a government today, as long as it is “anti-capitalist.”

Counterposed to the reformist program of taking responsibility for the bourgeois state, what’s really needed is a struggle to prepare the working class to take society’s fate into its own hands. The repressive organs of the capitalist state must be replaced by organs of workers rule. Opposing this revolutionary perspective, the “radical left” reformists barely even mention the chauvinist protectionism of the union bureaucrats, much less offer a programmatic alternative to it. They see in the bourgeois state a means of controlling the excesses of capitalism and not an instrument of bourgeois class rule. Against this, Lenin, leader of the 1917 October Revolution, explained in *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1917): “We see plainly here how private and state monopolies are interwoven in the epoch of finance capital; how both are but separate links in the imperialist struggle between the big monopolists for the division of the world.”

At bottom the question is, which class will rule. Competition and rivalry between the “great” imperialist powers over spheres of influence and exploitation lead inevitably to trade wars and then to shooting wars, which are the ultimate means for the bourgeoisie to defend its interests against rivals. For the bourgeoisie, protectionism and “free trade” are options to be discussed. For the proletariat, protectionism means renouncing internationalism, pledging support in advance for the capitalist rulers’ interimperialist slaughters and giving up on socialist revolution, which is the only way out for humanity. Against this, we of the ICL fight to reforge the Fourth International as the world party of socialist revolution, to prepare the working class for this solution. ■

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# WORKERS VANGUARD

Joint Statement by ICL British, French and German Sections

## For United International Class Struggle Against Airbus Bosses!



Pascal Pavani



DPA

March 16: Airbus workers near Toulouse, France (left) and in Hamburg, Germany, protest threat of massive layoffs.

BERLIN—35,000 Airbus workers and supporters took part in a Europe-wide day of action on March 16 against the mass layoffs and plant closures planned as part of the company's restructuring plan, known as "Power 8." The Spartacist Arbeiterpartei Deutschlands, section of the International Communist League, joined the 25,000-strong rally in Hamburg and distributed a statement signed jointly with our comrades of the Ligue Trotskyste de France and the Spartacist League/Britain. Airbus workers walked off the job and protested in France as well, where some 7,500 came out in Toulouse and another 4,000 total in Nantes, Saint-Nazaire and Méaulte. Mass demonstrations and walkouts also took place at seven locations in Spain, while hundreds rallied in North Wales.

**Against National Protectionism,  
Chauvinist Poison for the Working Class!  
For the Socialist United States of Europe!**

Profits at the Airbus parent company, European Aeronautic Defence and Space Company (EADS), reportedly fell significantly last year after management blunders caused a two-year production holdup of the Airbus A380 "superjumbo" jet. The "Power 8" plan, which includes eliminating 10,000 of the 55,000 jobs in Europe, is aimed at squeezing the workers in order to recoup some of the billions of dollars that Airbus lost last year. After details of the cutbacks began to leak

out, thousands of workers in Germany and France downed tools in spontaneous protest earlier this month. At the March 16 Hamburg demonstration, workers protested the projected sale of plants in Varel and Nordenham, two of the Airbus plants on the chopping block. The fear of unemployment and poverty was on every face. Recalling the four Hartz Laws enacted by former Social Democratic (SPD) chancellor Gerhard Schröder to shred social programs, and specifically the fourth law attacking unemployment benefits, workers carried a placard that read: "Today Power 8 and Tomorrow Hartz IV."

While the demonstrations were impressive, the *continued on page 10*

## Appeals Court Hearing Set for May 17

### Join the Fight to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!

The following statement was issued by the Partisan Defense Committee on March 26.

The United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit has informed attorneys for death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal that it will hear oral argument on Mumia's *habeas corpus* appeal on May 17 in Philadelphia. In a letter to supporters announcing the hearing, Mumia's attorney Robert Bryan pointed out that Mumia "remains in great danger. If all is lost, he will be executed." Mumia's case has reached a critical juncture. Any decision by the Third Circuit will likely be appealed to the reactionary U.S. Supreme Court.

Both Mumia's defense team and prose-

cutors are appealing decisions made in 2001 by U.S. District Court judge William Yohn, who overturned Mumia's death sentence but upheld every aspect of his 1982 frame-up conviction. A Black Panther Party spokesman in his youth and later a MOVE supporter and renowned journalist, Mumia has been on death row for over 24 years, falsely convicted of killing Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner and sentenced to death specifically for political views he expressed as a Black Panther. There are mountains of evidence of Mumia's innocence, including the sworn confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Mumia, killed Faulkner. Beverly's confession was submitted to the courts in

2001. But to the racists in black robes, a court of law is no place for evidence of the innocence of Mumia, a fighter for the oppressed.

The Partisan Defense Committee is a class-struggle legal and social defense organization that champions cases and causes in the interests of the whole of the working people. This purpose is in accordance with the political views of the Spartacist League. As PDC Labor Coordinator Gene Herson said, "We have long fought to mobilize fighters against racist injustice, opponents of U.S. imperialist depredations and, crucially, the labor movement, in the U.S. and internationally, to demand: Free Mumia! Abolish

*continued on page 8*



Jennifer Beach