

For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution! Supreme Court: Segregation Forever

In a major setback for black rights, on June 28 the U.S. Supreme Court threw out school desegregation plans in Seattle and Louisville, giving the green light to those seeking to overturn some 1,000 school integration plans across the country. In eviscerating the 1954 *Brown v.*

Board of Education ruling that banned school segregation, the Court majority in essence turned the clock back over a hundred years to the infamous 1896 “separate but equal” *Plessy v. Ferguson* ruling—a cornerstone of the racist Jim Crow system. Their decision was the

reflection on the legal front of the murderous contempt displayed by the government when it left black people and the poor to die in Hurricane Katrina’s wake. The court decision, part of a panoply of attacks on blacks, immigrants and working people, cries out

for determined protest by the integrated labor movement against the racist onslaught.

Justice Clarence Thomas wrote a concurring opinion invoking the authority of the “color-blind Constitution.” But
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Zionists Tighten Vise as Hamas Takes Gaza Ghetto

U.S./Israel Provoke Palestinian Bloodletting



AP

AP



June 25: Israeli tank rumbles past barrier enclosing Gaza (top); Hamas supporters imprisoned by Fatah-controlled security forces in West Bank town of Jenin (left). Right: Hamas fighters in Gaza City seize Fatah-run Preventive Security compound, June 14.

Reuters



Days after the takeover of the Gaza Strip by the Islamic fundamentalist Hamas, Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert met with Jordan’s King Abdullah II and Palestinian Authority (PA) president Mahmoud Abbas in Egypt on June 25 in a summit organized by Egyptian dictator Hosni Mubarak. Abbas had dutifully dispersed the elected government of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh, and Fatah forces rounded up Hamas members in the West Bank. Abbas installed a handpicked “emergency government” to the applause of his imperialist and Zionist paymasters and the venal

Defend the Palestinian People! For a Socialist Federation of the Near East!

Arab bourgeois regimes. To underline who is in charge of the Occupied Territories, Israel was planning its next assault on the Palestinians even as the four leaders met in Egypt. Within a few days, Israeli forces had killed some 20 Palestinians in the Gaza ghetto and attacked the West Bank town of Nablus, killing at least one Fatah fighter.

Exacerbated by Israel and the imperialists, the bloodletting between Hamas

and the petty-bourgeois nationalist Fatah is but the latest chapter in the tragedy of Palestinian life. Through a variety of economic sanctions, the U.S., Israel and the European powers had been starving the Palestinians as punishment for the January 2006 electoral victory of Hamas, which the Zionists and imperialists have long labeled “terrorist.” Furthering its own interests against its Hamas rivals,

Abbas’ PA has acted as the willing tool of Tel Aviv and Washington.

Revolutionary Marxists had no side in the internecine fighting between Hamas and Fatah. At the same time, we stand for the military defense of Hamas against military assault by Israel or the U.S. without giving this reactionary fundamentalist outfit any political support.

The spark for the fighting in Gaza was the deployment of 3,000 Fatah-allied security forces in Gaza City in early May over Hamas’ objections. Hamas also bristled at Abbas’ appointment of former Gaza strongman Mohammed Dahlan as his national security advisor. (Dahlan had been responsible for building up the PA’s security services in Gaza under the 1993 U.S.-brokered Oslo accord and oversaw the
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Payback for 2005 NYC Transit Strike State Revokes TWU Dues Checkoff

Rip Up Slave-Labor Taylor Law!

NEW YORK CITY—In an attempt to bankrupt Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 100 for its solid and popular three-day strike in December 2005, a New York state court has revoked the union's dues checkoff. As of June 1, members' dues were no longer automatically deducted from paychecks by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA). In response, Local 100 has taken measures to collect its dues directly from union members for the first time in decades.

The 2005 strike shut down bus and subway service in the financial center of U.S. imperialism in defiance of the state's Taylor Law, which bans public employee strikes. But the pro-capitalist Local 100 leadership stopped the strike after 60

hours without a contract in hand and without winning amnesty from Taylor Law penalties. For its part, the TWU International openly opposed the strike, while the city labor leaders ducked for cover. Calling off this effective strike emboldened the courts and MTA bosses to go after the union, fining workers six days' pay, imposing \$2.5 million in fines on Local 100, briefly jailing union president Roger Toussaint and now eliminating its existing dues collection system. Beholden to a policy of class collaboration, Toussaint & Co. turned around and energetically campaigned for Democratic Party strikebreaker Eliot Spitzer in the 2006 gubernatorial race, even though Spitzer as state Attorney General enforced the

19 December 2005: Striking bus workers picket in Queens one day before TWU shut down entire transit system.



Taylor Law reprisals against the union.

Make no mistake: It is the duty of all Local 100 members to pay their dues. A bankrupt union cannot carry out its purpose: defending the livelihood, safety and working conditions of its membership against the bosses. According to the *Chief-Leader* (8 June), Local 100 officials were projecting to get half the union membership to "sign up" to pay dues by June 1. But many workers are refusing to pay out of disgust with the policies of the union tops and the rotten contract rammed down their throats in binding arbitration. Union members have every reason to be angry at Toussaint and other Local 100 officers. What is needed is a new, class-struggle leadership of the unions. But not paying dues only weakens Local 100, and the MTA would love to drive a stake into the heart of this powerful, multiracial union.

At the moment, Toussaint says that he wants to permanently replace dues checkoff with direct payments to the union. In fact, the whole system of dues checkoff put the union's money into the bosses' hands, giving management an instrument for financial blackmail. Local 100 can petition the court to have the system reinstated after 90 days—at the cost of pledging to abide by the Taylor Law and never strike again. Without the right to strike, a union has surrendered its purpose. In 1980, dues checkoff was taken away in the heat of the 11-day NYC transit strike. It was restored six months later after union misleaders sold out work and safety standards.

Dues checkoff in NYC transit has its origins in a rotten deal with the class enemy. In 1948, TWU leader Mike Quill was facing a restive membership and militant opposition within the union, not least as a result of the World War II "no strike pledge" he upheld and the NYC rulers' stonewalling on contract negotiations. In backroom discussions, Quill accepted Democratic Party mayor Mike O'Dwyer's "offer" to let the bosses control dues collection and then transfer that money to the union. In return for dues checkoff and a package of wage increases, Quill disavowed the union's historic opposition to transit fare hikes, opening the road for the bosses to respond to all future union demands by threatening fare increases. The fare was soon doubled! Quill's policy of class collaboration continued as he worked to purge most of his former Communist Party comrades out of the TWU during the anti-red witchhunts of the 1940s and '50s.

As we wrote in an exchange on dues checkoff in WV No. 358 (6 July 1984):

"The dues checkoff is a classic example of the tendency for trade unions in the absence of a revolutionary leadership to turn into appendages of the bourgeois state, reflecting the sellout labor bureaucracy's desire to live in 'harmony' with the class enemy. It is of a piece with the various 'labor courts,' boards and capitalist labor legislation generally which these fakers always count on. And it is particularly true for the dues checkoff in NYC transit where the boss and union treasurer is the state itself."

Dues should be collected by union reps, which would help make the union leadership more accountable to the ranks. Instituting this method of dues collection would better prepare the union for its future battles and goes hand in hand with the fight for a class-struggle leadership of the unions that is financially and politically independent of the capitalists and their state. In its struggle, labor must rely on its own organized power, which includes control of union finances vital to win strikes.

It is this power that can smash the anti-strike Taylor Law through uniting transit workers and all city and state labor at the head of the poor and oppressed. In order to mobilize the mass of the city's dispossessed behind it, the TWU should raise such demands as free, quality mass transit for all. But even after the TWU has repeatedly felt the sting of Taylor Law penalties, the Local 100 leadership wants capitalist politicians in Albany to "reform" the law by giving the government's Public Employment Relations Board the power "to seek an injunction when a party engages in prohibited subjects of bargaining." The union bureaucrats want a more evenhanded Taylor Law to keep the bosses honest. But the entire purpose of the law is to keep public workers unions in chains, and any strengthening of its provisions will ultimately redound against the unions.

Various and sundry oppositionists and "militants" in Local 100 are critical of the Toussaint leadership but do not represent a break from the politics of class collaboration. Among the more left-talking are union members supported by the fake socialists of the League for the Revolutionary Party. An article on dues checkoff in their publication *Revolutionary Transit Worker (RTW)* No. 41 (10 June) rightly opposes its revocation and states that "the bosses' hands should be kept off the union's money." But in practice *RTW* has made a mockery of the principle of class independence by lashing up with others who bring the capitalist state into the union's affairs, including by giving "critical support" to Toussaint in the 2000 elections, despite the fact that he had *sued the union*.

As Marxists, we fight for the complete independence of the trade unions from the capitalist state and the bosses' political parties. A new leadership is needed to turn the unions into instruments of class struggle. Such a leadership would support the building of a workers party that leads all the exploited and oppressed in the fight for a workers government. ■

CORRECTION

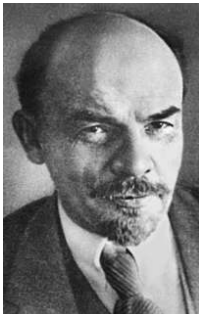
In Part Two of "German Imperialism and the Lie of 'Collective Guilt'" (WV No. 894, 8 June), the author of *The Making of the GDR, 1945-53: From Antifascism to Stalinism* was incorrectly identified as Richard Pritchard. The actual name of the author is Gareth Pritchard.

Zionism: A Marxist Understanding

Amid the Nazi genocidal rampages against European Jewry, the young Trotskyist Abram Leon, who died in Auschwitz in 1944, warned against Zionism as a solution to the oppression of the Jewish people. Indeed, the Israeli capitalist state, founded in 1948 and today possessing nuclear arms, is premised on the expulsion and brutal oppression of the Palestinian people and is also a death trap for the Hebrew-speaking people themselves. There can and will be no just resolution to the conflicting national rights of the Palestinian and Hebrew-speaking peoples short of the establishment of a socialist federation of the Near East, requiring the overthrow of all the bourgeois regimes of the region through proletarian revolution.



TROTSKY



LENIN

tion to the conflicting national rights of the Palestinian and Hebrew-speaking peoples short of the establishment of a socialist federation of the Near East, requiring the overthrow of all the bourgeois regimes of the region through proletarian revolution.

Zionist theoreticians like to compare Zionism with all other national movements. But in reality, the foundations of the national movements and that of Zionism are altogether different. The national movement of the European bourgeoisie is the consequence of capitalist development; it reflects the will of the bourgeoisie to create the national bases for production, to abolish feudal remnants. The national movement of the European bourgeoisie is closely linked with the ascending phase of capitalism. But in the Nineteenth Century, in the period of the flowering of nationalisms, far from being "Zionist," the Jewish bourgeoisie was profoundly assimilationist. The economic process from which the modern nations issued laid the foundations for integration of the Jewish bourgeoisie into the bourgeois nation.

It is only when the process of the formation of nations approaches its end, when the productive forces have for a long time found themselves constricted within national boundaries, that the process of expulsion of Jews from capitalist society begins to manifest itself, that modern anti-Semitism begins to develop. The elimination of Judaism accompanies the decline of capitalism. Far from being a product of the development of the productive forces, Zionism is precisely the consequence of the complete halt of this development, the result of the petrification of capitalism. Whereas the national movement is the product of the ascending period of capitalism, Zionism is the product of the imperialist era. The Jewish tragedy of the Twentieth Century is a direct consequence of the decline of capitalism....

It was capitalism, by virtue of the fact that it provided an economic basis for the national problem, which also created insoluble national contradictions.... With the disappearance of capitalism, the national problem will lose all its acuteness. If it is premature to speak of a worldwide assimilation of peoples, it is nonetheless clear that a planned economy on a global scale will bring all the peoples of the world much closer to each other.

—Abram Leon, *The Jewish Question: A Marxist Interpretation*
(published posthumously in 1946)

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Norden for President?

The IG and Executive Office: Sewer Centrism

Ninety years ago, Bolshevik Party leader V. I. Lenin wrote *State and Revolution*. Forcefully arguing the Marxist understanding of the state, Lenin drew upon his predecessors, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, who added the following to their 1872 preface to the German edition, and subsequent editions, of the *Communist Manifesto*: “One thing especially was proved by the [Paris] Commune, viz., that ‘the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery, and wield it for its own purposes’.” The work on *State and Revolution* was “interrupted” by the October 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, which put in practice the smashing of the bourgeois state and its replacement by the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Upon its publication, Lenin’s work was denounced by all manner of centrists and reformists as an “anarchist” tract, as opposed to their revisionist versions of “Marxism.” Not coincidentally, revisionists of various stripes launched vitriolic attacks on the establishment of the workers state issuing from the October Revolution. So when a senior comrade of the International Communist League prompted a discussion on our own policy on running for executive office in bourgeois elections, it was Lenin’s fight against these opponents of October to which we turned for guidance.

We had held, consistent with historic practices of the revolutionary Marxist movement, that it was permissible to run for executive office, while at the same time we understood that we would refuse, on principle, to assume such office. Such a position, however, contained a contradiction. The executive authority commands the “special bodies of armed men” that are the core of the state apparatus; the revolutionary shattering of that state entails inevitably reckoning with the executive. Even in the great *bourgeois* revolutions in England and France, the revolutionists who established a base in the Parliament and the National Assembly had to get rid of the king and set up a new executive organ. What end would be served by a revolutionary campaign for such an office?

The Fifth International Conference of the ICL, held earlier this year, resolved this contradiction and concluded that we would not run for such offices. Rather, our slogan should be in regard to the capitalist state: “Down with executive offices!” In so doing, we saw ourselves fulfilling the work of the Communist International of Lenin and Trotsky’s time, correcting a bad compromise made at the Second Comintern Congress in 1920. In fighting against the position put forward by ultraleft Communists of boycotting bourgeois elections on principle, the distinction between running for executive office and for legislative office was lost. We announced this change of line in an article in *Le Bolchévique*, newspaper of the Ligue Trotskyiste de France, that we ran in *Workers Vanguard* No. 890 (13 April) under the headline “French Election: No Choice for Workers.” The article declares:

“As our recent conference document states: ‘The problem with running for

executive offices is that it lends legitimacy to prevailing and reformist conceptions of the state.’ Our entire purpose is to bring to workers the understanding that in any socialist revolution the bourgeois state must be destroyed and replaced by the dictatorship of the proletariat. Lenin taught this, and all history has proven it. To run in elections for executive office thus represents an obstacle to our strategic goal.”

We expected grunts of sneering disagreement over our line change from fake-socialist opponents; the centrist Internationalist Group (IG) did not disappoint. Having stressed the distinction between executive and parliamentary bodies, we were charged by the IG not with “anarchism,” the epithet hurled against Lenin, but, ludicrously, with “parliamentary cretinism.” The crux of the IG’s argument is:

“But for revolutionaries, putting forward candidates for executive posts such as presidents or mayors in no way implies that they intend to occupy these positions within the framework of the bourgeois state. As we always stressed at the time when the ICL, and the international Spartacist tendency which preceded it, stood for the continuity of genuine Trotskyism, we use elections as a platform for revolutionary propaganda. In the unusual case in which a revolutionary candidate had enough influence to be elected, the party would already have begun building workers councils and other organs of a soviet character. And the party would insist that, if elected, its candidates would base themselves on such organs of workers power and not on the institutions of the bourgeois state.”

—“France Turns Hard to the Right,” *The Internationalist*, May 2007

Thus the IG leaves open, and certainly does not disavow, the possibility that it *would accept executive office* in certain “unusual” cases. This is not in “continuity” with our earlier position of “run but do not serve.” It is, rather, a rightist resolution of the contradiction inherent in that line, and by no means a new one. In fact, the early French and Bulgarian Communist parties, among others, won elections to local executive offices, and the Bulgarian Communists controlled hundreds of municipal administrations.

In its polemical zeal, the IG trips over the elementary distinction between executive and legislative bodies, writing:

“In reality, ever since Marx, we Marxists have been opposed to the election of presidents by universal suffrage, for this produces a semi-bonapartist executive escaping the control of legislative bodies. We are also opposed to the existence of a second, supposedly higher, legislative chamber as inherently anti-democratic. Should we therefore also refuse to run candidates of the Senate?”

In a word: No. (Except that in France the question does not even arise, as the Senate is elected not by suffrage but by mayors and councillors.) There is a historical distinction between Parliament and the King. We do not aspire to the office of Commander-in-Chief of U.S. imperialism, or of the local sheriff or, like the “sewer Socialists” who ran Milwaukee and other cities a century ago, of the mayor overseeing the police (and the sewers). But it is possible, and sometimes desirable, to run and serve in a revolutionary way in a parliamentary body, a *tactic* in the Leninist arsenal on the road to the proletariat’s seizure of state power.

Sure, the U.S. Senate, for example, is undemocratic. But only parliamentary

cretins would base their participation in elections on the “democratic” credentials of the institutional facades of the capitalist state. Does the IG think the lower chambers of bourgeois parliamentary republics are genuinely “democratic”? The Bolsheviks’ parliamentary fraction functioned as revolutionaries in the Duma of tsarist Russia—a very non-democratic institution. But Lenin never proposed any electoral tactic entailing standing candidates for a “Red Tsar.”

Nor, after the February Revolution in 1917, did Lenin propose—under those “unusual” circumstances—that the Bolsheviks obtain ministerial portfolios in the Kerensky government, which was, to be sure, joined by Mensheviks and other “socialists.” On the contrary, he fought down the line against any conciliation to this class-collaborationist government (“popular front”), let alone participation within it, thus steeling the Bolshevik Party and laying the basis for the October victory.

It is precisely in revolutionary situations that illusions in the capitalist state have the most detrimental impact. For example, in Germany, amid the revolutionary upheaval that swept the country at the end of World War I, the centrist social democrat Karl Kautsky and his co-thinkers claimed to support *both* the workers councils and the bourgeois provisional government—the Council of People’s Representatives—which they joined in November 1918. At the head of the Independent Socialist

Party, a split from the Social Democratic Party (SPD), Kautsky & Co. proved to be of great utility to that same SPD and its government.

The SPD of Scheidemann, Ebert and Noske, notorious for the services rendered to its “own” bourgeoisie by criminally supporting the imperialist slaughter of World War I, was widely discredited. So Kautsky & Co.’s authority was instrumental in getting the National Assembly accepted by the working class, after which it was relatively easy to dismantle the workers councils, drowning the revolutionary movement in blood. And when a revolutionary situation erupted in 1923, the German Communist Party derailed that historic opportunity, adapting to the Social Democracy and, in October, even entering the SPD-led regional bourgeois governments in Saxony and Thuringia (see “A Trotskyist Critique of Germany 1923 and the Comintern,” *Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 56, Spring 2001).

The IG, with its fence-straddling talk about assuming bourgeois executive office while at the same time basing itself on organs of workers power, is very much in the Kautsky tradition. It is also oddly silent about one occasion when the Spartacist League *did* run for executive office. In 1985, we ran Marjorie Stamberg, now an IG supporter, for mayor of New York. It was, given our understanding at the time, not an unprincipled act but rather a campaign carried out in accordance with what we believed to be correct communist practice. In light of our understanding now, running for executive office is out of the question; it is not a tactical question, but one of principle.

The IG’s empty bombast about the probability of a “genuinely revolutionary candidate for *whatever post*” (emphasis ours) ending up in jail still begs the question. Where will the IG draw the line? If it is permissible to run for president or mayor, then how about sheriff? After all, presidents are the sheriffs of all the sheriffs. If it is possible to accept such posts, what exceptional loophole might allow IG honcho Jan Norden to assume the duties of Commander-in-Chief? Unwittingly, the IG’s “polemic” has made it even more crystal clear how necessary and correct it was for us to stand on Lenin, complete the unfinished business of the Communist International and renounce running for executive office. ■



Der Spiegel

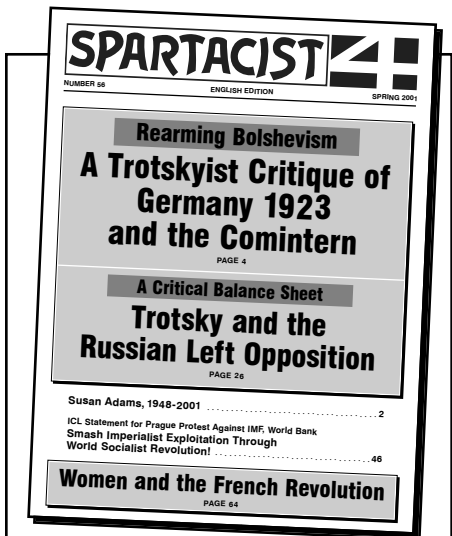
Above: German Social Democratic president Friedrich Ebert reviewing troops following World War I. Centrist Karl Kautsky (right) covered for social-chauvinists.

Below: December 1918 mass workers demonstration in Berlin demands: “All Power to the Workers and Soldiers Councils.”

Walter Gircke



Frederick A. Praeger



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ICL Honors Our Comrade Diana Kartsen

Our comrade Diana Kartsen died on April 12 at age 58 of ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or Lou Gehrig's disease). The Librarian of the Prometheus Research Library since its inception, Diana was also at the time of her death a member of the Spartacist League/U.S. Central Control Commission, on which she served in different capacities for more than two decades.

Memorial gatherings for Diana have been held internationally. Written tributes have come in from Europe, India and elsewhere, including from young women cadres of the International Communist League who had been inspired by Diana and from Marxist scholars who worked with her at the Prometheus Research Library. In several countries, as is the custom in the communist movement, Diana's comrades gathered at the gravesites of past revolutionaries to lay wreaths, including at the grave of Karl Marx in London and at the Wall of the Communards in the Père Lachaise cemetery in Paris. In Chicago, where Diana was recruited to Trotskyism in the early 1970s, comrades gathered at the memorial to the Haymarket martyrs. In Japan, comrades honored her at the grave of heroic Soviet spies Richard Sorge and Ozaki Hotsumi.

In New York, where Diana lived for the last 30 years, more than 100 comrades, friends and family gathered on May 27. A memorial meeting was also held in Oakland on June 10. At both gatherings, photographs and documents were displayed highlighting in particular her role as a leader of our interventions at numerous demonstrations and as head of the PRL. Under Diana's leadership, the Library, which serves as the Spartacist League's central archive, acquired over 6,000 books and periodical volumes. In collaboration with SL/U.S. National Chairman Jim Robertson and others, Diana and her staff were instrumental in the publishing of three books by the PRL: *James P. Cannon and the Early Years of American Communism*; *Dog Days: James P. Cannon vs. Max Shachtman in the Communist League of America, 1931-1933*; and the first publication in Russian of Leon Trotsky's *The Communist International After Lenin*. She also oversaw the production of six bulletins of the *Prometheus Research Series*.

At the New York gathering, Carl Lichtenstein, who worked closely with Diana at the PRL, not only spoke about her work in administering the Library but stressed how she was always concerned about "keeping comrades politically current, knowing what was going on, knowing where our work fit in." Corky Benedict, long a mainstay of the Maintenance department in the party center, indicated a green hard hat with Diana's name on it on the PRL display table, which Maintenance comrades gave her as a testament to her assistance in transforming "an old, run-down loft building into a space that is friendly to books and archival material and to comrades and visiting scholars." Bryan Palmer, who came to know Diana while working at the PRL on his new biography of Cannon (*James P. Cannon and the Origins of the American Revolu-*

tionary Left, 1890-1928), sent a letter paying tribute to her "p penchant for preserving our heritage, which is why she gave me such support in my research and writing on Cannon, and why she was such a successful builder of the PRL's holdings."

Numerous speakers and letters spoke to Diana's concern for comrades' development, her compassion, fairness and ability to listen, and her warmth and kindness toward the family of her beloved husband and comrade, Ed Kartsen. Ed's sister Victoria told the New York meeting how Diana took extraordinary care in looking after their family as Ed's mother lay in a coma in Harlem Hospital in August 2003. Describing her return home to Florida, Victoria said, "As I sat waiting for the plane wondering whether my mother would survive, I was comforted by the thought that Diana would be keeping an eye on my mom's progress. I also realized that my brother was extraordinarily fortunate to have found such a wonderful woman to love and to be loved by."

In her speech at the New York memorial, Mindy Gianninoto, Diana's close friend and comrade, spoke of Ed's devotion to Diana: "Ed really loved her and took care of Diana. From the moment he got home from work and on the weekends he was her sole caregiver. She could

no longer walk or talk, move her hands or eat. To do what Ed did, you have to set aside your ego and yourself. You become totally selfless in order to do what needs to be done for the one you love. I, and I think all of us, salute him."

Speaking in Oakland, comrade Francis expressed her heartfelt appreciation for comrades Karen, Gayle, Mindy and Ed for their diligent care for Diana over the last period of her life. Beginning her remarks by recalling Diana's last phone call with Elizabeth King Robertson, a party leader who died in October 2005, she concluded: "Someone's recent tribute referred to Diana's arched eyebrow. Her arched eyebrow and the accompanying evil twinkle that would come into her eye—those were Diana's signal warning you of the coming of a wry remark that left you laughing, whether on the field of battle or as she was dying. But Diana died in the comfort, which is left to us to fulfill, that her party, that Lizzy's party, that the party of the proletariat lives on."

We print below our party's memorial tribute delivered in New York by Jane Kirby, as well as speeches by Ed Kartsen and his aunt, Susan Jarvis, Mindy Gianninoto and Jim Robertson, some of which have been excerpted.

* * *

Jane Kirby: Diana died of Lou Gehrig's disease, a disease that is slowly debilitating and where advancing paralysis essentially entombs one in one's own body. So we all knew that she was dying. Nonetheless as Jim remarked to me, it was still a tremendous shock when she did die. She fought until the end to continue to keep up with all aspects of the party's work, particularly that of the Prometheus Research Library of which she was the founding and head Librarian, but also the work of the party's central office of which she had been a key component, the work of the locals of the American section and of our sections internationally.

Although her ability to communicate progressively diminished, she would pump comrades by whatever means she had at hand for news of what was going on, and above all about the comrades themselves—their lives, their concerns, their problems—for Diana keenly understood the importance of cadre preservation as central to forging a Leninist vanguard party as the critical instrumentality for the liberation of all of humanity from this increasingly brutal and depraved system of capitalist imperialism. More than that, she was simply a nice person.

She was very much the stiff-upper-lip WASP, not cold or dour or snobbish but very upright, with a keen and abiding sense of right and wrong, and one not given to self-pity or for that matter to any manner of egotism. She was a rock. At the end, she fought with all the calm determination and iron will that she brought to her work as a leading cadre of our party for some 25 years. She continued to be a voice of reason, offering considered and objective advice to her friends and comrades. Diana also maintained a very wry sense of humor through it all. When her friend comrade Francis came in a few months ago to see Diana and say her goodbyes, she asked Diana if there was anything she could do to help Ed—Diana's companion and the love of her life—after she was gone. Diana, who was no longer capable of speaking, typed into her voice machine the following question: "Where am I going?" Of course, one can see aspects of denial there. But I see her understated but devilish wit, and I can just see the twinkle in her eye.

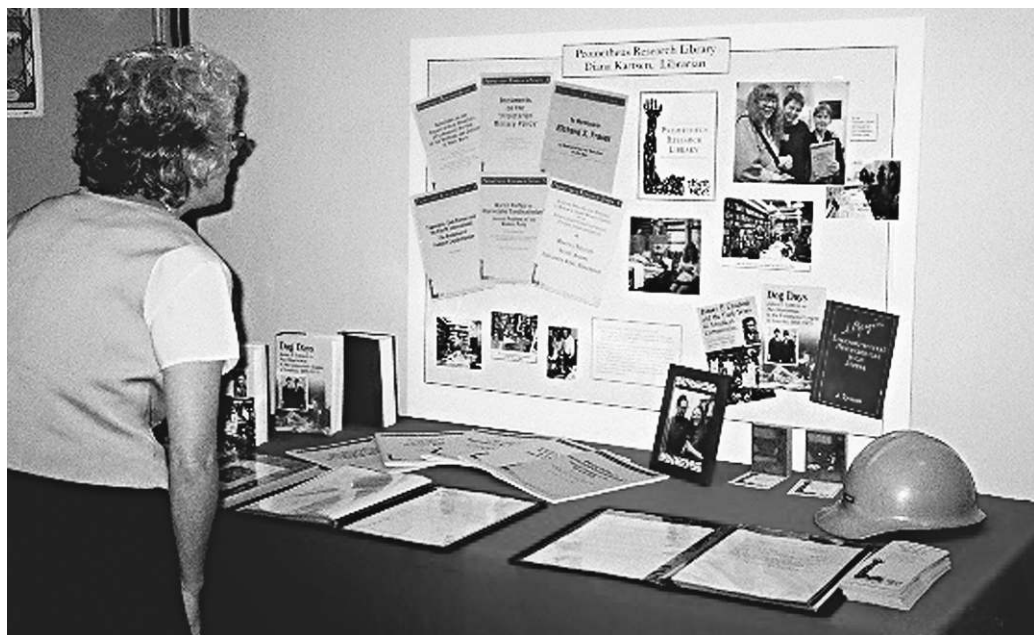
But now she *is* gone. And that is a tremendous loss to our party, the International Communist League. And it leaves a big hole in the hearts of her companion Ed, her family—sister Nancy and her two daughters Alex and "Little Di"—and her friends. But as a comrade from the Mexican section wrote in a letter to Diana at the end, "Some consolation comes from knowing that as communists our impact stretches far beyond our counted days." And today, we come not only to honor Diana but to learn from the example of her role in our party and to carry forward the fight to which she remained unwaveringly committed to the end—the fight to reforge Trotsky's Fourth International.



Kartsen Family



1948-2007



WV Photo

NYC memorial: Display prepared by PRL shows books and pamphlets produced under Diana's leadership along with hard hat given her by Maintenance comrades in appreciation of her assistance.

Diana was a party cadre of the school of James P. Cannon, who himself learned from Lenin and Trotsky, and these lessons were immediately and particularly passed on to Diana by Jim Robertson, who himself learned from Cannon. For Jim, Diana was one of his closest political collaborators and friends, and her loss is incalculable. Their collaboration began some 30 years ago as they worked together to build the Prometheus Research Library, starting from comrade Robertson's 40-year accumulated and organized collection, with Diana as Librarian and Jim as Director. It was a collaboration that would extend into many areas of party work.

In a work titled "Factional Struggle and Party Leadership," James P. Cannon succinctly summed up the Leninist conception of party leadership. And the following section, I think, is one that really captures Diana:

"A third feature of our conception of the cadre, which we work on consciously and deliberately all the time, is to cultivate among all the leading people the ability to work together; not to be individual stars; not to be wiseacres who make problems of themselves—but people who fit into a machine; work with others; recognize the merits and respect the opinions of others; recognize that there is no such thing as an unimportant person, that anybody who stands for the program and is sent into the National Committee by his branch or local has got something to give. The task of the central leaders of the party is to open the door for him, find out what he can do, and help him to train himself to do better in the future.

"The ability to work together is an essential feature of our conception of the leading cadre, and the next feature is that of a division of labor. It is not necessary for one or two wise guys to know everything and do everything. It is much better, much firmer, much surer if you have a broad selection of people, each one of whom contributes something to the decisions and does a specially selective work for which he is qualified, and coordinates his work with others."

These are the qualities that Diana Kartsen brought to our party leadership. She was not a facile pen, she was not a grand orator. She *was* an audacious military leader, but never did this translate into a perception of herself as an individual star. She always worked to build a collective, and comrades who worked with her in the many fields of party work for which she had responsibility all speak of how she would give a thorough political briefing and overview of what was going on in the party as a precondition to any assignment she was in charge of, no matter how pressing the tasks or how short the time at hand.

As the head Librarian at PRL, she keenly understood the importance of a Leninist party as the memory of the working class, meticulously assembling the documentary record of our revolutionary forebears to preserve, as Trotsky put it, the dearly bought lessons of the past in order to guide the future revolutionary struggles of the proletariat and to preserve our own revolutionary continuity going back to Lenin and Trotsky's Bolshevik Party. She brought this understanding to preserving our own documentary record in her role as Secretary of the Political Bureau, to which she was appointed in 1991, and as the head of the secretariat at many national and international gatherings of our tendency. She was extremely professional, and her superb organizational skills were rooted in the highest political consciousness.

As her companion and political collaborator, Ed Kartsen, wrote in a letter to comrades the day Diana died, "She had a clear conception of the unity of mental and physical labor, that is, of theory with practice." In her day-to-day political life she fought against the division between "thinkers" and "doers"—which is itself an ideological expression of class-divided society serving to justify the exploitation and oppression of those who "work with their hands" as some kind of lesser beings, deserv-



WV Photo

Left: Chicago gathering honors Diana at statue dedicated to Haymarket martyrs, May 13. Right: French comrades laid flowers at Wall of the Communards, Père Lachaise Cemetery in Paris, May 20.



Le Bolchévik photos

ing of their lot in life. Her work at the Library involved setting up the physical plant, carefully cataloguing, shelving, and numerous construction projects as our holdings expanded. She was also key in cohering the structures and systems necessary to pursue our work in the central party office and the International Secretariat.

Comrade Robertson made the point that Diana was not only one of the most senior, but *the most* responsible cadre of an earlier order of party leadership. As the highest expression of this capacity, he underlined her position as the Central Committee representative to the party's Control Commission—a position she held for 20 years and one which requires and carries with it the greatest moral authority in the party.

We ran into Diana and Wes, who was her companion at the time, in 1970-71 at the University of Chicago. That was a time of great radicalization and outpouring of opposition to U.S. imperialism's dirty war against the Vietnamese workers and peasants. In a recent letter Wes recalled that Diana disliked the destructive, mindless radicalism that characterized at least a wing of the New Left. That certainly rang true. Diana was a very serious person, and she was also very cultured. At the time we met her she was a graduate student in Art History whose main interest was Islamic art, to which end she was struggling to learn Arabic, which is no mean feat.

But at the same time, she was passionately opposed to the racism, to the injustice, to the poverty and the war of this capitalist society. Impelled particularly by the brutal police attacks on protesters at the 1968 Democratic Party Convention in Chicago, Wes and Diana became connected with the campus International Socialists [I.S.]. At the time, the I.S. was striking a rather left posture—a response to the more radical political temperature of the times—including selling books such as Trotsky's *The Revolution Betrayed*, his seminal work analyzing the Stalinist degeneration of the Russian Revolution. This took some chutzpah considering that this book is a complete repudiation of the International Socialists' so-called "theory" that the Soviet Union had become a new form of class society—a position which was born under the pressures of "democratic" imperialism and which was implemented on its behalf as these so-called "third campists" took the side of imperialist-inspired counterrevolution in every conflict in which the defense of the gains of October was posed.

But Diana was won to genuine Trotskyism and the fight for new Octobers, embarking on her course to becoming a professional revolutionary when she joined the Chicago chapter of our newly founded youth organization, the Revolutionary Communist Youth, in October 1971. A comrade from the time recalled seeing "this striking young woman with red flowing hair and a visible hammer and sickle pin on her jacket striding across the campus" at the University of Chicago. In 1973, Diana and Wes went to live and study in India under the political direction of the party. It was a difficult trip. But the intense experiences that she had that year in India contributed to her fight for a communist future for humanity. After her year in India, she abandoned her academic career, moved to New York and joined the party in 1974.

To get a measure of Diana, it is useful to look at the different political periods that shaped her, how the world was changing, the changing demands on the party and the strengths that she brought to bear in different politi-

cal periods. When she joined the RCY in 1971, the Spartacist League had doubled in size, winning new recruits from our hard communist interventions in the antiwar movement, the women's movement, in the fight for black liberation, in the working class and in polemical struggle against our opponents on the left. Out of this we had gained a key accretion of cadre from our fusion with the Communist Working Collective, which we had won from Maoism to Trotskyism.

A 1971 "Memorandum to the Central Committee on the Transformation of the SL" by the Political Bureau noted that "almost every aspect of struggle and motion has found us compelled to intervene, in a way qualitatively at variance with our self-designation as an *unstable sub-propaganda group*." Out of this memorandum and discussion, we launched *Workers Vanguard* in 1971. Second only to establishing a regular and frequent press, we recognized the need to systematize and expand our work in the unions. We established a communist youth organization, the RCY, organizationally independent and politically subordinate to the party, as the training ground for young apprentice communists like Diana.

Understanding the importance of forging a black cadre to the fight for socialist revolution in this deeply racist country, where capitalism is rooted in the forcible subjugation of blacks at the bottom, we saw an opening to winning the most thoughtful and dedicated of those black radicals who were questioning the program of black separatism following the split in the Black Panther Party. Throughout Diana's life in the party, the fight for black freedom was always at the forefront of her interventions. Labor and black, the two central questions of the American Revolution were, for her, key.

The Transformation Memorandum concluded by emphasizing that "in this period of many-sided expansion and growth, we must not lose sight of the necessity to maintain the SL as a centralized, highly responsible national collective." Diana would become a key part of this collective, not only nationally but internationally. From the very first issue of *Spartacist*, we recognized the importance of revolutionary regroupment through splits and fusions with leftward-moving elements from contending organizations in the workers movement as key to forging a Leninist international. In 1974, the Spartacist League/U.S. and the Spartacist League of Australia and New Zealand issued a Declaration for the Organizing of an International Trotskyist Tendency, based on our 1966 Declaration of Principles and dedicated to the rebirth of the Fourth International.

As we began to realize regroupment with splits from other tendencies internationally, particularly from Ernest Mandel's United Secretariat, Diana's work was critical to organizing an International Secretariat, setting up the systems and apparatus crucial to cohering the international Spartacist tendency. In this capacity, she was also central to the organizing of our first International Conference in 1979. In 1980, Diana was elected as a candidate member of the SL/U.S. Central Committee, and at a subsequent PB meeting she was appointed the department head of the Prometheus Research Library as well as of the International Secretariat in New York.

It was in the 1980s that Diana would demonstrate her capacity as a military leader. This was a far different *continued on page 6*



WV Photo

Diana at New York's Tamiment Library, 1977.

Diana Kartsen...

(continued from page 5)

political period than the heady days of the Vietnam anti-war movement. The winds of anti-Soviet Cold War II were blowing red hot. The rest of the left had moved sharply to the right. We stood out for our hard-edged and forthright fight to defend the gains of the October Revolution, which remained embodied in the Soviet Union and in the deformed workers states, against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution. Those who wanted to have the Pope run Poland, who took the side of the CIA-backed Islamic reaction in Afghanistan against the liberating role played by the Red Army, who wanted to keep El Salvador safe for U.S. imperialism, came after us 16 ways from Sunday. That lineup ran from the *Wall Street Journal* right down to most of the left. The left went after us with Big Lie campaigns of slander, with attempts to exclude us, calling the capitalist cops and so on. We took a lot of losses in this period of members who couldn't take the heat. But it was in this period that Diana came to the fore, as a leader in fighting against the stream.

Her abilities as a decisive and clearheaded leader of a combat party were demonstrated at the mass protests over Central America. The Sandinista government in Nicaragua and the leftist rebels in El Salvador were seen as "Soviet surrogates," and Central America was a front line in U.S. imperialism's drive to "roll back Communism." They poured millions into arming and bankrolling the sadistic contra terrorists in Nicaragua and the death squad junta in El Salvador. In the face of the advancing victories by leftist rebels in El Salvador, the reformists and rad-libs appealed for a "political solution"—that is, a deal with the blood-crazed military butchers in El Salvador, and at home looked to the Democratic Party to set a more "humane" policy for U.S. imperialism. The Spartacist League drew the class line. We fought for an Anti-Imperialist Contingent around the central demands: Military Victory to Leftist Insurgents! Defense of Cuba and the USSR Begins in El Salvador! Break with the Democrats—For Workers Action to Bring Down Reagan!

At a massive protest in Washington, D.C., on May 3, 1981, our Anti-Imperialist Contingent was 500-strong. The organizers of that protest, centrally Sam Marcy's Workers World Party and its front groups of the time, set up a line of marshals to prevent people from joining our



Kartsen Family

Diana and Ed at Montauk, Long Island, during 2005 New Year holiday.

this was getting the support of organized labor, the first coming from the predominantly black waterfront unions in the Tidewater area. Other labor support began to pour in, which set the stage for bringing out thousands of fighters from the black and working-class population of the D.C. region. On the eve of the demonstration, the D.C. cops went on a campaign to intimidate people from coming out. We were told that our mobilization would be completely cordoned off. More than 1,000 cops were out to protect the Klan that day. But some 5,000 turned out to *stop* the Klan despite the threats and intimidation. In the course of the day, the anti-Klan protesters became increasingly aware of their strength and their power. And Diana called the shots that provided key aspects of leadership.

What she demonstrated was an ability to assess the tenor of the crowd, their response to our speeches and other interventions, and from there to tactically anticipate what was needed to provide leadership. This included the ability to reverse, on site, decisions that had previously



WW Photo

Diana at 1994 SL/U.S. National Conference.

anti-imperialist rally. As we wrote at the time, the Marcyite organizers "understood that their job was to keep youth 'uncontaminated' by communism" and "ready for Teddy" (that is, Teddy Kennedy, who was then the liberal darling of the Democratic Party). Diana was not part of the designated central leadership at that demonstration, but she fought to have our forces marshaled against the Marcyite goon squad which was trying to prevent people from joining us. Unfortunately, she did not prevail. But she was given a battlefield promotion from being a candidate member of the Central Committee to being an alternate, and she won a commendation from the Political Bureau.

At a subsequent mass protest on March 27, 1982, where Diana *was* a central component of the leadership, the Marcyites were given a well-deserved lesson in workers democracy when they once again tried to seal us off with another one of their "daisy chain" goon squads. But it was at our 5,000-strong Labor/Black Mobilization to Stop the Klan in Washington, D.C., on November 27, 1982, that Diana really demonstrated the capacities of military leadership. And that is at bottom a political question, the ability to make the on-the-spot command decisions that provide revolutionary leadership and bring our program into action.

The Klan had been given the go-ahead by Reagan's White House to rally for racist terror and genocide in the nation's capital. We mobilized to stop them. Key to

been made. Understanding the determination of the anti-Klan protesters and anticipating that there was no way they were going to let the Klan march that day, she made two key decisions. One was to make sure that we got a leadership team to the top of the hill where the Klan was supposed to be assembling. The Klan didn't march that day, they didn't even put on their hoods and robes, but scurried away like sewer rats when they saw the reception they were about to receive. The other decision Diana made was to assemble our banners to lead the crowd when they learned of the Klan's retreat. And when the cops began to pull back, the crowd took to the street, jubilantly chanting, "We stopped the Klan!" The Spartacist League provided the conscious Bolshevik leadership, and it was Diana who was key to that in making the decisions on site that gave coherence and political leadership.

In August 1983 Diana was elected as a full member of the Central Committee at our Seventh National Conference. In December of that year, she was brought on to the Political Bureau, and six months later she was elected as National Secretary, paying particular attention to the often conflicting demands of the central office departments and the SL locals and to politically organizing the necessary discussion to prioritize our work. In June 1988, she was asked to give up her post as National Secretary in order to concentrate full-time on running the Library. That August we brought out the first of our *Prometheus Research Series* bulletins, the resolu-

tion of the Third Congress of the Communist International, "Guidelines on the Organizational Structure of Communist Parties, on the Methods and Content of Their Work." That was the first of six *PRS* bulletins, which you can see in the displays here today, as well as two books on the history and political struggles of James P. Cannon and the publication of Trotsky's *The Communist International After Lenin* in the original Russian.

In the mid 1990s, Diana came back to play key roles in the central party administration in a period in which we were going through a very wrenching transition of leadership. This transition was compounded by the impact on our party of the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union—a world-historic defeat for the international working class. Our difficulties in this period have been frankly assessed in our press, reflecting the internal discussions that have gone on in the struggle to maintain our revolutionary continuity in the post-Soviet period.

Diana was a key thread in that revolutionary continuity, not only, and importantly, through her work at PRL but also in helping to train a new generation. In their farewells to Diana, a number of younger women cadre wrote movingly of the impact that she had on them as a shining example of a strong Bolshevik woman leader. She of course had her failings and her weaknesses. But the fight for collective leadership is none other than the recognition that there is no such thing as 100-percent leadership. Or as Cannon put it, we are men of common clay. Our purpose in this memorial to our dear comrade Diana is not hagiography; it is to carry forward the fight to which she dedicated her life: the socialist emancipation of the workers and all the oppressed of the world, and the forging of the international revolutionary party necessary for that victory.

* * *

Susan Jarvis: I am Ed and Diana's aunt, generally known to one and all as Aunt Sue. I met Diana for the first time on December 25, 1984, when Ed brought her to Christmas dinner. Thank you, Ed, for bringing Diana into our life. That was the day they told us they were planning to be married. After that Christmas we spent 22 Thanksgivings and 22 Christmases together. Diana always said to me, "You love to cook, we love to eat. It's a perfect division of labor."

When I thought about what I wanted to say today, I realized how many happy memories I have of the times we shared together. I remember celebrating their marriage with dinner at Tavern on the Green and a carriage ride through Central Park. I have been looking through the boxes of photographs I have accumulated over the years: pictures of country trips, of outdoor concerts, of picnics, of museum visits, and of sitting and talking endlessly with glasses of wine at our elbows.

We also shared the grief when Vincent [Susan's husband] died, and it was Ed and Diana who supported me through that sad time. We loved Diana deeply from the day Ed brought her to us. We loved her for her kindness, for her compassion, her morality, her belief in human potential, her grace, her humor—she could always make us laugh—and perhaps most of all her intelligence.

We shared a love of the music of Bach, of Chinese landscape painting, of Asian landscapes, of detective stories. And above all we had a love of history. In the weeks before she died, when she could no longer hold a book in her hands, I was reading to her a book about Lincoln and the Gettysburg Address. And it's very appropriate to me that the music that was playing when we came into the room was from *Gettysburg*. Her intellect, her love of knowledge—these were the things that sustained her to the very end of her life.

I respected and admired her belief in the working class and the possibility of a socialist future for the world. Her greatest devotion was to her party and to Ed and, of course, the two can't be separated in her life. I don't believe in God or religion, but according to the Jewish tradition, which is my tradition, Diana will be immortal. She will live forever in the memory of those who knew her and loved her.

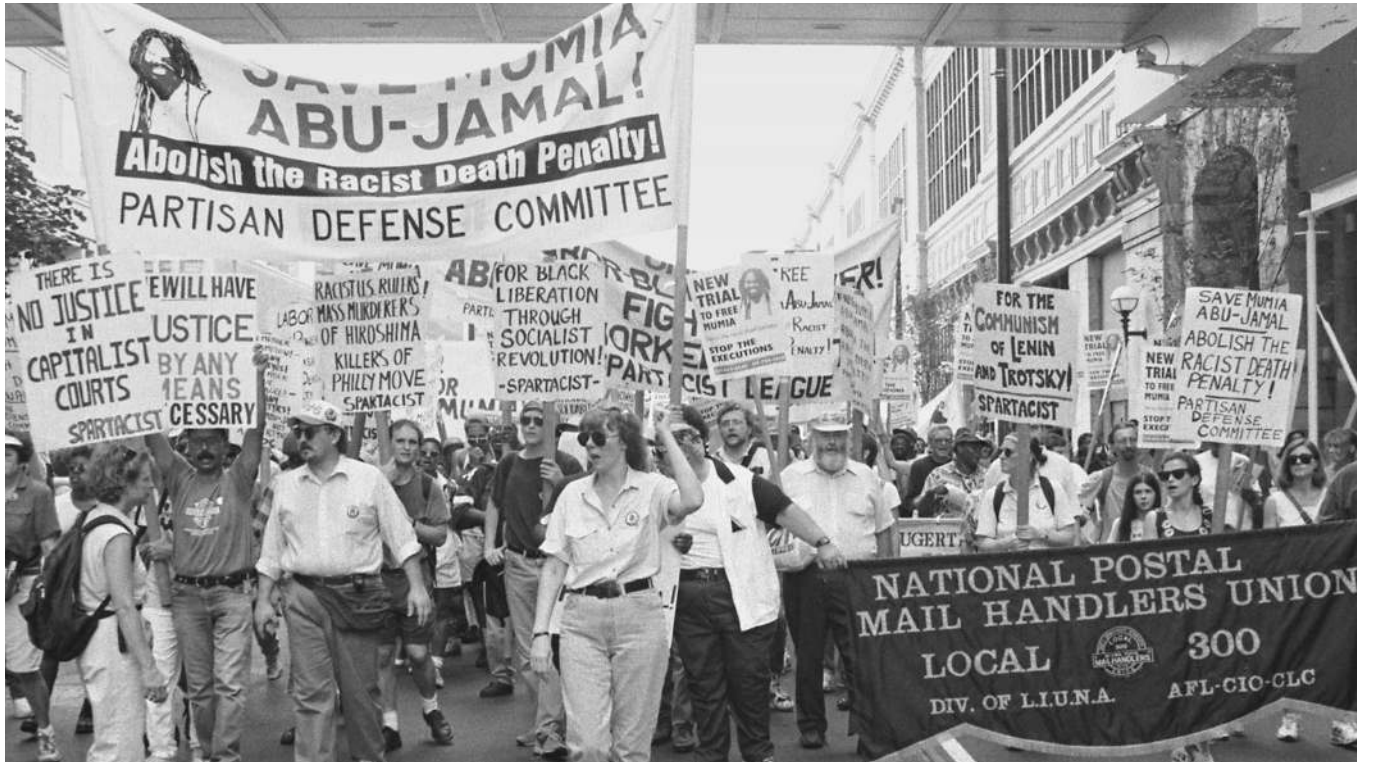
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Ed Kartsen: I was honored by the opportunity of knowing and loving Diana. She had the capacity to put someone as socially awkward as me at rest and relaxed immediately. And that's what she did the first time I met her at the Prometheus Research Library. Her openness, her comradely attitude, her friendliness were the things that first attracted me to her. Our early discussions on Marxist literature eventually blossomed over time into discussions encompassing Marxist theory, dialectical materialism, and all the natural sciences. We married in 1985.

Our personal struggles developed into a relationship of deep love, respect and theoretical depth. Diana's impact was wide-ranging as you can see from the speakers today, and I was fortunate enough to have been



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Above: Diana at 3 May 1981 El Salvador protest in Washington, D.C. Right: Diana leading our contingent at demonstration for Mumia Abu-Jamal in Philadelphia, 12 August 1995.

enriched by the experience of having ongoing and deep theoretical discussions with Diana.

One of the things I learned about her was her capacity to categorize information, an essential skill for a librarian. She displayed a great capacity for attention to detail. She had a profound understanding of the organization of systems of information. And this turned out to be the organization of information not only in a literary sense but in the military and in the scientific. In the maintenance and construction projects you heard about, she truly got a concrete understanding of the sense of the unity of physical and mental labor.

She well understood the A of the ABCs of dialectics, “A” being the necessity of objective information, exhaustive knowledge based on the understanding of things in their development and their transformation through contradictions. She understood this to be the foundation for making scientific judgments in her party work. She learned a great deal of this in the Prometheus Research Library work, under the direction of comrade Jim Robertson.

She used her ability to organize *objective* information on a battlefield and her ability to organize the *subjective* accumulated knowledge of the Marxist movement in her library work. This work contributed, as you can see from the PRL display, to the preservation of the Marxist literary history of our movement, including the James P. Cannon writings of the early years of American Communism, as well as the early conflict between Cannon and Shachtman in the CLA, 1931-1933, the *Dog Days*. This work provided Diana with the capacity to understand many of the components of dialectics. But even before she was a communist, she studied art history at the University of Chicago. In her studies she eventually comprehended the evolution of art forms. And she once told me that in studying the forms of art from one historic period to the next, she came to an understanding of the transformation of quantitative change into qualitative change.

She started out as a liberal before joining the communist movement. But she developed into a communist who stood with iron firmness against the political censorship of liberal reformism in the service of imperialism (as you heard comrade Jane talk about here today). She had a passionate hatred of injustice and racism as a young woman, and this converted her into a dedicated communist in the struggle for revolutionary integration.

She had a revolutionary fire in her belly and she was a fighter to the last. She radiated strength, determination, competence, discipline, accountability, love, intelligence, objectivity—what can be summed up as the high-

est level of comradeship. She expressed everything positive in leadership qualities. She knew the primary importance of the highest level of political consciousness as a guide to the highest quality of organizational work, the essence of Bolshevism. The workers movement must never forget her contributions.

We were all lucky to have known her as long as we did, and her memory will live in the work we do to secure the construction of an egalitarian socialist society across the entire globe.

* * *

Mindy Gianninoto: I feel when your best friend and comrade dies you need to stand up and pay tribute. You make friends over years through the good times and hard times, but mainly the hard times. And Diana was always for me, and she was always there for me. If it wasn’t for her and other people in this party I might not be here. I would have walked through fire for her. I don’t know when we first became friends, maybe some 30 years ago. In those days we spent hours at the office or at the Library doing politics together, hanging out together, drinking together and so on. We all loved doing politics together and we really enjoyed each other’s comradeship and friendship.

I thought we would be sitting on bar stools until at least the age of 70. You know, we were very different people. I can’t tell you how many world problems and party problems we tried to solve and how we just sat around and gossiped. She would always say to me: Mindy, you’re never one to mince words. Diana was a WASP, very proper, very private. If Diana said she was “annoyed,” you knew she was furious.

She always gave me perspective. I’m the kind of person that you have to agree with me, now. That’s it. But Diana was very understated. She would tell you what she thought, and I knew that if I didn’t agree with her I had to go home and think about it. And I would go home and think about it and what she said, and I realized she was usually right.

But where we were very different people, given our respective upbringings, politically we were very similar in respect to how we viewed the work. We both felt it important that the comrades in your department were politically informed and given reports to read and given verbal reports of various meetings, in order that those comrades could carry out their political assignments. And the well-being of those comrades was your responsibility as well. But none of this is unusual. This is how we were trained, and we were trained by Jim, like other people in this room. I read *Prometheus Research Series*

No. 6 [*Selected Speeches and Writings in Honor of Three Women Leaders of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)*—Martha Phillips, Susan Adams, Elizabeth King Robertson] in preparation for this meeting. And it is very striking to me how a generation of us came of age during the ’60s, joined the party and was politically trained by Jim.

Diana got her battlefield promotion not just for the fight to reverse the daisy chain but for the report that was called into the center. And I made that call with her report. That battlefield promotion was for defending the party! I was her “runner” on November 27, 1982, and she was formidable. I can still see it; it’s like in slow motion: every person in charge giving her reports—in one ear, right out of her mouth, directive after directive without even thinking. And the decision to take that hill. Because the reports coming in were that the thousands of people that came out to our call to stop the Klan were now on the hill. The rumor was the Klan was up on Capitol Hill, and the masses spontaneously took down the fences and poured into the streets. Diana understood that the party needed to assert our leadership and made that decision to take the hill.

I want to give mention to the “ad hoc committee to save Diana Kartsen.” When Diana was finally diagnosed with ALS, in January of 2005, Gayle, Karen, Richard and myself started making plans to help Diana. Because we loved her. And then Rachel stepped in and said: No, this is party business, and she worked out a division of labor.

A couple of months before Diana died, I was over there. She had been unable to talk for quite some time; she had her bi-pap (a breathing machine) on that she pretty much used 24 hours a day. She had a communication device that she could use with her knuckle, which was the only thing that worked, really, anymore. She tapped in, “How much money do you think we spent?” and I said, “Where?” And she said, “In the bars.” And I said, “Di, probably enough to buy a condo, but I wouldn’t trade it in for the world.” I will always miss her.

* * *

Jim Robertson: I did not prepare any notes, but of course since Diana died, I have thought a great deal about her and her political and organizational and personal relations. She was a representative of an old and now well past order in the administration of the Spartacist League, and she was far from our worst representative. She was quite a senior comrade.

A great deal has been mentioned about her capacity to lead in our picket lines and demonstrations under sometimes very difficult conditions. And we were generally successful in our endeavors under her direction and never came to any disasters with the police or somebody killing our members—which is quite an achievement in a second half of the 20th century in North America.

The post which most shows the trust that the organization had in her was that she was the representative from the SL/U.S. Central Committee to its Central Control Commission. That is a position of grave responsibility, and she discharged it very well. After the administration of the organization changed, she simply moved easily into further professionalizing the work of Prometheus Research Library, and until she became incapacitated with this miserable, debilitating and ultimately fatal illness, she was attending library school to get further credentials to pursue the work of Prometheus Research Library. For me personally, given her qualities, she functioned as kind of a combination for a number of decades of both my surrogate mother and my conscience. ■



Mindy Gianninoto

Diana with Mindy, Gayle and Karen at Mindy’s wedding, November 2004.

Young Spartacus

SFSU Students Walk Out Against Fee Hikes

On April 26, a multiracial crowd of 1,000 San Francisco State University (SFSU) students walked out in protest of increasing student fees and cuts in services. Students assembled at Malcolm X Plaza, marched through several buildings and then briefly occupied the Administration building. Fees for students in the Cal State University system have gone up a staggering 92 percent since 2002 and there have been major cuts in classes and staff. The gutting of affirmative action and rollbacks of financial aid and educational outreach programs are part of the ruling class' racist purge of universities nationwide.

The SFSU walkout was organized by members of the student government and student interns of the California Faculty Association (CFA), which represents over half of the almost 1,800 faculty at SFSU and had passed a resolution against the increase in student fees. The walkout's organizers wore red T-shirts sporting the Students for a Democratic Society fist and the words "This is what an activist looks like." But these activists sought to steer angry students into the dead end of reliance on so-called friends in the state capitol, telling people to go to Sacramento on May 9 for the annual Lobby Day. While the Democrats posture as the "friends" of working people and the oppressed, they are a party of the capitalist ruling class. Historically the Democrats have been the preferred party to enforce racist capitalist austerity, strengthen the repressive powers of the state, and wage bloody imperialist war.

The austerity measures that sparked the student protest mean an attack on campus workers and teachers, who are natural allies in the students' struggle. Importantly, a representative from the campus janitors union attended the walkout, as did a number of professors and counselors. In March, after two years without a contract, the CFA membership voted overwhelmingly to strike for the first time in its history. A last-minute agreement between the union and the Cal State University Board of Trustees resulted in a settlement with a 20.7 percent increase in wages over four years.

The Spartacus Youth Club joined the walkout and occupation, arguing for students fighting against fee hikes to link their struggle to the social power of the working class. We fight for free, quality, integrated education for all as part of the struggle against capitalism, which means war, poverty and oppression for millions around the world. We carried signs calling for student/labor mobilizations against tuition hikes, for freeing black death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, against the U.S. occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq, and for breaking with the Democrats and forging a revolutionary workers party. In response to the organizers' chants of "What do we want? Less fees!" we chanted, "No fees!" and many students joined in.

The organizers of the walkout, in an effort to avoid a confrontation with the administration, tried to prevent the crowd from entering the Administration building. But after a few minutes of standing outside the building chanting "The students, united, will never be divided!", "Shame on you!" (to the administration) and "Fewer classes, higher fees—the CSU is run by thieves!", students began



Spartacus Youth Club at April 26 walkout.

Young Spartacus

— SYC Says — “Free, Quality Education! Abolish the Administration!”

to occupy the building. The organizers *worked with the cops* to prevent people from entering the fifth floor, where SFSU president Robert Corrigan's office is. We chanted, "Cops off campus!" A couple of self-proclaimed anarchists joined in. But when one of the organizers told them to stop, they meekly obeyed! We also chanted, "Free, quality education! Abolish the administration!", which was picked up by many of the protesters. The organizers, dismayed, drowned us out with chants of "What do we want? Lower fees! When do we want it? Now!"

Members of the crowd defended the SYC's right to put forward our Marxist program at an open mic inside the Administration building, including against members of the International Socialist Organization (ISO) and Students Against War, who tried to shout our speaker down when he criticized their politics. Predictably, the ISO and Socialist Action (SA) ditched their usual Sunday speechifying about socialism in order to impress the liberals as "realistic" advisers to the world's bloodiest ruling class on how to reform capitalism. The ISO speaker called the attacks on public education a problem of "government priorities" and SA's spokesman simply bemoaned that the government is spending billions on war and prisons instead of schools. Despite what SA and the ISO would have you believe, imperialist war and racist oppression are inherent to the capitalist order. Nothing short of international socialist revolution, which is what we fight for, will put an end to them.

The College Republicans posted a video of the walkout on YouTube in an attempt to set protesters up for administration and cop reprisals. These junior McCarthyites were in hysterics about supposed violations of the administration's guidelines for student organizations—including "subversive" acts like standing in doorways and carrying posters on poles. A special section of the video entitled "The March Was About More Than Fee Hikes" is devoted to SYC signs, which were indeed about more than fee hikes. But for all the right-wingers' attempts to paint the demo bright red, the SYCers were the only reds around. We say: No reprisals against the student demonstrators!

We print below the speech given by SYC comrade Martin Burk, edited for publication.

* * *

Down with the fee hikes! Free, quality education for all! Down with the racist purge of the universities—for open admissions and no tuition!

The attacks on education today are a part of the ruling class' drive to wipe out the gains that were won through hard-fought struggle by the working class and the oppressed. Education under capitalism is increasingly out of reach for working-class, poor and minority youth as tuition goes up, affirmative action is gutted, programs are cut and teachers are laid off.

As Marxists, we know that free, quality education will be the right of all only when this decaying, profit-driven capital-

ist order is overthrown by victorious socialist revolution around the globe. While the ruling class purges the universities of blacks and minorities, it also bolsters its racist "war on terror" on the campuses. The campus administration is not neutral, but acts as the enforcers of the "war on terror" here, going after Near Eastern and leftist students and stifling dissent, like with the ban on the Edward Said mural [see "Down With Ban on Edward Said Mural!", WV No. 881, 24 November 2006].

None of these attacks are simply a product of one belligerent, right-wing president. Both the Republicans and the Democrats are parties of capitalist exploitation and imperialist war. Many students see the Democrats as allies of the oppressed, but the Democratic Party are representatives of this rapacious bloody system. The imperialist system cannot be reformed. Yet so-called socialists like the International Socialist Organization and Speak Out Now present war as simply a policy that can be pressured out of existence. You call for "Money for jobs and schools, not wars." It is utterly utopian to think that this capitalist state can be made to change its interests and serve the oppressed. It's the same capitalist state that left blacks and poor to die in New Orleans, that slaughters the people of Iraq, that continuously attacks workers' livelihoods, taking away health care and pensions, that further erodes women's abortion rights, and that wants to kill Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Student actions alone cannot put an end to the cutbacks and attacks on education. Teachers in Hayward have been on strike for the past few weeks fighting for a wage increase so they can survive! We need the strength and power of the multiracial organized working class. The campus administrations should be abolished. Those who work, study and teach at the universities should run them—for worker/student/teacher control of the universities! We call for open admissions and a state-paid living stipend for all students. We also call for cops and military recruiters off campus! For full citizenship rights for immigrants! Students must ally with labor in the struggle for free, quality education, and fight for the future of humanity through workers revolution. ■

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NEW YORK CITY

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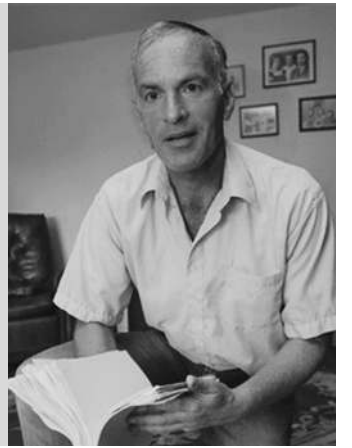
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Opponent of Zionist Terror Denied Tenure Protest DePaul University Attack on Norman Finkelstein!



Cavalier Daily

On June 8, the college dean and the Board on Promotion and Tenure at Chicago's DePaul University denied tenure to assistant professor Norman Finkelstein, a longtime opponent of Zionist terror. The decision overturned a vote by the Political Science department and personnel committee of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences supporting his tenure. Finkelstein stands to lose his job altogether at the Catholic university after a one-year "grace period." Mehrene Larudee, an assistant professor who was slated to head the International Studies Program and an advocate for Finkelstein, was also denied tenure and likewise stands to lose her job. The Chicago Spartacus Youth Club has joined continuing protests in support of Finkelstein and Larudee.

Finkelstein has long been targeted by Zionists because he is a Jewish historian, the son of Holocaust survivors, who defends Palestinian rights. He has a long history of exposing Israeli atrocities and apologists for them, not least rabid Zionist Harvard Law professor Alan Dershowitz, whom Finkelstein charges "played the leading role in creating an atmosphere of hysteria" at DePaul (*Harvard Crimson*, 17 June). According to the *Chronicle of Higher Education* (5 April), in fall 2006 Dershowitz "sent members of DePaul's law and political-science faculties what he described as 'a dossier of Norman Finkelstein's most egregious academic sins'." As Finkelstein put it, "I met the standards of tenure DePaul required, but it wasn't enough to overcome the political opposition to my speaking out on the Israel-Palestine conflict" (London *Guardian*, 11 June).

Finkelstein, who authored the highly controversial 2000 book, *The Holocaust Industry*, has written detailed refutations

of shoddy history and apologies for Zionism, like Joan Peters' *From Time Immemorial* (which claimed Palestine was basically empty land before 1948). His 1998 essay, *A Nation on Trial*, was a powerful polemic against Daniel Goldhagen's *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust*, which alibied the German bourgeoisie's responsibility for the Nazi Holocaust by claiming that the entire German people were "guilty" (see "The Holocaust, 'Collective Guilt' and German Imperialism," *WV* Nos. 697, 698 and 699, 25 September, 9 October and 23 October 1998).

In recent years, Finkelstein has made a point of exposing Alan Dershowitz's churning mass of justifications for Israeli state terror. In 2005 he wrote *Beyond Chutzpah: On the Misuse of Anti-Semitism and the Abuse of History*, a refutation of Dershowitz's 2003 screed *The Case for Israel*, which—in the midst of renewed and massive state terror against the Palestinians—trumpeted Israel's "human rights" record! The *Nation* magazine (11 July 2005) reported that Dershowitz intervened heavily in the process of publication of Finkelstein's book, appealing to California governor Schwarzenegger. The governor's legal affairs secretary responded, "You have asked for the Governor's assistance in preventing the publication of this book" and went on to say that Schwarzenegger was "not inclined" to intervene because of the "clear, academic freedom issue it presents."

Witchhunting those who oppose the crimes of U.S. imperialism and protest Israel's genocidal assaults against the Palestinian people is a major industry these days in academia. Such campaigns have included the likes of all-purpose reactionaries Ann Coulter and David

Horowitz. In 2001, Horowitz even ran a grotesque ad in 50 campus newspapers alibiing slavery and spitting on the gains of black struggle (see "Racism and Witchhunts on Campus," *WV* No. 756, 13 April 2001).

More recently, Horowitz has been on the offensive against Jewish Near East historian Joel Beinin, outrageously claiming that Beinin "supported terrorism" because of his defense of Palestinian national rights. Horowitz provocatively slapped Beinin's photo—as well as that of leftist attorney Lynne Stewart and Palestinian engineer Sami al-Arian, victims of government "war on terror" witchhunts, and Rachel Corrie, a pro-Palestinian rights activist killed by an Israeli bulldozer in 2003—on the cover of his 2006 diatribe, *Campus Support for Terrorism*. Horowitz has also targeted Ward Churchill, a longtime activist on behalf of Native Americans and co-author of *The COINTELPRO Papers*, who is threatened with being fired by the University of Colorado because of his political views, including opposition to the Iraq and Afghanistan wars.

Another prominent target of this witchhunt is pro-Palestinian rights Columbia University professor Joseph Massad. In a visit to the campus in February 2005, Dershowitz urged students to cooperate with the committee "investigating" lying allegations against Massad and the Middle East and Asian Languages and Cultures (MEALAC) department and denounced critics of Israel, claiming that they "encourage the terrorists." In his speech, he also defended "regulated" torture (*Columbia Daily Spectator*, 8 February 2005). Dershowitz had earlier told CNN (4 March 2003) that what he means by this is something like "a sterilized

needle underneath the nail, which would violate the Geneva Accords, but you know, countries all over the world violate the Geneva Accords."

The Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Clubs defend Finkelstein, Larudee, Massad and all those victimized by the right-wing witchhunts on the campuses, despite whatever political differences we have with their views. Finkelstein and Larudee should get tenure. However, contrary to the myth of the university "ivory tower," tenure is essentially a tool to punish or reward the bourgeois administration's allies, an avenue to purge the campuses of those who challenge current ruling-class policy. We revolutionary Marxists are for nationalizing all the private universities, for free, quality education for all, and for union organization of teachers and campus workers. The campus administrations should be abolished—for student/worker/teacher control!

In the case of Finkelstein, like those of Massad and Beinin, what is key to defeating the witchhunt is forthrightly taking up the defense of the Palestinians. Against the Zionists and all variants of Arab nationalism and religious fundamentalism, we emphasize that a just solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, where two peoples lay claim to the same small piece of land, is not possible under capitalism (see article, page 1). Our perspective is that of joint class struggle of Hebrew-speaking and Palestinian Arab workers, connected to working-class struggle throughout the region. We fight for the establishment of a socialist federation of the Near East—the only way to guarantee the national rights of the region's myriad peoples. Defend Norman Finkelstein and Mehrene Larudee! Down with the campus witchhunts! ■

Segregation...

(continued from page 1)

as our revolutionary Trotskyist forebears noted in the journal *Fourth International* (January 1942): "The original constitution of the United States, drafted by the representatives of Southern slave-owners and Northern capitalists, recognized the institution of chattel slavery as one of the 'inalienable rights' of American citizens." They also pointed out: "Written constitutions are merely juridical expressions of class relations which have been established as a result of intense struggle in society."

It took the Civil War to smash the Southern slave system. And it took the massive civil rights struggles of the 1950s and '60s to beat down the system of Jim Crow segregation that took hold in the late 19th century after the defeat of Reconstruction. But from integrated schools to abortion rights for women, such reforms are *always* reversible as long as power is in the hands of the capitalist exploiters. The latest Court decision gives the lie to the liberal myth that social equality can be achieved through piecemeal, incremental reforms. The whole system of U.S. capitalism in which black oppression is embedded must be torn up by the roots through socialist revolution.

The Supreme Court is on an aggressive

campaign to roll back the gains of past struggles. Its April 18 ruling upholding a law criminalizing certain late-term abortion procedures further trampled on women's already severely diminished right to abortion. The Justice Department, meanwhile, has been dumping cases of racist police brutality and of blacks being denied voting rights, while promoting the "rights" of religious outfits to further their incursions into the public schools.

Against the plethora of reactionary court decisions, liberal spokesmen are beating the drums for the Democrats—the *other* party of racist capitalism and imperialist war—to take Bush's place in the White House. During one of their TV debates, Democratic presidential hopefuls all bemoaned the Supreme Court ruling that had come down that day. But from the anti-busing president Jimmy Carter to Bill "end welfare as we know it" Clinton, the Democrats have themselves helped carry out the onslaught against black rights and the devastation of the ghettos, aided by black Democratic Party mayors. Jesse Jackson intervened in Norfolk, Virginia, in the early 1980s to *demobilize* black workers marching for busing.

It was the liberal strategy of reliance on the Democrats, the federal government and the courts that brought the fight for black freedom to a dead end in the 1960s. When the civil rights struggles came to the Northern ghettos, they ran

into the solid core of racist American capitalism: segregated, dilapidated housing and schools, rampant cop brutality, entrenched unemployment. In the early to mid 1970s, the fight for school busing was a front line in the fight for elementary democratic rights for black people. A referendum on racism was posed in Boston and Louisville as anti-busing forces mobilized to kill school integration.

The Spartacist League intervened heavily in Boston, calling to defend school busing and extend it to the lily-white, wealthier suburbs. We called for quality, racially integrated housing and free universal education. While the NAACP and such craven reformists as the Socialist Workers Party called for federal troops to Boston, we fought for labor-black defense guards to stop racist attacks and protect black schoolchildren. As the racist mobs rampaged on the streets, the liberals in Congress caved in. The defeat of busing in Boston set the stage for further attacks against black people and for rolling back social gains more broadly.

Today, in many parts of the country black schoolchildren are more segregated than any time in the last four decades. Inner-city schools are mere holding pens for black and Latino youth, to whom the capitalist rulers offer menial jobs, at best, or service as cannon fodder for their imperialist military ventures. More than 50 years after the *Brown* decision, in 90-

percent black Detroit over 75 percent of students drop out of high school, and the black youth unemployment rate is 70 percent. In New York City, in the shadow of Wall Street opulence, almost half of black men are unemployed. Of the more than two million entombed in the U.S. prison system, well over half are black or Latino.

This situation cries out for proletarian struggle in defense of black rights, linking the anger of the ghettos to the *social power* of the labor movement, where black workers play a crucial role. Our strategy of *revolutionary integrationism* is counterposed both to the liberal integrationist notion that blacks can achieve social equality within the confines of the capitalist profit system and to black nationalism, which accepts the racial divide in this society and despairs of multiracial class struggle. This despair is fed by the pro-capitalist labor tops, whose policies tie workers to the exploiters' political parties. Labor needs a new leadership, one based on a program of class struggle. Ultimately, social conditions cannot be fundamentally altered short of the overthrow of the racist capitalist system and the construction of an egalitarian socialist society. The Spartacist League is committed to the fight to build a multiracial revolutionary workers party that can lead all the exploited and the oppressed in the struggle to sweep away this decaying capitalist system. ■



The Suffragettes, the Russian Revolution and Women's Liberation

We print below an edited and expanded version of a presentation given by comrade Julia Emery of the Spartacist League/Britain at a dayschool in London on 15 April 2006. It was first printed in the *SL/B newspaper*, Workers Hammer No. 195 (Summer 2006).

For many activists around the world, the British Suffragette movement represents one of the high points of women's struggles, bringing women out on the streets in large numbers for militant and even heroic actions in support of the right of women to vote. Today, those who want to fight for women's liberation would do well to study the lessons of the fight for women's suffrage in the early 20th century. The story of the suffrage movement is the story of a movement which split into two camps—feminist and revolutionary socialist—in the face of social crises, centrally the wave of class struggle in Britain known as the “great unrest,” followed by World War I and the Russian Revolution. Before I talk about the Suffragette movement, I want to say a word about our attitude to the fight for women's liberation.

We differ from feminists in that they consider the main division in society to be that between men and women. For us Marxists the fundamental division in society is the class division. Under capitalism the division is between the bourgeoisie, owners of the means of production, and the working class who sell their labour power. Winning liberation for women requires a workers socialist revolution to overturn capitalist property relations. While we fight to defend every gain won from the ruling class through hard struggle, our perspective is to build a revolutionary workers party that champions the interests of all the oppressed based on the understanding that the entire capitalist system must go and workers states must be established internationally. Only the advance to a socialist society will liberate women from their oppression and lay the basis for full integration and equality for women in society.

As Marxists we recognise that the special oppression of women is rooted in the institution of the family. Friedrich Engels in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* (1884) traced the origin of the institution of the family and the state to the division of society into classes. When human society developed the capacity to produce a social surplus beyond what is needed for basic subsistence, a ruling class was able to form, based on private appropriation of that surplus. With the emergence of private property the family became the necessary instrument to ensure that property would be inherited by the true biological heir, requiring women's sexual monogamy and social subordination. Engels called this the “world historical defeat of the female sex.” Under capitalism the family serves as the instrument for raising the next generation of wage slaves and for inculcating bourgeois moral values, training youth to obey authority and to accept the social order.

The proletariat alone has the potential power to overthrow the system of capitalism, because of its organisation and its role in production. Women's participation

**Sylvia Pankhurst
addressing
a crowd in
East London,
where she
worked among
proletarian
women.**



Spartacist League/Britain Educational

in the proletariat gives them the social power to fight alongside their male co-workers for revolutionary change in society. In a socialist society the institution of the family as we know it will be replaced and household labour will be performed by collective institutions. The emancipation of women is the task of the working class as a whole and, to this end, we intervene into the working class and social struggle with our programme, fighting for women's liberation through socialist revolution. Our press regularly publishes articles under *Women and Revolution* mastheads in our quadrilingual journal *Spartacist* and also in the press of ICL sections. I recommend comrades read the early *Women and Revolution* articles we wrote about the Pankhursts, who were prominent leaders of the Suffragette movement (“The Pankhursts: Suffrage and Socialism,” in *Women and Revolution* No.

12, Summer 1976 and “Sylvia Pankhurst and the Workers Movement,” in *Women and Revolution* No. 17, Summer 1978).

British Capitalism and Women's Oppression

At the beginning of the 20th century, it was still relatively uncommon for women to continue in paid employment after marriage. A woman once married was considered the property of her husband and her primary role was to look after the household and raise children. The origins of the Suffragette movement lay in the Independent Labour Party (ILP) which was founded in 1893. The ILP was instrumental in the formation of the Labour Representation Committee and affiliated to the Labour Party when it was formed in 1906. The Labour Party was what Lenin termed a bourgeois workers party, having a pro-capitalist programme and leader-

ship but a mass working-class base. Emmeline Pankhurst and her husband Dr. Richard Marsden Pankhurst joined the ILP in 1894. The Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) was formed in October 1903 by Emmeline Pankhurst and other ILP women as a male-exclusionist group to campaign on the single issue of women's right to vote “on the same terms as that agreed or may be accorded to men.” Thus it upheld the class bias of the Third Reform Act of 1884 which contained a property qualification, leaving roughly a third of men, predominantly from the working class, disenfranchised.

The WSPU engaged in a crescendo of protests, ranging from marches, speeches and breaking windows to arson and martyrdom. Their members suffered constant police harassment, beating, imprisonment, brutal force-feeding and even death in the fight for parliamentary reform that would allow women the elementary right to vote. The WSPU broke with the ILP in 1907 when Emmeline and her daughter Christabel insisted that WSPU members could not support any other party until women had won the vote. In particular, they were keen to win the support of rich conservative and upper-class women. This class prejudice meant that WSPU members were prohibited from campaigning for the ILP, which mobilised manual labourers and which many in the WSPU had actually worked to build. Sylvia Pankhurst, also the daughter of Emmeline, in 1912 founded the East London Federation of Suffragettes, which was affiliated with the WSPU but based on the working-class constituency of East London. It was founded in the context of the “great unrest” from 1910 to 1914, a period marked by major industrial struggles including by miners, railwaymen and other transport workers. This period also saw protests for women's suffrage as well as agitation for Home Rule in Ireland which was then under British rule.

In Britain, trade-union membership had increased threefold since the 1889 dockers strike while wages had decreased by 10 per cent between 1910 and 1912. The capitalists tried to maintain their profit rates by decreasing wages, provoking massive outbursts of class struggle. It's very common among reformists on the left to argue that the history of the Suffragettes, and particularly of Sylvia Pankhurst, shows that feminism and socialism are very closely intertwined. A leading exponent of this view during the 1970s was Sheila Rowbotham of the International Socialists, precursor to the [British] Socialist Workers Party (SWP). Rowbotham's book *Hidden from History* (1973) argues that “there was a close connection between feminism and socialism in the early years of this [20th] century, and the divorce between the two was long, painful and protracted.” Three decades later the SWP's Paul Foot wrote that “the division among many WSPU supporters can be exaggerated. In many cases, support for the WSPU overlapped with a growing conversion to socialist organisation” (*The Vote*, 2005).

In fact, nothing could be further from the truth: the Suffragette movement con-



British suffragettes wearing prison clothing on release from prison, 1908.

Museum of London

firms that the ideology and social programme of feminism is counterposed to the perspective of socialist revolution. Both may have seemed compatible at the beginning of the 20th century, when there was relatively little social struggle. But the sharpening of class antagonisms and the outbreak of imperialist war, followed by the Russian October Revolution in 1917, exploded this myth and forced all those fighters for women's liberation to choose: feminism or the programme of socialist revolution. The impact of these tumultuous events was reflected in the Pankhurst family and Sylvia was won to communism as a result of the October Revolution.

The polarisation within the Suffragettes over whether to take the side of the working class was evident in 1912 when troops were sent to break a strike in London docks, in which the strike leaders had been jailed for calling on troops not to shoot the workers. In the WSPU's paper *Votes for Women* Christabel Pankhurst attacked the right of workers to strike and said, "We would ask the Government if they propose to make the organisation of strikes punishable by law." The WSPU protested that "this offence was more serious than any committed by the Suffragettes and should have been more seriously punished." In contrast Sylvia Pankhurst's East London Federation displayed increasing sympathy towards the workers movement.

In 1913 the working class of Dublin, led by socialist leaders James Connolly and Jim Larkin, were locked out by the Irish bourgeoisie in an attempt to smash the transport union. Sylvia Pankhurst's solidarity with the embattled workers in Ireland caused a split in the Suffragettes. On 1 November 1913 she spoke on the platform at a meeting in London's Albert Hall, alongside left-wing ILP representative George Lansbury and James Connolly. Connolly and Larkin campaigned for concrete acts of solidarity by the unions in Britain, as opposed to simply providing money and fine speeches, but their demands were rejected by the social-chauvinist Labour and trade-union leaders in Britain and the Dublin workers were defeated. As a consequence of Sylvia Pankhurst's appearance at this meeting she was immediately summoned to the WSPU headquarters in exile in Paris and told by Christabel that the East London Federation must become a separate organisation at once.

The existing legislation excluded manual workers—who were the base of the Labour Party—from voting and Christabel Pankhurst shared the British ruling class's contempt for manual workers and didn't want any taint of association with Lansbury, who campaigned not just for votes for women householders but for all men and women. Christabel considered the East London Federation's working-class base a liability and said that working women were "the weakest portion of the sex," adding: "Surely it is a mistake to use the weakest for the struggle" (quoted in *The Suffragette Movement* by Sylvia Pankhurst, 1931). Therefore in March 1914, the East London Federation began publishing its own newspaper called *Woman's Dreadnought*. At the time Sylvia Pankhurst was opposed to the split. Despite her misgivings about some of the WSPU's tactics, particularly arson, what distinguished the East London Federation from the WSPU was its class composition and sympathy, but its programme was not substantially different. Sylvia had in reality created a proletarian auxiliary to a bourgeois feminist movement.

Feminism Turns to Jingoism

However, things changed very fast with the outbreak of World War I. Mary Davis, who wrote a biography of Sylvia Pankhurst, said that "the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 propelled the WSPU away from feminism in the direction of patriotism" (*Sylvia Pankhurst*, 1999). This is not the case. Feminism is perfectly compatible with patriotism. Because feminists see the fundamental division in society as being between men and women,

they seek to build a movement to fight for a better position for women within the existing capitalist order. It therefore follows logically that when that order is threatened, feminists loyal to bourgeois society will mobilise to defend it.

When World War I broke out, Emmeline and Christabel Pankhurst immediately suspended all activities of the WSPU and called on members to serve "their" country. Feminists in other belligerent countries lined up in the same way with their "own" bourgeoisies. The WSPU changed the name of its paper from *Suffragette* to *Britannia* and it bore a dedication, "for King, for Country, for Freedom." It also took to the streets to hand out "white feathers of cowardice" to any able-bodied men found on the streets. The WSPU actively called for national service for women and conscription for men even before the government introduced it in 1916. This was not the first time these feminists took a clear side with the bourgeoisie: in 1915, they toured areas of great industrial militancy, particularly in the north of England and the

for a political split with social democracy, as an essential part of building parties that would lead the working class to the overthrow of their own bourgeoisie. He concluded that a new, revolutionary international had to be built. These lessons were tested and confirmed by the Bolshevik Party's struggle to successfully lead the October Revolution.

Bolshevik Revolution Laid the Basis for Women's Liberation

The Bolshevik Revolution proved definitively that the road to women's emancipation was through socialist revolution. The greatest victory for the working class and oppressed masses to date, the revolution smashed tsarist/capitalist rule and the Bolshevik-led soviets (workers and peasants councils) seized power. Land was taken from the landlords; industry was soon collectivised and the new workers state took steps to establish a planned economy. The revolution sought to bring women into full participation in economic, political and social life, and brought enormous gains to working women. The



Women's demonstration in Petrograd, 19 March 1917. Banner reads: "As Long as the Woman Is a Slave There Cannot Be Freedom—Long Live Women's Equality."

mining areas of South Wales, to denounce "Bolshevism."

Sylvia Pankhurst, by contrast, was not caught up in the outbreak of jingoism that followed the start of the war. She consistently attacked the war, demanded peace and denounced the WSPU's bloodthirstiness. She continued to campaign for adult suffrage, but as her political outlook moved to the left she embraced broader questions, particularly poverty and class oppression. Her paper *Woman's Dreadnought* was renamed *Workers' Dreadnought* and carried articles dealing with a wide range of social issues, including inadequate allowances for servicemen's wives and poor working conditions. Many of her followers were amongst the poorest women in East London, where starvation was rife, and so there was relatively little flag-waving compared to the country as a whole. She led demonstrations and deputations to the government to protest working conditions, but also pioneered neighbourhood relief programmes, which included maternity and infant clinics providing free medical care and milk, a day-care centre, a toy factory and a "Cost Price" restaurant. The strength of her organisation, the East London Federation, lay in the fact that she tied the question of wartime working conditions to a campaign against the war itself.

When on 4 August 1914 the German Social Democratic Party (SPD)'s parliamentary fraction voted for war credits for the German government, Lenin concluded that the Second International was dead as a force for socialist revolution. The majority of the social-democratic parties including the British Labour Party had taken the side of their "own" bourgeoisie. Exceptions to this were the Bolshevik Party, as well as socialists such as Karl Liebknecht in Germany, while in Scotland workers leader John Maclean was imprisoned for agitating against the war. For Lenin, the treachery of the official "socialist" parties signified the need

new workers state gave women a level of equality and freedom unparalleled anywhere in the world at that time—sweeping away centuries of patriarchal and religious power. Civil marriage was established, divorce was allowed at the request of either partner and all laws against homosexuality were abolished. However, the Bolsheviks also understood that emancipation of women, and indeed of the toiling masses, requires an end to scarcity and poverty and therefore could not take place within the confines of an impoverished workers state. Rather it necessitated a vast leap in the development of the productive forces, which in turn required the extension of the revolution internationally, particularly to the more advanced capitalist countries such as Germany.

Lenin's Bolsheviks attached great importance to the establishment of the Third International, which was founded in 1919 for the purpose of building communist parties in all countries. The Bolsheviks' revolutionary experience was generalised and codified in the 21 "Conditions of Admission to the Communist International" which aimed for hard splits from

the social-patriots and reformists among the parties seeking affiliation to the Communist International. Under the impact of the Russian Revolution, the positions of those on either side of the split in the Suffragette movement were carried to their logical conclusions. After the February Revolution, Emmeline Pankhurst, with Prime Minister Lloyd George's agreement, travelled to Russia to persuade the Provisional Government leader Kerensky to honour the tsarist commitment to the Triple Entente and stay in the war. After the Bolshevik Revolution, she called on the British government to intervene militarily against the workers state.

Not so Sylvia Pankhurst, who called on workers to support the Soviet form of government and strongly welcomed the October Revolution. In 1916 the East London Federation of Suffragettes had been renamed the Workers' Suffrage Federation. In 1918, following the Russian Revolution, it was renamed the Workers' Socialist Federation (WSF) and its stated aim was the formation of workers soviets and international working-class revolution. The WSF paper reported on the 1916 Easter Uprising in Dublin and Sylvia Pankhurst, who was sympathetic to the Irish liberation struggle, was very saddened by the execution of Connolly by the British imperialist rulers. The *Workers' Dreadnought* had frequent articles and speeches by Lenin and reports from the Russian Revolution, including many by the American communist John Reed, which were run under a series called "Red Russia." The paper was internationalist in scope, reporting on the labour movement in Germany as well as the importance of the anti-colonial struggle, including in India.

A Franchise Bill was introduced in Britain in 1917 and signed into law in early 1918. The Russian Revolution, which was welcomed by millions of workers across Europe, played a decisive role in the achievement of votes for women in Britain. The bourgeoisie granted this concession in the face of the Russian Revolution and massive class struggle between 1917 and 1920. According to Sylvia Pankhurst herself:

"Undoubtedly the large part taken by women during the War in all branches of social service had proved a tremendous argument for their own enfranchisement. Yet the memory of the old militancy, and the certainty of its recurrence if the claims of women were set aside, was a much stronger factor in overcoming the reluctance of those who would again have postponed the settlement. The shock to the foundations of existing social institutions already reverberating from Russia across Europe, made many old opponents desire to enlist the new enthusiasm of women voters to stabilise the Parliamentary machine."

—The Suffragette Movement

While Emmeline Pankhurst supported the Franchise Bill, the WSF opposed it because it only gave the vote to women over the age of 30 and included a property qualification. These restrictions were not lifted until 1928 when women got the vote at the age of 21 on the same terms as men.

"Hands Off Russia!"

Sylvia Pankhurst was a member of the steering committee of the Hands Off Russia Committee, a mass campaign for

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WORKERS HAMMER

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Suffragettes...

(continued from page 11)

defence of the fledgling Soviet state. The campaign was particularly effective in the East London docks. There is a story that I like. In 1920 there was a rumour that some ships were being loaded with weapons destined for the Polish front against Soviet Russia. The WSF and the Hands Off Russia Committee were very active in campaigning against this and when they found out that munitions were being loaded they went down to the docks to argue with the dockers not to load these weapons. They didn't seem to be getting much of a response and Harry Pollitt, who at the time was a member of the WSF (and went on to become a leader of the Communist Party of Great Britain), says an old dock worker tapped him on the shoulder and said, don't worry, we have this situation in hand. Shortly thereafter, the rope broke and the entire cargo ended up sinking into the North Sea.

The Hands Off Russia campaign led to strikes by London dockers, who refused to load the *Jolly George* ship in 1920 with munitions bound for Pilsudski's nationalist forces in Poland to fight against the Soviet Army. Dockers and railway unions throughout Britain also refused to load munitions. As some 350 "councils of action" sprang up throughout the country,

however the capitalist order was assured by the treachery of the Labourite leaders of the rail, coal and steel unions—the Triple Alliance—who refused to undertake a revolutionary confrontation with the government. That same year Belfast experienced a near-general strike that united Catholic and Protestant workers. Shortly afterwards troops were sent to Glasgow to quell massive workers' protests there. Workers leaders John Maclean and Willie Gallacher were arrested and the troops were not tested out.

In this context the Labour Party positioned itself to derail the growing upsurge of working-class struggle inspired by the Russian Revolution and to channel it into support for parliament. To this end, in 1918 the Labour Party adopted "Clause IV," a nominal commitment to "common ownership of the means of production" as a deliberate ploy to deceive the working class into believing socialism could be achieved through parliament. Historically, the strategic task for revolutionaries in Britain has been to split the Labour Party, winning its working-class base to the programme of authentic communism. During 1919-20, unity negotiations took place between those groups in Britain who supported the call to form a communist party and to affiliate to the Communist International—the British Socialist Party, the Socialist Labour Party, the South Wales Socialist Society, and the WSF. Sylvia Pankhurst



Red Clydeside: Workers demonstration in Glasgow during general strike, January 1919. Inset: Manchester "Hands Off Russia" call and appeal by Lenin to soldiers of British army, which stated: "You have been brought here to overthrow our revolution, and bring back the reign of Tsarism."

the Labour and trade-union leaders sought to maintain control of this upsurge. They established a national council of action and threatened a general strike to stop military intervention against Soviet Russia, which forced the British ruling class to call it off.

The Need for Communist Parties

Despite the failure of revolutions in the rest of Europe with the receding of the postwar revolutionary wave of 1918-19, there were continuing political crises and outbreaks of tremendous class struggle in Europe. In Germany in March 1920, the right-wing Kapp Putsch against the SPD government was defeated through a nationwide general strike with the armed mobilisation of the workers. 1920 was a year of massive strikes in Italy culminating in factory occupations in August and September. Also the Red Army had just repulsed Pilsudski's forces in the Ukraine and was advancing towards Warsaw, posing the possibility of revolution in Poland and the direct linking up with the German proletariat. The Communist International anticipated continuing revolutionary opportunities and a major task of its Second Congress in July and August 1920 was the formation of effective communist parties to take advantage of them.

British capitalist rule was profoundly shaken at the time. In 1919 the country was on the verge of a general strike;

was one of those whom Lenin described as "ultra-lefts." These also included Willie Gallacher, leader of the Scottish shop stewards' movement and of militant workers' struggles on Clydeside during World War I. It quickly became clear that their disagreements were one of the main obstacles to forming a united communist party in Britain.

Sylvia Pankhurst, after campaigning for women's suffrage, had come to believe that revolutionaries should refuse on principle to participate in parliamentary activities like voting or running for parliament, nor should they affiliate to the Labour Party. Lenin understood that some of the best fighters in Britain shared these positions. In large part this was conditioned by the betrayals of social democracy—the Labour Party and Trades Union Congress (TUC) had declared an industrial truce during the war, while supporting military recruitment as well as measures like the Treasury Agreements and the Munitions of War Act. These included no-strike agreements and hiring of semi-skilled and women workers at lower wages.

Tactics Towards Labour

While seeking to exclude the social-chauvinists, the Communist International sought to win over subjectively revolutionary leftists, particularly syndicalists, and to convince them of the need for revolutionary parties dedicated to taking



Spartacist contingent at August 1970 NYC women's liberation march.

power. Sylvia Pankhurst founded her own Communist Party (British section of the Third International) in June 1920, a move that was strongly rebuked by Lenin who was critical of her for placing tactical considerations above the formation of a united communist party. Lenin's "Left-Wing" Communism—an Infantile Disorder (1920), an extension of his arguments with Sylvia Pankhurst, argued that communists should advocate critical support to the Labour Party in the upcoming elections and also affiliate to the Labour Party, to win over its working-class base to form a communist party. Several million workers had become members of the Labour Party as a consequence of joining trade unions which were affiliated to Labour.

Lenin argued for communist propaganda and tactics, including participation in the Labour Party and in parliament among other arenas, as a necessary step to dispel those illusions and to win the working class over to an understanding of the need for the dictatorship of the proletariat. This debate continued at the Second Congress of the Communist International, which was attended by both Sylvia Pankhurst and Willie Gallacher. Lenin's intervention was decisive and at its foundation the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) adopted his position. Sylvia Pankhurst agreed to join the new CPGB and argue for her positions inside. However, she insisted on continuing the publication of her own newspaper *Workers' Dreadnought* and refused to bring it under party control. She printed articles critical of the party and Comintern policy and by taking differences outside the party she only served to make the fledgling Comintern more vulnerable. She was expelled because she refused to accept this elementary requirement of democratic-centralism, after which she drifted away from communism. *Workers' Dreadnought* ceased publication in 1924 and Sylvia Pankhurst ended up a follower of Emperor Haile Selassie in Ethiopia, where she died and is buried. While this meant breaking with communism, her sister Christabel on the other hand quit politics to await the second coming of Christ while her mother became a staunch Tory. Neither had to break with a single one of their feminist positions.

As a revolutionary party capable of challenging the capitalist order, the CPGB was stillborn. The sterility of the Commu-

nist Party and the absence of a real Leninist tradition in Britain have been key negative conditions enabling Labourite reformism and illusions in parliamentarism to maintain hegemony in the workers movement. Unlike in the early American Communist Party, there was no faction fight against Stalinism in the CPGB, which in turn accounts for the subsequent absence of a strong Trotskyist tradition in Britain. Trotskyism, in fact, had to be imported. We trace our revolutionary continuity through James P. Cannon and the American Socialist Workers Party. Cannon was a leader of the early American Communist Party who was won over to Trotskyism from the time of the Sixth Congress of the Comintern in 1928. He struggled to crystallise a Trotskyist party, initially from within the ranks of the Communist Party which, like the rest of the Comintern, succumbed to the bureaucratic degeneration of the Soviet Union that began in 1923-24.

This degeneration was conditioned by the failure of revolutions elsewhere, particularly in Germany in 1923, the isolation of the impoverished workers state with a predominantly peasant population and the decimation of the proletarian vanguard in the civil war. The bureaucratic caste led by J.V. Stalin came to power, which rolled back many gains of the Bolshevik Revolution, not least for women who were encouraged back into the family and the home. But despite this political degeneration the Soviet Union remained a workers state. Even at the time of its destruction by counterrevolution in 1991-92, the Soviet Union provided many advantages for women, such as state-supported childcare institutions, full abortion rights, access to a wide range of trades and professions and a status in many ways far ahead of many advanced capitalist societies today. We fought for unconditional military defence of the Soviet Union against imperialist attack and against capitalist restoration from within, and for proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy. The Spartacist League/Britain and the Spartacist Group Ireland are the British and Irish sections of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist), and we seek to reforge the Fourth International as part of the struggle for international proletarian revolution worldwide.■

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U.S./Israel...

(continued from page 1)

brutal repression of Hamas, carried out in collaboration with the CIA.) U.S. officials openly promised military support to Abbas against Hamas as part of an \$84 million aid package; Israel made clear that it would allow arms to be shipped to Abbas' Presidential Guard and allow U.S. training of his forces in the West Bank. After taking Gaza, Hamas claimed to have captured an arsenal of \$400 million worth of weapons from Fatah.

In mid May, Israel allowed some 500 Fatah loyalists to enter Gaza from Egypt at the Rafah border crossing, setting off the fighting. Fatah's forces had been trained in Egypt under the oversight of American Lt. General Keith Dayton, who told a Congressional committee on May 23: "We have a temporary security zone almost complete on the Palestinian side, financed largely by the Dutch, British, Norwegians and Canadians." From the right-wing Bush gang to the ardently pro-



Nasser Nouri

Recent strike by more than 20,000 textile workers in Ghazi el-Mahalla, Egypt.

Israel Democratic Party, the U.S. ruling class has long been committed to supporting Israel as a bulwark of American interests in the Near East.

At least 150 Palestinians died in the clashes, during which a U.S. envoy reportedly said, "I like this violence." In the wake of Fatah's defeat, Israel, Egypt and the imperialists further sealed off Gaza, causing meager food supplies to dwindle even further. Bush declared that Abbas was now "the president of all the Palestinians." The Olmert government has begun doling out to the PA some of the hundreds of millions of dollars of Palestinian taxes it had withheld since the election of Hamas and said it would release some 250 of the 11,000 Palestinians languishing in Zionist dungeons, a promise that does not include dozens of Hamas legislators.

Surrounded by an electrified fence, sealed borders and the Mediterranean, Gaza is little more than a glorified concentration camp holding 1.5 million people. Even after Israel withdrew military forces from Gaza in 2005, it continues to isolate the area. Israeli forces now lob bombs and missiles into Gaza while also carrying out numerous incursions. Children going to the beach have been shot down with impunity by Zionist troops.

The Palestinian population in the West Bank barely fares better. The area is nearly sealed by an apartheid wall that cuts into Palestinian territories, separating farmers from their land. A Kafkaesque series of military checkpoints and "Jewish only" roads make travel between towns virtually impossible for Arabs. Palestinians in need of medical aid die

and give birth waiting at the checkpoints. Backed by thousands of troops, at least 450,000 Zionist settlers occupy the West Bank. **Israel hands off Gaza! All Zionist troops and settlers out of the West Bank and East Jerusalem!**

For a Socialist Federation of the Near East!

The long record of treachery by Fatah, the central component of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) founded by the late Yasir Arafat, combined with Israel's relentless, pounding oppression, opened the door to the rise of the Hamas reactionaries. Hamas' imprint on Palestinian society can be seen in the reinforced oppression of women symbolized by the headscarf and veil. This situation starkly demonstrates the political bankruptcy of Palestinian nationalism, whose program is based on allying with the bloody Arab bourgeois regimes and appealing to the imperialists and their agencies like the United Nations.

At the heart of the question of Israel/Palestine is the impossibility, within a capitalist framework, of achieving national justice for the geographically interpenetrated Palestinian and Hebrew-speaking peoples, which both lay claim to the same small sliver of land. Under capitalism, the exercise of national self-determination by one will necessarily be at the expense of the other. The national emancipation of the Palestinians—including the right of all refugees and their descendants to return to their homeland—necessarily entails workers revolutions to not only shatter the Zionist state from within but to sweep away the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Syrian Ba'athist bonapartists and the capitalist rulers of Lebanon—countries that all have sizable Palestinian populations. The myriad peoples of the region—including both the Palestinian and Hebrew-speaking peoples—will not know peace, justice or material well-being until bourgeois rule is overthrown through a series of proletarian revolutions that establish a socialist federation of the Near East.

Israeli society is not a seamless mass of reaction but a class-divided society, with a working class viciously exploited at the hands of its "own" ruling class. We have no illusions that it will be easy to shatter the chauvinism of the Hebrew working class. Indeed, it will likely require cataclysmic events—from economic crisis and military defeat to revolutionary upheavals in the region—to break the Israeli proletariat from Zionism. This task is not made easier by the criminal indiscriminate terror bombings carried out by Palestinian forces against Israeli civilians, which drive the Hebrew-speaking population further into the arms of the Zionist rulers. The key in Israel/Palestine, as throughout the region, is the forging of revolutionary workers parties that uncompromisingly fight against all manner of nationalism and religious reaction.

Nowhere in the region is the proletariat at "peace" with its rulers. For more than six months, Egypt has been convulsed by a wave of strikes carried out in defiance of the Mubarak dictatorship and the official union federation it controls. Textile workers, railway workers, trash collectors, subway workers, truck drivers, construction workers and others have engaged in hundreds of sit-ins and other labor actions, with women often playing a leading role. Protesting against privatization policies as well as over pay and benefits, workers have often won their demands from a government fearful that the unrest will spread. Meanwhile in Iran, with its powerful proletariat in the oil fields and other industries, the population suffers deepening poverty, exacerbated by imperialist sanctions, and suffocating social conditions under the mullah regime of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Beginning June 27, Tehran was gripped by fuel riots in response to government-imposed gasoline rations.

The struggle to mobilize the proletariat of the Near East in its own interests is inextricably bound up with the fight against the region's imperialist overlords. As the U.S. continues to wreak havoc on Iraq, the expansion of U.S. and NATO troops in Afghanistan has led to numerous

**September 1993:
Israeli prime
minister
Yitzhak Rabin
and PLO leader
Yasir Arafat
seal "peace"
agreement
brokered by
U.S. president
Clinton.**



incidents of civilians being slaughtered. Even Afghan president Hamid Karzai felt compelled to complain to his American handlers. **All U.S. troops out of the Near East, Iraq and Afghanistan now!** The Spartacist League/U.S. calls for **class struggle at home** against the capitalist rulers.

With U.S. imperialism bogged down in its Iraq quagmire, Washington continues to hurl provocative accusations at Iran, most recently claiming that its agents were responsible for a January raid in the Iraqi Shi'ite city of Karbala that killed five U.S. soldiers. What hubris coming from the U.S. imperialists, whose invasion and occupation of Iraq has led to the displacement of millions from their homes and the deaths of hundreds of thousands, either through imperialist terror or the sectarian bloodbath unleashed by the occupation. George W. Bush, lame duck that he is, has used his remaining powers to keep "Scooter" Libby, assistant to Vice President Cheney and a key player in preparing the Iraq invasion, out of jail despite his conviction for perjury and obstruction of justice in the Valerie Plame case.

The U.S. and UN are pursuing their attempts to block Iran from developing its nuclear program, which Tehran says is for energy purposes. In the face of threats from the nuclear-armed imperialists and the nuclear-armed Zionists, Iran **needs** nukes to defend itself and deter attack. Down with UN imperialist sanctions! Hands off Iran! It is the U.S. imperialists and their Zionist henchmen who threaten nuclear Armageddon. On July 2, an Israeli court sentenced Mordechai Vanunu, who spent 18 years in prison for revealing the extent of Israel's nuclear arsenal, to another six months in jail for violating a gag order. Hands off Vanunu! Grant his request to leave Israel!

Nationalism and Islamic Fundamentalism

Petty-bourgeois nationalism has utterly shown itself to be a dead end for the Palestinian masses. But helping to pave that road was the reformist left internationally. In opposition to a Marxist, proletarian strategy, the U.S. Workers World Party (WWP), International Socialist Organization (ISO) and others for years cheered on Arafat's PLO and other nationalist outfits.

More recently, these groups have expressed shock at the PLO's collaboration with the Zionists and have taken to lauding Hamas and other Islamic reactionaries as "anti-imperialist."

Thus we are told by *Workers World* (24 June) that "the Gaza struggle was between irreconcilable class forces," where "the forces of national resistance" were "represented by Hamas." The British Socialist Workers Party (SWP)—formerly allied with the ISO—enthuses that Hamas' victory "was a strike against imperialism in the Middle East" (*Socialist Worker* [Britain] online, 23 June).

Far from being "anti-imperialists," the Islamic fundamentalists were historically promoted by the imperialists and their allies as a counter to Communism and even secular nationalism. Hamas was in fact initially promoted by Israel as a bulwark against the secular-nationalist PLO. In 1978, the Israeli government approved an application by one Sheik Ahmed Yassin to license the Islamic Association, a front for the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood and a forerunner of Hamas. In addition to funding the Islamic Association as an official charity, Israel helped it gain control of the Islamic University of Gaza as a base among the intelligentsia, while the association's welfare programs helped the fundamentalists win a base among the Palestinian poor.

Some months after the outbreak of the 1987-93 Palestinian *Intifada*, Hamas was founded as an Islamist political movement with an armed wing, seeking to fuse the national struggle, previously secularist, with Islamic fundamentalism, larded with anti-Jewish demagoguery. Israel did not break relations with it until the fall of 1989 after discovering that Hamas had killed two Israeli soldiers. Sheik Yassin was assassinated by Israel in 2004.

The WWP, ISO and SWP—all of whom praise Hamas—stand by the nationalist program that paved the way for Fatah's abject treachery. *Workers World* claims that only "a small faction of Fatah" under Abbas and Dahlan represents "the forces of imperialist slavery." The SWP declares that "Fatah has been transformed from an organisation that fought against Zionism and imperialism into an organisation that

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Aborigines...

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With polls projecting a defeat for Howard in the upcoming federal elections, the military occupation of Aboriginal communities is widely recognised as another of his pre-election ploys to garner white racist support while sowing racist divisions amongst the working class and oppressed. Disgustingly the government’s plan was immediately backed by the federal ALP [Australian Labor Party] leader Kevin Rudd, who scrambled to outdo the government by promising a “war cabinet” and a 20 percent increase in federal police numbers if elected. Victorian and New South Wales state Labor premiers quickly pledged contingents of cops to join Howard’s occupation force. Northern Territory ALP chief minister, Clare Martin, simply complained that the intervention should be sustained for decades! In states with a significant Aboriginal population, Labor premiers balked at participating, complaining they had not been consulted by Howard beforehand. Australian Capital Territory chief minister, Jon Stanhope, is the only prominent ALP leader to state the obvious truth that these moves against NT Aborigines are racist.

Using the reactionary views pushed within the Aboriginal community by flunkies like Noel Pearson, the government’s current offensive has been prepared by an ongoing campaign to blame Aboriginal people for their own oppression. Many have already spoken out against the government’s ghoulish plan to subject NT Aborigines under the age of 16 to “medical examinations” for sexual abuse. This proposal ratchets up the bourgeoisie’s reactionary and hysterical anti-sex witchhunt, which is designed particularly to regiment youth by demeaning, abusing and punishing all those who engage in *consensual* sexual activity outside the bounds of the reactionary “age of consent” laws. The government uses the watchword “child sexual abuse” as a pretext for greater state intervention in Aboriginal lives.

The very real social pathologies of domestic violence, abuse of children, and drug addiction—problems which exist throughout capitalist society—are exacerbated by the brutal subjugation and enforced marginalisation of Aboriginal people. But it is the capitalist state itself which is the greatest instigator of violence against Aboriginal people, who, for example, know all too well that for a black man detention can often be a death sentence. This state, which consists at its core of the courts, prisons, police and

military, exists for the purpose of enforcing capitalist rule over the exploited and oppressed masses.

It is grotesque hypocrisy for Howard and his minister for Aboriginal oppression, ex-army commander Mal Brough, to portray themselves as upholding the rights of Aboriginal children! With its prison guards, police and “Aboriginal Protection Boards,” the bourgeois state has systematically killed and raped Aboriginal men, women and children for over 200 years. The Howard government has whipped up racist fear and hatred with the lie that refugees had thrown their “children overboard”; it has incarcerated refugees, including children, in hell-hole detention camps; and it is an enthusiastic junior partner in the bloody imperialist military occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan, which have left hundreds of thousands of men, women and children dead.

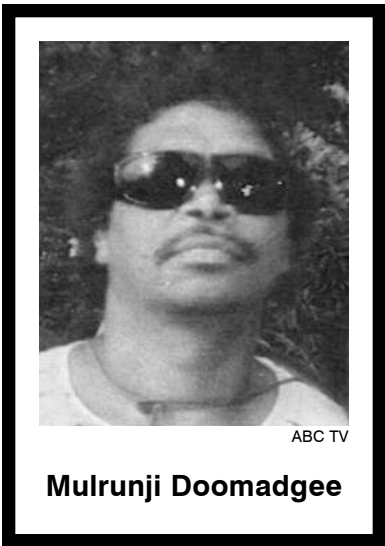
A recent health report noted that Aboriginal people are four times more likely to die before the age of 25 and 13 times more likely to be in jail, stating that “Indigenous Australian youth are disadvantaged on almost every welfare criterion” ([Melbourne] *Age*, 31 May). As the head of paediatrics at Royal Darwin Hospital recently pointed out, the topmost causes of suffering among Aboriginal children are overwhelmingly eminently treatable poverty-related conditions such as lung infections, rheumatic heart disease, anaemia and malnutrition. ***Down with attacks on welfare! Aboriginal people need jobs for all at equal wages and massive education, health and housing programs, including the provision of clean water and electricity. For complete equality including equal access to decent public amenities! No to forced medical examinations! For free quality healthcare and education for all!*** However, elementary justice for Aboriginal people and all the oppressed and exploited demands not some limited and ultimately reversible concessions by the bosses but the expropriation of industry, mining and agriculture from the capitalist class through victorious workers revolution. ***We need a class-struggle fight for Aboriginal rights!***

Howard aims to massively roll back land rights. As Pat Turner, a former head of the recently abolished Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, remarked: “We believe that this government is using child sexual abuse as the Trojan horse to resume total control of our lands.” Some 90 Aboriginal and welfare organisations have released a statement attacking the government’s plan as a smokescreen for a massive grab of those lands that had been reclaimed from the



AAP

June 20: Mulrunji Doomadgee’s sisters comforted by friend whitewash trial acquitted cop in brutal killing of their brother.



capitalist rulers. This land grab paves the way for large petrochemical, mining and agribusiness to loot the incredibly lucrative resources found there. Aborigines are now facing a colonial-style military occupation similar to that which the Howard government has imposed on the oppressed people of the Solomon Islands and East Timor while plundering their resources. ***Racist Australian troops/cops hands off Aboriginal lands! Get out of Iraq, Afghanistan, the Solomons and East Timor!***

Howard’s declaration was also a preemptive strike against any outpouring of justified anger over the whitewash “trial” of the Queensland cop, Chris Hurley, for the brutal killing of Aborigine Mulrunji Doomadgee in the Palm Island lock-up in 2004. Hurley’s acquittal by an all-white jury gives a green light to an escalation of cop killings of Aborigines in the lockups and on the streets and will further embolden fascist scum like the KKK who terrorise besieged Aboriginal communities across the country. The current cop/military occupation will mean more Aborigines in prison and more deaths in custody. Only five days after the whitewash Hurley verdict, a 44-year-old Aboriginal man died in police custody. Meanwhile Palm Island Aboriginal leader Lex Wotton is still facing serious charges for the “crime” of protesting the cop killing of Mulrunji! ***Drop the charges now! For union/black/minority action against racist terror!***

There can be no justice from the capitalist courts or governments! The brutal White Australia capitalist order was built on the plunder, theft, slaughter and degradation of the indigenous inhabitants and the systematic exclusion of Asian and dark-skinned people. The multiracial trade-union movement, which has been on the receiving end of federal coalition and state Labor

governments’ relentless attacks, must take action *with* Aboriginal people against their common enemy—the bosses’ state.

Only the organised working class has the objective interest and social power to take on the racist capitalist rulers and win. But as long as the working class buys into the bosses’ racist divide-and-rule schemes, it will never forge the consciousness and unity necessary to liberate itself from the chains of capitalist exploitation. We communists of the Spartacist League of Australia fight to break the working class from the Laborite nationalism and loyalty to the capitalist state pushed by the pro-capitalist union leaders.

Against the Labor politicians, trade-union misleaders and their left tails who serve to subordinate the working class to capitalist rule, it is urgently necessary to build an internationalist Leninist vanguard party. Such a party, fighting to lead all the exploited and oppressed against every manifestation of capitalist oppression, will be built by splitting the working-class base of the ALP from its pro-capitalist and nationalist leadership.

It is the class struggle of the multiracial proletariat, led by a Leninist-Trotskyist party, that can open the road to overthrowing this deeply racist, decrepit, capitalist system through workers revolution. Only under the rule of the working class and based on a planned collectivised economy will it be possible to address the special needs of Aboriginal people created by more than two centuries of capitalist injustice and oppression. The multiracial working class must come to the defence of their Aboriginal brothers and sisters now! ***Cops/military out of Aboriginal communities! For proletarian-centred defence of Aborigines against racist terror! For a workers republic of Australia, part of a socialist Asia! ■***

U.S./Israel...

(continued from page 13)

polices its own people in their service.” For its part, the ISO’s *Socialist Worker* (22 June) states: “The willingness of Fatah to act as a U.S.-Israeli proxy force against Hamas is the culmination of a long process that began with the Oslo ‘peace process.’”

The Oslo accords did indeed mark a turning point. As we wrote at the time, they represented a “grotesque bargain over the subjugated Palestinian people” that “would place the PLO’s seal on the national oppression of the long-suffering Palestinian Arab masses” (“Israel-PLO Deal for Palestinian Ghetto,” WV No. 583, 10 September 1993). But contrary to the contention of the ISO, the “long process” that culminated in Fatah’s current role as a “U.S.-Israeli proxy” began well before Oslo.

The basis of Arab nationalism, like all nationalism, is to preach the unity of the

downtrodden and exploited with their “own” exploiters and would-be exploiters. In this view, the Palestinians’ allies are to be sought not among the proletariat of the region but rather among the Arab rulers. Even the most militant Palestinian nationalists recognized that they could not defeat the Zionist state militarily. The strategy of “armed struggle” pursued by the PLO in the 1960s and ’70s—when, according to the SWP, Fatah was “an organisation that fought against Zionism and imperialism”—was aimed at pressing for “Arab unity” against Israel.

But the Arab bourgeoisies are enemies to the cause of Palestinian national liberation. Between the creation of the state of Israel in 1948 and the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, the West Bank and Gaza were controlled by Jordan and Egypt respectively. The Palestinian population remained politically dispossessed and subject to brutal repression. In the decade following the ’67 war, nearly 50,000 Palestinians were slaughtered by Arab governments, including some 10,000 militants killed by the Jordanian monarchy in the 1970 Black September massacre.

The PLO’s appeals to the bourgeois rulers were eventually supplanted by direct appeals to the imperialists, centrally the U.S., and even the Zionists, culminating in the 1993 accords. Underlying that deal was the destruction of the USSR through capitalist counterrevolution—a world-historic defeat for workers

and the oppressed internationally. As a military and political counterweight to the U.S. and other capitalist powers, the existence of the Soviet degenerated workers state allowed the PLO and other Third World nationalist movements and regimes room to maneuver between the Soviets and the imperialists. Without the diplomatic and financial support previously provided by Moscow, the PLO soon agreed to act as guardians for the Zionists in the Occupied Territories.

As Trotskyists, we fought for the unconditional military defense of the Soviet Union and the deformed workers states of East Europe against imperialist attack and counterrevolution and for proletarian political revolution to oust the ruling Stalinist bureaucracies. Today we raise the same program for the remaining deformed workers states of China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba. The ISO and their SWP former brethren took the *other side*, denouncing the Soviet Union as “state capitalist” and siding with “democratic” imperialism and every imperialist-backed movement aimed at the USSR, from Polish Solidarność to the CIA-funded *mujahedin* cutthroats who fought against the Soviet Army in Afghanistan in the 1980s.

Counterrevolution in the former Soviet Union—over which the ISO and SWP rejoiced—has brought devastation to the working people of those societies and emboldened the imperialists in their

attacks while fueling the resurgence of religious reaction globally. Our fight is for new October Revolutions. Key to this is combatting bourgeois ideology in all its forms—and the reformist leftists who promote it—in order to render the proletariat conscious of its historic task as the gravedigger of the capitalist system. Reforge the Fourth International—world party of socialist revolution! ■



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South Africa...
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apartheid, the present battle got the attention and support of unions internationally, including Transport Workers Union Local 100 in New York City, the Service Employees International Union in the U.S., UNISON in Britain, the Canadian Union of Public Employees and the Nigeria Labour Congress.

The strike demonstrated again the Marxist truth that the core of the state—the cops, the courts, prisons and army—is an armed apparatus that the ruling class uses to maintain power. However, the COSATU bureaucrats as well as the SACP treacherously treat the cops as a bona fide component of the workers movement. As the strike was going on and the police were brutalizing pickets, COSATU general secretary Zwelinzima Vavi addressed a conference of the cop “union,” the Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union (POPCRU), claiming outrageously that “we have to pay tribute to POPCRU as a mainstay of the public-service unions.” POPCRU was a member of the public-service union coalition. But POPCRU did not go on strike. Rather, it assisted the government in its attempts to break the strike. This underscores that the police—black as well as white—are agents of organized ruling-class violence against the working class and all the oppressed. Our comrades of Spartacist South Africa forthrightly demand: Police, security and prison guards —out of the unions!

One reason that the strike ended as it did was because the public workers were left to strike on their own. The powerful National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) and the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA)—both of which are part of COSATU—as well as chemical and petroleum workers continued to work, even though all these unions were already threatening strikes against companies with whom they have contracts. A watershed in the strike occurred on June 13, when there was supposed to be a general strike by COSATU unions in solidarity with the public service unions. However, NUMSA, the NUM and several other unions refused to strike, using cowardly pretexts such as that they hadn’t given the required seven-day strike notice.

As this case proved, the COSATU bureaucrats were all for “solidarity”—as long as it was acceptable to the bourgeoisie and its courts! The false idea that one has to observe the rules of the bosses and their state is contradicted by the experience of many South African workers, who on numerous occasions defied the edicts of the apartheid state. During the current battle as well, thousands of health workers regarded as providing “essential services” went on strike, knowing full well that they could be fired for doing so.

Had NUMSA, the NUM and other unions that represent workers in strategic sectors of the economy struck alongside the public workers, it would have brought the country to a grinding halt. It also would have created a political crisis for the ruling Tripartite Alliance. But this is exactly what the SACP/COSATU tops do not want.

At the same time that COSATU organizes millions of workers, its leadership forms an integral component of the same government that is carrying out attacks on its members. Blade Nzimande, general secretary of the SACP, noted, “Some of our international allies have asked us as to how come a government led by an allied formation faces such a massive public service strike led by an allied trade union federation.” While affirming the SACP’s support for the public workers strike, Nzimande was quick to assure his ANC allies that “this does not mean that the SACP supports any or every strike by virtue of being a workers’ strike” (Umsebenzi Online, 20 June).

This is certainly true. One notable example took place in 1990, in the period when the “power-sharing” deal that ended apartheid was being worked out between the Randlords, the ANC and the Western imperialists. Then-SACP leader Joe

PDC Protests Police Attacks
Against South African Strikers

The following letter, addressed to South African president Thabo Mbeki, was issued by the Partisan Defense Committee on June 12.

The Partisan Defense Committee joins workers around the world in protest against the brutal repression being meted out by your ANC government against the approximately 700,000 public service unionists on strike since June 1. As this massive strike led by COSATU and other unions to defend workers’ livelihoods began, thousands of armed soldiers and cops launched a furious campaign against strikers at schools and

hospitals around the country. Among many reported instances, police in Cape Town fired stun grenades at strikers picketing Tygerberg Hospital, injuring workers including one who was hospitalized in intensive care. In Durban, police fired rubber bullets at striking nurses, arresting 20, and carried out another grenade attack at Addington Hospital. Now your government threatens mass firings of striking health workers for defying a government ultimatum that they return to work.

This is an outrage. We demand an immediate end to this campaign of ter-

ror against striking workers. Workers all over the globe have followed and will continue to follow the struggles of the South African working class against neo-apartheid capitalism over which you preside: a system in which the white capitalist class, its senior partners in the City of London and Wall Street and a thin layer of black businessmen and politicians reap rewards, while the conditions of the working class, rural toilers and township masses continue to be miserable.

The PDC demands an immediate halt to all police attacks and freedom for all arrested strikers. We demand all charges be dropped with no reprisals against striking workers. We also demand the rescinding of all firings and the immediate reinstatement of any dismissed worker.

Slovo and SACPer Moses Mayekiso were flown into East London to quash a powerful workers occupation at the Mercedes-Benz plant. The SACP wanted to make crystal clear that it would guarantee the sanctity of private property in the face of any proletarian challenge.

The SACP is a reformist workers party. In order to placate its working-class base, the SACP has been forced to become more critical of Mbeki. At the same time, the SACP tops are ultimately loyal to the bourgeois order. In order to justify its participation in the government, the SACP has to pretend that the Tripartite Alliance is something other than what it is: a bourgeois government. The SACP claims that “the post-1994 democratic state is not inherently capitalist, it is in fact, a sharply class-contested reality” and that the workers can somehow achieve “hegemony” or control over that state. This is designed to obscure the basic Marxist truth that modern society is divided into two main classes—the capitalist exploiters and the exploited proletariat—whose interests are irreconcilable. In allying themselves to the bourgeois-nationalist ANC, the SACP and the COSATU tops perform an invaluable service for the capitalist rulers in keeping the country’s powerful working class tied to the capitalist order. And as participants in the governing Tripartite Alliance, the SACP and COSATU bear responsibility for the anti-working-class austerity implemented by the government.

Within the ranks of the SACP there is increasing restlessness with the party’s servile subordination to the ANC. A March meeting of the party’s Gauteng Provincial Council recommended a resolution for the SACP’s upcoming 12th national congress that asserted: “Therefore, the Council overwhelmingly resolved that the SACP must contest elections from 2009 at all levels by fielding its own candidates.... We cannot continue outsourcing this important function of the Communist Party” (emphasis in original). According to the South African news Web site www.iol.co.za (3 June), a similar resolution was passed by the Port Elizabeth district of the SACP. However, although it says that SACP candidates should run in their own name rather than on the ANC slate, the Gauteng resolution asserts that the “revolutionary alliance led by the ANC” is “an historic and important alliance that should be preserved.”

Genuine working-class independence requires not only organizational independence from capitalist parties like the ANC but also political opposition to them. But the SACP is and has long been politically subordinated to the bourgeois-nationalist ANC. Being allied to the ANC means accepting a common program, i.e., one that necessarily subordinates the workers and the oppressed to the capitalist order. Calls for “going it alone” while preserving the class-collaborationist alliance with the ANC can only be an attempt to refurbish the tarnished credentials of the alliance, at

a time when it is facing huge anger at the base of society. The point is not to reform the ANC by futilely searching for a “pro-worker” alternative to Mbeki. An ANC run by Jacob Zuma would be just as anti-working-class as the current ANC. We call to break with the Tripartite Alliance and to forge a Leninist-Trotskyist party that fights for a workers government. This does not mean placing in power a labor government that administers capitalism, like the British Labour governments, but a revolutionary struggle that overthrows the capitalist order, as the Bolsheviks did in 1917.

A fundamental argument raised by reformists against such a perspective is that such a revolution would be isolated and crushed by the imperialists. It is true that in the post-Soviet period the imperialists have become more emboldened and arrogant. However, workers revolution in South Africa would reverberate powerfully among the oppressed working masses, from black and other workers in the U.S. to Latin America and Europe. It would revive revolutionary class struggle internationally. Only the extension of workers revolution to the advanced capitalist countries would provide the material basis for the establishment of a genuine socialist society, one in which poverty has been abolished and classes are no more. To that end there must be an instrumentality, a world party of socialist revolution. That is why we Spartacists fight for the reforging of the Fourth International. ■

Join the Campaign to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!

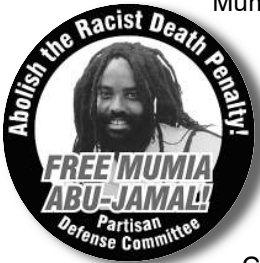
The case of death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal is at a critical juncture. On May 17, the U.S. Third Circuit Court of Appeals heard oral arguments on Mumia’s appeal and a decision could come within weeks or months. We must mobilize now to win his freedom.

Funds are urgently needed for legal defense!

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

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

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



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



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WORKERS VANGUARD

Break with the Tripartite Alliance! For Workers Revolution!

South Africa: Bitter End to Defiant Strike

For four weeks, at least 700,000 teachers, hospital workers and other public service workers struck against the South African government headed by the African National Congress (ANC). A coalition of 17 unions participated in the strike. The largest of the unions are affiliated with the mainly black Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), but there were also independent unions, including some that had never called strikes before, thereby uniting workers across racial lines. The strike, the largest since the end of the apartheid government in 1994, was widely popular, particularly among the country's impoverished masses. The strikers shut down most of the schools and hospitals in the country and braved police attacks and arrests as well as a government ultimatum to return to work.

Many workers are bitter at the settlement. Although the unions had originally asked for a 12 percent wage increase, the final settlement was only 7.5 percent, not much more than the rate of inflation. One analyst noted that it could take until after 2010 for teachers to recoup the money they lost during the strike. In protest, the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU), while returning to work, refused to sign the agreement.

The strike highlighted that despite the change in the political and judicial superstructure since apartheid rule, South Africa today is a neo-apartheid capitalist state: the black masses live in Third World poverty while most whites enjoy First World conditions. The white capitalists, and their senior partners in the City of London and



Soobramoney/News24

June 14: Striking public service workers march in Durban.

on Wall Street, now along with a small layer of black elite, live off the exploitation of the working class. Since 1994, the bourgeois state has been run by the Tripartite Alliance consisting of the ANC, COSATU and the South African Communist Party (SACP). Behind the failure to unleash the forces necessary to achieve victory in the strike—private sector mining, industrial and commercial unions—was the fact that the reformist union tops did not want to deal a decisive blow against the government of which they are a part.

The economy has been booming, but this has done little to improve the situation

of the masses of working people. Unemployment is at least 40 percent. More than a third of all women between the ages of 25 and 29 are HIV-positive. This reflects not only the grinding poverty of the majority of the populace but also the deliberate neglect of AIDS treatment by the Thabo Mbeki regime. Commenting on the growing gulf between rich and poor, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, once closely associated with the ANC, was compelled to observe, "I'm really very surprised by the remarkable patience of people," adding that it was hard "to explain why they don't say to hell with Tutu, [Nelson]

Mandela and the rest and go on the rampage" (*Financial Times*, 28 June).

Strikers, most of whom lack savings, were left to rely on their own resources or in many cases were forced to turn to loan sharks to survive. While there were virtually no union strike funds, the COSATU bureaucrats have invested millions of rands in the Johannesburg stock exchange in their futile schemes to achieve union influence over the boards of directors of capitalist concerns. Courageous picketers defied government strikebreaking in order to shut down schools and hospitals. Several thousand nurses and other health workers were sacked on the grounds that they were violating laws prohibiting workers who did essential services from striking. The settlement reinstates them to their jobs, but *with a final warning* attached to their work record. The unions must demand: No reprisals against the strikers!

The police and army were mobilized on a large scale to patrol hospitals and schools. Army medics were used to do the jobs of strikers. Police assaulted pickets, beating strikers and hurling stun grenades; military helicopters were employed. In KwaZulu-Natal, SADTU members were shot. Suraya Jawoodeen, secretary of the National Education Health and Allied Workers Union in Western Cape province, asserted that the cops "have used more violence against strikers than during apartheid" (*Mail & Guardian online*, 15 June).

Just as in the past, when workers around the world supported the struggles of the oppressed in South Africa against

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Labor Party Leader Backs Howard's Racist War on Aborigines

Australian Cops/Military: Hands Off Aboriginal Communities!

We reprint below a June 27 leaflet issued by the Spartacist League of Australia, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

Declaring a "national emergency," the [Liberal Party] Howard government is moving contingents of cops, backed by troops, to occupy some 60 Northern Territory (NT) Aboriginal communities. To facilitate this naked land grab, federal parliament is to be recalled to override the 1976 Aboriginal Land Rights Act and likely the 1975 Racial Discrimination Act. In the name of "law and order" against "child abuse," the government is imposing an immediate puritanical ban on alcohol and pornography. In a chill-

ing, racist, state-sponsored campaign of abuse and humiliation, they want to subject Aboriginal children and youth under 16 years of age to outrageous genital "medical examinations." They are also threatening to starve impoverished Aboriginal families by withholding already meagre welfare payments for such reasons as their kids don't or won't go to school, which are invariably under-resourced and in some cases racist or non-existent!

Howard's attacks have been met with fear and anger from Aboriginal communities. Women and children have already begun fleeing Mutitjulu, the first community to face the police/military take-

over. This vividly recalls how terrified Aboriginal parents had to hide their children from the all-powerful "Protector" or mission manager, events powerfully portrayed in the film *Rabbit-Proof Fence*. Indeed Howard intends to turn the clock back to the days of the protector where the systematic physical, emotional and sexual abuse, which accompanied the mass institutionalisation of Aboriginal children *stolen* from their parents and used as forced labour, was rife. This was accompanied by capitalist theft of land on a grand scale by cattle barons and mining companies.

Howard's assault on welfare within Aboriginal communities is a template

for gutting welfare across the entire population. Furthermore, increased police repression, backed up by troops, comes on top of draconian laws already restricting the rights of *all*, from "anti-terror" laws to anti-union laws. Targeting the most vulnerable today, the government is greasing the skids for broader attacks on the morrow. The working class has a direct interest in taking up the fight to defend Aboriginal people and all the oppressed. *For working-class protests against racist state repression! Down with Howard's martial law! No to cop/military occupations of Northern Territory Aboriginal communities!*

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For a Class-Struggle Fight for Aboriginal Rights!