

Italy



Left: As Italy's popular-front government pushed through vicious anti-immigrant law, police raided Romanian immigrant camp in Rome, October 31. Right: Bulldozer destroying "illegal" encampment in Rome, November 3.

Defeat Racist Campaign Against Gypsies, Immigrants!

We print below a November 12 leaflet, abridged and edited for publication, by the Lega Trotskista d'Italia, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist). As proletarian revolutionary internationalists, the ICL fights to mobilize the workers movement against vicious, racist attacks on immigrants, whether in Europe, the U.S. or other capitalist countries. In so doing, we do not seek to tinker with the capitalist system by promoting an "alternative" immigration policy. Rather, we seek to imbue the working class with the consciousness that it must fight in defense of all the oppressed as part of a struggle to sweep away the murderous capitalist profit system through socialist revolution.

Our Italian comrades' fight against the persecution of immigrants including of Roma (Gypsy), Romanian, North African and Chinese descent by the popular-front government led by Romano Prodi will have resonance for the workers movement in

Stop the Deportations! Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!

the U.S., which has seen escalating anti-immigrant hysteria pushed by the Democratic and Republican parties alike.

This was underlined recently when Democratic New York governor Eliot Spitzer—who as attorney general obtained strikebreaking injunctions against the December 2005 New York City transit strike—furiously backpedaled from his proposal to grant a driver's license to anyone who passes a driving test, irrespective of immigration status. As the racist backlash over the plan swelled, Democratic

presidential hopeful Hillary Clinton at first evaded taking a position before coming out against this minimal measure. Meanwhile, roundups of immigrants and deportations continue apace, threatening the whole workers movement by attacking its most vulnerable sections. The need to mobilize labor's power in defense of immigrant workers and to demand full citizenship rights for all immigrants requires a political struggle against the pro-capitalist labor tops, who tie workers to their exploiters through their support to

the Democratic Party, and against the reformist left, which strengthens those ties through its "Anybody but Bush" politics.

* * *

On October 31, the capitalist popular-front government of the Democratic Party and Rifondazione Comunista (RC) *unanimously* approved an obscene racist decree that allows for deportations of foreign citizens, including from the European Union [EU], for "crimes" against public "safety" and "human dignity." In practice, the law allows the deportation of thousands of Roma and Romanian immigrants for such "crimes" as begging and washing car windows.

Newspapers and TV stations have used the killing of a woman in Rome, a murder of which a Romanian Roma man has been accused, to launch a hysterical campaign reminiscent of the stereotypes in Mussolini's racist propaganda. The Rome City

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Government Hands Off ILWU Local 10!

Earlier this month, a U.S. district judge ordered that the capitalist government run the elections in the San Francisco Bay Area International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 10. This ruling was the fruit of complaints by two Local 10 members who ran to the Department of Labor to seek redress for having been disqualified from running for union office in the two prior elections. In doing so, they opened the door for the bosses' government to stick its nose into internal Local 10 affairs. Under the pretext of "democratic elections," the Feds will try to cripple Local 10's ability to defend its members. A WV salesman reported that longshoremen understand that the Feds are coming after the union because its contract is up next year.

Indeed, the timing of this ruling was no accident. The Local 10 elections occur just before the opening of negotiations for the 2008 contract between the ILWU and the employers' Pacific Maritime Association (PMA). The capitalist state, acting in the interests of the shipping bosses and the ruling class as a whole, wants to bring the strategically powerful ILWU to heel, as the West Coast ports are vital chokepoints for the booming trade with China, Japan and the entire Pacific Rim. The government's vendetta against the ILWU carries over from the last contract battle in 2002. At the time, "Homeland Security" chief Tom Ridge phoned the ILWU International president to warn that a strike could "threaten national security." The Bush administration threatened to send the military to operate the ports. After the PMA locked out the ILWU from all 29 West Coast ports for ten days, President Bush invoked the anti-labor Taft-Hartley Act to force ILWU members back to work.

Now the government is bringing its anti-terror laws directly to the waterfront unions, moving to begin making workers enroll in the Transportation Worker Identification Credential program, with its criminal background checks, at the Port of Oakland this month. Enrollment has already begun in some East and Gulf Coast ports. The bosses' state increasingly invades the workplace in the name of "security"—especially as part of the reactionary "war on terror"—just as it invades the unions in the name of "democracy." What "port security" really means was shown at the Port of Sacramento in August when two black Local 10 longshoremen were pulled from their car, beaten by police and thrown in jail when returning to work after lunch (see WV No. 900, 12 October). All labor must demand: Drop the charges against Jason Ruffin and Aaron Harrison now!

The capitalist state—the courts, the cops, the military—is run in the interests of

America's Wall Street rulers by their dual parties, the Democrats and Republicans. Democratic Senator Dianne Feinstein was among the first to demand that Bush invoke Taft-Hartley in 2002, and Democratic Party politicians are some of the loudest calling for strengthening "port security." It is an indictment of the ILWU tops that they advocate support to "friends" in the Democratic Party and back government "port security" measures.

The anger of Local 10 members at the government's takeover of their union elections should be directed into a fight for the political independence of the working class from the exploiters, their political parties and the capitalist state. That means a struggle to build a workers party that fights for a workers government. For the unions to become battalions in the struggle against the capitalist profit system, they must break the political chains that tie them to the class enemy. *Government, courts out of the unions!* ■



Italy...

(continued from page 1)

Council sent in bulldozers to demolish shanties on the city’s outskirts, and the government launched an ethnically based roundup in Roma camps and immigrant neighborhoods. Police departments were mobilized to deport dozens of Roma and Romanian immigrants, and the government announced 5,000 more deportations.

The racist hysteria unleashed by the government has directly fed reactionary right-wing forces. The head of National Alliance, [Gianfranco] Fini, strolled through Rome neighborhoods calling for the deportation of all homeless people and unemployed immigrants, and fascist squads wielding clubs and knives attacked three Romanian immigrants in front of a supermarket. Racist patrols, arson and violent attacks have pounded Roma camps for months. The fascists are a deadly threat to all minorities, immigrants and the working class. *What is needed are defense guards of workers and immigrants, based on the trade unions, to defend Roma camps and immigrant neighborhoods!*

Although the fascists exploit the occasion to put their genocidal program into practice, the real immoral instigators of the lynching (to use the words of [leftist newspaper] *Il Manifesto*) are sitting in the government in Rome, and they are called the Democratic Party, Rifondazione Comunista & Co.

By attacking the Roma in the name of “security,” the government takes aim at an easy target, a marginalized and defenseless minority persecuted for centuries and surrounded by pervasive racist prejudice. The government’s real aim is to tighten

control on the flow of immigrant labor and to strengthen the repressive powers of the bourgeois state apparatus. The capitalists need a pool of labor that is deprived of rights and can be blackmailed and subjected to threats of deportation in order to increase profits, increase the exploitation of the proletariat and divide it along ethnic lines. In Italy there are 600,000 Romanian immigrants, concentrated in the most exploited and oppressed layers of the proletariat. Such a victim was Ion Cazacu, a construction worker burned to death in the town of Gallarate in 2000 by his Italian “master” for having dared to ask for decent working conditions.

With the extension of the European Union to include Romania and other East European countries, the capitalists fear that immigrants who have formally become European citizens will be more difficult to discriminate against, deport and terrorize than non-EU citizens. The expansion of the European Union is the fruit of the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union and the East European deformed workers states, a historic defeat for the proletariat that reduced these countries to miserable semicolonies of imperialist Europe, prey to interethnic conflicts and nationalist wars.

Restrictions on the right to work and the racist persecutions and deportations that Romanian immigrants are subjected to show the true face of the European imperialist “democracies.” For the countries of East Europe, entry into the European Union meant “shock therapy” against workers and minorities and the transformation of those countries into protectorates of the main European imperialist powers (including Italy, one of the main investors in Romania). Just as the racial

laws against Slovenians, Croats, Roma and Jews under fascism served the imperial fantasies of the Italian bourgeoisie, so today nationalist revanchism and attacks against immigrants and minorities are part of the bourgeoisie’s ambitions to play the role of regional power in the Mediterranean and the Balkans. *No restrictions against East European workers! Stop the deportations! Down with the capitalist European Union!*

The anti-immigrant decree coincides with a fierce anti-worker offensive symbolized by pension cuts and increased slashing of work contracts. It is necessary to fight for the distribution of all existing work among the entire workforce without any cuts to wages and including an adequate sliding scale of wages. It is necessary to fight for the unionization of all non-unionized workers. The fight for the immediate, basic needs of the working masses must be linked to the perspective of proletarian power and an internationally planned and collectivized economy that places humanity’s enormous resources in the service of the masses and not for the profit of a small minority of exploiters. It is in the interests of all workers to defeat the government’s racist attacks. An attack on one is an attack on all: *Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!*

Following approval of the decree, [RC’s] *Liberazione* (2 November) denounced the government’s measures. What a pity that Rifondazione is *directly responsible* for the new “racial laws.” RC is part of the government that approved them. Its Minister for “Social Welfare,” Paolo Ferrero, voted in favor of the decree and RC leaders defend it. In the end, Rifondazione would be happy with a figleaf amendment to sweeten the repressive decree. These racist laws are *an integral part of Rifondazione’s policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie*. It is not the first time that Rifondazione has approved such laws. The most obvious example is that of the Turco-Napolitano Law of the first Prodi government [1996-98], for which Rifondazione voted and which instituted the CPT ethnic prisons and opened the road to deportations and racist terror. After having withdrawn its support to the first Prodi government, RC then opposed the CPT and the [2002 anti-immigrant] Bossi-Fini Law, but once back in government it continued to support racist laws, imperialist missions (Lebanon and Afghanistan) and anti-worker measures.

The Prodi government is a *capitalist government*, a variant of what Marxists call popular fronts: coalitions between bourgeois parties and reformist workers parties. We oppose all forms of support to or trust in these governments. We are against any kind of electoral support, however “critical” it may be, to parties of the working class that are in popular fronts. In contrast are the reformist tails of Rifondazione, which all supported the government in the elections: Falcemartello [affiliated with the International Marxist Tendency of the late Ted Grant], the Workers Communist Party [MPCL—affiliated with Jorge Altamira’s Coordinating Committee for the Refoundation of the Fourth International] and Sinistra Critica [Critical Left—affiliated with the United Secretariat of the late Ernest Mandel]. These groups also bear responsibility for the government’s attacks.

Falcemartello continues to remain inside Rifondazione as the latter sells out working-class interests bit by bit, and this *in itself* is class betrayal. From the moment it was clear that RC’s credibility in the eyes of workers was at risk, Falcemartello called on RC to quit the government in order to save face. But this operation, doubly criminal, serves only to maintain Rifondazione’s authority in the workers movement and to spread the illusion that it is possible to transform RC into a party that fights for the interests of the workers. Even should RC break with the government, as it did in 1998 so as not to lose control of its base, it would do so in order to tie workers to class collaboration with the bourgeoisie. Rifondazione Comunista cannot be reformed. It is a bourgeois workers

party, with a social base in the workers movement and a pro-capitalist leadership and program. In order to fight for the interests of workers and immigrants, it is necessary *to break with the class collaboration of Rifondazione, Falcemartello, Sinistra Critica and MPCL*.

The bourgeoisie considers the Roma to be some sort of “subhumans” that they would like to get rid of and that make an easy scapegoat in periods of social and economic crisis. For centuries, the Roma have been persecuted and hunted from one country to another. With the end of



Spartaco

April 20: LTd’I at Milan protest against police attacks on Chinese immigrants. Placard denounces “Popular Front of Racism, Repression and Imperialism.”

the pre-capitalist economy in which they occupied a marginal economic niche as artisans and performing artists, they were thrown to the margins of society, becoming victims of terrible persecutions, bloody pogroms and the Nazi and fascist extermination, ending with the *porrajmos*, the extermination of 500,000 Roma. Capitalism in its phase of decay continues to keep this persecuted people in a state of endemic poverty and segregation. Only socialist revolution will make possible the full integration of Roma into society with full rights, as shown by the example of the October 1917 proletarian revolution in Russia that overthrew capitalist power. The October Revolution destroyed the tsarist empire—that prison house of peoples—and laid the basis for freeing the oppressed nations and ethnic minorities, including the Roma peoples, from the jackboot of Great Russian chauvinism.

Professing his anti-communist faith, RC leader Nichi Vendola justified the racist stereotypes against Romanians, saying that “during the regimes of Eastern Europe, Romania was a black hole, a conglomeration of moral and material misery” (*Il Manifesto*, 2 November). Even under the grotesque Stalinist regime of Ceaucescu, Romania (as with Tito’s Yugoslavia) was a deformed workers state in which the collectivized and nationalized economy guaranteed an unprecedented standard of living and degree of national and ethnic integration. The Roma were recognized as a national minority and had the right to education in their language, besides being relatively integrated into the proletariat, army and state apparatus. It was the counterrevolutionary destruction of those workers states that turned the Balkans, East Europe and the Soviet Union into a conglomerate of interethnic massacres, nationalist genocide and desperate poverty. The current emigration of Roma from Romania is often in order to escape horrible racist persecution.

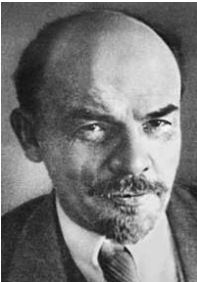
The LTd’I fought to the end for unconditional military defense of these deformed workers states and the Soviet Union against capitalist counterrevolution, and for a workers political revolution to sweep away the Stalinist bureaucratic caste and replace it with a workers soviet government. On the contrary, Falcemartello, Sinistra Critica and the forerunners of the MPCL all sided with the forces of counterrevolution supported by the imperialists, contributing to counterrevolution with all its devastating consequences. The LTd’I fights to build a revolutionary, multiethnic workers party that mobilizes the working class at the head of all the oppressed in the struggle for a socialist society.■



TROTSKY

To be, or not to be; that is the question:
Whether ’tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous
fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And, by opposing, end them. To die,
to sleep—
No more, and by a sleep to say we end
The heartache and the thousand
natural shocks
That flesh is heir to—’tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wished. To die, to sleep.
To sleep, perchance to dream. Ay, there’s
the rub,
For in that sleep of death what dreams
may come
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil
Must give us pause. There’s the respect
That makes calamity of so long life,
For who would bear the whips and scorns
of time,

—William Shakespeare, *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*, Act III, Scene I



LENIN

Th’oppressor’s wrong, the proud
man’s contumely,
The pangs of disprized love, the law’s delay,
The insulence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of th’unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin? Who would these
fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,
The undiscovered country from whose bourn
No traveller returns, puzzles the will,
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of
us all,
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o’er with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great pith and moment
With this regard their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action.

WORKERS VANGUARD

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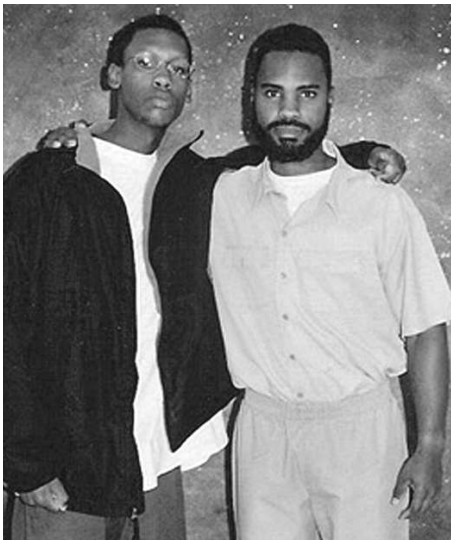
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The closing date for news in this issue is November 20.

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Monique Code
Jamal Hart (right) with son.

22nd Annual Holiday Appeal



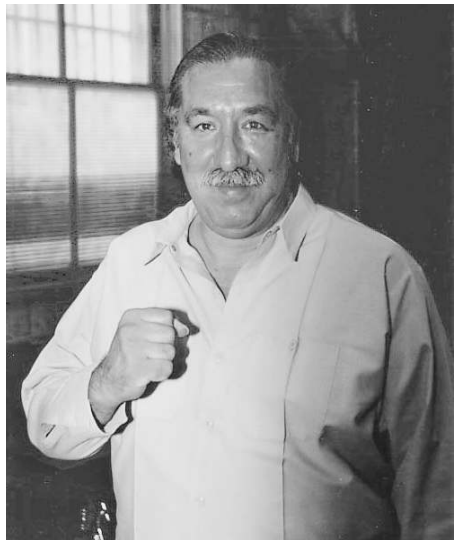
December 16th Committee
Tom Manning



strugglemag
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Ben Corbett
Leonard Peltier

Free the Class-War Prisoners!

“The class-conscious worker accords to the class-war prisoners a place of singular honor and esteem.”

—James P. Cannon, “The Cause that Passes Through a Prison,” *Labor Defender*, September 1926

For the past 22 years, the Partisan Defense Committee has been sending monthly stipends as an expression of solidarity to those imprisoned for standing up to racist capitalist repression. In doing so, we have revived the tradition initiated by the International Labor Defense (ILD) under Cannon, a founding leader of the Communist Party and the ILD’s first secretary (1925-28). This year, as in years past, the PDC calls on labor activists, fighters for black rights, radical youth and defenders of civil liberties to join us in building our annual Holiday Appeal, which raises funds for this unique program.

The Holiday Appeal benefits will focus particularly on our campaign to mobilize mass protest demanding freedom for death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. Mumia currently awaits a decision by a federal appeals court on whether to reinstitute the death sentence, keep him entombed in prison for life or grant him a new trial or other legal proceedings. For those fighting for Mumia’s freedom, there must be no illusions in capitalist “justice.” Earlier this year, the capitalist courts again turned down appeals by class-war prisoners Leonard Peltier, Ed Poindexter and Mumia’s son Jamal Hart. Build the Holiday Appeal! Free all class-war prisoners!

Mumia Abu-Jamal is a former Black Panther Party spokesman, a well-known supporter of the MOVE organization and an award-winning journalist known as “the voice of the voiceless.” The fight to free America’s foremost class-war prisoner has reached a crucial juncture. This past May, oral arguments were heard before the U.S. Third Circuit Court of Appeals—the last stage before the U.S. Supreme Court. A decision could come at any moment.

9 December 2007 marks the 26th anniversary of Mumia’s arrest for a killing that the cops know he did not commit. Mumia was framed up for the 1981 killing of Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner and sentenced to death explicitly for his political views. More than six years ago, Mumia’s attorneys submitted to the courts the sworn confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Mumia, shot and killed Faulkner, but to the racists in black robes, a court of law is no place for evidence of the innocence of this fighter for the oppressed.

Mumia faces the racist death penalty or life in prison because he has always spoken for the oppressed, like the Jena 6 or those left to die in New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Workers, immigrants, minorities and all opponents of racist oppression must redouble their efforts to free Mumia now!

Leonard Peltier is an internationally revered class-war prisoner. His incarceration

**Partisan Defense Committee**

CLASS-STRUGGLE DEFENSE NOTES

tion for his activism in the American Indian Movement has come to symbolize this country’s racist repression of its native peoples, the survivors of centuries of genocidal oppression. Peltier’s frame-up trial for the deaths of two marauding FBI agents in what had become a war zone at the South Dakota Pine Ridge Reservation in 1975 shows what capitalist “justice” is all about. Although the lead government attorney has admitted: “We can’t prove who shot those agents,” and the courts have acknowledged blatant prosecutorial misconduct, the 63-year-old Peltier is still locked away. In separate lawsuits, early this year federal courts in New York and Minnesota kept under government seal thousands of FBI documents, once again covering up the racist frame-up that has already stolen 30 years of his life.

Jamal Hart, Mumia’s son, was sentenced in 1998 to 15½ years without parole on bogus firearms possession charges. Hart was targeted for his prominent activism in the campaign to free his father. Although Hart was initially charged under Pennsylvania laws, which would have meant a probationary sentence, Clinton’s Justice Department intervened to have Hart thrown into prison under federal laws. Hart was transferred to Minersville, PA, where prison officials subjected him to repeated provocations and improperly adjusted Hart’s security level to deny him transfer to a lower level security facility; a transfer to Loretto, PA, has finally been granted. In October, the U.S. Third Circuit Court of Appeals summarily turned down Hart’s *habeas corpus* petition which would have freed him after more than ten years in prison.

Eight MOVE members, **Chuck Africa, Michael Africa, Debbie Africa, Janet Africa, Janine Africa, Delbert Africa, Eddie Africa** and **Phil Africa**, are in their 30th year of prison. They were sentenced to 30-100 years after the 8 August 1978 siege of their Philadelphia home by over 600 heavily armed cops, falsely convicted of killing a police officer who died in the cops’ own cross fire. In 1985, eleven of their MOVE family members, including five children, were massacred by Philly cops. In 2008, the MOVE prisoners will be eligible for parole, but without massive calls for their freedom can only expect continued imprisonment.

Jaan Laaman and **Thomas Manning** are the remaining anti-imperialist activists known as the Ohio 7 still in prison, convicted for their roles in a radical group that took credit for bank “expropriations” and bombings in the late 1970s and ’80s

against symbols of U.S. imperialism such as military and corporate offices. Before their arrests in 1984 and 1985, the Ohio 7 were targets of massive manhunts. Their children were kidnapped at gunpoint by the Feds.

The Ohio 7’s politics were once shared by thousands of radicals during the Vietnam antiwar movement and by New Leftists who wrote off the possibility of winning the working class to a revolutionary program and saw themselves as an auxiliary of Third World liberation movements. But, like the Weathermen before them, the Ohio 7 were spurned by the “respectable” left. From a proletarian standpoint, the actions of these leftist activists against imperialism and racist injustice are not a crime. They should not have served a day in prison.

Ed Poindexter and **Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa** are former Black Panther supporters and leaders of the Omaha, Nebraska, National Committee to Combat Fascism. They were victims of

the deadly FBI COINTELPRO operation under which 38 Black Panther Party members were killed and hundreds more imprisoned on frame-up charges. Poindexter and Mondo, railroaded to prison for a 1970 explosion which killed a cop, were sentenced to life and have now served more than 35 years in jail. In September, a Nebraska court denied a new trial for Poindexter despite the fact that a crucial piece of evidence excluded from the original trial, a long-suppressed 911 audio tape, proved that testimony of the state’s key witness was perjured.

Hugo Pinell is the last of the San Quentin 6 still in prison. He was a militant anti-racist leader of prison rights organizing along with his comrade and mentor, George Jackson, who was gunned down by prison guards in 1971. Despite hundreds of letters of support and no disciplinary write-ups for over 26 years, Pinell has repeatedly been denied parole, most recently in November 2006. Now in his 60s, Pinell continues to serve a life sentence at the notorious Pelican Bay Security Housing Unit in California.

Contribute now! All proceeds from the Holiday Appeals will go to the Class-War Prisoners Stipend Fund. Send your contributions to: PDC, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013; (212) 406-4252. ■

22nd Annual Holiday Appeal for Class-War Prisoners

Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!

Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!



Bay Area Sunday, December 2 3 to 6 p.m. Berkeley Fellowship of Unitarian Universalists 1606 Bonita Ave., Berkeley (1 block east of MLK at Cedar St., near Berkeley BART) For more information: (510) 839-0852	Chicago Sunday, December 9 3 to 7 p.m. United Electrical Hall 37 S. Ashland (at Monroe) For more information: (312) 563-0442	Los Angeles Saturday, December 8 2 to 6 p.m. Immanuel Presbyterian Church 3300 Wilshire Blvd. (at Berendo Street, 2 blocks west of Vermont/Wilshire Red Line Sta.) For more information: (213) 380-8897
New York City Sunday, December 16 5 to 9 p.m. CWA Local 1180 Hall 6 Harrison St., Manhattan (#1 Train to Franklin, west on Franklin to Hudson, 1 block south to Harrison) For more information: (212) 406-4252	Toronto Friday, December 14 7 to 10 p.m. Steelworkers Hall 25 Cecil Street (1 block south of College at Ross St., west of Queen’s Park Station) For more information: (416) 593-4138	Sponsored by the Partisan Defense Committee More information: (212) 406-4252 partisandefense@earthlink.net www.partisandefense.org Photo credit: Jennifer Beach

Spartacists at NYC Bryan Palmer Presentation

Defending the Legacy of James P. Cannon

On October 12, social historian Bryan Palmer spoke about his recently published *James P. Cannon and the Origins of the American Revolutionary Left, 1890-1928* at a meeting sponsored by New York University's Tamiment Library. The event was co-sponsored by the Prometheus Research Library, the central reference archive of the Spartacist League, U.S. section of the International Communist League. The PRL had made available to Palmer material on the Communist Party of the U.S. and the Communist International in their early Leninist phase, and more generally aided in research for the book. Also co-sponsoring Palmer's talk were the Freedom Socialist Party (FSP), Socialist Action, the Socialist Equality Party (SEP) and the International Bolshevik Tendency (BT), most of whom (falsely) claim to stand in Cannon's tradition. Other left groups, including the Internationalist Group (IG), Solidarity and the League for the Revolutionary Party, were among the overflow audience of some 120.

As we noted in "A Biography of James P. Cannon" (*Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 60, Autumn 2007), the publication of this book is a major event for us. A founding leader of the American Communist movement and later of American Trotskyism, Cannon was the finest revolutionary yet produced in the United States. Cannon's status at the time of his death in 1974 as National Chairman emeritus of the reformist Socialist Workers Party (SWP), which had abandoned a revolutionary program more than ten years earlier, does not negate his many years as the foremost Leninist leader in this country. As SL National Chairman James Robertson noted in a 1974 memorial meeting for Cannon: "All that comrade Cannon could do—and it was not a personal capacity but was evolved out of his times and out of his battles—was to be the successful strategist and leader of a proletarian revolution in North America!" (*Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 38-39, Summer 1986).

Palmer's book is a substantial addition to the existing published material on Cannon's political evolution and his leadership role in the first decade of American Communism. The study of this period of his life is critical for revolutionaries not only in the U.S. but internationally because of the unique continuity of Leninism-Trotskyism in the U.S., a continuity that was broken in, for example, France and China. In addition to Cannon's writings on the history of American Communism and Trotskyism, the new biography supplements the PRL's own books on Cannon: *James P. Cannon and the Early Years of American Communism: Selected Writings and Speeches, 1920-1928* (1992) and *Dog Days: James P. Cannon vs. Max Shachtman in the Communist League of America, 1931-1933* (2002).

The Tamiment event was democratically run, with each co-sponsoring organization getting a literature table. After Palmer's 45-minute speech, which recapped the highlights of his book and stressed that Cannon "was the red thread of continuity in the American revolutionary tradition," each co-sponsoring organization had three minutes' presentation time. The floor was then opened for wider discussion. Our comrades relished the all-too-rare opportunity to polemically engage political opponents whose responses usually range from evasion to exclusion or violence.

We stand on the program and legacy of the revolutionary James P. Cannon. The same cannot be said for any of the other co-sponsoring organizations, whose

occasional hosannas to Cannon stand in contrast to their anti-revolutionary practices. Against the "unity of the left" swamp, our comrades distinguished themselves as those who stand in the tradition of Cannon, i.e., Bolshevism. We exposed the emptiness of our political opponents' pretenses to stand in the Cannon tradition on two fundamental principles of Leninism-Trotskyism: the need for a complete organizational and political split

parties around the world.

Calls for regroupment are hollow in this period of deep reaction, shaped above all by the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92, a world-historic defeat for the working class. While the bulk of the left internationally either hailed or abetted this defeat, we Spartacists fought to the end against the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet degenerated workers state and the

that seriously addressing Palmer's work, including forthrightly criticizing its weaknesses, was left to the speakers from the PRL,

SL and Partisan Defense Committee. The entire event had an odd quality. There was some genuine debate between us and Palmer, while the other groups engaged in abstract and hypocritical praise of Cannon, turning him into a harmless icon.

Sales of Spartacist and PRL literature were brisk. It was noteworthy that many people bought the ICL's new two-volume bulletin, "The Logan Dossier." Bill Logan was expelled from our tendency in 1979 for crimes against communist morality and elementary human decency. Among his crimes, Logan used his organizational position as chairman of our Australian section to break up couples and to try to force a young woman to get an abortion and, failing that, to give up her baby. We published these bulletins to emphasize that a pathological monster like Bill Logan has no place in the workers movement. Yet the BT long ago embraced Logan as its leader. That in itself says everything one needs to know about what this dubious organization means by "regroupment."

On October 20, one week after the Tamiment event, we observed an example of such "regroupment" at a Bay Area Labor Conference to Stop the War, at which Logan masqueraded as a bona fide "workers' leader" from New Zealand and Australia. At that conference, the IG's Jan Norden engaged in an oh-so-polite political exchange with Logan, legitimizing him as part of the workers movement. Long before departing our organization in 1996, Norden had condemned Logan as a "criminally sociopathic individual." But no longer. As we wrote in "Labor Opportunists, Renegades Embrace Bill Logan" (WV No. 901, 26 October), "For the IG, embracing Logan, the revolting antithesis of the liberating goals of Marxism, was the admission price, happily paid, into the pro-Democratic Party 'anti-war' swamp in the Bay Area."

Political Bandits and Cannon Bashers

Many of the co-sponsoring organizations had written their own reviews of Palmer's book. The award for the most outrageous dishonesty in a review goes to David North's SEP and its "World Socialist Web Site." The previous incarnation of the SEP, the Workers League, and its parent group, Gerry Healy's International Committee, slandered Cannon as a "prisoner of the reactionary pragmatic and empiricist method" who failed to "master the algebra of revolution" and as an "anti-dialectical" bureaucrat shaped in the school of the degenerating Communist International under Gregory Zinoviev (Michael Banda, *James P. Cannon: A Critical Assessment* [1975]). In their sinister "Security and the Fourth International," the Healyites peddled the Stalinist lie that Joseph Hansen and other leaders of Cannon's SWP were complicit in Trotsky's 1940 assassination by a Stalinist agent. (For more on the Healy outfit, see "Healyism Implodes" and other material in *Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 36-37, Winter 1985-86.) None of these slanders made their way into the SEP's review of Palmer's book by Fred Mazelis titled, "A Fighter for Marxism in America."

While Mazelis waxed lyrical at the Tamiment event about Cannon's fusion of "the strengths of revolutionary syndicalism with the lessons of Bolshevism," the

continued on page 8

October 12: Bryan Palmer speaking about his new biography of James P. Cannon at Tamiment Library in New York City.

WV Photo



from reformism and centrism as a precondition for building a revolutionary vanguard workers party, and the unconditional military defense of the Soviet workers state that issued out of the 1917 Russian Revolution.

"Revolutionary Regroupment" ...Out of Defeat?

We took issue with Palmer's call at the end of his presentation for "revolutionary regroupment" among leftists, a sentiment echoed by the BT and Solidarity. Regroupment generally results from big changes in the objective situation, usually victories, and involves a process of splits and fusions. The Bolshevik Revolution (October 1917), toward the end of the terrible world war, impelled hundreds of thousands of former left social democrats, anarchists and syndicalists (Cannon among them) to re-examine their political programs, laying the basis for the founding of the Third (Communist) International and the construction of Communist

deformed workers states of East and Central Europe. As Leon Trotsky pointed out to supporters who thought that the Left Opposition's trenchant analysis of the Stalinist betrayal of the 1925-27 Chinese Revolution would bring significant recruitment, "our predictions can win some few intellectuals who take an interest in such things, but not the masses" ("Fighting Against the Stream," April 1939).

Talk of regroupment from the mouths of such opponents of the revolutionary working-class movement as those at the Tamiment event can mean only one thing: huddling together as the "left" (or not so left) wing of class collaborationism in whatever liberal, pro-Democratic Party "movement" happens to be popular. In contrast, the SL continues Cannon's fight for the *political independence* of the proletariat from the bourgeoisie, its parties and the capitalist state.

Our comrades went into the Tamiment meeting politically armed with the extensive *Spartacist* review. It was telling



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Cannon with Red Army soldiers at time of 1928 Sixth Comintern Congress. First issue of the *Militant*, launched in 1928, declares support for International Left Opposition. November 1932 issue of U.S. Trotskyist youth paper salutes 15th anniversary of October Revolution.

The Development and Extension of Leon Trotsky's Theory of Permanent Revolution

Part One of this article appeared in WV No. 901 (26 October) and Part Two in WV No. 902 (9 November).

PART THREE

It was in the wake of the catastrophic defeat of the Second Chinese Revolution of 1925-27 that Leon Trotsky generalized his theory and perspective of permanent revolution, which had been borne out by the Russian October Revolution of 1917, to other countries of belated capitalist development. In the period between 1923 and 1925, the Chinese proletariat had not yet emerged as a contender for power. At this time, Trotsky correctly stood for Soviet military aid to the bourgeois-nationalist Guomindang (GMD) and for a military bloc between the GMD and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) against the warlords, who were agents of one imperialist power or another. His prognosis for colonial revolutions in this period still had the tentative quality of the 1920 Communist International (CI) Second Congress "Theses on the National and Colonial Question," which did not exclude the possibility of a radical bourgeois regime arising for a time in China.

Even as he warned the embryonic Communist movements of the East against adapting to nationalism, Trotsky stated, "There is no doubt that if the Chinese Guomindang party manages to unify China under a national-democratic regime then the capitalist development of China will go ahead with seven-mile strides" ("Perspectives and Tasks in the East," April 1924, reprinted under the headline "Communism and Women of the East" in *Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 60, Autumn 2007). But in contrast to the Troika of J.V. Stalin, Lev Kamenev and Gregory Zinoviev that stood at the head of the Soviet Communist Party and the CI, Trotsky opposed the CCP's entry into the Guomindang. He insisted that the Chinese Communists maintain their independence and not merge political banners with the bourgeois nationalists.

The Second Chinese Revolution began with the Shanghai Incident of 30 May 1925, when British troops fired into a demonstration protesting repression against strikers, killing 12. In response, a general strike was called in Shanghai, which quickly spread. British goods were boycotted and Chinese longshoremen in Hong Kong bottled up the port. The GMD drove out the local warlord in Canton, but



Kelley & Walsh

Public meeting of Shanghai General Union during workers' takeover of city, Spring 1927.

the growing general strike made a clash between the Chinese bourgeoisie and the proletariat inevitable. In 1925, up to a million workers participated in strikes, many of them directly political in nature. Two years later, Chinese unions counted three million members.

Sun Yat-sen, the founder of Chinese nationalism, had died in 1925. His successor, General Chiang Kai-shek, launched a coup in Canton in March 1926 to crush the proletariat and roll back the CCP's positions within the GMD. In May, Chiang ordered the CCP to turn over a list of its members in the GMD. Key CCP leaders renewed their calls for the party to exit the GMD. But the CI representative, Mikhail Borodin, declared that Communists should do "coolie service" for the GMD and this nationalist party was even admitted to the Comintern as a "sympathizing" section. Only Trotsky voted against this, in the Russian Politburo. The "two-stage revolution" propounded for China by Stalin's Comintern was a rehash of the Mensheviks' servile position in 1917 when they supported, and then entered, the bourgeois Provisional Government—with the added twist that the CCP was liquidated wholesale into the bourgeois Guomindang.

The decisive political events took place the following year in Shanghai. As

Chiang's army approached in March, over 500,000 workers staged a general strike, which turned into an insurrection. The workers stormed the police stations and drove the warlords out of the city. The proletariat had Shanghai in its hands, but Stalin ordered the CCP to give Chiang a triumphant welcome as he entered the city on March 26. Two days later Chiang declared martial law. On March 31, as these events were unfolding, Trotsky demanded that the CCP organize soviets and initiate a revolutionary struggle for power. But that same day Stalin & Co. ordered the CCP to hide its weapons. Stalin had ordered a surrender, and Chiang would take no prisoners.

On April 12, Chiang staged a massive coup—tens of thousands of Communists and trade unionists were slaughtered. The Comintern then turned to the Guomindang's "left" faction based in Wuhan and had the CCP enter a coalition government there. But the "left" GMD quickly turned its guns on the CCP and reunited with Chiang.

Faced with Trotsky's scathing criticisms of Stalin's conciliationist policies, as the 15th Congress of the Russian Communist Party opened in December 1927, Stalin cynically called an uprising in Canton. Having fought against Trotsky's call to form soviets at the height of the pro-

letarian upsurge, Stalin now attempted to conjure up a Canton "soviet" out of thin air. The Communist workers, despite their heroic efforts, never had a chance. After the massive defeat in Shanghai, the bulk of the working masses remained passive. The Canton Commune added an estimated 5,700 fatalities to the terrible toll of 1927.

The defeat of the Second Chinese Revolution had a profound impact on the CCP. Retreating to the countryside, the party turned away from the proletariat, transforming itself into a peasant party both in composition and political outlook. When the 1949 Chinese Revolution overthrew capitalist rule, it did so under the leadership of a Stalinized, peasant-based party that established a bureaucratically deformed workers state, in which the proletariat was excluded from political power.

Permanent Revolution and the Joint Opposition

A political assessment of the catastrophic defeat of the 1925-27 Chinese Revolution was indispensable, and it was carried out by Trotsky. From March 1926 on, his attention had been focused on China. When he submitted a report to the Politburo on military-diplomatic dangers in the Far East that month, he again proposed that the CCP leave the Guomindang instantly. As noted by the Marxist historian Isaac Deutscher in *The Prophet Unarmed* (1959), Trotsky held that "it was the diplomat's business to make deals with existing bourgeois governments—even with old-time warlords; but it was the revolutionaries' job to overthrow them." This was a declaration of war by Trotsky, the beginning of his direct intervention into Comintern policies in China.

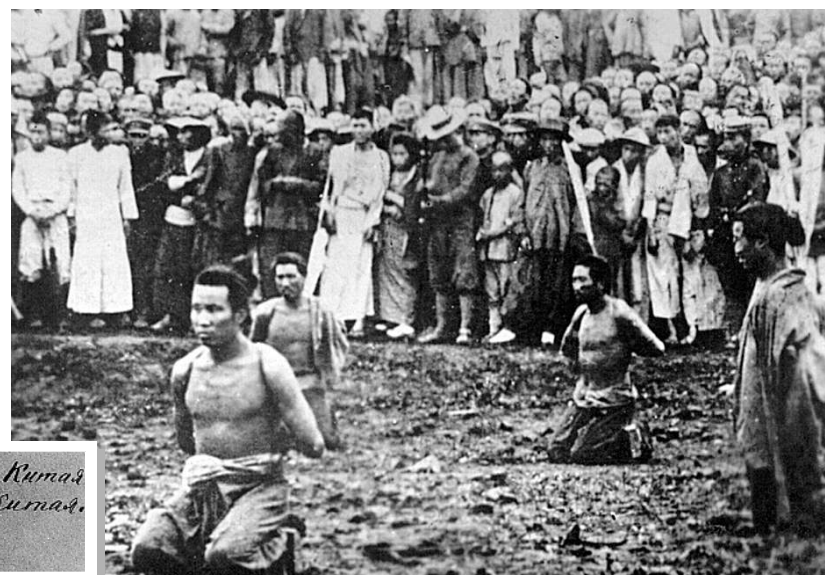
In September 1926, Trotsky argued in "The Chinese Communist Party and the Kuomintang":

"The petty bourgeoisie, by itself, however numerous it may be, cannot decide the main line of revolutionary policy. The differentiation of the political struggle along class lines, the sharp divergence between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, implies a struggle between them for influence over the petty bourgeoisie, and it implies the vacillation of the petty bourgeoisie between the merchants, on the one hand, and the workers and communists, on the other."

Up until that year, Trotsky had sought to evade the bureaucracy's charge that the theory of permanent revolution was his original sin against Leninism. But now the question of permanent revolution vs. the Menshevik/Stalinist dogma of "two-



Ган-Рай-Меру, правому нацарити Китая
В знак победы Гоминдана и освобождения Китая.
От Сталина.



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Left: Workers take over Shanghai as Chiang Kai-shek's forces approach city, 1927. Stalin's 1927 autographed photo (center) dedicated to Chiang "in honor of the victory of the Guomindang and the liberation of China." Right: Tens of thousands were massacred following Chiang's 12 April 1927 coup in Shanghai.

stage” revolution posed the very fate of the Chinese proletariat. As Trotsky would write in a footnote in *The Permanent Revolution* (1930): “I found myself compelled to return to this question only at the moment when the epigones’ criticism of the theory of the permanent revolution not only began to nurture theoretical reaction in the whole International, but also became converted into a means of direct sabotage of the Chinese Revolution.”

For most of the period when the dispute over China raged, Trotsky’s Left Opposition was in a political bloc with the Leningrad-based opposition of Zinoviev, who, along with Kamenev, had fallen out with Stalin in late 1925. In “A Critical Balance Sheet: Trotsky and the Russian Left Opposition” (*Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 56, Spring 2001) we observed: “Trotsky and Zinoviev-Kamenev shared a theoretical opposition to ‘socialism in one country’ and an opposition to the pro-peasant economic policies of the Stalin/Bukharin bloc. But they differed on the concretes of Comintern policy.”

Within this Joint Opposition there were significant differences over China. Zinoviev had been the chairman of the Comintern until he was removed in October 1926 and thus had heavy responsibility for its early policy in China, including the decision to enter the Guomindang. The Zinovievites opposed the demand raised by Trotsky that the CCP leave the GMD, even after the latter had begun openly carrying out counter-revolutionary policies. And the public line of the Joint Opposition was that of the Zinovievites.

In early 1927, as part of his accommodation with Zinoviev, Trotsky supported the call for a “democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry,” a slogan he had rejected two decades earlier in the Russian context. Likewise, the September 1927 platform of the Joint Opposition declared: “Trotsky has stated to the International that on all the fundamental questions over which he had differences with Lenin, Lenin was right—in particular on the questions of the permanent revolution and the peasantry.” And by the time the Joint Opposition publicly called for the CCP to leave the Guomindang in the fall of 1927, the question was moot, as all wings of the GMD had turned on the Communists.

It was not until September 1927 that Trotsky unambiguously asserted: “The Chinese revolution at its new stage will win as a dictatorship of the proletariat, or it will not win at all” (“New Opportunities for the Chinese Revolution”). In a 1928 letter to Left Oppositionist Evgeny Preobrazhensky, Trotsky acknowledged:

“From April to May 1927 I supported the slogan of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry for China (more correctly, I went along with this slogan) inasmuch as the social forces had not as yet rendered their political verdict, although the situation in China was immeasurably less propitious for this slogan than in Russia. After this verdict was rendered by a gigantic historical action (the experience of Wuhan) the slogan of the democratic dictatorship became a reactionary force and will lead inevitably either to opportunism or adventurism.” (our translation)

Trotsky summed up the cardinal political lesson of the defeat of the Second Chinese Revolution in “The Political Situation in China and the Tasks of the Bolshevik-Leninist Opposition” (June 1929):

“*Never and under no circumstances may the party of the proletariat enter into a party of another class or merge with it organizationally.* An absolutely independent party of the proletariat is a first and decisive condition for communist politics.”

Zinoviev and Kamenev capitulated to Stalin at the December 1927 15th Party Congress. Some 1,500 Oppositionists were soon expelled and allowed re-entry only on condition of denouncing permanent revolution. This Congress marked the end of the Joint Opposition and sent shock waves into the Left Opposition itself, some of whose members reconciled themselves to the nationalist dogma of “socialism in one country.” Preobrazhensky declared, “We, the old Bolsheviks in opposition, must dissociate ourselves from Trot-



Crapouillot

1928: Leon Trotsky with Natalya Sedova and son Leon Sedov in exile in Alma Ata, where Trotsky wrote his critique of the draft program of the Comintern and started work on *The Permanent Revolution*.

sky on the point of permanent revolution” (quoted in Isaac Deutscher, *The Prophet Unarmed*).

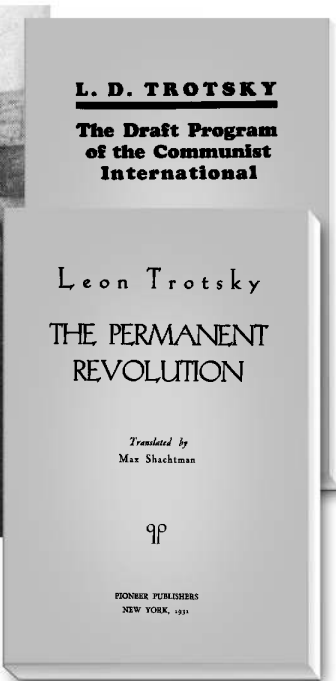
Trotsky Rearms

In rising to the unprecedented challenge of fighting against the bureaucratic usurpation in the Soviet Union and its catastrophic consequences in China, Trotsky had to grow as a Leninist party leader. A letter left for Trotsky by Adolf Joffe upon his suicide played a key role in stiffening Trotsky’s resolve in the struggle to forge the International Left Opposition. (The Stalinists had denied Joffe permission to travel abroad to seek medical treatment.) In his 16 November 1927 letter, Joffe asserted:

“I have always believed that you lacked Lenin’s *unbending will*, his *unwillingness to yield*, his readiness even to remain alone on the path that he thought right in the anticipation of a future majority.... *Politically you were always right*, beginning with 1905, and I told you repeatedly that with my own ears I had heard Lenin admit that even in 1905, *you, and not he*, were right.... “But you have often *abandoned your rightness* for the sake of an overvalued agreement or compromise. This is a mistake.”

In his dying words, Joffe confirmed that Lenin had explicitly acknowledged the correctness of the theory of permanent revolution advanced by Trotsky for Russia in 1905. Joffe wrote this just as Trotsky grasped the global validity of permanent revolution. Once and for all Trotsky absorbed Lenin’s “policy of irreconcilable ideological demarcation and, when necessary, split, for the purpose of welding and tempering the core of the truly revolutionary party,” as he put it in *The Permanent Revolution*, which was framed as a polemic against Karl Radek, one of the former Oppositionists who had capitulated to Stalin.

The programmatic founding document of the international Trotskyist movement was Trotsky’s “The Draft Program of the Communist International—A Criticism of Fundamentals” (published in English in *The Third International After Lenin*), a critique of the Stalin/Bukharin draft pro-



gram submitted to the Sixth CI Congress in 1928. Trotsky sharply drew the lessons of the defeat of the Second Chinese Revolution, linking the fight against the bureaucratic degeneration of the Russian Revolution with the defense of permanent revolution as the core of the program for the colonial and semicolonial world. He branded the “democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry” slogan a “noose for the proletariat” and emphatically affirmed that permanent revolution had “been completely verified and proven: in theory, by the works of Marx and Lenin; in practice, by the experience of the October Revolution.”

In “Summary and Perspectives of the Chinese Revolution” (also included in *The Third International After Lenin*), Trotsky noted that in the brief time that Communist workers held power in Canton, their program included workers control of production, nationalization of large industry, the banks and transportation, “and even the confiscation of bourgeois dwellings and all bourgeois property for the benefit of the toilers.” He asked: “If these are the methods of a bourgeois revolution then what should the proletarian revolution in China look like?”

Trotsky explained permanent revolution as the *antithesis* of “socialism in one country”:

“It is precisely here that we come up against the two mutually exclusive standpoints: the international revolutionary theory of the permanent revolution and the national reformist theory of socialism in one country. Not only backward China, but in general no country in the world can build socialism within its own national limits.”

—*The Permanent Revolution*

In his November 1929 introduction to the first Russian edition of *The Permanent Revolution*, Trotsky noted, “The socialist revolution begins on national foundations—but it cannot be completed within these foundations. The maintenance of the proletarian revolution within a national framework can only be a provisional state of affairs, even though, as the experience of the Soviet Union shows, one of long duration. In an iso-

lated proletarian dictatorship, the internal and external contradictions grow inevitably along with the successes achieved. If it remains isolated, the proletarian state must finally fall victim to these contradictions.”

Hundreds of young CCP cadre studying in Moscow were won to the Left Opposition. But it was not until after the beheading of the proletariat in April 1927 that CCP leaders in China like Chen Duxiu learned of Trotsky’s fight. By then Chen, the founding leader of Chinese Communism, had been made the scapegoat for the bloody disaster Stalin’s class collaborationism had wrought. Though isolated, Chen still had many defenders among the top party cadre, who shared his view that liquidation into the Guomindang had been behind the defeat. They had heard of factional fights in the Russian party but had no idea what they were about. When they finally read Trotsky’s critique of the Stalinist betrayal in China, Chen and many others were won to Trotskyism. While Chen had implemented the Comintern’s disastrous line, he had thought through his mistakes, which made him a better communist.

Many Chinese Trotskyists were killed by Stalin’s regime. By the late 1930s, to consolidate his position atop the bureaucracy that had usurped control of the Soviet party and state, Stalin had murdered or otherwise eliminated virtually every one of the surviving “old Bolshevik” cadres.

In China, the Trotskyists sought to maintain roots within the urban working



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Chen Duxiu, Chinese Communist Party founding leader, in 1922.

class under extremely onerous conditions. On top of Chiang’s counterrevolutionary terror came the murderous occupation of China by Japanese imperialism. As we noted in “The Origins of Chinese Trotskyism” (*Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 53, Summer 1997): “The 1930s did see some sporadic workers’ economic struggles in Shanghai and Hong Kong, in which the Trotskyists played leading roles. However the general prostration of the working masses, whose trade unions and other legal organizations had been smashed, took a great political toll.”

SACP’s “Two-Stage” Menshevism

In the aftermath of the Chinese debacle, the Stalinized Comintern proclaimed the imminence of the world revolution and embarked on its sectarian, pseudo-leftist “Third Period” course, abjuring united fronts with other workers organizations and building “red trade unions” in counterposition to the existing unions led by social democrats and others. The Third Period was driven largely by the domestic circumstances faced by the Soviet bureaucracy. A threatened counterrevolutionary rising by the wealthier peasants (kulaks) led Stalin to break from his rightist, conciliationist policies, which were articulated particularly by his ally Nikolai Bukharin. Stalin now borrowed from the Left Opposition’s program of collectivization and planned industrialization—albeit carried out by the bureaucracy in an arbitrary, adventurist manner and at breakneck pace. This turn facilitated the capitulation of leading Oppositionists like Radek and Preobrazhensky.

But the Stalinist bureaucracy never

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Basil Blackwell, Inc.

Trotskyist Left Oppositionists in Siberian exile demonstrate on anniversary of October Revolution, 1928. Banner on left reads: “Turn the Fire to the Right—Against the Kulak, Nepman and Bureaucrat.”

Cannon...

(continued from page 4)

SEP had written an article that joined the bosses in calling to keep the United Auto Workers out of non-union plants (see “Northites’ Scab Line on UAW,” WV No. 901, 26 October)! As the SL speaker at the event stated, “There’s a [four-letter] word for that, and it begins with ‘s’ and it ends with ‘b’.”

In his remarks, Mazelis had the gall to denounce Stalinist gangsterism. This from a group that is infamous for its thuggery against leftist political opponents and whose international organization received nearly £1,000,000 in blood money from bourgeois Arab regimes over a seven-year period in the 1970s, hailed the execution of 21 Iraqi Communists by the Iraqi Ba’athist regime in 1979 and criminally photographed protest demonstrations of Iraqi militants in Britain at the time and turned the photos over to the Iraqi embassy! True to form, Mazelis threatened one of our female comrades with violence at the end of the Tamiment event.

“There Is No Family of Cannonism”

As the Prometheus Research Library brochure states, “The purpose of the PRL is to collect, preserve and make available the historical record of the international workers movement and to assist Marxist scholarship. It is both a strength and weakness of the PRL that it is necessarily centered upon the work and interests of the American Communist and Trotskyist movement.” The PRL’s collection grew out of the 40-year accumulated holdings of James Robertson.

The revolutionary party must act as the memory of the working class. Elaborating on one of the themes of the *Spartacist* review, the PRL speaker remarked that in his talk Palmer continued to pursue the methodology of “seeing Cannon as a representative of something called the revolutionary left in its age of innocence, before Stalinism brought corruption and abandonment of revolutionary purpose of the workers movement. But to say that there was some kind of mythical age of innocence denies, for example, the important watershed of 4 August 1914.” It was from that time that most of the parties of the Second International—with such notable exceptions as the Russian, Serbian and Bulgarian parties—“betrayed Marxist internationalism by supporting their own bourgeoisies in World War I.”

She pointed out that in Palmer’s book “there is no real feel for the international context in which the Communist Party of the United States was founded, of the irreconcilable struggle against social-chauvinism and reformism that was required.” Palmer did not mention social democracy in his remarks, an omission that benefited the other co-sponsoring organizations, whose politics are at bottom or overtly social-democratic, or worse. The PRL speaker concluded: “Cannon became a Leninist because he saw the need for a hard split—not unity, *split*—both organizationally and politically with ref-

ormism. That’s the program that the International Communist League continues to stand on. There is no family of Cannonism.”

In the discussion round, the speaker for the SL counterposed Cannon’s legacy of unconditional military defense of the Soviet Union to our opponents’ open support for capitalist counterrevolution in the homeland of October. She noted that in 1993 the PRL published Trotsky’s *The Third International After Lenin* in Russian, adding, “We returned to Russia the very material that won Cannon to Trotskyism in 1928 and we used it as a living document to fight against the current of counterrevolution that had swept East Europe and the Soviet Union.... There is a lot of anti-Stalinism in this room and not much of a defense of the Soviet Union against counterrevolution. Today, the expression of this is in defense of China, and if you search the Web you will not

the name of Yuri Andropov, who happened to be the Stalinist butcher of the Hungarian Revolution in 1956.”

The “Yuri Andropov Brigade” was what we dubbed one of the buses going to Washington, D.C., for the 27 November 1982 SL-initiated labor/black mobilization that stopped the KKK from marching. Naming a brigade after the then Soviet leader was a jibe at the large number of ex-members who joined the mobilization and a semi-jocular way to thumb our noses at Ronald Reagan’s anti-Soviet “Evil Empire” hysterics. And it threw the founders of the BT into paroxysms of Stalinophobia.

Riley neglected to note the BT’s belated and programmatically more substantial denunciation of our call “Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!” We prominently raised this slogan when the Soviet Union intervened into Afghanistan in 1979



January 1992 Spartacist protest outside Federal Reserve Bank in New York City, where Boris Yeltsin was feted by his Wall Street paymasters. ICL fought to mobilize Soviet workers against capitalist counterrevolution.

see very much about China among our opponents.”

She continued, “It is hard to have revolutionary unity when you are on opposite sides of the barricades.” Socialist Action, she pointed out, adopted its newspaper masthead from Polish Solidarność, a counterrevolutionary movement backed by the CIA, imperialist bankers and the Vatican that was in the forefront of the drive for capitalist restoration in East Europe. Those who would go on to form the BT in the early 1980s quit our organization, turning tail as U.S. imperialism’s anti-Soviet Cold War II drive was heating up. For its part, our comrade noted, the SEP “supported every imperialist-inspired force aimed at destroying the gains of the 1917 Revolution.”

The BT’s Toronto leader, Tom Riley, provided inadvertent confirmation of the importance of the Russian question as a litmus test for proletarian revolutionaries, declaiming: “One of the differences we’d have with the Spartacist League, just for example, is we don’t think it’s a good idea to build a Trotskyist organization by marching around holding high

against CIA-backed *mujahedin* Islamic reactionaries. The purpose of the Soviet intervention was to defend its southern border and to aid a left-nationalist government that was instituting social reforms particularly beneficial to Afghanistan’s hideously oppressed women. While initially claiming to agree with this slogan, the BT subsequently rejected it for the same reason it griped about the Andropov brigade: to get in good with the reformist swamp defined by capitulation to bourgeois anti-Sovietism.

The BT’s position on Boris Yeltsin’s counterrevolutionary coup in the Soviet Union in 1991 was born of the same impulse. While the ICL distributed tens of thousands of copies of our Russian-language call, “Soviet Workers: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!” the BT rushed to write off the USSR as lost before the Soviet working class could show whether it would fight to defend its workers state (see our *Hate Trotskyism*, *Hate the Spartacist League* bulletins, the 1995 ICL pamphlet *The International Bolshevik Tendency—What Is It?* and numerous articles on the BT in our indexed bound volumes of *Workers Vanguard*).

Class-Struggle Defense Work, Then and Now

The founders of the BT steered clear of the 1982 D.C. anti-Klan mobilization, dismissing our struggle against racial oppression. Howard Keylor, a supporter of what would become the BT, denounced our supporters in his union newsletter *Militant Longshoreman* (4 February 1983) for turning “away from the unions and towards the unemployed, particularly in the ghettos.”

At the Tamiment meeting, a spokesman for the PDC, a legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League, addressed the importance of the fight for black liberation as a motor force for proletarian revolution in the U.S.:

“As Cannon explained in his essay, ‘The Russian Revolution and the American Negro Movement’: ‘Everything new and

progressive on the Negro question came from Moscow, after the revolution of 1917 ...not only for the American communists who responded directly, but for all others concerned with the question.’ The Bolsheviks hammered at the American Party that this was the crucial question for the American revolution. This has infused our work from the beginning.”

The PDC speaker underlined that “this is not the perspective of the Bolshevik Tendency,” pointing out that the BT resembles the early American socialist movement in its indifference to the fight for black liberation.

He also addressed the way in which Palmer’s book treated Cannon’s work in the International Labor Defense (ILD), the Communist Party’s class-struggle defense organization. Referring to “80th Anniversary of Legal Lynching: Lessons of the Fight to Free Sacco and Vanzetti” (WV Nos. 897 and 898, 31 August and 14 September 2007), the PDC speaker stated that while we appreciate Palmer’s chapter on the ILD, Palmer neglected “the polemical aspect of Cannon’s work: his furious struggles against the obstacles in the way of unleashing the type of labor power needed to win freedom for Sacco and Vanzetti.” Cannon “denounced the labor tops who sabotaged strike action and the reformists who peddled illusions in bourgeois justice. The ILD fought against those who demanded the replacement of the movement of the masses by the movement of the lawyers. He argued to put the center of gravity in the protest movement of the workers as against the policy of respectability, of the soft-pedal.”

The PDC speaker underlined that we apply the lessons of the ILD’s struggles to our work today, including especially the fight to free Mumia Abu-Jamal. In stark contrast, reformist groups like Socialist Action and Solidarity play the same role today as the social democrats did in Cannon’s time, seeking to derail the struggle for Mumia’s freedom into the dead-end strategy of subordinating the call to free this innocent man to appeals for a “new trial.”

Palmer acknowledged, “On the failure of my chapter on the ILD to address the polemical side, I’ll have to go back and read that again and think through that. I think there is something to that critique and I may have softened that unduly.” At the same time, Palmer in his conclusion linked his non-polemical portrayal of united-front defense work to his call for revolutionary regroupment. The BT jumped on these remarks to push a “united front” fraud around Mumia’s case (see article, page 5). In an announcement at the end of the meeting, one of our supporters challenged the organizations in attendance to put their money where their mouths are and “bring your people out” to the emergency protests called by the PDC if the Third Circuit Court of Appeals hands down a negative decision against Mumia.

Program Is Primary

The BT’s Tom Riley spoke in support of Palmer’s call for regroupment: “When

Spartacus Youth Club Classes

NEW YORK CITY

Thursday, November 29, 7 p.m.
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SPARTACIST

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Fifth International Conference of the ICL

Maintaining a Revolutionary Program in the Post-Soviet Period

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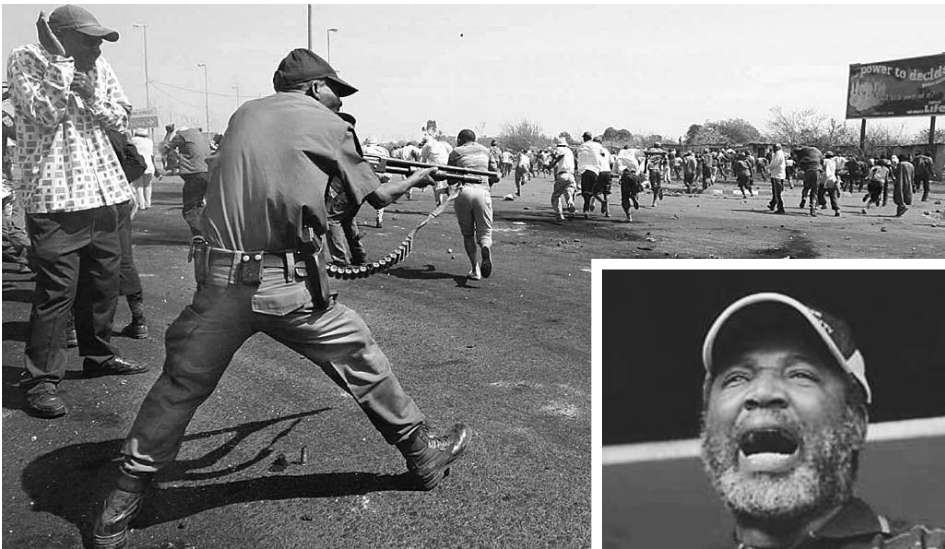
wavered from its nationalist dogma of “socialism in one country,” and in the countries of belated capitalist development, it deepened and codified the stagist, liquidationist line that led to the betrayal of the Chinese Revolution. This was recently brought home at a congress in July 2007 of the South African Communist Party (SACP), where a document submitted by the party’s leadership quoted the following passages from a resolution of the 1928 Sixth CI Congress:

“Our aim should be to transform the African National Congress into a fighting nationalist revolutionary organization against the white bourgeoisie and the British imperialists, based upon the trade unions, peasant organizations, etc., developing systematically the leadership of the workers and the Communist Party in this organization [we repeat: “*developing systematically the leadership of the workers and the Communist Party in this organization*”].... The development of a national-revolutionary movement of the toilers of South Africa...constitutes one of the major tasks of the Communist Party of South Africa.”

—Political report of the SACP’s 11th Congress Central Committee as tabled before the 12th Congress (brackets and emphasis in original)

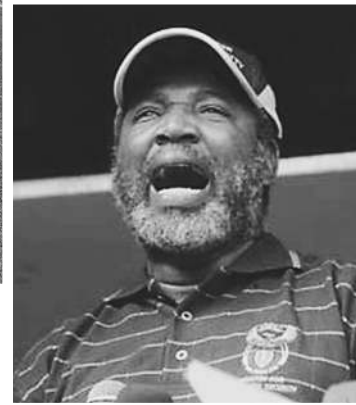
In harking back to the Comintern Sixth Congress, the SACP leadership today offers a fig leaf of historical legitimacy for its continuing subordination to the bourgeois-nationalist African National Congress (ANC) and for the SACP’s participation in the capitalist ANC-led Tripartite Alliance—a nationalist popular front that came to power in 1994, signaling the end of apartheid rule. This is the “orthodox” not of Lenin’s Bolshevism but of Stalinist betrayal. In South Africa, where the capitalist class is white (now including a handful of others), the fundamental class divide is hugely distorted by the lens of racial color. The SACP uses this historic characteristic of South African society to much more openly and shamelessly advance its class-collaborationist alliance with the ANC.

It was necessary for revolutionary Marxists to give *military* support to the ANC in its struggle against the white-supremacist apartheid regime, in the same vein that the Second Congress of the



Werner Beukes/SAPA (above), Die Burger (right)

Black South African cops fire at Soweto residents, September 3. Communist Party leader Charles Nqakula runs police as Minister of Safety and Security.



Comintern called for supporting national liberation struggles against the imperialist powers. But the Stalinists mandated *political* support to what was a petty-bourgeois nationalist movement. Today the bourgeois ANC and its SACP partner administer neo-apartheid capitalism, enforcing the brutal exploitation of the mainly black proletariat on behalf of the white South African Randlords and their senior partners on Wall Street and in the City of London. Today as before, the struggle for national liberation can be a powerful motor force for socialist revolution in South Africa. But the precondition for victory is the political independence of the proletariat from all wings of the bourgeoisie.

To justify its participation in the government, the SACP has to pretend that the Tripartite Alliance is not 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. To maintain any claim to the mantle of communism, the SACP leadership has to falsify the experience of the October Revolution. In “Lessons of the Bolshevik Revolution” (*Umsebenzi* online, 6 November 2002), the SACP states: “We have to move away from the illusion, in our circumstances, of the ‘total’ seizure of power, or of the ‘complete’ rupture with the global system. We also have to move away from the idea that there is a Chinese Wall between the tasks of the national democratic revolution,

and the tasks of advancing towards socialism.... We need to approach the ongoing national democratic revolution to liberate the black majority, Africans in particular, as a complex, dialectical process that must, necessarily, have anti-imperialist, non-capitalist features if it is to succeed at all.

“There are the lessons which we believe can be derived, in part, from the great Bolshevik Revolution and its consequences.”

What the SACP denounces as an “illusion” is the proletarian seizure of power and the “complete” overthrow of the yoke of global imperialism, as part of a fight for world socialist revolution. To mask the class nature of the South African capitalist state and to cover over its own hostility to Bolshevism, the SACP leadership holds out the promise that the “national democratic revolution” is something that grows over organically into socialism. In 1917, the bourgeois Provisional Government in Russia did not grow over into a socialist regime but was overthrown by the Bolshevik-led proletarian insurrection. Only when the bourgeois state was smashed and replaced by soviet power—the dictatorship of the proletariat supported by the peasantry—was it possible to fulfill the tasks of the democratic revolution. Trotsky himself debunked this “growing over” conception in 1931, when, as now, it was a justification for ostensible socialists giving political support to bourgeois formations:

“It is not the bourgeois power that grows over into a workers’ and peasants’ and then into a proletarian power; no, the

power of one class does not ‘grow over’ from the power of another class, but is torn from it with rifle in hand. But after the working class has seized power, the democratic tasks of the proletarian regime inevitably grow over into socialist tasks. An evolutionary, organic transition from democracy to socialism is conceivable only under the *dictatorship of the proletariat*. This is Lenin’s central idea.”

—“The Spanish Revolution and the Dangers Threatening It,” 28 May 1931

The proletariat’s pursuit of its class interests requires not only organizational independence from capitalist parties like the ANC but also political *opposition* to them. Spartacist South Africa, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist), raises the call to break with the Tripartite Alliance and to forge a Leninist-Trotskyist party that fights for a black-centered 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.

South African reality starkly demonstrates the need for permanent revolution. The proletariat is brutally exploited in the mines and factories. In the countryside, millions of black people are relegated to desperate poverty in what were formerly the bantustans, while productive land is owned overwhelmingly by white farmers who depend on black laborers toiling for next to nothing. The AIDS pandemic that continues to ravage South Africa demands a fight for quality public health care, including access to free anti-retrovirals, and a struggle against the destitution as well as the religious and anti-woman backwardness that have fueled the spread of the disease. The extent of AIDS throughout sub-Saharan Africa and elsewhere and the need to marshal all available scientific resources, especially in the advanced industrialized countries, to combat it demand breaking from the narrow framework of bourgeois nationalism. Adequate housing for millions in the townships and shantytowns, electricity and clean water for the entire population, free quality education, the eradication of *lobola* (the bride price) and female genital mutilation: these desperately needed measures require the socialist transformation of the economy and society under a dictatorship of the proletariat, fighting to promote socialist revolution internationally.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

the left can work together on things we agree with, then it should be possible for us to discuss intelligently, seriously, and in a way that James P. Cannon would—inside his organization as well as with other organizations—what are the real substantial differences that stand between us. And on that basis, it may well be possible that many of the people in the room tonight who are in different opponent organizations may one day be in common organizations.”

Riley was appealing for “unity” to an audience that consisted largely of groups that share the BT’s crass Stalinophobic appetites. For our part, we find such smarmy appeals for “unity” grotesque coming from a group whose history consists of one provocation after another against us, a group that has dedicated itself to our destruction. Bill Logan’s BT is the antithesis of Cannon’s Leninist legacy.

From its inception, our international tendency has pursued genuine opportunities for revolutionary regroupment—including in the 1970s with such groups as the Buffalo Marxist Collective and Red Flag Union in the U.S. and the organization led by veteran Trotskyist Edmund Samarakkody in Sri Lanka. Our efforts yielded the core cadre that founded sections of our tendency in Australia, Canada, Europe, Japan and elsewhere, laying the basis for the ICL. While we had some successful regroupments with left factions and tendencies—particularly from the United Secretariat of the late Ernest

Mandel—we discovered that no other organization stood on the program and principles of Trotskyism. This was sharply demonstrated by the fact that the ICL stood alone on the left in fighting against the capitalist reunification of Germany in 1989-90 and against the final undoing of the October Revolution in 1991-92.

The counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union has led to a profound retrogression in proletarian consciousness, albeit uneven in its impact around the world. Today, even politically conscious workers in capitalist countries by and large no longer identify their struggles with the ultimate aim of achieving a socialist society. Against the prevailing howl of bourgeois ideologues that “communism is dead,” we are committed to the hard task of explicating the basic principles and worldview of Marxism as we intervene into class and other social struggles. As Trotsky noted in “Stalinism and Bolshevism” (1936):

“Great political defeats inevitably provoke a reconsideration of values, generally occurring in two directions. On the one hand the true vanguard, enriched by the experience of defeat, defends with tooth and nail the heritage of revolutionary thought and on this basis attempts to educate new cadres for the mass struggle to come. On the other hand the routinists, centrists, and dilettantes, frightened by defeat, do their best to destroy the authority of revolutionary tradition and go backward in their search for a ‘New Word’.”

Having led the proletariat to the seizure of power, the Bolsheviks saw fur-

ther from the heights they achieved. In today’s deep trough, it is the responsibility of Marxist revolutionaries to defend the programmatic lessons of the Russian Revolution and the early Communist International. We are guided by Trotsky’s admonition in “Stalinism and Bolshevism”:

“In these conditions the task of the vanguard is above all not to let itself be carried along by the backward flow: it must swim against the current. If an unfavorable relation of forces prevents it from holding the positions that it has won, it must at least retain its ideological positions, because in them is expressed

the dearly purchased experience of the past. Fools will consider this policy ‘sectarian.’ Actually it is the only means of preparing for a new tremendous surge forward with the coming historical tide.”

The proletarian, revolutionary and internationalist road charted by Lenin and Trotsky was the cause to which James P. Cannon devoted the bulk of his life. The ICL seeks to maintain and extend that tradition in our fight to reforge the Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution. We proclaim, as Cannon once did, “We are the party of the Russian Revolution!” ■

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BT...

(continued from page 5)

regarding Mumia's case. We have publicly acknowledged the PDC's very important contributions, particularly your role in proving Mumia's innocence by unearthing the truth about how and why Officer Daniel Faulkner was killed. In *The Case of Mumia Abu-Jamal* we saluted the PDC's opposition to "attempts by liberals and reformist leftists to change the political axis of the campaign from a fight to free Mumia to one of re-trying him."

Unfortunately, your record has, at times, been marred by sectarianism. An outstanding example was your refusal to march in the large 24 April 1999 demonstrations for Mumia in San Francisco and Philadelphia (see "Disagreeable Sectarians," 1917 No. 21 and *Whatever Happened to the Spartacist League?*). While you later acknowledged that this was indeed a mistake, your current rejection of a united-front approach reveals the same sectarian impulse.

In the letter from your Toronto comrades rebuffing our proposal, you refer to "those who foster deadly illusions in the 'justice' of the capitalist state," and claim that we have a:

"record of conciliating such forces, including at the May 17 Toronto demonstration where, for example, your speakers declined to mention, much less argue against, the reformists' 'new trial' calls that have undermined mobilizations for Mumia's defense. It is in this context that we must take your demand for a 'preliminary organizing meeting' to agree a 'basis of unity' for Mumia protests."

While we have co-sponsored events to demand Mumia's freedom with people who do not share our view of the capitalist "justice" system, we have never raised or supported the demand for a "new trial," as you well know. At the 17 May Toronto protest our spokesperson explicitly criticized the idea that working people and the oppressed can expect justice from the bourgeois courts:

"[Mumia's] case is a *political* one and it is through a *political* struggle in the workers' movement and oppressed that his freedom can be won. We should have no faith in the capitalist courts. That said, every possible legal avenue must be pursued to save Mumia's life, but the best way to protect him is by using the

frame-up to expose the entire corrupt capitalist judicial system."

No reasonable person could interpret this as "conciliating" those "who foster deadly illusions in the 'justice' of the capitalist state."

In a 10 October letter to our comrades in London, Kate Klein of the PDC claimed that the "Mumia Must Live!" (MML) united front that we participated in had also "conciliated" advocates of a new trial. In fact, every MML event was organized on the basis of two slogans: "Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!" and "Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!" We did not seek to exclude those who push the demand for a new trial, though we have a record of consistently arguing against it. MML organized a rally of 1,000 on 4 March 2000—by far the largest demonstration for Mumia in Britain to date. As we reported in 1917 No. 22, the question of adding the demand for a "new trial" was proposed and rejected by the united-front committee:

"In the course of building the March demonstration there were several intense discussions within Mumia Must Live!, particularly after the British Socialist Workers Party (SWP) joined. The SWP contributed significant resources, and has given MML a much higher profile. At the same time, SWPers have made several attempts to include, as part of MML's basis of unity, a demand for the U.S. courts to retry Mumia. Our comrades and some of the anarchists were opposed to including this demand, and after some to-ing and fro-ing, the SWP relented, and agreed to only raise it in their own name."

While we think that united-front efforts are preferable, we will actively participate in events in defense of Mumia, regardless of how, or by whom, they are organized.

Yours for Mumia's Freedom!
Josh Decker,
for the IBT

WV replies:

Mumia Abu-Jamal's life hangs in the balance as the Third Circuit Court of Appeals decides whether to uphold the death sentence, keep him in prison for life or grant him a new trial or further court hearings. Recognizing the urgency of the situation and with no evidence of any actions being planned by others, in late August the Partisan Defense Committee in the U.S. issued a call for emergency protests in the event of a negative

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL 16 June 1995

Not Much Left: 'The Movement' Is Pretty Still Nowadays

Despite the GOP Revolution,
Radical Groups Can't Win
Converts to Their Brand

...ed by Angela Davis ...
... Communist Party USA member ...
The Spartacists are led by a man ...
named James Robertson, prompting the ...
International Bolshevik Tendency, a group ...
of former Spartacists, to deride their old ...
party as "Jimstown," a takeoff on Jones- ...
town in Guyana, the jungle site of mass ...
suicide.

U.S. finance capital's house organ retailed BT slanders of Spartacist League in 1995 in attempt to under- mine mass protest movement for Mumia.

decision as several of our fraternal legal and social defense organizations internationally did subsequently. Since then, other organizations have also called protests which we have advertised, including a national demonstration to be held in Philadelphia on the third Saturday after a negative decision.

Several weeks after we first put out the call for emergency protests, our comrades in Toronto and London received letters from the International Bolshevik Tendency arguing that a united-front committee be established, or alternately "a preliminary organizing meeting" be held, in order to "produce a larger demonstration with more impact." In responding, we noted the BT's professed agreement with the central slogans of these protests—"Mumia Abu-Jamal is an innocent man! Free Mumia now! Abolish the racist death penalty!"—and pointed out that the BT should do its part to publicize the protests, bring out its own members and supporters, with its own signs and banners, distribute its own propaganda and have its own speakers. The whole purpose of the united front is to mobilize *in action*, and that is precisely what we urged the BT to do.

But actually mobilizing for Mumia was not the intent behind the BT's letters. The proof is the simple fact that *the BT has not produced a single written announcement or flyer mobilizing support for Mumia in the run-up to a court decision*. It does seem that the BT was shamed by our challenge at an October 12 New York City meeting featuring Bryan Palmer, author of a recent biography of James P. Cannon, to put its money where its mouth was (see article page 4). At a subsequent BT meeting in Toronto, it announced the PDC's emergency protest. But as of now you can click "Mumia Abu-Jamal" or look under "what's new" on the BT's Web site and not find a word about the protests called by the PDC or anyone else for that matter.

On November 5, the PDC in the Bay Area received an e-mail from the Labor Action Committee to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal (LACMAJ), in which the BT is a prominent player, announcing, as if it were late-breaking news, that there could be an imminent negative decision in Mumia's case and urging emergency protests. Nary a mention was made that such protests have already been called in the Bay Area—by the PDC in Oakland and by the Mobilization to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal in San Francisco. More than a week earlier, at an October 27 Bay Area "Labor Conference to Stop the War" which was mainly organized by International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 10 executive board member and LACMAJ spokesman Jack Heyman and which heard taped greetings from Mumia, PDC and SL supporters had agitated for participants to come out for the emergency protests. Then on November 17 we received an e-mail from LACMAJ announcing both the San Francisco and Oakland protests. Go figure. For our part, we welcome the mobilization of all those com-

mitted to the fight for Mumia's freedom. In the meantime, on November 9—two months after we first issued our protest calls—we received the above letter from the BT denouncing the PDC for rejecting their "proposals for united-front demonstrations in Toronto and London"! The cynicism is mind-boggling, but the purpose is clear: to portray the PDC as "sectarian" saboteurs of mobilizations for Mumia's freedom.

This is hardly the first time we have been on the receiving end of such charges by the BT, an organization led by the twisted sociopath Bill Logan that has throughout its existence pursued an unnatural and hostile obsession with our organization. Significantly, in August 1995, at the height of the mass protests nationally and internationally that were key in winning a stay of execution for Mumia, WV received a letter from the BT accusing us of undermining "the effort required to save Mumia from the executioner's needle" (see "Poison Pen Pals," WV No. 627, 25 August 1995). The PDC and International Communist League had been fighting for eight years to spark an international campaign in Mumia's defense while supporting legal means pursued on his behalf. This effort, together with that of others and, not least, Mumia's own powerful writings, was successful in igniting the mass protests that stayed the executioner's hand. At the time, one of the few organizations on the left that had not made Mumia's cause a banner headline was the Bolshevik Tendency.

The BT had, however, made a press splash around Mumia's case—in the pages of the *Wall Street Journal*. In a 16 June 1995 article, this house organ of U.S.



Spartacists hailed Soviet intervention against reactionary Afghan mujahedin. BT was founded by quitters who abandoned our party in the face of anti-Soviet war drive.

finance capital retailed the BT's slanders of the Spartacist League as a deranged "cult" in order to smear the efforts of the PDC and others on Mumia's behalf. The *Wall Street Journal's* intent was transparent enough. How and why the minuscule BT was readily wielded as a tool for the *Wall Street Journal* is not. In any case, this anti-communist smear job did not bother the BT, whose response was to write a treatise attacking...the PDC and SL for "sectarian behavior" that "truly sabotages the fight for Mumia's freedom!"

And to whom is the BT playing today? They cry foul at our indictment of their conciliation of the reformists' call for a "new trial" as the basis of demonstrations for Mumia. The BT's defense? They cite the words of their speaker at a May 17 Toronto rally for Mumia who never mentioned, much less politically exposed, the call for a "new trial"—a demand that was explicitly raised by other speakers at the protest. This is not simply a question of words. As the PDC speaker at that protest explained, as new evidence of Mumia's innocence came out from 1995 to 1999, "the reformist left groups...started to call for a 'new trial' for Mumia. Instead of mobilizing to free this innocent victim of a racist frame-up, they mobilized on the basis that he could get a new and fair trial from the same courts that put him on death row in the first place. But they're wrong!" ("Class Struggle to

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

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



Partisan Defense Committee

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Free Mumia!” *Spartacist Canada* No. 153, Summer 2007).

What is posed is a contest of two fundamentally counterposed strategies. The first sows deadly illusions in the capitalist courts—illusions that have served to demobilize a mass movement in his defense. The second is our class-struggle fight to re-ignite mass protests for Mumia’s freedom centered on the social power of the multiracial working class. Our policy of class-struggle defense is based on the Marxist understanding that capitalist society is fundamentally divided into two classes—a tiny minority that owns the means of production and the workers whose labor they exploit—and that the capitalist state serves to defend the rule and profits of the exploiters. We fight for mass protest based on labor’s social power, which lies in its ability to choke off the profits that are the lifeblood of capitalism. Our fight for Mumia’s freedom is predicated on *opposition* to the racist cops, courts and prosecutors of the capitalist state who conspired in a monstrous frame-up to silence forever this eloquent and defiant fighter for the oppressed.

In regard to our self-criticism over the April 1999 “Millions for Mumia” protests, we wrote in “A Hard Look at Recent Party Work and Current Tasks” (WV No. 841, 4 February 2005), “We should have made clear our political opposition by organizing ‘Free Mumia’ contingents in the demonstrations organized by liberals and reformists.” In other words, while mobilizing our forces to participate in the protest we missed an opportunity to politically combat those who subordinate the fight to free Mumia to the call for a new trial. That includes the Labor Action Committee to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal—an organization that from its inception has been supported by the BT—which issued an international appeal to build rallies on 24 April 1999 around two central demands: “Stop the execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal” and “A new and fair trial for Mumia Abu-Jamal.”

On the united front, James P. Cannon—the founder of American Trotskyism and secretary of the early International Labor Defense (ILD), whose class-struggle, non-sectarian defense work is the model for the work of the PDC—put it well: “The united front, as Lenin taught it, is a means of mobilizing the masses and leading them in the direction of the revolution. It is not a ‘partnership’ with reformists, but a form of struggle against them” (“Limits of the United Front,” *Militant*, 1 April 1931).

This is a far cry from the BT’s notion of the “united front,” which is devoid of the struggle of counterposed political programs and strategies aimed at advancing the consciousness of the working class. What the BT has in mind, rather, is a peace treaty with the reformists and liberals against a common enemy—us. Its letter to the Trotskyist League of Canada gives the game away with its call for a “preliminary organizing meeting where a basis of unity could be agreed upon.” Since the BT claims to agree with our slogans centered on Mumia’s innocence and the fight for his freedom, what is there to “negotiate” as a “basis of unity” other than to conciliate the “new trial” reformists and liberals?

We can’t resist noting that the rules of the BT’s cynical “united-front” game were different when it was a matter of

27 November 1982: “We Stopped the Klan!”



WV Photo

Twenty-five years ago, a mass labor/black mobilization initiated by the Spartacist League drove the race-terrorist KKK off the streets of Washington, D.C. With the working class reeling from capitalist attacks on labor and with anti-Soviet Cold War II in full swing, the Klan had announced a march against “illegal” immigrants, posing a direct threat to black people, trade unionists, leftists and all who are in the fascists’ sights. But they were stopped cold when more than 5,000 union members, black youth and anti-racist militants turned out and took the streets instead. This demonstration of communist-led, integrated working-class power showed the way forward in the struggle for black liberation through socialist revolution!

determining the “basis of unity” for the May 17 Toronto protest. We were never invited to any meeting—the first we heard of the protest was an e-mail with a draft flyer from something called the “May 17th Committee to Free Mumia.” But that was of no consequence for us. We agreed with the central slogans, which were those that the PDC has historically fought for, and set out to help build this protest with our own call for people to mobilize.

The BT now darkly intones that “perhaps...you have a somewhat ambivalent attitude toward the May demonstration,” and then in the next breath points out that the PDC contingent was a “third of the crowd”! So what is the evidence of our purported “ambivalence”? That we did not add our name to the call by the “May 17th Committee.” As our comrades in the Trotskyist League wrote in “Class Struggle to Free Mumia!” the condition for doing so was to endorse “a lowest-common-denominator ‘statement’ which, reflecting the BT’s longstanding indifference to the fight for black freedom, could not even choke out that Mumia was a former Black Panther and a supporter of the MOVE organization.”

This is hardly surprising. The BT also could not choke out a word of protest against the firebombing of the MOVE home in Philadelphia in 1985, carried out by the Philly cops under black Democratic mayor Wilson Goode in collusion with Reagan’s FBI. Eleven black people, including five children, were killed and an entire black neighborhood burned to the ground. When the Spartacist League organized a New York memorial meeting in solidarity with the victims of this racist atrocity, the BT attacked us for not polemicalizing against MOVE’s philosophy!

Since its inception in the early 1980s as a clot of embittered ex-members of our organization, a defining feature of the BT has been its sneering contempt for the fight for black freedom. The BT, for instance, generally absented itself from our mass united-front labor/black mobilizations to stop fascist terror. But it did spill a lot of ink denouncing us for aban-

doning trade-union work in favor of “community organizing” when we initiated labor black leagues linked to the SL building on the success of these anti-fascist actions. To counterpose organized labor to the black plebeian masses echoes the reactionary trade-union bureaucracy, whose support to this racist capitalist system and the Democratic Party has served to shackle the unions to the exploiters. The fight for black liberation and the class independence of the proletariat is key to mobilizing the power of labor for Mumia’s freedom. This understanding has animated the PDC’s work in Mumia’s defense for the past two decades.

Unlike the BT, which currently is handing out an anonymous leaflet in London calling to “Free Mumia: Organise Now!”, we do not conceal our political identity. The PDC openly declares that its purpose—class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense, championing cases and causes that are in the interests of the whole of the working people—is in accordance with the political views of the Spartacist League/ICL. But agreement with our openly Marxist politics is not a condition for participating in the PDC’s united-front actions. We welcome all those, whatever their political views, who agree with our fight to free Mumia and abolish the racist death penalty to participate in united-front actions with their own propaganda, placards, chants and speakers—including the BT.

But to believe the BT, what stands in the way of mobilizing for Mumia’s freedom is the PDC’s “sectarianism.” This

serves the “new trial” liberals and reformists who are hostile to our purpose and would be only too happy to get rid of the PDC and ICL’s involvement in Mumia’s fight. The BT supplies the arguments for them by insinuating that the PDC merely seeks to advance its own purpose in its defense work. This line comes straight from the annals of anti-communism and was answered by Cannon in addressing those who declared his motives in the ILD “not altogether philanthropic”:

“My motives were not ‘philanthropic’ at all. I really believed in the principle of solidarity with all class war prisoners.... To be sure, I was an undisguised communist, and I thought and said that the honest work of solidarity practiced by the ILD would bring, at least indirectly, some credit to the Communist Party. But don’t people who represent all kinds of causes and organizations do what they consider their good works with this double motivation?”

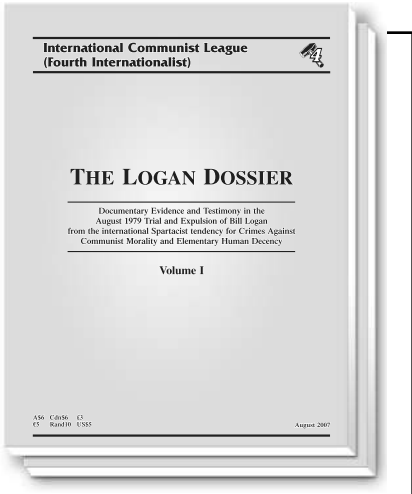
—*The First Ten Years of American Communism* (1962)

And what of the BT’s motivation? Here’s an organization with a record of dismissing our labor-centered mobilizations to defend the black masses and denouncing our solidarity with victims of the government’s racist terror. Now they lecture us on building “real” united-front actions in defense of Mumia Abu-Jamal, whose cause they did not take up in their press in any real way until after mass protests broke out in 1995. So you can’t blame us for smelling a rat here, particularly given the propensity of the BT’s slanders of our organization to find their way into the hands of larger forces who would like to do us harm.■

Documentary Evidence and Testimony in the August 1979 Trial and Expulsion of Bill Logan from the international Spartacist tendency for Crimes Against Communist Morality and Elementary Human Decency

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Sinister Book Recycles Frame-Up Lies

Mumia Abu-Jamal Is Innocent! Free Him Now!

With the Third Circuit Court of Appeals set to rule in the case of death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, the fight to free this former Black Panther Party spokesman, renowned journalist and MOVE supporter is growing ever more urgent. As the court decides whether to uphold his death sentence or keep him in prison for life, or alternatively to grant a new trial or further court hearings, the forces of racist capitalist “law and order” are once again howling for his legal lynching. The cops and prosecutors, Democratic and Republican politicians and press hacks tell any lie to bury this unbroken fighter for the oppressed. The biggest lie of all is that Mumia shot and killed Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner on 9 December 1981. Now a new book by Faulkner’s widow Maureen—luridly titled *Murdered by Mumia: A Life Sentence of Loss, Pain and Injustice*—is due for release in early December, an ominous escalation in the drive to kill this innocent man.

Faulkner and co-author Michael Smerconish, a Philadelphia shock jock, will be trotted out on a book tour blitz, and Faulkner is due to appear on the *Today* show on December 6. Smerconish, who once served as a political adviser to the late Frank Rizzo, Philly’s notoriously racist police chief and mayor, has orchestrated the Fraternal Order of Police (F.O.P.) media offensive against Mumia, including the “Justice for Daniel Faulkner” Web site. In 1999, Smerconish hosted a \$100-a-plate dinner to fund his anti-Mumia crusade, drawing over 800 F.O.P. heavies and a phalanx of local Democrats like Pennsylvania governor and former Philly mayor Ed Rendell, who as District Attorney in the early 1980s oversaw the frame-up of Mumia. Last April, the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal was forced to change venues for events celebrating Mumia’s birthday in Philadelphia and New York after the F.O.P. threatened the venues’ proprietors.

As mouthpieces for the cops’ frame-up



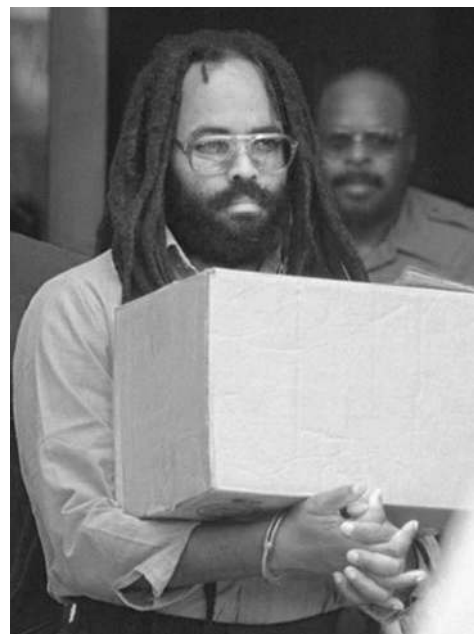
Shadd/Philadelphia Inquirer

July 1995: Mob of 300 racist Philly cops besiege headquarters of hospital workers Local 1199C, denouncing union support for Mumia.



WV Photo

Left: PDC contingent at May 17 demonstration for Mumia in Philadelphia on day of Third Circuit Court of Appeals hearing. Right: Mumia Abu-Jamal in handcuffs entering Philadelphia courthouse for July 1995 hearing.



AP

machine, Maureen Faulkner and Michael Smerconish even deny Mumia’s credentials as a journalist, which flies in the face of Mumia’s widespread acclaim as the “voice of the voiceless.” Mumia was recently awarded membership in PEN, a writers organization for human rights, in recognition of his writings. A new documentary about Mumia titled *In Prison My Whole Life* premiered in London and Rome in October, helping to publicize his struggle.

Beginning with Mumia’s 1995 post-conviction hearings, reams of evidence have refuted the cops’ and prosecutors’ lies, establishing beyond any doubt that Mumia’s conviction was the product of a wide-ranging, multilayered, racially and politically motivated frame-up. This overwhelming evidence of innocence is capped by Arnold Beverly’s confession that he, not Mumia, shot and killed Faulkner. According to Beverly, who gave his testimony in a June 1999 affidavit, he and an accomplice were hired to kill Faulkner because he was interfering with police graft and mob vice in Philly’s Center City. Mumia arrived after the shooting, had nothing to do with it and was shot by arriving police reinforcements. The Beverly confession, Mumia’s own statement that he did not kill Faulkner and other evidence of Mumia’s innocence are laid out in detail in the Partisan Defense Committee pamphlet, *The Fight to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal—Mumia Is Innocent!*

Beverly’s account is backed up by a range of supporting evidence, including the fact that in December 1981 there were at least three ongoing federal probes of the Philly cops including mob links. The targets included the entire chain of command for the “investigation” of Faulkner’s shooting: the head of Homicide, the Central Division commander and the ranking officer at the scene of the shooting, Alfonzo Giordano. A longtime henchman of Rizzo, Giordano targeted the Black Panther Party and oversaw the 1977-78 police siege of MOVE’s Powelton Village house. He knew exactly who Mumia was

and had both motive and opportunity to frame him up. But despite the widespread evidence supporting Beverly, court after court has refused to hear his testimony. Evidence of Mumia’s innocence continues to grow. In the past year, German radical-liberal writer Michael Schiffmann has publicized newly unearthed crime scene photos showing that police tampered with much of the evidence of Faulkner’s killing in order to prosecute Mumia.

Schiffmann, however, has undermined the evidence of Mumia’s innocence by joining those who claim that it is “incredible” that a cop would hire a hitman to kill another cop. In 1999, when Beverly first confessed, Mumia’s lead counsel at the time, Leonard Weinglass, and his co-counsel Dan Williams suppressed the evidence. Then, in 2001, Williams published a book, *Executing Justice*, as a “pre-emptive strike” against Beverly’s account, which he declared was “bona fide lunacy.” This was seized upon by the prosecution to keep the testimony out of court. For this betrayal, Mumia fired Weinglass and Williams, and his new legal team brought the Beverly confession forward.

In response, liberal writer Dave Lindorff popped up as a self-appointed Mumia “expert” and launched his own attack on Beverly’s confession. A central point of Lindorff’s 2003 book, *Killing Time*, was to trash Beverly’s testimony. Lindorff has never offered a single fact to refute Beverly and even acknowledges the widespread Philly police corruption and that cops sometimes kill other cops. Instead, Lindorff argues that hiring hitmen is not the “standard modus operandi for police executions” and that it “seems improbable that they would involve so many people in the carrying out of such a heinous plot.” Echoing Lindorff, Schiffmann contended in a November 2006 interview that the Beverly account involves “too many people in the know, too many imponderables in its planned execution.”

That the cops would work hand in hand

with gangsters is common knowledge, except perhaps for those blinded by illusions in the police as “public servants.” On the heels of highly publicized cases of collusion between cops and/or Feds and mobsters in Boston and New York, just this September Chicago cop Jerome Finnigan was indicted on charges of plotting, with fellow police officer Keith Herrera, to hire two street gang members to murder another cop whom they correctly suspected of working for the Feds in a police corruption probe. Finnigan has been at the center of federal and state criminal cases charging Special Operations cops with shaking down “drug suspects” for hundreds of thousands of dollars through home invasions, false arrests, robbery and kidnapping. In August, he told Herrera that the hit was “all taken care of,” and in September he said that they “might as well take care of all the witnesses against them” (*Chicago Sun-Times*, 27 September). What Finnigan did not know was that in the meantime Herrera had started working for the Feds and was wearing a wire.

In our article “Class-Struggle Defense vs. Faith in Capitalist ‘Justice,’” (WV No. 892, 11 May), we wrote: “Why would Lindorff and Schiffmann, two self-proclaimed advocates for Mumia, follow Williams by tearing at the Beverly confession, doing the prosecutors’ work for them? At bottom, it is because the Beverly evidence shows that Mumia was the victim not of a rogue cop, bad prosecutor or racist judge but of an entire ‘justice’ system in which the cops, prosecutors and courts act to uphold the class interests of the capitalist rulers.”

What is crucially needed is mass protest on Mumia’s behalf, centered on the social power of labor. If undertaken with a mobilization of the union movement, the fight to free Mumia and abolish the racist death penalty would be a first, giant step toward infusing workers with the consciousness that the whole system of capitalist repression must be smashed through socialist revolution. ■