

## Court Decision Looms—Mobilize to Free Mumia!

# Media Blitz Targets Mumia Abu-Jamal

The following statement was issued by the Partisan Defense Committee, a legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League, on December 4.

On Thursday, December 6, NBC's *Today* show will be a forum to promote the legal lynching of Mumia Abu-Jamal, an innocent man on death row. Maureen Faulkner, wife of Police Officer Daniel

Faulkner, of whose killing Mumia was falsely convicted, will appear on the show to promote her book, *Murdered by Mumia: A Life Sentence of Loss, Pain, and Injustice*, which is set for release the same day (see "Sinister Book Recycles Frame-Up Lies: Mumia Abu-Jamal Is Innocent! Free Him Now!" WV No. 903, 23 November). Faulkner will be joined by her co-author, right-wing radio

broadcaster Michael Smerconish, a former political adviser to Philadelphia's notoriously racist police chief and mayor, Frank Rizzo. Their caravan of lies will continue later that day on Fox News' *The O'Reilly Factor* and CNN's *Anderson Cooper 360*, and the following day on MSNBC's *Hardball with Chris Matthews*. Meanwhile, an Associated Press article about the book has already

been picked up by a number of newspapers, including the *International Herald Tribune*.

With a decision in Mumia's case by the Third Circuit Court of Appeals anticipated any day, it is clear that the purpose of the Faulkner/Smerconish book and the media blitzkrieg behind it is to kill Mumia, a former Black Panther  
*continued on page 12*

## Labor Tops Sell Out Strikes

# Down With Government Attacks on Workers, Students, Minorities!

## France

On the heels of last month's strikes by French rail and transit workers, youth in *banlieues* (working-class and minority ghettos) in several cities erupted in anger after a police car in Villiers-le-Bel killed two youth by ramming their motor bike. The right-wing government of President Nicolas Sarkozy has sent in an army of cops while menacing residents with police helicopters hovering overhead. In a broad crackdown on immigrants and other minorities, *banlieue* youth are targeted by a "law on repeat offenders" that imposes stiff jail sentences. The government has increased restrictions on immigration and continues mass roundups of *sans-papiers* (undocumented immigrants) and refugees seeking asylum, with a stated goal of 25,000 deportations this year alone.

These racist attacks are part of a broad assault by the capitalist rulers on the entire working class. Aiming to destroy what remains of the "welfare state," the government wants to dismantle health care and pension benefits and limit access to university education. Using salami tactics, Sarkozy is trying to isolate and target those sectors of the French working class that have been particularly combative in recent years, most notably the rail workers.

The government is threatening to increase the number of years of work that workers in rail, transit and utilities need to qualify for a full pension from 37.5 to 40, with severe penalties for those who retire early. In response, workers struck the buses and Métro in Paris and other cities for two days in October and for nine days in November, shutting down almost all transit in the country as well as rail freight traffic, despite attempts by the labor tops to bring them back to work. They were joined on strike for a time



Above: CGT union federation members march in Montpellier on November 20 during recent strike wave against attacks led by right-wing president Nicolas Sarkozy (inset). Below: Riot police face off against protesters in working-class Paris suburb of Villiers-le-Bel on November 26, one day after two minority youth were killed by a police car that hit them.



## No to Class Collaboration! For a Revolutionary Workers Party!

by utility workers as well as teachers and other government workers. Meanwhile, students had been engaged in their own struggles against a new law on "university autonomy," a first step toward privatization of higher education that will restrict access for working-class and minority youth. Students occupied and blockaded dozens of campuses.

In an attempt to isolate and weaken the strikes, the government railed against the "privileges" of railway workers, who can retire earlier than other workers. This after the government granted some 15 billion euros in tax breaks for the rich and more than doubled Sarkozy's own salary! Sarkozy arrogantly declared that the attacks on railway workers' pensions "are only an aperitif" (*Le Monde*, 26 November), making clear that pension rights for all workers are next. And in an attack on the very right to strike, a new law imposes a "minimum service" requirement during strikes by railway workers and others.

The Sarkozy government's offensive against the working class reflects a consensus in the bourgeoisie that the attacks on health care, pensions and trade-union rights are essential to making French capitalism competitive against its imperialist rivals. This consensus is shared by the leadership of the Socialist Party (PS), which disagrees with Sarkozy only over the way he is carrying out his "reforms." Following Sarkozy's defeat of PS candidate Ségolène Royal in the election in May, six prominent Socialists accepted key posts in his administration, including Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner, the main spokesman for French imperialism's threats against Iran. Meanwhile, the union tops, in the tow of the reformist parties, are playing their role as capitalism's "labor lieutenants." The leadership of the CFDT union federation openly supports pension "reform," while the CGT federation tops have refused to call for the 37.5 year limit to be extended to all workers. For its part, the PS-led UNEF student federation refused to call for repealing the "university autonomy" law.

The workers' combativity caught both the government and the union misleaders  
*continued on page 11*



# A Clarification on Logan, Sadism and the British Ruling Class

October 23, 2007

To the editor:

As a longtime sympathizer of the ICL, I was shocked to read in the otherwise effective preface to *The Logan Dossier* (reprinted in WV 900) the following sentence: “The British ruling class, particularly in its Tory embodiment, has long been notorious in its appetite for blood sports, capital punishment (most recently mere hanging), corporal punishment in its schools and associated sado-masochistic sexual proclivities.”

This can only be read as saying there is something wrong with “an appetite for blood sports” and “sado-masochistic sexual proclivities”—two harmless matters of personal taste with no political or moral implications. And yet I cannot believe the party would endorse such a view.

As for blood sports, Lenin and Trotsky both did some fox-hunting, as did Engels, an enthusiastic member of the Cheshire Hunt. In a letter to Marx he wrote, “That sort of thing always keeps me in a state of devilish excitement for several days; it’s the greatest physical pleasure I know. [...] At least twenty of the chaps fell off or came down, two horses were done for, one fox killed (I was in AT THE

DEATH)” (cited in Francis Wheen, *Karl Marx: A Life*, page 226).

And the suggestion that sadomasochistic sexual tastes are sick and inhumane undermines the party’s forthright line that, as long as everyone involved is willing, what people like to do (or look at or read about) for pleasure is no business of the state or anyone else. I always thought we agreed with Gore Vidal in this area, including when he wrote, “I’m all for bringing back the birch, but only between consenting adults” (provided we pardon him the *adults* here for the sake of the joke).

Like others whose inclinations stray from those approved by bourgeois morality, people who go in for SM acts or fantasies are targets for reactionary state persecution, perhaps nowhere more so than in...Britain. In 1990, after a four-year-long police investigation in Manchester known as “Operation Spanner,” sixteen men were convicted and some went to jail for taking part in consensual gay BDSM. Some were charged with assault and others, quite absurdly, with abetting in their own assaults. The decision, upheld on appeal, effectively criminalized the SM scene in the UK and drove it underground. This case was recently cited by the British gov-

ernment in its proposed legislation (part of the Criminal Justice and Immigration Bill 2007) to make it a crime to possess (!) so-called “extreme pornography.”

That sort of thing goes on here too, of course. In your exemplary review of *Capturing the Friedmans* (WV 808), *Workers Vanguard* reported and denounced the ongoing federal prosecution of Extreme Associates, a producer of fantasy rape porn, for sending “obscene material” across state lines through the mail.

As the Spanner case shows, the repression of SM sex can be a pretext for anti-gay persecution. I remember *Workers Vanguard*’s defense of exhibitions of the work of Robert Mapplethorpe, which made use of gay and sadomasochistic motifs, when there were efforts to censor it in 1989-90.

I would hate to see the isolated and inexplicable lapse into squeamishness and prudery cited above in any way muddy the party’s crystal-clear record of defending personal freedom in sexual matters against bigotry and state repression.

CGs,  
Alan H.  
Brooklyn, NY

## WV replies:

Alan H. is right. We did not intend to imply in our indictment of Bill Logan (now a leader of the International Bolshevik Tendency) that we believe voluntary and personal pursuits such as “blood sports” or “sado-masochistic sexual proclivities” are matters to be condemned by the Marxist movement. As we state in the introduction to the two-volume bulletin, *The Logan Dossier*, “We have published countless articles opposing any interference by the church, state or other agencies in the intimate affairs of mutually consenting individuals.”

The point of the passage Alan cites is not to criticize any form of mutually consenting behavior but to condemn the

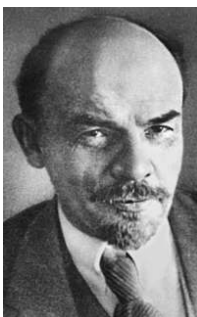
sadistic brutality historically inculcated by the British ruling class in those who aspired to be the administrators of its colonial empire, a sadistic brutality bound up with the institutions of the monarchy, House of Lords and established church. This was the training Logan brought with him when he used his position as leader of our Australian section in the 1970s to maliciously and sadistically interfere in and destroy comrades’ personal lives. As the preface to *The Logan Dossier* makes clear, Logan’s “social and educational background lay in New Zealand’s English-style ‘public school’ (elite private school) culture, steeped in imperialist elitism and misogynist sadism.” The sociopath Logan was a creature of his own small nasty bourgeoisie aping the British rulers. Following a meticulous trial, we expelled him from our tendency in August 1979 for crimes against communist morality and elementary human decency.

The sadistic practices and sexual/psychological terror that were part and parcel of life in the British public schools had nothing to do with pleasurable activity and everything to do with maintaining a culture of arrogant bullying. One is molded to take pleasure in manipulating and inflicting suffering and pain on others, particularly those of the “lower orders.” The movie *Mutiny on the Bounty* (especially the 1935 Charles Laughton version) and George Orwell’s essay “Such, Such Were the Joys,” a chilling description of the unrelenting sadism of his prep school days in Sussex, evoke this vicious world quite well.

Finally, a small point: Our party has no position on “blood sports,” though we would note they aren’t quite harmless for the small creature—a fox, say—that gets torn apart. For every enthusiast like Engels, there’s a more jaundiced view, such as that expressed by Oscar Wilde: “The English country gentleman galloping after a fox—the unspeakable in pursuit of the inedible.” To each his own. ■

## Honor Class-War Prisoners!

*In building its annual Holiday Appeal for Class-War Prisoners, the Partisan Defense Committee follows in the tradition of the International Labor Defense, established by the early Communist Party and headed by James P. Cannon, who subsequently became the founder of American Trotskyism. In struggling to mobilize labor-centered protest to free the class-war prisoners, we seek to imbue the proletariat with the understanding that it must sweep away the capitalist system through socialist revolution.*



LENIN



TROTSKY

In one sense of the word the whole of capitalist society is a prison. For the great mass of people who do the hard, useful work there is no such word as freedom. They come and go at the order of a few. Their lives are regulated according to the needs and wishes of a few. A censorship is put upon their words and deeds. The fruits of their labor are taken from them. And if, by chance, they have the instinct and spirit to rebel, if they take their place in the vanguard of the fight for justice, the prisons are waiting....

The class-war prisoners of today, just as those in previous periods of history, are representatives of the most courageous and advanced section of the oppressed but upward-striving class. As a rule they are individuals of particular audacity and ability who have stood out conspicuously in their environment as leaders and militants, and have thereby incurred the hatred of the oppressors....

The class-conscious worker accords to the class-war prisoners a place of singular honor and esteem. The class-war prisoners are stronger than all the jails and jailers and judges. They rise triumphant over all their enemies and oppressors. Confined in prison, covered with ignominy, branded as criminals, they are not defeated. They are destined to triumph. They are the representatives of an idea that will crack the walls of every prison and crumble them into dust.

There is a way of saying that the class-war prisoners are victorious, which smacks of superficial optimism and which offers little consolation to men who spend long, almost forgotten years behind the gray walls of the jail. We do not mean to speak in this sense, as though it were an automatic process. The victory of the class-war prisoners is possible only when they are inseparably united with the living labor movement and when that movement claims them for its own, takes up their battle cry and carries on their work.

—James P. Cannon, “The Cause That Passes Through a Prison,” *Labor Defender* (September 1926), reprinted in *Notebook of an Agitator* (Pioneer Publishers, 1958)

## On Trotsky’s Call for the Fourth International

29 November 2007

Dear Comrades,

In Part Two of “The Development and Extension of Leon Trotsky’s Theory of Permanent Revolution” (WV No. 902, 9 November 2007), the following sentence is so telescoped that it misses the key point as to why Trotsky called to build the Fourth International:

“By 1933, Stalin’s Comintern could not be awakened by what Trotsky called ‘the thunderbolt of Fascism’—the victory of Hitler’s Nazis without a shot being fired by the powerful German workers movement. The CI had proved itself utterly dead as a force for revolution.”

What made the victory of the Nazis “without a shot” decisive was that following the collapse of the German section it became clear that there was a complete strangulation of all signs of political life in the sections of the Third International. Trotsky wrote in “It is Necessary

to Build Communist Parties and an International Anew” (15 July 1933):

“The Moscow leadership has not only proclaimed as infallible the policy which guaranteed victory to Hitler, but has also prohibited all discussion of what had occurred. And this shameful interdiction was not violated nor overthrown. No national congresses; no international congress; no discussions at party meetings; no discussion in the press! An organization which was not roused by the thunder of fascism and which submits docilely to such outrageous acts of the bureaucracy demonstrates thereby that it is dead and that nothing can ever revive it.”

From that point on, the task of the International Left Opposition was preparation of a new international, which culminated in the founding of the Fourth International in 1938.

Comradely,  
Keith Markin

## WORKERS VANGUARD

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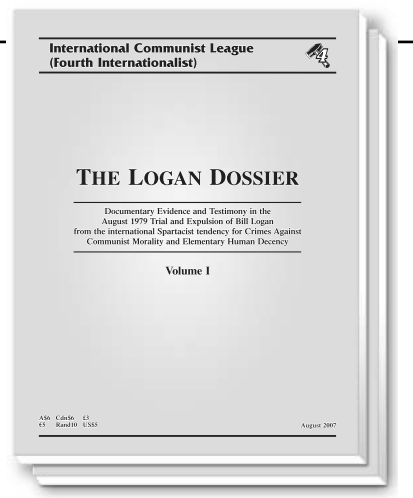
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# Subscription Drive Success

## WV Welcomes New Readers

Every year the Spartacist League, Spartacus Youth Clubs and Labor Black Leagues embark on a *Workers Vanguard* subscription drive, an all-out national campaign from late August to early October. We extend greetings to our first-time subscribers and welcome back those who renewed their subscriptions. This year we exceeded our quota of 2,700 points by 20 percent, achieving a grand total of 3,241.5 points, modestly raising our subscription base and arresting a decline in recent years. The points include 1,506 subscriptions to WV and 103 subscriptions to *Espartaco*, newspaper of the Grupo Espartaquista de México, section of the International Communist League. The Chicago and Bay Area locals raised their quotas after early successes, and all locals exceeded the quotas they had set. Special congratulations to comrade Inessa in the Bay Area for selling the most subscriptions.

*Workers Vanguard* is the newspaper of the Spartacist League/U.S. and the flagship paper of the ICL. We produce a polemical press that takes on the “death of communism,” pro-Democratic Party politics of our reformist opponents, as part of our struggle to build a multiracial workers party that fights for socialist revolution. Our task is all the more important in the current political period, which is marked by the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92. The final undoing of the world’s first workers state has ushered in a global offensive against the working class and oppressed and an ideological climate in which proletarian consciousness has been thrown back.

Throughout the subscription drive, we raised our Trotskyist call for the unconditional military defense of the remaining deformed workers states of China, Cuba, North Korea and Vietnam and for workers political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracies. All our locals held public forums on China. We also built for our forums on the 90th anniversary of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, which were held shortly after the subscription drive, stressing our fight against capitalist counterrevolution in the USSR and the deformed workers states of East and Central Europe.

### Racial Oppression and the Fight for Mumia’s Freedom

Throughout the course of our campaign, we made clear our opposition to U.S. imperialism, including our call for the immediate withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Iraq and Afghanistan. Calling for U.S. hands off Iran, we underlined the fact that Iran needs nukes to deter an imperialist attack. We emphasized the need to mobilize the power of labor to fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants. Our placards calling for free abortion on demand drew a lot of attention on the campuses and attracted new subscribers. We stressed our fight for black liberation and the need to mobilize the social power



Frazier/Natchez Democrat

**Workers Vanguard salesman at September 20 march in Jena, Louisiana.**

of the multiracial labor movement to fight for freedom for death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Our staunch opposition to the capitalist Democratic Party of racism and war was a major question discussed with youth and workers, many of whom supported Barack Obama and to a lesser extent Hillary Clinton as their preferred presidential candidates. We encountered increased activity from the “fight the right” liberals and reformist groups whose aim is to pressure the Democrats.

In Berkeley, the Campus Antiwar Network, a creature of the reformist International Socialist Organization (ISO), was passing out flyers for a rally in front of Democratic Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi’s office to “hold our leaders accountable.” In Texas we found discontent among ISO members regarding their group’s support to the Green Party, a capitalist appendage to the Democrats. At Howard University in Washington, D.C., a student trying to compare *Revolution*, the newspaper of the misnamed Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), to ours decided to subscribe to WV because of our revolutionary working-class perspective as opposed to the RCP’s “Anybody but Bush” politics.

Our subscription drive also intersected the explosion of outrage against Jim Crow justice in Jena, Louisiana. Following months of racist insults and threats, including the hanging of nooses on a “white tree” at their school, five black youth were initially charged with attempted murder and a sixth charged as a juvenile

after a scuffle with a white student, though the charges were later reduced. Teenager Mychal Bell, who was hounded by prosecutors for nearly a year and spent some ten months in jail, pleaded guilty to a juvenile charge of second-degree battery on December 3 and faces another eight months in prison. The other youths are still awaiting their trials (see “Jena Six: Racist ‘Justice’ U.S.A.,” WV No. 899, 28 September). We say: **Free Mychal Bell! Drop all charges against the Jena Six!**

On campuses and in workplaces across the country, the case of the Jena Six touched a raw nerve among black people, many of whom recognized that “Jena justice” is not some aberration but rather epitomizes the day-to-day conditions of black youth. Our trip to overwhelmingly black Howard University was particularly successful. On campuses throughout the

country, our signs on Jena attracted the attention of students who wanted to join protest actions.

Our comrades participated in the September 20 march in Jena, which drew as many as 50,000 people—overwhelmingly black and comprising workers, students, retirees and church groups. Democratic politicians Jesse Jackson Sr. and Al Sharpton were the central leaders of the protest, preaching reliance on the same “justice” system that from the county sheriff on up is a machine of racial and class oppression. Our comrades argued against this losing strategy and stressed the importance of a class-struggle fight against racial oppression. Many of the protesters appreciated the connection we made between the Jena Six case and the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, one of the worst racist atrocities in modern U.S. history. We also distributed our newspaper to buses setting off for the march from cities as far away as Los Angeles and to solidarity events being held in Raleigh and Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and other areas.

Our comrades also participated in protests at Columbia University and elsewhere against the racist backlash following the Jena protest, marked by the nooses hung at workplaces, homes and schools to terrorize black people. We emphasized the need to fight for the independent mobilization of the working class against racist terror (see “Vicious Racist Backlash After Jena Protest,” WV No. 901, 26 October).

As part of our struggle against black oppression, we raised the urgency of fighting to mobilize workers and youth around the struggle to free Mumia Abu-Jamal, whose case is at a critical juncture right now. We put up signs, made announcements, gathered statements for his freedom from union officials and held showings of the Partisan Defense Committee video, *From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal*, including at several campuses where the SYC was invited by campus groups. At the University of Oregon in Eugene, comrades from the Bay Area gave a presentation on Mumia’s case on the campus radio station. We underlined our perspective of class-struggle defense

*continued on page 7*

### 22nd Annual Holiday Appeal for Class-War Prisoners

# Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!

## Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!



#### 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  
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at Ross St., west of  
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# The Development and Extension of Leon Trotsky's Theory of Permanent Revolution

This part concludes this article. Part One appeared in WV No. 901 (26 October), Part Two in No. 902 (9 November) and Part Three in No. 903 (23 November).

## PART FOUR

In generalizing and extending the concept of permanent revolution following the defeat of the Chinese Revolution of 1925-27, Leon Trotsky explained in *The Permanent Revolution* (1930):

“Does this at least mean that every country, including the most backward colonial country, is ripe, if not for socialism, then for the dictatorship of the proletariat?... Under the conditions of the imperialist epoch the national democratic revolution can be carried through to a victorious end only when the social and political relationships of the country are mature for putting the proletariat in power as the leader of the masses of the people. And if this is not yet the case? Then the struggle for national liberation will produce only very partial results, results directed entirely against the working masses. In 1905, the proletariat of Russia did not prove strong enough to unite the peasant masses around it and to conquer power. For this very reason, the revolution halted midway, and then sank lower and lower. In China, where, in spite of the exceptionally favourable situation, the leadership of the Communist International prevented the Chinese proletariat from fighting for power, the national tasks found a wretched, unstable and measly solution in the régime of the Kuomintang.”

As in Trotsky's time, there are today a number of especially backward countries—e.g., Afghanistan, East Timor, Rwanda—in which there is not a modern, concentrated proletariat with sufficient social weight to lead the oppressed masses in carrying out the tasks of permanent revolution. Even so, as we noted in regard to the modernizing intellectuals and military officers of the pro-Soviet People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) in the 1980s, radicals have much to learn from the struggles of Georgi Plekhanov a century earlier, notwithstanding the vast differences between contemporary Afghanistan and tsarist Russia. Despite the fact that the Russian proletariat in the 1880s was also a rela-

tively insignificant social force, Plekhanov fought to forge a core of Marxist revolutionaries through polemical and ideological struggle (see Part One of this article). What is crucial is to develop a Marxist-internationalist framework, linking the struggle for social modernization and liberation to the class struggles of the proletariat in more advanced countries outside their own countries' boundaries.

Afghanistan's tiny proletariat is dwarfed by a far more numerous Islamic clergy, and the small urban population is surrounded by a sea of nomadic herdsmen and landless peasants beholden to the khans. In April 1978, a coup brought the PDPA to power, touching off a reactionary Islamist revolt backed by the CIA. It was at the behest of the PDPA that the Soviet Red Army intervened in Decem-

ber 1979. The International Communist League—then the international Spartacist tendency—declared: Hail Red Army in Afghanistan! Extend social gains of the October Revolution to the Afghan peoples!

We understood that the entry of the Soviet Army posed the chance to not only defeat the imperialist-sponsored reactionary cutthroats but to incorporate Afghanistan into Soviet Central Asia, where the masses lived a modern existence light years beyond that of the Afghan peoples. The withdrawal of Soviet troops by the Gorbachev regime in Moscow in 1988-89 was a historic betrayal that not only ushered in bloody *mujahedin* rule in Afghanistan but also opened the floodgates to capitalist counterrevolution in East Germany and then the Soviet Union itself.

Likewise in desperately poor Nepal,

where Maoist forces have waged a peasant-guerrilla struggle aimed at replacing the monarchy with a bourgeois coalition government, the proletariat is relatively insignificant. However, Nepalis have for decades crossed into India to live and work, becoming a part of what is now a rapidly growing proletariat in India; hundreds of thousands of Nepalis work elsewhere in Asia. A proletarian revolution in India would have a massive immediate effect on Nepal and other neighboring countries, posing a struggle for a socialist federation of the subcontinent. Crucial to such a proletarian-internationalist perspective is the fight for workers political revolution in the Chinese deformed workers state, a fight that must be premised on the unconditional military defense of China against imperialism and domestic counterrevolution.

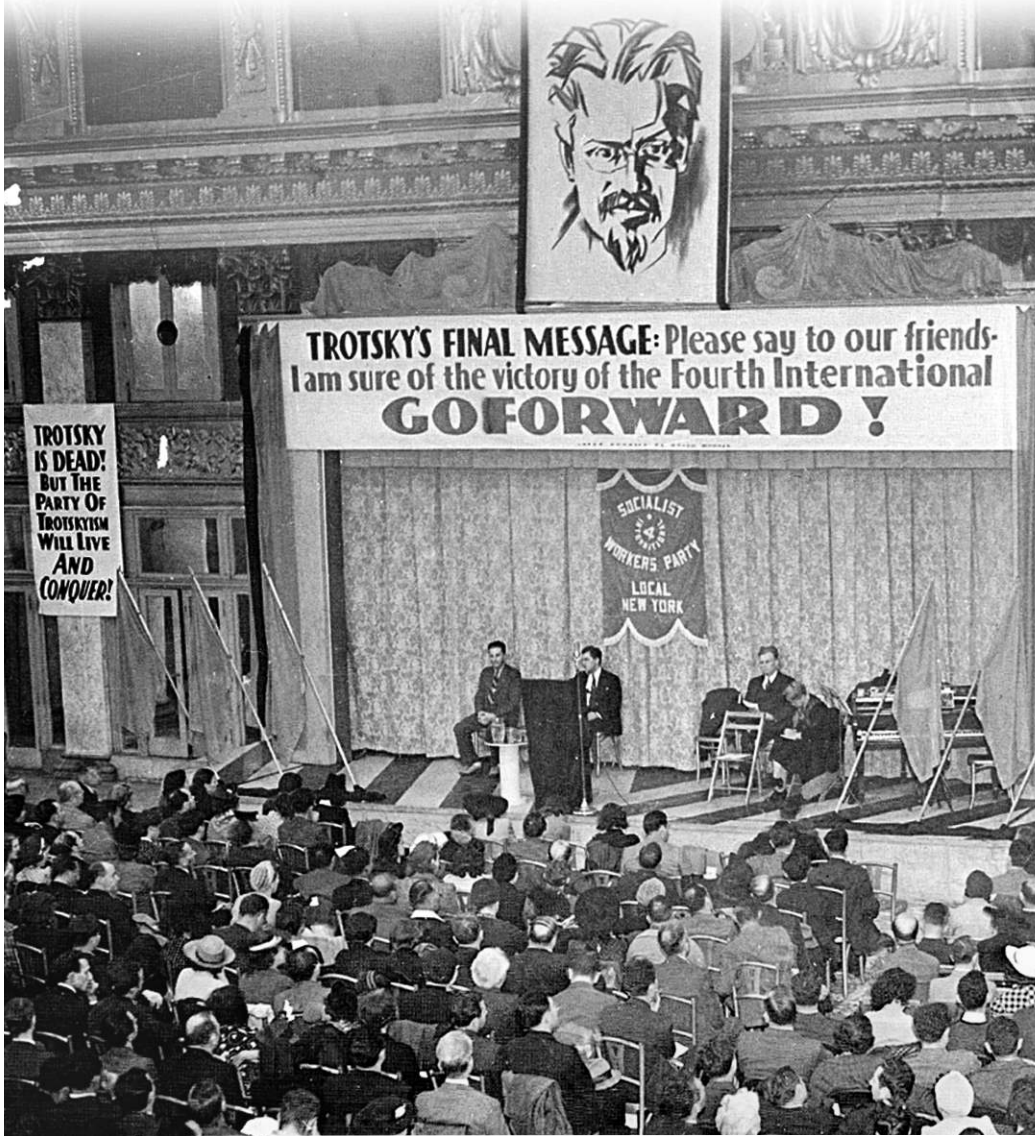
## The Algerian Independence Struggle

Today in South Africa and in many semicolonial countries such as South Korea, the role of the peasantry is no longer the crucial question it was in Russia in 1917 or in China in 1925-27. Nonetheless, historical experience since then has confirmed the theory of permanent revolution for such countries, which are characterized by combined and uneven development.

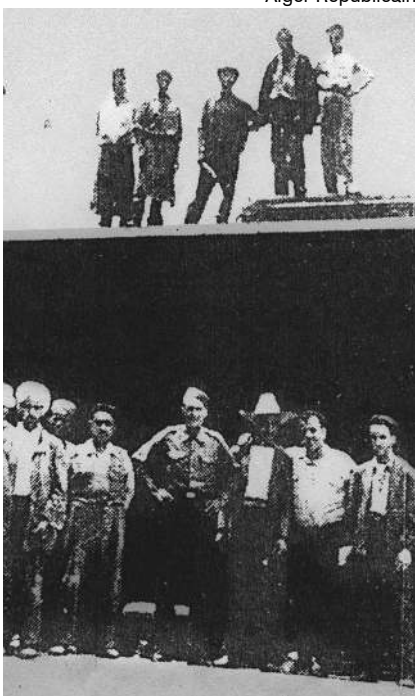
Those countries that underwent “democratic” or anti-colonial revolutions that did not result in the overthrow of capitalist rule remain bourgeois states mired in backwardness and dominated by imperialism. A case in point is the Algerian independence struggle against France in the 1950s and early '60s, one of the most radical and heroic of the colonial revolutions of the postwar period. From the first military operation by the National Liberation Front (FLN) in November 1954, it took more than seven years, at a cost of over one million dead, for the Algerian masses to drive the colonial rulers out of their country. The Algerian proletariat played an important, though not politically independent, role in this national liberation struggle. Together with the bourgeois-nationalist FLN, the UGTA union federation called a number of powerful strikes, including a massive general strike in July 1956.

When independence was finally achieved in 1962, it placed in power the FLN, which was committed to maintaining capitalism with a domestic ruling class lording it over its “own” people. Various leftists, uncritically promoting the FLN's “socialist” rhetoric, played a direct role in helping to consolidate an anti-working-class bourgeois regime in independent Algeria. The Algerian Communist Party liquidated into the FLN in 1956, and its successor organization was outlawed as soon as the FLN came to power. Yet the Stalinists continued to serve in the FLN machine after independence as propagandists, administrators and UGTA bureaucrats. Revisionist “Trotskyist” Michel Pablo was a top economic adviser to the FLN government of Ahmed Ben Bella and was instrumental in chaining the working class to the capitalist government.

The FLN banned strikes by public sector workers and imposed an iron grip over the organized working class. The FLN



Socialist Workers Party memorial meeting for Leon Trotsky, New York, 28 August 1940.



Alger Republican



Henissart

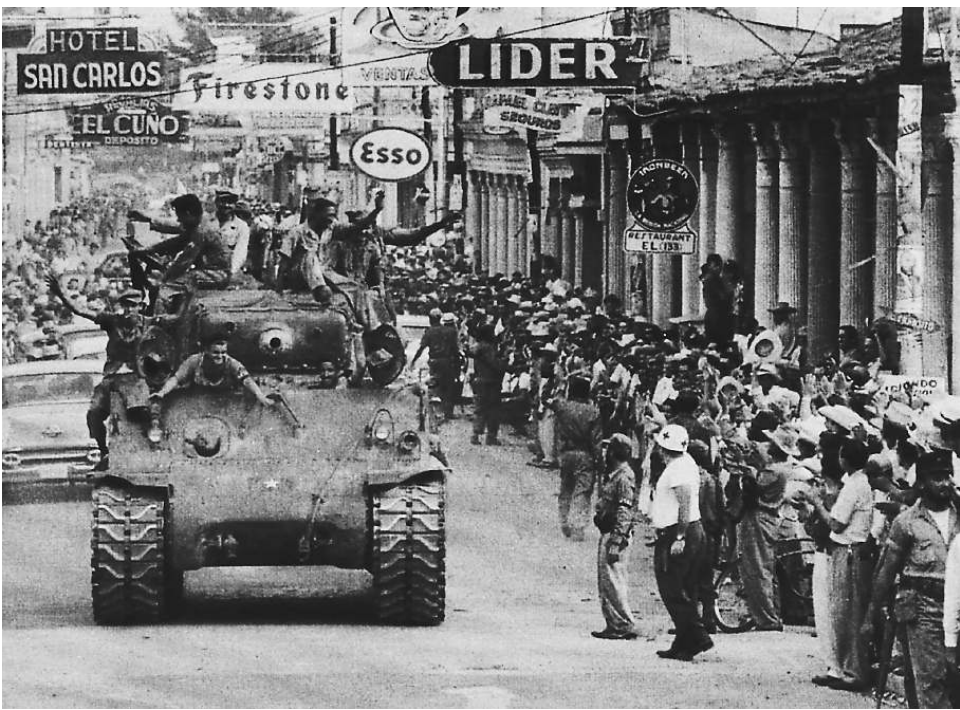
Left: Algerian dock workers on strike against 30 June 1955 arrest of union leaders by French colonial police. Right: Mass demonstration in Algiers, December 1960, under outlawed FLN flag in defiance of continued French rule.

demobilized thousands of women who had courageously fought against French colonialism and enforced the subjugation of women, including through references to Islamic law. The Berber ethnic minority, whose militants had played an exceptionally prominent role in the independence struggle, were subjected to vicious repression. FLN rule paved the way for a brutal military dictatorship and the rise of a mass Islamic fundamentalist movement committed to the enslavement of women, the reversal of modernization efforts and savage terror against workers and minorities.

**The Cuban Revolution**

However, following World War II there were also several revolutions in the backward countries that destroyed capitalist class rule and overthrew the yoke of imperialist domination. When Mao Zedong’s peasant-based People’s Liberation Army seized power from the collapsing Guomindang in 1949, the state that resulted was not a “New Democracy” based on a “bloc of four classes”—the parlance of the Stalinist Communist Party (CCP)—but a dictatorship of the proletariat, albeit bureaucratically deformed from its inception. Stalinist-led social overturns in Yugoslavia, North Korea and North Vietnam (extending to the South in 1975) also resulted in bureaucratically deformed workers states. Similar social overturns also occurred in the postwar “People’s Democracies” established under the aegis of the Soviet Red Army elsewhere in East Europe and in East Germany.

Michel Pablo, then head of the Fourth International that had been founded under Trotsky’s leadership in 1938, seized on the postwar social overturns to repudiate the central importance of a conscious revolutionary leadership and argue for the liquidation of Trotskyist organizations into various Stalinist and social-



Glinn/Magnum  
**Castro’s petty-bourgeois rebel forces enter Havana, New Year’s Day 1959. Right: Cuban militiaman guards expropriated U.S. oil refinery, 1960.**

for the Castro regime but, more importantly, economic assistance and a military shield that helped stay the hand of the U.S. imperialist beast just 90 miles away.

It was only as a result of exceptional circumstances—the absence of the working class as a contender for power in its own right, hostile imperialist encirclement and the flight of the national bourgeoisie, and a lifeline thrown by the Soviet Union—that Castro’s petty-bourgeois government was able to eventually smash capitalist property relations (see “Cuba and Marxist Theory,” *Marxist Bulletin* No. 8). Similar circumstances allowed for the creation of deformed workers states in Yugoslavia and elsewhere by Stalinist-led petty-bourgeois forces following World War II.

leadership can in itself lead to nothing more than an anti-working-class bureaucratic regime. The creation of such regimes has come about under the conditions of decay of imperialism, the demoralization and disorientation caused by Stalinist betrayals, and the absence of revolutionary Marxist leadership of the working class. Colonial revolution can have an unequivocally progressive significance only under such leadership of the revolutionary proletariat. For Trotskyists to incorporate into their strategy revisionism on the *proletarian* leadership in the revolution is a profound negation of Marxism-Leninism no matter what pious wish may be concurrently expressed for ‘building revolutionary Marxist parties in colonial countries.’ Marxists must resolutely oppose any adventurist acceptance of the peasant-guerrilla road to socialism—historically akin to the Social Revolutionary program on tactics that Lenin fought.”

—“Draft Resolution on the World Movement,” 14 June 1963; reprinted in *Marxist Bulletin* No. 9 and most recently in *Spartacist* (English-language edition) No. 58, Spring 2004

The Cuban Revolution demonstrated yet again that there is no “third road” between the dictatorship of capital and the dictatorship of the proletariat. In this sense, it confirmed the theory of permanent revolution. But the Cuban Revolution was a far cry from the Bolshevik-led proletarian socialist revolution that took place in Russia in November 1917. In Cuba, as in the other deformed workers states, the road to further socialist development was blocked by the political rule of a parasitic and nationalist bureaucracy. Upholding the anti-revolutionary Stalinist dogma of “socialism in one country,” the Castro regime has been hostile to the struggle for world revolution. Instead, it has promoted “progressive” bourgeois formations from the Allende popular-front government in Chile in the early 1970s, which resulted in a bloodbath of the workers, to the national-populist regime of Venezuela’s Hugo Chávez today.

As was the case with the degenerated Soviet workers state, what is necessary in Cuba and the other remaining deformed workers states is the shattering of the bureaucracy through a proletarian political revolution that establishes democratic organs of working-class rule based on



Wide World

revolutionary internationalism. Trotskyists base this perspective on the unconditional military defense of the workers states against imperialist attack and domestic capitalist counterrevolution.

To the limits of our modest forces, the ICL fought in East Germany and in the USSR to rally the working class to defeat the forces of capitalist restoration and to oust the disintegrating Stalinist regimes, which had undermined the workers states and in the end capitulated to imperialist-backed counterrevolution. Today we raise the same program in regard to China, Cuba, Vietnam, North Korea and fight for socialist revolutions in capitalist countries from the Third World to the imperialist centers of the U.S., Japan and West Europe.

**Permanent Revolution vs. Populist Nationalism**

The counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union and the East and Central European workers states had disastrous effects for the people of those societies and was a world-historic defeat for workers and the oppressed internationally, with the balance of forces dramatically altered in favor of imperialism. The working people of the former workers states have been plunged into mass poverty, ethnic bloodletting and other horrors. In the imperialist centers, the capitalist rulers have taken the ax to workers’ hard-won gains, accompanied by widespread attacks on immigrants and minorities. With a military force far surpassing that of any other country, U.S. imperialism in particular has been riding roughshod over the peoples of the Near East and elsewhere, while imperialist-dictated austerity measures have driven the masses of the Third World further into misery.

The profound retrogression in consciousness resulting from the destruction of the USSR has led even militant workers and radical youth to dismiss the Marxist program of proletarian revolution as, at best, a pipe dream. Instead, many leftists look to the resurgence of bourgeois-populist nationalism in Latin America, exemplified by Hugo Chávez in Venezuela, as the road to, in Chávez’s words, “21st century socialism.” Among those

*continued on page 6*



Le Bolchévick  
**Above: Ernest Mandel (left) and Michel Pablo abandoned Trotskyism in favor of tailing Third World nationalists. Pablo became a top economic adviser to FLN government of Ahmed Ben Bella (far right), shown here with Fidel Castro in Cuba, 1962.**



democratic parties. This revisionism led to the destruction of the Fourth International in 1951-53. In the early 1960s, the leadership of the U.S. Socialist Workers Party (SWP), which had broken with Pablo in 1953, embraced similar revisionist conclusions in its adulation for the petty-bourgeois Castroite leadership of the Cuban Revolution (see “Genesis of Pabloism,” *Spartacist* No. 21, Fall 1972).

Fidel Castro led a force of petty-bourgeois intellectuals and peasant guerrillas, the July 26 Movement, who were temporarily estranged from the bourgeoisie and independent of the proletariat. Under ordinary conditions, the rebels, after their overthrow of the corrupt, U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship in January 1959, would have followed in the footsteps of countless similar movements in Latin America, wielding radical-democratic rhetoric to reassert bourgeois control. But with the old capitalist state apparatus shattered, in 1960-61 the Castro regime nationalized U.S.-owned and domestic capitalist holdings, creating a deformed workers state. The existence of the Soviet Union was crucial in this development, providing not only a model

Our tendency, originating as the Revolutionary Tendency (RT) in the SWP, was born in a struggle to defend the Trotskyist program against the Pabloism of the SWP majority. Painting Castro as an unconscious Trotskyist, the SWP argued:

“Along the road of a revolution beginning with simple democratic demands and ending in the rupture of capitalist property relations, guerrilla warfare conducted by landless peasant and semi-proletarian forces, under a leadership that becomes committed to carrying the revolution through to a conclusion, can play a decisive role in undermining and precipitating the downfall of a colonial or semicolonial power. This is one of the main lessons to be drawn from experience since the second world war. It must be consciously incorporated into the strategy of building revolutionary Marxist parties in colonial countries.”

—SWP Political Committee, “For Early Reunification of the World Trotskyist Movement,” *SWP Discussion Bulletin* Vol. 24, No. 9 (April 1963)

In direct counterposition, the RT upheld Trotsky’s theory of permanent revolution and asserted:

“Experience since the Second World War has demonstrated that peasant-based guerrilla warfare under petit-bourgeois

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**SPARTACIST**

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**TOWARD REBIRTH OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL**

(DRAFT RESOLUTION ON THE WORLD MOVEMENT submitted to the 1963 SWP Convention by the Revolutionary Tendency.)

INTRODUCTION

1. For the past fifteen years the movement founded by Leon Trotsky has been rent by a profound theoretical, political, and organizational crisis. The surface

the existing petit-bourgeois leaderships of the labor movement, the deformed workers states, and the colonial revolution. The heart of the revolutionary perspective of Marxism is in the struggle for the independence of the workers as a class from all non-proletarian forces; the guiding political issue and theoretical criterion is workers' democracy, of which the supreme expression is workers' power. This applies to all countries where the proletariat has become capable of carrying

**First issue of *Spartacist* in 1964 stressed need for Leninist vanguard party, opposed SWP’s Pabloite revisionism.**

Permanent Revolution...

(continued from page 5)

promoting such illusions is Cuban writer Celia Hart, a supporter of the Castro regime and self-styled Trotskyist, who in a recent interview with the fake-Trotskyist Argentine *El Militante* (translated by CubaNews online, 6 July) lavishes praise on “Venezuela’s revolutionary process, which is increasingly moving to a radical left.”

Hart asserts that “many Cubans who stopped talking about socialism” are “seeing that Venezuela talks quite naturally about socialism and want to follow suit, never mind the strange ways some people want to call it these days, namely 21st Century Socialism, saying that it can be attained without expropriating the local capitalists and so forth.” Speaking of Chávez’s call for “socialism,” Hart adds: “It’s like seeing how the Permanent Revolution thesis of that Russian in 1905 comes to life a century later.”

Similarly, Mexican leftist Guillermo Almeyra, in an article titled “Trotsky in the 21st Century” in *La Jornada* (19 August), a newspaper that supports the bourgeois-nationalist Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD), claims: “The attitude of poor countries like Venezuela or Cuba in their solidarity aid is inscribed, consciously or not, in that course of thought by Trotsky which Lenin shared.” In his “defense” of permanent



Marxist.com Pseudo-Trotskyist Alan Woods (left) of International Marxist Tendency promotes “21st Century Socialism” of bourgeois nationalist Hugo Chávez.

revolution, Almeyra, a former Pabloite who now “critically” supports the PRD, recasts Trotsky’s fight for the continuity of Lenin’s Bolshevism into a tale of “democracy” vs. “the monolithic party” and concludes by warning against “dogmatic” and “Talmudic” followers of Trotsky today.

Knowingly or not, Hart and Almeyra echo the SWP line that Castro was an unconscious Trotskyist. To say this of Hugo Chávez is truly breathtaking. Since his election as president in 1998, Chávez has diverted some of the huge profits the Venezuelan bourgeoisie has gleaned from skyrocketing oil prices to provide enhanced social services for the plebeian masses. Meanwhile, the government has



With rapid rate of economic growth beginning in 1960s, percentage of Spanish people engaged in agriculture underwent steep decline. Today, immigrants, including from North Africa, such as those pictured above in a 2002 protest, form core of Spain’s agricultural workforce.

increased taxes on foreign oil companies, which continue to rake in profits. The social measures under Chávez, and the fact that he boasts of his *zambo* (mixed African and indigenous) heritage, have earned him the contempt of the lily-white oligarchy. He has also incurred Washington’s wrath for his friendship with Castro’s Cuba and his pointed denunciations of the arrogant U.S. imperialists. In the event of a U.S.-sponsored coup attempt, as in 2002, we call for the military defense of the Chávez regime.

But Chávez is no socialist. He has moved to tighten the straitjacket of capitalist state control over the Venezuelan workers movement and, as even Hart admits, is not about to countenance the expropriation of the Venezuelan bourgeoisie. As we noted in “Venezuela: Populist Nationalism vs. Proletarian Revolution” (WV No. 860, 9 December 2005):

“When Castro’s rebel army marched into Havana on 1 January 1959, the bourgeois army and the rest of the capitalist state apparatus that had propped up the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship collapsed in disarray. By the time Castro declared Cuba ‘socialist’ in 1961, the Cuban bourgeoisie and the U.S. imperialists and their CIA and Mafia henchmen had all fled and every bit of capitalist property down to the last ice cream vendor had been expropriated. In contrast, Chávez came to power and rules *at the head of* the capitalist state, the Venezuelan bourgeoisie is alive and kicking, and the imperialists continue to carry on a thriving business with Venezuela, White House threats and provocations notwithstanding.”

Hart and Almeyra turn permanent revolution on its head in order to justify their support to bourgeois populists, who are no less the class opponents of the victory of the workers and urban and rural poor than neoliberal politicians. The programmatic essence of permanent revolution is the struggle for the *class independence of the proletariat* from *all* wings of the semicolonial bourgeoisie—no matter how “progressive” or “anti-imperialist” their proclamations. That struggle can be realized only through forging revolutionary, internationalist workers parties in opposition to all variants of bourgeois

nationalism. The ICL fights to reforge the Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution.

The Modernization of Capitalist Spain

Despite substantial industrial development in recent decades, Brazil, South Korea and the so-called “tiger” economies of Southeast Asia have not been able to escape from imperialist subjugation. However, there are a handful of countries on the periphery of Europe that have managed—at great human cost and in the context of wars, counterrevolutions and other major world developments—to develop from backward agrarian societies to modern capitalist states as part of the European imperialist consortium. For example, in the period before World War I Finland was an economic backwater, with a sizable oppressed peasantry, that had been part of the Russian tsarist empire. But the attempt to consummate a proletarian revolution following the Bolshevik victory in Russia was drowned in blood by the imperialist-backed Mannerheim military dictatorship, and capitalist Finland was subsequently integrated into imperialist Europe.

Spain before World War II was a prime example of combined and uneven development where the tasks of permanent revolution were manifest. A large peasantry was brutally exploited by a landowning class, derived from the old feudal nobility, that heavily overlapped with the urban bourgeoisie. The powerful Catholic church, which exercised a monopoly in the education of children, was the country’s largest landowner and also had substantial investments in industry and finance. Furthermore, then as today the Spanish state contained within its boundaries such oppressed nations as the Basques and Catalans. Amid the social backwardness, there also existed a raw, combative working class made up in good part of peasant youth who retained close ties to their families in the countryside.

The Spanish Civil War of 1936-39 posed pointblank the possibility of proletarian revolution. But this opportunity was betrayed by the Stalinists, Socialists and anarchists who were the mainstay of the bourgeois Republican government, a popular front that was also treacherously supported by the centrist POUM (Workers Party of Marxist Unification). Through its disarming and suppression of the revolutionary proletariat, mainly at the hands of the Stalinists, the popular front paved the way for the victory of the right-wing forces of Generalissimo Francisco Franco, who subsequently ruled Spain with an iron fist for nearly four decades.

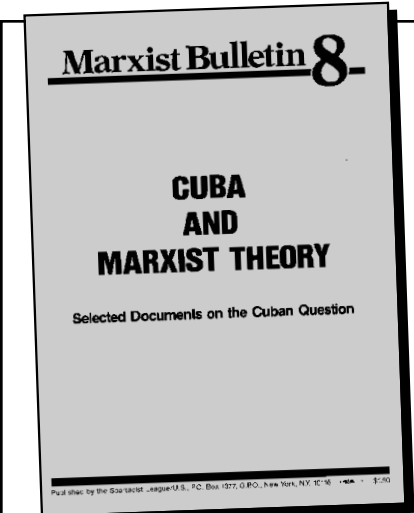
Developments in Spain between the 1930s and the 1980s, at both the economic and political levels, were to a large degree determined and conditioned by the changing international situation. Following the end of World War II, the U.S. forged a

political and military alliance (NATO) with the West European capitalist governments as part of the imperialist Cold War against the Soviet Union. By allying itself with American imperialism, the Franco regime broke Spain out of its former international isolation. (The country had not even been allowed to join the United Nations at its founding.) In 1953, Washington scrapped a UN-sanctioned economic embargo of Spain in exchange for U.S. military bases there. Spain became a recipient of U.S. government loans and, more importantly, began to increase its economic ties to the rest of West Europe.

Beginning in the 1960s, Spain experienced a rapid rate of economic growth that would eventually lead to a predominantly urbanized and culturally cosmopolitan society with an annual per capita gross domestic product (\$25,300) not much below that of Italy (Economist, *Pocket World in Figures*, 2007). In *The Economic Transformation of Spain and Portugal* (1978), American economist Eric N. Baklanoff summarized the international factors underlying what was called the Spanish “economic miracle”: “For it was the international economy, and most especially the European Economic Community and the United States, that presented Spain with surging markets for its products, sent it free-spending tourists by the millions, invested in its factories and real estate, and employed a goodly share of its ‘surplus’ manpower.” Private foreign investment climbed from \$40 million in 1960 to nearly \$800 million in 1973. Attracted by Spain’s relatively cheap labor, American, German and British capitalists concentrated their investments in manufacturing, especially the automobile and chemical industries.

The economic boom of the 1960s-early ’70s led to the effective liquidation of small peasant farming. The agricultural labor force declined from 5.3 million in 1950 to 2.9 million in 1975 and then to 2.4 million in 1980. Small family holdings, dependent on manual labor and draft animals, were increasingly replaced by larger, mechanized farms. The share of the labor force engaged in agriculture declined from 48 percent in 1950 to 13 percent by 1990 (Carlos Prieto del Campo, “A Spanish Spring?”, *New Left Review*, January-February 2005). Today, Spain’s agricultural labor force consists primarily of immigrants from North Africa and elsewhere.

Following Franco’s death in 1975, Spain experienced a massive wave of labor strikes that raised both economic and political demands. At this point the Spanish ruling class and its senior partners in Washington and the capitals of NATO Europe recognized that the only way to restore social and political order was to work out a deal with the country’s reformist workers parties, which had been outlawed under the Franco regime. In late 1977, in exchange for their parties’ legal-



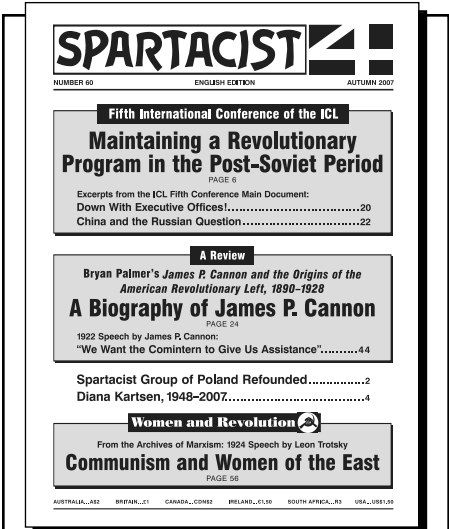
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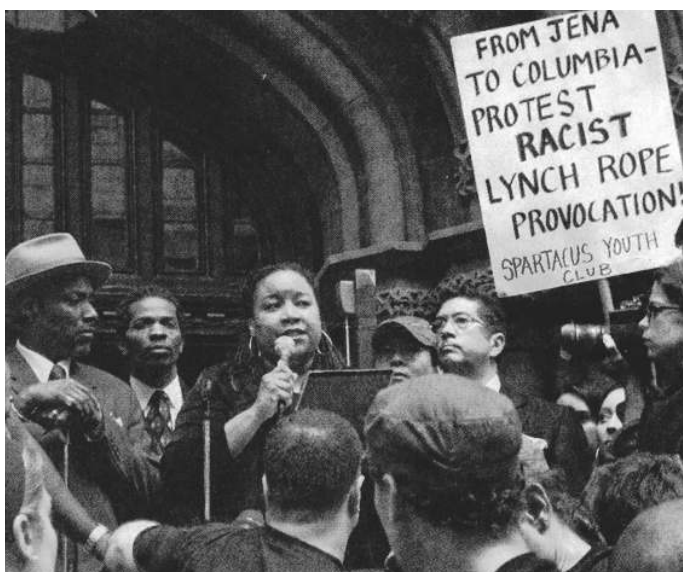
# Subscription...

(continued from page 3)

—the mobilization of mass protest, centered on the power of labor, to fight for Mumia’s freedom and to abolish the racist death penalty. Though a number of students were learning about Mumia’s case for the first time, the PDC pamphlet *The Fight to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal—Mumia Is Innocent!* was the most popular “giveaway” with new WV subscriptions.

The SYCs held “Meet the Marxists” events on campuses across the country, particularly focusing on the struggle against black oppression, a central question in the fight for socialist revolution in the U.S. A good deal of lively discussion and debate ensued at these events. Many students did not understand our slogan “Finish the Civil War!” or the centrality of black oppression to U.S. capitalism. Our comrades explained that black oppression has been built into the American republic from its inception, and that it took a bloody Civil War to smash the slavocracy and free the slaves. However, the promise of black equality was subsequently betrayed by the Northern capitalists. We pointed to our program of revolutionary integrationism: While seeking to combat every manifestation of racist discrimination, fighting in particular to mobilize the social power of the multi-racial labor movement, we understand that black liberation can be achieved only

**Spartacus Youth Club joined October 10 protest at Columbia University after noose was hung outside office of professor Madonna Constantine (center).**



Angela Radulescu/Columbia Spectator

through the overthrow of the capitalist order and the integration of black people into an egalitarian socialist society. We say: *For black liberation through socialist revolution!*

## Local and Regional Highlights

New York comrades made tours of the Boston area and Western Massachusetts colleges, and we sent several teams on trips, including to North Carolina, Washington, D.C., Norfolk, New Orleans and Atlanta. In Charleston, South Carolina, comrades got a notably good reception at ILA longshore union Local 1422, which had sent a contingent with a banner to the September 20 Jena Six march. In

New Orleans we found the devastation wreaked by the racist neglect after Hurricane Katrina is still very much evident in people’s day-to-day lives.

Los Angeles and Bay Area comrades went to several University of California and Cal State campuses and made trips to Texas, Arizona, Colorado and the Northwest. Chicago comrades went to Wisconsin and Michigan and sold several subscriptions to striking AFSCME clerical workers at the University of Minnesota. When the two-day, nationwide United Auto Workers strike against General Motors began on September 24, our comrades went to picket lines in the Mid-Atlantic region and in the Detroit area and sold

ization and the promise of “democratization,” the Communist and Socialist leaders demobilized the workers movement, thereby ending the greatest threat to bourgeois rule in Spain since the end of the Civil War. Groomed by the West German Social Democracy, the Spanish Socialist Workers Party has since become a bulwark of a stable bourgeois parliamentary order. Clearly the perspective of permanent revolution in regard to the historic tasks associated with the bourgeois-democratic revolution no longer applies to Spain.

Ireland is another European country that was historically marked by socio-economic backwardness, including a primarily agrarian economy and a dominant role played by the Catholic church in society. Moreover, a significant proportion of the Irish Catholic nation constitutes an oppressed minority in the Ulster Protestant-dominated Northern Ireland statelet, which is part of the British imperialist state.

Addressing the intense national conflict between these two geographically interpenetrated peoples, we wrote in “Theses on Ireland” (*Spartacist* No. 24, Autumn 1977): “Ireland, like other situations of interpenetrated peoples as in the Middle East and Cyprus, is a striking confirmation of the Trotskyist theory of permanent revolution.” The Theses made clear that in cases of interpenetrated peoples, there can be no democratic and equitable solution to the national question within the framework of capitalism: “In such circumstances the exercise of self-determination by one or the other people in the form of the establishment of their own bourgeois state can only be brought about by the denial of that right to the other.” While opposing the national oppression of the Irish Catholics in the North, we also oppose the forcible reunification of Ireland, which would mean the oppression of the Ulster Protestant population in a Catholic-dominated state. The Spartacist League/Britain, section of the ICL, demands the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland and calls for an Irish workers republic within a federation of workers republics in the British Isles.

However, subsequent discussion within the ICL concluded that to refer to permanent revolution in this context was theoretically confusing, conflating a democratic solution to the national question in an advanced capitalist society with the historic tasks of the bourgeois revolution. For well over a century, Ireland has been integrated into the economy of the

British Isles, with a large fraction of the Irish proletariat working in the factories and construction sites of London and other cities. And in recent decades, Ireland’s membership in the European Union has played a large part in the country’s further economic development.

The concept of permanent revolution is *not* about the relationship of proletarian revolution to democratic questions in general. In many advanced capitalist countries there exist reactionary institutions inherited from the feudal past—e.g., the monarchy in Spain, Britain and Japan; the privileged role of the Vatican in Italy—which play a very important role in maintaining the present-day bourgeois order. In the U.S., the institutionalized oppression of the black population—a strategic question for proletarian revolution—is a legacy of chattel slavery. In all of these cases, only proletarian socialist revolution can eliminate national, racial and ethnic oppression. This underlines the need to forge Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard parties that act as a tribune of the people.

## For Proletarian Internationalism!

As Trotsky laid out in *The Permanent Revolution*:

“The completion of the socialist revolution within national limits is unthinkable. One of the basic reasons for the crisis in bourgeois society is the fact that the productive forces created by it can no longer be reconciled with the framework of the national state.... The socialist revolution begins on the national arena, it unfolds on the international arena, and is completed on the world arena. Thus, the socialist revolution becomes a permanent revolution in a newer and broader sense of the word; it attains completion only in the final victory of the new society on our entire planet.”

From Mexico to South Africa and elsewhere, many leftists point to the tremendous military and economic might of the U.S. to claim that a workers revolution would inevitably be crushed by the imperialists. No one would deny that the U.S. and other capitalist powers represent a formidable obstacle to proletarian revolutions. But the imperialist countries are class-divided societies with deep discontents and insoluble contradictions, necessarily leading to class and other social struggles. In the course of sharp class struggle and through the instrumentality of a revolutionary party that patiently educates the working class in the understanding not only of its social power but of its historic interests, the workers will become conscious of themselves as a class fight-

ing for itself and for all the oppressed against the capitalist order.

The preconditions for a revolution will be different in different parts of the world. When these are met, the situation in any particular country and in the world will be different than it is today, and the consciousness of the working class will have changed significantly. Our struggle to forge Leninist vanguard parties is based on the understanding that when such parties become rooted in the working class, this will reflect a qualitative change in the political consciousness of the proletariat.

The struggles of the proletariat in the semicolonial world are integrally intertwined with those of the workers in the imperialist centers. A proletarian revolution in Mexico would have a massive impact on the multiracial U.S. proletariat, whose growing Latino component is a human bridge between the struggles of workers in the U.S. and of those in Latin America. A revolutionary proletarian upsurge in South Africa would resonate powerfully among working people and youth throughout the world, especially but definitely not only the black people who form a strategically important layer of the working class in the United States and in Brazil. A South African workers revolution would also touch off struggles

several introductory subscriptions.

We joined our Canadian comrades of the Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyste in Vancouver and Montreal to assist with their annual subscription drive. Comrades working with other sections of the ICL also contributed to our subscription drive totals.

We seek to build a Leninist vanguard party that fights for socialist revolution, the only road to a world free of capitalist exploitation, imperialist slaughter and racist oppression. As a Marxist bi-weekly, *Workers Vanguard* is a key political weapon in that struggle. As Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin put it in “Where To Begin?” in 1901:

“The role of a newspaper...is not limited solely to the dissemination of ideas, to political education, and to the enlistment of political allies. A newspaper is not only a collective propagandist and a collective agitator, it is also a collective organiser. In this last respect it may be likened to the scaffolding round a building under construction, which marks the contours of the structure and facilitates communication between the builders, enabling them to distribute the work and to view the common results achieved by their organised labour.”

Congratulations to all comrades and friends for their very hard work in making this subscription drive a success! We encourage our readers to let us know what they think of our press and to contact us to discuss its contents and get involved in the activities of the Spartacist League, Spartacus Youth Clubs and the Labor Black Leagues. ■

throughout the continent by destroying the regional gendarme of sub-Saharan Africa. Conversely, a proletarian seizure of state power in one of the imperialist countries would have enormous revolutionary repercussions in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

In the 1994 *WV* series, “South Africa Powder Keg” (reprinted in *Black History and the Class Struggle* No. 12 [February 1995]), we wrote:

“For the moment South Africa is a weakened link in the chain of the world capitalist system binding the neocolonies of the Third World to the imperialist states of North America, West Europe and Japan. It is necessary to mobilize the forces of the proletariat to *break* that chain at its weakest links, and then fight like hell to take the battle to the imperialist centers, seeking allies against the vicious enemy of all the oppressed—international capital. Thus, the fight to build a South African Bolshevik Party is inseparable from the struggle we in the International Communist League are waging to reforge an authentically Trotskyist Fourth International.”

The fight for world socialist revolution is certainly not easy. But what is truly impossible is for the subordination of the working class to the class enemy to result in anything but the continuing vicious cycle of defeats and demoralizing sellouts. ■

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# Young Spartacus

## The Speak Out Now! Group

# Ordinary Reformists for “Ordinary People”

We reprint below an October 24 Bay Area Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth Club leaflet that was distributed at the October 27 San Francisco antiwar demonstration.

Over the past couple of years, antiwar protests in the San Francisco Bay Area have brought out contingents of youth in red T-shirts with “Speak Out Now!” emblazoned on them. A self-proclaimed Marxist outfit, Speak Out Now!—a.k.a. the Revolutionary Workers Group (SON/RWG)—also exists, albeit semi-clandestinely, at Bay Area campuses, particularly San Francisco State University. In its public appearances, SON/RWG distributes leaflets that would not offend any middle-class liberal, complaining of the misuse of “our tax dollars” by the “wealthy minority” and appealing for “a system run democratically by ordinary people.” Indeed, this refrain has more in common with populist currents in the U.S. than anything resembling Marxism.

What makes SON/RWG a bird of a different feather is that it is affiliated with a factional minority of France’s Lutte Ouvrière (LO—Worker’s Fight), a reformist party that falsely, albeit rarely, lays claim to Trotskyism. While anyone meeting them for the first time won’t hear much about their relationship to Trotskyism, a lie spoken even occasionally is still a lie. For the initiated, SON/RWG offers a cynical school of phony Marxism, while in practice peddling a program of liberal reformism. Its “Where We Stand” statement, which on occasion accompanies SON’s leaflets and pamphlets, declares: “We base ourselves on the ideas and actions of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky, on the model of the Russian Revolution of 1917 when the working class showed its capacity to take over and exert its power, and on the revolutionary ideas of the Fourth International in its struggles against Stalinism.”

This claim is belied by the whole history of LO, which was born in rejecting Trotsky’s Fourth International and marked by its refusal in practice to defend the gains of the 1917 Russian Revolution. Its day-to-day work is based on an economist adaptation to the present consciousness of the working class, accommodating the backwardness and bigotry imbued by the bourgeoisie and its labor lieutenants. In polemicizing against the Russian Economists in the early 1900s, Lenin outlined the central characteristics of this trend: a vulgarization of Marxism; sensitivity to opportunist criticism; the restriction of political activity to economic struggles to improve the conditions of the working class; and worshipping the “spontaneity of the masses” in opposition to building a centralized vanguard party to bring revolutionary consciousness to the proletariat, steeling its most advanced elements for the conquest of power.

Economism arose in Russia in response to the awakening of struggle among a new, young working class. Today, the conscious-

ness of the working class has been thrown backward under the impact of the counter-revolutionary destruction of the former Soviet Union, the world’s first workers state. In this context, tailing the “spontaneity of the masses”—or in SON/RWG’s words, reaching people where they are at—means adapting to “death of communism” reaction. Transported to the ivory tower of American campuses by SON/RWG, this

good communists. We tell the hard truth: This is a class-divided society, run into decay and ruin by a system based on production for the profits of the few and the exploitation of the many. We fight to win youth to the understanding that there will be no end to imperialist war short of the socialist eradication of the capitalist system. We expose and combat every manifestation of oppression and state terror

tates a struggle to make the working class conscious that it has both the revolutionary class interest and the social power to overthrow capitalism and institute its own class rule. An essential part of this struggle is the fight, in opposition to all forms of backward, false consciousness, to win the working class to champion the cause of all those oppressed by capitalism. We *mean it* when we say we fight to carry forward the ideas of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky and the tradition of the 1917 Russian Revolution!

### Looking for a Piece of the Reformist Pie?

SON/RWG’s leaflets at antiwar demonstrations are standard condemnations of arrogant politicians and greedy oil companies. Together with a panoply of journalistic bullet points against the lies the Bush administration told in the lead-up to the war, they also distribute a “where your income tax money really goes” pie chart from the pacifist War Resisters League. Taken together, there is nothing that distinguishes SON/RWG from the International Socialist Organization, ANSWER/Party for Socialism and Liberation or other “butter not guns” reformists and their lies that the “people united” can pressure the imperialists to “stop war.” In a January 2007 leaflet titled “Now Is The Time To Say NO To War,” SON/RWG opines that “wishing, hoping and voting is not enough.” It concludes with classic “movement” mongering:

“A demonstration, even a small one can be a start. But we can’t stop here. We can use this demonstration to do more than protest in the streets. We can organize ourselves to go back to our schools, workplaces and communities, to begin to educate people about the facts of the war. We can bring more people to the next demonstration on March 18. That can be a real start.”

At the March 18 antiwar protest, the were whistling a somewhat different tune, obviously appealing to those increasingly disgruntled with peace crawls that have done nothing other than boost the electoral fortunes of the Democratic Party. Here the SON leaflet declaimed: “Despite our anger, demonstrations are never enough to stop a war.” It even went on to call for “revolutionary change” and further declared that there can be no “lasting future unless capitalism is replaced.” The goal, concludes SON, is “a world system that is democratically run in the interests of and controlled by the majority of people.” Thus, “revolutionary change” is simply used to promote the bourgeois-liberal notion of classless “democracy,” a myth which has so effectively been used to mask the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

The SYC intervenes in the mass antiwar demonstrations to forthrightly argue that the struggle against the occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan must be a proletarian revolutionary struggle against the capitalist system that breeds such wars. We took a side in defense of Iraq and



Young Spartacus photos  
**Spartacists at October 27 San Francisco antiwar demonstration. Below: At March 18 San Francisco rally ANSWER and other reformist groups promote lie that imperialism can be reformed. Speak Out Now! is just another little fish in the big reformist swamp.**



opportunist practice takes the form of condescending leaflets, devoid of an iota of Marxism much less partisanship with the working class, aimed at petty-bourgeois liberals. When confronted by members of the Spartacus Youth Club they argue that people aren’t ready for socialist ideas.

The SYC takes a very different approach because we’re looking for a few

meted out by the racist rulers. In political solidarity with the Spartacist League, we work for the formation of a revolutionary vanguard party of the working class to lead the struggle here and internationally for a successful communist revolution, which will lay the basis for freeing the energies of all of humanity toward creating a truly free society. This task necessi-

Afghanistan against the U.S. imperialist invaders, while politically opposing Saddam Hussein's bloody regime and the Taliban reactionaries. Today we have a side with the Iraqi and Afghan peoples against the U.S. occupiers, their allies and Iraqi and Afghan lackeys. Our slogans and revolutionary contingents at these protests call for "class struggle against U.S. capitalist rulers!"

As the Spartacus Youth League, the American Trotskyist youth organization of the 1930s, from which we take our name, stated:

"For youth, as for other workers, it is imperative that he learns the class nature of society and of government and of warfare. When he learns these lessons he will have made headway in the fundamental question. *Between classes there can be no peace* till one or the other is vanquished. The workers have to understand that the *road to peace lies through war: class war, class struggle.*"

—"Disarmament and Pacifism,"  
Young Spartacus No. 3,  
February 1932

SON/RWG meticulously avoids any such class analysis, much less its revolutionary conclusion. This only plays into the pro-Democratic Party pressure politics peddled by the reformists and liberals at the mass antiwar protests. Their call to "bring the troops home now" confines these demonstrations to social-patriotic appeals to that wing of the bourgeoisie, mainly the Democrats, which wants to cut its losses in Iraq in order to better pursue its aims and interests in Iran, Afghanistan and elsewhere, with an eye on the huge prize of restoring capitalism in China.

We fight to break activists from illusions in the Democrats and their Green Party sidekicks, pointing out that you can't fight the imperialists and their predatory wars while supporting the political parties that represent their interests. The lie that the Democrats are the "friends" of the working people and the oppressed, promoted by the trade-union tops, has long served to shackle the power of labor to their capitalist class enemy. Breaking those chains is central to the fight to bring revolutionary consciousness to the working class, a precondition to the socialist emancipation of all the exploited and oppressed.

## SON/RWG: Color-Blind "Socialists"

In France, LO's economist adaptation to the existing consciousness of the working class has long meant rejecting the fight against special oppression. Applied to the American terrain this means consciously avoiding the fight against black oppression, which is a cornerstone of capitalist exploitation. One of the rare times that SON/RWG even mentions the question of anti-black racism is in its leaflet on Hurricane Katrina. Titled "Natural Disaster or Man-Made Catastrophe?", it notes in passing that New Orleans is "primarily African-American" and describes the wretched living conditions for blacks in the city before the storm. But they still can't state the obvious: The abandoning of the masses of the poor, overwhelmingly black population in New Orleans to die was a *racist atrocity!*

Instead, the leaflet complains that "40% of the Louisiana National Guard, the front line of defense in the case of national emergencies, is serving today in Iraq along with a major share of their best equipment." This stance perfectly captures SON's liberal illusions in the capitalist state. In fact, the National Guard *was* sent into New Orleans after the storms



AFP

—with "equipment" to crack down on the suffering black population! When some 300 Arkansas National Guardsmen were sent into the city, Democratic Louisiana governor Kathleen Blanco said: "These troops know how to shoot and kill...and I expect they will." And they did.

It's elementary Marxism that the capitalist state consists of bodies of armed men—the police, courts, prison guards and army, including the National Guard—whose purpose is to maintain the bourgeoisie's dictatorship over the working

the U.S. ruling class before, during and after Hurricane Katrina is a harbinger of the murderous capitalist system's impulse toward genocide of black Americans. The segregation of the mass of the black population at the bottom of this society has long served as a key prop for maintaining the rule of capital in the U.S., where the color bar is used to obscure the fundamental class divide between labor and their exploiters. Today the racist rulers see no reason to spend money on the black poor, who are increasingly seen as



AP

Left: Rally against "First Employment Contract" (CPE) in Marseille, March 2006. Above: Cops attack protester after March 2006 Paris demonstration. SON touts LO's intervention in anti-CPE protests. LO served in daisy chains to exclude minority youth they called "hooligans."



Answorth/Dallas Morning News

New Orleans, 1 September 2005: National Guard patrols as survivors of Hurricane Katrina wade toward Superdome. Troops were used to crack down on blacks, poor.

class and the oppressed. This means suppressing strikes, as when riot police break up a picket line, or "restoring order" against starving poor folk clamoring for housing and bread. As Marx and Lenin taught us, the working class cannot wield the machinery of the capitalist state in its interests; the state must be smashed through workers revolution, replacing it with proletarian rule.

Despite Hurricane Katrina's exposure of racial oppression, class exploitation and their intertwined roots in capitalist America, petty-bourgeois liberals and most of the left, including, manifestly, SON/RWG, buy into an "end of racism" ideology that blunts the hard truth about the deep-seated racist oppression of black people. SON's leaflet on Katrina doesn't speak of, much less put forward a program for fighting, the racist segregation and starvation policies aimed at the black population of this country. Instead, the best it can offer is that people follow the example of the "heroic acts on the part of many ordinary people during this tragedy." The actions taken by many to rescue people and provide clothing, food and medicine to those who had been left to starve and die were indeed heroic. But for SON/RWG to offer this as the answer is to *accept* the desperate conditions faced by black people in this country, merely offering some alleviation through charity.

The utter contempt for black and poor people demonstrated at all levels of

expendable to this system of production for profit. At the same time, black workers continue to be a strategic component of the American proletariat.

The situation cries out for a class-struggle fight for black rights, mobilizing the *social power* of the labor movement. That potential power was seen in the shipyard strike in Pascagoula, Mississippi earlier this year, where integrated strikers, many of whom had lost their homes in Katrina, shut down one of the world's largest naval shipbuilders. In answer to the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, the Spartacist League called for the unions to mobilize for the rescue effort and to demand a massive program of public works, at good union wages and under the control of workers committees, to rebuild New Orleans. That there was little to no mobilization of the unions, despite wide sentiment in the ranks, is due to the accommodation of pro-Democratic Party union misleaders to the *racist, capitalist status quo*.

Our call to mobilize the unions was a concrete expression of our perspective of *revolutionary integrationism*, the understanding that the fight for black liberation in this country is central to the fight for the socialist emancipation of the working class as a whole. This program is counterposed both to the liberal integrationist notion that black people can achieve social equality within the confines of the capitalist profit system, and to black nationalism, which capitulates to and helps

perpetuate the racist segregation fostered by this country's rulers. Won to a revolutionary program, black workers will be the living link between the dispossessed masses in the inner cities and the social power of the multiracial proletariat. The only road to black freedom lies through sweeping away this racist capitalist system, and the only road to socialist revolution lies through a united struggle of black and white workers led by a multiracial vanguard party. We are committed to building that party.

## LO Reformists and Anti-Immigrant Attacks

Across the Atlantic we find the same color-blind faith in the racist capitalist state with SON's mentor, LO, in France. Racism against ghettoized immigrant and minority youth serves to profoundly divide the working class. Yet LO consciously evades the issue, talking only of "poor neighborhoods" and avoiding the key question of racial oppression.

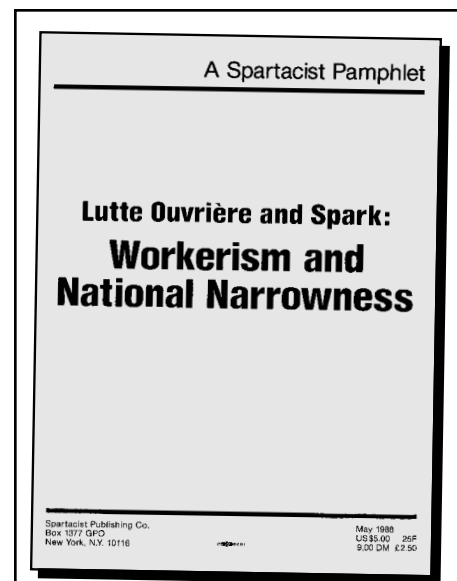
From the outset, LO has refused to oppose the French bourgeoisie's long-standing "Vigipirate" campaign, a massive mobilization of the police and military to sow terror in minority neighborhoods and to patrol train and Metro stations and airports hunting for supposed "terror suspects." LO's silence over Vigipirate goes hand in hand with its leading role in pushing the racist campaign to expel young women wearing the headscarf from school. The headscarf represents a reactionary social program that confines women to the home in a position of servitude. But in France, Islam is a religion of the oppressed and of the ghettos. The expulsion of Muslim girls from school can only reinforce their isolation and oppression, and fuel racism against all immigrants. Our comrades of the Ligue Trotskyste de France oppose these racist

*continued on page 10*

## NOTICE

**Workers Vanguard skips an issue in December.**

**Our next issue will be dated January 4.**



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## Ordinary Reformists...

(continued from page 9)

campaigns and defend the girls who wear headscarves against the bourgeois state. In contrast, LO welcomed Jacques Chirac's law banning the headscarf, a law which is part and parcel of the daily attacks against Muslims.

While silent on Vigipirate, LO came out in solidarity with police "strikes," arguing that these armed thugs of the capitalist state "carry out functions that are useful to society as a whole, by doing security tasks that are necessary to collective life, for lousy wages!" (*Lutte Ouvrière*, 7 December 2001)! This was echoed on the eve of the 2005 revolt of youth in suburban ghettos (*banlieues*) in France, when LO attacked the country's top cop, then-Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy, for reducing the number of police in the ghettos. In its press, *Lutte Ouvrière* (8 July 2005), LO complained: "In complete contradiction to his promises, the minister Sarkozy has conducted the same policy on his turf as his colleagues: playing tricks with the numbers to hide the decrease, closing police precincts, budgets without funds." These criticisms of Sarkozy *from the right* find an echo in SON/RWG's whining over the absence of National Guard "equipment" in New Orleans.

SON/RWG touts LO's 2006 intervention in the broad-based student and labor struggle against the CPE (First Contract Law) stripping young workers of any job security. During these protests, the bourgeoisie and its media whipped up a racist hysteria against ghetto youth. For its part, LO served in daisy chains to "protect" student contingents from supposed "hooligans" ["*casseurs*"] from the *banlieues*. Similarly, during the 2005 ghetto upheavals in France, LO signed on to a declaration by the League of the Rights of Man calling to re-establish "order." LO later issued a mealy-mouthed retraction, saying that their signature had been "an idiocy of course, but a minor one." A "minor" one for LO, but not for those on the receiving end of police "law and order," which was aimed at minority youth of North African and African origin.

### LO: Cheerleaders for Counterrevolution

In the words of James P. Cannon, the founding leader of American Trotskyism, from the time of the 1917 October Revolution the "attitude taken toward the Soviet Union...has been the decisive criterion separating the genuine revolutionary tendency from all shades and degrees of waverers, backsliders and capitulators to the pressure of the bourgeois world" ("Speech on the Russian Question," 15 October 1939). Despite its degeneration under the nationalist misrule of the Stalinist bureaucracy that usurped political power from the working class, the Soviet workers state, based on the collectivized economy ushered in by the Bolshevik Revolution, remained a tremendous gain for the workers of the world. Our tendency, the International Communist

League, fought to the end in defense of the Soviet degenerated workers state and the deformed workers states of East Europe against imperialist-inspired counterrevolution. This defense was despite and in political opposition to the Stalinist bureaucracy, which undermined the foundations of the workers state and opened the door to the forces of capitalist restoration. We fought for proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy and establish the rule of workers councils, based on soviet democracy and proletarian revolutionary internationalism.

Despite a paper position professing a Trotskyist defense of the former Soviet Union, in practice LO came down on the imperialist side of the barricades. During Cold War II in the 1980s, France was the cockpit for anti-Soviet mobilizations in Europe under Socialist Party president François Mitterrand's popular-front government. LO joined the social democrats' anti-Communist hysteria over Afghanistan, grotesquely comparing the Red Army's intervention against CIA-backed Islamic cutthroats to French colonialism in Algeria and U.S. imperialism's dirty war in Vietnam. In contrast, we *hailed the Red Army intervention*, which opened the possibility of extending the gains of October to the hideously benighted Afghan peoples, particularly offering the perspec-



East Berlin, 3 January 1990: ICL-initiated demonstration of 250,000 against Nazi desecration of Red Army monument in Treptow Park and in defense of USSR. ICL banner reads: "Down with NATO! Defend the Soviet Union!"

tive for the liberation of women from Islamic reaction. The withdrawal of these troops by the Soviet Stalinist regime of Mikhail Gorbachev, in a futile attempt to appease the imperialists, betrayed the Afghan masses and paved the way for the capitalist counterrevolutions that swept East Europe at the end of the 1980s and destroyed the Soviet Union in 1991-92.

Although claiming to recognize the Soviet Union as a workers state, LO denied the social transformations in East Europe (and later in China, North Korea, Cuba and Vietnam) that created bureaucratically deformed workers states based on collectivized property. Rather, they falsely claimed that these countries were, and are, capitalist. On this basis, they supported Polish Solidarność, which was backed and bankrolled by the CIA, the Vatican and Western bankers, in its counterrevolutionary bid for power. Although admitting that the leadership of Solidarność was animated by "nationalist, clericalist and reactionary political ideas," LO concluded, "it goes without saying that even if the Polish workers struggle on the basis of a program which does not lead to their social emancipation, revolutionaries must be in complete solidarity with their struggles" (*Lutte de Classe*, 22 December 1980).

This year at its annual Fête, LO welcomed Cai Chongguo, from the Hong Kong-based journal *China Labour Bulletin* (CLB). The CLB claims to defend workers' rights and the fight for "independent" trade unions. But like Solidarność, this is an imperialist-backed

Detail of Diego Rivera mural "Man in Control of the Universe" depicts Trotsky (center), Engels and Marx (right) and others with banner of Fourth International.



outfit that seeks to cynically manipulate the discontent and legitimate grievances of Chinese workers to foster capitalist counterrevolution in China, the largest and most powerful of the remaining deformed workers states. Our comrades of the LTF intervened to protest Cai's appearance at the LO Fête (see "France: Chinese Counterrevolutionary Feted by *Lutte Ouvrière*," *Workers Vanguard* No. 896, 3 August). The unconditional military defense of the Chinese deformed workers state against capitalist counterrevolution, which would immeasurably

Fourth International to carry forward the revolutionary internationalist program of Bolshevism against the Stalinist betrayers. LO's repudiation of the need for an international Leninist vanguard party, the critical instrumentality for making the working class conscious of its revolutionary purpose as the agency for the eradication of the capitalist order, is at the root of LO's economist adaptation to the existing consciousness of the working class, burdened by all the backwardness, bigotry and religious superstition inculcated by the institutions and ideology of bourgeois society. For its part, SON/RWG can barely bring itself to utter the words "working class" in its leaflets for fear of offending petty-bourgeois sensibilities in its campus haunts.

Similarly, neither the destruction of the gains that existed for the world's working class in the former Soviet Union, nor the defense of the proletarian gains remaining in China, Cuba, North Korea and Vietnam, are of evident concern. Despite its rare claims to defend the tradition of the 1917 Russian Revolution, SON/RWG's more common appeals to "ordinary people" play straight into anti-Communism, offering that previous "struggles have almost always left a ruling minority still in power." Here they also fall in line with the imperialists' cry that the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union proved that Marxism was a "failed experiment."

With its mantra of the need to meet people where they are at, SON/RWG goes with the regressive ideological flow. As fighters for new October Revolutions, the SYC swims against the stream. As the youth auxiliary of the Spartacist League, we fight to break the proletariat, youth and others from the false consciousness that ties them to the rule of the bourgeoisie. Polemical combat to expose the pretensions to Marxism of other tendencies is crucial to removing the obstacles on the road to proletarian socialist revolution for those actually seeking a revolutionary alternative to this system of exploitation, poverty, war and racism. ■

## Letter

### On Accuracy in Attribution

November 3, 2007

To the editor,

In the article on the RCP in your last issue, you pointed out how these Maoists who once cheered the Khomeni "revolution" in Iran now talk as though they've always fought against that clerical reaction. You add: "We can only paraphrase a comment attributed to Oscar Wilde: Hypocrisy is the homage vice pays to virtue." That's not a paraphrase, and you're off a couple centuries on the attribution. If you consult any good book of quotations (or the Internet), you'd learn that the author of this famous and oft-quoted maxim is Francois de La Rochefoucauld (*Reflections*, no. 218).

"Accuracy to a newspaper is what virtue is to a lady, but a newspaper

can always print a retraction." Now, who said that?

Sincerely yours,  
A reader from Florida

#### Young Spartacus replies:

Our reader is right about the author of the aphorism quoted in our article, "RCP Maoists 'Serve the People' ...Up to the Democrats" (WV No. 901, 26 October). Although we were aware of the correct attribution, we chose not to include it in the article. The aphorism is attributed to Oscar Wilde, but it would have been better to credit its original author, François de La Rochefoucauld (1613-1680). We thank the reader for his letter on this. In answer to his question: liberal Cold Warrior Adlai Stevenson. ■

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(continued from page 1)

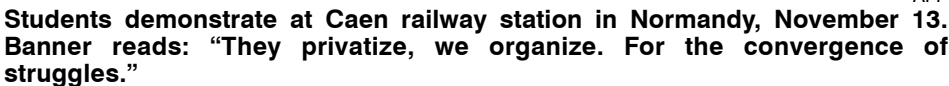
The utter treachery of the labor tops left a leadership vacuum that was filled by fake-Trotskyist organizations such as the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR) and Lutte Ouvrière (LO), as well as by anarchists and other leftists. The LCR in particular is widely seen as militant because of its prominent role in the strikes, including calling to extend them. But the LCR's program is fundamentally no different from that of the class-collaborationist union bureaucracy. For the last 30 years, the LCR has given electoral support to popular-front coalitions, in which parties like the Communist Party (PCF) and PS join bourgeois forces to rule on behalf of the capitalists.

While the LCR trumpets its stance of opposition to Sarkozy and “independence” from the PS, its stated program is limited to defending the welfare state. As our comrades of the Ligue Trotskyste de France wrote in “It Is Necessary to Fight Back Against Government Attacks!” (*Le Bolchéviek*, September 2007), “For all its invective against the PS these days, the LCR has never, since its inception, strayed from its course of pressure politics, remaining comfortably in the framework of capitalism.” The article lays out:

Our model is the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky, which led the proletariat to power in the 1917 October Revolution. To forge such a party requires political struggle against the LCR and other reformist groups, which are opponents of this revolutionary perspective.

Throughout West Europe, capitalist governments are intent on overturning the social measures that were introduced in the main following World War II, after the Soviet Union's defeat of Nazi Germany, which laid the basis for the creation of bureaucratically deformed workers states in East and Central Europe over the next

In response to the capitalist offensive, there have been significant labor struggles in defense of wages and benefits. This has been seen recently not only in France but in Germany, where locomotive engineers staged a combative and bitter strike, the largest in the history of that country's state railroad system. But under the leadership of the labor bureaucracies,



The destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state has led to a profound, though uneven, regression in political consciousness internationally, with even the more advanced workers no longer identifying their struggles with the aspiration of building a socialist society. This is nowhere more clearly seen than in France, where the formerly pro-Soviet PCF could once rally millions behind its banners. The 1997 *Black Book of Communism*, written mainly by French ex-leftists, was a focus internationally for a campaign of hysterical slanders against the October Revolution of 1917 and Lenin's Bolshevik Party.

Hand in hand with their class collaboration “at home,” the LCR and other “far left” groups criminally aided the imperialist drive to destroy the homeland of

The same LCR that did its part to help bring capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union now talks about building an “anti-capitalist” party in France to unite dissident PCF members, ecologists and

“Anti-capitalism” has become a fashionable term for such anti-communist “leftists” as those who populate the Social Forums. These are popular-frontist outfits, avidly promoted by the LCR, that are funded by the Ford Foundation and various bourgeois governments as a means of channeling those critical of imperialist brigandage into the dead end of bourgeois reformism. Brazil’s bourgeois Lula government, a key sponsor of the Social Forums, for some years included Miguel Rossetto, a member of the LCR’s sister organization. As minister of agrarian development, Rossetto was the enemy of landless peasants and the rural poor. The LCR also hails the bourgeois-populist regime of Venezuela’s Hugo Chávez, who supported the brutal repression against *banlieue* youth carried out by then-president Jacques Chirac two years ago.

As for LO, after its candidate, Arlette Laguiller, made the worst showing in six presidential campaigns (1.3 percent), LO immediately called to vote for Royal on the second round “without reserve” and

—“French Election: No Choice  
for Workers,” WV No. 890,  
13 April

The trade-union bureaucrats rest on a relatively privileged layer of workers,  
*continued on page 12*

[illegible]

# France...

(continued from page 11)

largely men of French or European descent, who benefit from the crumbs thrown at them by the imperialists. Based on these privileges, the labor tops spread the illusion that workers have common interests with their “own” capitalist rulers. As part of the fight to forge a Leninist vanguard party, we call for a new, revolutionary leadership of the unions that stands for the complete independence of labor from the capitalists and their state.

The program of class collaboration that defines the labor bureaucracy and the reformists of both the PS/PCF and “far left” type has emboldened the bourgeoisie to intensify its attacks on workers and minorities. When *banlieue* youth in France revolted two years ago against cop terror and racist oppression, the PS and PCF—echoed by LO—refused to defend the youth and called for re-establishing racist capitalist “order.”

The unions must mobilize in defense of all those victimized by the capitalist rulers, demanding full citizenship rights for all immigrants and opposing the Vigipirate campaign of racist cop terror. This includes defending the *banlieue* youth (in the main French citizens) who are beset by massive levels of unemployment and discrimination, even barred from nightclubs. But minorities in France are not simply helpless victims of oppression.



Jean-Michel Sicot

**September 6: Riot police drag away a woman from encampment in Aubervilliers, near Paris. Some 80 African immigrant families were expelled from the camp by police.**

As the LTF wrote in a leaflet distributed during this year’s strike at the PSA Citroën-Aulnay auto plant (printed in *Le Bolchéviek* No. 180, June 2007), “This strike shows where the social power of youth of African and North African origin resides.... It is in their relation to the means of production, as workers, not in mindlessly expressing their anger by burning cars and schools in reaction to racist oppression and cop terror in ‘la belle France’.”

France has not only one of the lowest rates of unionization of any industrialized country—with as few as 5 percent of private sector workers organized—but the union movement is broken up into a constellation of federations, many directly run by the reformist parties. The French bourgeoisie is long practiced at exploiting these divisions. After the October rail strike, the government made a separate deal with one of the unions of train drivers, whose participation in the strike had

been key. A revolutionary leadership would fight for industrial unions, organizing all workers in a single industry into one union. It is necessary to *organize the unorganized*, with special emphasis on minorities and women, who are especially subjected to part-time and precarious work.

As the current struggles in France underline, reforms are always reversible as long as power remains in the hands of the capitalist exploiters. In a presentation given in the aftermath of the massive 2006 protests against the Chirac government’s “First Employment Contract” attack on young workers (printed in “Workers, Students Beat Back Government Attack,” WV No. 868, 14 April 2006), an LTF spokesman declared:

“The workers still have the social power to overturn the capitalist system. What they lack to take the struggle to the end is consciousness of their own strength and historic responsibility to be the gravediggers of the capitalist order. They also lack the revolutionary leadership to lead them to the victory that the Russian workers had in October 1917. Our task is to build a party to win the majority of the working class to our revolutionary perspective. Our political opponents are an obstacle to this because, continually telling workers that all they can hope for is slowing down the pace of the attacks, they set up the proletariat for big defeats. The building of revolutionary parties—national sections of a reformed Fourth International—is the central task confronting us, a task we will accomplish. We call on you to make our battle yours and to join us!”■

# Mumia...

(continued from page 1)

Party spokesman, MOVE supporter and renowned journalist known as the “voice of the voiceless.” Faulkner stated in an excerpt of the book published in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* (2 December): “I need to see Abu-Jamal executed.” Mumia’s case represents what the racist death penalty is all about—a barbaric legacy of chattel slavery. It is no accident that with support for capital punishment waning and an effective moratorium in place, supporters of the racist death penalty are seizing upon Faulkner’s book to promote state-sanctioned murder.

The International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal, Journalists for Mumia and Educators for Mumia have initiated a “media-activist” letter-writing campaign calling on the *Today* show to allow Mumia’s supporters to counter the lies of Faulkner and Smerconish—a request that has to date been rejected. The Partisan Defense Committee and Spartacist League will be joining a protest called by the Free Mumia Abu-Jamal Coalition on December 6 outside the *Today* show at 7:15 a.m., at 48th St. and Rockefeller Plaza. We urge Mumia’s supporters, fighters for black freedom and opponents of the racist death penalty

to be there to demand: Mumia Is Innocent! Free Him Now!

A mountain of evidence proves Mumia’s innocence, including the confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Mumia, killed Faulkner. This means nothing to the bourgeois press corps feting Smerconish and Faulkner in order to rehash lies that were demolished over a decade ago. The book’s Web site falsely claims that Mumia was convicted by a “racially mixed jury based on: the testimony of several eyewitnesses, his ownership of the murder weapon, matching ballistics, and Abu-Jamal’s own confession.” In fact, black jurors were unlawfully excluded, Mumia’s “confession” was concocted two months after the shooting at a roundtable meeting of the cops and prosecutors who feared that their frame-up prosecution, based on the false testimony of a prostitute who was not even present at the time of the shooting, was falling apart.

A 2001 affidavit submitted to state and federal courts by PDC counsel Rachel Wolkenstein, who served on Mumia’s legal defense team from 1995 to 1999, exposed, among other things, the phony ballistics evidence. There was no evidence Mumia’s gun was fired that night; the absence of divots in the sidewalk contradicts the cops’ tale that Mumia fired repeatedly as he stood over Faulkner; bul-

let trajectories point to more than one shooter (see PDC pamphlet, *The Fight to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal—Mumia Is Innocent!*). Photographs unearthed by Michael Schiffmann confirm police tampering with guns and other evidence in order to prosecute Mumia.

While Smerconish has made a name for himself by dismissing the evidence of torture at Abu Ghraib as nothing but “naked pyramid pictures” and calling for mass arrests of undocumented immigrants who protest for their rights, Maureen Faulkner has long peddled the lie that Mumia leeringly smiled at her when Officer Faulkner’s bloody shirt was shown to the jury—a smear intended to portray Mumia as a coldhearted killer. Mumia was not even in the courtroom that day, one of the numerous days he was excluded from his own trial. An inkling of their book’s mendacity can be seen in the Associated Press article, which dutifully reports that “neither Abu-Jamal nor his

brother have ever spoken about what happened that night,” adding, “the book emphasizes that point.”

In fact, declarations sworn in 2001 by Mumia and his brother William Cook, and presented to both state and federal courts, gave detailed accounts of what they saw the night of Faulkner’s shooting, including Mumia’s statement: “I did not shoot Police Officer Daniel Faulkner. I had nothing to do with the killing of Officer Faulkner. I am innocent.” As with Beverly’s confession, not one court has considered these declarations. As we stated in “Sinister Book Recycles Frame-Up Lies”: “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.” Labor, black people and opponents of racist oppression must mobilize now to free Mumia!■

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

**Funds are urgently needed for legal defense!**

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

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

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

### Partisan Defense Committee

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Jennifer Beach

## Prepare Now for Emergency Protests!

On May 17, the Third Circuit Court of Appeals heard oral arguments in Mumia’s case, and there could be a decision at any time.

**If the Court rules to uphold the death sentence or denies Mumia’s appeals for a new trial or a new hearing, the Partisan Defense Committee and the Labor Black Leagues have called for protests the day after the decision. Others have also called for protests.**

**For more information see the PDC Web site, [www.partisandefense.org](http://www.partisandefense.org)**

**Mumia Abu-Jamal Is an Innocent Man!  
FREE MUMIA NOW!  
Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!**

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GUIDE TO THE SUBJECT INDEX

- This subject index covers issues of *Workers Vanguard* published during 2007, from issue No. 883 (5 January) through the end-of-the-year issue No. 904 (7 December). During this time, *WV* was published biweekly, except skipping three alternate issues in June, July and August, and skipping the last issue in December.
- The fullest listing is by SUBJECT. Subject headings are arranged alphabetically. Entries are listed chronologically with two exceptions: all entries comprising a series are listed together immediately following the first entry of the series; corrections immediately follow the relevant entry. An asterisk (\*) after the page location of an entry indicates that a correction follows.
- Entries are listed under subject heads. In some cases, subject heads are broken down into subcategories. These subcategories are listed immediately after the initial subject head and preceded by a dot (•). The numbers following each entry headline give the issue number, date and page number(s) for the article. Thus: V.I. Lenin on the State, #893, 25 May (2, 3) means the headline of the article, issue No. 893, dated 25 May 2007, beginning on page 2 and continuing on page 3.
- No entry is listed twice; refer to cross-references for guidance in locating the subject head for particular articles. Cross-references are of two types: those following the word “see” deal centrally with the subject head; those following the words “see also” are related articles. Subject heads in cross-references are separated by a semicolon, while subcategories of subject heads are separated by a comma. Thus: Poland—See **International Communist League**. See also **Hungarian Revolution of 1956**. means that articles about Poland can be found by going to the subject head **INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST LEAGUE**. Related articles can be found by going to the

- subject head **HUNGARIAN REVOLUTION OF 1956**.
- Individuals mentioned in articles are usually not listed separately unless the article is primarily about the given person. Foreign political organizations are generally listed under appropriate countries, while U.S. political organizations are listed under their organizational names.
- Articles relating to foreign countries are listed under geographical headings and not normally under any other subject heading. Articles which deal centrally with U.S. foreign policy will be found under the subject head **UNITED STATES** and by looking under the subcategory **International Relations**, or under the relevant geographical heading. For example, articles about the U.S. occupation of Iraq will be found under **IRAQ**.
- Articles on protests or repression that take place on a campus will generally be found under the subject of the protest or repression. Repression on miscellaneous subjects will be found under **CAMPUS REPRESSION**.
- The periodic columns by death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal are listed under the subject heading **ABU-JAMAL** in the subcategory **Message from Death Row**; articles on his case and the campaign to free him are in the subcategory **Defense Campaign**.
- Articles under the *Class-Struggle Defense Notes* (CSDN) masthead are by the Partisan Defense Committee, a class-struggle, non-sectarian, legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League.
- Abbreviations used in entries are:  
C: Correction  
CSDN: *Class-Struggle Defense Notes* article  
E: Editorial Note  
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W&R: *Women and Revolution* article  
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