

## Partisan Defense Committee International Campaign

Espartaco



COC Productions



# Protests Demand: Free Mumia Now!

On March 27, the federal Third Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the conviction of Mumia Abu-Jamal, a former Black Panther, MOVE supporter and award-winning journalist known as the “voice of the voiceless,” who was framed up for the 1981 killing of Philadelphia policeman Daniel Faulkner and sent to death row solely for his political beliefs. Upholding an earlier 2001 federal court ruling, the appeals court decision means that either a new sentencing hearing will take place, in which the death sentence could be reinstated, or Mumia will be condemned to life imprisonment. This is an outrage! There is a mountain of evidence, which the courts have either rejected or refused to hear, that demonstrates that Mumia Abu-Jamal is an innocent man who should never have spent one day in prison!

In anticipation of the court decision, last summer the Partisan Defense Committee—a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League—and the Labor Black Leagues called for emergency protests immediately after the ruling. These protests, which took place on March 28 and 29, were followed by united-front demonstrations called by the PDC, which has championed Mumia’s defense for over 20 years, and heavily built by the Spartacist League and other sections of the International Communist League. On April 19, some 200 demonstrators mobilized for the united-front protest in Oakland, while over 100 came out in London and in Toronto. United-front protests were also held in Sydney, Australia, on April 23, on the campus of the National Autonomous University (UNAM) in Mexico City on April 24, and in Chicago and Los Angeles on April 26.

**April 24 united-front protest to free Mumia in Mexico City, initiated by Grupo Espartaquista de México.**

In addition to the united-front protests, the PDC and the New York Labor Black League for Social Defense mobilized a Class-Struggle Contingent of some 150 people for the April 19 demonstration in Philadelphia called by the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal (ICFFMAJ), which drew some 600 protesters. The same day, the Committee for Social Defense (CDDS), the PDC’s fraternal defense organization in France, also built a contingent of over 60 people at a Paris protest that drew over 200 demon-

strators, while our comrades of the Grupo Espartaquista de México, section of the ICL, participated in a protest of some 50 people in Mexico City. On April 12, the Committee for Social Defense (KfsV) in Germany had mobilized a Class-Struggle Contingent of 80 people in a demonstration called by the Berlin “Free Mumia Abu-Jamal” Coalition that drew about 300. These contingents marched under the slogans: “Mumia Abu-Jamal Is Innocent! Free Mumia Now! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty! There Is No Justice in the Capital-

ist Courts! Mobilize Labor’s Power—For Mass Protest!”

The united-front protests initiated by the PDC were called under the slogans: “Mumia Abu-Jamal Is Innocent! Free Mumia Now! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!” Over 500 individuals and organizations, including trade unions representing hundreds of thousands of workers, endorsed the protests (for a list of endorsers, go to: [www.partisandefense.org](http://www.partisandefense.org)). An early endorsement came from the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) Western Cape, which issued a statement declaring: “COSATU endorses the campaign

*continued on page 7*

### Los Angeles



WV Photo

### Sydney

As part of PDC-initiated international campaign to free Mumia, united-front protests were held in Sydney, Australia, on April 23, and in L.A. and Chicago on April 26.



Australasian Spartacist

### Chicago



PDC



# Chicago Gay Liberation Network Activist Targeted

## Drop Charges Against Andy Thayer!

We print below a May 1 protest letter from the Partisan Defense Committee to the Cook County State's Attorney Richard A. Devine. The PDC is a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League.

The Partisan Defense Committee vigorously protests the prosecution of Andy Thayer, a well-known Chicago antiwar activist and co-founder of the Gay Liberation Network, who faces bogus *felony* charges of aggravated battery against a police officer. We say: Drop all charges against Andy Thayer!

On January 7, Mr. Thayer was among 100 protesting against President George W. Bush at the corner of Jackson and Dearborn Streets, during Bush's meeting with Mayor Richard Daley and businessmen at the Union League Club. Mr. Thayer was one of four protesters holding a large banner that read: "End the War and Occupation!" and "Troops Home

NOW!" As Bush and his motorcade drove away, Mr. Thayer was surrounded by cops on horseback, and then arrested. The cops also grabbed three other demonstrators who were holding the banner—Buddy Bell, Kevin Clark and Jeff Pickert. On January 25, Mr. Thayer was indicted by the Cook County grand jury on trumped-up felony charges that carry a possible seven-year sentence.

Mr. Thayer was targeted for arrest as retaliation for his role as an organizer of many large antiwar rallies and marches in Chicago. Mr. Thayer helped spearhead the effort to win the right for antiwar protesters to march on Michigan Avenue, which was strongly opposed by the city police brass. That the full weight of the city government is behind the false prosecution can be seen in the fact that Deputy Chief of Police James Keating is serving as complaining "witness" claiming he was "battered" because Thayer

"bumped" him. The witchhunt directed at Mr. Thayer comes as the City is restoring the Red Squad, and in the context of all-sided attacks on civil liberties in the name of the bipartisan "war on terror."

On April 18, two of the "Bush 4" defendants—Bell and Clark—were acquitted of all misdemeanor charges. Outrageously, Pickert was found guilty of disorderly conduct and sentenced to 30 days' supervision. Mr. Thayer still faces trial on the bogus felony battery charges.

We vehemently demand that all the charges against Andy Thayer be dropped immediately!

\* \* \*

Donations for Andy Thayer's legal defense can be sent to: Eighth Day Center for Justice, 205 W. Monroe Street, 5th Floor, Chicago, IL 60606. Make checks payable to Eighth Day Center for Justice, earmarked "Bush 4 Defense." ■



WV Photo

Andy Thayer at April 26 united-front Mumia protest in Chicago.

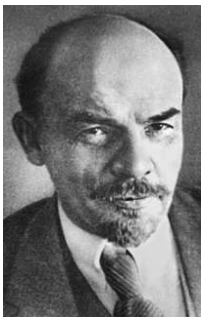


TROTSKY

### For the Dictatorship of the Proletariat!

Writing after the 1917 Russian Revolution, Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky polemicized against German Social Democrat Karl Kautsky, who denounced the Soviet workers state and promoted bourgeois parliamentarism. In exposing bourgeois democracy as a facade for the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, Trotsky quoted French revolutionary socialist (and Karl Marx's son-in-law) Paul Lafargue.

"Parliamentarism," wrote Paul Lafargue in the Russian review, *Sozialdemokrat*, in



LENIN

1888, "is a system of government in which the people acquires the illusion that it is controlling the forces of the country itself, when, in reality, the actual power is concentrated in the hands of the bourgeoisie—and not even of the whole bourgeoisie, but only of certain sections of that class. In the first period of its supremacy the bourgeoisie does not understand, or, more correctly, does not feel, the necessity for making the people believe in the illusion of self-government. Hence it was that all the parliamentary countries of Europe began with a limited franchise. Everywhere the right of influencing the policy of the country by means of the election of deputies belonged at first only to more or less large property holders, and was only gradually extended to less substantial citizens, until finally in some countries it became from a privilege the universal right of all and sundry.

"In bourgeois society, the more considerable becomes the amount of social wealth, the smaller becomes the number of individuals by whom it is appropriated. The same takes place with power: in proportion as the mass of citizens who possess political rights increases, and the number of elected rulers increases, the actual power is concentrated and becomes the monopoly of a smaller and smaller group of individuals." Such is the secret of the majority.

For the Marxist, Lafargue, parliamentarism remains as long as the supremacy of the bourgeoisie remains. "On the day," writes Lafargue, "when the proletariat of Europe and America seizes the state, it will have to organize a revolutionary government, and govern society as a dictatorship, until the bourgeoisie has disappeared as a class."

Kautsky in his time knew this Marxist estimate of parliamentarism, and more than once repeated it himself, although with no such Gallic sharpness and lucidity. The theoretical apostasy of Kautsky lies just in this point: having recognized the principle of democracy as absolute and eternal, he has stepped back from materialist dialectics to natural law. That which was exposed by Marxism as the passing mechanism of the bourgeoisie, and was subjected only to temporary utilization with the object of preparing the proletarian revolution, has been newly sanctified by Kautsky as the supreme principle standing above classes, and unconditionally subordinating to itself the methods of the proletarian struggle.

—Leon Trotsky, *Terrorism and Communism* (1920)

## Free the MOVE 9 Prisoners!

## Remember May 1985 MOVE Massacre

Police helicopter dropping bomb on MOVE commune in Philadelphia in 1985. Eleven people, MOVE members and their children, were killed and an entire black neighborhood destroyed in the ensuing inferno.

UPI, Barger/WCAU-TV (inset)



The police firebombing of black Philadelphia on 13 May 1985 was racist mass murder. Eleven people, five of them children, members of the mostly black and radical back-to-nature MOVE commune, were slaughtered. Police shot at MOVE members as they tried to escape their burning Osage Avenue house, and the ensuing inferno was deliberately allowed to rage for five hours, reducing a block of 61 homes to smoldering rubble and leaving hundreds homeless. For the "crime" of being the sole adult survivor, Ramona Africa was sentenced to seven years in prison and served every day. We wrote in protest immediately afterward that this racist atrocity was the bloody signature of the Reagan years, intended "to send a message to black America and 'radicals' of every stripe. 'Anti-terrorism' means massive government terror against anyone who is out of step in Reagan's America" (WV No. 379, 17 May 1985).

The bombing of MOVE, ordered by black Democratic mayor Wilson Goode and orchestrated by the Feds, was the cul-

mination of over a decade of harassment, beatings, arrests and brutal assaults by a police force determined to ruthlessly repress any expression of black dissent in the racist hellhole of Philadelphia. Seven years earlier, on 8 August 1978, an army of nearly 600 Philadelphia cops surrounded and stormed the Powelton Village MOVE home to evict its defenseless residents. Cops blasted thousands of rounds at the house, killing Police Officer James Ramp in the cross fire. At a press conference later that day, then-Philadelphia D.A. Edward Rendell (who is now Pennsylvania's governor) declared that police would have been "within their rights to have, subsequent to the shooting of Officer Ramp, stormed the house and killed all of the 12 people in the basement." Nine MOVE members were sentenced to 30 to 100 years in prison, framed up for conspiracy and murder stemming from Ramp's death. The MOVE 9 prisoners watched in horror from their Pennsylvania prison cells the 1985 incineration of their families and comrades. In 1998,

## WORKERS VANGUARD

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# Young Spartacus

## Drop Charges Against Evergreen 6! Reinstate Olympia SDS!

A police riot broke out at a Dead Prez concert at Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington, on February 14. Cops attacked and injured concertgoers protesting the racist arrest of Kaylen Williams, a black man and VIP guest at the concert. Six concertgoers were arraigned on criminal charges as a result of the police provocation, and the local sheriff has stated his intention to press charges against others over damage to police cars in the confrontation. Last week, six more protesters were arrested at the Olympia May Day rally. The Spartacus Youth Club stands in solidarity with the protesters, and demands: **Drop the charges against the Evergreen 6! Hands off the protesters!**

For all Evergreen State College's "progressive" credentials, these protests have clearly shown that the administration's role is to keep the campus "safe" for the capitalists, including by cracking down on student protest. The Evergreen administration worked together with the cops to witch-hunt campus activists. When approached by police seeking to prosecute protesters, the administration recommended that police investigate members of the Olympia branch of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and other students involved in protests against the shipping of military cargo from the Port of Olympia. Subsequently, the administration suspended the Olympia SDS, which had been prominently defending the Evergreen 6. **Reinstate SDS at Evergreen State College!**

This makes perfectly clear what the Spartacus Youth Club has been saying all along—under capitalism, the university administrations uphold the interests of the capitalist class on campus. This is completely counter to the perspective of SDS and fake socialists like the International Socialist Organization, who look to the administration as an ally in student struggles and promote illusions that the oppression inherent under capitalism can be ended in the "ivory towers" of university and college campuses while the capitalists still run society as a whole.

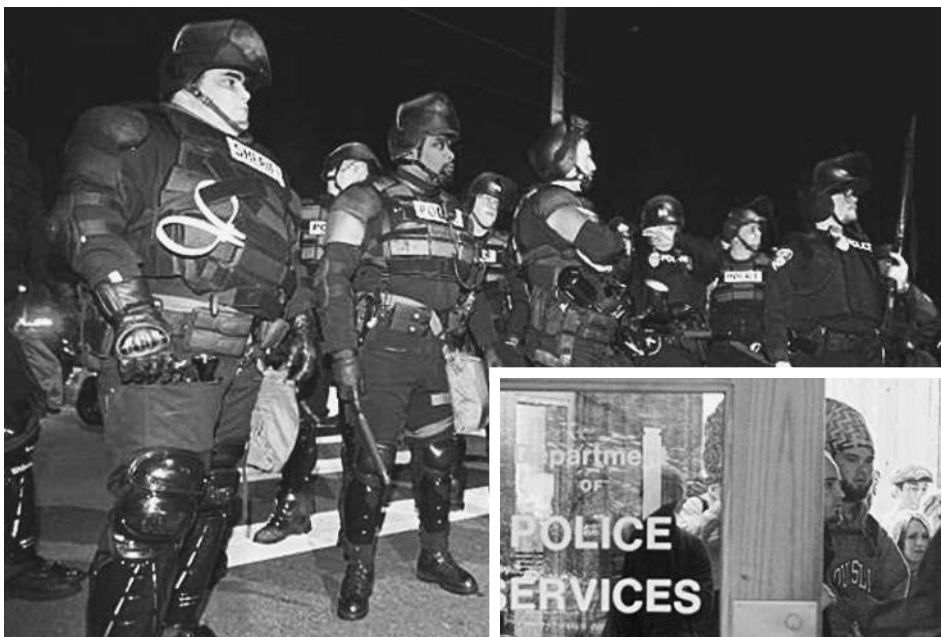
What happened at elite, liberal Evergreen State College is a snapshot of what the cops and courts are all about in racist, capitalist America. From the occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan to the ghettos and barrios across the U.S., terror and violence are business as usual for the U.S. imperialist rulers, under both Democratic and Republican administrations. In the run-up to the presidential elections, youth

Merle Africa died in prison, having spent nearly 20 years behind bars.

Today the racist capitalist state continues its vendetta against MOVE and its most eloquent supporter, Mumia Abu-Jamal, who was framed up and sentenced to death in 1982. Last month, after enduring 30 years of persistent persecution in prison, Janine Africa, Janet Africa and Debbie Africa, three of the eight surviving members of the MOVE 9, were outrageously denied parole. Parole decisions for Michael Africa, Delbert Africa, Eddie Africa and Phil Africa are still pending, and Chuck Africa is eligible for parole next year.

The Partisan Defense Committee, a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League, sends monthly stipends to the eight MOVE prisoners, as well as Mumia, as an expression of solidarity with those imprisoned for standing up to racist capitalist repression.

### Evergreen State College: Cop Riots, Campus Repression



Overman/Olympian

**Riot police at Evergreen State College following February 14 Dead Prez concert (above). Evergreen students protest police attack on concertgoers, February 27 (right).**

are being mobilized behind capitalist Democratic Party candidates, including by so-called socialists from the Revolutionary Communist Party to the Workers World Party who push lesser evil politics. Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton are vying to be the top cop of U.S. imperialism. No matter who wins the election, the capitalist state—cops, courts, prisons and military—will remain a machinery of repression to maintain the capitalists' dictatorship over those they oppress and exploit. Black oppression, the heritage of chattel slavery, will remain the bedrock of American capitalism and state repression will still come wrapped in the envelope of raw racism. It will take a workers revolution, like the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 led by the vanguard party of Lenin and Trotsky, to consign this barbaric system to the trash heap of history.

We reprint below April 30 letters by the Bay Area SYC to the Thurston County prosecuting attorney protesting

We wrote in 1985, stressing that a communist party must serve as a tribune of the people, that "it is our obligation to etch this racist atrocity into the memory of everyone we can reach, and on behalf of the working class to hold out the promise of proletarian justice" (WV No. 384, 26 July 1985). The MOVE prisoners and Mumia Abu-Jamal must be freed! The American workers revolution will avenge the MOVE martyrs!

\* \* \*

Letters demanding freedom for the MOVE prisoners should be sent to the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole, 1101 South Front Street, Suite 5100, Harrisburg, PA 17104-2517. The names for each of the commissioners are at: [www.pbpp.state.pa.us](http://www.pbpp.state.pa.us). Copies of letters should be sent to: William Phillips Africa, AM 4984, SCI-Dallas, 1000 Follies Road, Dallas, PA 18612-0286. ■

pension of the Olympia branch of Students for a Democratic Society. In what is clearly an act of political censorship, SDS was suspended for holding a panel discussion with the San Francisco 8—former Black Panthers framed up for the killing of a police officer [see "Protest Government Roundup of Former Black Panthers," WV No. 885, 2 February 2007]—and an antiwar benefit concert.

The pretext for SDS's suspension was a "moratorium" on student events "that involve substantial safety and security considerations." Undoubtedly, this "moratorium" would not apply if the Dalai Lama were invited to promote counter-revolution in China. As SDS member Courtney Franz has pointed out, other events, including a concert with over 300



Herppich/Olympian

the charges against the Evergreen 6 and to Evergreen State College president Thomas L. Purce protesting the banning of the Olympia chapter of Students for a Democratic Society.

\* \* \*

The Spartacus Youth Club demands that all charges be dropped against Kaylen Williams, Jake Silberman, Chase Hill, Monica Ragan, Nina Hinton and Peter Sloan, known as the Evergreen 6. On the night of February 14 at a concert by hip-hop group Dead Prez at Evergreen State College, a college police officer arrested Kaylen Williams, a black man, targeting him because of his race. Concertgoers who protested Williams' wrongful detention were attacked by state and local police using clubs and pepper spray. Many concertgoers suffered chemical burns and one young man was hospitalized with internal bleeding.

Following this brutal police attack, Jake Silberman, Chase Hill, Monica Ragan, Nina Hinton and Peter Sloan face felony charges for their part in defending Williams and themselves. Williams is facing misdemeanor assault charges, with a possible sentence of a year in jail. These charges are an act of retaliation against those who stood up to racist police violence, and the Thurston County Sheriff has threatened to file charges against others who attended the concert. **Hands off the Evergreen protesters!** As Lawrence Hildes, the attorney for two of those charged, noted, the only people hurt that night were concertgoers, the result of actions by the police. **Drop the charges now!**

\* \* \*

The Spartacus Youth Club vigorously protests Evergreen State College's sus-

attendees, were allowed to continue without incident. The "moratorium" itself was imposed following the February 14 Dead Prez concert where the **only** threat to "safety and security" was a racist police arrest and subsequent assault on concertgoers with clubs and pepper spray. The suspension of the Evergreen chapter of SDS is a politically motivated attack on students' First Amendment rights. **We demand that the suspension be lifted immediately!**

\* \* \*

Send protest letters demanding the dropping of charges against the Evergreen 6 to: Edward G. Holm, Thurston County prosecuting attorney, 2000 Lakemridge Dr. S.W., Building 2, Olympia, WA 98502. Send letters calling for the reinstatement of the Olympia SDS to: Thomas L. Purce, President, Evergreen State College, SI Annex A102, 2700 Evergreen Parkway NW, Olympia, WA 98505. The Partisan Defense Committee has contributed to the Evergreen 6 Legal Defense Fund and encourages others to do so. Checks should be made out to Evergreen 6 Legal Defense, PO Box 2775, Olympia, WA 98501. ■

#### Spartacus Youth Club Class

##### LOS ANGELES

Thursday, May 15, 6 p.m.  
From Feminism to Trotskyism

UCLA  
Ackerman Union, Room 3516

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

# Remember Jean Charles de Menezes!

## Craven Reformists Back Cops

### Britain

The following article is reprinted from Workers Hammer No. 202 (Spring 2008), newspaper of the Spartacist League/Britain, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

#### WORKERS HAMMER

When up to 23,000 cops marched through London on 23 January demanding better pay, Labourite reformists gave this mobilisation of the repressive arm of the capitalist state a gushing welcome. “Bolshevik Bobbies,” headlined *Socialist Appeal*, published by the die-hard Labourite organisation founded by the late Ted Grant. Revelling in the mood among the cops, the article by Rob Sewell enthused: “There is rebellion in the air. A pillar of the state is in a mutinous mood,” whilst equating the cops with public sector workers whose wages and jobs this Labour government is slashing. Clearly this reformist outfit’s drooling over the police has not gone amiss: Rob Sewell, the author of the article, made the breathtaking admission that: “I knew there was something up when the ‘Socialist Appeal’ office got a phone call from the ‘Police Review’ asking for permission to republish an article from our website on the police strikes of 1918-19” (*Socialist Appeal*, 28 January).

No less jubilant over the police protest was Peter Taaffe’s Socialist Party which said the police protest was “in many ways a momentous occasion.” They pointed out that cops on duty were not allowed to attend but “the turnout was impressive under the circumstances.” These reformists unashamedly boast of having gone to the march and “sold five copies of The Socialist in 20 minutes and got three sheets of our petition for a living wage and joint public-sector action filled in” (*Socialist*, 31 January).

This craven subservience to the racist capitalist state’s thugs in blue is not new for these organisations, both of which have maintained for decades that the police are



Workers Hammer

**Above: Police march through London on January 23. Right: Reformist *Socialist Appeal* article in solidarity with bourgeoisie’s cops—enemies of workers and oppressed.**

part of the working class when in fact they are a core part of the capitalist state. This fulsome support by “socialists” for better pay for the cops is obscene, particularly now in London where the police carried out the brutal, cold-blooded killing of Brazilian immigrant Jean Charles de Menezes in July 2005 and got away with it. This outrage by the Metropolitan Police is in continuity with their years-long role in shielding the racist killers of black teenager Stephen Lawrence in 1993, despite a huge effort by the family campaign to have his killers brought to justice.

Support for the police is an integral part of Labour reformism which has been used to dupe the British working class into sup-

#### SocialistAppeal

March 2008

#### Britain

### Bolshevik Bobbies

By Rob Sewell

“THE SPIRIT of Petrograd,” cried Sylvia Pankhurst on hearing the news of a police strike in 1918. “The London police on strike. After that, anything can happen.”

The ground is certainly shifting in Britain. There has been a continual build up of public anger at the government’s attempt to impose a 2% limit on public sector pay. For the first time in 21 years, the National Union of Teachers is balking for a national stoppage.

And there are the police. I knew there was something up when the ‘Socialist Appeal’ office got a phone

The police even decided to march through central London in January. Some 25,000 police took part. The Met said the real figure was only 22,500, but they always underestimate demo figures, don’t they?

There was a sea of furry bobbies with white base-ball caps. They read ‘Fair Pay for the Police’. There were very few placards and not a riot shield or miner’s helmet in sight. There was no chanting or whistling for that matter. The only shouts came from the occasional bystander calling ‘Get back to work’, to everyone’s amusement.

Police strike

Despite the good nature, there was a

However, a compromise was reached whereby police would drop their demands to strike and have their pay linked to private sector deals, which produced good rises for the next 28 years - up till now that is.

Lloyd George

Today we have entered uncharted waters. Feelings are running high and strike action is being discussed. In 1919, they faced Lloyd George. Today they face Gordon Brown. In 1919 they were dubbed ‘Bolshevik Bobbies’, today they will need to take a leaf out of the experience of their forefathers if they are to get anywhere. Whatever happens, such moods

porting the racist capitalist order for over a century. Both Socialist Appeal and the Socialist Party had their origins in the Militant tendency which for more than four decades was an organic part of the old Labour Party. As we wrote 14 years ago:

“Labourism is reflected in Militant’s politics across the board, from its sympathetic portrayal of the British ‘bobby’ and its appeals to the capitalist state to act against the fascists, to its gross refusal to oppose the murderous British imperialist troops sent into Northern Ireland by a Labour government.”

—*Militant Labour’s Touching Faith in the Capitalist State*, Spartacist pamphlet (1994)

Today Socialist Appeal remains inside New Labour, while beseeching the unions

to reclaim the Labour Party demanding that Labour must “immediately take over the ‘commanding heights of the economy’.” The Socialist Party was formed outside the Labour Party in the early 1990s and now campaigns for a “new mass workers party,” but the politics of old Labour reformism remain unchanged. Both organisations hold that socialism can be achieved through parliament passing an “enabling act” giving a *bourgeois government* “emergency powers.”

#### Police: Core Part of the Capitalist State

In an attempt to portray the police as part of the workers movement, Socialist Appeal welcomes the fact that the Police Federation “has threatened to ballot its 140,000 members about the right to strike” (*Socialist Appeal*, March 2008). The 1984-85 miners strike, in which an army of cops occupied the coalfields, brutally battered the miners on picket lines and protected the scabs from the pickets, showed in unmistakable terms the true function of the cops as regards the unions: they are professional strike-breakers and enemies of the working class in struggle. That is a basic truth that reformists try to *cover up*. The only purpose served by “socialists” portraying the police as “workers in uniform” is to deny the need for revolution to smash the capitalist state. That is what underlies reformist illusions that the capitalist state can become an instrument capable of serving the interests of the working class and the oppressed in society.

In our last issue we scandalised the Socialist Party and others for their enthusiastic hailing of last August’s prison guards strike (see “‘Socialists’ Embrace Cops and Prison Guards,” *Workers Hammer* No. 201, Winter 2007-2008 [reprinted in WV No. 908, 15 February]). What distinguishes us Marxists from these reformists comes down to the central question of the bourgeois state, which is the divide between reform and revolution. We base our programme on Lenin’s *The State and Revolution*, written in 1917 shortly before the Bolsheviks led the working class to *state power* in Russia. Lenin laid out the fundamental Marxist understanding that the state consists of “special bodies of armed men” and “is an organ of class *rule*, an organ for the *oppression* of one class by another.”

Citing Marx and the experience of the Paris Commune, Lenin reiterates that “the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery, and wield it for its own purposes”; that the liberation of the working class cannot come about “*without the destruction* of the apparatus of state power which was created by the ruling class.” The capitalist state, at its core consisting of armed bodies of men—the cops, courts, prisons and army—must be replaced “by a ‘special repressive force’ for the suppression of the bourgeoisie by the proletariat (the dictatorship of the proletariat).” In short, the bourgeois state is the “dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.” The only way to get rid of the rotten racist system of capitalism that breeds racism, poverty, famine and war is through workers revolution that *shatters* the capitalist state and replaces it by the rule of the working class through workers councils (soviets). This fundamental truth has been obscured and contradicted by Labourite social-democratic organisations for over a century. Our task of building a multiethnic revolutionary workers party requires destroying the illusions perpetrated by Labourite reformists.

The fact that the police may demonstrate for higher wages (or even, on rare occasions, go on “strike”) neither makes

#### Spartacist/Labor Black League Forums

### Race, Class and the Fight for a Workers America

**Break with the Democrats! For a Class-Struggle Workers Party!  
For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!**

#### Update: Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!

**Report on the international campaign to free innocent death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal and the continuing campaign to win his freedom**

#### CHICAGO

**Saturday, May 17, 6 p.m.**  
University of Chicago  
Ida Noyes Hall  
East Lounge  
1212 E. 59th St.

For more information: (312) 563-0441  
or e-mail: [chicagospartacist@sbcglobal.net](mailto:chicagospartacist@sbcglobal.net)

#### LOS ANGELES

**Saturday, May 17, 4 p.m.**  
Mount Hollywood  
Congregational Church  
4607 Prospect Avenue  
(1 block east of Vermont, a few blocks from Vermont/Sunset Red Line Station)

For more information: (213) 380-8239  
or e-mail: [slsycla@sbcglobal.net](mailto:slsycla@sbcglobal.net)

#### OAKLAND

**Saturday, May 10, 3 p.m.**  
First Presbyterian Church  
of Oakland, Reception Room  
2619 Broadway near 27th  
(8 blocks from 19th St.  
BART station—exit 20th St.)

For more information: (510) 839-0851  
or e-mail: [slbayarea@sbcglobal.net](mailto:slbayarea@sbcglobal.net)

#### NEW YORK CITY

**Saturday, May 10, 4:30 p.m.**  
322 W. 48th St., 1st Floor  
(between 8th and 9th Avenues,  
take A, C or E to 42nd Street)

For more information: (212) 267-1025  
or e-mail: [nysl@tiac.net](mailto:nysl@tiac.net)

#### From Chain Gangs to the Racist “War on Drugs”

### Mass Black Incarceration in Capitalist America

**With a report on the international campaign to free Mumia Abu-Jamal**

# In Memory of Polish Socialist Ludwik Hass

WARSAW—Professor Ludwik Hass died in Warsaw on April 8. A historian of the Polish labor movement and freemasonry, he was also known as an exponent of Trotskyism in Poland. A member of the prewar Trotskyist Bolshevik-Leninist group in Poland, he was arrested in Lwów in 1939 following the Soviet occupation of eastern Poland and sentenced to eight years in a Soviet labor camp. He later married in the Soviet Union and only managed to return to Poland, with his wife and son, in 1957. In 1965, he was arrested and spent over a year in prison, along with Jacek Kuron, Karol Modzelewski and others, for playing a key political role in influencing an “Open Letter to the Party” signed by Kuron and Modzelewski that included a call for proletarian internationalism and workers democracy. At the time, *Spartacist* (No. 6, June-July 1966) ran an article calling for defense of Hass and his comrades.

Ludwik Hass had ties with some pseudo-Trotskyist organizations in the West, notably including the United Secretariat of the late Ernest Mandel. Hass’s articles appeared in *Revolutionary History* and other pseudo-Trotskyist papers in the West. When the cadres who later formed the Polish section of the International Communist League met Hass in the mid 1980s, he opposed the anti-Communist Stalinophobia prevalent in the pro-Solidarność pseudo-Trotskyist milieu. At the same time, he accepted the notion of a “family of the left.” He used to write articles for some Stalinist papers and allowed Stalinist youth organizations to sponsor his discussion meetings. Interestingly, at one such meeting Hass said that his biggest error ever was named Jacek Kuron. At one time a pro-socialist opponent of the Stalinist regime, Kuron had become a leading element in counterrevolutionary Solidarność and served as the strikebreaking minister of labor in the first Solidarność government in 1990. We published a contribution by Hass on the 1990 Polish presidential elections (WV No. 518, 18 January 1991).

Hass played a key role in winning the founding cadres of the Spartacist Group of Poland to Trotskyism, as they then understood it. Their Young Left Movement (RML), which was established in 1988, was an amorphous “family of the left” grouping, composed mainly of members of Stalinist youth organizations. Our future members were known for reviving the forgotten revolutionary internationalist tradition of honoring the “3 Ls” (Lenin,

Luxemburg, Liebknecht). Thanks to Ludwik Hass, they succeeded in getting a suppressed copy of the Polish translation of *The Revolution Betrayed* by Trotsky and in having it published by the ZSMP Stalinist youth organization at the end of the 1980s.

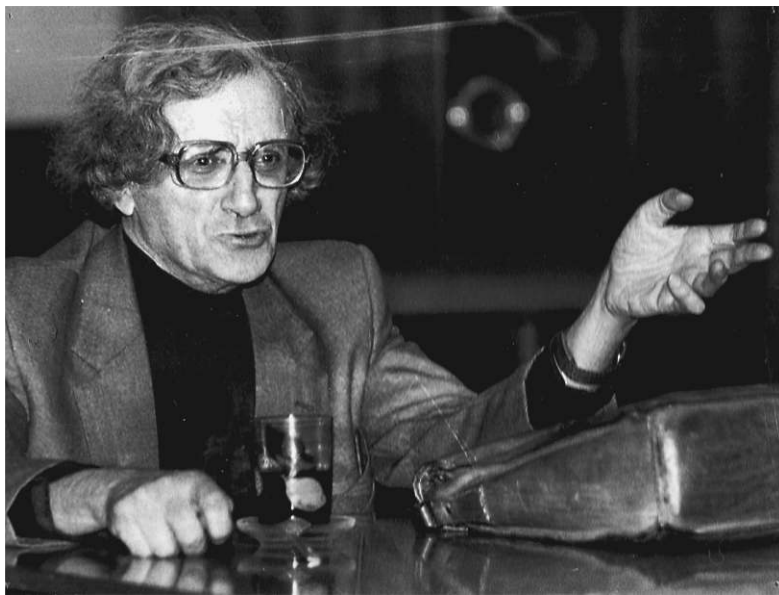
Following discussions in 1989-90, the RML was rejected by the Stalinophobic Mandelites of the misnamed Current of the Revolutionary Left (NLR), one of

the groups that shared responsibility for supporting the forces of the capitalist counter-revolution in Poland. It was Ludwik Hass who in July 1990 introduced an RML cadre to an ICL representative then visiting Warsaw. The ICL comrade brought with him copies of the May 1990 “Letter to Polish Workers” by the ICL’s German section (translated in WV No. 504, 15 June 1990), which warned of the counterrevolutionary threat represented by the Solidarność government and called for a return to the perspective of proletarian internationalism personified by Rosa Luxemburg.

The result of that meeting and ensuing discussions with the ICL was programmatic agreement and the establishment in October 1990 of the Spartacist Group of Poland. The SGP/ICL had a difference with Ludwik Hass regarding the counterrevolutionary character of Solidarność, which was evident from the time of Solidarność’s first national congress in September 1981. At that point, we raised the call “Stop Solidarność counterrevolution!” Hass claimed that the decisive change in Solidarność’s class character resulted from the government’s later crackdown in December 1981. In reality, the imposition by the Stalinist regime of Wojciech Jaruzelski of a temporary state of emergency, which we defended at the time, spiked Solidarność’s counterrevolutionary bid for power. The SGP also rejected the notion of a “family of the left” as counterposed to the conception of a Leninist vanguard party.

Some time after the counterrevolution of 1989-90, Hass told the SGP that the ICL had been right about the class character of Solidarność. But, expressing his Polish nationalism, he said that this was simply a fluke and that “we here know better our own backyard.” But our position was the result of an analysis based on the Trotskyist program of unconditional military defense of the deformed and degenerated workers states and the struggle for proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracies, as documented in the October 1981 Spartacist pamphlet *Solidarność: Polish Company Union for CIA and Bankers*, which was published last year in Polish by the SGP.

Despite his programmatic revisionism, Ludwik Hass did play the role of teacher and catalyst of Trotskyism in Poland, and he contributed to the rebuilding of the continuity of Trotskyism there, broken by the Stalinist blood purges and the Nazi occupation. We will remember him for that service to the proletarian cause. ■



Lech Tadeusz Wilczek

## 1918-2008

them part of the working class nor does it change the material reality that they serve only one master: the capitalist class. By supporting the police demonstration on 23 January, the Socialist Party and Socialist Appeal are supporting better pay for the police force to carry out their work. That consists of brutalising minorities by carrying out dawn raids on Asian homes under the pretext of the “war on terror,” including the raid in Forest Gate in June 2006 in which police shot Mohammed Abdul Kahar and nearly killed him. These “socialists” are backing improved conditions for the police to detain and arrest black and Asian minorities under the racist “stop and search” powers that have been boosted massively. Try telling the families of the dozens of blacks and Asians who have died in police custody that “socialists” support the cops’ claim for better pay for doing their job!

Appropriately enough, marching at the

head of the police demonstration was the fascist British National Party (BNP) candidate for London mayor, Richard Barnbrook, who stated that “he had been told by officers that he was welcome” ([London] *Guardian*, 24 January). As well as the fascists, with whom they overlap, the police are necessarily a sewer of concentrated racism, male chauvinism and anti-communism in capitalist society. This shows the fallacy of reformist appeals to the capitalist state to deal with the fascists. Fascists are extra-parliamentary race-terror gangs which cannot be “stopped” by state bans, nor by campaigns not to vote for fascist candidates in elections. What is necessary to combat fascist provocations is *trade union/minority mobilisations to stop them in their tracks!* The fascists are kept in reserve by the bourgeoisie to be used in times of crisis, and the fight to end fascism is inseparable from the fight to overthrow capitalism.

The reformist Socialist Workers Party (SWP) has in the past argued that cops and prison guards are part of the working class. A 26 January *Socialist Worker* article headlined: “Whose Interests Do Police Officers Really Serve?” It answered, somewhat surprisingly, that the state “operates as the instrument of the rich to oppress the poor” and that “the police are not part of the working class, but are rather a method of holding back the working class.” But actions speak louder than words: leading SWPer Lindsey German is running for Mayor of London and giving her second preference votes to Ken Livingstone, assuring us that “it is very important that we don’t let the Tory in, which is why I will be calling for all my voters to give Ken their second prefer-

ence” (*Socialist Worker*, 2 February). Livingstone boasts of having put thousands more cops on London’s streets and he backed the Metropolitan Police in the face of public criticism over the execution of Jean Charles de Menezes. This cold-blooded execution took place amid a wave of anti-Muslim hysteria following the criminal London public transport bombings in July 2005, at which time the Socialist Party adopted the slogan “no to terrorism, no to war.” This was an echo of Livingstone himself, who brandished his “anti-war” credentials over Iraq while backing the “war on terror” at home. Above all that meant supporting the cops.

The notion that the strikebreaking police are part of the workers movement is the outlook of Labourite union bureaucrats whose policy is class collaboration. Thus the Socialist Party boasts that its

members have a majority on the executive of the civil service union, the PCS [Public and Commercial Services Union]. These “socialists,” who have secured a sell-out two-tier deal on pensions, raise not a peep about the fact that the union membership includes immigration cops. We say: **all cops out of the PCS!**

Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky made it unquestionably clear that the police are the class enemy, saying:

“The fact that the police was originally recruited in large numbers from among Social Democratic workers is absolutely meaningless. Consciousness is determined by environment even in this instance. The worker who becomes a policeman in the service of the capitalist state, is a bourgeois cop, not a worker.”

—“What Next? Vital Questions for the German Proletariat,” January 1932, *The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany* ■

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## SL Speaker at Chicago United-Front Protest

# “Join Us in the Fight for a Workers America!”

## Break with the Democrats! For a Workers Party!

We print below, slightly edited for publication, the speech delivered by Spartacist League speaker Paula Daniels at the April 26 united-front rally for Mumia in Chicago.

Mumia Abu-Jamal, “voice of the voiceless,” is a marked man because of his political convictions and beliefs. Our task is very clear; it’s very urgent. The question is how will we free Mumia?

We have the seeds of Mumia’s only hope for freedom here at this rally today: the social power of labor. We have ATU representatives, AFSCME, UAW—maybe there are others out there—and the thousands of union brothers and sisters that these unions represent. That’s power! We can make the buses and trucks stop, we can bring the factories to a halt, we can dim the steel mills. But we have to know where we are going and what the obstacles are. Labor needs a leadership based on the *independence* of the working class from the bosses’ state and political parties, not one tying us to the Democratic Party. Imagine if the unions had a class-struggle leadership that waged strikes instead of cutting deals, that supported strikes instead of calling them “illegal,” that promoted international labor solidarity instead of pushing poisonous chauvinist protectionism—a labor movement that took up the struggle for all the oppressed, from Mumia to immigrants to gay rights. We would be operating from a position of power, not prostration!

The fight to free Mumia and all the class-war prisoners, the fight to abolish the racist death penalty, is inseparable from the struggle for workers rule. What is the death penalty in this country if not a system of legal murder, a legacy of chattel slavery? And when they can’t get their targets in the courts or the prisons, they let their street cops do the dirty work and act as judge, jury and executioner. Those cops that were acquitted yesterday for killing Sean Bell were acquitted because that’s not a crime to the bourgeoisie—that’s their job, as one of the speakers said!

We in the Spartacist League stand for the abolition of the death penalty on principle and everywhere—for the guilty as well as for the innocent. We do not accord

to the state the right to decide who lives and who dies. Our opposition to the death penalty extends to the deformed workers states: China, Vietnam, Cuba and North Korea. As Trotskyists, we know full well that the Chinese or Cuban bureaucracies, for example, mete out repression to all those they view as opponents, including socialist militants. You don’t have to be a counterrevolutionary. Nonetheless these workers states, despite their deformations, continue to represent qualitative gains for the working class internationally. Compare Cuba to Haiti. Compare China to India. That’s a class difference.

Today the Democrats and the reformist left, such as the International Socialist Organization, the League for the Revolutionary Party, etc., stand united in their efforts to “Free Tibet,” with the reformists joining the bourgeois rulers’ drive for counterrevolution in China. Let me tell you that the extension of the Chinese Revolution into Tibet ended slavery. It ended the status of women as beasts of burden and paved the way to open the road for social progress in a backward society. We say: Unconditional military defense of the Chinese deformed workers state! We are unconditionally against capitalist counterrevolution and imperialist intervention. The working people of China must fight for a workers political revolution, to replace the nationalist Stalinist bureaucracy with the rule of workers, peasants and soldiers councils.

While I’m speaking about the left, I want to say it is a damning indictment of those who call themselves socialist, who claim to fight for freedom, that they did not mobilize their forces for this demonstration and are not here en masse.

We owe a great debt to Lenin and the Bolshevik Party, not least for leading a successful workers revolution in Russia. The Communist International under Lenin and Trotsky intervened into the Communist movement in this country and hammered home the question of special oppression of black Americans. They made the point: black workers in this country are doubly oppressed, not just by skin color, but as workers. Black women face triple oppression—as women, as

workers and because of the color of their skin. The Bolsheviks insisted that the communists in this country need to fight against the oppression of black people and to win black workers to the fight for a workers government. We in the Spartacist League seek to impart to a new generation the importance of the black question and its centrality in the fight for socialist revolution, the only road forward to black liberation.

The Democrats and Republicans may diverge on tactics here and there, but fundamentally they are united in upholding this rotting, racist capitalist system, and they will get the “best man” for the job, even if he is black or a woman, as the case may be. Now, I will concede that should a black man or a woman sit in the White House, that would be a significant development in this country. But—it is a big but—the truth is, be it Clinton or Obama, it might be a shiny new pail, but inside it’s the same old garbage. Neither offers any qualitative change for working people or the oppressed.

I know some of you say: “But wait, wait, we gotta vote for the lesser evil!” The “lesser evil” brought us Hiroshima, it brought us the Bay of Pigs, the Vietnam War, the end of welfare, and more recently the 1996 Antiterrorism and Effective



WV Photo

Death Penalty Act, which virtually eliminated the right to *habeas corpus* appeals for those sentenced to death in state courts. In a period of greater class consciousness, it will become ever more apparent that the program of the Obamas, of the “friends of labor” in the Democratic Party, and the “sisters” in the bourgeoisie, is counterposed to ours.

Again, it is the power of labor that can free Mumia Abu-Jamal. That enormous power, here in the street, once freed from the illusions that the class enemy is on our side—once the working class is turned into a class *for* itself—will be a force to be reckoned with. We ask you to help us build that revolutionary workers party that fights for Mumia’s freedom, for black freedom, women’s liberation and defense of gay rights, for full citizenship rights for all immigrants. We need October Revolutions along the lines of the Russian Revolution internationally. That’s what the Spartacist League, the American section of the International Communist League, is all about. The first American Revolution gained independence from the British, the second smashed slavery. It’s time for a third, a workers revolution. Join us in the fight for a workers America! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the racist death penalty! ■

## JOIN THE CAMPAIGN!

### 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.**

Donations earmarked “Mumia” as well as collections at PDC or other events for Mumia’s legal defense are receipted and transferred in full to the above NLG account as has been designated by Mumia’s lawyer for this purpose.

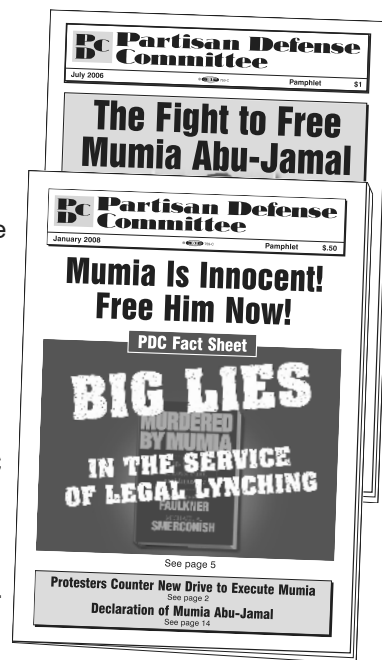
**Organize protest!** Pass motions in your unions, campus, community and religious organizations demanding Mumia’s freedom. Get your union or organization to make a contribution and join rallies and protests for Mumia. Publicize Mumia’s case in your union or organization’s newsletter.

**Get the facts!** New PDC fact sheet pamphlet, *Big Lies in the Service of Legal Lynching* (available in English, German and French—\$.50 each, \$10 for 30) is a detailed refutation of the recent book *Murdered by Mumia* by right-wing journalist Michael Smerconish and Maureen Faulkner, whose lying tract is a rallying cry not only to execute Mumia but for the death penalty itself. The PDC’s other Mumia pamphlet, *The Fight to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal—Mumia Is Innocent!* (\$1), lays out the political basis of the state vendetta against Mumia and provides additional detail on the explosive evidence that shatters the decades-long frame-up of this fighter for black freedom. Both these PDC pamphlets politically arm activists in the struggle for Mumia’s freedom.

**PDC Button:** “Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!”—\$1 each.

**PDC Video:** *From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal*—\$10 DVD, \$15 VHS.

**Bundles of the 4-page brochure:** *Mumia Is an Innocent Man: Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!*—\$2 for 25 copies. Order from/make checks payable to Partisan Defense Committee at our New York City address below.



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# Mumia...

(continued from page 7)

political support on principle to any capitalist politician—Democrat, Republican, Green or ‘Independent’.”

In going to this rally, we sought to publicize Mumia’s cause and to intersect liberal youth attracted to Obama with Mumia’s case. Ever since we took up Mumia’s case in 1987, we have always sought to bring in broader forces that do not share our Marxist framework in the struggle on his behalf. In going to the “mainstream,” the reformists sought to build a “movement” that took an agnostic position on Mumia’s innocence. It is the PDC and the SL that have publicized Mumia’s case and brought it to the broadest possible forces, and done so—through our mobilizations, rallies and publications (most recently, for example, the PDC Fact Sheet pamphlet, *Big Lies in the Service of Legal Lynching*)—on the basis that he is an innocent man, the victim of a racist and political frame-up, who must be immediately freed.

One can contrast the protests initiated by the PDC with the other recent Mumia protests, which sought to exclude our communist views from the expressions of “diversity” permitted from their platforms. At the April 19 Philadelphia rally, the organizers arranged that different groups of demonstrators protest separately in their own little bantustans: the contingent built by the PDC on one corner, while on other corners there were supporters of organizations such as the ICFEJ, WWP, PSL and the RCP’s October 22nd Coalition. This division only emboldened fascist provocateurs and other supporters of the racist



**Mumia in hospital after being shot and beaten by cops in 1981.**

terposition to the reformist left’s reliance on the U.S. “justice” system, was a point of controversy. During the Chicago united-front protest, as Bernard Branche, speaking for the Labor Black Struggle League, was underlining the need for integrated class struggle to fight for Mumia’s freedom, a supporter of the Black Panther Party, whose speaker Jokarhi Shakur-El had earlier addressed the crowd, tried to interrupt, declaring, “It doesn’t just take the working class.” Branche noted in response:

“They’ve had their speaker.... They have their own strategy. They put it forward. That strategy...despairs of united working-class struggle across racial lines against the racist bourgeoisie.... They despair of the possibility of winning working-class leadership, so therefore the only thing...left is support to the Democratic Party. This is a united-front protest. So freedom of criticism. That’s why it was appropriate for Jokarhi to get up here and give his perspective. And that’s why I’m giving mine.”

## From Mexico City to Sydney: Mumia Must Be Freed Now!

Addressing the 100 protesters who mobilized in Mexico City for the April 24 united-front protest called by the GEM, Rachel Wolkenstein emphasized: “We are here to declare our opposition to the determination by the American state to execute Mumia or keep him in prison for the rest of his life. Mumia’s only crime was to be an unbending opponent of racism, police brutality, imperialist war and colonial depredation.” She added: “The American racist rulers see in Mumia the spectre of black revolt.... When Mumia was only 14 years old, he joined the Black Panther Party and soon became Minister of Communications of his local.... Mumia was put on a government list when he was 15 years old, for the crime, in the words of the FBI, of being an ‘effective spokesman’.” She continued:

“Mumia’s fight for freedom is a fight for all of us—in the United States, in Mexico, around the globe. In the United States his frame-up embodies every aspect of racist capitalist injustice. It lays bare the essence of the capitalist state as an instrument of repression against working people and the oppressed. The development of U.S. capitalism is rooted in black chattel slavery. The death penalty is the legacy of slavery—when blacks could be tortured and murdered as the property of their owners. The death sentence is the lynch rope made legal.”

Among the protesters in Mexico City were UNAM students and campus workers, leftists—including the Liga de los Trabajadores por el Socialismo-ContraCorriente (LTS, allied with a Morenoite current of ostensible Trotskyism) and the IG, both of which addressed the rally—and spokesmen for defense groups including ¡Eureka! and the National Front Against Repression (FNCR). Inti Martínez from ¡Eureka! brought greetings from Senator Rosario Ibarra, National Coordinator of ¡Eureka! and an endorser of the united-front protests. Referring to the decades-long struggle by Ibarra and ¡Eureka! to recover their children, spouses and comrades disappeared by the Mexican state, he said: “They took them alive, we want them back alive! Free all political prisoners, free Mumia!”

The speaker from the Juventud Espartaquista, youth group of the GEM, recalled that the previous day was the ninth anniversary of the beginning of the militant UNAM student strike in defense of public education, “a very combative struggle that had the potential to light the fuse of workers revolution in Mexico. To realize this potential, a revolutionary leadership was necessary.” The strike was broken

by bloody state repression by all three of Mexico’s bourgeois parties, the PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party), PAN (National Action Party) and PRD (Party of the Democratic Revolution), and the JE speaker linked this to the attacks by right-wing thugs against leftist students on campuses today. He also took up the current campaign to smear prominent Mexican leftist spokesmen as well as UNAM students and working-class militants as “terrorists” in the wake of the murderous Colombian government attack on a camp of the guerrillaist FARC in Ecuador in early March, which killed 22 people, including several UNAM students.

The theme of labor solidarity across the border was repeatedly raised. The speaker for the Workers Assembly at the Political and Social Sciences School, organized in the STUNAM union, declared, “Death to tyranny! Death to the death penalty!” He demanded freedom for Mumia and for “all the Mexicans and Latinos unjustly prosecuted” by the U.S. government. The LTS speaker saluted the PDC for the international campaign and pointed to the power of the U.S. working class and the need for American workers to unite with workers around the world. Disavowing confidence in the U.S. Democratic or Republican parties, he called on the trade unions to lead the struggle for Mumia’s freedom. The speaker for the GEM responded that through its calls for “dissolution of the repressive forces of the state,” the LTS partakes of the same illusions in the capitalist state that demobilized the fight for Mumia’s freedom (see page 9).

Celia Hart sent a solidarity message linking Mumia’s case to that of the Cuban Five, framed up in Miami on bogus espionage charges because of their solidarity with Cuba. She wrote: “With great honor and commitment I endorse the campaign for the immediate freedom of our brother Mumia.... Our five Cuban *compañeros*, revolutionary fighters, suffer unacceptable sentences just as Mumia does. They are six fighters for the happiness of their peoples (two of the Cuban comrades are also Americans). These two campaigns should be one.... We need those six internationalist fighters out from behind bars....”

At every united-front protest, the injustice suffered by Mumia was linked with capitalist oppression and racist cop terror at home. At the April 23 united-front protest in Sydney, Australia, where some 55 demonstrators called for Mumia’s freedom, the speaker for the Spartacist League, Margaret Rodda, said: “We oppose the death penalty on principle and demand its abolition. We do not accord the state the right to decide who lives and dies. While the death penalty was officially abolished in Australia...it is applied in practice against the deeply oppressed Aboriginal population in the prisons and police cells. This gives Mumia’s case a deep resonance in this country.” Denouncing the military and police takeover of Aboriginal lands in Australia’s Northern Territory, she demanded, “The Aboriginal people must not be left to fight alone—mobilize the organized workers movement in a class-struggle fight for Aboriginal rights!”

## Chicago: “Mumia Belongs Out Here with the People”

The Chicago demonstration drew more than 200 protesters and included 13 speakers representing a broad range of political and union organizations. Chicago endorsers of the united-front protests

included Amalgamated Transit Union Locals 241 and 308, United Auto Workers Local 3212 and AFSCME Local 3506. Students mobilized for the protest from campuses across Chicago, including from the University of Illinois at Chicago, the University of Chicago, DePaul University, Chicago State University and Northwestern University. Campus endorsers included the Black Student Union at DePaul and the MEChA and Students for a Democratic Society groups at the University of Chicago.

Virtually every speaker expressed outrage at the acquittal, the day before the rally, of the NYPD cops who killed Sean Bell in a hail of 50 bullets. LBSL speaker Bernard Branche stated that “two of the cops who killed Sean Bell were black, and in gunning down a black youth they were just doing their jobs in the eyes of the racist rulers. We seek to mobilize labor in protest against these outrages while explaining to the masses that things like racist cop terror can only be ended when the class that the cops protect is removed from power by the working class.”

Calling for mass protests centered on the power of labor to fight for Mumia’s freedom, Branche pointed out that racial oppression has been a fundamental aspect of the workings of American capitalism “since slavery, through the defeat of Radical Reconstruction, all the way up to the present with examples like Katrina or the Jena Six.” He continued:

“The division of the working class along racial and ethnic lines has been used to stifle the working class in its struggle against the corrupt and racist bosses. Our perspective is that of revolutionary integrationism. We seek to fight every manifestation of the racial oppression of black people. We understand that only through the construction of an egalitarian socialist society can black freedom be won. This strategy stands counterposed to both the liberal-integrationist pipe dream of a slow and gradual crawl to equality and to black nationalism, which accepts the ghettoization and separation that is a key aspect of black racial oppression.”

Branche added: “We seek to win the working class, including white workers as well as the growing number of Latino and other immigrants to the fight for black liberation. We also see the necessity for black and working-class militants to fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants. This is to prepare the working masses to fight their common capitalist enemy. An injury to one is an injury to all!” Spartacist League speaker Paula Daniels pointed to the pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy as the obstacle in the workers movement to mobilizing labor’s power for Mumia’s freedom, stating, “Labor needs a leadership based on the *independence* of the working class from the bosses’ state and political parties” (see page 6).

Speaking for the Gay Liberation Network, Bob Schwartz said: “Yesterday I saw a prominent politician on television stating that we must respect the court decision that exonerated the killers of Sean Bell. Now who was that politician? That’s right, it was Barack Obama. It wasn’t George Bush, or John McCain, although it could have been, but it was Barack Obama. I’m sure that no one here, or I hope no one here, has illusions in Obama or in any other capitalist politician to bring about liberation.”

Speaking at the rally, Rachel Wolkenstein noted:

“While directed at Mumia, the Court of Appeals ruling is an attack on the rights of all of us. The court upheld the exclusion of black jurors, approved the outrageous racist conduct of Judge Sabo and gave license to the prosecutor’s unconstitutional argument to the jury that they could convict Mumia because he’d have ‘appeal after appeal.’ The Third Circuit made ‘Mumia rules’ in order to undermine those rights which are supposed to be in the Bill of Rights for everyone....

“The ruling in Mumia’s case confirms again that no justice can be expected from the capitalist courts. Every possible legal avenue must be pursued vigorously to challenge this recent court decision. But we cannot afford to have any illusions in fair hearings and impartial judges.”

Glenna Swinford spoke for the Freightliner 5, UAW Local 3520 members in North Carolina who were fired for leading a strike. She detailed how the UAW International bureaucrats declared the



**PDC contingent at May 2007 Philadelphia rally for Mumia combatted illusions in capitalist courts exemplified by call for “new trial” by WWP’s International Action Center and other reformists.**

cops to carry out their previously announced threats of harassment and violence against Mumia’s defenders.

In contrast, the PDC-initiated protests *united* forces with diverse political viewpoints behind the call to free Mumia, while allowing each group to put forward its views. In Oakland, speakers included Richard Brown, Hank Jones, Francisco Torres and Ray Boudreaux of the “San Francisco 8,” former Black Panthers who are now being dragged through the courts on frame-up charges of killing a cop, which had been dismissed 30 years ago.

Speakers in the London protest included a number of black nationalists, such as Brother Omowale, who spoke on behalf of Galaxy Radio, which had publicized the PDC-initiated protest. Jessica Huntley, who helped found Bogle-L’Ouverture Publications, gave a very powerful and vivid picture of Mumia’s professionalism and political knowledge as a journalist when she had met him in 1981. She recalled Mumia calling her after he was arrested, telling her he was in prison for a crime he did not commit. (For more on the Oakland, Toronto and London united-front protests, see “International Protests Demand: Mumia Must Be Freed Now!” WV No. 913, 25 April.)

And there was political debate. Our class-struggle perspective, which stands in coun-



## GEM Speaker at April 24 Mexico City Mumia Protest:

# “Unleash the Power of the Working Class Internationally”

We print below a translation of a speech by Adrian Ortega of the Grupo Espartaquista de México at an April 24 united-front protest to free Mumia Abu-Jamal at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) in Mexico City.

The Grupo Espartaquista de México, Mexican section of the International Communist League, fights for the immediate freedom of Mumia Abu-Jamal as part of our revolutionary duty to defend all social activists victimized by state repression. But the state’s murderous machinery will not be stopped until socialist revolution wins internationally. Only the expropriation of the capitalists and their imperialist bosses by the international proletariat will lay the foundation for an international system that puts an end to misery and social injustice, as well as the exploitation of man by man.

In Mexico, this means struggling politically to break the shackles that bind the Mexican proletariat to the bourgeoisie. It means breaking with AMLO [Andrés Manuel López Obrador] and his bourgeois PRD [Party of the Democratic Revolution], who—just like Hugo Chávez in Venezuela—uses nationalist and populist rhetoric to obscure the class divisions in society and to shackle the exploited to their exploiters. The proletariat is the only class with the social power to lead the poor peasantry and the rest of the oppressed in socialist revolution.

This revolution must be extended to the U.S. through the human bridge of immigrant Mexican workers, and to the rest of Latin America. Only workers revolution can break imperialist subjugation, bring genuine democracy to the masses through workers councils, and eliminate rural poverty through agrarian revolution. The main ally of the Mexican workers in this struggle is the powerful multiracial working class in the U.S., especially black workers who will play a leading role in the socialist revolution in the U.S.

It is from this perspective that today we seek the mobilization of the power



Mexico City, April 24: Union of Workers of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (STUNAM) contingent at united-front Mumia protest.

of the working class to fight against the privatization of PEMEX [Mexico’s state oil company] and the electrical industry, as well as the devastation of the countryside caused by NAFTA. Even providing for the basic necessities of the population requires a collectivized and planned economy under workers control internationally.

Defending Mumia means opposing imperialist depredations in Iraq and Afghanistan. As we did in the former Soviet Union and East Europe, we will fight on the last barricades for the unconditional military defense of the deformed workers states: China, North Korea, Cuba and Vietnam. We fight for proletarian political revolution to sweep away the Stalinist regimes and replace them with workers democracy based on workers, peasants and soldiers soviets. We say: Down with the anti-Chinese riots in Tibet!

Our class-struggle defense of Mumia and other class-war prisoners is based on mobilizing the broadest possible support,

centered on the working class, under the principle of strike together, march separately. This also means struggling against the role played by reformist groups that seek to subordinate the movement for Mumia’s freedom to illusions in the bourgeois state. This is shown in their slogan for a “new trial” and their rejection of Arnold Beverly’s confession that proves the police and courts in the U.S. are a web of corruption and lies. Mumia will never receive a fair trial under racist U.S. imperialism. Today, thousands throughout the world demand Mumia’s freedom, now.

As part of united-front actions, it is important to raise differences over the correct strategy necessary to fight for Mumia’s freedom—even though many of the speakers have not mentioned these fundamental differences. These same illusions in the state are promoted by groups in the Mexican left like the Liga de Trabajadores por el Socialismo [LTS]—who we are glad has spoken here today—whose perspective of democratic reform

of the state is expressed in their slogan for the “dissolution of the repressive apparatus of the state.” The bourgeois state will never dissolve; it must be destroyed through proletarian revolution. Similarly, the speaker from the Internationalist Group spoke about mobilizing the working class, above all in the unions, and mentioned the union in Brazil. What this speaker did not say was that in 1996 this same union was dragged through the courts by comrades from his own organization. This is well documented in our press and you can check it out yourselves. Police and security guards, courts, and all of the bourgeois state out of the workers movement, out of the unions! The state must not be allowed even a small step inside the workers movement.

The way to mobilize the working class is through movements such as this: united-front mobilizations that bring out important sectors of the workers, such as workers at the Political Science School at UNAM, the COSATU union, and other unions internationally.

The key to victory in Mumia’s case is to unleash the power of the working class internationally and to break with bourgeois nationalism, which is nothing more than an ideology that permeates the working class, nothing more than poison that prevents the working class from mobilizing on a class basis. The working class needs its own party, a revolutionary party, section of a reformed Fourth International, that joins together the vanguard of the working class and declassed intellectuals under the banner of Lenin and Trotsky’s Bolshevism; a party that fights against every form of oppression in society, connecting the immediate demands of the population to the need for socialist revolution and a workers and peasants government.

Today, Mumia faces possible execution or imprisonment for life. Neither of these is acceptable. Free Mumia now! Free this innocent political prisoner! Abolish the racist death penalty! ■

strike “illegal,” setting the workers up for victimization. “Mumia is fighting for his life, his freedom, and wrongful incarceration,” she said. “This is a battle he has fought for over 25 years. The justice system has failed him, but he still keeps fighting for his freedom, and the Freightliner 5 will continue to fight for ours.”

“We know that Mumia is innocent. We know he belongs out here with the people. He’s part of the people,” said Bill Hampton, brother of Fred Hampton, the Chicago Black Panther Party leader who along with Mark Clark was assassinated by the Chicago cops in 1969. Exonerated former death row prisoner Delbert Tibbs also endorsed and attended the protest. “If anybody believes that there is going to be justice in this system, let me tell you, I’m sorry, but you’re wrong” said immigrant rights activist Jorge Mujica, Co-Coordinator of the March 10th Committee. Mujica referred to the 1927 execution of framed-up immigrant anarchist workers Sacco and Vanzetti and the 1953 execution of Communists Julius and Ethel Rosenberg. He linked the struggle to free Mumia with the struggle for immigrant rights, pointing to the militancy that immigrant workers have brought into the U.S. labor movement.

Earl Silbar, a retired member of AFSCME Local 3506, paid tribute to the power of Mumia’s journalism. He also remarked, “The fact is I never would have been involved if it weren’t for my subscribing to the Spartacist paper.... Despite

any and all disagreements, the Spartacist League has been consistent over many, many years...in raising Mumia’s case and keeping people informed and bringing people out and so I want to pay tribute to them for that and for this rally.”

The rally began with demonstrators listening to a recording of the moving speech made by Mumia’s daughter, Goldii, at the March 28 PDC demonstration in New York, where she underlined that the rulers want to kill Mumia “because they are afraid of him, because of his eloquence, his intelligence” (Goldii’s speech is available at: [www.partisandefense.org/pubs/articles/videos0408.html](http://www.partisandefense.org/pubs/articles/videos0408.html)). Greetings to the rallies were read from Mumia’s son, Jamal Hart, who has been in prison since 1997 for bogus weapons charges in retaliation for defending his father.

### Los Angeles: “The Fight to Free Mumia Is a Fight for Black Liberation”

In Los Angeles, up to 150 people participated in the united-front rally at the Westwood Federal Building, including a contingent that marched from UCLA. The demonstration reflected the multiracial working class of the city. Rosie Martinez, flanked at the podium by several fellow unionists, spoke as the chairperson of the Latino Caucus of SEIU 721, which represents county and city workers in Southern California. “The Latino Caucus,” she said, “stands in solidarity with the demand to free Mumia Abu-Jamal.” She noted, “We

in the labor movement know the racist capitalists try to divide and oppress workers here in the United States and worldwide,” adding: “We will continue the struggle, brothers and sisters, until we free Mumia and all political prisoners and end the racist death penalty.”

James Lafferty, Executive Director of the L.A. branch of the National Lawyers Guild (NLG), proudly noted that “Mumia Abu-Jamal has been a Vice President for Jailhouse Lawyers” in the NLG for more than 25 years. Lafferty added: “I bring you greetings as well from KPFFK,” where “we have been proud to broadcast Mumia’s commentaries.” KPFFK, he added, was the first radio station to put Arnold Beverly’s confession on the air.

Reverend Richard Byrd told the Los

Angeles protest that “35 percent of young black men between the ages of 19 and 29 are incarcerated or in some way involved in the criminal injustice system. That’s a lynching.” He also cited the cop shooting of Sean Bell. “The labor movement must get involved,” emphasized Jesse Smith, President of the African American Caucus of SEIU United Healthcare Workers-West. “In the 13th amendment to the United States Constitution they tell you that slavery and involuntary servitude are abolished,” Smith said, but that doesn’t apply to “the nearly one million black men and women” behind bars today. Mumia “is a victim of slavery in this criminal justice system,” he added.

Other speakers included Don White, *continued on page 10*

## RALLY!

**Mumia Abu-Jamal Is Innocent!  
Free Mumia Now!  
Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!**

**Saturday, May 17, 3:30 p.m.**

Meeting Room 1, Trades Hall  
corner Victoria and Lygon Streets, Carlton  
(entrance on Victoria Street)

**MELBOURNE**

For more information: (03) 9654 4315  
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Sponsored by the Partisan Defence Committee

# Mumia...

(continued from page 9)

coordinator of the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador-L.A. (CIS-PES) and Sherman Austin, a young black anarchist who was railroaded to prison for a year for the “crime” of hosting an anarchist Web site. Austin performed his hip-hop protest songs “Raise the Fist” and “Freedom.” Additionally, Walter Lippmann, editor of the online CubaNews, spoke. He noted that the Spanish translation of Mumia’s book *We Want Freedom* is widely available in Cuba, where Mumia’s case is closely followed and where he is viewed as a leader in the struggle for justice in the United States.

Spartacist League spokesman Don Cane said: “Our task is to assist the international working class in making the cause of this class-war prisoner their own, so that the demand ‘Free Mumia’ rings out from worker-led protest around the world!... Labor must champion freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal! This would give labor a sense of its own power. The fight to free Mumia is a fight for black liberation, the emancipation of labor, and it is part of the struggle for socialist revolution.”

## From the Reformists to the Dubious

A number of reformist groups have sought to paint the March 27 federal court decision as a “victory.” *L’Humanité* (28 March), daily paper of the reformist French Communist Party, headlined, “Mumia Abu-Jamal Gets Off Death Row.” But as Mumia stated in an April 7 radio interview: “If you look at what the court said and what they did: what they did is, they made up new rules. You see, that is not a victory. That is, again, the Mumia rule.... So it’s the ‘Mu rule’ once again. When a court has to make up new rules and make up new laws to uphold something that was unjust before, that’s not a victory. It’s not a victory. But we struggle on.”

In France, the CDDS, the PDC’s fraternal defense organization, has fought to expose the fallacy of the PCF’s “victory” claim. Stung by this exposure, the Collectif Unitaire National “Ensemble, sauvons Mumia” (United National Collective, “Together, Let’s Save Mumia”), which is supported by the PCF, issued a statement that, among other things, condemned as “slander” the fact that the CDDS noted of the Collectif that “their confidence in the capitalist state flows from their conviction that the courts and the police are some kind of neutral public service like the post office.”

The CDDS replied in an April 17 open letter: “While the PCF has been administering the capitalist state for decades at the municipal level, as well as at the

national level in popular-front governments like under Mitterrand and Jospin, the LCR [Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire] has been aspiring to do so, too.... LO [Lutte Ouvrière] just ran in the municipal elections on a number of slates with the PCF.... A central plank of many a municipal program for these slates was to re-establish the ‘neighborhood police.’... Fueling illusions in the racist police and court system of capitalist-imperialist France goes hand in hand with preaching the need for a ‘new, fair trial for Mumia,’ as these groups have done.”

While the reformist left has sought to avoid our united-front protests like the

freedom. When we launched a series of labor/black mobilizations to stop the Klan and Nazis in major urban centers in the early to mid 1980s, the BT denounced us for abandoning trade-union work in favor of “community organizing.” When in 1985 Philly cops under black Democratic mayor Wilson Goode, working in collusion with Ronald Reagan’s FBI, bombed the Osage Avenue home of MOVE, of which Mumia is a supporter, killing eleven people, the BT could not choke out a word of protest. Instead, when we organized a New York memorial meeting in solidarity with the victims of this racist atrocity, the BT attacked us for not polemicizing against



WV Photo

**Philadelphia, April 19: Partisan Defense Committee and Labor Black League’s 150-strong Class-Struggle Contingent at demonstration for Mumia Abu-Jamal, which drew some 600 people.**

plague, the dubious International Bolshevik Tendency (BT) has sought to be the microbe that poisons the labor-centered mass protest necessary to free Mumia. Having become involved in the united-front protests in Toronto and London, the BT then promoted protests in cities where we do not have active branches: Dublin, Ireland; Cologne, Germany; and Vienna, Austria. These three Potemkin-village “protests” drew a combined total of no more than 35 people. The Dublin “rally” featured a speaker from the anarchist Workers Solidarity Movement who questioned Mumia’s innocence without a peep in response from the BT. Meanwhile, BT supporters showed up at the April 19 Oakland united-front protest and, while claiming to support the slogans of the protest, refused to endorse it. What gives?

The BT was formed over 25 years ago by embittered ex-members of our tendency and has been marked by utter disdain for special oppression, not least a sneering contempt for the fight for black

MOVE’s philosophy!

The BT, in fact, did not have an article on Mumia until 1996. But they made a press splash around Mumia’s case the prior year in the midst of the protests against the execution warrant—in the pages of the *Wall Street Journal*. A 16 June 1995 article by this house organ of U.S. finance capital retailed the BT’s slanders of the Spartacist League as a deranged “cult” in order to smear the efforts of the PDC and others on Mumia’s behalf. As we wrote in “Dubious BT’s ‘United Front’ Fraud—The Fight for Class-Struggle Defense of Mumia Abu-Jamal” (WV No. 903, 23 November 2007): “The *Wall Street Journal*’s intent was transparent enough. How and why the minuscule BT was readily wielded as a tool for the *Wall Street Journal* is not.”

We can only guess why an organization that cares nothing about black oppression would get involved in Mumia’s case. What we do know is that the BT—an organization led by the twisted sociopath Bill Logan, who was expelled from our tendency in 1979 for crimes “against commu-

nist morality and its substrate elementary human decency”—has always pursued an unnatural and hostile obsession with our organization. Insofar as they have gotten involved in Mumia’s case, it has been to conciliate the reformists’ calls for a “new trial” while attacking the PDC and SL as “sectarian” as we have fought to reverse the demobilization of Mumia’s supporters.

## Mobilize Now to Free Mumia!

The PDC was founded in 1974 in emulation of the International Labor Defense (ILD) of the early American Communist movement. The ILD was headed by James P. Cannon, who would go on to become the founding leader of American Trotskyism. It was the American branch of the International Red Aid (MOPR) established by the Third (Communist) International following the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution. From its inception, the PDC has championed cases and causes in the interest of the working class in the spirit of non-sectarian solidarity. In addition to defending class-war prisoners, such as union militants victimized for defending picket lines, the PDC defends anti-racist militants, opponents of imperialist war and colonial oppression, activists for women’s and gay rights and all others targeted by the capitalist rulers for their defense of the oppressed. Over 20 years ago the PDC initiated a monthly stipend program for class-war prisoners, which today includes Mumia, Leonard Peltier and the MOVE prisoners.

For the early ILD, one of the defining issues was the case of Sacco and Vanzetti (see “Lessons of the Fight to Free Sacco and Vanzetti,” WV Nos. 897 and 898, 31 August and 14 September 2007). At the Los Angeles emergency protest on March 28, PDC speaker Michael Graham noted striking parallels between the ILD’s fight to save Sacco and Vanzetti and Mumia’s case today:

“The two anarchists were framed up by the capitalist state in much the same way that Mumia is being framed up today: phony ballistics, witness intimidation, and the use of the defendants’ political background to inflame the jury. As in Mumia’s case, a criminal confessed that he, not Sacco and Vanzetti, was involved in the crime for which the two were convicted. And as in Mumia’s case, liberals, the reformist Socialist Party and the pro-capitalist leaders of the American Federation of Labor demobilized the fight for Sacco and Vanzetti’s freedom, diverting the movement into appeals for a ‘fair day in court’ for the sake of America’s ‘democratic’ image.”

The PDC-initiated united-front protests give a taste of what is necessary to win Mumia’s freedom. Time is running short, and the racist rulers are determined to silence Mumia. ***Labor’s power must be mobilized to fight racist oppression and free all class-war prisoners! Free Mumia now! Abolish the racist death penalty! ■***

# Sean Bell...

(continued from page 12)

and Trent Benefield on the stand! Once again, the racist injustice system of this country recalls the infamous 1857 *Dred Scott* decision in which the U.S. Supreme Court held that black people “had no rights which the white man was bound to respect.”

What should be happening now is massive labor-centered protests on the streets to unite the social power of the working class with the anger of the ghetto and barrio masses. New York City is a union town with a multiracial working class—black, white, Latino, Asian and immigrants from around the world. Transit workers, city and hospital workers have the social power to bring the financial capital of U.S. imperialism to a screeching halt. To unleash this tremendous social power requires a political struggle within the unions to build a class-struggle leadership by fighting to oust the pro-capitalist labor misleaders who subordinate the interests of working people to the capitalist parties, Democratic and Republican alike. As a

spokesman for the Spartacist League put it in addressing a protest rally on the day of the acquittal of Sean Bell’s killers: “The only way to fight these racist rulers and the gangs in blue is through a workers party that fights for a workers revolution.”

NYC mayor Michael Bloomberg, whose cops are out in force to intimidate and repress, said of the court’s verdict: “America is a nation of laws, and...we accept their authority.” Proving again that his talk of “change” doesn’t mean a dime’s worth of difference, Democratic Party presidential candidate Barack Obama intoned: “We’re a nation of laws, so we respect the verdict that came down.” The miserable pawnbrokers of ghetto rage like Democrat Al Sharpton have likewise appealed for calm and promised to take it to the Justice Department along with making diversionary calls for civil disobedience. This is a calculated strategy to chill the justified anger and corral it into the dead end of electoral pressure politics, not least in this presidential election year. Against the timeworn schemes to “reform” this racist capitalist system, including whitewash “police accountability” commissions and hat-in-hand appeals to the Justice Depart-

ment of Guantánamo Bay and Torture, Inc., it is necessary to understand that the state—the cops, the courts, the prison system—is an instrument of the rule of the capitalist class, of repression against the working class and all the oppressed. It cannot be reformed to meet our needs, it must be smashed and replaced by workers rule.

Mumia Abu-Jamal, former Black Panther, award-winning journalist and MOVE supporter, framed-up and facing execution or life imprisonment at the hands of the state, said of the Bell verdict: “So 23-year-old Sean Bell joins Amadou Diallo and many, many others guilty of WWB: Walking While Black. And while millions of black and white Americans thrill at political illusions of post-racialism, Sean Bell’s case proves how deeply deadly race can still be.” Mumia’s case, too, shows that there is no justice in the capitalist courts: This innocent man and eloquent fighter for the rights of the oppressed should not have spent a day in prison. So Sean Bell’s killers walk while Mumia rots in prison. ***Free Mumia now!***

The same racist capitalist rulers who bomb, starve and torture people from Afghanistan to Iraq unleash their racist

cops “at home” against striking workers, black people and immigrants. Black oppression in this country is the envelope for class exploitation; it took a Civil War to smash chattel slavery, and it will take a third American revolution to put a final end to centuries of black oppression that is the bedrock of this system. Only then will it be possible to eradicate the systematic segregation in jobs, housing, education and health care and build a workers state where those who labor rule. This Marxist perspective for ***revolutionary integrationism*** is counterposed both to liberal integrationists who promote illusions in justice under capitalism and to black nationalists who preach despairing acquiescence to segregation and discrimination with schemes of “black capitalism.” ***Finish the Civil War—For black liberation through socialist revolution!*** As revolutionary, proletarian internationalists in the belly of the U.S. imperialist beast, we seek to forge a party on the model of Lenin and Trotsky’s Bolsheviks and fight for new October Revolutions, eliminating once and for all the class exploitation and racist oppression that the cops and courts “serve and protect.” ***Sean Bell: We will not forget! ■***

(continued from page 12)

rights of workers in the U.S., that abandoned the black and poor of the Gulf Coast to Hurricane Katrina. Insofar as the forces on the ground in Iraq aim their fire at the occupiers and their Iraqi lackeys, we call for their military defense against U.S. imperialism, while vehemently opposing Islamic fundamentalism, nationalism and the communal slaughter devastating the Iraqi population. *All U.S. troops out of Iraq and Afghanistan now!*

The San Francisco May Day rally was politically no different from the many liberal peace crawls. This rally, organized by ILWU Local 10 Executive Board member Jack Heyman, was politically dominated by capitalist politicians. Speakers included a representative for black Democratic Congresswoman Barbara Lee, Green Party presidential candidate Cynthia McKinney, and Cindy Sheehan and Democrat Shirley Golub, both of whom are challenging Nancy Pelosi for her congressional seat. To fight for its own interests as well as those of all the oppressed, the working class must be mobilized independent of and against all capitalist parties. This requires a political struggle against the pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucracy, which ties workers to the class enemy, and a fight for a new, class-struggle leadership. This is part of the struggle to build a revolutionary workers party. *Break with the Democrats and Greens!*

A class-struggle leadership would fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants. On May Day, a number of the largely immigrant and unorganized port truckers turned their rigs around, refusing to cross a picket line set up by Direct Action Against the War and Code Pink at the Union Pacific intermodal facility,



**ILWU Local 10 member and Labor Black League supporter at May Day rally.**


which connects the Oakland port to the rail lines. The ILWU should be fighting to extend its wages and working conditions to the poorly paid port truckers and helping to organize them.

## Left-Talking Labor Fakers

The call for a “No Peace, No Work” May Day was authored by Jack Heyman in a motion passed in February at the meeting of the ILWU Longshore Division’s Coast Caucus, its highest decision-making body. While the motion itself called for “an immediate end to the war and occupation in Iraq and Afghanistan and the withdrawal of U.S. troops from the Middle East,” its content was immediately dumped by McEllrath, who described the projected May Day action as one to “honor labor history and express support for the troops by bringing them home safely.” All mention of the occupation of Afghanistan was deep-sixed.

From the outset, Heyman gave a left cover, including through silence, for the

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**For immediate release:** May 1, 2008


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**Longshore workers are standing down at West Coast ports:**

**“We’re standing up for America, we’re supporting the troops, and we’re telling politicians that it’s time to end the Iraq war now!”**

**(SAN FRANCISCO, CA)** More than 25,000 longshore workers at 29 west coast ports are exercising their First Amendment rights today by taking a day off work and calling for an end to the war in Iraq.

“Longshore workers are different. We’re loyal to America, and we won’t stand by while our country, our troops, and our economy are destroyed by a war that’s bankrupting us to the tune of 3 trillion dollars. It’s time to stand up, and we’re



International's red-white-and-blue patriotism. While an April leaflet by Heyman denounced "phony appeals to patriotism," he has made clear his own appeal to patriotism. At an April 29 press conference sponsored by the Oakland Education Association, Heyman declared: "We want the troops home. That's what our members said at a meeting we had back in February and it was our Vietnam vets who brought the point home, very close to their hearts. And they said enough is enough, people are dying over there for nothing. It's not a war about democracy, it's for oil and empire."

Heyman made but a nod to the over *two million* Iraqis killed by the occupation and the UN starvation sanctions imposed by the Clinton administration in the 1990s. He casts opposition to the occupation in terms of the cost in *American* lives. Local 10 executive board member Clarence Thomas, who emceed the San Francisco May 1 rally with Heyman, denounced the Iraqi occupation from the platform because “It’s killing *our* children and diverting resources from domestic needs” (emphasis added). The “Call to Action” issued by the Port Workers’ May Day Organizing Committee, led by Heyman and Thomas, was a “butter not guns” appeal to “stop the war.” Its purpose is to reinforce illusions that—with enough pressure and the right Democrats in office—the capitalist government will “change” its priorities.

The trillions now being spent on the occupation in Iraq weren't being spent on health care, welfare and education before the invasion, including under the Democratic Clinton administration. The capitalists spend on the welfare of the working class only what is necessary to ensure the continued exploitation of labor—or what is wrested from them in hard class struggle.

Double-talkers like Heyman and Thomas *politically disarm* the working class by giving a “progressive” gloss to the treacherous class collaborationism of the ILWU bureaucracy, of which they are an integral part. At the May Day rally, Heyman’s polemical fire was aimed not at his fellow bureaucrats but rather at Code Pink. Bizarrely, he depicted these overwhelmingly middle-aged, liberal women as veritable wild-eyed radicals who had wanted to jump the gun on labor action against the war. Heyman left his call for “a workers party that is going to lead us to power” to a brief speech at the end of the rally, when most of the participants had left.

Heyman & Co.'s role stands squarely in the tradition set by Communist Party fellow-traveler and historic ILWU leader Harry Bridges, a point that Heyman himself repeatedly makes. Bridges sometimes talked out of the left side of his mouth, but he was also a solid advocate of class collaboration and generally supported the Democratic Party. He supported the U.S. imperialists against their Japanese and German rivals in the inter-imperialist slaughter of World War II, including by enforcing the "no-strike" pledge. In contrast, Trotskyists opposed all the belligerent imperialist powers, going to jail for their opposition to U.S. imperialism, while at the same time

defending the Soviet Union. When the ILWU struck in 1971, at the height of the Vietnam War, Bridges made sure that military cargo headed to Vietnam was worked, even as the union passed many paper resolutions opposing the war and was hailed for joining in antiwar protests.

## IG: Apologists for the Labor Fakers

For its part, the Internationalist Group (IG) has downplayed the pro-capitalist politics of the May Day protest organizers and uncritically enthuses over left-talking bureaucrat Jack Heyman. In a 19 April article in its *Internationalist*, the IG declares: “When we broke the story last month, many rubbed their eyes in disbelief. Yes, it’s for real.” Actually, we rubbed our eyes because we needed a magnifying glass to find in the IG’s earlier March 1 article a brief mention of the patriotism that drenched the ILWU bureaucracy’s promotion of the May Day action.

(Likewise, the dubious Bolshevik Tendency [BT] barely mentions the “patriotic spin” given to the action in a 19 April leaflet, even as it cites Rosa Luxemburg’s famous statement that the choice before the working class is socialism or barbarism and opines that “the ILWU’s action points the way forward.” It is obscene for the BT—an outfit led by the sociopath Bill Logan, who was expelled from our tendency in 1979 for “crimes against communist morality”—to cite the great revolutionary internationalist Luxemburg, using her as a left cover for the chauvinism of the ILWU labor tops.)

The IG's April article complained that the union tops were presenting the May 1 action "in a 'social-patriotic' light." Proclaiming this to be contrary to the original resolution drawn up by Jack Heyman, the IG neglects to mention that the Caucus resolution's demand for "an immediate end to the war and occupation in Iraq and Afghanistan and the withdrawal of U.S. troops from the Middle East" never saw the light of day in any of the union leaflets mobilizing for May 1. That includes Heyman & Co.'s "Call to Action."

In their first article the IG didn't even mention the ILWU's endorsement of Obama. In their second article they lamely opined that "The ILWU leaders' endorsement of Obama hurts rather than helps the struggle against imperialist war and undercuts the May 1 work stoppage." How delicately put! The union's endorsement of Obama provided the entire political framework in which the May Day action played out.

In the IG's follow-up article on May Day, "Historic ILWU Dock Workers' Action Points the Way," Obama again goes unmentioned. The prominence of Democratic and Green Party politicians at the rally is only described as one of its "weaknesses," which the IG lays at the feet of the ILWU International and San Francisco labor tops. The "butter not guns" appeals at the rally are attributed to unnamed "union speakers," while Heyman is touted as the spokesman for working-class independence. Left unsaid is that he pushed the very same "butter not guns" reformist politics. Citing Heyman's remark that the May Day action "was raising the level of struggle from

protest to resistance,” the IG pronounces that “it raises the challenge ahead: *to go from resistance to a struggle for power*” (emphasis in original). But to struggle for power assumes that you oppose the existing power!

As Trotskyists (i.e., genuine Marxists), our purpose is to arm the proletariat with the consciousness and leadership necessary for combat with the forces of the capitalist class. This means taking on the class-collaborationist politics of the trade-union bureaucracy (as well as the politics of those who falsely claim to offer a revolutionary alternative). Not so the IG, which obscures the fact that the trade-union bureaucracy criminally subordinated the May Day work action to pro-Democratic Party pressure politics.

Since at least the 2001 Afghanistan invasion, the IG has issued bombastic proclamations calling to militarily “Defeat U.S. Imperialism” and to “Drive U.S. Imperialists Out of Iraq.” Now, in its article on the May Day action, the IG conveniently omits any mention of taking a side with Afghanistan or Iraq against the U.S. Also left unmentioned is the fact that the ILWU worked military cargo on May Day! For all their hot air about “workers strikes against the war,” this is the same outfit that in 2001 denounced our call for “Class Struggle Against Capitalist Rulers at Home” as “*nationalist, economist social-pacifism*,” writing, “the emphasis on ‘at home’ is counterposed to the call to defeat the imperialists abroad” (*Internationalist*, November 2001, emphasis in original). As we wrote in “Worthless Pilots in Stormy Weather” (WV No. 797, 14 February 2003):

“The IG’s oh-so-militant sloganeering has nothing to do with the fight to mobilize workers for a political confrontation with the forces of the capitalist enemy. Instead, the IG denigrates the fight to advance the consciousness of the proletariat and, by so doing, sows illusions in the capacity of the present labor misleaders to lead a fight against the bosses and their state.”

This is exactly what played out on May 1.

The IG is right, however, in pointing out that the “Labor Conference to Stop the War” last October in the Bay Area “set the stage” for the “No Peace, No Work Holiday.” Both the IG and the BT promoted this conference, organized by Jack Heyman and supported by Local 10, as a step on the road to independent working-class action against the war. In reality, this conference allowed occasionally left-talking union bureaucrats and their reformist hangers-on to peddle their wares in the shadow of the Democratic Party and, incidentally, tout sociopathic BT leader Bill Logan as some kind of workers’ leader (see “Labor Opportunists, Renegades Embrace Bill Logan,” *WV* No. 901, 26 October 2007). At the opening plenary session, San Francisco Labor Council head Tim Paulson gave the pro-Democratic Party game away by appealing for support to the labor contingent at an upcoming antiwar protest calling to “Bring the Troops Home.” Paulson bragged that the planned contingent speaker was Barbara Lee. On the day of the protest, the contingent’s main chant was “Barbara Lee speaks for me.”

Longshoremen are in a position to inflict a direct setback to the imperialist war machine through political strikes and hot-cargoing military goods. But this tremendous power is kept in check by the current leadership, which understands that militant action would tear into their reactionary game of preaching reliance on the bosses' state and its political agents, particularly those in the Democratic Party. For labor to take the offensive against imperialist war will require a different kind of leadership, one guided by a program of class struggle and able to instill class consciousness, educating workers on the way to defeat imperialism. The attacks by the capitalist ruling class and its government against working people at home and abroad underline the need to build a multiracial workers party to fight for a workers government. The only way to put an end to imperialist war and capitalist exploitation and oppression is through international socialist revolution. ■



# WORKERS VANGUARD

**Labor: Break with Democrats, “National Unity” Patriotism!**

## ILWU Shuts West Coast Ports on May Day

OAKLAND—Movement of cargo at the 29 West Coast ports was brought to a virtual standstill for eight hours on May 1, as members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) refused

**U.S. Out of Iraq, Afghanistan Now! For Class Struggle at Home!**

to work the day shift. Called as a “No Peace, No Work” protest against the U.S. occupation of Iraq, the ILWU work stoppage was also a powerful show of union power in the midst of ongoing contract negotiations with the Pacific Maritime Association (PMA). It took place in open defiance of an April 30 arbitrator’s decision that ordered the union to instruct its members to report for work as usual on May 1. The PMA has cried foul and may be preparing reprisals against the union—the entire workers movement must rally to the defense of the ILWU.

We salute the more than 27,000 longshoremen, both registered men and casuals, who withheld their labor. The ILWU port shutdown points the way to the kind of working-class action that needs to be mobilized against the bloody U.S. imperialist occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan. But the ILWU leadership politically undermined this action by channeling the ranks’ anger at the Iraqi occupation and desire to defend their union into pro-Democratic Party “national unity” patriotism. Around the same time that the May Day action was first announced, the ILWU endorsed Barack Obama for U.S. imperialist Commander-in-Chief,

citing his “opposition to the Iraq war.”

Obama staunchly supports the murderous occupation of Afghanistan. His call for a partial withdrawal of troops from Iraq—sooner (but not immediately) rather than later—reflects that wing of the U.S. ruling class that wants to cut its losses in Iraq in order to better pursue its interests in Iran and elsewhere, with an eye on the huge prize of capitalist restoration in the Chinese deformed workers state. Obama has called for an additional 92,000 combat troops to “build a twenty-first-century military” and threatened to bomb Pakistan.

Imperialist war is not the result of “bad” government policy. Imperialism is capitalism in its prolonged death agony, where a handful of major capitalist powers compete, including through war, for

control of markets and raw materials around the world. Workers must take up the struggle against the occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan as part of the struggle against the capitalist system that breeds imperialist wars. This needs to be linked to the unconditional military defense of China and the other bureaucratically deformed workers states—Cuba, North Korea and Vietnam—against imperialism and internal counterrevolution. You can’t fight against imperialist war by supporting the parties of U.S. imperialism!

On May Day, as a show of their loyalty

to U.S. imperialism, the ILWU Local 10 tops in the Bay Area dispatched longshoremen to the Concord Naval Weapons Station to work military cargo aboard the *USN Tripoli*. Local 10 Executive Board member and elected dispatcher, Mike Villeggiante, told KTVU Channel 2 News that evening, “We feel an obligation to the military to make sure no supplies stop to the troops. We support the troops, we’re just not in support of the war.” Earlier that day, ILWU International President Bob McEllrath issued a grossly chauvinist statement declaring: “Big foreign corporations that control global shipping aren’t loyal or accountable to any country. For them it’s all about making money. But longshore workers are different. We’re loyal to America, and we won’t stand by while our country, our troops, and our economy are destroyed by a war that’s bankrupting us to the tune of 3 trillion dollars.”

McEllrath’s patriotic rant, widely quoted in the media, is an outrageous affront to the May Day tradition of international workers solidarity, as well as to the many foreign-born workers in the ILWU.

It was read out from the platform at the ILWU-sponsored antiwar rally of some 1,000 in San Francisco held during the work stoppage. The rally included over 100 longshoremen from Local 10 and the Local 34 clerks union. At the rally, greetings from black death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal were played as protesters chanted, “Free Mumia!” The ILWU International withdrew its request for an officially sanctioned stop-work meeting after the PMA turned it down. However, in Los Angeles, ILWU Local 13 announced and held a stop-work meeting that some 1,000 longshoremen attended. Spartacist supporters at the San Francisco rally and at the L.A. meeting distributed *Workers Vanguard* and argued against the labor bureaucrats’ declarations of fealty to U.S. imperialism.

While the capitalist rulers enlist the sons and daughters of the working class as cannon fodder for their imperialist military adventures, these are not “our” troops. Nor is the bloody U.S. government “our” government. Soldiers in the bourgeois army serve to defend the rule of the capitalist exploiters, at home and abroad. During the 2002 West Coast port lockout, on the eve of the Iraq invasion, the Bush White House—with the backing of leading California Democrats—invoked Taft-Hartley and threatened to send U.S. troops to occupy the docks. In Iraq, U.S. troops are the enforcers of a vicious occupation that by late 2006 had cost the lives of an estimated 655,000 Iraqis.

In the lead-up to the invasions, we emphasized that the international working class, particularly in the U.S., must stand for the defense of Afghanistan and Iraq against the U.S., while politically opposing the Taliban reactionaries and Saddam Hussein’s bloody capitalist regime. We raised the call for class struggle against the capitalist rulers at home. Today, workers must also take a side: against the occupiers and their allies. Any setback for the imperialist aggressors redounds against the same ruling class that is looting, fleeing and shredding the

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Hiller/Long Beach Press-Telegram

**May Day: Idle cranes at Port of Los Angeles during ILWU work stoppage against Iraq occupation (top). ILWU contingent at San Francisco antiwar protest.**



WV Photo

**There Is No Justice in the Capitalist Courts!**

## Sean Bell Verdict: Killer Cops Walk...Again! For Mass Labor Action Against Racist Cop Terror!

*The following statement was issued by the New York Labor Black League for Social Defense and Spartacist League on April 28.*

Once again, the cops who committed a heinous crime—this time, the gunning down of 23-year-old Sean Bell in a firestorm of 50 bullets on his wedding day—have been found “not guilty” on all counts. The grisly death march of the NYPD thus continues, from the 1999 cop killing of Amadou Diallo, cut down in a hail of 41 bullets in the lobby of his own home, and countless other victims of racist police terror to the present outrage. By the standards of bourgeois legality, the cops who killed Sean Bell were doing the job they are paid to do under racist capitalism. To add insult to injury, not only did State Supreme Court justice Arthur Cooperman last Friday acquit the cops on all charges, but in the course of the bench trial, it was the *victims* who were put on trial—Sean Bell posthumously and bullet-riddled Joseph Guzman

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**New York City, April 25: Protesters at Queens County Courthouse denounce acquittal of cops who killed Sean Bell.**

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