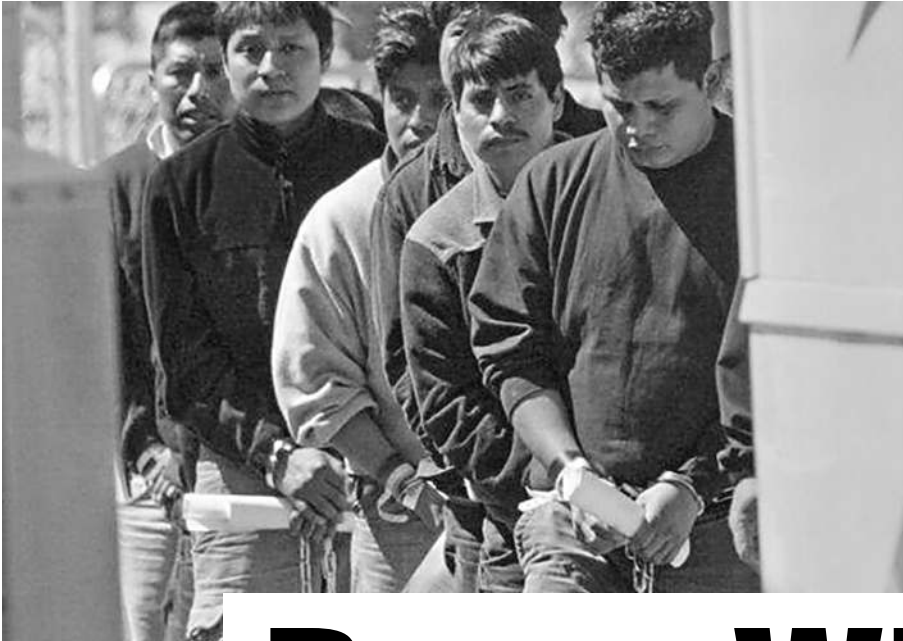


Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants! No Prosecutions! No Deportations!



Gaps/Des Moines Register



Putney/Waterloo Courier

Down With Feds' Anti-Immigrant Raids!

At ten in the morning on May 12, the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (I.C.E.) brought in over 200 federal, county and local police agents in helicopters, buses and vans, swarming the Agriprocessors kosher meatpacking plant in Postville, Iowa. More than 10 percent of Postville's population was detained in what was the largest immigration raid in U.S. history. I.C.E. rounded up nearly 400 workers, most of them from Guatemala and Mexico. So many people were arrested or fled in fear that half the local school district's students were absent the next day.

The detained immigrants were packed into a cattle exhibition hall, where for four days groups of detainees shackled ten at a time were hauled before a judge in the Feds' makeshift courtroom, charged with being in the U.S. illegally and "identity theft" because they had supposedly used fake documents. Facing the prospect of at least two years in prison, most of the arrested pled guilty and were sentenced to five months in prison, to be followed by deportation. One immigrant pleaded to a judge: "I ask that you deport us as soon as possible, that you do us that kindness so we can be together again with our families" (*New York Times*, 24 May).

This raid was part of a nationwide campaign of anti-immigrant repression by the federal government. In May alone, 905 immigrants were detained in raids at homes and workplaces in California, and 39 were detained in Arizona. And it is not just the Feds: I.C.E. has trained cops from 37 jurisdictions nationwide to round up immigrants. In Arizona's Maricopa County, Sheriff Joe Arpaio, infamous for his use of chain gangs, organized a 160-man posse that swept through Latino neighborhoods.

Break with the Democrats! For a Class-Struggle Workers Party!

Left: Detainees from May 12 I.C.E. raid in Postville, Iowa, where nearly 400 immigrants were rounded up, are led into makeshift courthouse on National Cattle Congress grounds in nearby Waterloo. Right: Demonstrators in Waterloo protest anti-immigrant raids, May 12.

Immigrant detention is the fastest growing form of incarceration in the U.S. In 2007, over 276,000 people were deported and more than 280,000 detained, some for nothing more than asking for political asylum. Many are imprisoned in the 18 for-profit hellholes operated by the Corrections Corporation of America. The Iowa raid came after the *New York Times* (5 May) ran an exposé on deaths in these detention centers, including of immigrants who were denied urgent medical care and left to die without anyone even notifying their relatives. **No prosecutions! No deportations! Free the detainees now!**

The Postville raids highlight the union-busting that goes hand in hand with the government's anti-immigrant onslaught. For at least two years, the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) union has been trying to organize workers at the Postville plant. The New York Jewish paper *The Forward* has regularly detailed the horrid working conditions at the plant: long hours, unpaid overtime, low wages, child labor and horrendous lack of safety. In March, the Iowa Division of Labor Services fined the company \$182,000 for violating safety rules. (After the raid, the fines were reduced to \$42,750.) I.C.E. hypocritically seized upon these conditions as a pretext for the raid.

The Postville raid recalls the raids at the Smithfield pork processing plant in Tar Heel, North Carolina, that the UFCW

has been trying to organize for more than a decade. Smithfield has been conspiring with I.C.E. to get rid of longtime workers and strong union supporters, many of them undocumented workers. In 2006, after workers idled the plant as part of the nationwide May Day immigrant rights protests, the company enrolled in the IMAGE program—the ICE Mutual Agreement between Government and

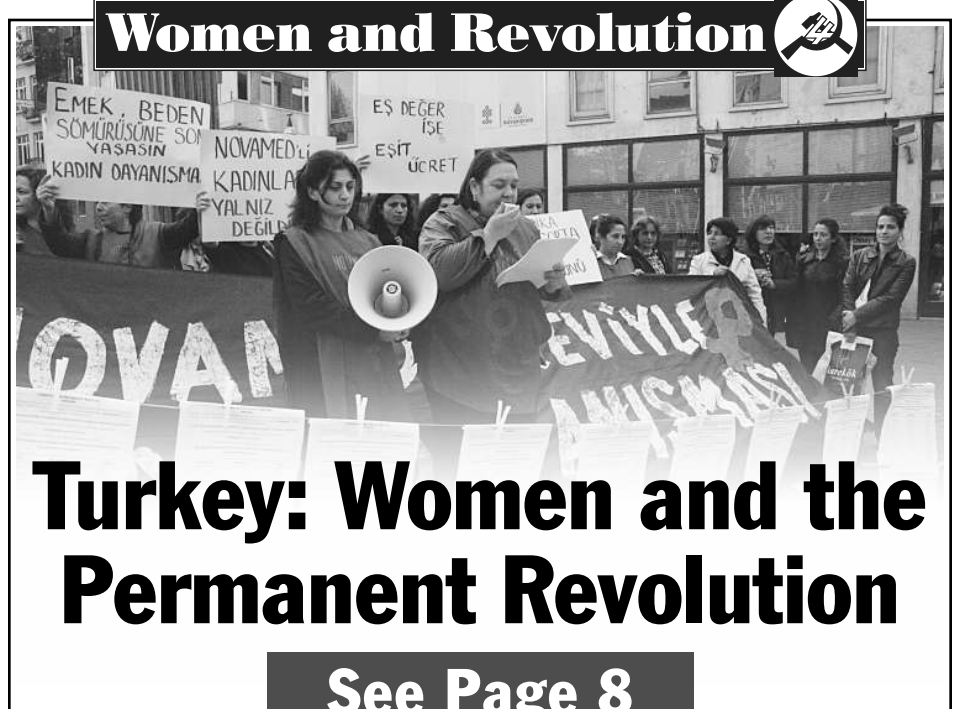
Employers—to purge militant "illegal" workers. In November 2006, it fired 75 workers and threatened to fire hundreds more, claiming that their identity papers did not match government records. A two-day walkout that included black and

white workers as well as Latinos forced the company to rehire everyone. In January and August 2007, I.C.E. agents raided the plant and workers' homes, arresting and hauling off dozens (see: "Organize the South! Smithfield Plant: Smash Anti-Union RICO Suit!" WV No. 909, 29 February).

The social power of the union movement must be mobilized to defend immigrant workers—many of whom are union members!—and fight for full citizenship for *all* immigrants, no matter how they got here. This is integral to revitalizing the labor movement and organizing the

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Women and Revolution



Turkey: Women and the Permanent Revolution

See Page 8



Note to IG: When in Hole, Stop Digging

When Jan Norden and his coterie departed from our ranks in 1996 to form the Internationalist Group (IG), this “action faction,” whose opportunist proclivities had earlier been constrained by our Marxist program and discipline, became free to pursue various get-rich-quick schemes, centered on tailing Stalinist has-beens, Latin American nationalists and left-talking labor bureaucrats. They have become shameless in their support for International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 10 Executive Board member Jack Heyman. In February, Heyman authored a motion—which was sponsored by Bay Area Local 10—for the longshore Coast Caucus that called for a May 1 port shutdown and “an immediate end to the war and occupation in Iraq and Afghanistan and the withdrawal of U.S. troops from the Middle East.” But that motion’s content was immediately dumped by ILWU International president Bob McEllrath, who declared the projected action’s aim to be “support for the troops by bringing them home safely”—only from Iraq, i.e., not from Afghanistan, the occupation universally supported by the Democrats.

In a 15 May posting on their Web site (“‘Workers Vanguard’ Brings Up the Rear—The Opportunist Left and the Port Strike Against the War: The Sound of

One Hand Clapping”), the IG declares us “schizophrenic” for stating the truth about the May Day action in WV No. 914 (9 May):

“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 the union into pro-Democratic Party ‘national unity’ patriotism.”

What particularly gored the IG’s ox is that we exposed its role in the syphilitic chain that keeps labor tied to the capitalists and their political parties. The IG covers for Heyman, who in turn covers for the ILWU International tops, who in turn chain the union to the Democratic Party of U.S. imperialism. Shortly after announcing the May Day action, the ILWU International announced its endorsement of Barack Obama for president.

The ILWU International bureaucrats, using Heyman as their tool, effectively maneuvered to make a statement of union power to the Pacific Maritime Association bosses in the midst of contract negotiations, while at the same time striking a posture that longshore workers are “supporting the troops,” in the words of ILWU

International president McEllrath in a May 1 press statement, and “loyal to America,” as opposed to “foreign” shipping companies that “aren’t loyal or accountable to any country.” Making up its own reality, the IG gushingly portrays this contradictory outcome as an unequivocal blow against U.S. imperialism and its political parties.

The IG in League with Social-Patriotism

To bolster its claims, the IG repeatedly cites Heyman’s original February motion. But except for one leaflet issued by Heyman on April 17 in his own name—“One Longshoreman’s Opinion”—the content of that motion, including opposition to the occupation of Afghanistan, never saw the light of day in any official union May Day announcements (including those by the Port Workers Organizing Committee led by Heyman and others in Local 10). Heyman himself wrote an op-ed piece in the *San Francisco Chronicle* (9 April) that said *nothing* about the International’s patriotic basis for the action or its endorsement of Obama.

Citing our statement that the ILWU bureaucracy undermined the union’s action by channeling the ranks’ anger into pro-Democratic Party patriotism, the IG responded: “That’s certainly what the ILWU tops *sought* to do.” Sought to do?! That’s exactly what they did, with the complicity of Heyman. With over 600,000 Iraqis killed and an entire country’s infrastructure virtually wiped out, Heyman, in his April 17 leaflet that the IG uncritically reprinted in its *Internationalist* (19 April), described “support the troops” as a “trap” that “doesn’t do them any favors—it ends up with the flag draped over coffins.” At an April 29 press conference, Heyman provided a social-patriotic echo of the ILWU International’s red-white-and-blue patriotism, saying, “we want the troops home.”

At the ILWU May Day rally in San Francisco organized by Heyman (who also co-ceeded) and other Local 10 bureaucrats, McEllrath’s chauvinist May 1 statement was read from the platform, declaring that “longshore workers” are “loyal to America” and “won’t stand by while our country, our troops, and our economy are destroyed” by the war. The purpose of this rally was not class-struggle opposition to the capitalist system that breeds war, but class collaboration to promote the lie that capitalist “democracy” is the road to peace. That is why the rally was politically dominated by capitalist politicians like black Democratic Congresswoman Barbara Lee, Green Party presidential candidate Cynthia McKinney and Congressional candidates Cindy Sheehan and Democrat Shirley Golub.

The IG Taking a Side—Not

In our article in WV No. 914, we underlined that in the lead-up to the U.S. invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq the international working class had a duty to stand for these countries’ military defense, while politically opposing the Taliban reactionaries and Saddam Hussein’s bloody capitalist regime. We stated that today, “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.”

For years, the IG has issued bombastic proclamations calling to militarily “Defeat U.S. Imperialism.” But now, as we noted in WV No. 914, amid the ILWU bureaucracy’s calls to “support our troops,” the IG disappeared in its 3 May article its ostensible position of military defense of those fighting against the U.S. occupiers. The IG responded by citing...an April 19 article that stated: “Revolutionaries fight to *drive the U.S. out of Iraq and Afghanistan*—which will be anything but orderly, as the U.S.’ exit from Vietnam showed—

by workers action.” This only proves our point. *Conveniently omitted is any mention of military defense of those fighting against “our troops.”*

Likewise, we exposed that the IG’s 3 May article did not even note that the ILWU dispatched longshoremen to work military cargo at the Concord Naval Weapons Station during a port shutdown against the Iraq occupation! In its response, the IG all but dismissed this: it was just “a few longshoremen” who were dispatched and, besides, “the fact remains that shipping was shut down.” In fact, this confirms the “support the troops” politics around which the ILWU bureaucrats organized this action.

The IG on Obama: The Sound of One Hand Clapping

In its 15 May article, the IG huffs that it is a “travesty” that we criticize Heyman or say that the IG “uncritically enthuses” over him. The IG doesn’t deny its praise for Heyman. They are simply covering for this left-talking bureaucrat while he covers for the ILWU International’s support to Obama and the Democrats. It is quite a statement that in three lengthy articles on the ILWU action, all the IG could say about the ILWU’s endorsement of Obama is that it “hurts rather than helps the struggle against imperialist war.”

The IG all but claims that support to the Democrats is limited to the ILWU International bureaucrats. They write that the Coast Caucus delegates voting for the May Day action “loudly denounced the Democrats in the discussion.” But as Heyman himself stated, delegates were “angered after supporting Democrats who received a mandate to end the war but who now continue to fund it” (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 9 April). This anger, which is widespread among liberal supporters of the Democratic Party, expresses *illusions* in the Democrats, not a break from “lesser evilism” based on opposition to capitalism. It is telling that in the face of massive illusions and voter turnout for the Democratic primaries, the IG has not posted a single article on the elections, quite a feat of evasion for an election year in which a black man or a woman is bound to be the Democratic nominee.

Marxists seek to transform workers’ discontent into revolutionary class consciousness—i.e., the understanding that the capitalist order has to be overthrown through socialist revolution. This requires a political struggle against prevailing illusions in the capitalist system, its state and political parties. With the IG one hears an echo of late 19th-century reformist Eduard Bernstein, who argued that the movement is everything and the goal of socialism nothing. In *Reform or Revolution*, Rosa Luxemburg replied that “from the revisionist standpoint,” the struggle for working-class rule is “impossible and useless. And therefore, trade-union and parliamentary

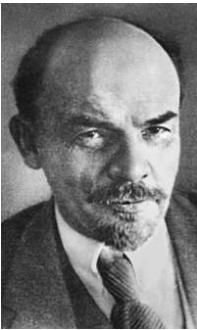
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TROTSKY

The Fraud of Bourgeois Democracy

Underlining that capitalist democracy is a fig leaf for the class dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin explained in a lecture delivered after the 1917 Russian Revolution that only under the dictatorship of the proletariat would the state serve the interests of the working masses against the capitalist exploiters. It will take the victory of proletarian revolution on an international scale to lay the basis for the creation of a classless communist society and the withering away of the state.



LENIN

The forms of domination of the state may vary: capital manifests its power in one way where one form exists, and in another way where another form exists—but essentially the power is in the hands of capital, whether there are voting qualifications or some other rights or not, or whether the republic is a democratic one or not—in fact, the more democratic it is the cruder and more cynical is the rule of capitalism. One of the most democratic republics in the world is the United States of America, yet nowhere (and those who have been there since 1905 probably know it) is the power of capital, the power of a handful of multimillionaires over the whole of society, so crude and so openly corrupt as in America. Once capital exists, it dominates the whole of society, and no democratic republic, no franchise can change its nature....

We shall reject all the old prejudices about the state meaning universal equality—for that is a fraud: as long as there is exploitation there cannot be equality. The landowner cannot be the equal of the worker, or the hungry man the equal of the full man. This machine called the state, before which people bowed in superstitious awe, believing the old tales that it means popular rule, tales which the proletariat declares to be a bourgeois lie—this machine the proletariat will smash. So far we have deprived the capitalists of this machine and have taken it over. We shall use this machine, or bludgeon, to destroy all exploitation. And when the possibility of exploitation no longer exists anywhere in the world, when there are no longer owners of land and owners of factories, and when there is no longer a situation in which some gorge while others starve, only when the possibility of this no longer exists shall we consign this machine to the scrap-heap. Then there will be no state and no exploitation.

—V.I. Lenin, “The State” (July 1919)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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6 June 2008

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Down With Racist “War on Terror”!

For a Class-Struggle Fight to Organize Port Truckers!

OAKLAND—With skyrocketing diesel fuel costs slashing their already miserable earnings, overwhelmingly immigrant port truckers in California initiated strikes from Stockton to Oakland to the Los Angeles-Long Beach ports over the past month. On May 6, a 100-strong picket with signs in Punjabi, Spanish and English blocked the truck entrance to the huge SSA marine terminal at the Oakland port until the cops forced the strikers to disperse. A week later, 100 port truckers from Stockton protested at the state capital in Sacramento demanding lower prices for diesel. Last week, truckers picketed shipping and transportation companies on the L.A.-Long Beach docks, and several were fired for refusing to move cargo. All waterfront workers should support the truckers and join in a fight to reinstate those who were fired.

Spartacist League and Labor Black League for Social Defense supporters went to the port truckers’ picket lines in Oakland, while Spartacus Youth Club activists did well distributing *Workers Vanguard* at the Sacramento protest. The drivers gave us graphic descriptions of the hideous exploitation and racist discrimination they face on the job. Mostly independent “owner-operators,” nearly half of their earnings go to maintain and service their rigs and to pay off insurance premiums and bank loans. Under constant pressure for speed-up, working long hours, with many more unpaid hours waiting in line or bob-tailing (deadheading) back for the next drop, the truckers scramble to clear more than \$25,000 a year. In the current recession, this has sunk to \$800-\$900 a month with no paid sick or vacation time, health care or pensions.

The situation cries out for a class-struggle fight to unionize these drivers, who are a vital and powerful part of the port workforce. The fate of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU), which is becoming the last bastion of union power on the West Coast docks, is inextricably linked to the fight to unionize the truckers as well as the many low-wage, non-union workers in the ever-growing chain of world trade, from the warehouses and intermodal facilities to the mammoth cargo ships. The ILWU will either take up the fight to extend union rights and union-scale wages, benefits and conditions to these workers or it will sooner or later face government-backed union-busting by the capitalist employers *without union allies* on the docks.

In December 2001, the Teamsters and the ILWU, together with the International Longshoremen’s Association (ILA) on the East and Gulf coasts, announced an alliance to make the ports “100 percent union.” To date, none of these unions have undertaken a serious campaign to organize the port truckers. Since the outset of the racist “war on terror,” when ILWU International president James Spinosa vituperated against “unknown truck drivers” being “allowed free access to our work environment,” the ILWU tops have despicably pointed the finger at



Molloy/Oakland Tribune

May 6: Striking port truckers protest scab trucks at Oakland port.

the truckers as a “security threat.”

The Teamsters and ILWU tops’ support for “national unity” with the class enemy in the name of the “war on terror” puts the unions at risk. By signing on to “anti-terror” port security measures, even if seeking to ameliorate certain provisions, the ILWU International has facilitated the government’s crackdown on all dock workers. The threat to labor posed by beefing up security was brought home last August when two black ILWU Local 10 longshoremen were beaten and arrested after security guards at the Sacramento port invoked maritime security regulations in demanding to search their car (see “ILWU Rally: ‘Drop the Bogus Charges Now!’” WV No. 900, 12 October 2007).

Today, implementation of the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) program, which includes criminal background checks, is vastly increasing the government’s ability to police the workforce on the docks. Black and Latino workers victimized by the racist cops and courts, especially through the “war on drugs,” face being disproportionately purged and barred from the waterfront. TWIC is also a prescription for an anti-immigrant dragnet, which will especially redound against the port truckers. Outrageously, ILWU officials have turned over the union’s membership list to the government to check immigration status and find matches to its “terrorism” database.

It is a further indictment of the union tops that they advocate support to “friends of labor” in the capitalist Democratic Party, whose politicians are among the loudest cheering on the “war on terror.” Earlier this year, the ILWU International endorsed Barack Obama in his bid to run bloody U.S. imperialism. This underlines the need for a political struggle within the trade unions to break them from the Democrats and build a class-struggle leadership that is based on the understanding that the interests of labor and capital cannot be reconciled and that champions the cause of black freedom and immigrant rights.

American Chauvinism—Poison to Working-Class Solidarity

The port truckers strikes drew inspiration from the ILWU’s shutdown of West Coast ports on May Day, called to protest the U.S. occupation of Iraq (but *not* of Afghanistan). Coming amid ongoing contract negotiations with the Pacific Maritime Association (PMA), this action was a

powerful display of union muscle to the shipping bosses. But it was wrapped in red-white-and-blue American chauvinism by the ILWU International bureaucracy. At the San Francisco May Day rally, which was politically dominated by Democratic Party speakers and their junior sidekicks in the capitalist Green Party, an ILWU Local 10 official read out a statement from International president Bob McEllrath declaring that “big foreign corporations that control global shipping aren’t loyal or accountable to any country” while painting longshore workers as the best “loyal to America” patriots.

This vile “America first” chauvinism

Macor/SF Chronicle



Customs agents check trucker’s documents at Oakland port, October 2001.

was a pledge of allegiance to the bloody U.S. occupiers against the peoples of Iraq and Afghanistan and an outrageous affront to every foreign-born worker on the docks, spitting on the May Day tradition of international workers solidarity. It was particularly a kick in the teeth to the largely immigrant port truckers, a number of whom turned their rigs around on May 1, refusing to cross the picket line set up by Direct Action at the Union Pacific intermodal facility at the Oakland port in solidarity with the port shutdown.

In the lead-up to the port shutdown, Local 10 bureaucrat Jack Heyman, who authored the motion calling for the work stoppage, declared in a KPFA interview that the ILWU action was integrally linked to the defense of immigrant rights and pointed to the port truckers. The poster for the S.F. rally also demanded “End Sweat Shops On Wheels.” Indeed, the fight to organize the port truckers is bound up with the defense of immigrant rights, as the trucking companies prey on the desperation

of foreign-born workers, many of whom are refugees from the brutal depredations of U.S. imperialism, to enforce poverty wages and wretched working conditions.

But Heyman was only giving a left cover to the flag-waving chauvinism of the International (see article, page 2). The appeals to immigrant rights for the May Day action were little more than empty words, as was demonstrated only five days later when the truckers went on strike. Longshoremen worked the affected terminals in the Bay Area and L.A. as the union tops did not instruct ILWU members to honor the truckers’ picket lines, on the grounds that these pickets were not “bona fide.”

The ILWU leadership—which often uses the slogan “An injury to one is an injury to all!”—abided by government-dictated contractual provisions that argue that workers who have no union have no “bona fide dispute over wages, hours or working conditions.” This is a repudiation of the entire history of the battles to found the unions in this country, which were born out of hard-fought struggles over wages, hours and working conditions. For the ILWU to refuse to honor picket lines while its own contract negotiations are under way strengthens the hand of the PMA and gives a pass to the vicious exploitation of the non-union workers in the ports.

Longshoremen would do well to remember that their picket lines in 1934 were also not considered to be “bona fide” by their then-union leaders in the ILA. The 15,000 West Coast ILA members went on strike in defiance of their leadership. The strike soon grew to include 25,000 workers, including many sympathetic union seamen. Truckers honored the picket lines, ensuring that no cargo was moved, which

was critical. It took the four-day 1934 San Francisco General Strike and several other port strikes through 1936 to win the union hiring hall, a coast-wide contract and decent wages and benefits.

Before the union hiring hall, the longshoremen themselves were reviled as derelict “day laborers” who got in line for the “shape-up,” hired for the day by gang bosses based on favoritism and kickbacks. Militant workers who stood up for their rights were blacklisted. The fight against oppression, exploitation and degradation united workers of many ethnic and immigrant backgrounds in opposition to the employers’ efforts to wield racism and anti-immigrant chauvinism to keep longshore workers divided and enslaved to the gang bosses.

Organizing the 60,000 port truckers nationwide, no matter which union does it, would be a blow to the capitalists’ divide-and-conquer schemes and open the road to uniting all dock workers into one industrial

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NOTICE

Workers Vanguard skips alternate issues in June, July and August. Our next issue will be dated July 4.

Declaration of the Grupo Espartaquista de México

Defend Nationalized Energy Industry Against Privatization!

Only Workers Revolution Can Break Imperialist Stranglehold!

The following is a translation of an April 29 leaflet issued by our comrades of the Grupo Espartaquista de México, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

The PAN [ruling National Action Party] of Felipe Calderón and the PRI [Institutional Revolutionary Party] are moving to privatize the nationalized energy industry in a maneuver in the service of U.S. imperialism, which has had its eye on Mexican oil since 1938. The privatization would mean mass layoffs, even more brutal cuts to social spending, anti-union attacks—including against the oil workers union—and higher costs of daily expenses. The working class must mobilize its social power against this offensive!

The working and poor masses of Mexico perceive the oil expropriation as a historic conquest of the Mexican Revolution, touching their deeply felt democratic aspirations, in particular regarding national

emancipation. Just as Leon Trotsky, co-leader with Lenin of the 1917 Russian Revolution, defended the expropriation of Anglo-American oil companies in 1938, we Spartacists defend the nationalized energy industry as a measure of national self-defense of semicolonial Mexico against imperialism. Our defense of the nationalized energy industry is not an end in itself, but an integral part of our fight for proletarian revolution and its international extension, which is the only way to end poverty and to achieve national emancipation.

The bourgeois privatization offensive comes after more than two decades of neoliberal attacks against the exploited and oppressed. The devastation of the economy and of the quality of life of the masses created the conditions for the most important social upheavals in decades. These defensive struggles—such as the powerful Lázaro Cárdenas steel workers strike or the desperate struggles, ultimate-

**April 27:
Demonstration in
Mexico City against
government plan to
privatize state oil
company.**



Victor Camacho

ly defeated, of the Oaxacan and Atenco masses in 2006—are a reflection of generalized discontent. Millions of peasants have been driven off the land and forced to emigrate because NAFTA, a treaty for the imperialist rape of Mexico, has devastated the countryside. The recent implementation of the agriculture provision of NAFTA is the coup de grâce for poor peasants. Down with NAFTA, imperialist free-trade rape of Mexico!

The current neoliberal attacks must be

seen in the context of the capitalist counterrevolution in the USSR, a world historic defeat for the working class and oppressed, which has changed the relationship of forces in favor of imperialism. The counterrevolution brought a retrogression in consciousness. Today, the current perception among workers, peasants and youth is that communism was a failed experiment; this has led to a strengthening of bourgeois populism. Latin American

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“Anti-Terror” Hysteria in Mexico

Down With Campaign Against Leftist Activists!



Carlos Ramos Mamahua

Mexico City: Friends and relatives of youth killed in Colombian attack on FARC encampment in Ecuador march at head of demonstration called by CNTE teachers union. Banner reads: “In Memory of Our Fallen Brothers.” Right: Parents of slain university students at memorial on UNAM campus, March 25.

We print below a translation of an April 17 leaflet issued by the Grupo Espartaquista de México.

The Grupo Espartaquista de México repudiates the campaign of vilification against leftist activists, UNAM [National Autonomous University of Mexico] students and the workers movement after the brutal attack by the Colombian government against a FARC [Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia] encamp-

ment in Ecuador on March 1. This outrageous attack, which was carried out by the Uribe regime with the backing of its imperialist sponsors in Washington, killed 22 people—among them UNAM students Verónica Velázquez, Fernando Franco and Juan González, as well as IPN [National Polytechnic Institute] student Soren Ulises Avilés. There were only three survivors, among them UNAM graduate Lucía Morett. This is

the context of the sinister witchhunt launched by the right-wing media, which seeks to link leftists in Mexico with the FARC. There are also threats of criminal charges against Lucía Morett in Mexico. Down with the witchhunt! Government hands off the FARC supporters! No charges against Lucía Morett and the other survivors of the massacre in Ecuador!

The objective of this sinister media

campaign is to pave the way for the repression and criminalization of social protest. The campaign recently escalated with the publication in *Excelsior* (10 April) of an article by right-winger Jorge Fernández Menéndez. Based on the supposed discovery by Colombian forces of files on the computer of assassinated FARC leader Raúl Reyes—supposedly not destroyed by the bombs that wiped out the encampment and destroyed the bodies of more than two dozen people—the frame-up diatribe attempts to link Fermín García (trade-union militant and member of Ricardo Flores Magón-Movimiento de Lucha Popular), his companion Margarita Villanueva, Rosario Ibarra, Edgard Sánchez, the Comité Cerezo, ¡Eureka!, PRD [Party of the Democratic Revolution] and PT [Labor Party] members with the FARC, EPR [Popular Revolutionary Army] and the ERPI [Revolutionary Army of the Insurgent People]. We Spartacists say: Down with the attacks against Fermín García, Margarita Villanueva, Rosario Ibarra, Edgard Sánchez, and the others!

While we maintain our programmatic differences with the guerrilla road, we say: From Mexico to Colombia, down with state terror against the EZLN [Zapatista Army of National Liberation], the EPR, the ERPI and the FARC! Bring back the disappeared activists of the EPR, alive and free! The workers movement as a whole must protest against this witchhunting campaign! An injury to one is an injury to all! The capitalist state and its courts are organs of repression against the workers and the oppressed. It is necessary to build a revolutionary workers party to overturn the murderous capitalist system, based on the thirst for profits, and replace it with a workers and peasants regime, as part of the struggle for socialist revolution throughout the Americas and internationally. ■



Marco Peláez

Racist Philly Cop Beating Caught on Tape, Again

Just over a week after the three New York City cops who killed 23-year-old Sean Bell in a hail of 50 bullets on his wedding day were found “not guilty” on all counts, the spotlight on racist cop terror moved to the Philadelphia thugs in blue. On May 5, a Fox News helicopter videotaped the horrendous spectacle of up to 19 cops dragging three unarmed young black men out of a car, punching, kicking and stomping on them, pressing a foot to one man’s neck. In a bloody frenzy, the cops dashed from one victim to another, bludgeoning them as they lay restrained on the ground, circled by a riled-up police dog.

Lisa Hall, the mother of 23-year-old Brian Hall, watched the video of cops kicking her son and exclaimed that they were “beating them like they are a piece of meat.” Lemoia Dyches, the mother of 24-year-old Dwayne Dyches, another victim, said, “You see 14 white police officers beating three black males. In my area where I live at, I can see it constantly.” As death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal put it in his column, “Philadelphia: City of Brotherly Thugs” (reprinted in WV No. 915, 23 May): “The scene is as common as sunlight: cops beating Black men in the streets.”

Recently elected black Democratic Party mayor Michael Nutter, who came to office calling for a more aggressive stop-and-frisk policy and promising hundreds more cops on the streets, said that he was “tremendously disappointed” and that there would be an investigation of the police attack, adding, “we will move on.” Police Commissioner Charles Ramsey, appointed by Nutter, rationalized the attack as a result of police “stress.” Two weeks later, Ramsey announced that four of the cops were fired, three were suspended for five to 15 days, a sergeant was demoted and others will be sent to “retraining.” Black Democratic Party hustler Al Sharpton, who has played a key role in dissipating anger against the acquittal of Sean Bell’s killers into empty “civil disobedience” gestures, applauded Nutter and Ramsey for showing “some real muscle and seriousness about addressing police brutality.” But as one AP reporter noted, “if history proves the rule, the officers may never lose a day’s pay” (delawareonline.com, 22 May). The courts and prosecutors have allowed the torturers of Rodney King and the killers of Sean Bell, Amadou Diallo and members



NBC News

May 5 video by TV news helicopter catches Philadelphia cops attacking three black youth.

of the MOVE organization, among countless others, to roam the streets with impunity. Terrorizing the besieged black and Latino populations is precisely the job the cops are paid to do under racist capitalism.

The sickening brutality of the Philly Police Department that splashed across the TV screen was no aberration but

authority, in 1979 the Feds filed a civil rights suit against the city and police department citing “widespread, arbitrary, and unreasonable physical abuse.” The suit was rapidly dismissed for “lack of jurisdiction.” The city’s own files revealed thousands of people who had been shot and beaten by the police.

Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Free the MOVE Prisoners!

standard operating procedure. This is the Philadelphia PD that has run roughshod over the black population for decades—from the mass roundup without warrants of nearly 600 black people in November 1940, to the reign of terror under Frank Rizzo as police commissioner and then mayor in the 1960s and 1970s, to the bombing of the MOVE commune on 13 May 1985, on to the present. This is the Philly PD that 26 years ago tried to execute in the streets its most prominent and outspoken critic, Mumia Abu-Jamal, and has fought for his legal lynching ever since. A Black Panther Party spokesman at the age of 15, subsequently a supporter of the MOVE organization and a renowned journalist, Mumia was framed up for the 1981 killing of Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner and sentenced to death explicitly for his political views.

In his commentary on the Philly beating, Mumia recalled “the taped beating of Delbert Africa, a MOVE member who was beaten during the August 8th, 1978 police raid on MOVE’s home. These cops, too, were easily acquitted by explicit judicial decree.” After years of a police offensive against the largely black, radical back-to-nature MOVE group, an army of nearly 600 cops surrounded the MOVE home in Philadelphia’s Powelton Village neighborhood. The cops unleashed a fusillade on the house so intense that one of their own officers, James Ramp, was killed in their cross fire. When the surviving adults emerged from their home, television news cameras captured the police dragging, kicking, punching and stomping Delbert Africa nearly to death.

That atrocity came atop a wave of cold-blooded street executions by police and growing exposure of systematic frame-up methods employed particularly by the Homicide Division. Seeking to quell growing outrage and shore up the cops’

Nine MOVE members, including Delbert Africa, were sentenced to 30 to 100 years on false charges of killing Ramp. In 1985, they watched on TV from prison as the Philly cops and black Democratic mayor Wilson Goode, in collusion with the FBI and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, dropped a bomb on MOVE’s Osage Avenue home, killing eleven people, including five children, and leaving a black neighborhood in ashes. In 1998, Merle Africa died in prison. This

and prosecutors forced witnesses into providing perjured testimony and terrorized others into not testifying at all. The latter included William Singletary, who had told police immediately after the killing that he saw someone other than Mumia shoot Faulkner. Fearing for his life, Singletary left town during the trial.

Mumia is an innocent man, and there is a mountain of evidence that proves this. This includes a 1999 affidavit by one Arnold Beverly who confessed that he, not Mumia, killed Faulkner. Beverly declared: “I was hired, along with another guy, and paid to shoot and kill Faulkner. I had heard that Faulkner was a problem for the mob and corrupt policemen because he interfered with the graft and payoffs made to allow illegal activity including prostitution, gambling, drugs without prosecution in the center city area.”

Beverly’s confession lays bare the extent and consciousness of the police and prosecutorial misconduct in prosecuting and convicting Mumia and sentencing him to death for a crime he did not commit. Beverly’s account of being hired to kill Officer Faulkner is consistent with the fact that there were at least three ongoing FBI investigations of police corruption in the Center City area where Faulkner worked at the time of his murder, and that at least one other informant in those investigations was murdered.

Mumia is the victim not of one rogue cop, “overzealous” prosecutor or racist judge. All the elements of the capitalist “justice” system colluded in framing him up. And these are the same people running Philadelphia today. Pennsylvania’s governor, Ed Rendell, was the D.A. who prosecuted the MOVE 9 and Mumia. He is one of a number of leading figures in the Pennsylvania state government for whom the vendetta against MOVE and Mumia has played a key role in building their careers.

It has been over two months since the federal Third Circuit Court of Appeals upheld Mumia’s frame-up conviction, condemning him to either execution or the living death of life in prison. Following the March 27 decision, the Partisan Defense Committee—a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense



Philadelphia Daily News

MOVE member Delbert Africa brutally beaten after cop assault on MOVE’s Powelton Village home in August 1978.



no credit

Mumia Abu-Jamal in hospital after being shot and beaten by cops in 1981.

year, for the first time, the eight survivors have become eligible for parole hearings, and already five of them have been turned down. The MOVE prisoners must be freed now!

In December 1981, only months after the MOVE 9 conviction, Mumia was arrested on false charges of killing Officer Faulkner. He was sentenced to death the next year after a frame-up trial of faked evidence, coerced witnesses and racist jury rigging. That trial was overseen by racist “hanging judge” Albert Sabo, who was overheard at the time by a court reporter promising, “I’m going to help them fry the n---r.”

To secure Mumia’s conviction, cops

organization associated with the Spartacist League—initiated a series of international united-front protests as part of the struggle to rekindle the mass protest that is necessary to win Mumia’s freedom. The fight for Mumia’s freedom must be based on the understanding that the courts and cops, key components of the capitalist state, are an apparatus for the repression of the working class and oppressed minorities on behalf of the bloody capitalist rulers. Especially for a fighter for black freedom like Mumia, there is no justice in the capitalist courts. **Free Mumia now!**

The fight for Mumia’s freedom cuts to the core of racist American capitalism

continued on page 7

Young Spartacus

“Mumia’s Fight Is the Fight of All the Oppressed”



Young Spartacus photos

Partisan Defense Committee and Labor Black Struggle League initiated united-front rally for Mumia in Chicago, April 26. Right: Spartacus Youth Club speaker Tom Allegri.

SYC Speaker at Chicago United-Front Rally

We print below, slightly edited for publication, Chicago Spartacus Youth Club member Tom Allegri’s speech at the April 26 united-front rally in Chicago called under the slogans, “Mumia Abu-Jamal Is Innocent! Free Mumia Now! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!” Mumia is a former Black Panther, supporter of the MOVE organization and award-winning journalist who has been imprisoned for more than 25 years. He was framed up and sentenced to death solely because of his political beliefs, falsely convicted of

the 1981 killing of a Philadelphia police officer. The April 26 rally in Chicago, initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee and the Chicago Labor Black Struggle League, was one of a series of rallies called internationally by the Partisan Defense Committee and its fraternal organizations following the March 27 decision of the federal Third Circuit Court of Appeals upholding Mumia’s frame-up conviction (see “Protests Demand: Free Mumia Now!” WV No. 914, 9 May). These protests were a step toward rebuilding a movement to win Mumia’s freedom. For more information on Mumia’s case and to get involved in the fight to free him, visit the PDC’s Web site: www.partisandefense.org.

* * *

The Spartacus Youth Club says: Free Mumia Abu-Jamal now! Abolish the racist death penalty! It’s really an honor to get up here after so many powerful speakers and put forward what the Spartacus Youth Club says. We are the youth auxiliary of the revolutionary Marxist Spartacist League. As the outrageous March 27 decision upholding Mumia’s frame-up conviction shows, there is no justice in the capitalist courts! From the racist Philadelphia cops all the way up through the federal courts and prison system, the capitalist state machine is dead set on killing Mumia or burying him alive for the rest of his life in a jail cell. His case shows exactly what the death penalty is all about: the ultimate weapon in the state arsenal to maintain the racist status quo of capitalist oppression and exploitation. The bourgeois rulers will stop at nothing to silence this eloquent journalist and outspoken critic of racist oppression because he represents the spectre of black revolt against their system. Mumia’s fight is our fight! It is the fight of all the oppressed!

As revolutionary Marxists, the SYC understands that the working class represents the only force in society with the social power and objective historic interest to lead all the oppressed in sweeping away the capitalist order. With its hands directly

on the means of production—that’s factories, mines, transport—the working class has the power to withhold its labor and shut this profit system down! Look at the tens of thousands in the multiracial Transport Workers Union who went on strike in 2005, and crippled New York City, the financial capital of the globe.

We have a representative from Chicago State University out here today. We have people from Waukegan down here. We have students from DePaul and the Black Students Union out here fighting for Mumia’s freedom. People from Northeastern. We have people from the University of Chicago, representatives of MEChA

that endorsed this rally. The SYC is going around the campuses, and we’re mobilizing students and radical youth behind the power of labor to demand Mumia’s freedom now! It’s shown here today.

The same capitalist state forces that are going after Mumia also carry out brutal colonial occupations in Iraq and Afghanistan. We took a side against U.S. imperialism by calling for the defense of Iraq. Today we call for the immediate withdrawal of all troops from Iraq and Afghanistan. Insofar as the insurgents on the ground aim their fire against the occupiers and their lackeys, we call for their military defense against U.S. imperialism. At the same time, we lend absolutely no political support to communalist forces. The SYC seeks to win students and radical youth to the understanding that only socialist revolution can end war, racist oppression and exploitation.

In contrast—let me make this clear—the Party for Socialism and Liberation, the Revolutionary Communist Party, the Workers World Party and the International Socialist Organization [ISO], to name a few, continue to build class-collaborationist antiwar coalitions to urge the Democrats to put “people over profits.” These fake socialists present an obstacle to our revolutionary Marxist perspective by tying the working class to their bourgeois class enemies and pushing the illusion that the capitalist state can be reformed. The ISO, for instance, enthuses over how the bourgeois politician Obama is “a breath of fresh air.” Or take the Workers World Party. They support the capitalist Green Party candidate Cynthia McKinney while they also leave the door wide open to a vote for Obama. Remember that the Workers World Party class traitors called for a vote to the Democrat Jesse Jackson back in 1988. And if you look at the Progressive Labor Party, they even call to “actively participate in Obama’s campaign”!

Barack Obama is running to become the chief administrator of America’s bloody imperialist system and head overseer of the modern-day capitalist plantation. Obama, Hillary Clinton and every other bourgeois politician, Republican, Democrat and Green, seek to maintain capitalism, which is fundamentally, at its core, a racist and sexist society. Likewise with Mumia’s case, the reformists build faith in the capitalist system, as expressed in

Spartacus Youth Club Events

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Class Series
Saturday, June 14, 3 p.m.
Marxism and the
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Saturdays, 3 p.m.

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Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!
Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!
There Is No Justice
in the Capitalist Courts!
Video: *From Death Row,*
This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal

June 28:

Class Struggle and Revolutionary Leadership
Minneapolis 1934:
How the Workers Won
Video: *Labor’s Turning Point*
299 Broadway, Suite 318
(take any train to City Hall or Chambers St.)
Information and readings: (212) 267-1025
or e-mail: nysl@tiac.net

Defend Activists at Evergreen State College

In “Drop Charges Against Evergreen 6! Reinstate Olympia SDS!” (WV No. 914, 9 May), we reported that six concertgoers face frame-up charges following the cop riot at a February 14 Dead Prez concert at Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington. Outrageously, as part of this ongoing witchhunt, charges of malicious mischief—a felony—and riot have been filed against three more people, Justin Killing, Kelly Primeaux and Christina Shimizu. The Spartacus Youth Club demands: **Drop the charges now! Hands off the concertgoers!**

Following the February cop riot, the Olympia branch of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) was suspended by the Evergreen State College administration in an act of political censorship. Supporters of SDS have been occupying Evergreen’s Seminar I building since May 21, demanding SDS’s reinstatement and calling to “build a movement for student power.” Cops targeting the protesters have arrested one

supporter of SDS, Shyam Khanna, who faces charges of assault and riot for allegedly spitting on a cop at the Olympia May Day demonstration. Six others also face charges following the May Day protest. We say: Drop the charges now! The SYC protests SDS’s suspension and defends those occupying the building against any reprisals from the administration or police. At the same time, as revolutionary Marxists, we understand that students do not have the power to fundamentally change society. We seek to win the best radical students over to the side of the working class, which uniquely has both the social power and the objective interest to overthrow the capitalist system and organize society according to human need.

Donations to Evergreen 6 Legal Defense should be made through their PayPal account, accessible from the Evergreen 6 Legal Defense Web site at evergreen6.x10hosting.com. The address advertised in our last article is no longer in use.

SYC's Anti-Imperialism vs. RCP's Pro-Democratic Party Whitewash

Berkeley Protest Against John Yoo, Architect of Torture

On May 17, the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Club participated in a protest against “torture professor” John Yoo outside the commencement ceremony at UC Berkeley’s Boalt Hall law school. As deputy assistant attorney general, John Yoo, now a law professor at UC Berkeley, authored the notorious Justice Department memos that provided legal justification for the U.S. imperialists’ use of torture as part of the ruling class’ bipartisan “war on terror.” Yoo maintains that the bourgeoisie’s use of waterboarding is justified and that there are no legal restrictions against the president’s ordering the torture of detainees. Supported by both Democrats and Republicans, the “war on terror” has meant bloody imperialist slaughter abroad and racist repression in the U.S., and John Yoo was a key architect of it.

The protest against Yoo was called by Act Against Torture and the World Can’t Wait campaign (WCW) of the reformist Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP). We intervened into this demonstration to protest John Yoo from our revolutionary Marxist perspective, with the understanding that the only way to rid the world of torture, imperialist war and barbarism is through the overturn of the capitalist system through socialist revolution. The WCW and its creator, the RCP, attempted to censor our revolutionary internationalist opposition to American imperialism so that they could push their program of refurbishing the democratic credentials of U.S. imperialism.

The WCW’s call for the demonstration, “Fire & Dis-bar [sic] John Yoo! No Professors Condoning Torture at UC Berkeley,” was an appeal to the administration to clean up the campus, and they urged students to petition the dean to fire John

Yoo. We are for students, teachers and campus workers driving this war criminal off campus. But to paint the administration as an ally against this war criminal is a whitewash of the administration, which is the representative of the capitalist rulers on campus. It is not the bourgeoisie’s war criminals, but leftist professors like Ward Churchill and Norman Finkelstein, student activists and campus workers whom the administration targets. Universities under capitalism are *bourgeois* institutions that train the next generation of technocrats, businessmen and bureaucrats to maintain the rule of the capitalist class. We remind our readers that “progressive” Berkeley was home to the Lawrence Livermore nuclear weapons development lab for decades.

As law students lined the walk to the Boalt Hall commencement reception, our comrades chanted, “John Yoo and the CIA: Torture made in the U.S.A.!” and “John Yoo, imperialist tool! Overthrow U.S. capitalist rule!” When we chanted, “Pressure politics—no solution! We need workers revolution!” and “Democrats, Republicans—parties of war! For a workers party to wage class war!”, RCPers started to panic and tried to drown us out by chanting, “Shame on who? John Yoo!” Law graduates filing by gave thumbs up for our next chant, “U.S. imperialists out of Iraq now! U.S. imperialists out of Afghanistan now! U.S. imperialists out of the Near East now!” This sent the reformists into a frenzy, arguing that the demonstration could only take up John Yoo and torture!

This pathetic attempt at political cen-



Young Spartacus

Spartacus Youth Club at protest against “torture professor” John Yoo at UC Berkeley’s Boalt Hall law school, May 17.

sorship showed the RCP’s appetite for unity with the liberals and the Democrats against the revolutionary communists. One RCPer asked us how we would like it if they had come to the rally we built for Mumia and chanted, “Long live Mao.” We would have welcomed the chance to debate Maoism or any other political question. In fact, that’s why the RCP declined the Partisan Defense Committee’s invitation to endorse, build for and speak at the April united-front rallies to free Mumia. They fear exposure of the contradiction between their cynical “revolutionary” rhetoric and their thoroughly reformist poli-

tics. (See “RCP Maoists ‘Serve the People’ ...Up to the Democrats,” WV No. 901, 26 October 2007.)

Several RCPers at the demo argued that their WCW campaign, which pushes as its main slogan, “Drive out the Bush regime” (read: “vote Democrat”), was a way to create an opening for revolutionary politics. Really the opposite is true. Far from creating an opening for a revolutionary program, the RCP and its WCW project divert outrage against the depredations of U.S. imperialism back into the same old “lesser evil” Democratic Party pressure politics. ■

their calls for a new trial—a new, fair trial. Contrary to these deadly illusions, we have always said that the state is not neutral, and we have to fight even harder today to get this man out of prison!

Capitalism means a life of hell especially for black and Hispanic youth. This is a society where cops occupy the ghettos like open-air prisons and they kill with impunity, as they did with Aaron Harrison right here in Chicago last summer. The Spartacus Youth Club takes the side of the working class and oppressed and fights against all manifestations of

racist oppression. We fight for free, quality education for all and take a stand against the racist purges of the universities. We say: Free abortion on demand! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! The Spartacus Youth Club fights for a Leninist vanguard workers party, the necessary instrumentality for international socialist revolution, the only hope for a society free of imperialist war, women’s oppression and racial oppression. If you agree with that program, join us in this fight! Free Mumia now! Abolish the racist death penalty! ■

ing class rip the economy out of the hands of the bourgeoisie and reorganize it on a socialist basis. Only then will it be possible to eliminate the material roots of black oppression through the full integration of black people into an egalitarian socialist society based on a collectivized economy with quality jobs, housing, health care and education for all. **For black liberation through socialist revolution!**

The social power of labor must be mobilized in struggle against rampant police brutality and racist attacks. Such struggle must be infused with the understanding that there will be no end to cop terror short of the destruction of the system of capitalist exploitation and racist oppression that the police “serve and protect.” We seek to forge a Leninist vanguard party that will lead all of the exploited and oppressed in the fight for socialist revolution—the only road to sweeping away the capitalist state and its frame-up machinery. ■

Philly Cops...

(continued from page 5)

and its state. We fight for Mumia’s freedom as part of the broader struggle for black liberation based on the program of *revolutionary integrationism*. Combatting every manifestation of racist oppression, we underline that full equality for the black masses requires that the work-

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Donations to the PDC earmarked “Mumia Legal Defense” 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.

Partisan Defense Committee

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For Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

Turkey: Women and the Permanent Revolution

The following article is reprinted from Spartakist No. 170 (March 2008), newspaper of the Spartakist Workers Party of Germany, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

SPARTAKIST 4

In the novel *Snow*, by acclaimed Turkish author Orhan Pamuk, a local official tells Ka, a returning political exile investigating a wave of suicides among young women and girls, "What is certain is that these girls were driven to suicide because they were extremely unhappy.... But if unhappiness were a genuine reason for suicide, half the women in Turkey would be killing themselves." Pamuk's novel is set in Kars, in north-eastern Turkey. In the southeastern Anatolian town of Batman, a real epidemic of suicides, forced and otherwise, has seen hundreds of young women attempt to take their own lives, and dozens have succeeded. The great 19th-century French utopian socialist Charles Fourier explained that the status of women in any given society reflects that society's general level of human emancipation. These deaths throw into stark relief the terrible oppression of women in Turkey, revealing a society marked by profound religious and social reaction that is reinforced and deepened by imperialist domination.

The status of women has become a battleground in the political struggles that have been rocking Turkey for some time. The re-election in July 2007 of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his reactionary Islamic Justice and Development Party (AKP) followed massive protests last April in defense of the espoused secularism of the Kemalist Turkish bourgeoisie and against the AKP's plan to appoint Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül, whose wife wears a headscarf, to the presidency. Some Turkish commentators called these protests in Ankara, Istanbul and Izmir a "women's revolution." Millions of women, frightened by the danger



Istanbul, Fall 2007: Solidarity demonstration with women workers striking against Novamed, a pharmaceutical manufacturer. After 16 months on strike, workers won contract and wage increase.

Islamic fundamentalism poses, were said to have taken part.

On February 9, in spite of mass nationalist protests in Ankara and Istanbul, the Turkish parliament voted in favor of an amendment to the constitution allow-

ing headscarves to be worn at Turkish universities. An article in *junge Welt* (9 February) described how the Erdogan regime secured, for now, the generals' acquiescence:

"Less than a year ago the Turkish generals threatened a putsch if Erdogan continued advancing the Islamization of the country. But all of a sudden there's no objection to be heard. The MP Aysel Tugluk of the DTP [pro-Kurdish Democratic Society Party] recently revealed in a speech in parliament that the reason for this was a deal between the government and the armed forces. Erdogan gave the military men free rein on the Kurdish question—and in return he got free rein on the headscarf question."

Down With Islamic Reaction! Down With Turkish Nationalism!

Governmental Organizations" for mass protests in Izmir and Ankara on March 7, for International Women's Day, against the constitutional amendment.

The motor force behind the mobilizations was a de facto coalition of the army, the bourgeois Republican People's Party (CHP) and the constitutional court, presenting themselves as guardians of the "secular legacy" of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the nationalist founder of modern Turkey. The election itself was sparked when in May 2007 the constitutional court, emboldened by the military's threats against the government, ruled Gül's appointment unconstitutional. The Ankara protest in

2007 was organized by the Association for Atatürkist Thought, headed by a former military commander currently under investigation for plotting a coup in 2003-2004. Looking to the blood-drenched military as an ally in the struggle for women's liberation is deadly.

For Permanent Revolution!

Subjugated by imperialism, straddling Europe and Asia Minor, Turkey is a country of massive social and political contradictions. Leon Trotsky, who with V. I. Lenin was co-leader of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, termed such contradictions "combined and uneven development." Unique among Islamic countries in that it is officially secular, modern Turkey arose not from a bourgeois revolution, but from the subordination of the clerical Ottoman state to the nationalist forces led by Atatürk. Rising Turkish nationalism also meant the ruthless suppression of national minorities, in particular the slaughter of Armenians and Kurds. To this day, uneven social development is seen in every aspect of Turkish society. A sizable industrial proletariat exists alongside the mass of peasants in the Anatolian heartland still subject to precapitalist forms of exploitation. Behind Istanbul's pubs, chic cafés, bright malls and unveiled women in jeans or miniskirts, stands a vast country locked in barbaric, centuries-old anti-woman practices, stamped by dire unemployment and poverty.

The forces of political Islam now vie with those of the "secular," military-backed bourgeoisie over who shall shape Turkey's destiny and reap the profits. We revolutionary Marxists reject this framework, for these are the "choices" posed by a bankrupt capitalist ruling class incapable of modernizing this country. We look instead to the revolutionary mobilization of Turkey's powerful multiethnic working class, standing at the head of all the oppressed, which alone can shatter the chains of backwardness.

With its enormous social contradictions, Turkey presents a powerful argument for Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution, which found living confirmation in the Bolshevik Revolution. Trotsky's theory provides the program for resolving the fundamental democratic questions posed by combined and uneven development in countries like Turkey that came to capitalist development in the epoch of imperialism. In such economically backward countries, the weak national bourgeoisie, dependent on its imperialist masters and fearing its "own" proletariat, is incapable of taking up the democratic tasks formerly associated with the European bourgeois revolutions: separation of the state from religion, agrarian revolution, national liberation. To assure the completion of these tasks it is necessary for the proletariat to come to



"Headscarf war" in Turkey traps women between Islamists and Kemalist nationalism. Left: Supporters of Erdogan's AKP protest in Konya against headscarf ban. Right: Nationalists protested on February 9 in Ankara against lifting headscarf ban in universities.

For a Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan!

power through socialist revolution. Having already divided the world for exploitation, a handful of the most powerful imperialists economically strangles the masses of semicolonial countries. In such countries, Trotsky wrote, “the complete and genuine solution of their tasks of achieving *democracy and national emancipation* is conceivable only through the dictatorship of the proletariat as the leader of the subjugated nation, above all of its peasant masses.” —*The Permanent Revolution* (1930)

In power, the proletariat will expropriate the bourgeoisie and the holdings of its imperialist masters in order to establish a collectivized, planned economy where production is based on social need rather than profit. But short of international extension of the revolution, especially to the advanced capitalist countries, the development of the social revolution will be arrested and ultimately reversed.

The struggles of the Turkish working class have been repeatedly wrecked by Stalinist reformists who, pushing the class-collaborationist program of “two-stage revolution,” have fostered illusions in the supposed “progressives” of the deeply anti-communist CHP. The program of fighting for a “democratic” revolution in league with a mythical “progressive” and “anti-imperialist” wing of the bourgeoisie, relegating the struggle for socialism



to an indefinite future, has brought defeat after bloody defeat. From the massacres of Indonesian Communists by Suharto in 1965 to Pinochet’s 1973 reign of terror against the Chilean masses, history has repeatedly demonstrated that the first “stage” of “two-stage revolution” ends in the blood of the workers and oppressed. The second stage never comes. As we wrote in our “Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program” (1998): “Trotsky’s program of permanent revolution is the alternative to placing confidence in fantasies resting upon the backward, imperialist-dependent bourgeoisie of one’s own oppressed country as the vehicle for liberation.”

In Turkey, as in other backward countries, the oppression of women is deeply rooted in religious obscurantism and pre-capitalist “customs” that are manipulated and buttressed by imperialism. Above all, it is the institution of the family that is central to upholding the subjugation of women everywhere.

In the 17th and 18th centuries, developing capitalism spawned social and political revolutions against the aristocracies, monarchies and churches that propped up the old feudal order, to the great benefit of women. The elementary rights that most Western women take for granted—to choose your marriage partner, birth control, divorce, access to education, the right to vote—do not exist for women in the tradition-bound, priest-ridden countries of the East. Christianity and Judaism had to conform with rising industrial capitalism and the bourgeois nation-states, but Islam did not have to adapt, largely because it remains rooted in those parts of the world where imperialism has reinforced social backwardness as a prop to its domination. Bourgeois-democratic gains do not eliminate the fundamental oppression of women in the institution of the family.

In *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* (1884), Friedrich



Engels explained that the monogamous patrilineal family arose “to make the man supreme in the family, and to propagate, as the future heirs to his wealth, children indisputably his own.” Along with the state and organized religion, the family is a mainstay of social reaction, regimenting the population, instilling subservience to authority and reinforcing the hold of religion. To the rulers, poor and working-class women serve the purpose of raising a new generation of exploited toilers. Women in the home are isolated from the centers of production. But working-class

Women of different ethnic backgrounds courageously protest in Turkey against disappearance of their relatives by Turkish state and death squads at end of 1990s.

women, along with working-class men, have great potential social power to overthrow the capitalist system. Only a socialist revolution can lay the material basis for the replacement of the family and for women’s social independence from its confines through collective childcare, laundries and dining halls.

As the demonstrations over the last year headed by the Kemalist bourgeoisie and military show, if women are not mobilized as part of the proletarian class struggle they can be mobilized by other forces for reactionary ends. The fate of women and their struggle for emancipation is a strategic question. Because the oppression of women is integral to capitalist property relations and is bolstered ideologically by religion, women’s oppression cannot be eradicated in capitalist society. At the same time, without a struggle to end women’s oppression, which reinforces all forms of social backwardness, there will be no proletarian revolution.

To unleash the enormous revolutionary potential of the proletariat requires the leadership of a genuinely communist workers party—drawing in women as part of its leadership—armed with a program for the political independence of the working class and for the fight for socialist revolution, as well as a broad vision of a social order of equality and freedom. Such a party will champion full equality for women and their integration into the workforce, where they will acquire social power. Such a party will stand for equal pay for equal work and will lead the fight to end all backward practices, such as “honor” killings, polygamy and bride price. The fight for basic needs and democratic rights—an end to arranged and forced marriages and the seclusion of the veil, freedom from poverty and legal subjugation, the right to education and free health care, including free and safe abortion on demand—is an attack on the foundations of the imperialist-dominated

Left: Turkish troops invade northern Iraq earlier this year in attack against Kurdish PKK. Right: Spartacists at Berlin demonstration protest against the attack, February 27. Sign at center reads: “Turkish Army Out of Kurdish Regions! Imperialists Out of Iraq! Hands Off Iran!”



capitalist social order and poses nothing less than a socialist revolution.

The “Headscarf Wars” and Women’s Oppression

The imperialists welcomed the AKP’s re-election last July. A European Union (EU) spokesman declared, “Gül is appreciated in Europe,” and financial analysts in the U.S. were similarly bullish on the AKP. In its prior five years in power, the AKP carried out privatizations, attacked Turkey’s unions and followed the IMF’s dictates to the letter in most cases. As long as Erdogan delivers stability and profits for the imperialists, his goal of resolving Turkey’s contradictions in favor of Islam will not unduly trouble his European and American masters.

In the wake of its victory, the AKP wasted no time in this regard. New constitutional amendments were announced scrapping the longstanding ban on the headscarf in colleges and public institutions and replacing a clause in the current constitution that obliges the government to “ensure equality for both men and women” with one that describes women as a “vulnerable group in need of special protection.” Meanwhile, the emboldened forces of Islamic reaction are starting to change the political and social landscape of Turkey, including in cities like Istanbul. Some government offices are organizing work schedules according to prayer times, and boys and girls are being separated in high schools, a wholly reactionary measure. During the month of Ramadan last fall, which is holy to Muslims, most restaurants stopped serving alcohol and the police brutally beat people for smoking and drinking. The effect of more than two decades of rising political Islam in the Near East is apparent in Istanbul, where the veil and headscarf are increasingly prevalent. Today, some form of veiling is worn by more than 60 percent of Turkish women.

The ban on the veil harks back to the early days of the republic when Atatürk, in his drive to modernize the country at gunpoint, campaigned vigorously against religious symbols and issued decrees banning all forms of religious dress in schools and public institutions. The current “headscarf war” dates back to the early 1980s, when the military, self-appointed guardians of “secular order,” reinforced the ban after their 1980 coup. The rising forces of Islamic fundamentalism naturally opposed it.

When the Islamic Welfare Party of Necmettin Erbakan surged to power in 1996 and allowed veiling in government offices, the military again tightened the ban on the veil as part of its effort to stem the tide of “Islamic subversive activities.” Erbakan was forced out of power by the military in 1997, and in 1998 his Welfare Party was banned. It was in this context that a medical student, Leyla Sahin, expelled from Istanbul University in 1998 for refusing to remove her headscarf, launched a legal challenge to the ban. In November 2005, the bourgeois European Court of Human Rights ruled on her case, upholding Turkey’s ban on women wearing headscarves in universities.

We are opposed to the veil, no matter what its form, as both a symbol and instrument of women’s oppression, but we are equally unambiguous in our opposition to state bans or restrictions on it. As Marxists we uphold the democratic principle of separation of religion and state and oppose both state funding of religious schools and religious instruction within public educational institutions. We are for free, secular education for all. Islamic fundamentalists will use any easing of the ban on the headscarf to exert social pressure on women to cover themselves. Nonetheless, we oppose state interference in private religious practices, which paves the way for the state to meddle in the lives of religious minorities and to repress workers and leftist organizations.

We also oppose the bans against veiled Muslim girls and women that have spread across West Europe. These bans are simply racist and have seen girls expelled from school and women driven from jobs and public places. The oppressed Muslim minority in Europe suffers the daily humiliations of racism, segregation and police violence. The anti-veil hysteria also serves as an extension of the racist “war on terror” directed in the main against Muslims.

In Turkey, as in West Europe, barring religious women from education and universities because they refuse to remove their headscarves can only deepen their isolation from secular currents, increasing the hold of religious reaction and family domination. Moreover, cases like Sahin’s, or Erdogan’s daughters, who were sent to study in the U.S. where they could wear the headscarf, become lightning rods for religious reaction in the name of “democratic” rights. The mass of Turkish women,

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Kabardun BM'nin ambigüası!
Irak'ı ABD'nin ve müttefik emperyalistlerin saldırısına karşı savunun!
Enternasyonal Komünist Liga'nın demeli

26 Ekim 2002
Baskınlar karşısında
savaşçıların
devrimci
kuvvetleri
Farklılaşarak
devrimci
Baskınlar ve Yavaş
Devrimler için

6 JUNE 2008

9

(continued from page 9)

Contrary to Erdogan and Islamic women's groups, the veil is not an exercise in "religious freedom" or a sign of submission to a deity. Nor is it simply a reactionary symbol of religious affiliation like the Christian cross or Jewish yarmulke. The veil is the physical symbol of the submission of women to men, the permanent, imposed affirmation of their inferior status. It represents the extension outside the home of the seclusion imposed on women by reactionary *sharia* law (Islamic law).

Atatürk and the Limits of Bourgeois Nationalism

Atatürk and his Republican People's Party inherited an economically retarded country lacking a concentration of modern industry. Insofar as a small capitalist class existed, it was Armenian and Greek,



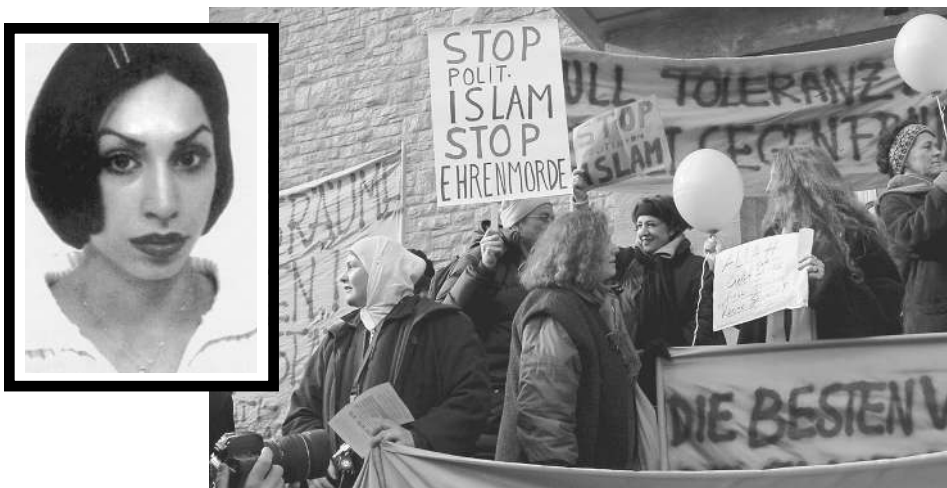
Literacy campaign for women in Soviet Caucasus in 1920s. Bolsheviks fought to emancipate women in backward regions of former tsarist empire.

Acting as the vanguard of the nascent Turkish bourgeoisie, the Kemalists embarked on a program of reforms aimed at removing all obstacles to the development of a modern capitalist nation-state. Dismantling the strongholds of institutionalized Islam, they proclaimed the country a “secular” republic and abolished the caliphate (office of Islamic ruler). Islam, which does not recognize national boundaries, was in contradiction to the Kemalist aim of constructing a Turkish nation-state, and it ceased to be the state religion. *Sharia* law was replaced by a constitution based on the Swiss Civil Code and the Italian Penal Code, polygamy was prohibited, and religious orders and brotherhoods were outlawed. Religious symbols—the veil in schools and public institutions, and the fez everywhere—were banned. The Latin alphabet was introduced and the Western calendar was adopted.

Atatürk saw himself as a modernizer who could, with a few strokes of his pen,

“Under the conditions of the imperialist epoch the national democratic revolution can be carried through to a victorious end only when the social and political relationships of the country are mature for putting the proletariat in power as the leader of the masses of the people. And if this is not yet the case? Then the struggle for national liberation will produce only very partial results, results directed entirely against the working masses.”

Atatürk's reforms could not resolve the basic democratic questions. There were



Berlin demonstration in March 2005 protests series of “honor killings,” including that of Hatun Sürücü (inset), a Turkish immigrant in Germany who took off the headscarf and defied her family’s religious precepts.

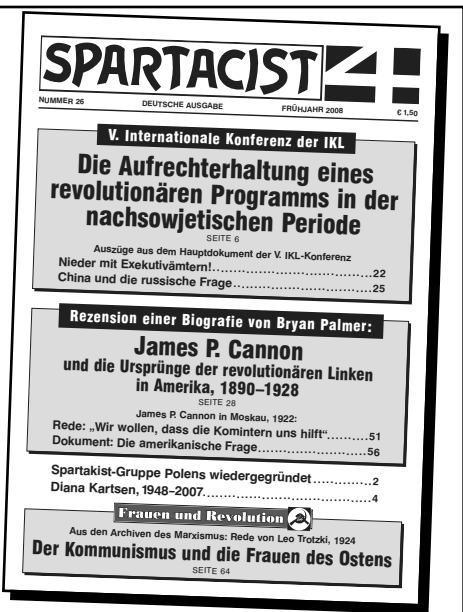
Urban women, especially those of the ruling class, certainly benefited from the Kemalist reforms. But the lives of the overwhelming majority of women, especially in the backward, conservative countryside, changed little. The headscarf ban, instead of a liberating measure, deepened women's exclusion from school, government service and public life. The gulf between the secular, educated bourgeoisie and the illiterate masses, between city and countryside, widened. Indeed, nothing is more cynical than the Kemalist elite's posture as partisans of women's rights. The same Turkish state that banned the veil in schools in the guise of liberating women, for years forced virginity tests on schoolgirls, women in police custody and girls in state-run foster homes, a practice banned only after five girls attempted suicide in 1999. Women's inferior status is reinforced by textbooks pounding children with the message, "The father is the

For Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

The Marxist understanding of women's oppression as linked to private property and especially to the oppressive institution of the family was integral to the Bolshevik program and strategy for building socialism internationally. The Russian Revolution sought to bring women into full participation in economic, social and political life (see "The Russian Revolution and the Emancipation of Women," *Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 59, Spring 2006). But the Bolsheviks were keenly aware that they could not overcome the backwardness and poverty



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and benighted as in Afghanistan today.

It is the oppressive institution of the family that is at the heart of the increasing number of “*namus*,” or “honor” killings, in Turkey, a barbaric practice steeped in the backwardness of rural societies. In 1983 we reviewed Yilmaz Güney’s film *Yol*, in which a husband murders his wife as punishment for adultery, and a young couple, forced to flee to get married because the parents disapprove, is hunted down and killed by the bride’s family (*Women and Revolution* No. 27, Winter 1983-84). Twenty-four years later, at least 200 girls and young women are thought to be murdered each year by their families. The real number is likely far higher, as most “honor” murders are hushed up and go unreported or take the form of “forced suicides.” A UN report puts these barbaric killings worldwide at over 5,000 a year, a number that surely understates reality.

Young girls have been strangled, buried alive or stoned to death for such “crimes” as having a consensual sexual relationship outside marriage, rejecting an arranged marriage, wearing a short skirt, dating, stealing a glance at a boy or being raped by a stranger or relative. Malicious neighborhood gossip can incur a death sentence. Until recently, murderers received lenient sentences, as the law provides “unjust provocation” as an available defense.

In impoverished rural Turkey, where a woman’s “honor” is a measurable commodity, young brides are humiliated by having to display a bloody sheet after their wedding night. Anatolian girls are often married off at a very young age to men they have never seen, treated little better than cattle to be purchased at the proper price. Divorce, considered a social taboo, is extremely rare; only 2.6 percent of Turkish women over 30 are single. Interethnic and interfaith marriages are not allowed. Crossing these lines can mean a death sentence for women (and the men who marry them).

The travails of Turkish and Kurdish women do not end when they emigrate to Europe. In the segregated immigrant communities, all the reactionary, oppressive traditions are preserved through ties to the homeland. Young immigrant and minority women are trapped between the racism of these societies and oppressive, rigid family strictures. Unable to find jobs that provide financial independence, life for them is an endless saga of miseries. The 2005 murder by her brothers of Hatun Sürücü, a young Kurdish mother in Germany, shows that women may pay with their lives. Her “crime” was to leave an arranged marriage, seek an independent life with her child and choose a Western lifestyle. As we explained in “‘Honor’ Killings in Germany” (*Workers Vanguard* No. 850, 10 June 2005):

“The concept of ‘family honor,’ i.e., control of the sexuality of women by their family, is not exclusively Islamic, but rather connected to a mode of production where a clan—a series of related extended families—holds and works the land in common.”

Indeed, “honor” killings in the Near East take place in Christian families as well as Muslim ones. Engels put it trenchantly: “In order to make certain of the wife’s fidelity and therefore of the paternity of the children, she is delivered over unconditionally into the power of the husband; if he kills her, he is only exercising his rights.”

Islam Rising, Women Falling

Erdogan has taken pains to show that he is not a Turkish version of the Iranian fundamentalist mullahs, and there is some truth to that. But he and the AKP have always been open about their goal of breaking down all barriers to Islamic domination of social life. “Thank God Almighty, I am a servant of the Shariah” (*Wall Street Journal*, 19 October 2006), Erdogan once boasted. After his election as mayor of Istanbul in 1994, he proclaimed himself the city’s imam, opened public meetings with prayers and banned alcohol in municipal restaurants, a ban now extended to 61 of Turkey’s 81 provinces. Erdogan opposes abortion and contraception and he tried, without success,



no credit

to criminalize adultery. He would not shake a woman’s hand. He has rejected any suggestion that Turkey is a “moderate” Islamic state, declaring, “Islam is Islam” (*Today’s Zaman*, 10 October 2007).

This reactionary climate, in which religious violence vies with nationalism, is a deadly danger. A 92-year-old professor of Sumerian history was put on trial for publishing a book linking the origin of the veil to prostitutes in Sumerian times. In the 1990s, secular writers, academics, feminists and journalists were killed in a spate of attacks by fundamentalists as well as by nationalists and circles close to the military. More recently, several intellectuals and writers were put on trial for “insulting Turkishness.” Among them was Orhan Pamuk. The charges against him were dropped after an international outcry. Turkish-Armenian journalist Hrant Dink, an advocate of exposing the mass killings of Armenians in the last days of the Ottoman Empire, was less fortunate. His murder by a Turkish nationalist was the direct result of his conviction for “insulting Turkish identity.”

As in much of the Near East in the last two decades, Islamic fundamentalism as a mass political force in Turkey is a reactionary outcome of disenchantment with the ineptitude, corruption and bankruptcy of bourgeois nationalism, Stalinist betrayal and, above all, the absence of a viable communist alternative. The frustration, anger and despair of the masses that grew out of their dire misery and degradation have provided fertile ground for the spread of Islamic fundamentalism. Not only is religion the opium of the people, as Marx said, but also:

“*Religious* suffering is, at one and the same time, the *expression* of real suffering and a *protest* against real suffering. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions.”

The millions of dispossessed peasants, unemployed youth and low-wage migrant workers in the shantytowns ringing Turkey’s major cities find a comforting retreat in religion. They direct their hopes not only to heaven, but more so to its earthly representation in the Islamic solidarity networks of clinics, schools, charities, cooperatives and other free personal and social services that have become a vitally necessary alternative to scant government services gutted by IMF-imposed austerity measures. They have provided a bottomless pool for recruitment to the ranks of Islamic fundamentalists who pose as anti-imperialists, saviors from mass poverty and promoters of social justice.

It was under the rule of the “secular” military generals in the early 1980s that Islamic fundamentalism began to flourish. Islam was viewed as a potential bulwark against communism and trade-union militancy. The generals’ constitution made religious instruction compulsory at all pre-university levels. The religious schools set up for the imams were seedbeds for Islamic ideology and provided activists and leaders for the Islamic fundamentalist movement. The number of religious school graduates increased fourteen-fold,

compared with a tripling of those from the secular state schools, during the military’s rule.

The watershed for the Islamic fundamentalist movement was the 1979 Iranian “revolution.” In the minds of many impoverished Muslims, this mass upheaval, which overthrew one of the most oppressive, Western-backed regimes in the region, redefined (falsely) Islamic reaction as an anti-imperialist ideology of liberation. While most of the left around the world tailed the Iranian mullahs, the International Communist League (then the international Spartacist tendency) declared: “Down with the Shah! Down with Khomeini! For workers revolution in Iran!” Once in power, the mullahs enslaved women under the veil, slaughtered thousands of workers, leftists and homosexuals, and intensified murderous repression against Kurds and other minorities.

The growth of Islamic fundamentalism was further augmented in the 1980s by U.S. imperialism’s massive arming and organizing of the Afghan *mujahedin* holy warriors against the Soviet Union’s 1979 intervention in Afghanistan. This was the CIA’s largest covert operation ever, and it turned Afghanistan into the front line of the imperialists’ relentless drive to destroy the Soviet Union through capitalist counterrevolution. We hailed the Red Army intervention, for it opened the way to the liberation of the Afghan peoples, especially the horribly oppressed women, and we called to extend the gains of the October 1917 Revolution to the Afghan peoples. In the first war in modern history in which women’s emancipation was a central issue, the Red Army battled the murderous imperialist-armed and -financed Islamic fundamentalists, who threw acid in the faces of unveiled women and killed schoolteachers who taught young girls to read. We denounced the 1989 withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan as a betrayal of women and the oppressed Afghan peoples. The Red Army pullout was a pivotal event directly linked to the final collapse of the USSR itself, which was a historic defeat not only for the peoples of the Soviet Union, but for the whole of the international working class.

We Trotskyists fought until the last bar-

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Imperialist Frenzy Over Afghanistan

Hail Red Army!

The American government is taking as if it is about to start World War III over Afghanistan and is preparing to launch a massive military offensive against the Soviet Union. The American government is taking as if it is about to start World War III over Afghanistan and is preparing to launch a massive military offensive against the Soviet Union. The American government is taking as if it is about to start World War III over Afghanistan and is preparing to launch a massive military offensive against the Soviet Union.

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Morenotes Call For Counterrevolution

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Thousands of courageous women took up arms alongside Red Army in Afghanistan in struggle against *mujahedin* cutthroats. We called to extend social gains of October Revolution to Afghan peoples.

ricade to defend the Soviet Union and, earlier, the deformed workers states in East Europe. We were guided by our Trotskyist program of unconditional military defense of these states against imperialism and capitalist counterrevolution and of proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracies. During 1989-92, the International Communist League intervened uniquely, first in East Germany and then in the Soviet Union, fighting in defense of the gains of the 1917 October Revolution. Despite the victory of counterrevolution in East Europe and the Soviet Union, about a quarter of the world’s population still lives in countries over which the capitalist exploiters do not rule. Today, we fight to defend the remaining deformed workers states—China, Cuba, Vietnam and North Korea. Capitalist counterrevolution would be devastating and embolden the capitalists internationally to launch more savage attacks on workers, rural toilers, women, minorities and immigrants.

The counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union has enormously fueled the growth of religious obscurantism worldwide: Islamic fundamentalism in the Muslim world, Protestant fundamentalism in the United States, Orthodox Jewish fundamentalism in Israel and the ever-expanding reach of the Catholic church. In the Near East, as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union, socialism is seen as at best a failed experiment, not as a viable alternative. In a region where allegiance to communism once flourished, today the masses widely perceive the nationalists on the one hand or the Islamists on the other as the only two credible alternatives.

It is the task of the working class in Turkey, leading all the oppressed behind it, to overthrow the rule of the Turkish bourgeoisie. Key to this perspective is the forging of a Marxist workers party. Such parties must be built throughout the Near East to unite the diverse proletariats in struggle against imperialism and against their own capitalist rulers. The fight for workers rule in the Near East includes shattering Turkey’s ally, the Zionist garrison state of Israel, through Arab/Hebrew

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International Communist League Pamphlet

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

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Rearming Bolshevism
A Trotskyist Critique of Germany 1923 and the Comintern.....30

International Communist League's Fifth International Conference:
Down With Executive Offices of the Capitalist State!.....56

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Turkey...

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workers revolution. The Stalinized Communist parties of the Near East—which made a mockery of this revolutionary perspective through their subordination of the proletariat to mythical “progressive” bourgeois forces—share responsibility for the growth of Islamic fundamentalism among the working and oppressed masses. The construction of revolutionary workers parties is essential to implant genuine Marxism and break the Near Eastern proletariat from nationalism and fundamentalism in the struggle for socialist revolution.

Turkey and the Imperialist Order: From the Cold War to the EU

For more than one hundred years, since the late years of the Ottoman Empire, Turkey has been both a pawn and a prize for the imperialists. With the largest NATO army in Europe, during the Cold War Turkey served as a strategic bulwark in the anti-Soviet imperialist military alliance. Today, Turkey is under the military thumb of the U.S. and economically beholden to German imperialism. It provides a strategic center offering a crucial energy route into Europe, preserving and extending imperialist interests in the Near East. In 1991, Turkey served the U.S. imperialists as a launching pad for their bloody war against Iraq.

The army generals, who are the self-conscious custodians of Atatürk’s legacy, combine bonapartist bourgeois nationalism with pro-Western “secularism” and fierce anti-communism. Acting as agents of Western imperialism and the domestic national bourgeoisie, they have staged three bloody imperialist-backed coups to quell popular unrest, in 1960, 1971 and 1980. The generals are sworn enemies of labor and the left, and the “path of Atatürk’s legacy” is strewn with the corpses of thousands of Kurds, Communists and labor-union leaders. According to a leaked parliamentary report, security forces and the fascistic Gray Wolves death squads were responsible for many of the 14,000 unsolved murders and disappearances during the 1990s. On May Day 2007, workers demonstrating in Istanbul were brutally attacked by police; close to 600 were arrested.

The issue of Turkey’s admission to the EU colors all aspects of political life in the country. For years, the Turkish ruling class has been campaigning to join the European Union and has come under pressure to clean up their “human rights” record as the price of admission. While prospects of EU membership are dimming, many Turks think or hope that the EU will bring “democracy” and “prosperity” to the country. Some Kurds think the EU will put an end to their oppression, and many women believe the same. Nothing could be more mistaken.



Left: Protest against German government’s anti-Kurdish repression, Kassel, December 1993. Banner of class-struggle defense organization KfsV, associated with Spartacist Workers Party, reads: “Down With the Ban on the PKK and All Kurdish Groups!” Right: Spartacists at July 1999 NYC united-front demonstration demand freedom for PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan, imprisoned by Turkish state.



We are against the EU, a cartel of the main European imperialist powers centered on improving their competitiveness against their American and Japanese rivals and deepening imperialist exploitation of the weaker member states. Such an alliance can only be at the expense of the multiethnic proletariat in Europe and those under the boot of neocolonialism.

For the Right of Self-Determination for the Kurds

The Kurdish question is pivotal in Turkey. The 25 to 30 million Kurdish people in the Near East constitute the largest nation in the world without a state. Kurds make up a fifth of Turkey’s population.

ish in public and the use of Kurdish names were outlawed. Kurdish people were referred to as “mountain Turks.”

In recent years, the Turkish bourgeoisie introduced cosmetic reforms intended to appease the EU. They cynically allowed Kurdish-language classes in private schools, which few impoverished Kurds can afford to attend. Kurdish radio broadcasts were limited to four hours per week and television broadcasts to two hours. None of this interfered with the AKP government’s incessant attacks on Kurds. In March 2007, Ahmet Turk, a Kurdish leader of the Democratic Society Party (DTP) was sentenced to six months in prison for giving Abdullah Öcalan, jailed leader of the Kurdish-nationalist Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), a respect-

ish flags and chanted anti-PKK slogans. Mob attacks on Kurdish businesses went largely unreported in the press, while many Kurds sought to allay pogromist violence by hanging Turkish flags on their homes and workplaces.

On February 22, with the blatant aid of the U.S. imperialists and after having launched massive air raids into Iraq in December, the Turkish military sent ten thousand troops over the border to “hunt down” Kurdish PKK fighters. Already last December, the military bragged that they had killed “hundreds of terrorists” in attacks that hit villages, schools and hospitals, forcing some 1,800 people to flee their homes, according to a UN report. While we give the PKK no political support, we say that the Turkish regime’s bloody terror attacks must be condemned by the international workers movement—including in Turkey—which must stand for the military defense of the PKK against the Turkish state. By mobilizing against these attacks, linking this to opposition to the U.S. imperialist occupation of Iraq and defense of Kurdish national rights, the powerful Turkish proletariat could strike a blow in the interests of all the oppressed. *U.S., NATO, Germany out of Afghanistan! Turkey—Hands off the PKK! U.S. out of Iraq! Turkish army out of Kurdistan!*

The struggle for independence for the Kurdish people not only intersects powerfully the struggle for women’s liberation, but is also a crucial measure of revolutionary integrity of any party claiming to lead the working class. It is integral to the struggle for proletarian power, requiring the overthrow of bourgeois rule in Turkey, Iran and Syria and an end to the American imperialist occupation of Iraq. But the Kurdish nationalist leaders actively and militarily collaborated with the U.S. invasion of Iraq, and today act as pawns of the U.S. occupiers. As we wrote in “The U.S. Occupation and the Kurdish Question,” (WV No. 871, 26 May 2006):

“This is a cynical parody of self-determination for the Kurdish people, who have endured generations of oppression at the hands of various colonialist and nationalist regimes. The Kurdish nationalist leaders in Iraq have subordinated themselves to the American-led occupation forces. And many Iraqi Kurds mistakenly look with favor on the occupation as a guarantor against Arab conquest. Any fight for Kurdish independence that does not take as its starting point opposition to the occupation and to the nationalist parties that serve it will necessarily be subordinated to the occupation....

“As part of the multinational prole-



Kurdistan extends from eastern Turkey through a portion of Syria, across northern Iraq and into Iran. Since the mid 1980s the Turkish army, backed and armed by the U.S. and Germany, has been waging a bloody war against the oppressed Kurdish minority in which some 37,000 people have been killed and several thousand villages have been burned. So intent has been the Turkish bourgeoisie on stamping out any hint of Kurdish separatism that for years speaking Kurd-

ful title by calling him the “Sayin,” meaning “esteemed” or “Mister.” He was also sentenced, along with a DTP deputy leader, to 18 months in prison for distributing party literature in the Kurdish language. *We demand: Freedom for Öcalan! Hands off Ahmet Turk and the DTP!*

The situation of the Kurdish people in Turkey has sharply deteriorated in recent months. On 21 October 2007, during a Turkish military anti-Kurdish offensive near the Iraq border, PKK guerrilla fighters attacked a military convoy, killing 12 Turkish soldiers. In response, Erdogan declared, “Our anger, our hatred is great.” This signaled a massive outburst of Turkish nationalism that saw 300,000 marching on October 27 in the Anatolian city of Kayseri. Thousands of runners in Istanbul’s Eurasian Marathon carried Turk-

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Port Truckers...

(continued from page 3)

waterfront union coast to coast. The port truckers have tremendous social power, which has been enhanced by the introduction of lean inventory and “just in time” delivery. This power was shown on May Day 2006 when immigrant drivers shut down the huge L.A.-Long Beach port complex as part of a national day of action in defense of immigrant rights.

The way forward is hard class struggle. The shipping companies and capitalist courts deem port truckers, as owner-operators, to be independent businessmen subject to federal price-fixing laws prohibiting unionization. Such union-busting schemes hark back to the 1890 Sherman Antitrust Act, ostensibly directed against capitalist monopolies but used for decades to break strikes. In Vancouver in 2005, a 38-day strike by 1,200 mainly East Indian port truckers, two-thirds of whom were non-union, shut down much of the port. As 25,000 containers piled up on the docks, the Canadian government lifted its anti-trust laws, compelling the shippers to sign a port-wide contract.

During the Great Depression, independent owner-operators appeared in large numbers on America’s roads. Many of these truckers joined the Teamsters on the heels of the Trotskyist-led 1934 Minneapolis citywide strikes, which paved the way for organizing the Teamsters as a powerful national union. The Minneapolis Teamsters strikes demonstrated the ability of labor to prevail against the union-busting bosses and the capitalist state. Guided by their revolutionary Marxist program, the Trotskyists who led these strikes fought for the independence of the working class from the capitalist state and engaged in mass struggle, mobilizing the city’s proletariat and its allies. This strategy was carried over to the hugely successful national truck drivers organizing campaigns led by Trotskyists until they were purged from the union during World War II through the collusion of the Teamsters International bureaucracy and the Roosevelt administration.

Deregulation and Union-Busting

It is a common myth in the ILWU that port truckers are the makers of their own fate because they “opted out” of the Teamsters union in the late 1970s. This in



WV Photo

Bay Area longshoremen were at core of February 2002 united-front, labor-centered mobilization initiated by Partisan Defense Committee and Labor Black League in defense of immigrant rights and against government’s “war on terror.”

turn serves to justify the contempt with which these workers are often treated today. In reality, when militant Teamsters strikes coincided with independent truckers’ protests in the late 1970s, the government pushed through deregulation to drive down shipping and transportation costs and strangle union power in the industry. This allowed the bosses to replace Teamsters drivers with non-union owner-operators in the ports. Twenty years ago, 60 percent of truck drivers nationwide were unionized; by 2000 it was less than 25 percent.

Deregulation of the trucking industry was introduced under Democratic Party president Jimmy Carter with the Motor Carrier Act of 1980. It was also Carter who laid the groundwork for busting the PATCO air traffic controllers union, which was carried out by Ronald Reagan in 1981. Coming amid U.S. imperialism’s Cold War II against the Soviet Union, this union-busting offensive was part of American capitalism’s drive to restore its rate of profit and shore up its position as the dominant imperialist power against its rivals in West Europe and Japan.

Michael Belzer’s *Sweatshops On Wheels* (2000) notes that between 1977 and 1987, truck drivers’ real mileage wage rates declined by 44 percent. The capitalists’ drive for ever-greater profits has put at risk the country’s freight infrastructure. With fuel costs rising and the economy slowing, owner-operators are being forced out of the industry, with over

45,000 trucks having disappeared from the roads since early last year.

Working conditions for port truckers have also rapidly deteriorated. Aging rigs turned into rolling accidents waiting to happen. The amount of cancer-causing soot or black carbon found in port trucker cabs is about 2,000 times greater than the level typically considered acceptable by federal environmental agencies, according to Diane Bailey of the Natural Resources Defense Council. These diesel fumes have also taken their toll on the overwhelmingly poor and minority areas surrounding the ports. At the same time, the enforcement of ecologically “clean” trucking could force even more of the increasingly impoverished port truckers out of their jobs.

Exploiting the issues of air pollution and “port security,” the Teamsters have been lobbying harbor commissions and port authorities to end the “owner-operator” chaos and establish employer-employee provisions that would lift the antitrust laws. The reorganization of the port truckers along industrial lines would eliminate the one-on-one competition that contributes to their financial straits and break down the atomization and petty-bourgeois consciousness that go together with being owner-operators. But rather than fighting to defend and organize the existing port truckers by mobilizing their collective social power in struggle against the shipping, cargo and trucking companies, the Teamsters bureaucrats are petitioning the bosses and the state and offering themselves as

“national security” policemen on the docks.

In his April 2006 testimony before the Senate Committee on Homeland Security, Teamster president James Hoffa railed:

“Drivers operating illegally in our ports, or operating in or near bankruptcy, are vulnerable to blackmail and bribery. They are susceptible, knowingly or not, to people who would harm our country. They are in a position to smuggle contraband—or God forbid, a weapon of mass destruction....

“The system we have now is bad for our ports and bad for America. Once Congress forces the industry to clean up its act, you will have a workforce that can pass background checks. A workforce that will be trained, efficient and productive. A workforce that will be the eyes and ears of our ports—one that will make America more secure.”

This is nothing other than a call for a racist purge of the port truckers and any others who can’t pass the state’s “background” checks.

This same Hoffa has organized chauvinist, racist demonstrations against “unsafe” Mexican truckers in the name of opposing the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Against the labor tops’ protectionist calls to “save American jobs,” what is necessary is international class solidarity. Workers on both sides of the border must join in common class struggle against NAFTA, a neocolonial “free trade” rape of Mexico by the U.S. imperialist bosses.

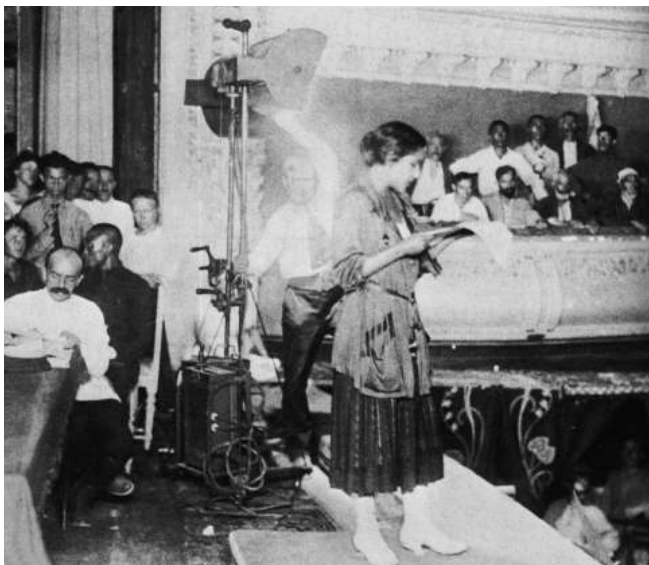
The fight for full citizenship rights for *all* immigrants, no matter how they got here, is crucial to organizing the largely foreign-born port truckers. As part of fighting against a racist purge of the workforce on the docks under TWIC, labor must also champion the cause of restoring citizenship rights to ex-felons: the right to work, vote, avail themselves of government services and carry firearms. The rights of workers, immigrants and black people will either go forward together or fall back separately. For the unions, the only significant racially integrated organizations in the U.S., to become battalions of struggle against this racist capitalist order requires a political fight to oust the chauvinist misleaders of the labor movement and replace them with a class-struggle leadership. This is integrally linked to the forging of a multiracial revolutionary workers party to lead the battle for the eradication of this increasingly depraved system of exploitation and racist reaction through a victorious socialist revolution. ■

tariat of the Near East, Kurdish workers can play a leading role in bringing down the rotten structure set up to serve the imperialist overlords. Kurdish and Turkish workers in Europe, especially in Germany, can serve as a living bridge linking the Kurdish struggle for independence to the fight for socialist revolution in the Near East and the advanced capitalist countries of West Europe. This struggle requires the leadership of internationalist workers parties, which will inscribe on their banner the call for a *Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan, part of a socialist federation of the Near East.*”

For the Communism of Lenin and Trotsky!

IMF-imposed austerity measures generated mass workers strikes that shook the country throughout the 1990s. In 2003, amid large trade-union dominated protests in cities across Turkey, the government denied the U.S. use of Turkish territory for deployment of troops, preventing the opening of a northern front in the Iraq war. In recent years, however, because of cyclical economic crises, a series of natural disasters, massive unemployment following the brutal IMF and EU austerity and privatization measures, and decades of betrayal and disorientation by the Stalinists, the working class has taken significant defeats.

Though presently beleaguered, the integrated Turkish/Kurdish proletariat has not ceased its struggles. On International Women’s Day in March 2007, thousands of women, joined by workers unions, demonstrated in Istanbul. Their banners read: “Do Not Interfere with My Body and My Honor,” “Our Body Is Ours” and “No



Humbert-Droz Archives

Najiya Hanum, Turkish delegate to 1920 Soviet Baku Congress of the Peoples of the East, addresses struggle for women’s emancipation in Muslim East.

Honor Killings.” They demanded equality and nurseries for children of working women. They called for an end to IMF interference and an end to the occupation of Iraq. Kurdish women joined the demonstrations, demanding peace, and courageous gay and lesbian activists protested their oppression. These demonstrations touched on many of the burning questions that confront revolutionaries seeking the road to the overthrow of capitalist class rule in imperialist-dependent Turkey.

Among the demonstrators, in T-shirts and baseball caps, were striking women workers from the German- and Italian-owned Novamed factory, in an Anatolian export zone. The strike of these women workers, which ended after 16 months, put a spotlight on the brutal conditions of women workers. Company abuse, which

included a “pregnancy list” to regulate when women would be “allowed” to become pregnant, was supplemented by grinding social oppression. The Novamed strikers had to win the support of their husbands and families before even launching the union. This strike sparked widespread solidarity and won a collective agreement and wage increases. A strike in late 2007 by 27,000 workers at Turk Telekom against union-busting and for a new collective agreement had an impact in towns and cities across Turkey.

In the Near East, the struggle against imperialism and its neocolonial surrogate regimes cannot be resolved within the confines of a single country. Justice for the Palestinian people, national emancipation for the Kurds and other ethnic and religious minorities, freedom for women

from the veil and Islamic law require sweeping away the capitalist regimes from Iran to Egypt to the shores of the Bosphorus and establishing a socialist federation of the Near East. The struggle for proletarian power in the Near East must be linked to the fight for workers rule in the advanced capitalist countries, and it demands the forging of internationalist workers parties to win the working masses of the region to the communism of Lenin and Trotsky and fight intransigently for working-class power.

The way out of the Turkish impasse lies in forging a revolutionary leadership of the proletariat at the head of the peasant masses, on the model of Lenin’s Bolsheviks and based on the Trotskyist program of permanent revolution and the political independence of the proletariat. Like the Bolsheviks, such a party will recognize that the struggle for the liberation of women is a motor force for revolution. As Trotsky wrote of the Muslim women of Central Asia in 1924 (reprinted in “Communism and Women of the East” in *Spartacist* No. 60 [English-language edition], Autumn 2007):

“The Eastern woman who is the most paralysed in life, in her habits and in creativity, the slave of slaves, that she, having at the demand of the new economic relations taken off her cloak will at once feel herself lacking any sort of religious buttress; she will have a passionate thirst to gain new ideas, a new consciousness which will permit her to appreciate her new position in society. And there will be no better communist in the East, no better fighter for the ideas of the revolution and for the ideas of communism than the awakened woman worker.” ■

Immigrants...

(continued from page 1)

unorganized, as many immigrant workers bring with them a history of militant union and social struggle. Allowing the rulers to divide the workers along racial and ethnic lines is poison to the class struggle. As the Spartacist League/U.S. and the Grupo Espartaquista de México, sections of the International Communist League, wrote in a joint declaration reprinted in WV No. 867, 31 March 2006:

“Opposition to anti-immigrant racism in the U.S. is directly intertwined with the struggle against black oppression. It is particularly important to combat anti-immigrant chauvinism among U.S.-born black and white workers, while immigrant workers must grasp that anti-black racism remains the touchstone of social reaction in the U.S. Black oppression is the cornerstone of American capitalism.”

Immigration and the Politics of the Possible

Several years’ worth of stalled attempts by Congress to pass immigration legislation shows a division in the bourgeoisie. On one side are anti-immigrant ideologues who advocate more raids, round-ups and deportations. On the other hand, there is a wide swath—ranging from the Bush White House, presumptive Republican presidential nominee John McCain and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce to most of the Democratic Party—that speaks for those capitalists who depend on low-cost immigrant labor. After the Postville raid, the *Wall Street Journal* (24 May) remarked, “Do homeland security officials really have nothing better to do than raid businesses that hire willing workers.” Both Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton voted in May 2006 for the Senate’s “Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act” (also known as the McCain-Kennedy bill), which would have set up a “guest worker” program, the modern equivalent of indentured servitude, tying immigrants’ visas to their employers. Both also supported the “Secure Fence Act,” mandating the construction of a 700-mile wall along the U.S.-Mexican border.

For its part, the AFL-CIO tops oppose “guest worker” programs as creating “a second class of citizens who remain marginalized with no voice in our democracy.” But far from fighting for full and equal rights for immigrant workers, they complain that the “lax enforcement of labor laws created an incentive for corporations to recruit and hire workers who came to the United States from Mexico without authorization to work,” adding that the government has created “a de facto open border enabling corporations to reach around the globe and encourage workers to come to this country in search of jobs” (“Q&As on AFL-CIO’s Immi-



WV Photo

Labor Black League denounces bipartisan “war on terror” at united-front protest for Mumia in Oakland, April 19.

gration Policy” at www.aflcio.org). Meanwhile, the leadership of two key unions of the Change to Win union federation, the heavily immigrant SEIU service workers union and the UNITE HERE hotel, restaurant and garment workers union, supported the McCain-Kennedy “guest workers” plan in 2006. In 2007, the bureaucracy of SEIU and the United Farm Workers supported another “reform” that offered a tortuous process of legalization for some “illegal” immigrants while criminalizing the rest.

The role of the pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucracy is to tie the proletariat to the class enemy, especially through support to the capitalist Democratic Party. The Change to Win trade-union federation has endorsed Obama. The AFL-CIO has not yet endorsed a candidate but has made it clear that it opposes McCain. A class-struggle perspective means an uncompromising fight for the independence of the proletariat from all wings of the capitalist exploiters and their state. The Democratic Party, no less than the Republicans, is dedicated to maintaining the rule and profits of the bourgeoisie. What is necessary is a political struggle within the union movement against the craven, pro-capitalist policies of the bureaucratic tops and the forging of a class-struggle union leadership. *Break with the Democrats! For a revolutionary workers party!*

The reformist left tails the bureaucracy’s pro-Democratic Party “lesser evilism,” albeit with more radical rhetoric. This was made clear during the large immigrant rights demonstrations on May Day 2006, when hundreds of thousands of overwhelmingly Latino immigrants took to the streets in cities across the coun-

try to protest anti-immigrant repression. At the same time, the politics of these protests, organized by Latino groups, the Catholic church, Democratic politicians and their allies in the trade-union bureaucracy, was crystallized in the slogan, “Today we march, tomorrow we vote.” The International Socialist Organization (ISO) claimed that these pro-Democratic Party marches showed the potential to “break the logjam of U.S. politics, in which the Republicans launch attack after attack with little or no response from the Democrats” (*Socialist Worker*, 31 March 2006). In contrast to the ISO and other fake socialists, we wrote in “How the Fake Left Amnesties the Democrats” (WV No. 873, 7 July 2006):

“These reformist outfits’ agenda is to prettify the ugly face of U.S. imperialist capitalism. Our aim in intervening on behalf of immigrants, both at the massive demonstrations and within the working class, is to win workers to the understanding that they must oppose the whole capitalist system.”

Now, the ISO’s *International Socialist Review* (March-April 2008) cynically writes, “Very broad sections of the immigrant rights movement believe that a Democratic Party-controlled White House and Congress will create better conditions for winning some form of legalization and ending the crackdown on immigrant communities.” Promoting the illusion that the Democrats can be pressured to serve the interests of workers and the oppressed, the ISO complains that “the Democratic Party has never come under significant pressure to put forward an alternative to militarization of the border and the interior.”

Were anything like genuine amnesty for undocumented immigrants on offer,

we Marxists would be in favor of it. But none of the capitalist politicians, nor their friends in the union bureaucracy, are proposing anything of the sort! And the harsh reality is that no amount of reform can make capitalism, which is based on the brutal exploitation of labor, a humane or rational system. We wrote in the International Communist League’s “Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program” (*Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 54, Spring 1998):

“Modern capitalism, i.e., imperialism, reaching into all areas of the planet, in the course of the class struggle and as economic need demands, brings into the proletariat at its bottom new sources of cheaper labor, principally immigrants from poorer and less-developed regions of the world—workers with few rights who are deemed more disposable in times of economic contraction.... Everywhere, the capitalists, abetted by aristocracy-of-labor opportunists, try to poison class consciousness and solidarity among the workers by fomenting religious, national and ethnic divisions. The struggle for the unity and integrity of the working class against chauvinism and racism is thus a vital task for the proletarian vanguard.”

For more than a decade, the U.S. imperialists, under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), have systematically looted the Mexican economy. Millions of peasants have been forced to migrate to urban centers in Mexico and across the Río Bravo in search of work. Both Obama and Clinton (who earlier supported her husband’s signing of NAFTA) have railed against NAFTA, portraying the U.S., the world’s most powerful imperialist state, rather than semicolonial Mexico, as the victim. This line is echoed by the trade-union tops, who blame workers in other countries for “stealing” U.S. jobs.

Such chauvinism is poison to international class solidarity, the linking of struggles of workers in the U.S. with those of workers around the world, that is required to rebuild the unions. We have always opposed NAFTA, a “free trade” rape of Mexico, from the standpoint of proletarian internationalism. As we wrote in “Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!” (WV No. 891, 27 April 2007):

“The reformists acquiesce to what is ‘possible’ and practical under capitalism. Ours is a different purpose: to build a workers party that fights for a socialist revolution to expropriate the capitalist class and establish a workers state with a planned, collectivized economy. As the struggles in defense of immigrant rights and against the wars, neocolonial occupations and other depredations visited by U.S. imperialism around the globe make vividly clear, this must be an international fight. Our watchwords are those that Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels inscribed on their banner more than 150 years ago in the *Communist Manifesto*: ‘The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Working men of all countries, unite!’” ■

Note to IG...

(continued from page 2)

activity are to be carried on by the party only for their immediate results.”

The Not-So-Strange Case of Jan Norden

In its response to our article on the ILWU port shutdown, the IG adds a postscript of sorts titled “The Strange Case of Bill Logan,” presently the leader of the dubious International Bolshevik Tendency (BT). Logan is a sociopath who used his authority as the leader of our Australian section in the 1970s to interfere in the most intimate aspects of comrades’ personal lives. Following a trial at our first international conference in 1979, he was expelled after conference delegates voted unanimously that Logan “cannot be and should never have been a member of a working-class organization.” But in common pursuit of Heyman, and as an entry ticket into the anti-Spartacist swamp, the IG is now cozy with Logan and the BT.

When Logan masqueraded as a bona fide “workers’ leader” at a Bay Area “Labor

Conference to Stop the War” last October, at which Heyman was a leading light, a Spartacist floor speaker protested that Logan had no place at this or any working-class gathering. Heyman defended Logan against our supposed “personal slanders.” Norden, who is seldom at a loss for words (and who spoke *after* our comrade not before, as the IG claims in its article), said nothing about Logan’s crimes (see “Labor Opportunists, Renegades Embrace Bill Logan,” WV No. 901, 26 October 2007). Instead, the IG brags that Norden responded to Logan “*politically*” while we “screeched...about the crimes Logan committed 29 years ago.” In other words, they legitimized this sociopath—it’s like lecturing Jack the Ripper on the need for women’s liberation and free medical care!

In a footnote to their Logan piece, the IG states that when present-day IG leaders were in our organization, they voted for Logan’s expulsion in 1979, and “we have never had reason to revise our opinion of his guilt.” Yet in its article the IG writes that for the ICL to publish our two-part bulletin, *The Logan Dossier* (August 2007), “totaling over 400 printed pages, at a price of \$10, reflects their increas-

International Communist League
(Fourth Internationalist)

THE LOGAN DOSSIER

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

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ingly bizarre/skewed priorities.” Our exposure of Logan, who is the very antithesis of everything communism stands for, is integral to our purpose of arming the working class with the consciousness and leadership necessary to sweep away this deeply inhumane capitalist system.

Not so for the IG, consummate opportunists, for whom the struggle for revolutionary consciousness is a matter of footnotes, far less important than cozying up

to left-talking labor fakers. Norden and Heyman are cosmeticians working to cover up the evidence of the syphilitic chain that runs from them straight to the Democratic Party (with the BT functioning more as a spirochete organism). The standard method of centrists like the IG requires a certain amount of artful dodging over questions of principle, such as the political independence of the working class, which are the province of revolutionaries. ■

14

WORKERS VANGUARD

Mormons...

(continued from page 16)

and denied virtually any rights. In the United States, the government wields its hypocritical “save the children” card to more thoroughly target those it deems “deviant,” including the Eldorado community. The lie of government concern for mothers and children is worn threadbare, as both Democrats and Republicans have slashed welfare and social programs over the past decades, with a huge toll in malnutrition, disease and death. “Abstinence” programs for teens have only enforced sexual ignorance—and resulted in a recent increase in STDs (sexually transmitted diseases). The reality for many poor and working-class Americans, especially single black mothers, is Child Protective Services hounding them and ripping away their children for “neglect” or “abuse,” often because they don’t have anyone to leave their kids with while they go to work.

Certainly the family is a cesspool of frustration, coercion and abuse—whether the bourgeois “one man on one woman for life” model or that of the Mormon polygamists. But it is almost universally far, far worse to fall into the clutches of this barbaric and brutal government’s institutions. Youth who try to escape their families have nowhere to go—and often end up imprisoned in detention centers where they are more likely to be beaten and raped than “rehabilitated.” We fight for free, 24-hour, quality day-care centers and for safe shelters for youth and teens as well as for free contraceptives and abortion on demand and other quality medical care, and for significantly lowering the “age of adulthood.” These are basic measures to help those most in need escape desperate poverty and the straitjacket of the family, without bringing in the cops and prison system.

Fundamentally, the oppression of women and youth is rooted in the institution of the family, which arose with the advent of private property as the mechanism for passing property from one generation to the next, with the monogamous wife supposedly ensuring the heirs’ paternity. For the masses, the role of the family is to instill respect for authority and to act as a conservatizing force. Together with religion, the institution of the family serves to instill a morality that proscribes anything that deviates from the family ideal—such as premarital and gay sex. It reinforces, as Friedrich Engels put it, “the supremacy



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WV Photo

of the man over the woman, and the individual family as the economic unit of society” (*The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* [1884]). Thus, the burden of raising the next generation of workers rests on the family. We wrote in “Free Tom Green! Mormon Polygamists: Leave Them Alone!” (WV No. 764, 14 September 2001):

“The family structure—whether monogamous or polygamous—necessarily oppresses women. However, not everybody understands the source of their oppression, and people do all sorts of things that are undoubtedly bad for them that the state still has no business throwing them in prison for. As Marxists we understand that the family serves a real social purpose and cannot simply be ‘abolished,’ even in a workers state, but must be replaced with alternate social institutions.”

The material basis for women’s liberation can be established only through workers revolutions internationally. In power, the working class would abolish the capitalist private property and inheritance system and socialize the current

Branch Davidian commune near Waco, Texas, where 86 men, women and children were incinerated under orders of Democratic president Clinton and Attorney General Janet Reno on 19 April 1993. Later that day, Spartacists held emergency protest outside New York Federal Building.

functions of the family—providing communal kitchens, childcare and health care—thus freeing women from the burden of child-rearing and household slavery.

Regarding religion itself—Mormon or otherwise—our attitude is that it is reactionary superstition counterposed to Marxist materialism. We fight to purge religion from public education and government policy. Religion provides moral justification for exploitation and reactionary prejudices. It deflects workers’ struggles into piety and acquiescence to bourgeois power. But religious beliefs cannot be “abolished” by government decree; they will only wither away when material want is overcome and the oppressed masses no longer feel the need to resort to the supernatural to provide for what is, in capitalist society, unattainable—the hope for a better life, which for billions of people today can only be dreamt of in “heavenly” fantasies.

Persecution by the bourgeois state of religious practices targets smaller, fringe

sects or oppressed minorities, reinforcing the moral authority of “mainstream” religions and, more importantly, the bourgeois state itself. We demand the complete separation of church and state, as we seek to relegate religion to the confines of personal belief, and oppose state persecution of religious beliefs. Just as we defend the Church of Scientology against state repression in Germany, we defend the Fundamentalist Mormons, who are being targeted for practices that are nobody’s business but their own.

Given the anti-sex hysteria and ignorance it promulgates, the bourgeois state finds it easy to justify the most barbaric of penalties and intrusions into people’s private lives under the guise of protecting children from sexual abuse. America’s rulers are not interested in protecting children; they are the main oppressors and killers of children, from the black and Latino youth gunned down by cops in the ghettos to the hundreds of thousands of children killed in the predatory wars waged by the American imperialists around the world.

The Eldorado raid is frighteningly reminiscent of the Waco massacre in 1993, when Democratic president Bill Clinton and his attorney general Janet Reno’s thugs ended a three-month siege of the racially integrated Branch Davidian compound in Waco, Texas, by burning alive 86 men, women and children. The guise was alleged “child abuse.” And we do not forget the MOVE massacre in 1985, when the Philadelphia police, led by black Democratic mayor Wilson Goode, and the federal government conspired to firebomb the mainly black back-to-nature MOVE commune, killing eleven people, including five children, and destroying an entire black neighborhood. The Waco and MOVE massacres loom as a reminder of how far the bloody American bourgeois state will go.

While the Eldorado Mormons may be a peculiar sect, they are not the ones wielding the massive apparatus of death that is the bourgeois state, whether administered by the Republicans or Democrats. Just as women’s liberation requires a socialist revolution that expropriates the capitalist class and lays the foundation for the replacement of the family, so the workers and oppressed of this country cannot liberate themselves without understanding that the bourgeois state, with its cops, judges and prisons, must be smashed and replaced by a workers state. ■

Mexico...

(continued from page 4)

populism—prominently represented today by the PRD [Party of the Democratic Revolution] in Mexico and by Chávez in Venezuela, and in the past by Lázaro Cárdenas, among others—is a bourgeois policy that tries to erase class divisions, dissolving the working class into the mass of “the people.” The envelope in which this policy is presented is nationalism, which sells the lie that the working class and the oppressed have the same interests as their class enemy, the bourgeoisie. Chávez and AMLO [PRD leader Andrés Manuel López Obrador] use false democratic and “anti-imperialist” rhetoric combined with concessions to the working class, poor and oppressed, as well as repression. From the UNAM [National Autonomous University of Mexico] strike in 1999-2000 to Lázaro Cárdenas and Atenco, the PRD, PRI and PAN have been partners in capitalist repression.

We warn against any illusions in the bourgeoisie, especially in the populist PRD and AMLO, who oppose the privatization plan and are trying to refurbish their fake “anti-imperialist” credentials. The bourgeois populists, who defend the capitalist system, are no less enemies of the victory of the proletariat than the more right-wing politicians of the PAN. AMLO bases his campaign on the widespread illusion that modernizing PEMEX as a state [oil] company leads to—or safeguards—national emancipation, and that it could become the

basis for satisfying the needs of the people.

Similarly, there is a widespread and false notion that PEMEX belongs to “the people” or “the nation.” All of this is a lie. PEMEX belongs to the bourgeoisie, and the Mexican capitalists are split over how to take advantage of the huge wealth produced by the astronomical price of oil. Independently of what they do with PEMEX, or who rules the country and under what program, capitalist Mexico will remain a backward petroleum producer subjugated by imperialism, subject to the crises of the market and the wild fluctuations in the price of crude. The imperialist yoke cannot be broken and the needs of the population cannot be met by capitalism, much less when it is based principally on one extractive industry in one semicolonial country.

Indeed, the bourgeoisies of all the countries of belated capitalist development are absolutely incapable of breaking with imperialism. As Lenin taught, imperialism is *not* a disposable conjunctural policy but a world system of exploitation and oppression dominated by huge financial monopolies, backed up by their respective nation-states with their armies and fleets, which long ago divided up the world among themselves and maintain the backward countries under their yoke. Thus, Mexico is a country of combined and uneven development, where modern production technology coexists with miserable backwardness in the countryside. The overwhelming majority of industry in Mexico owes its existence to imperialist capital, which has created a powerful proletariat. We Marxists base our entire

strategy on the modern industrial proletariat, which has no interest as a class in maintaining the system of capitalist exploitation and production for profit. The working class has the social power and interest to lead all the oppressed in overthrowing capitalism through socialist revolution, abolishing private property in the means of production and the rule of the bourgeoisie, the class that owns the means of production and exploits wage labor.

The enormous dependency of the Mexican economy on oil—which constitutes 40 percent of the government’s income—is an undeniable example of the backward character of Mexico’s capitalist development. It is impossible to achieve industrial development comparable to that of the advanced countries within the framework of capitalism. In his work *The Permanent Revolution*, Leon Trotsky explained:

“With regard to countries with a belated bourgeois development, especially the colonial and semi-colonial countries, the theory of the permanent revolution signifies that the complete and genuine solution of their tasks of achieving *democracy and national emancipation* is conceivable only through the dictatorship of the proletariat as the leader of the subjugated nation, above all of its peasant masses.”

Upon taking power, the proletariat cannot stop at the democratic tasks, but rather must immediately pass to the socialist tasks—the expropriation of the bourgeoisie as a class, collectivization and a planned economy. Thus, the felt democratic aspirations of the masses, such as for national emancipation, political democracy and agrarian revolution, are a motor

force for the proletarian revolution, since they can only be achieved through a collectivized economy. *For a workers and peasants government!* We fight to build the vanguard party of the proletariat that seeks to win the loyalty of the masses away from the national-populist bourgeoisie, combatting illusions in the democratic reform of the bourgeois state and channeling the workers’ struggles toward the taking of power by the proletariat.

The proletarian revolution must be extended *internationally*, especially to the American imperialist beast. The survival of the revolution in Mexico and its development toward socialism is unthinkable, economically and militarily, without the help of the multiracial proletariat of the U.S. And a workers revolution in Mexico would provide a powerful impetus to the revolution north of the Río Bravo, especially among black workers and the millions of immigrant workers. The multiracial American proletariat must make its powerful voice heard in joint class struggle with its Mexican brothers and sisters against the capitalist rulers’ designs. As opposed to the rest of the left, the communists of the Grupo Espartaquista de México, alongside our comrades of the entire ICL, genuinely fight for an international socialist economy through new October Revolutions around the world to do away with imperialism, racism and all forms of oppression. If you agree with our perspective, join our struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat, the fundamental basis for universal human emancipation! ■

WORKERS VANGUARD



Left: Protest against state kidnapping of fundamentalist Mormons and their children, Salt Lake City, April 24. Right: Mormon polygamist families in Eldorado, Texas, being “relocated” by police, April 6. AP photos

Mormon Polygamists— Leave Them Alone!

On April 3, heavily armed Texas Rangers, police agencies from six counties, the state highway patrol and wildlife officers stormed into a polygamous Mormon community in Eldorado, Texas. A phone call was the pretext for this massive raid on the Yearning for Zion Ranch of the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (FLDS), a long-established split-off from the mainstream Mormons. Authorities now admit this call by a woman claiming sexual abuse at the ranch was probably a hoax. Over the next seven days, more than 500 children and women were kidnapped in a state onslaught of “collective punishment.”

At least 465 of those kidnapped were under age 18 and were seized by Child Protective Services (CPS). Thirty-one women were pregnant when arrested; two have given birth while in state custody. Several of the “children” in custody are actually mothers who have had their own infants seized. All the parents were separated from their children, many sent hundreds of miles away, while the state conducted humiliating DNA tests to determine parents’ “legitimacy” to visit their children. The outrageous treatment of the Mormon families is the *real* abuse perpetrated here! It was so bad that even the Texas Supreme Court on May 29 upheld a prior appeals court ruling that the state had no right to seize the children. As we go to press, most of those seized are being returned to their parents.

We Marxists have a longstanding position in defense of polygamous Mormons against state persecution. We stated in “For the Right of Gay Marriage...and Divorce! Marriage and the Capitalist State” (WV No. 824, 16 April 2004): “We believe the Mormons have the right to be left alone, to practice their religion and live their private lives however they see fit. Our position for the right of gay marriage, like the right of Mormons to practice polygamy, stems from our opposition to government interference with the rights of individuals to

effect whatever consensual arrangements they wish.” *Leave the Mormon polygamists alone!*

The raid and the mass kidnapping have sparked outrage, not least in Mormon strongholds such as Salt Lake City, where 50 protested on April 24 outside an NBA playoff game between the Rockets and Jazz. As FLDS spokesman Rod Parker said, “I think every American needs to be very fearful of what Child Protective Services is doing in Texas.” Mental health workers at emergency shelters for the women and children expressed anger toward the state’s child welfare agency for removing the children from their mothers and for the conditions in the shelters, which were so poor that upper respiratory infections and chicken pox spread rapidly. One of the workers said it was a deliberate form of coercion: “The more uncomfortable they were the more CPS thought they would talk.” The entire mental health staff was fired the second week, accused by the authorities of being “too compassionate” (*Houston Chronicle*, 10 May).

The spiritual leader of the FLDS, Warren Jeffs, is in prison, charged with “rape as an accomplice” for performing a marriage—“rape” because the young woman, who was 14, was underage and the groom was her 19-year-old cousin. In “Feds Hands Off Mormon Fundamentalists!” (WV No. 871, 26 May 2006), we defended Jeffs against the government’s witchhunt before his capture, denouncing the anti-sex hysteria and hypocrisy of the authorities and noting that such early marriages were commonplace only decades ago. New Hampshire, for example, still allows 13-year-old girls to marry with parental consent. In some European countries, the age of consent is 14 years, while in quite a few U.S. states first cousins can legally marry.

The state uses reactionary “age of consent” laws to oppress youth—who are supposed to go against nature and be “sexless,” especially if they’re female—

and expand its own powers of repression. We oppose “age of consent,” “squeal rules” and “statutory rape” laws, which strengthen the repressive reach of the state, as well as serving as a diversion from the real brutality of this sick capitalist society. We uphold *effective consent* as the only guiding principle in sexual relations—i.e., mutual agreement and understanding, as opposed to coercion. As long as those who take part agree to do so at the time, no one, least of all the state, has the right to tell them they can’t do it. Rape and violent abuse are terrible crimes that occur throughout society and in monogamous as well as polygamous families. But the prosecution of Mormons for polygamy can only force possible victims to retreat further underground in legitimate fear of the authorities.

The question of polygamy has a long history in the U.S., and was central to the development of Mormonism in the 19th century. When in 1890 the Mormons officially renounced the practice, preparatory to getting Utah recognized as a U.S. state in 1896, significant breakaway factions continued polygamy, one calling themselves the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints. Today, an estimated 10,000 FLDS followers live in communities concentrated along the Utah-Arizona border and nearby states. Their presence in Texas dates only from 2003, and the Texas state authorities have been extremely aggressive in their attempts to banish them.

President Abraham Lincoln, though he later signed a bill outlawing plural marriages, made an early statement to a Mormon journalist regarding the Mormons, a model of good sense and tolerance that the rulers of this decaying capitalist society have long since abandoned. When he was a boy on the farm, he said, “Occasionally we would come to a log which had fallen down. It was too hard to split, too wet to burn and too heavy to move, so we plowed around it. That’s what I intend to do with the Mormons. You go

back and tell Brigham Young that if he will let me alone I will let him alone.”

The Family and Organized Religion: Props of Brutal Bourgeois Rule

With revolting hypocrisy, America’s rulers are flexing their muscles against a tiny community in rural Texas while hailing one of the most anti-woman and feudal forces in the world, the Dalai Lama and the deposed pro-slavery Tibetan “Lamaocracy.” Before the Chinese People’s Liberation Army (PLA) came to Tibet, it was a hellhole for poor peasants and women, who slaved like oxen as the ruling monks meditated in the temples. In pre-1950s Tibet, polygamy was the norm and intrinsic to the enslavement of women. Its corollary was polyandry among poorer males, who had to share a wife with other men (often brothers) because they could not afford wives themselves. The PLA’s extension to Tibet of the gains of the 1949 Chinese Revolution, which overthrew capitalist rule in China, broke the lamas’ power and lifted the region from feudal darkness, a leap of several centuries in human development (see “Defend Chinese Deformed Workers State! Counterrevolutionary Riots in Tibet,” WV No. 911, 28 March).

Whereas American Mormons essentially choose their practice, in many regions of the world the legacy of precapitalist social backwardness means that women are held to be little more than property, requiring struggle by communists to abolish institutionalized polygamy, as well as the bride price, female genital mutilation and other such practices. In countries of belated capitalist development, social backwardness is reinforced and manipulated by imperialist domination. For example, the U.S. imperialists prop up reactionary client states like impoverished Afghanistan and oil-rich Saudi Arabia, countries where women are forcibly veiled head-to-toe

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