

Hands Off Iran!

U.S. Imperialists Out of Afghanistan, Iraq!

Obama Vows to Send 10,000 More Troops to Afghanistan

Break with the Democrats! For a Workers Party!

As he prepared for his recent trip abroad, Barack Obama fleshed out his plan to remodel the U.S. imperialist presence in the Near East region. In a July 14 *New York Times* op-ed piece, the presumptive Democratic presidential candidate called for “redeploying” troops from Iraq while maintaining “a residual force” in that country that could total as many as 50,000 troops. He also called for dispatching two U.S. combat brigades—as many as 10,000 soldiers—to Afghanistan, in addition to the 32,000 U.S. troops already there. In his July 24 speech before an enormous crowd in Berlin, Obama appealed to the European powers to send more troops to Afghanistan, declaring: “America cannot do this alone.” By all indications, Obama’s trip achieved its purpose: demonstrating that, as president, he would be quite effective in furthering the interests of U.S. imperialism.

If in racist, capitalist America a black man were elected president it would still do nothing to change the fundamental conditions of working people, blacks, women and the oppressed. Working people need a party that fights for *their* class interests, a workers party committed to sweeping away the murderous imperialist order through socialist revolution. As Trotskyists (i.e., genuine Marxists), we fight for the political independence of the working class from the capitalist class enemy. We take a principled stand of never voting for, or otherwise extending any political support to, any capitalist politician—Democrat, Republican, Green or “Independent.” Nor would we run for executive office—president, governor or mayor—ourselves. In the U.S., the president is the top cop responsible for the most massive military power in history and for the domestic machinery of repression that maintains social oppression and exploitation. As we wrote:

“Obama simply seeks to become the overseer for the whole plantation. The class he serves is a reactionary gendarme internationally and the enemy of the multiracial proletariat and oppressed masses ‘at home,’ not least since the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union, which left Washington less restrained in its machinations.”

—“Obama’s Speech: ‘National Unity’ in Service of U.S. Imperialism—Break with Democratic Party of War and Racism!” (WV No. 911, 28 March)



Corbis

Left: Democratic Party presidential contender Barack Obama with Afghan president Hamid Karzai in Kabul, July 20. U.S. Marines in Afghanistan’s Helmand Province break down house doors in early July. Below: U.S. air strikes in June near Pakistan-Afghanistan border killed eleven people.



AP

Down With U.S. Imperialism!

Obama’s trip took place at a time when the situation facing U.S./NATO forces in Afghanistan had become, as he put it, “precarious and urgent.” June was the deadliest month for U.S. troops in Afghanistan since the war began in late 2001, a result of what U.S. commanders say is a 40 percent increase over last year in insurgent attacks. Republican and Democratic politicians nowadays like to rail against Islamic fundamentalism. But not so long ago, the U.S. bourgeoisie, including the liberals who were tailed by most of the left, heralded Islamic reactionaries as “freedom fighters,” as the CIA doled out billions to the *mujahedin* fighting the Soviet Army in Afghanistan in the 1980s. This was the largest covert operation in CIA history, and included aid to Osama bin Laden, who would later turn on his former masters.

In mid-July, U.S. troops abandoned a military outpost in eastern Afghanistan after some 200 insurgents almost overran it, killing nine U.S. soldiers. It was the deadliest one-day loss for U.S. forces in Afghanistan in the past three years. U.S. commanders in Afghanistan have sought to counter the push by insurgents with stepped up airstrikes, causing a skyrocketing number of civilian deaths. According to Afghan officials, more than 70 civilians have been “mistakenly” targeted by U.S. bombs and missiles in July alone. Among them were at least 47 people in eastern Afghanistan, mostly women and



Reuters

children, who were killed as they traveled to a wedding party.

Meanwhile, in recent months, U.S. forces have carried out a number of airstrikes, often with the approval of the Pakistani military-backed regime, within Pakistan itself. This is similar to the policy of U.S. military incursions into Pakistan’s western tribal regions that is advocated by Obama. On May 14, a Predator drone hit the village of Damadola near the Afghan border, killing more than a dozen people. On June 10, U.S. planes hit a Pakistani border post, killing eleven soldiers. Many enraged Pakistani military commanders saw that U.S. attack as

a deliberate act intended to “punish” Pakistan for not preventing insurgents from crossing into Afghanistan.

The Afghanistan war, which was embraced by liberals as a “just” response to the September 11 terror attacks, has meant continued brutal oppression of women as well as warfare among the various tribal warlords. Afghanistan’s imperialist overseers brokered a constitution that effectively enshrined Islamic fundamentalist *sharia* law, while in Iraq Islamic clerics are granted authority to strike down “un-Islamic” laws.

The Spartacist League, U.S. section
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Thirty Years After We Will Not Forget Racist Police Assault on Philly MOVE

August 8 marks the 30th anniversary of the police's violent assault on the interracial MOVE commune in Philadelphia's Powelton Village neighborhood. For some 30 years, MOVE members have been in prison for the "crime" of surviving the police attack. Seven of the eight surviving MOVE prisoners were denied parole earlier this year.

A massive police offensive against MOVE, a radical back-to-nature group that proclaimed its right of armed self-defense, had started in May 1977, with 15

months of round-the-clock surveillance. In March 1978, police launched a full-scale siege, sealing off a four-block area with eight-foot-high fences and cutting off gas and water lines to MOVE's house. At 6 a.m. on that August day, an army of 600 cops surrounded the house to evict its defenseless residents. After bringing in a



UPI
In vendetta against MOVE, nearly 600 cops besieged their Powelton Village commune in 1978.

Free the MOVE Prisoners!

bulldozer to rip down a stockade fence around the house and using a crane as a battering ram to break down boarded windows, the cops used smoke bombs and "deluge guns" to drive out MOVE members and their children.

After a single gunshot was heard, the police blasted thousands of rounds of

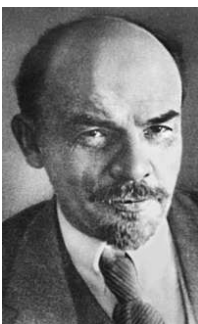
ammunition into the home. The cops' fusillade was so intense that one of their officers, James Ramp, was killed in their own cross fire. Though cops claimed the original gunshot came from the MOVE house, witnesses, including a reporter for KYW radio, identified the gunfire as coming from a building behind the police lines. When the adults emerged from the gunfire, police publicly beat, dragged, kicked and stomped nearly to death a shirtless Delbert Africa. The outrage sparked
continued on page 5



TROTSKY

For a Class-Struggle Workers Party!

In 1948 Henry Wallace's "third party" presidential candidacy was discussed in the then-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP), with some elements wanting to support his bourgeois Progressive Party campaign. SWP leader James P. Cannon's report laid out the fundamental Marxist criteria for assessing the class character of a party, criteria we uphold today in opposing the capitalist "third party" Greens and their left-liberal presidential candidate Cynthia McKinney, who is hailed by reformist leftists.



LENIN

The Wallace party must be opposed and denounced by every class criterion. In the first place it is programmatically completely bourgeois, as all the comrades have recognized. Its differences with the Republican and Democratic parties are purely tactical. There is not a trace of a principled difference anywhere. And by principled difference I mean a class difference....

It would be very, very bad and demoralizing if we would allow for a moment the anti-war demagoguery of Wallace to be taken by any member of our party as something preferable to the blatant aggressiveness of Truman and Marshall. That would be nothing less than the preparation of the minds of party members for "lesser evil" politics—based on the theory that one kind of capitalist tactics in the expansion of American imperialism is preferable to another, and that the workers should intervene to support one against the other....

The class character of the party is determined first by its program; secondly by its actual policy in practice; and thirdly by its composition and control. The Wallace party is bourgeois on all these counts; by its program, its policy and practice, its composition and control....

Wallace is the, as yet, unacknowledged, candidate for the role of diverting the workers' movement for independent political action into the channel of bourgeois politics dressed up with radical demagoguery which costs nothing. That is what we have to say, and that's what we have to fight—vigorously and openly, and with no qualifications at all. We have to be 100% anti-Wallaceites. We have to stir up the workers against this imposter, and explain to them that they will never get a party of their own by accepting substitutes.

—James P. Cannon, "Election Policy in 1948" (February 1948)

WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League of the U.S.

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The Spartacist League is the U.S. Section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

Workers Vanguard (ISSN 0276-0746) published biweekly, except skipping three alternate issues in June, July and August (beginning with omitting the second issue in June) and skipping the last issue in December, by the Spartacist Publishing Co., 299 Broadway, Suite 318, New York, NY 10007. Telephone: (212) 732-7862 (Editorial), (212) 732-7861 (Business). Address all correspondence to: Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116. E-mail address: vanguard@tiac.net. Domestic subscriptions: \$10.00/22 issues. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Workers Vanguard*, Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116.

Opinions expressed in signed articles or letters do not necessarily express the editorial viewpoint.

The closing date for news in this issue is July 29.

No. 918

1 August 2008

On the Kennedys' Vendetta Against Hoffa

15 June 2008
Brooklyn, NY

To the editor:

In the article "Reinstate Freightliner Five Now!" (WV No. 915, 23 May), we write: "The 1989 RICO-inspired government takeover of the powerful Teamsters was the culmination of a decades-long union-busting vendetta by the Feds, beginning in the 1960s with Democrat Robert Kennedy, against the union and James Hoffa Sr." While Hoffa was jailed in the 1960s, the government vendetta against the Teamsters began earlier. In 1957 Teamster president Dave Beck met his downfall before the Senate's McClellan Committee investigation of labor "racketeering." Hoffa was next. As we wrote in "The Hoffa Myth" (WV No. 76, 12 September 1975): "Beginning in the late 1950's Hoffa became the object of a massive government vendetta, with five criminal proceedings in seven years, most of them braintrustered by Robert Kennedy, first as counsel to the McClellan subcom-



Bettmann

1958: Teamsters leader Jimmy Hoffa faces Robert F. Kennedy (left) at meeting of Senate committee on labor "racketeering."

mittee and later as U.S. Attorney General." Paul C.

P.S.: The liberal icon Robert Kennedy also had close ties to the anti-communist witchhunter Joseph McCarthy, who hired Kennedy as assistant counsel to his Senate committee, the counterpart to HUAC (House Un-American Activities Committee). Robert Kennedy even made McCarthy godfather to his first child.

On Age of Adulthood

19 June 2008

Dear Workers Vanguard,

I really enjoyed the WV No. 916 article on the state abduction of the children of Eldorado Mormons, especially the connection between the rights of the Mormons to their private lives and that of gays.

However the article leaves itself open to misinterpretation when it raises the demand "for significantly lowering the 'age of adulthood'." I believe what you mean to say is that kids should be able to emancipate themselves both practically (through access to union jobs, education, housing, etc.) and legally (through laws that allow teens to separate themselves from their parents).

The problem is that the article doesn't make this clear. "Age of adulthood" does

not, for example, mean the age one should be tried in a court of law as an adult, which the ruling class increasingly uses as a club against poor, working-class and minority youth. Nor does it mean the age at which one can consent to sex. As communists we believe in effective consent and not allowing the state to set any arbitrary age at which someone can make choices about their bodies.

These are complicated issues. However the principles are clear: 1) The blood-drenched capitalist state will never have any interest in protecting youth or women, and should not interfere in people's private affairs regardless of age, race, sexual orientation or religion, 2) The economic foundation for the liberation of women and youth needs to be fought for and ultimately can only be won through the overthrow of capitalist society.

Comradely,
Ken R.

WORKERS VANGUARD

On Bourgeois “Third Parties” and the 1948 Henry Wallace Campaign

The following article, originally titled “Henry Wallace and Gideon’s Army,” is reprinted from *Spartacist* No. 7 (September-October 1966). The article is about Wallace’s 1948 Progressive Party presidential campaign. In the current election year, the “third party” capitalist Greens have nominated former Georgia Democratic Party Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney as their presidential candidate. The parallels between Wallace and McKinney are striking: the candidates’ rousing talk of “peace,” “justice” and a better deal for the little people is meant to corral dissatisfaction with the two main bourgeois parties into yet another capitalist electoral vehicle. Our forebears in the then-revolutionary Socialist Workers Party (SWP) in 1948 gave no political support to Wallace. Today, in contrast to reformist groups like Workers World Party, which has endorsed McKinney, we give no political support to the Green/McKinney “Power to the People” campaign. It represents no break with bourgeois politics.

Nor, as Marxists, would we run for executive office—such as mayor, governor or president—ourselves, although Marxists have and can run for parliamentary office as a tactic to propagate our revolutionary program and as part of the struggle to imbue the working class with the understanding that the capitalist order, including its parliamentary facade, must be overthrown through socialist revolution. As Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels taught long ago, the capitalist government is the executive committee that manages the common affairs of the capitalist class as a whole. In the U.S., the president is the chief executive responsible for the most massive military power in history and for the domestic machinery of repression that maintains social oppression and exploitation. To run for executive office means to aspire to be the next Commander-in-Chief who decides who gets tortured, who gets bombed, who gets invaded (see *Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 60, Autumn 2007).

As we pointed out in *Spartacist* No. 7’s front-page article, “1966 Elections,” to which the Wallace piece was a companion, “In sum, independent campaigns must not only break with the Democratic Party, but *must break with the system of bourgeois rule*, and aim toward arousing the working class from its present passive allegiance to that system.” The 1966 mid-term elections, two years after Democrat Lyndon Johnson’s 1964 landslide victory against Barry (“In your guts, you know

he’s nuts”) Goldwater, saw growing opposition to the Vietnam War and recognition that the Democratic Party was, as we wrote, “the favored tool of those forces which are committed to maintaining American capitalist hegemony throughout the world.” In sorting out the various forces running “independent” candidacies, we relied on the working-class Marxist analysis developed in part by James P. Cannon, the founding leader of American Trotskyism, and the SWP.

* * *

In late 1947, Henry A. Wallace announced his intention to run for the presidency of the U.S. as an anti-war, pro-labor candidate. Wallace had been secre-

New Dealers and some Democratic politicians; CIO President Philip Murray, left-dominated unions in the CIO and organizations based on the CIO; and the Communist Party [CP] had all shown an interest in such a third party. However by December 1947, the first two groupings, partially under the pressures of a growing red scare, had almost all retreated to the Democratic Party. Only the CP and groupings closely allied to it gave any substantial support after the end of 1947. The nature of that support can be seen by the continuing withdrawals throughout the campaign by Stalinist-led unions confronted by CIO pressure, and by the composition of the Progressive Citizens of America, a largely petty-



Spartacist



WV Photo

Spartacists at 1966 protest against Vietnam War (top) and at Philadelphia April 19 demonstration for Mumia Abu-Jamal (bottom). We fight for socialist revolution to end imperialist war and racial oppression.

tary of agriculture, vice president and secretary of commerce, all under Franklin D. Roosevelt, capitalism’s phony champion of the working man. But for the 1948 campaign Wallace ran at the head of the new Progressive Party, a third party challenge to the two established capitalist “front groups.”

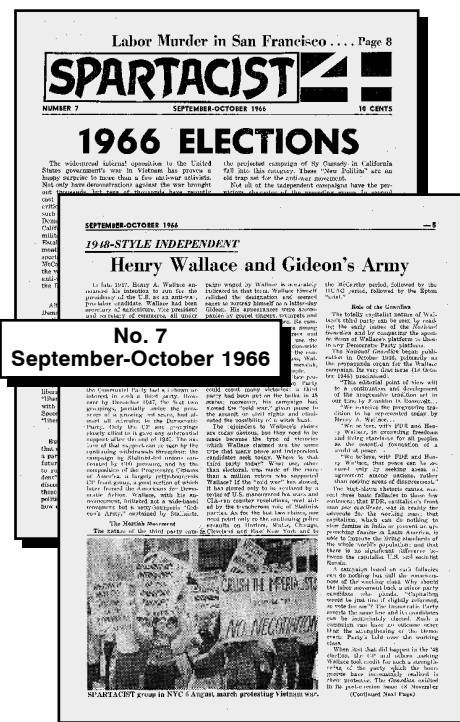
During 1946 and early 1947, old-line

bourgeois CP front group, a good section of which later formed the Americans for Democratic Action. Wallace, with his announcement, initiated not a wide-based movement but a petty-bourgeois “Gideon’s Army,” captained by Stalinists.

The Messiah Movement

The nature of the third party campaign waged by Wallace is accurately indicated in that term. Wallace himself relished the designation and seemed eager to portray himself as a latter-day Gideon. His appearances were accompanied by gospel singers, trumpets and a revivalist camp atmosphere. He campaigned on the basis of peace among nations, brotherhood among men and justice for all. Rather than use the first campaign of a new nation-wide party as a means for raising the consciousness of the working class, Wallace accepted the role of a messiah, come to save the American people.

Just before the election, Wallace proclaimed that the Progressive Party could count many victories: a third party had been put on the ballot in 45 states; moreover, his campaign had slowed the “cold war,” given pause to the assault on civil rights and eliminated the possibility of a witch hunt.



The rejoinders to Wallace’s claims are today obvious, but they need to be made because the type of victories which Wallace claimed are the same type that many peace and independent candidates seek today. Where is that third party today? What use, other than electoral, was made of the more than a million voters who supported Wallace? If the “cold war” has slowed, it has slowed only to be replaced by a series of U.S. maneuvered hot wars and CIA-run counter revolutions, most aided by the treacherous role of Stalinist parties. As for the last two claims, one need point only to the continuing police assaults on Harlem, Watts, Chicago, Cleveland and East New York and to the McCarthy period, followed by the HUAC period, followed by the Epton “trial.” [Epton, a leftist activist who at that time was in the Progressive Labor Party, was the first person in New York State since the 1919 “red scare” to be convicted of “criminal anarchy” for his courageous efforts to provide leadership and organization to the besieged black masses during the 1964 Harlem police riot. See “In Memory of Bill Epton,” WV No. 781, 17 May 2002.]

Role of the Guardian

The totally capitalist nature of Wallace’s third party can be seen by reading the early issues of the *National Guardian* and by comparing the specific items of Wallace’s platform to those in any Democratic Party platform.

The *National Guardian* began publication in October 1948, primarily as the propaganda organ for the Wallace campaign. Its very first issue (18 October 1948) proclaimed:

“This editorial point of view will be a continuation and development of the progressive tradition set in our time by Franklin D. Roosevelt...”

“We conceive the progressive tradition to be represented today by Henry A. Wallace...”

“We believe, with FDR and Henry Wallace, in expanding freedoms and living standards for all peoples as the essential foundation of a world at peace.

“We believe, with FDR and Henry Wallace, that peace can be secured only by seeking areas of agreement among nations, rather than seeking areas of disagreement.”

The high-blown rhetoric cannot conceal three basic fallacies in those few sentences: that FDR, capitalism’s front man *par excellence*, was in reality the advocate for the working man; that capitalism,

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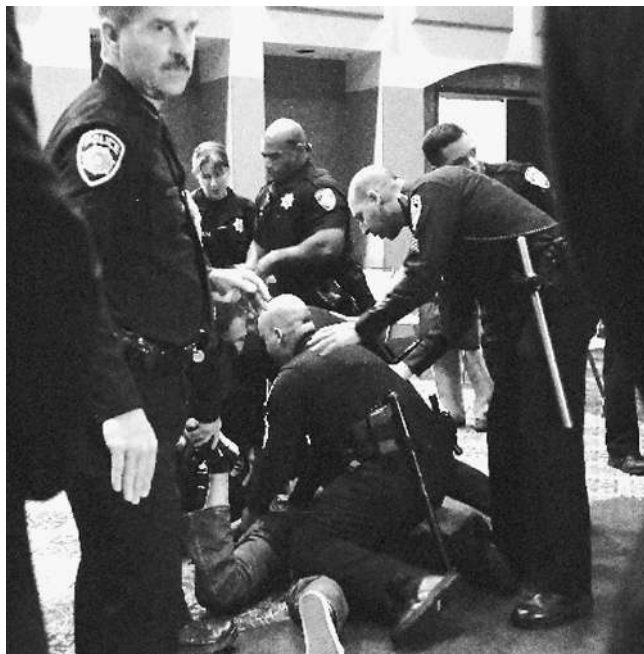
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Winter 1983-84–Spring 1997

Spartacist (French edition)

Volume 1: Issues 1 to 14,
May 1972–December 1977

Young Spartacus



Lajcik/Daily Bruin photos

UCLA: 16 Arrested at SDS/SWF Protest—Drop the Charges! *For Free, Quality, Integrated Education for All!*

We reprint below a June 25 leaflet by the Spartacus Youth Club in defense of those arrested at a fee hikes protest initiated by Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and the UCLA Student Worker Front (SWF) at the University of California, Los Angeles on May 14. The leaflet was handed out at UCLA and to AFSCME Local 3299's strike the week of July 14-18. Keenly interested in the leaflet, many striking workers expressed solidarity with the arrested students and an understanding that massive fee hikes have made a university education unaffordable for their children.

The Los Angeles Spartacist League and SYC also distributed the leaflet at the Los Angeles Social Forum on June 28. Part of the World Social Forum, which is funded by capitalist states and the CIA-connected Ford Foundation, among others, the L.A. event was a popular-frontist formation—a class-collaborationist political bloc in which the politics of the working-class component of the bloc are subordinated to the politics of the bourgeoisie. (For more on the Social Forums, see “Social Forum Con Game,” WV No. 853, 2 September 2005.) The L.A. confab was endorsed by the radical-liberal SDS and endorsed or built by a slew of reformist fake-socialists, including the International Socialist Organization, the Revolutionary Communist Party and the Party for Socialism and Liberation. We aggressively intervened to oppose and expose the Social Forums, including those who endorse and join them, as obstacles to the fight against capitalist imperialism and the struggle for socialism.

* * *

On May 14, 16 people, all but one students in the UC system, were arrested on charges of “willful disturbance of a public meeting” on the UCLA campus for protesting a 7.4%, or \$490, tuition fee hike approved by the UC Regents. Led by the Students for a Democratic Society at UCLA, as well as the UCLA Student Worker Front, more than 100 demonstrators attended the protest outside and about 80 attended the UC Regents meet-

Down With Racist Fee Hikes!

University of California Board of Regents meeting at UCLA, May 14: Protest initiated by Students for a Democratic Society and the Student Worker Front against tuition fee increases. Right: University police attack protester, one of 16 arrested.

ing. After the Finance Committee of the Regents approved the fee increase, students chanted “Regents, regents, can’t you see? You’re creating poverty!” In response, campus police physically removed and arrested the 16 protesters. In at least one instance, several cops wrestled one protester to the ground and then charged him outrageously with resisting arrest. At the Monday 16 June court hearing, all charges were dropped against 14 of the protesters while two still face further proceedings. Despite our political differences as Marxists with the radical liberals of SDS and SWF, we in the Spartacus Youth Club defend them and all the activists who protested the fee hikes against police and administration repression and reprisals. *Drop all charges against the protesters! Cops off campus!*

Tuition has nearly doubled at UC campuses in the past six years. The massive fee and tuition hikes in the last decade have meant that a once affordable university education has become unattainable for most poor, working class and minority students, making a university education increasingly an exclusive privilege of the elite. The fee increases, combined with the bourgeoisie’s drive against affirmative action, have also amounted to a racist purge of black and minority youth from the campuses. We in the Spartacus Youth Club have defended affirmative action programs for university admissions against ruling-class assault because they have meant gains, however limited, against the inherent race and class bias in higher education under capitalism. We fight for *free, quality, integrated education for all!* At the university level, this means a fight for *open admissions and no tuition*, along with government-paid living

stipends for all students! Nationalize the elite private universities! Massively expand remedial programs for students relegated to inner-city public schools that are often nothing more than holding pens for poor, working class and minority students!

SDS and SWF call to “democratize the UC Regents.” In contrast, as the SYC argued in a 2006 leaflet distributed at a UCLA protest against low minority enrollment, we are against “promoting the capitalist government, its politicians, the regents and campus administrations as the agency for providing access to higher education for black and minority youth.... The UC Regents, who banned affirmative action in admissions even prior to Prop. 209, are the capitalist class

watchdogs over the university. Most are themselves capitalists or executives of corporations, banks, investment houses and the like....” (reprinted in WV No. 881, 24 November 2006). This is shown

clearly by the struggle being waged by the campus workers of AFSCME Local 3299 against the UC campus administrations in an effort to win wage parity with other state workers and for better working conditions. The SYC stands in solidarity with these campus workers. These workers and their children, like everyone, deserve the right to the same quality of education provided at schools like UCLA. *Abolish the Board of Regents and the administration! Those who work, study and teach at the universities should run the universities—for worker/student/teacher control!*

SDS peddles illusions that the capitalists can be made—through protest and pressure—to serve the interests of those they exploit and oppress. This goes hand in hand with their quest to reignite “the flames of participatory democracy on which this country was founded” (undated UCLA SDS leaflet). But “democracy” for which

Spartacus Youth Club Events

BAY AREA

Class Series
Saturday, August 16, 3 p.m.
Revolutionary Integrationism

Saturday, August 30, 3 p.m.
The Struggle for
a Revolutionary Party

1634 Telegraph Avenue, 3rd floor
Oakland
(Near 17th and Broadway,
1 block from 19th Street BART)
Information and readings: (510) 839-0851
or e-mail: sycbayarea@sbcglobal.net

Visit the ICL Web
Site: www.icl-fi.org

CHICAGO

Class Series
Tuesday, August 5, 7 p.m.
The Revolution Betrayed
222 S. Morgan Street, Suite 2C
(Buzzer 23)

(Near the UIC/Halsted stop on the Blue Line)
Information and readings: (312) 563-0441
or e-mail: chicagosyc@sbcglobal.net

NEW YORK CITY

Video Showing & Discussion
Wednesday, August 6, 7 p.m.
Popular Front Strangled
the Spanish Revolution

Movie: *Land and Freedom*
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

class? This country was founded on black chattel slavery in which only white, land-owning males could vote. Despite the fact that slavery was smashed through the Civil War and voting rights expanded through social struggle (such as the civil rights movement), “participatory democracy” then as now represents democracy only for the exploiters. Bourgeois “democracy” is a form of the dictatorship of the capitalist class. As Russian revolutionary V.I. Lenin explained in *The State and Revolution*: “To decide once every few years which member of the ruling class is to repress and crush the people through parliament—this is the real essence of bourgeois parliamentarism, not only in parliamentary-constitutional monarchies, but also in the most democratic republics.”

Ours is a revolutionary Marxist program. While SDS pushes to reform this rotten system, we fight to win workers and students to the understanding that we need a revolutionary workers party that fights for a socialist revolution that will consign this barbaric capitalist system to the trash heap of history. SDS is a part of the radical liberal milieu that actively pushes “anybody but Bush” politics. Their efforts are aimed at pressuring (through various means, including “direct action”) and boosting the electoral fortunes of the Democratic Party, which is the other capitalist party of racism and imperialist war. Indeed, when the SYC was distributing our defense letter defending those arrested for protesting fee hikes, SDSers told us that they were going to vote for Democrat Barack Obama in the upcoming presidential elections. In contrast, as Trotskyists—



SYC contingent at UCLA march for affirmative action, 15 November 2006.

revolutionary Marxists—we fight for the political independence of the working class from the capitalist class enemy. We do not extend any political support on principle to any capitalist politician—Democrat, Republican, Green or Independent. We struggle to win students to the understanding that only one class in society has the social power and material interest to overthrow capitalism: the multiracial working class.

Such a perspective is counterposed to the various “antiwar” coalitions, such as Coalition for Peace at UCLA with which

SDS works. In November 2007 SDS and Coalition for Peace organized an Iraq Moratorium Rally and Die-in at UCLA as part of the national Iraq Moratorium, which does not oppose the bloody U.S.-led occupation of Afghanistan. This coalition is consciously built to appeal to liberal Democrats, who look to cut U.S. losses in Iraq in order to reinforce American military capabilities elsewhere. All the major Democratic Party politicians support the occupation of Afghanistan, presenting themselves as even tougher than Bush and Co. in the “war on terror,” and targeting the bureaucratically deformed workers state of China, the largest and most powerful of the remaining countries where capitalist rule was overthrown. ***We demand the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Iraq and Afghanistan! U.S. imperialists, hands off the world!***

SDS is a product of liberal “death of communism” politics that slander communism as a “failed experiment” and accept the framework of bourgeois class society. Thus, SDS rails against “ideology” and “vanguard parties,” which boils down to outright hostility to a revolutionary, internationalist, proletarian program and the Leninist party necessary to fight for such a program. Such politics are the product of the profound retrogression in political consciousness since the 1991-92 capitalist counterrevolution that destroyed

the Soviet Union, the world’s first workers state and industrial-military powerhouse of the non-capitalist world. This was a world historic defeat for the working class and oppressed. Just as we fought for unconditional military defense of the USSR and Eastern European deformed workers states against capitalist counter-revolution and imperialist attacks until the bitter end, today we defend those countries where capitalism has been overthrown—China, Cuba, North Korea and Vietnam.

Our model is the Bolshevik Party under V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky which led the Russian Revolution of October 1917, placing the working class in power and emancipating one-sixth of the surface of the earth from imperialist capitalist exploitation. We fight for new October revolutions in this imperialist “belly of the beast” and internationally. If you want to put an end to this system of imperialist war, racism, oppression and exploitation, check out the SYC!

We reprint below a 1 June letter by the Los Angeles Spartacus Youth Club to L.A. City Attorney Rocky Delgadillo protesting the charges against the protesters.

The Spartacus Youth Club vehemently protests the arrest of Anna Sterling, David Chavez, Juliet Ovalle, Gloria Negrete-Lopez, Josh Galang, Noah Ebner, Nathan Wright, Cheye-Ann Corona, Mark Columbus, Heather Shapiro, Rob Sierakowski, Alberto Ortiz, Kimberly Torres, Diane Valencia and two other protesters at a protest initiated by the SDS and Student Worker Front at the May 14 UC Regents meeting at UCLA. We demand that all charges be dropped now! Students from several UC campuses attended the Regents meeting and were rightly outraged when the finance committee voted for a huge 7.4% increase in student fees. The campus police were quickly called in by the Regents to silence the students’ dissent. Sixteen of the protesters were handcuffed, physically removed, arrested and charged with “willful disturbance of a public meeting.” In at least one instance, several cops violently forced a protester to the ground and then slapped him with an additional charge of resisting arrest. These youth are under attack for protesting for the right to an education for black, minority, and poor students. Drop all the charges now! ■



Schabert/L.A. Times

Striking University of California workers from AFSCME Local 3299, July 14.

MOVE...

(continued from page 2)

by Delbert’s savage beating, captured by news cameras and televised in slow motion, ultimately led to a federal civil rights lawsuit and indictments against three of the cops. When chilling photos of the beating appeared in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 400 cops picketed the newspaper. After the assault, the police completely bulldozed the house, destroying evidence of their own wrongdoing and proving that the MOVE members’ only “crime” was to survive.

The Philadelphia in which the MOVE organization emerged in 1972 was a racist hellhole lorded over by a force of killer cops led by Frank Rizzo, first as deputy police commissioner, then commissioner and later mayor. Any expression of black dissent was met with brutal police repression, centrally meted out by Philadelphia’s notorious “red squad”—the Civil Affairs unit—and the “Stakeout” squad, an urban death squad of police sharpshooters. For the cops, arbitrary stops, beatings and arrests of MOVE members were standard procedure. In 1973-74, some 40 MOVE members were arrested 150 times, fined approximately \$15,000 and given sentences of up to several years in jail. In 1976, blackjack-wielding cops descended on a MOVE celebration, and in the resulting melee Janine Africa’s

newborn infant was trampled to death.

In 1978, then-District Attorney Edward Rendell declared that the police would have been “within their rights to have, subsequent to the shooting of Officer Ramp, stormed the house and killed all of the 12 people in the basement.” In August 1981, nine MOVE members including Delbert Africa were sentenced to prison terms of 30 to 100 years on false charges stemming from the death of Ramp. At the time, standing alone among journalists in defense of MOVE was Mumia Abu-Jamal, who is today America’s foremost class-war prisoner (see article, page 12). By the time of the 1978 assault, Mumia had already interviewed victims of police brutality and was acquiring a reputation as the “voice of the voiceless.” In December 1981, only months after the MOVE 9 conviction, Mumia himself was arrested on false charges of killing Officer Daniel Faulkner and sentenced to death explicitly for his political views. The D.A. Rendell, who prosecuted the MOVE 9 and Mumia Abu-Jamal, is Pennsylvania’s current governor and a leading player in the national Democratic Party. 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. ***Free Mumia now!***

On 13 May 1985, the MOVE prisoners watched in horror from their Pennsylvania cells as the Philadelphia police under

black Democratic mayor Wilson Goode, in league with federal authorities, came to finish the job they had started in 1978, dropping a high-powered explosive bomb on MOVE’s Osage Avenue home. Eleven people, including five children, were burnt to death and an entire black neighborhood was left in smoldering ruins. This coordinated act of racist state murder must never be forgotten.

In 1998, Merle Africa of the MOVE 9 died in prison, having spent nearly 20 years behind bars. Despite persistent persecution and repeated harassment, the MOVE members have remained strong and outspoken, steadfast fighters not only for their own freedom but also for the freedom of Mumia Abu-Jamal. This year, for the first time since their imprisonment 30 years ago, the eight surviving members of the MOVE 9 became eligible for parole, and already Debbie Africa, Janine Africa, Janet Africa, Eddie Africa, Phil Africa, Delbert Africa and Michael Africa have been turned down. Chuck Africa is eligible for a hearing later this year. It is an outrage that these men and women have spent a day in jail. They are innocent survivors of premeditated police assaults. ***For the immediate, unconditional release of all the MOVE prisoners!***

In denying parole to Janine Africa, Janet Africa and Debbie Africa, the parole board stated that the MOVE prisoners “refused to accept responsibility” and, according to the *Inquirer*, “lacked re-

morse” (Philly.com, 22 April). As the PDC noted in a March 6 protest letter to the parole board calling for the release of the MOVE prisoners (see “Parole Hearing Approaches: Free the MOVE Prisoners!” WV No. 910, 14 March): “We are mindful that a common ruse for denying parole for those who have been falsely convicted is the claimed failure to show ‘remorse.’ Having committed no crime, the imprisoned MOVE members have no reason to demonstrate any so-called ‘remorse.’”

The sinister web of police surveillance, violence and frame-ups that succeeded in entrapping the MOVE 9 and Mumia Abu-Jamal is no aberration. Terrorizing the besieged black and Latino populations is precisely the job the cops are paid to do, and the courts enforce legal lynch rope “justice” in the service of the American racist capitalist exploiters. Like other urban centers, Philadelphia is a concentrated expression of racist American capitalism. The U.S. bourgeois order is rooted in the segregation of black people at the bottom of society, with the color bar serving to obscure and reinforce the irreconcilable class division between labor and capital. It will take a workers revolution to put the capitalist state’s machinery of torture and death out of business once and for all and to bring to justice the hired thugs of the capitalist class who have committed untold numbers of crimes against the working class and minorities. ■

OLIVER CROMWELL AND THE ENGLISH REVOLUTION

ABOLISH THE MONARCHY, THE HOUSE OF LORDS AND THE ESTABLISHED CHURCHES!



Portrait by Robert Walker

We reprint below an article that originally appeared in *Workers Hammer* No. 184 (Spring 2003), the newspaper of the Spartacist League/Britain, section of the International Communist League.

Speaking last month at a “People’s Assembly” convened to protest parliament’s support for the war on Iraq, “left” Labour MP [Member of Parliament] George Galloway complained that “we have a parliament that is not speaking for Britain,” a view echoed by Chris Nineham of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) who moaned that Blair was “negating democracy.” The illusion that Her Majesty’s parliament *ought* to represent “the people” has been handed down

WORKERS HAMMER

for generations. But the question is, whose interest does Parliament serve? And what is the nature of the “democracy” that the British ruling class claims to have invented in Westminster and upheld since time immemorial?

The single most important event in British history was the seventeenth-century English Revolution. This shaped British capitalism, made possible the industrial revolution in the eighteenth century and laid the foundation for England, a small nation in the seventeenth century, to master the world in the nineteenth. As a result, by 1914 the British ruling class ruled over more than one-fifth of humanity. The British bourgeoisie came to power in a revolution that overthrew the feudal order—the monarchy, the old feudal land-owning aristocracy and the established Anglican Church.

However the capitalist class that came to power never forgot that Cromwell’s army mobilised the “lower orders,” and that it was they who made sure the Civil War was fought to the finish, resulting in the defeat of the old order. To this day the British ruling class, aided by Her Majesty’s Labour Party, rewrites history to erase all trace of revolution and civil war, which according to them must never happen again. School students are taught that Oliver Cromwell’s Roundheads fought King Charles I and his Cavaliers in the 1640s, and that the King’s head was cut off. But bloody civil war and regicide was an “excess.” The episode was merely a “constitutional” dispute between King and Parliament, in which Parliament triumphed and established its sovereignty over the monarchy. The period between the execution of the King in 1649 and the restoration of the monarchy in 1660 is described as an “interregnum.” The “Glorious Revolution” of 1688 is so called because there was no bloodshed and no mobilisation of the lower classes. In reality it was the removal of a king (James II of England) who overstepped the mark and acted as though the revolution had never happened.

Ever since the Cromwellian revolution, “Her Majesty’s Parliament” has been an

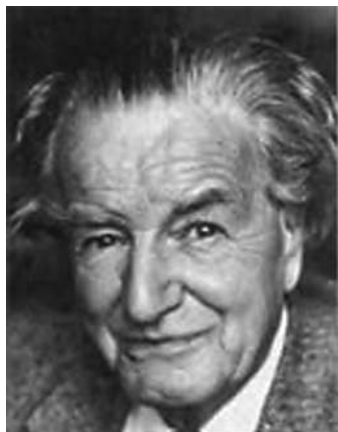
instrument of bourgeois rule and for the suppression of struggles for the emancipation of the working class. The capitalist order has long been obsolete, just as the feudal system had become outmoded by the seventeenth century. And in order for the proletariat to prepare its historic task—the overthrow of the capitalist order—there is much to be learned from the English bourgeois revolution. The old feudal ruling class did not exit gracefully from the scene, and neither will the capitalist class relinquish power without a fight. This will require class struggle on a mass scale, pursued to the end, and must culminate in a thoroughgoing socialist revolution.

To study the English Revolution is to read Christopher Hill, the outstanding historian of Cromwellian England who died in February. Hill devoted his life’s work to rescuing the history of the English Revolution from oblivion at the hands of those who churn out “gradualist” accounts of British history. Hill’s literary output began in 1940 with the essay, *The English Revolution of 1640*, which asserted that “the English Revolution of 1640-60 was a great social movement like the French revolution of 1789.” He argued that:

“Ever since then [1660] orthodox historians have done their utmost to stress the ‘continuity’ of English history, to minimise the revolutionary breaks, to pretend that the ‘interregnum’ (the word itself shows what they are trying to do) was an unfortunate accident, that in 1660 we returned to the old Constitution normally developing, that 1688 merely corrected the aberrations of a deranged King. Whereas, in fact, the period 1640-60 saw the destruction of one kind of state and the introduction of a new political structure within which capitalism could freely develop. For tactical reasons, the ruling class in 1660 *pretended* that they were merely restoring the old forms of the Constitution. But they intended by that restoration to give sanctity and social stamp to a new social order. The important thing is that the social order was new and would not have been won without revolution.”

—*The English Revolution of 1640*

In Honor of Christopher Hill 1912–2003



Weekly Worker

Hill went on to become Master of Balliol College in Oxford, but stuck to his original thesis and published a variety of superb books. His commanding sweep of the social, political and cultural history of seventeenth-century England resulted in books such as: *The Century of Revolution, 1603-1714*; *The World Turned Upside Down*; *God’s Englishman*; a series called *People and Ideas in 17th Century England* and many more. Hill provides an orthodox Marxist account of the revolutionary period. He highlights the role played by radical democratic movements such as the Levellers and the Diggers (or True Levellers) whose programme expressed the most radical and enlightened views of their time. The Levellers represented the lower classes, who at the time were the lowest levels of the petty bourgeoisie, including the craftsmen and apprentices of London. Christopher Hill shows that, had it not been for the influence of the Levellers, it is unlikely that Charles I would have been beheaded in 1649.

The lessons of the English Revolution are as relevant for today’s new generation of political activists who despise Blair’s Labour Party and parliament as they were when Trotsky urged British workers to study Cromwell’s revolution, as an antidote to the Labourite view of British history as “gradualism.” Those youth who have no desire to be duped by the SWP, Workers Power or the Socialist Party into supporting parliamentary reformism through an alliance with Labour “lefts” ought to relish Trotsky’s 1925 essay *Where Is Britain Going?*, a delightfully savage polemic against Labourite gradualism. He evokes Carlyle, Cromwell’s biographer, who noted that his job was to drag out the Lord Protector from under a mountain of dead dogs, meaning a huge load of calumny and oblivion. Trotsky said that “British workers can learn incomparably more from Cromwell than from MacDonald, Snowden, Webb” (Labour leaders of the time) and added that:

“Cromwell was a great revolutionary of his time, who knew how to uphold the interests of the new, bourgeois social system against the old aristocratic one *without holding back at anything*. This must be learnt from him, and the dead lion of the seventeenth century is in this sense immeasurably greater than many living dogs.”

—*Where Is Britain Going?*

Trotsky railed against “left” Labour leaders for their religiosity, cowardice and servility to the monarchy—as he put it, they “dare not refuse pocket money to the Prince of Wales.” The monarchy is an integral part of the “parliamentary democracy” that Labour leaders revere. One of the few Labour figures today who professes to oppose the monarchy is Tony Benn, and he’s a member (for life) of the Queen’s Privy Council, a secret body whose members swear “by Almighty God to be a true and faithful servant unto The Queen’s Majesty”! Benn’s “anti-monarchism” makes us Red Republicans look longingly on the day when Oliver Cromwell summoned his troops to dis-

perse the Long Parliament with the words, “call them in, call them in.”

While he was a young student at Oxford in the mid 1930s, Christopher Hill joined the Communist Party, as indeed did many youth who were radicalised by the rise of the Nazis in Germany and by the Spanish Civil War. This was a time when the capitalist world was beset by the Great Depression, yet the Soviet Union was undergoing dramatic economic development. In Britain there was mass disaffection with Labour’s betrayals, precipitated by Labour leader Ramsay MacDonald joining a “National Government” in 1931. But while the British Communist Party that Hill joined was distrusted by the British bourgeoisie for its loyalty to the Kremlin, it nonetheless was a party of parliamentary reformism. Posthumously, Hill is being accused of having spied for the Soviet Union in the period during World War II when he worked in military intelligence and at the Foreign Office. For the British establishment and their Labour Party lackeys, this is the ultimate betrayal. Spying for the Soviet Union against an imperialist power, if indeed he did, is certainly no crime as far as we Trotskyists are concerned. The Soviet Union emerged out of the Bolshevik October 1917 revolution and continued to embody the gains of that revolution despite the political counterrevolution that took place in 1923-24 with the rise to power of the conservative Stalinist bureaucracy. For this reason we defended the Soviet Union and fought tooth and nail against the capitalist counterrevolution of 1991-92. We don’t know what Christopher Hill did in World War II. But given that he openly professed his Marxist sympathies, it seems unlikely that he could have played a role comparable to heroic Soviet spies Kim Philby, Guy Burgess, Donald Maclean and Anthony Blunt, his contemporaries and comrades who were recruited at Cambridge.

Hill was outstanding even among Communist Party historians such as E. P. Thompson, Eric Hobsbawm, A. L. Morton and Rodney Hilton who were his peers. He wrote cogent history because he mainly restricted his work to seventeenth-century England, on which there was no Stalinist line. One exception is Hill’s 1947 book *Lenin and the Russian Revolution*, which is inferior to any of his works on the English Revolution. He denies Trotsky’s role alongside Lenin as co-leader of the Russian Revolution while elevating Stalin to great heights.

Class Forces in the Civil War

Key to understanding the English Revolution is recognising the class forces in conflict. On the side of King Charles I were the old feudal landed aristocracy and the Anglican Church. The latter became the official church with the Reformation against the Catholic Church a century earlier, which also led to much political power (and land) passing to the Crown. The fifteenth-century Wars of the

Roses, in which overmighty and some mighty nobles killed each other, had the virtue of reducing the old feudal lords.

Outside of England, the Catholic Church dominated the feudal world and was the main bulwark against social, economic and scientific progress. As Europe emerged from the Middle Ages, the nascent merchant capitalist class was forced into a collision with the feudal system. Friedrich Engels described the role of the Catholic Church:

“The great international centre of feudalism was the Roman Catholic Church. It united the whole of feudalized Western Europe, in spite of all internal wars, into one grand political system, opposed as much to the schismatic Greeks as to the Mohammedan countries. It surrounded feudal institutions with the halo of divine consecration. It had organised its own hierarchy on the feudal model, and, lastly, it was itself by far the most powerful feudal lord, holding, as it did, fully one-third of the soil of the Catholic world. Before profane feudalism could be successfully attacked in each country and in detail, this, its sacred central organization, had to be destroyed.”
—Introduction to the English edition of *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* (1892)

During his reign, Charles I connived with the Catholic absolutist monarchies of Europe, including through his queen, Henrietta Maria of France. The grip of the Crown and Church on the populace in England would be difficult to overstate: the king ruled by “Divine Right”; both Church and Crown operated their own courts; non-attendance at one’s local parish church was punishable by law and church taxes were levied in the amount of one-tenth (a tithe) of one’s produce or profit. The dominant force on the Parliamentary side was the rising Presbyterian bourgeoisie based on the City of London and the merchant capitalists who had been accumulating vast amounts of capital. This class dominated the House of Commons, which had become three times as rich as the House of Lords. But the feudal system was an enormous barrier to the expansion of trade and industry and thus the merchant capitalists were compelled to remove these fetters on their profit accumulation. Parallel with the rise of capitalism went developments in science, and the capitalists needed science, which gave them added impetus to rebel against the Established Church.

In the countryside, the encroachment of capitalist economic relations meant higher rents for tenants. Lower sections of the landed gentry—from which Cromwell hailed—were being squeezed by the big feudal landowners. Also pitted against the feudal nobility were the yeomen—a stratum of independent farmers—who became the backbone of Cromwell’s army, as well as petty-bourgeois layers—small producers and craftsmen. The majority of wage-earners in England at the time were domestic servants and there was no industrial working class to speak of. The radical wing of the Parliamentary side, known as the “Independents,” came into



Beheading of Charles I in 1649. Regicide marked overthrow of feudal order in England.

conflict with the conservative Presbyterians, while Cromwell occupied an intermediate position between these two wings.

Cromwell’s Army, Instrument of Revolution

England in 1641 was crisis-ridden: the Royalists pulled out of Parliament because it would not do their bidding; a wave of riots against the enclosure of common land engulfed the countryside and an uprising in Ireland provoked a major crisis. In this context civil war between Parliamentarians and Royalists erupted in 1642. The Presbyterian bourgeois elements were alarmed by the social forces unleashed in the countryside against land seizures. The Royalists had created their own army, but the “Parliamentary” side tried to avoid doing likewise, hoping at first to leave the task of defeating the Royalists to the Scots, with whom Parliament signed a “Solemn League and Covenant” in 1643.

However in the course of battle Cromwell became convinced of the need for an army that would decisively defeat the Royalists. In 1645 he founded the New Model Army which became the decisive force in the revolution. In it he welded together yeomen, peasants and labouring classes of the cities—who had already engaged in effective battles against the Royalists—into a disciplined army. The New Model Army cut across aristocratic disdain for the “lower orders” by promoting men according to merit, up to the rank of general, which was normally the preserve of the nobility. Cromwell famously said: “I had rather have a plain russet-coated captain that knows what he fights

for and loves what he knows than what you call a gentleman and is nothing else” (quoted in *God’s Englishman*).

The “Protestant work ethic” played an enormous role in the rise of capitalism by providing an ideology that was tailor-made for the rise of a system based on private property. Calvinism was the clearest expression of this “work ethic” and Puritanism, the ideology of Oliver Cromwell and the yeomen, was heavily influenced by Calvinism. Puritanism emphasised the virtue of hard work, thrift, self-discipline and individual merit, over factors such as “noble birth.” The Puritans opposed the Presbyterians’ involvement in enclosures—the seizure of common lands from peasants by declaring it to be private property. Hill cites a Puritan tract urging Presbyterian gentlemen to “first go hang yourselves for your great thefts of enclosures and oppressions, and then afterwards you can go hang your poor brethren for petty thefts” (quoted in *The World Turned Upside Down*). A variety of small Protestant sects, tending to represent more radical social layers, emerged with the rise of capitalism. Because they favoured the right to choose one’s own religion and some regarded women as equal, they were persecuted as subversive. Within the army ranks there was considerable tolerance for these views and Cromwell’s army became a vehicle for major changes in many areas of social life.

The New Model Army inflicted crushing defeats on the Royalists, culminating in the battle of Naseby in 1645 in which they captured the King. With victory in their grasp, the conservative bourgeois elements in Parliament sought a compromise with the Royalists. This outraged the army ranks who, under the influence of the Levellers, were becoming politically independent. The Levellers organised a system of elected Agitators and acquired a substantial following in army regiments. With the King’s fate now hanging in the balance, Christopher Hill describes the situation as one in which: “Army and Parliament now existed side by side as rival powers in the State” (*The English Revolution of 1640*).

In June 1647 Parliament tried to disperse the army regiments, ordering them to enlist for Ireland or face immediate dismissal. The ranks mutinied, the Agitators seized the King, held him captive and led a march on London. This led to the ultimate nightmare scenario for every fat-headed Parliamentarian: the revolutionary army purged Parliament of its main conciliators, causing all the Presbyterians to flee from “the House.” Parliament subsequently assigned Oliver Cromwell to negotiate with the mutinous ranks. The Agitators met Cromwell and demanded that he should lead the army, while making clear that, if he chose not to, they

“would go their own way without him.” Cromwell and the generals made a deal with the Levellers and Cromwell resumed command of the army.

Trotsky’s *History of the Russian Revolution* (1931) referred to this stage of the English Revolution, describing it as “dual power” between Parliament and the army. He noted:

“It would seem that the conditions are now created for the single rule of the Presbyterian bourgeoisie. But before the Royal power could be broken, the parliamentary army has converted itself into an independent political force. It has concentrated in its ranks the Independents, the pious and resolute petit bourgeoisie, the craftsmen and farmers. This army powerfully interferes in social life, not merely as an armed force, but as a Praetorian Guard, and as the political representative of a new class opposing the prosperous and rich bourgeoisie. Correspondingly the army creates a new state organ rising above the military command: a council of soldiers’ and officers’ deputies (‘agitators’). A new period of ‘double sovereignty’ has thus arrived: that of the Presbyterian Parliament and the Independents’ army. This leads to open conflicts. The bourgeoisie proves powerless to oppose with its own army the ‘model army’ of Cromwell—that is, the armed plebeians. The conflict ends with a purgation of the Presbyterian Parliament by the sword of the Independents. There remains but the rump of a parliament; the dictatorship of Cromwell is established.”

Political debates between the Levellers and the generals raged within the army, most famously at Putney in London in November 1647. The very idea that soldiers could argue with their officers was unheard of. The Levellers argued for equality between rich and poor, expressed in the phrase by Colonel Rainborough that “the poorest he that is in England has a life to live as the greatest he”; to which Ireton, Cromwell’s son-in-law responded: “liberty cannot be provided for in a general sense, if property be preserved” (quoted in *The Century of Revolution*). The Levellers’ most radical democratic demands were in advance of the social and economic conditions of the time and of the social forces that could realise them.

The King’s Head Rolls

The immediate possibility of a split in the army was averted when the King escaped (or was freed) which reignited the civil war. Throughout 1648 Cromwell’s army inflicted defeats on the Royalists in England and Wales; they also defeated a pro-Royalist army from Scotland that threatened to invade. Once again, Colonel Thomas Pride purged Parliament of those who continued to seek a compromise with the King. However this time the army leadership in London, in alliance with the Levellers, also decided to put the King on trial, which meant he would be sentenced to death. This was done while Cromwell was finishing off the military campaign in the north of England. Upon his return, Cromwell hesitated before endorsing the regicide, although hardly out of principle—he is reputed to have told his soldiers earlier that he “would as soon discharge his pistol upon [the King] as at any other private
continued on page 8



Oliver Cromwell confronts Parliament in 1653, during short-lived English republic following execution of Charles I.

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PDC international protest campaign

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Cromwell...

(continued from page 7)

person” (quoted in *God’s Englishman*). When Cromwell made his mind up, he wholeheartedly supported the execution of Charles I, declaring: “I tell you we will cut off his head with the crown on it.”

On 30 January 1649 the King was executed, along with other leading Royalists. The regicide marked the decisive defeat for the feudal order in England. And as the first revolution of its kind, the significance of this victory was enormous. In March the monarchy and House of Lords were formally abolished and England became a republic. Compared to later revolutions, it had many limitations but judged by the conditions of its time, it was unprecedented. Common Law was adopted and although this was no equivalent of the Code Napoleon introduced by the French Revolution it was a major advance from “Royal Prerogative.” The Star Chamber court was abolished and although separation of church and state was not achieved, a measure of Protestant religious dissent was allowed. Christopher Hill eloquently captured what was meant by religious toleration, and how it was achieved, saying: “Cromwell, [by] stabling in cathedrals the horses of the most disciplined and most democratic cavalry the world had yet seen, won a victory which for ever stopped men being flogged and branded for having unorthodox views about the Communion service” (*The English Revolution of 1640*).

Oliver Cromwell died on 3 September 1658, as Lord Protector, having refused the Crown. However, the revolution and civil war had established bourgeois rule and even though the monarchy was restored in 1660 there would be no going back to the situation where the feudal nobles ruled over the bourgeoisie. The power of the monarchy that was restored had been drastically curbed. Trotsky pointed out that, underneath the struggles between Cromwell and Parliament, Cromwell had created a new society and that this could not be undone by decrees of parliament. He explained:

“In dispersing parliament after parliament Cromwell displayed as little reverence toward the fetish of ‘national’ representation as in the execution of Charles I he had displayed insufficient respect for a monarchy by the grace of God. Nevertheless it was this same Cromwell who paved the way for the parliamentarism and democracy of the two subsequent centuries. In revenge for Cromwell’s execution of Charles I, Charles II swung Cromwell’s corpse up on the gallows. But pre-Cromwellian society could not be re-established by the restoration. The works of Cromwell could not be liquidated by the thievish legislation of the Restoration because what is written by the sword cannot be wiped out by the pen.”

—Where Is Britain Going?

Having Brought Revolution to England, Cromwell Brings Tyranny to Ireland

The execution of Charles I so alarmed the bourgeoisie that within days they reopened negotiations with the Royalists. The latter were regrouping and were actively engaged in battle in Ireland. In March 1649 Parliament nominated Cromwell to command an invasion of Ireland. The prospect of being shipped to Ireland provoked a Leveller revolt in the army, as had happened in 1647, but this time on a much larger scale. However this time Cromwell and his generals did not side with the mutineers. As Hill says the generals “were now the government; and the government decided Ireland had to be subdued once and for all” (*God’s Englishman*). Cromwell and the generals crushed the Levellers at Burford; Leveller leaders were arrested and four were executed.

This was a turning point in Cromwell’s revolution. The bourgeoisie heartily endorsed Cromwell’s suppression of the Levellers: he was given an honorary degree by Oxford University, heretofore a bastion of Royalism, and the City Fathers in London threw a banquet in his honour. Rooting out the Levellers from the ranks of the army was seen by the bourgeoisie as necessary preparation

for the upcoming invasion of Ireland. This showed that the bourgeois revolution was progressive when it was ascendant because, however reluctantly, the capitalists were pitted against feudalism and backwardness. But when the bourgeoisie took power, the progressive content soon gave way to reaction as the capitalist class consolidated its hold on power.

In September 1649, when Cromwell invaded Ireland, Royalist forces from outside were also converging there. Charles Stuart—who would later become Charles II of England—arrived in Jersey en route for Ireland and leading Royalist general Prince Rupert, nephew of Charles I, was waiting off the Irish coast. However, Cromwell’s campaign in Ireland was not only carried out to defeat the Royalists

“English reaction in Ireland (as in Cromwell’s time) had its roots in the subjugation of Ireland” (Letter to Engels, 10 December 1869). Cromwell’s army conquered Ireland, crushed the resistance and seized two-thirds of the land. In addition, Cromwell encouraged colonial settlement of Ireland, particularly from among Leveller-influenced regiments in his army, as a way of dispersing troublemakers.

The fact that Cromwell’s army had brought progress and liberation from the yoke of absolutism to England, yet offered nothing but brutal colonisation to Ireland, seems contradictory at first. But the same phenomenon can be seen for example when we look at the impact of the French revolutionary regime in Haiti, a French colony. The French Revolution

had to be conducted in the first instance against the Catholic Church, the centre of feudal reaction. In Ireland, Catholics and Protestants, English and Irish fought on the Royalist side against Cromwell. But there was little incentive for Catholics to fight on the Parliamentary side, since Cromwell’s Puritanism condemned all Catholics as enemies. In Cromwell’s England, Jews returned for the first time since they were driven out in 1290, but there was no religious tolerance for Catholics.

Hill also points to the prevalence of anti-Irish prejudice in England, saying: “The hatred and contempt which proper-tied Englishmen felt for the Irish is something which we may deplore but should not conceal” (*God’s Englishman*), adding that this was shared even by the poet Milton, who was far from a reactionary. Milton was a leading ideologue whose poem *Paradise Lost* refers to the wave of reaction that accompanied the end of the republic and the restoration of the monarchy. For his defence of the regicides, Milton himself risked execution.

The Levellers often expressed solidarity with the people of Ireland—William Walwyn was of the view that, “the cause of the Irish natives in seeking their just freedoms...was the very same with our cause here in endeavouring our own rescue and freedom from the power of oppressors” (quoted in *The World Turned Upside Down*). The Levellers had a radical-democratic programme calling for abolition of the monarchy and House of Lords; free trade, freedom from monopolies, freedom from conscription, opening of enclosed lands, disestablishment of the church, abolition of tithes. The Diggers, who also had popular support, opposed private property and called for the abolition of wage labour while experimenting with communal farming. But the yeomen and craftsmen who were the base of the Levellers and Diggers were petty-bourgeois, and therefore lacked the cohesion and social power to take on and defeat the bourgeoisie. The birth of the factory proletariat was still far in the future. However, the Levellers earned their place in history for what they did achieve—it was thanks to their radical programme that the bourgeois revolution achieved what *was* possible at the time, namely the execution of the King, the abolition of the monarchy and establishment of a democratic republic.

Paradoxically, the bourgeois revolution would lead to the destruction of the yeomen who fought most valiantly for its victory. As Friedrich Engels explained in 1892, this applies to the bourgeois revolutions in France and Germany as well. He says:

“Curiously enough, in all the three great bourgeois risings, the peasantry furnishes the army that has to do the fighting; and the peasantry is just the class that, the victory once gained, is most surely ruined by the economic consequences of that victory. A hundred years after Cromwell, the yeomanry of Eng-



WV Photo
Above: Spartacists at 1980 New York City protest against Prince Philip’s visit. Left: British Communist Party’s 1922 cartoon of Labour Party leader Arthur Henderson and Leon Trotsky before statue of Oliver Cromwell contrasts Labourite reformism to Bolsheviks’ revolutionary policy.

and was not simply an extension of the English Civil War on Irish terrain. From the time of the 1641 uprising in Ireland—before the Civil War—both Royalists and Parliament agreed that Ireland must be subordinated to England, the only question was which side would command the English army that would carry this out. As an added incentive for a military conquest, Parliament had passed an “Adventurers Act” in 1642 inviting English moneymen to “invest” in the army, in return for which they were guaranteed Irish land. Under this scheme Cromwell himself had loaned over 2,000 pounds and had been promised land in Leinster.

Cromwell’s military campaign in Ireland was designed to colonise Ireland with settlers, by seizing land from Catholic landowners, who were sent to Connaught. Tenants were offered the choice of going with the landlord, or remaining to serve the new lord as “hewers of wood and drawers of water.” Cromwell also instituted severe repression for the 1641 uprising. For sheer brutality his campaign is regarded to this day as the most repressive English invasion ever. It has also been seized upon ever since by supporters of Catholic reaction and Royalism, as an example of the barbarity of what they termed the “regicide republic.” A Jesuit historian, Father Denis Murphy, became the leading Irish authority on Cromwell’s campaign. In 1883 he published fabricated tales about Cromwell’s indiscriminate slaughter of women and children, to inflate the death toll of this already bloody campaign. Judged by military standards of the day, and of the Civil War battles in England and Scotland, Cromwell’s policy was ruthless (though not indiscriminate). His army demanded the surrender of the garrisons at Drogheda and Wexford and when this was refused he took no prisoners but put to death all men at arms, including Catholic clergy.

Christopher Hill aptly describes Cromwell’s conquest of Ireland as “the first big triumph of English imperialism and the first big defeat of English democracy” (*The English Revolution of 1640*). In this he echoes Karl Marx who said in 1869 that

itself had inspired a slave rebellion in Haiti that struck fear into the slave-masters and property-owning classes. However, the class that came to power in France under the banner of “liberty, equality and fraternity” was the bourgeoisie and the new rulers were horrified at the prospect of abolishing slavery in Haiti, because the wealth of the leading capitalists in France depended on the enormous profits that flowed out of the Antilles. For the same reason, the relationship of Cromwellian England to Ireland would necessarily be oppressive because the determining factor was the profit the English capitalists raked in from its Irish colony, where the London-Derry Company had been established before Cromwell’s reign.

The fact that the bulk of the Irish poor were Catholic certainly added to the hatred displayed by Cromwell’s troops. It is true that the struggle against feudalism

SPARTACIST LEAGUE/U.S.

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Afghanistan...

(continued from page 1)

of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist), stood for the military defense of Afghanistan and Iraq against imperialist attack without giving any political support to the reactionary, woman-hating Taliban cutthroats or the capitalist dictatorship of Saddam Hussein. We underlined that every victory for the imperialists in their military adventures encourages more predatory wars; every setback serves to assist the struggles of working people and the oppressed the world over. Today, we call for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. troops and bases from Iraq, Afghanistan and Central Asia!

As proletarian-internationalist opponents of U.S. imperialism, we recognize that when the insurgents in Iraq and Afghanistan aim their blows against the U.S. occupiers and their lackeys, such acts coincide with the interests of the international proletariat. But we do not imbue the forces presently organizing guerrilla attacks on U.S. forces with “anti-imperialist” credentials.

We warn that in the absence of working-class struggle in Iraq and internationally against the occupation, the victory of one or another of the reactionary clerical forces is likely to come about through an alliance with U.S. imperialism. We are intransigent opponents of the murderous communal violence against other ethnic, religious and national populations often-times carried out by the very same forces fighting the occupation armies. And we condemn the kidnappings and executions of foreign civilian workers in Iraq. As we wrote in “The Left and the ‘Iraqi Resistance’—U.S. Out of Iraq Now!” (WV No. 830, 6 August 2004):

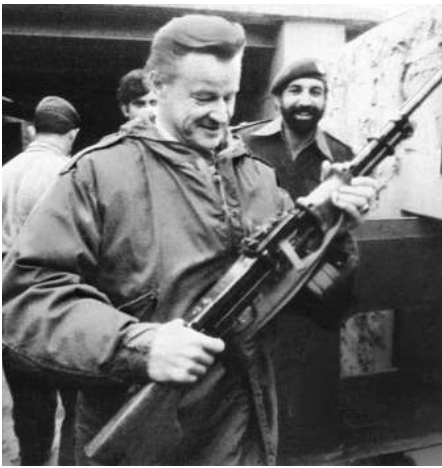
“Equitable resolution of the democratic rights of all the peoples of Iraq, and the Near East more broadly, cannot be achieved under capitalism but only with the overthrow of bourgeois rule in the region and the establishment of a socialist federation of the Near East. This is the Trotskyist program of permanent revolution. This means combining the struggle against the occupation with a struggle against all manner of bourgeois nationalism and religious fundamentalism, and poses the urgent need to forge Marxist parties to lead the struggles for the working people to come to power throughout the region. International extension of the revolution to the rich centers of imperialism—the United States, Germany, Japan

land had almost disappeared. Anyhow, had it not been for the yeomanry and for the *plebeian* element in the towns, the bourgeoisie alone would never have fought the matter out to the bitter end, and would never have brought Charles I to the scaffold. In order to secure even those conquests of the bourgeoisie that were ripe for gathering at the time, the revolution had to be carried considerably further—exactly as in 1793 in France and 1848 in Germany. This seems, in fact, to be one of the laws of evolution of bourgeois society.”

—Introduction to the English edition of *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*

Following a war with the Dutch republic in the early 1650s, England took control of shipping to and from the colonies, which now included Jamaica. The Navigation Acts of the early 1650s laid the foundation for British domination of the seas. Cromwell’s rule paved the way for development of British capitalism over the next two centuries to the point where it would become the “world’s number one superpower.” Beginning around the end of the nineteenth century, British capitalism went into steep decline relative to its rivals in the United States and Germany. In its prolonged decline, British imperialism has been preserved by Labour reformism, which has been implacably hostile to every revolutionary movement of the proletariat. But they cannot bury the revolutionary traditions.

In the nineteenth century, the young proletariat produced a revolutionary movement known as the Chartists, who picked up many of the ideas of the Levellers and Diggers. In 1848 Marx and Engels pub-



Ledru/Sygma

—is vital, or, as Marx noted, ‘all the old crap’ will return.”

We have stressed from the beginning that the chief means of defending neocolonial Afghanistan and Iraq against the overwhelming military might of American imperialism and its allies is through *international working-class struggle*, especially by the multiracial U.S. proletariat. The bombings in Afghanistan and the devastation of Iraq have gone hand in hand with the capitalist rulers’ onslaught against working people, minorities and most everyone else domestically. The “war on terror” that served as the pretext for the occupations has led to the shredding of democratic rights and a massive increase in the repressive powers of the capitalist state.

The perspective of class struggle against the capitalist rulers at home requires a political struggle against the trade-union bureaucracy, which supports the capitalist system and its political parties. A clear example of the role of the labor bureaucracy was the political basis on which the West Coast port shutdown by the ILWU longshore union on May Day against the U.S. occupation of Iraq (but *not* of Afghanistan) was carried out. Coming amid ongoing contract negotiations with the Pacific Maritime Association, 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 and subordinated to the union tops’ endorsement of Obama for president. At the San Francisco May Day rally, which was politically dominated by speakers from the Democratic and Green parties, an ILWU Local 10 official read out a statement from International president Bob McEllrath declaring,

lished *The Communist Manifesto*, a programme for proletarian revolution. Subsequently they came to understand the vital importance of the fight against the colonial oppression of Ireland to the emancipation of the proletariat in England. Summarising his conclusion, Karl Marx described how his appreciation of this question changed over time:

“*It is in the direct and absolute interests of the English working class to get rid of their present connection with Ireland....* For a long time I believed it would be possible to overthrow the Irish regime by English working class ascendancy. I always took this viewpoint in the *New-York Tribune*. Deeper study has now convinced me of the opposite. The English working class *will never accomplish anything* before it has got rid of Ireland. The lever must be applied in Ireland. This is why the Irish question is so important for the social movement in general.”

—Letter to Engels, 10 December 1869

The programme for proletarian revolution outlined by Marx and Engels was carried forward, developed and implemented by Lenin’s Bolshevik Party who led the great revolution of October 1917 in the Russian Empire, the first workers revolution in history. The Bolshevik Revolution overthrew the capitalists, landlords and the tsarist autocracy and set up a new state power based on working-class rule, supported by the peasantry. To paraphrase Gerard Winstanley, a leader of the Diggers, the Bolshevik Revolution “turned the world upside down.” And our job is to build a party that will again turn the capitalist order upside down. The revolutionary proletariat in Britain will

Left: Carter’s national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski at Khyber Pass overlooking Afghanistan, 1980. Ronald Reagan meets with reactionary Afghan *mujahedin* at White House, 1983. U.S. imperialists armed and financed Islamic fundamentalist terrorists against Soviet Union.



UPI

“We’re standing up for America, we’re supporting the troops.... We’re loyal to America.” Such vile “America first” chauvinism was a pledge of allegiance to the bloody U.S. occupiers against the peoples of Iraq and Afghanistan.

For their part, the various antiwar coalitions—United for Peace and Justice, ANSWER, Troops Out Now and Not In Our Name—were built by the reformist left on a class-collaborationist and social-patriotic basis, preaching the lie that imperialist war can be ended under capitalism. The purpose of these coalitions has been to forge a political alliance with “peace loving” sections of the bourgeoisie, i.e., liberal Democrats. Thus, such actions as were organized by these coalitions never called for military defense of Iraq and Afghanistan against American imperialism, limiting their slogans to pacifist “No to War” appeals to the imperialist rulers.

In June, a range of fake leftists such as Socialist Action, the International Socialist Organization (ISO), the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL) and Workers World joined with an array of liberals at a gathering in Cleveland dubbed the “National Assembly to End the Iraq War and Occupation.” Endorsers included the Progressive Democrats of America and Cynthia McKinney, presidential candidate of the bourgeois Green Party. This confab was modeled on the 1970s National Peace Action Coalition (NPAC) campaign that sought to limit the protests against the Vietnam War to the pacifist demand to bring the troops home. In building the Cleveland conference, the organizers disappeared the occupation of Afghanistan in order to appeal to liberal Democrats. This is not new. During the Vietnam War, when, unlike Iraq today,

there was a struggle not only against imperialist occupation but for social revolution to overthrow the capitalist order in Vietnam, NPAC opposed the call for the military defeat of U.S. imperialism. In contrast, the Spartacist League stood for military victory to Vietnam’s workers and peasants and declared, “All Indochina Must Go Communist!”

Typically, the various “peace” coalitions call for a reordering of the bourgeoisie’s priorities: money for education, not war, etc. However, the capitalist system cannot be pressured or reformed to work in the interest of human needs. The relentless drive for profits and spheres of influence by the rulers of the U.S. and other big capitalist powers necessarily results in wars and neocolonial pillage. Imperialist aggression and war are not “policies” that can be ended within the framework of capitalism—the entire system must be overturned. Only by wresting the means of production from the hands of the capitalist imperialist rulers and creating an international planned economy can the needs of the billions of toilers now consigned to hideous poverty begin to be met and the threat of war ended once and for all.

Republicans, Democrats Ratchet Up Threats Against Iran

Two months before Obama’s visit to Baghdad, the *Christian Science Monitor* (14 May) revealed details of a meeting in early April of Iraqi president Jalal Talabani and other top Iraqi officials with Iran’s Brig. Gen. Qassen Suleimani, the head of Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guards Quds Force, a paramilitary group that American officials say is backing Shi’ite militias in Iraq. The article quoted

continued on page 10

recognise its debt to Oliver Cromwell as it establishes workers republics in Britain and in Ireland, and fights to extend working-class rule internationally. The revolutionary proletariat will take care of unfinished business: the abolition of the monarchy, the House of Lords and the established churches!

Our demands also include: British troops out of Northern Ireland and for the right of self-determination for Scotland and Wales. Together with our comrades in Ireland who fight for an Irish workers republic, our aim is a voluntary federation of workers republics in the British Isles. This will open up the pos-

sibility of social and economic development far surpassing the English Revolution and the industrial revolution. We cannot say in advance how quickly the proletarian revolution will dissolve Parliament, but we concur with Trotsky that:

“Whether the proletarian revolution will have its own ‘long’ parliament we do not know. It is highly likely that it will confine itself to a *short* parliament. However it will the more surely achieve this the better it masters the lessons of Cromwell’s era.”

—Where Is Britain Going?

We are indebted to Christopher Hill for making these lessons more accessible to us.■

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CHICAGO

With a Report on the International Campaign to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal—Join the Fight! Get Involved!

Afghanistan...
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an American official who said that Suleimani “promised to stop arming groups in Iraq and to ensure that groups halt activities against US forces” and was “willing to ‘send a small team’ to ‘discuss any issue’ with the Americans.” Indeed, Iran is credited, including by Washington’s quisling Iraqi regime, with having used its influence to have al-Mahdi Army leader Moqtada al-Sadr order his forces to stand down after fierce fighting between his Shi’ite militia and government troops earlier this year.

With their kept bourgeois media in tow, the Democrats as well as the Republicans continue to foment hysteria over Iran’s nuclear energy program. Iran is subject to three sets of UN sanctions as well as a growing number of U.S. sanctions, the first imposed 25 years ago. Obama incurred criticism by presumptive Republican candidate John McCain for saying he would negotiate with Iranian leaders, but Obama has repeatedly emphasized that he would keep “all options,” including the threat of military attack against Iran, “on the table.”

In a provocative move in early June, Israel staged a major military exercise in the Eastern Mediterranean that was widely described as a “dress rehearsal” for an attack against Iranian nuclear facilities. Iran responded in early July by test-firing long-range missiles in the Persian Gulf, including one that Tehran said had the range to reach Israel.

The signals from Washington concerning a possible attack on Iran have lately been mixed. In late June, responding to the Israeli military exercise, Admiral Michael Mullen, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, met with his counterpart in Israel. According to the Jerusalem Post (4 July), Mullen was trying “to throw cold water on any possible Israeli intentions.” At the same time, the London Sunday Telegraph (6 July) reported:

“Those familiar with the Israeli-American military talks believe that Israel is still determined to act before Iran has enough highly enriched uranium to build a bomb, and before Tehran has acquired the Russian SA-20 air defence system to protect its nuclear facilities....
“Former defence and intelligence officers who advise the Pentagon have disclosed that the US military is looking into possible outcomes for military attacks featuring varying levels of American involvement.”

Meanwhile, on July 19 a high-ranking State Department official joined negotiations between the European Union and Iran, despite the Bush administration’s insistence for years that it would not engage in direct talks unless Tehran first suspended its enrichment of uranium. U.S. officials also leaked the fact that Washington was seeking to establish a diplomatic presence in Tehran for the first time since relations were severed nearly three decades ago.

We are in no position to judge the likelihood of an impending U.S. or Israeli attack on Iran. As revolutionary opponents of U.S. imperialism, we oppose any economic sanctions against Iran, which are an act of war. The Iranian government says that it does not plan to develop the bomb. In fact, given the threats by the imperialists, it would be perfectly reasonable and necessary for Iran to pursue getting nuclear weapons and adequate delivery systems to deter attack. In today’s world, possession of nukes has become a necessary means of maintaining national sovereignty. In the event of military attack against Iran by the U.S. or by Israel—the only nuclear-armed country in the Near East—operating on behalf of the U.S., it is in the interest of the international proletariat to stand for the military defense of Iran without giving an iota of political support to the reactionary Tehran regime.

A protest endorsed by a host of reformist groups, including the RCP’s World Can’t Wait (WCW) coalition, has been called for August 2 in New York City to “Stop War on Iran.” In fact, the “opposition” to war against Iran by the reformist left was exposed in 2006 when the RCP’s WCW and the ISO’s Campus Antiwar



Planeta Publishers



Soviet military intervention in 1979 opened road to emancipation of Afghan women (left, in Kabul march). Spartacists hailed Red Army in Afghanistan, called for extending gains of October Revolution to Afghan peoples. Anti-Communist ISO welcomed victory of Islamic fundamentalists’ holy war for re-enslavement of women (right, Afghanistan 2001).

Network (CAN) signed on to a petition to “Dear President Bush and Vice President Cheney” advising:

“The most effective way to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons would be to closely monitor its nuclear energy program, and to improve diplomatic relations—two tasks made much more difficult by threatening to bomb Iranian territory. We urge you to lead the way to peace, not war, and to begin by making clear that you will not commit the highest international crime by aggressively attacking Iran.”

As we wrote in “ISO, RCP to Bush: Disarm Iran, ‘Lead the Way to Peace’” (WV No. 870, 12 May 2006): “This petition is like appealing to Jack the Ripper to take up social work—while simultaneously demanding that his potential victims walk the streets defenseless.”

We Said: Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!

The insurgents the U.S. faces in Afghanistan today are Frankenstein’s monsters turned on their former masters. U.S. aid to the Afghan mujahedin began in the late 1970s under the Carter administration, which had launched an anti-Soviet “human rights” crusade. The Islamic fundamentalist mujahedin were in rebellion against the pro-Moscow People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), which took power in April 1978. The PDPA sought to implement some minimal reforms to bring Afghanistan closer to the 20th century: land distribution, freeing women from the burka (the head-to-toe “veil”), reducing the bride price to a nominal sum and providing education for girls. These basic reforms sparked a ferocious rebellion by landlords, tribal chiefs and mullahs who launched a jihad (holy war), burning down schools and flaying teachers alive for the “crime” of teaching young girls to read. When the PDPA requested assistance from Moscow in quelling this bloody rebellion, the Soviet Army intervened, acting to defend the USSR’s southern border against the CIA-backed insurgency. This was the first war fought in modern history where the status of women played the central role.

The threat of a CIA-supported Islamic takeover on the USSR’s southern flank posed pointblank the unconditional military defense of the Soviet degenerated workers state. As we wrote at the time:

“A victory for the Islamic-feudalist insurgency in Afghanistan will not only mean a hostile, imperialist-allied state on the USSR’s southern border. It will mean the extermination of the Afghan left and the reimposition of feudal barbarism—the veil, the bride price. Moreover, the Soviet military occupation raises the possibility of a social revolution in this wretchedly backward country, a possibility which did not exist before.”

—Spartacist (English-language edition) No. 29, Summer 1980

The Soviet intervention was unambiguously progressive, underlining the Trotskyist understanding that despite its degeneration under a Stalinist bureaucratic caste, the Soviet Union remained a workers state embodying the historic gains of the October Revolution of 1917, centrally the planned economy and collectivized property. These were enormous gains, not least for women and the historically Mus-

lim peoples of Soviet Central Asia, where conditions before the Bolshevik Revolution had been as backward and benighted as in Afghanistan.

A Red Army victory posed the extension of the social gains of the October Revolution to Afghanistan through a prolonged occupation and the country’s integration into the Soviet system. Though undertaken purely for defensive geopolitical reasons, the Soviet military intervention cut against the grain of the nationalist Stalinist dogma of “socialism in one country.” The Red Army troops, many of them recruits from Soviet Central Asia, who fought against the CIA-backed mujahedin believed they were fulfilling their internationalist duty. And so they were! This military intervention also offered the prospect of reanimating the Bolshevik program of proletarian revolutionary internationalism in the Soviet Union. Pointing to the Stalinist bureaucracy’s capacity to betray, we stressed at the time that a genuinely internationalist perspective toward Afghanistan required a workers political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy and return the Soviet Union to the road of Lenin and Trotsky.

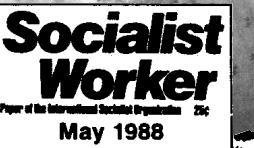
Joining the imperialists’ anti-Soviet war drive, the bulk of the left internationally condemned the Soviet “invasion” of Afghanistan. The anti-Communist ISO and its then-parent group in Britain, Tony Cliff’s Socialist Workers Party (SWP), criminally stood with the imperialists. The 12 January 1980 issue of the SWP’s Socialist Worker blared, “Troops Out of Afghanistan!” For its part, the Maoist RCP declared in Revolutionary Worker (11 January 1980): “Superpowers Square Off Over Afghanistan,” and condemned “Soviet social imperialism.” In order to cover for its treachery, the RCP invented Afghan Maoist groupings opposed to both the mullahs and the Soviets. But the real enemy of this “opposition” was the liberating Soviet troops, as the RCP made clear in a retrospective article in Revolutionary Worker (10 March 2002): “Revolutionary and progressive forces, including the country’s Maoist organizations, threw themselves into the fight against the Soviet invaders.”

When then-Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, in a vain attempt to appease the imperialists, withdrew forces from Afghanistan in 1989, we denounced this as a crime against both the Afghan and Soviet peoples. That betrayal by the Kremlin bureaucracy opened the road to mujahedin rule in Afghanistan and prepared the ground for the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state itself in 1991-92, a historic defeat for the proletariat and the oppressed around the world. In contrast, the ISO declared: “Just as socialists welcomed the defeat of the U.S. in Vietnam, we welcome the defeat of the Russians in Afghanistan. It will give heart to all those inside the USSR and in East Europe who want to break the rule of Stalin’s heirs” (Socialist Worker [U.S.], May 1988).

When the Soviet Army intervened into Afghanistan, we wrote in Spartacist (English-language edition) No. 27-28,



Getty



Winter 1979-80: “Although uncalled for militarily, a natural response on the part of the world’s young leftists would be an enthusiastic desire to join an international brigade to fight the reactionary CIA-connected rebels.” In the face of the Stalinists’ criminal withdrawal, the Partisan Defense Committee, a non-sectarian, class-struggle legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League, wrote to the PDPA government offering “to organize an international brigade to fight to the death” against the forces of Islamic reaction.

The PDC’s offer was declined, but at the request of the government, the PDC and its fraternal defense organizations internationally organized a fund drive to aid the civilian victims of the all-out mujahedin offensive against the city of Jalalabad. In three months, over \$44,000 was raised, overwhelmingly from small donations from thousands of people, many of them immigrant workers and women in Muslim communities throughout West Europe and North America. The siege of Jalalabad was defeated. The PDPA hung on for another three hard-fought years until 1992, when the mujahedin finally took Kabul. Four years later, the Taliban took over the country.

While the bulk of the left internationally stood on the side of counterrevolution, we of the International Communist League fought to the end in defense of the USSR and the deformed workers states of East and Central Europe, just as today we stand for the unconditional military defense of the remaining deformed workers states of China, Vietnam, North Korea and Cuba. In East Germany (DDR) in 1989-90, while the disintegrating Stalinist regime of the SED-PDS whined that capitalist restoration should be implemented in a humane manner, we uniquely opposed the capitalist reunification. We called for a red Germany of workers councils (soviets) through political revolution in the DDR and socialist revolution in West Germany. We initiated a massive mobilization, which was then supported by the SED-PDS, in Berlin’s Treptow Park on 3 January 1990 against the fascist desecration of a Soviet war memorial and in defense of the USSR and DDR. In the USSR, we distributed some 100,000 copies of our 1991 statement calling on Soviet workers to “Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution” and urging the proletariat to form soviets under the program of Bolshevik internationalism.

The horrors being played out today in Afghanistan are among the starkest expressions of the choice that has been posed since the advent of the imperialist epoch in the latter part of the 19th century: socialism or barbarism. As proletarian internationalists in the U.S., we seek to win workers and youth to the understanding that the most reactionary force standing in the way of human progress is U.S. imperialism, represented by the Republicans and Democrats and their small-time offshoots, like the Greens. We fight to build a revolutionary workers party dedicated to the overthrow of this barbaric system and to the establishment of workers rule.■

Wallace...

(continued from page 3)

which can do nothing to stem famine in India or prevent an approaching famine in Latin America, *is able* to improve the living standards of the whole world’s population; and that there is no significant difference between the capitalist U.S. and socialist Russia.

A campaign based on such fallacies can do nothing but dull the consciousness of the working class. Why should the labor movement back a minor party candidate who pleads, “Capitalism would be just fine if slightly reformed, so vote for me”? The Democratic Party asserts the same line and its candidates can be immediately elected. Such a campaign can have no outcome other than the strengthening of the Democratic Party’s hold over the working class.

When just that did happen in the ’48 election, the CP and others backing Wallace took credit for such a strengthening of the party which the bourgeoisie have increasingly realized is *their* protector. The *Guardian* exulted in its post-election issue (8 November 1948):

“The people of a whole world can look toward America today with renewed confidence. The American people have reaffirmed their progressive tradition. They have repelled the bold maneuvering of monopoly and reaction to take over

America through Thomas E. Dewey and the Republican Party. They have handed Harry S. Truman an unmistakable mandate to return to the principles of Franklin D. Roosevelt. “The mandate would not have been possible if the Progressive Party had not introduced the Roosevelt program into the 1948 campaign.”

Wallace’s Program

The laughable absurdity of such a statement is apparent as soon as one analyzes the class nature of the Roosevelt program which Wallace introduced. Its demands have already been fulfilled or have been repeated as truisms in the Great Society of another messiah.

Wallace’s program broke down into two general areas, isolated from each other: the achievement of international peace and the progressive reform of U.S. capitalism at home. According to Wallace, the U.S. could achieve worldwide peace by establishing faith in the UN, by negotiating with Soviet Russia, by recognizing new small countries such as Israel and by abolishing military conscription at home.

The domestic reforms required slightly more complex solutions. On the social side, Wallace advocated abolition of Jim Crow laws and the establishment of legal guarantees for civil rights; federal aid to housing, health and education; and governmental promotion of science and culture. On the economic front, he called for a council of economic planning to assure

high production, full employment and a rising standard of living; public ownership of key areas of the economy in TVA type developments; repeal of the Taft-Hartley law and a one dollar an hour minimum wage; anti-trust action against monopolies; and rollback of prices covered out of exorbitant profits.

A Bourgeois Program

Capitalism has been able to fulfill most of these demands or hold out the promise of their fulfillment without seriously damaging its own position. Thus the program posed no questions which capitalism itself could not appear to solve. It did not serve to link up the economic pressures at home with the already mounting imperialism of the “cold war.” Thus Wallace’s general evaluations of Progressive Party successes were all proved incorrect because his platform, accepted gladly by Truman, dealt with specific ills in a capitalist society and not with the capitalist mode of production which produces those ills.

There was no ideological content to the Wallace campaign—only the slogans of a messiah-reformer—and the one million votes formed no base for the development of a third party opposed to capitalist control.

Labor Control Needed

James Cannon in a 1948 internal SWP discussion on the Wallace candidacy offered several criteria which can be used

as measures today of these new third parties. He stated that Wallace’s policies showed only tactical differences in the camp of the bourgeoisie and that to support Wallace would mean an entrance into “lesser-evil” politics. He differentiated between the pseudo-radical party of a petty-bourgeois reformist like Wallace and the revolutionary labor party, which would proceed from the aim to assist the development of independent political action by workers and turn that action towards its revolutionary culmination. Finally he insisted that the class character of a party is determined not primarily by the class which supports it but by the class it supports, in its program, daily policy and practice.

The SWP Political Committee resolution on the Wallace candidacy developed on the basis of these criteria its minimum requirement for critical support to a third party: that the party be based on a significant section of labor and be subject to its control and pressure.

The incipient third parties could easily use these criteria in order to distinguish the class nature of their own demands, and therefore the possibility of those demands leading to a revolutionary culmination. More importantly, parties claiming to be Marxist need to establish such criteria as the basis for their own support to third party movements. (The SWP might well take note of its own past history.)■

Mumia...

(continued from page 12)

see where they stand on Mumia Abu-Jamal, who has not had a violent past; in fact, it’s quite the opposite, as you already know. It’s not too late to force them to do right by Mumia and all the other political prisoners rotting in prison.”

Meanwhile, Workers World has endorsed Cynthia McKinney who has spoken out on behalf of Mumia. To many youth, blacks and others, McKinney is perceived as a radical alternative to Obama. But for all her claims to stand “independent” of the Democrats, McKinney, herself a longtime black Democratic Party politician, issued a statement of congratulations to Obama following Clinton’s concession announcement. McKinney declared: “Coming from Barack Obama, the word ‘change’ did not appear as just another empty campaign slogan. It galvanized millions of people—mostly young people—to register to vote and to get active in the political system.” The Greens are a shill for the Democrats and McKinney is a *capitalist politician*. As we wrote in “For a Workers Party to Fight for a Workers Government!” (WV No. 917, 4 July):

“A vote for even the most left-wing bourgeois candidate is, in fact, a vote of confidence in the reformability of capitalism and a vote against the need for a workers party and socialist revolution. It is a vote for perpetuating a brutal system based on exploitation, oppression and war. For the likes of WWP this is no problem; today WWP enthuses over McKinney, while in the past they supported Democrat Jesse Jackson in 1988 and other black Democrats, including then-Democrat McKinney in 2004 and New York City Council member Charles Barron in 2006.”

Immediately after the March 27 Third Circuit Court decision, the PDC and its

fraternal defense organizations internationally held emergency protests. The PDC also called for international united-front protests under the slogans: “Mumia Abu-Jamal Is Innocent! Free Mumia Now! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!” Protests were held in April in Oakland, London, Toronto, Sydney, Chicago, Los Angeles and Mexico City. These protests brought together individuals and organizations representing diverse political viewpoints—trade unionists, anti-racists, death penalty abolitionists, gay rights activists, leftists and others—united behind the struggle to free Mumia. Central to the united-front protests was the understanding that the fight for Mumia’s freedom must be based on the fact that he is innocent—the victim of a racist political frame-up.

The PDC and its international fraternal defense organizations also organized Class-Struggle Contingents in a number of protests called by other groups. The contingents expressed our understanding that the working class must be mobilized to fight to free Mumia and with no illusions in the “justice” of the capitalist courts. In addition to the united-front slogans, the contingents also marched under the slogans: “There Is No Justice in the Capitalist Courts! Mobilize Labor’s Power—For Mass Protest!” (see “Protests Demand: Free Mumia Now!” WV No. 914, 9 May).

Our fight to free Mumia is part of our struggle against black oppression, which is rooted in American capitalism. The brutal state repression directed against black militants is intended to terrorize not only fighters for black rights but all those who would struggle against capitalist exploitation and oppression. The segregation, discrimination, unemployment and corresponding mass imprisonment of black

youth form a wedge to keep the working class divided. The struggle against racist oppression and in defense of class-war prisoners like Mumia is part of the struggle for the unity of the multiracial working class against its capitalist class enemy.

The battle for Mumia’s freedom cuts to the core of racist American capitalism and its state. We fight for Mumia’s freedom as part of the struggle for black liberation based on the program of revolutionary integrationism. We fight against every manifestation of racist oppression, a struggle which can be victorious only through the full social, political and economic integration of black people into an egalitarian *socialist* society. Won to a revolutionary program, doubly oppressed black workers will play a leading role in the fight to emancipate the black masses and all working people by sweeping away the entire system of capitalist exploitation. As we underlined in “Black and Red—Class Struggle Road to Negro Freedom,” which was adopted at the found-

ing conference of the Spartacist League/U.S. in 1966:

“The struggle of the Black people of this country for freedom, while part of the struggle of the working class as a whole, is more than that struggle. The Negro people are an oppressed race-color caste, in the main comprising the most exploited layer of the American working class.... Because of their position as both the most oppressed and also the most conscious and experienced section, revolutionary black workers are slated to play an exceptional role in the coming American revolution.”

Time is short. Mumia has nearly reached the end of the legal road, and there is no reason to believe he can receive a better outcome before the neo-segregationist U.S. Supreme Court. The fight to free Mumia embodies the struggle against this system of capitalist exploitation and racist oppression. This underlines the urgent need to mobilize the social power of labor in his defense. *Mumia Abu-Jamal is innocent! Free Mumia now! Abolish the racist death penalty!*■

JOIN THE CAMPAIGN!

Funds are urgently needed for legal defense!

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

Donations 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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Free Mumia Now!

Third Circuit Court Turns Down Appeal

On July 22, the judges of the federal Third Circuit Court of Appeals issued a two-sentence ruling, refusing to hear a petition filed by Mumia's attorneys less than a month earlier, on June 27. That petition, which was based on the racist jury-rigging at Mumia's 1982 trial, asked for the full court to review the March 27 decision by a three-judge panel of the court that affirmed Mumia's frame-up conviction and condemned this fighter for black freedom to either life imprisonment or a new sentencing hearing that could reinstate the death sentence (see "Free Mumia Abu-Jamal Now! New Legal Papers Filed," WV No. 917, 4 July). The three-judge panel's decision had upheld a December 2001 ruling by federal District Court judge William Yohn, who overturned Mumia's death sentence while upholding his frame-up conviction. Robert Bryan, Mumia's lead counsel, announced he will be filing a petition for review to the United States Supreme Court, the last legal avenue available to Mumia. The Philadelphia District Attorney's office, which had previously announced that it would be seeking to reinstate the death sentence, recently stated that it is undecided.

A Black Panther Party spokesman in his youth, then an award-winning journalist known as the "voice of the voiceless" and a supporter of the Philadelphia MOVE organization, Mumia was framed up for the 1981 killing of Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner and sentenced to death explicitly for his political views. For 26 years, the cops, prosecutors, bourgeois politicians and their media jackals have howled for Mumia's blood because they see in Mumia a voice of defiant opposition to all forms of racist discrimination, the spectre of black revolt.

That the courts would again deny justice to America's foremost class-war prisoner was clear to anyone who wished to see. Court after court has refused to consider the mountain of evidence of Mumia's innocence, including the confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Mumia, shot and killed Officer Faulkner. Those same courts have repeatedly discarded their own precedents and rules in favor of special "Mumia rules" to keep this "voice of the voiceless" in prison hell.

Making a mockery of the Supreme Court's 1986 *Batson* decision, which prohibits the exclusion of jurors based on race, the March 27 Third Circuit decision dismissed the overwhelming proof of racist jury-rigging that marked Mumia's 1982 trial, where the prosecution used eleven of its 15 peremptory challenges to get rid of black jurors. Enunciating a new rule—adopted from the prosecution's arguments—the Third Circuit decision held that Mumia's claim must be rejected because he and his attorneys failed to provide evidence of the racial composition of the entire pool of prospective jurors for the trial. Philadelphia journalist Linn Washington captured the Kafkaesque quality of the court's decision:



Partisan Defense Committee contingent at Philadelphia April 19 demonstration for Mumia Abu-Jamal.

There Is No Justice in the Capitalist Courts!

"That initial rejection, for example, faulted Abu-Jamal's 1982 trial attorney for not following legal standards that the US Supreme Court did not create until 1986—four full years after that trial. That rejection faulted Abu-Jamal's 1995 lawyers for not presenting certain evidence of jury selection discrimination that the '95 hearing judge blocked lawyers from presenting even to the point of briefly jailing one lawyer for objecting to this judge's obstruction" (*CounterPunch*, 26/27 July). Indeed, Judge Albert Sabo quashed a subpoena for the Philadelphia County Commissioner of Jurors and dismissed a motion for discovery of the name, address and race of each member of the jury pool for Mumia's 1982 trial. The lawyer who was jailed was Partisan Defense Committee counsel Rachel Wolkenstein, a member of Mumia's legal team from 1995 to 1999. Along with Jonathan Piper, another attorney associated with the PDC, Wolkenstein resigned when then-lead counsel Leonard Weinglass suppressed Beverly's confession.

Since the Partisan Defense Committee—a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League—and the SL took up Mumia's case in 1987, we have advocated pursuing all possible legal proceedings. At the same time, we have always fought against any illusions in the courts of the capitalist class enemy. We have insisted that the courts could

be made to respond only out of fear that executing or imprisoning Mumia for life would exact too high a cost in social and class struggle. The power that can make the courts yield is the power of the multiracial working class, which must be mobilized independently of and in opposition to the capitalist state and its political representatives, whether Democrat, Republican or Green.

This program of class-struggle defense is diametrically opposed to that of the liberals and reformists, who promote

dangerous illusions that the courts can provide justice for Mumia. These illusions are codified in the subordination of the demand for Mumia's freedom to the call for a "new trial." This has been promoted for many years by the Workers World Party (WWP), International Socialist Organization, Socialist Action (SA), the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal (ICFFMAJ) led by Pam Africa and the San Francisco Mobilization to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal led by SA honcho Jeff Mackler, and has played a key part in the demobilization of what was once a mass movement. Why mobilize on the streets or in the unions if Mumia can get justice from the courts?

While they may have put aside their "new trial" signs for the moment, these groups are no less craven in their reliance on the capitalist state and its political representatives. This can be seen in their efforts during this year's presidential election, which are aimed at making the Democrats "fight" and win the office of U.S. imperialist Commander-in-Chief. While stopping short of outright endorsement of Barack Obama—a proponent of capital punishment who lambasted the recent U.S. Supreme Court decision which prohibited execution for the rape of a child—a number of reformists have sought to pressure his campaign through one stratagem or another. This includes support to Cynthia McKinney, the presidential candidate of the capitalist Green Party. On the eve of the Pennsylvania Democratic primaries and the April 19 demonstration in Philadelphia called by ICFFMAJ, a representative of the New York Coalition to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal issued an undated statement titled "No Justice, No Peace" that crassly expressed the logic behind the illusions promoted by reformists such as Workers World: "Both Hillary Rodham Clinton and Barack Obama endorse capital punishment, even though they know the system is imperfect and it doesn't deter violent crime. Let's

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Mumia as Minister of Information for Philadelphia Black Panther Party in 1969.