

U.S. Beefs Up Racist Border Controls

Mexico: Down With “Drug Wars” Militarization!



Reuters

The massacre last month of 16 people, mostly teenagers, in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, was just the latest bloody evidence of the “drug wars” that have claimed nearly 20,000 lives in that country since 2001. Last year, some 2,700 people were killed in Juárez alone, making this one of the most violent cities on the planet. Shootouts happen frequently in Mexican cities, many carried out in broad daylight, as drug cartels and their police adjuncts battle over control of the booming trade, which mainly supplies the U.S. market. The cartels often torture and decapitate rivals in the trade, placing their heads next to posters with threatening messages. Videos of such sadistic handiwork are regularly posted on YouTube. One man, nicknamed “El Pozolero” (the Stewmaker), admitted he had dissolved some 300 bodies in acid over ten years to dispose of them for the Tijuana Cartel.

The gruesome reality of *narcoviolencia* has provided President Felipe Calderón of the right-wing National Action Party (PAN) a pretext to systematically reinforce the repressive apparatus of the bourgeois state. Calderón has deployed some 45,000 army troops throughout the country, along with thousands of federal police. In many cities, including northern industrial centers like Tijuana, Nogales, Ciudad Juárez, Reynosa and Nuevo Laredo, the army assumed police powers.

If anything, the deployment of the military has led to an increase in the bloodletting along with intensified repression of the working class and the urban and rural poor. At stake in the drug wars is control

For Workers Revolution on Both Sides of the Border!

Military convoy in Ciudad Juárez, June 2009. Nearly 2,000 soldiers poured into the city as part of military mobilization in Mexican “drug wars.”

of what is up to a \$25 billion a year business (about the same as remittances from the U.S.) that plays a central role in the capitalist economy, directly involving an estimated 150,000 people and linked to some 78 percent of legal business activities, according to *Proceso* magazine (15 March 2009). Joaquín “El Chapo” Guzmán Loera, leader of the Sinaloa Cartel, has even made the *Forbes* magazine list of billionaires. And from the government ministries on down to the cops,

Mexico’s capitalist state apparatus is thoroughly interpenetrated with the drug cartels.

From the beginning of his regime, Calderón has moved to bolster the bourgeois state, including through increasing reliance on the military. As he took office in 2006, Calderón was faced with social upheaval as millions protested his fraudulent electoral victory against Andrés Manuel López Obrador of the bourgeois-populist Party of the Democratic Revolu-

tion (PRD). Miners as well as teachers and indigenous communities in Oaxaca and peasants in the State of Mexico protested government repression and attacks on their livelihoods. One of the Calderón government’s first measures was to hike military pay by **45 percent** in February 2007 in order to assure the army’s allegiance. Backed by massive U.S. military aid, the regime has relied on the increasing militarization of the country to push through attacks on trade unions and yet more austerity measures.

While social unrest has subsided over the last couple of years, Mexico remains a deeply unstable society, with the working class and the poor further ravaged by the world economic recession. In describing the militarization that has been reinforced under the “war on drugs,” our comrades of the Grupo Espartaquista de México noted in *Espartaco* No. 31

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Getty

Left: Sheriff’s deputies arrest Latino immigrant workers in California, February 2009. Right: National Guard soldier monitoring Arizona-Mexico border in 2006.



U.S. Air Force



Feds Let South Dakota Reservation Freeze

A fierce ice storm hit the impoverished Cheyenne River Reservation in South Dakota on January 20, cutting off electrical power for most of the 10,000 Native Americans there. The Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, its emergency fund of \$175,000 already drained by earlier storms, was left virtually defenseless. Desperate families waited for days in the dark without food—some without water as well—before minimal relief finally began to arrive. With windchills reaching 20 degrees below zero, many were without power for up to several weeks. The tribe’s chairman, Joseph Brings Plenty, declared: “We could have had quite a few people perish in this.”

The plight of the South Dakota reservation has been particularly highlighted by MSNBC’s Keith Olbermann, whose appeal to his viewers raised some \$250,000 in relief funds in 48 hours. For their part, government relief agencies doled out aid with an eyedropper, recalling the racist indifference shown the largely black and poor population of New Orleans follow-

ing Hurricane Katrina. On January 31, the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe declared a state of emergency and requested federal disaster relief funds, medical supplies and generators. The reservation was granted an insufficient number of emergency generators, forcing tribal leaders to beg for more. As for federal relief funds, what they mainly got was the runaround. A spokesman for the South Dakota Department of Public Safety announced—almost two weeks after the start of the crisis—that federal funds could not be allocated until the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) got around to surveying the situation. He stated, “It may be two or three weeks before FEMA can assess the damage.” Adding insult to injury, the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe was the first Native tribe to officially endorse Barack Obama for president.

This crisis highlights the wretched poverty of Native Americans living on reservations like Cheyenne River, for whom disaster can be just one storm away. The statistics tell a shameful story of discrimi-



LeNae LeBeau
Massive storm cut off power and water for thousands on Cheyenne River Reservation in January.

nation and neglect. Unemployment at the Cheyenne River Reservation is a staggering 80 percent. At the neighboring Standing Rock Reservation, which was also severely hit by the storm, per capita income is about \$7,730 a year. Standing Rock’s average male life expectancy of 47 years is just two and a half years better than in Afghanistan!

This is part of the legacy of racist American capitalism’s bloody origins. Take the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). The BIA Web site touts that its mission is to “enhance the quality of life, to promote economic opportunity, and to carry out the responsibility to protect and improve the trust assets of American Indians, Indian tribes, and Alaska Natives.” This sick lie has long been the target of humor and anger, including the line “B.I.A., I’m not your Indian anymore” in the late Floyd Red Crow Westerman song “B.I.A.,” a hit during the period of Native American activism in the late 1960s and early ’70s.

U.S. capitalism was born in the genocidal extermination of Native Americans and the enslavement of black Africans. As we wrote in “Genocide ‘Made in USA’” (WV No. 581, 30 July 1993):

“From the governor of New Netherlands, who introduced scalping to North America as a means by which Indian-hunting bounty seekers could claim their payments, to the 1838 ‘Trail of Tears,’ where thousands died as the entire 14,000-strong Cherokee nation was force-marched from their home in Georgia to the barren Oklahoma plains, to the final massacre at Wounded Knee, South Dakota in 1890 when the U.S. Army assassinated 300 unarmed men, women and children—the westward march of U.S. capitalism was guided by the spirit of General Sheridan’s notorious remark: ‘There are no good Indians but dead Indians.’”

We dealt in depth with the oppression of Native Americans in the three-part series “Marxism & the American Indian Ques-

tion” (*Young Spartacus* Nos. 27, 28 and 31; December 1974, January and April 1975), where in the second part we wrote: “With the destruction of aboriginal tribal society, Indians became social refuse and wards of the state. Although the federal government finally granted citizenship rights to Indians in 1924, the state maintains an essentially custodial relationship to the reservations, holding the land ‘in trust.’ Until the New Deal’s Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) of 1934, the reservations were ruled autocratically by the agents of the Bureau of Indian Affairs.”

Under the IRA, the government introduced limited self-rule on the reservations, creating a layer of Native bureaucrats. Later, it attempted to “free” Native Americans by terminating tribal status and thereby ending the federal assistance programs and tax exemptions, the economic margin upon which many survived. Through this, the capitalist class sought to rid itself of the burden of either developing the reservations or integrating Native Americans into bourgeois society and the labor force.

We fight to build a Leninist workers party, a tribune of the people that champions the rights of Native Americans. As we concluded in *Young Spartacus* No. 28:

“Capitalism confronts the Indians, who are cynically termed the ‘Vanishing American,’ only with the prospects of either oppressive urban lumpenization or the abominable reservation, with its squalor, cultural deprivation, high infant mortality, chronic alcoholism and rampant teenage suicide. Only the destruction of capitalism through proletarian revolution and the inauguration of the era of socialist development can insure the all-sided voluntary integration of the American Indian into society on the basis of the fullest equality and meet the special needs created by well over a century of injustice and oppression.”■



TROTSKY

Students and Capitalist Society

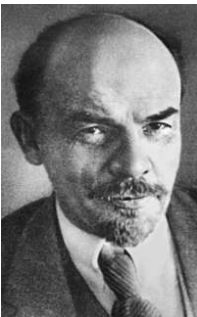
A Leninist vanguard party is built through the fusion of the most politically conscious workers with intellectuals who have been won over to the side of the working class. In his 1910 article, “The Intelligentsia and Socialism,” Leon Trotsky examined the role of intellectuals in capitalist society, refuting the view expressed in Austrian Social Democrat Max Adler’s 1910 pamphlet “Socialism and the Intellectuals” that the mass of intellectuals are predisposed to socialism. In particular, Trotsky focused on students, who tend

to be polarized to radicalism or reaction under the influence of social struggle, drawing on their differing roles in the defeated European democratic revolutions of 1848.

Among the workers the difference between “fathers” and “sons” is purely one of age. Among the intelligentsia it is not only a difference of age but also a social difference. The student, in contrast both to the young worker and to his own father, fulfils no social function, does not feel direct dependence on capital or the state, is not bound by any responsibilities, and—at least objectively, if not subjectively—is free in his judgment of right and wrong. At this period everything within him is fermenting, his class prejudices are as formless as his ideological interests, questions of conscience matter very strongly to him, his mind is opening for the first time to great scientific generalisations, the extraordinary is almost a physiological need for him. If collectivism is at all capable of mastering his mind, now is the moment, and it will indeed do it through the nobly scientific character of its basis and the comprehensive cultural content of its aims...

Throughout their entire history—in its best, most heroic moments just as in periods of utter moral decay—the students of Europe have been merely the sensitive barometer of the bourgeois classes. They became ultra-revolutionary, sincerely and honourably fraternizing with the people, when bourgeois society had no way out but revolution. They took *de facto* the place of the bourgeois democratic forces when the political nullity of these prevented them from standing at the head of the revolution, as happened in Vienna in 1848. But they also fired on the workers in June of that same year, in Paris, when bourgeoisie and workers found themselves on opposite sides of the barricade.... Here we have militant idealism—sometimes just like that of a fighting cock—which is characteristic not of a class or of an idea but of an age-group; on the other hand, the political content of this idealism is entirely determined by the historical spirit of those classes from which the students come and to which they return. And this is natural and inevitable.

—Leon Trotsky, “The Intelligentsia and Socialism” (1910)



LENIN

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26 February 2010

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

BAY AREA

Thursday, March 18, 6:30 p.m.
The Emancipation of Women Through Socialist Revolution
San Francisco State University
Cesar Chavez Student Center
Rosa Parks D
Information and readings: (510) 839-0851
sycbayarea@sbcglobal.net

NEW YORK CITY

Wednesday, March 3, 7:30 p.m.
Women’s Oppression and the Family
Hunter College
West Building, Room 509C
(No. 6 train to 68th St.-Hunter College)
Information and readings: (212) 267-1025
nysl@tiac.net

LOS ANGELES

Sunday, February 28, 12 noon
The Revolution Betrayed
3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215
Information and readings: (213) 380-8239
slsycla@sbcglobal.net

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

CHICAGO

Wednesday, March 3, 5:30 p.m.
The Revolution Betrayed
University of Illinois at Chicago
Room 603, Student Center East
750 S. Halsted Street
(Exit Halsted Street at UIC-Halsted stop on CTA Blue Line)
Information and readings: (312) 563-0441
chicagosyc@sbcglobal.net

TORONTO

Wednesday, March 10, 6 p.m.
For Women’s Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!
University of Toronto
Sidney Smith Hall, Room 1080
100 St. George Street
Information and readings: (416) 593-4138
spartacan@on.aibn.com

VANCOUVER

Thursday, March 4, 6:30 p.m.
Independence for Quebec! Marxism and the National Question
UBC, Student Union Building, Rm. 224
Information and readings: (604) 687-0353
trotskyst_ivan@shawcable.com

Budget Cuts Slam Workers, Poor

Chicago: Transit Jobs Under the Ax

CHICAGO—At the direction of the Democratic Party administration of Mayor Richard Daley, the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) imposed sweeping layoffs and service cuts on February 7 to close a major budget shortfall. More than 1,000 union drivers, repairmen, servicers and skilled workers—*over one-tenth of the entire workforce*—have already been laid off or are slated to lose their jobs in the coming week. The drastic measures include slashing 18 percent of bus service, affecting 119 of 150 routes, and 9 percent of rail service. Some one million people ride CTA buses and almost 650,000 ride the trains on an average workday. Particularly hard hit are the poorest black and Latino neighborhoods on the South and West Sides, where working people are heavily dependent on mass transit to make it to their jobs. Waiting times on these routes already are the longest and the buses are the oldest.

Boss Daley, the CTA and the bourgeois press are carrying out a major media blitz to blame the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Locals 241 (bus) and 308 (rail) and 15 craft unions representing Chicago transit workers for the severity of the cuts. Union members are pilloried for refusing to swallow massive concessions: wage freezes, increased health care payments and unpaid furlough days. With the economy in shambles, the message for workers everywhere has been “sacrifice or else” as the bosses make workers pay for the capitalist economic crisis. Capitalist Democratic Party politicians, whether in the White House, the Statehouse or City Hall, together with the Republicans have gone after the unions and gutted public services used by the working class and poor.

Starting from the top, President Barack Obama forked out billions to the Wall Street bankers and engineered the bailout of the auto giants by tearing up union gains won through decades of hard struggle—with the active assistance of the venal sellouts atop the United Auto Workers. At the same time, the Obama administration has ratcheted up U.S. imperialist military operations in Afghanistan while continuing the occupation of Iraq. Layoffs, speedups, imperialist depredations abroad—these are the workings of a system of exploitation dedicated to squeezing profits for the tiny class of capitalist rulers out of the blood and sweat of those who labor.

To effectively fight the bosses’ attacks, the unions must rely on their own strength, operating with the basic understanding that the interests of capital and labor are counterposed and irreconcilable. The ATU locals have a lot of social power, with the ability to shut down mass transit in Chicago, and could spearhead a struggle for the fighting unity of all city labor. The multiracial union membership is also a living link to the dispossessed ghetto masses. In “Segregation City,” many blacks and Latinos are consigned to a life of poverty, military service or prison. A federal civil rights lawsuit filed earlier this year exposed the huge gap between funding for commuter trains from Chicago’s middle-class, white suburbs and for bus and rail service in the inner city, where people often spend hours in the darkness and frigid cold making multiple connections to get to work or school. Championing demands addressed to the needs of the poor and oppressed—from the fight for free mass transit to free, quality health care for all—would win the ATU plenty of allies.

But this class-struggle perspective could not be further from the outlook of the ATU and other trade-union tops. From their embrace of Democratic Party candidates in the just-finished Illinois primary

elections to their support to Obama in 2008, the ATU bureaucrats act as what American socialist leader Daniel De Leon over a century ago called “the labor lieutenants of capital,” tying the unions to the capitalist system of exploitation and oppression. Their allegiance to the supposed “lesser evil” Democrats has facilitated the bourgeois rulers’ assaults on the American working class and poor: the dismantling of millions of heavily union-

while at the same time fighting for equal pay for equal work with no second-class union membership. In the face of mass layoffs, what is posed is a fight for *jobs for all*—for a shorter workweek with full-time pay and benefits for everyone.

Even if the grievance had won, it would have represented no victory. Under the watch of the ATU misleaders over the years, Chicago transit workers have been subjected to one “divide and conquer”

proposing a voluntary job action that would make it much easier for the company to victimize individual workers. For the ATU tops such tactics are a means to avoid hard class struggle, but some workers—and the CTA—are taking it seriously enough. The transit bosses are poised to file anti-union injunctions in the event of any perceived work “slowdown” and already have moved to fire one bus operator who distributed a flyer encouraging her co-workers to refuse to work overtime. Local 241 is defending this union activist by relying once again on arbitration, which places the fate of the union and its members in the hands of a “third party” who is in reality on the side of the class enemy. As an elementary act of solidarity, it is crucial for transit unions, and the rest of city labor, to fight against all CTA reprisals.

In raising the prospect of a slowdown, the ATU bureaucrats want nothing more than the opportunity to tinker with the terms of “sacrifice.” This is shown by their lash-up with Democratic Party front man Jesse Jackson Sr., who at a press conference at his Rainbow PUSH Coalition headquarters on February 13 said, “There will either be fair negotiations, or they’ll be slow roll or no roll.” “Fair negotiations” simply means “fair” layoffs or concessions. If labor struggle does break out, Jackson, who postures as a friend of labor and blacks in order to better serve the bosses, will be there to douse the flames. In 2000, a union official brought Jackson into L.A. during a convulsive transit strike, where he set about preaching “reconciliation” to the striking workers so that the local Democrats could ram through a giveback contract deal.

Now, more than two weeks after the bulk of the layoffs, Jefferson is threatening, through the press, to call a strike vote at the next union meeting on March 1. Jefferson is walking a tightrope between the anger of the union ranks and his loyalty to the Democratic Party. Many in ATU Local 241 well remember that when 2,000 workers came to a mass union meeting and authorized a strike in March 2006, Jefferson squandered the members’ desire to act in defense of the union and quickly submitted his membership’s future to binding arbitration.

Following massive job losses in construction and manufacturing, as the *New York Times* headlined, “Most U.S. Union Members Are Working for the Government, New Data Shows” (22 January).

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WV Photo

Demonstration outside Chicago transit headquarters against layoffs and service cuts, January 20.

ized manufacturing jobs, cuts in social programs and rampant cop terror in the ghettos and barrios. To advance its cause, labor must break with the capitalist parties—Democrat and Republican.

A comrade of the Spartacist League laid out these basic Marxist truths while intervening at a CTA public hearing on Chicago’s South Side on 3 November 2009. Turning his back to the CTA board members, our comrade declared that “the only people worth addressing here are those who are here to protest these vicious cuts.” He continued:

“Why do we continue to bleed? It’s because of the allegiance of working people and minorities to the Democratic Party. It’s the other party of war and racism, the other party of the capitalist system, the other party of the profit system, the other party of layoffs and segregation. And we should know that here in Chicago, where they have run things for 60 years. Obama in office has not changed that in the least, in fact, Obama and the Democrats went after the auto workers, they used the auto bailout to gut the union and that’s what they intend to do to the transit union, to all the public workers in the state of Illinois.”

Far from mobilizing the unions’ muscle to *stop* the layoffs and other attacks, the ATU bureaucrats surrendered in advance of a fight. Union leaders offered up their own “menu” of cost-cutting measures, which were rejected by the CTA. Earlier, ATU bureaucrats had filed a grievance demanding that part-time and temporary workers be laid off first. Local 308 president Robert Kelly said in a statement: “The ATU locals always understood, unfortunately, that our members would be laid off and our dispute was only about using seniority with the CTA to determine who would be laid off first.” According to *Medill Reports* (3 December 2009), this sentiment was echoed by Kelly’s counterpart in Local 241, Darrell Jefferson: “If anyone is gonna go, it has to be part-timers.” Predictably, an arbitrator in short order tossed out the union grievance on February 3, paving the way for the layoffs to begin four days later.

The union must defend seniority rights,

scheme after another, including the introduction of part-time work and wage tiers. Two years ago, the union bureaucrats helped roll out an “apprentice” program where ex-convicts are hired for a limited time as servicers at paltry wages with no benefits, while having to pay full union dues but getting no union rights or protections (see “Down With Racist, Anti-Union ‘Ex-Offender Apprentice’ Scheme!” WV No. 923, 24 October 2008). A further barrier to unity in struggle is the division of transit workers into two separate ATU locals and multiple craft unions. The bosses want to drive a wedge into the workforce so they can more easily roll back the wages and working conditions of all union members.

Jefferson has announced plans to ask Local 241 members to strictly follow CTA operating rules if negotiations to reverse the service cuts continue to stall. Instead of a united mobilization, he is

SPARTACIST LEAGUE/U.S. Local Directory and Public Offices

Web site: www.icl-fi.org • E-mail address: vanguard@tiac.net

National Office: Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116, (212) 732-7860

Chicago Box 6441, Main PO, Chicago, IL 60680, (312) 563-0441
chicagospartacist@sbcglobal.net
Public Office: Sat. 2-5 p.m., 222 S. Morgan (Buzzer 23)

Los Angeles Box 29574, Los Feliz Sta., Los Angeles, CA 90029, (213) 380-8239
slsycla@sbcglobal.net
Public Office: Sat. 2-5 p.m., 3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215

New York Box 3381, Church St. Sta., New York, NY 10008, (212) 267-1025
nysl@tiac.net
Public Office: 1st and 3rd Sat. of every month, 1-4 p.m., and by appointment, 299 Broadway, Suite 318

Oakland Box 29497, Oakland, CA 94604, (510) 839-0851
slbayarea@sbcglobal.net
Public Office: Sat. 1-5 p.m., 1634 Telegraph, 3rd Floor

TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA/LIGUE TROTSKYSTE DU CANADA

Toronto Box 7198, Station A, Toronto, ON M5W 1X8, (416) 593-4138
spartacan@on.aibn.com

Vancouver Box 2717, Main P.O., Vancouver, BC V6B 3X2, (604) 687-0353
trotskyist_vancouver@shawcable.com

The BT on Haiti: Postscript to IGiocy

A couple of years ago, we were e-mailed a compendium of internal communiqués among adherents of the International Bolshevik Tendency (BT). While these were kind of crackpot, though revealing of what passes for political discussion in the BT, our attention was drawn to the following proclamation by the organization's supreme leader, Bill Logan: "Our orientation is towards a fusion with the IG [Internationalist Group], a prerequisite to which is obviously some programmatic movement on their part."

It appears that the BT finds such "movement" in the IG's recent declaration that the Spartacist League has "gone over from bending under pressure from the ruling class to outright apology for imperialism" ("Spartacist League Backs U.S. Imperialist Invasion of Haiti," 30 January). A February 9 article posted on the BT's Web site, "Imperialist Troops Out of Haiti!" concurs with "the IG's assessment of the SL's scandalous capitulation over imperialist intervention in Haiti." We refer readers to our article "Haiti: IG Conjures Up Revolution Amid the Rubble" (WV No. 952, 12 February) for our answer to the IG's "assessment." As for the BT, its cynicism is, as always, breathtaking.

The BT's initial statement on Haiti, dated January 29, two weeks after the quake, did not demand "Imperialist troops out of Haiti!" And when there was a genuine U.S.-led and UN-sponsored invasion of Haiti in 2004, which included a contingent of 500 troops from Canada, where the BT is centered, the BT's newspaper *1917* did not call for "Imperialist troops out of Haiti!" (In fact, we could find only one passing reference to that invasion on the entirety of the BT's Web site.)

The BT couldn't give a damn about imperialist repression of the Haitian masses, an indifference that is matched by their general sneering contempt for special oppression, whether it be the national subjugation of Quebec to the Canadian imperialist state or the vicious segregation and state repression of the black ghetto masses in the U.S. The devastation of Haiti is simply a convenient opportunity for these renegades to practice what has always made them tick: trying to "get" the Spartacist League. This time around they perceive the added advantage of furthering their amorous advances toward the IG.

In some ways the political appetites and sensibilities of the BT and IG are at variance. The IG declared that the earthquake provided an immediate opening for a workers revolt in Haiti, a grotesque fantasy, which, as we pointed out, was animated by their adaptation to Third World nationalism. The BT's sensibilities are those of First World social democrats who promote illusions in the "humanitarian" pretensions of imperialism. This same outlook was explicitly expressed by the British Workers Power group. In a January 21 Web posting, "Haiti—Aid or Colonisation?" Workers Power raised the utterly delusional demand for the "troops to disarm and be placed at the disposal of civilian agencies—or leave Haiti," adding

that "all military vehicles and equipment that can be of use should be placed under civilian control."

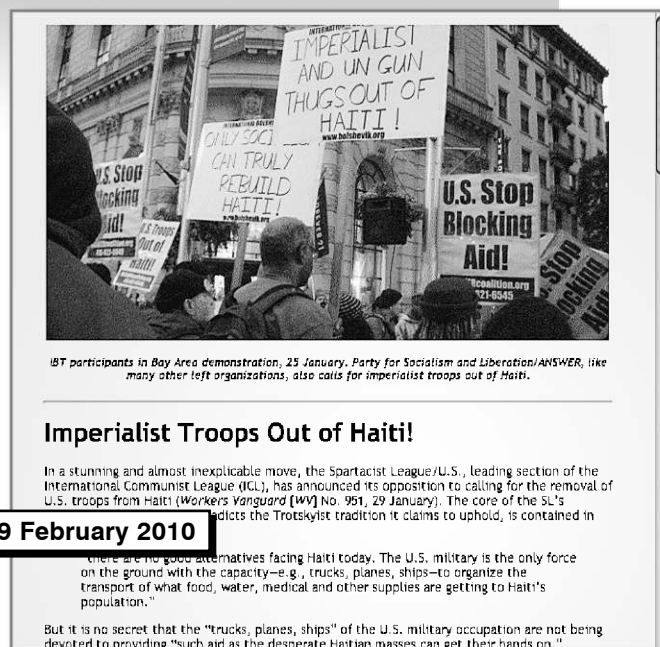
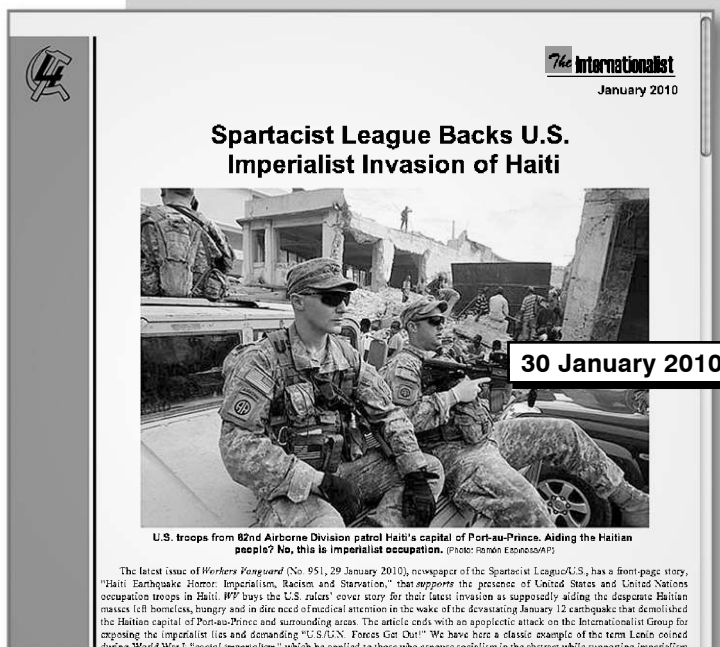
For its part, the BT points to the Red Cross and Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders) as the true source of aid for the desperate Haitian people. But these outfits are nothing other than agencies for imperialism. The self-declared purpose of the American Red Cross is to "carry out responsibilities delegated to it by the federal government"—i.e., U.S. imperialism. For its part, Médecins Sans Frontières was initiated as the "humanitarian" arm of French imperialism. One of its founders, Bernard Kouchner, is now the French government's minister of foreign affairs.

the sizable Haitian proletariat *in the diaspora* can play a key role." These workers can be a vital link to class struggle by the powerful North American proletariat. To infuse the multiracial U.S. working class with an understanding of its role as the gravedigger of U.S. imperialism requires a political struggle against the pro-capitalist labor misleaders who chain the working class to its capitalist exploiters, centrally through political support to the Democratic Party. Yet the sizable Haitian proletariat in North America goes unmentioned in the IG's article on the earthquake and in the BT's polemic against us. This speaks to their mutual ties to "progressive" labor fakers in the U.S. And here, despite their otherwise different

Part III," *International Information Bulletin* No. 16, November 1983, which is available to the public).

But when Logan grotesquely tried to pass himself off as a workers leader from New Zealand at an October 2007 Bay Area "Labor Conference to Stop the War," Norden went along for the ride. As a Spartacist spokesman intervened at the event to expose Logan as a revolting and dangerous fraud, the BT's and IG's favorite labor bureaucrat, Jack Heyman of ILWU Local 10, tried to interrupt our speaker and defended Logan against what he called "personal slanders." Norden sat silent through all this and then took the floor, where his only mention of Logan was a brief, oh-so-comradely criticism of

More Gas from the Swamp



Statements by IG (left) and BT (right) against SL on Haiti. Will the "celebrant" Bill Logan officiate at the wedding?

As we noted in "Haiti Earthquake Horror: Imperialism, Racism and Starvation" (WV No. 951, 29 January), the grim reality is:

"There are no good alternatives facing Haiti today. The U.S. military is the only force on the ground with the capacity—e.g., trucks, planes, ships—to organize the transport of what food, water, medical and other supplies are getting to Haiti's population. And they're doing it in the typical piggish U.S. imperialist manner. We have always opposed U.S. and UN occupations in Haiti and everywhere—and it may become necessary to call for U.S./UN out of Haiti in the near future—but we are not going to call for an end to such aid as the desperate Haitian masses can get their hands on."

Devastated by two centuries of colonial and imperialist subjugation, Haiti had virtually no industrial proletariat even before the earthquake hit, and hardly any infrastructure. As our article underlined, "The key to the liberation of Haiti lies in proletarian revolution throughout the hemisphere, in which the mobilization of

appetites, there is some real political "unity" between the IG and BT.

The Ties That Bind

In the BT's communiqués, the organization's second-in-command, Tom Riley, points to the enthusing by both the BT and IG over the 2008 antiwar West Coast port shutdown by the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) as the potential ticket for regroupment. Riley ridicules the IG's view of its role in spurring this action, writing, "I think the IG has really convinced themselves that them showing up at that Bay Area conference selling that pamphlet on Labor Strikes Against the War was instrumental. This isn't just cynicism but actual delusion." Nonetheless, he argues that the "ICL/IG differences on the ILWU labour action are an opening for us" and counsels "the MAIN thing we want to do however is not ridicule them but start pulling at the threads of the Logan Q and the origins of ILWU action."

By the "threads of the Logan Q," Riley means that, for any prospect of unity, the IG will have to embrace BT leader Bill Logan as their own "dear leader." A proven, massive liar and a sociopath, Logan was expelled from our international tendency in 1979 for crimes "against communist morality and its substrate elementary human decency." These included Logan using his organizational position as chairman of our Australian section to break up couples and to try to force a young woman to get an abortion and, failing that, to give up her baby. At the time of Logan's expulsion, IG leader Jan Norden, who was then a leading member of our organization, powerfully and rightly indicted Logan as "a criminally sociopathic individual who should be removed from all working-class organizations" (see "On the Logan Regime

Logan's description of a 1930s Australian labor boycott of pig iron to Japan as an example of working-class struggle against war. In other words, the IG joined Heyman and the BT in legitimizing the twisted Logan as part of the workers movement (see "Labor Opportunists, Renegades Embrace Bill Logan," WV No. 901, 26 October 2007).

Such is the price for entry into the Bay Area reformist swamp, where the likes of Heyman specialize in providing "militant" working-class cover for politics that have shackled the unions to the class enemy, particularly the Democratic Party. This is what played out on May Day 2008. The West Coast port shutdown that day was a powerful demonstration of the kind of working-class action that needs to be mobilized against the wars and occupations of U.S. imperialism. But the ILWU International tops channeled it into "loyal to America" patriotism and support for Democratic Party contender Barack Obama as the future Commander-in-Chief of U.S. imperialism. Any mention of the war in Afghanistan, championed by Obama, was deep-sixed.

Today, the BT begs to differ with the IG that we have undergone a "qualitative degeneration" over Haiti. They gently chide IG leaders for "their willfully blind allegiance to everything the SL did prior to their own departure in 1996." For the BT, our "qualitative degeneration" took place in 1983, when we raised the conjunctural demand "Marines Out of Lebanon, Now, Alive" to intersect widespread revulsion over the deaths of 240 U.S. Marines and direct it against the U.S. imperialist rulers. The BT charged us with "social-patriotism" because we didn't cheer the bombing of the Marine barracks as an act of "anti-imperialism."

On the front page of WV our Lebanon slogan was coupled with the call, "U.S.

The Logan Dossier

Documentary Evidence and Testimony in the August 1979 Trial and Expulsion of Bill Logan from the international Spartacist tendency for Crimes Against Communist Morality and Elementary Human Decency. Logan is now the leader of the "International Bolshevik Tendency."

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On 1902 Martinique Volcano by Rosa Luxemburg

The following article by revolutionary Marxist leader Rosa Luxemburg was written shortly after a massive volcanic eruption in May 1902 that killed some 40,000 people on the Caribbean island of Martinique, which remains to this day a colony of French imperialism. The article, which originally appeared in the Social Democratic paper Leipziger Volkszeitung (15 May 1902), appears here as translated in The Rosa Luxemburg Reader (Monthly Review Press [2004]). It conveys the hypocrisy of the European Great Powers, with the blood of millions on their hands, rushing to the aid of Martinique.

Throughout the article Luxemburg refers to various wars and revolutions. These include the Opium Wars of Western intervention into China in the mid 19th century; the Paris Commune of 1871, in which the proletariat briefly governed the city before being crushed by the French army with the support of German forces, with over 20,000 slaughtered; and the Boer Wars of 1880-81 and 1899-1902, when the British imperialists brutally crushed independent Afrikaner states in southern Africa that in turn lorded it over the black African masses. Other such references are explained by brackets in the text.

* * *

Mountains of smoking ruins, heaps of mangled corpses, a steaming, smoking sea of fire wherever you turn, mud and ashes—that is all that remains of the flourishing little city which perched on the rocky slope of the volcano like a fluttering swallow. For some time the angry giant had been heard to rumble and rage against this human presumption, the blind self-conceit of the two-legged dwarfs. Great-hearted even in his wrath, a true giant, he warned the reckless creatures that crawled at his feet. He smoked, spewed out fiery clouds, in his bosom there was seething and boiling and explosions like rifle volleys and cannon thunder. But the lords of the earth, those who ordain human destiny, remained with faith unshaken—in their own wisdom.

On [May] 7th, the commission dispatched by the government announced to the anxious people of St. Pierre that all was in order in heaven and on earth. All is in order, no cause for alarm!—as they said on the eve of the Oath of the Tennis Court in the dance-intoxicated halls of Louis XVI, while in the crater of the revolutionary volcano fiery lava was gathering for the fearful eruption. All is in order, peace and quiet everywhere!—as they said in Vienna and Berlin on the eve of the March eruption fifty years ago [the outbreak of the 1848 European revolutions]. The old, long-suffering titan of Martinique paid no heed to the reports of the honorable commission: after the people had been reassured by the governor on the 7th, he erupted in the early hours of the 8th and buried in a few minutes the

governor, the commission, the people, houses, streets and ships under the fiery exhalation of his indignant heart.

The work was radically thorough. Forty thousand human lives mowed down, a handful of trembling refugees rescued—the old giant can rumble and bubble in peace, he has shown his might, he has fearfully avenged the slight to his primordial power.

And now in the ruins of the annihilated city on Martinique a new guest arrives, unknown, never seen before—the human being. Not lords and bondsmen, not blacks and whites, not rich and poor, not plantation owners and wage slaves—human beings have appeared on the tiny shattered island, human beings who feel only the pain and see only the disaster, who



Library of Congress

View of St. Pierre, destroyed by Mt. Pelée eruption.

only want to help and succor. Old Mt. Pelee has worked a miracle! Forgotten are the days of Fashoda [in 1898, Britain and France nearly went to war over a conflict in Fashoda, Sudan], forgotten the conflict over Cuba, forgotten “la Revanche”—the French and the English, the Tsar and the Senate of Washington, Germany and Holland donate money, send telegrams, extend the helping hand. A brotherhood of peoples against nature’s burning hatred, a resurrection of humanism on the ruins of human culture. The price of recalling their humanity was high, but thundering Mt. Pelee had a voice to catch their ear.

France weeps over the tiny island’s forty thousand corpses, and the whole world hastens to dry the tears of the Mother Republic. But how was it then, centuries ago, when France spilled blood in torrents for the Lesser and Greater Antilles? In the sea off the east coast of Africa lies a volcanic island—Madagascar: fifty years ago there we saw the disconsolate Republic who weeps for her lost children today, how she bowed the

obstinate native people to her yoke with chains and the sword. No volcano opened its crater there: the mouths of French cannons spewed out death and annihilation; French artillery fire swept thousands of flowering human lives from the face of the earth until a free people lay prostrate on the ground, until the brown queen of the “savages” was dragged off as a trophy to the “City of Light.”

On the Asiatic coast, washed by the waves of the ocean, lie the smiling Philippines. Six years ago we saw the benevolent Yankees, we saw the Washington Senate at work there [a reference to the 1898 Spanish-American War, in which the U.S. took possession of the Philippines and Cuba—the war had taken place four years previously, not six]. Not fire-spewing

mountains—there, American rifles mowed down human lives in heaps; the sugar cartel Senate today sends golden dollars to Martinique, thousands upon thousands, to coax life back from the ruins, sent cannon upon cannon, warship upon warship, golden dollars millions upon millions to Cuba, to sow death and devastation.

Yesterday, today—far off in the African south, where only a few years ago a tranquil little people lived by their labor and in peace, there we saw how the English wreak havoc, these same Englishmen who in Martinique save the mother her children and the children their parents: there we saw them stamp on human bodies, on children’s corpses with brutal soldiers’ boots, wading in pools of blood, death and misery before them and behind.

Ah, and the Russians, the rescuing, helping, weeping Tsar of All the Russians—an old acquaintance! We have seen you on the ramparts of Praga, where warm Polish blood flowed in streams and turned the sky red with its steam [in 1831, the Tsarist army bloodily suppressed a Polish



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uprising in Praga, a suburb of Warsaw]. But those were the old days. No! Now, only a few weeks ago, we have seen you benevolent Russians on your dusty highways, in ruined Russian villages eye to eye with the ragged, wildly agitated, grumbling mob; gunfire rattled, gasping muzhiks fell to the earth, red peasant blood mingled with the dust of the highway. They must die, they must fall because their bodies doubled up with hunger, because they cried out for bread, for bread!

And we have seen you too, oh Mother Republic, you tear-distiller. It was on May 23 of 1871: the glorious spring sun shone down on Paris; thousands of pale human beings in working clothes stood packed together in the streets, in prison courtyard, body to body and head to head; through loopholes in the walls, mitrailleuses thrust their blood-thirsty muzzles. No volcano erupted, no lava stream poured down. Your cannons, Mother Republic, were turned on the tight-packed crowd, screams of pain rent the air—over twenty thousand corpses covered the pavements of Paris!

And all of you—whether French and English, Russians and Germans, Italians and Americans—we have seen you all together once before in brotherly accord, united in a great league of nations, helping and guiding each other: it was in China. There too you forgot all quarrels among yourselves, there too you made a peace of peoples—for mutual murder and the torch. Ha, how the pigtailed fell in rows before your bullets, like a ripe grainfield lashed by the hail! Ha, how the wailing women plunged into the water, their dead in their cold arms, fleeing the tortures of your ardent embraces!

And now they have all turned to Martinique, all one heart and one mind again; they help, rescue, dry the tears and curse the havoc-wreaking volcano. Mt. Pelee, great-hearted giant, you can laugh; you can look down in loathing at these benevolent murderers, at these weeping carnivores, at these beasts in Samaritan’s clothing. But a day will come when another volcano lifts its voice of thunder: a volcano that is seething and boiling, whether you need it or not, and will sweep the whole sanctimonious, blood-splattered culture from the face of the earth. And only on its ruins will the nations come together in true humanity, which will know but one deadly foe—blind, dead nature. ■

Out of Grenada, Dead or Alive” (see WV No. 341, 4 November 1983). We did not give military support to any of the contending forces in the bloody civil war in Lebanon, and there was no known force there fighting against the U.S. imperialists. In Grenada, we had a side: with the Cubans and others who *were* fighting against the U.S. imperialist invaders. During the same period we raised the call “kill the invaders” against CIA counter-revolutionary bands who sought to overthrow the leftist Sandinista regime in Nicaragua; we hailed the Soviet Red Army and called on it to mop up the

imperialist-backed Islamic reactionaries in Afghanistan; and we supported the suppression of Solidarność imperialist-sponsored counterrevolution in Poland.

None of this was inspired by glorying in dead bodies, but by our proletarian revolutionary internationalist commitment to ending imperialist barbarism. As we wrote in “Marxism and Bloodthirstiness” (WV No. 345, 6 January 1984), “*We are for the victory of just causes*. Necessarily and above all, the centrality of just causes is the shattering of the exploiting and oppressing classes and the victory of socialism” (emphasis in original). In con-

trast, as we noted at the time, the BT’s bloodthirstiness was a convenient posture against us and inversely proportional to the distance from where the blood was being shed. The founding members of the BT are, after all, an assortment of embittered ex-members of our organization who got cold feet about our Soviet defensism in the early 1980s when the winds of Cold War II were blowing.

Though the IG has gone some distance down the road to forgiving and forgetting the crimes of BT leader Bill Logan, Logan himself has opined that “some current members of the IG would not manage

the personal transformation required by a fusion.” Perhaps Logan could apply his well-documented expertise in sadistic and cult-like practices for such a “personal transformation.” Today, the BT leader advertises himself as a “professional celebrant”—a New Age equivalent of a faith healer—who specializes in “bereavement,” “betrayal,” “partnership break-up,” “sexuality issues” and other ceremonies derived from the “Anglican and Presbyterian influences of my childhood.” If all goes well in the BT’s “re-groupment” waltz with the IG, Logan can officiate at the wedding. ■

The following article, based on a November 2009 educational presentation in London, is reprinted in slightly edited form from Workers Hammer No. 209 (Winter 2009-2010), newspaper of the Spartacist League/Britain, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

WORKERS HAMMER

The 1917 Russian October Revolution was the greatest victory for the working people of the world, a defining event of modern history. For the first time ever the proletariat seized state power and created a workers state based on soviets, or workers councils, under the Bolshevik Party's leadership. As the founder of American Trotskyism, James P. Cannon, put it in 1939:

"The Russian Bolsheviks on November 7, 1917, once and for all, took the question of the workers' revolution out of the realm of abstraction and gave it flesh and blood reality."
—*Struggle for a Proletarian Party*, 1943

The Soviet government decreed land to the peasants and pulled Russia out of World War I, an interimperialist war. It demanded an immediate peace without annexations, including freedom for the colonies subjugated

Spartacist League/Britain Class



Moscow, 1918: Red Army soldiers celebrating first anniversary of Russian Revolution under banner hailing "Communism."

discriminating against women and gave women in Russia a level of equality and freedom that has not yet been attained by the most economically advanced "democratic" capitalist countries today. Just over a month after the revolution, two decrees established civil marriage and allowed for divorce at the request of either partner; all laws against homosexual acts and other consensual sexual activity were also abolished. The Bolshevik position was based on the following principle, as explained in a pamphlet by Grigorii Batkis, director of the Moscow Institute of Social Hygiene, *The Sexual Revolution in Russia* (1923):

"It declares the absolute non-interference of the state and society into sexual matters, so long as nobody is injured, and no one's interests are encroached upon."

This is light years ahead of the consciousness of liberals and fake leftists today, who go ballistic over our defence of Helen Goddard and of Roman Polanski. Both are behind bars because of "age of consent" laws, under which the bourgeois state accords to itself the right to regulate the sexual activity of youth.

Today's reactionary political climate is shaped largely by counterrevolution in the former Soviet Union in 1991-92. The USSR remained a workers state

October 1917:
The Bolshevik Revolution

by the imperialists. It also recognised the right to self-determination of all the non-Russian peoples oppressed under tsarist/capitalist rule.

The Bolshevik Revolution was not made solely for Russia, but for the working masses of the whole world, occurring at a time when the Indian subcontinent, China and Africa were either colonies or semicolonies of the imperialist powers. The Bolshevik Revolution became a beacon to the oppressed masses of all countries, not least in the colonial world. Revulsion against the imperialist rulers as a result of the slaughter in World War I led to a wave of revolutionary and pre-revolutionary struggles in many countries. This wave ended with the defeat of the German Revolution of 1923.

Only in Russia in October 1917 did this upsurge result in the working class taking state power, because uniquely among the socialist organisations of their time, the Bolsheviks had a programme for working-class power. At the outbreak of WWI on 4 August 1914, the German Social Democracy (as well as the Labour Party and most other parties in the Second International) passed definitively into the camp of social-chauvinism by supporting their "own" bourgeoisie in war. WWI was a watershed, provoking a profound realignment in the revolutionary workers movement internationally. Prepared by years of struggle and a decisive split with the Russian opportunists—the Mensheviks—Lenin and the Bolsheviks emerged as the leadership of an international



Lenin and Trotsky in Red Square on second anniversary of Bolshevik Revolution.

movement to recapture the banner of revolutionary Marxism.

From 1914 onwards Lenin hammered away at two related themes: the need to *split* from the social traitors of the Second International and to fight for a new, Third International; and the call to turn the imperialist war into a civil war against the capitalist system. Lenin's programme for the working classes of all the warring countries was *revolutionary defeatism*—i.e., the defeat of one's own bourgeoisie is the lesser evil; turn the guns around—the main enemy is at

home! Following the Bolshevik Revolution, in 1919 the Third (Communist) International was founded and, under Lenin and Trotsky's leadership, it sought to forge vanguard parties to fight for proletarian revolutions worldwide.

Social-chauvinism is integral to the programme of parties like the Labour Party. Old Labour governments have loyally served the aims of British imperialism, from the bloody partition of India in 1947, leading to communalist slaughter on a mass scale, to sending troops into Northern Ireland in 1969, to introducing vile racist virginity tests for Asian women in Britain in the 1970s. Social-chauvinism is alive and well today, as seen in the reactionary strikes against foreign workers, under the slogan "British jobs for British workers," led by the Socialist Party [affiliated with Socialist Alternative in the U.S.] and trade-union bureaucrats and tacitly supported by most of the Labourite left. In building a party modelled on Lenin's Bolsheviks, our strategic task is to expose such reformist organisations as an obstacle to building a revolutionary party.

Despite the grim poverty of Russia at the time of the October Revolution, the young workers state granted far-reaching measures of equality. It eliminated laws

(although degenerated), despite the rise to power of the Stalinist bureaucratic caste that began in 1923-24, rejecting the revolutionary internationalist programme of the Bolsheviks under Lenin and Trotsky. We upheld the Trotskyist programme of unconditional military defence of the Soviet Union and the deformed workers states of Eastern Europe and called for proletarian political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracy, and we have a proud record of fighting against the capitalist reunification of Germany in 1989-90 and against counterrevolution in the former Soviet Union.

The message behind today's rejoicing by the capitalist politicians and liberals over counterrevolution in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe is: "never again" should the working class hold state power. While organisations such as the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) are dumping any remaining claim to base themselves on the Bolshevik Revolution, we in the ICL uniquely uphold the programme of the Bolshevik Party in that revolution. To quote James Cannon again,

"We are, in fact, the party of the Russian revolution. We have been the people, and the only people, who have had the Russian revolution in their program and in their blood."

—*Struggle for a Proletarian Party*

There are many lessons from the revolution but the central one that I want to highlight—an issue that set the Bolsheviks apart from their competitors at the time, the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries (SRs)—was the need to combat illusions in bourgeois democracy. Breaking such illusions was central to the fight for the dictatorship of the proletariat. Ever since October 1917, social democrats and reformists, beginning with the Mensheviks, have denounced the October Revolution, arguing that the Bolsheviks should not have led the proletariat to seize power. Instead, they argue that the Russian proletariat should have supported the liberal bourgeoisie—in the name of "democracy." The main accusation levelled against the Bolsheviks is that they violated bourgeois democracy. What they actually violated was the rule of the landlords and capitalists, based on private property—exactly what bourgeois democracy exists to protect. Bourgeois democracy is a facade to con-



Above: *Pravda* of the Trenches, published in Latvia by Bolsheviks in the army during World War I. Right: Austrian and Russian soldiers fraternizing at the front, 1917.





VAAP

Petrograd, June 1917: Bolshevik banner (right) reads: “Down With Counter-revolution! Down With the Ten Capitalist Ministers! All Power to the Soviets of Workers, Soldiers and Peasants Deputies! We Demand Immediate Convocation of a Constituent Assembly!”

ceal the reality of capitalist rule which is the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

The State Is Not Neutral

Lenin’s pamphlet, *The State and Revolution*, written on the eve of the October Revolution, codifies a central lesson of the revolution: that the proletariat *cannot* use the bourgeois state to achieve a peaceful transition to socialism. Rather, the proletariat must smash the old state machinery, create a new state and impose its own class rule—the dictatorship of the proletariat—to suppress and expropriate the capitalist exploiters.

The role of the reformists today, as it was in 1917, is to reinforce illusions in “democratic” imperialism. For groups like the SWP and Socialist Party, the solution to everything from how to combat the fascist British National Party to ending the British and U.S. imperialist occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan is to appeal to the capitalist state. This is worse than grotesque: these bloody imperialist occupations are not aberrations, but part of the normal workings of “democratic” imperialism. The imperialist rulers have carried out mass murder and torture on an immense scale in their drive to secure world markets; much of the wealth that laid the foundations of British capitalism was acquired from the trade in African slaves. From the Indian subcontinent to Africa and beyond, British colonial rule killed tens of millions, subjugating entire populations. As Karl Marx put it in *Capital*, capitalism was born “dripping from head to foot, from every pore, with blood and dirt.”

The Paradox of the February Revolution

The February Revolution of 1917 that overthrew the tsarist monarchy was carried out overwhelmingly by the working class with the peasants, organised in the army, also playing a key role. The spark was a demonstration by women workers on February 23 (on the old calendar, which in the new calendar is March 8, International Women’s Day). On February 25 there was a general strike in Petrograd followed by a mutiny in some regiments and the creation of the Soviet of Workers’ Deputies. By February 28 the tsar’s ministers were arrested. The paradox of the February Revolution was that while workers had toppled the monarchy, power was handed over to the bourgeoisie in the form of the Provisional Government. This bourgeois government existed side by side with the soviets in what was known as “dual power.” The central question in Russia following the February Revolution was this: whether to cede power to the bourgeoisie or whether the proletariat should take the power.

Tsarist Russia was the weakest link in the imperialist chain as the Russian bourgeoisie were entirely dependent on the European powers. The particular conditions in Russia were described by Trotsky as “combined and uneven development.” A vast mass of hundreds of millions of peasants—who had no mechanised agriculture, were only a generation away from serfdom and were hungry for land

—co-existed with urban centres containing a small but concentrated proletariat. Particularly in Petrograd the proletariat was based in large-scale modern factories. This meant that the proletarian revolution could not hope to succeed and survive in backward Russia without the support of the mass of poor peasants.

The soviets, which had previously arisen in the 1905 Revolution, were revived in the February Revolution, but they now included soldiers, who were mainly peasants and who would otherwise have been difficult to organise. Soldiers’ soviets became the organised form of the armed



Viktor Bulla

Troops fire on workers demonstration during Petrograd July Days.

military units that were now at the disposal of the working class.

Between February and October there was continual conflict between the Provisional Government and the soviets. Describing the instability of dual power, the first minister of war in the Provisional Government, Alexander Guchkov, complained: “The government, alas, has no real power; the troops, the railroads, the post and telegraph are in the hands of the Soviet. The simple fact is that the Provisional Government exists only so long as the Soviet permits it” (quoted in *History of the Russian Revolution*, Leon Trotsky, 1930). Dual power could only be resolved either by revolution or counterrevolution.

With the overthrow of the autocratic rule of the tsar, democratic illusions became widespread. Upon his return from exile in the spring of 1917 Lenin described Russia as the “freest of all the belligerent countries in the world,” and there was freedom of expression and intense public debate, especially in the soviets about the way forward for the revolution. But the fundamental nature of Russia as an imperialist power had not changed and for Lenin, the question was to maintain the Bolsheviks’ revolutionary defeatist position on WWI—the task remained that of “turning the imperialist war into a civil war.”

The soviets in February were dominated by the SRs and Mensheviks, who maintained that the February Revolution had achieved the main task of overthrowing the monarchy and now the task was

to defend “democratic” Russia against German imperialism. In other words the war aims of the Russian bourgeoisie would continue. During Lenin’s exile the Bolshevik leaders in Russia began to bend in the direction of the Mensheviks’ defensism. Trotsky was scathing in his *History of the Russian Revolution* about a *Pravda* article in early March which said: “Our slogan is pressure upon the Provisional Government with the aim of compelling it...to make an attempt to induce all the warring countries to open immediate negotiations...and until then every man remains at his fighting post!” Lenin vehemently opposed this line in *Pravda*, saying in a March letter: “I shall prefer even an immediate split with anyone in our party, whoever it may be, to making concessions to the social-patriotism of Kerensky and Co.”

Lenin Fights to Rarm the Party

On his return to Russia in April, Lenin led a sharp fight to reorient the Bolshevik Party. Few events had such significance for the fate of the revolution as the Bolshevik Party conferences held in April, where the issue at stake was the question of the working class taking power. As Trotsky noted in *Lessons of October* (1924): “The fundamental controversial question, around which everything else centred, was this: whether or not we should struggle for power; whether or not we should assume power.”

Lenin’s “April Theses” make clear that not the slightest concession to “revolutionary defensism” is permissible. He abandoned his slogan of the “demo-

the proletariat, for a period of years or decades. In contrast Lenin saw the vital necessity for the peasants, who needed to rise up and overthrow the landlords, to ally with the proletariat in the coming revolution. He also saw the revolution in Russia as the opening shot in the European and international revolution. But Lenin’s formula for a joint dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry was flawed, not least because the peasantry is not an independent class but an atomised petty-bourgeois layer.

Faced with the reality of dual power Lenin fought for the same programmatic conclusions as Trotsky advocated in his theory of “permanent revolution.” From 1905 Trotsky understood that the realisation of the tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in backward Russia was conceivable only under the dictatorship of the proletariat, leaning on the peasantry. Moreover, the seizure of power by the working class in Russia would place on the order of the day not only democratic, but also socialist tasks. This would give a powerful impetus to international socialist revolution, which was necessary for the development of socialism in Russia. Trotsky in turn came over to Lenin on the party question, making clear on his return to Russia in May 1917 that he no longer favoured unity between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks.

In contrast to both Lenin and Trotsky, the right wing in the Bolshevik Party at the time—exemplified by Kamenev—still had in mind a consolidation of the new bourgeois democracy. Kamenev and Zinoviev would oppose the seizure of power in October.

Fake Socialists Join the Kerensky Government

When the SRs and Mensheviks openly joined the Provisional Government in May, this was a political betrayal of the working masses in the soviets, but entirely in keeping with the SR and Menshevik programme. The Kerensky government was a bourgeois government; the presence of the Mensheviks and SRs was designed to fool the workers that their concerns could be met through the bourgeois state. These defensist “socialists” still dominated the soviets and when the All-Russian Congress of Soviets opened in June it voted to approve Kerensky’s new offensive at the front.

But the mood in Petrograd was changing in favour of the Bolsheviks. When a demonstration in early June was banned by the Menshevik/SR-led Soviet, the Bolsheviks stood down. The Soviet leadership then called a demonstration on June 18, but the workers came out *en masse* under Bolshevik slogans, including: “Down with the ten capitalist ministers!” “Down with the offensive” and “All power to the soviets!” By the start of July Petrograd was in semi-insurrection—a delegation from a machine gun unit met workers from the Putilov factory to tell them they had received an order on July 4 to go to the front, but had decided instead to go “not to the German front, against the German proletariat, but against their own capitalist ministers.”

By June the Bolsheviks had a near majority in the Petrograd factories and in some garrisons but it was far from clear

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General Kornilov’s troops being disarmed after attempted counterrevolutionary coup in August 1917.



VAAP

(continued from page 1)

Calderón, the “war” against the drug trade has also provided a chance to purge the government apparatus by installing PAN cronies in place of PRI leftovers.

It is the bourgeois state that is the biggest force for violence. While the cops in Mexico—and not only in Mexico—are plenty corrupt, the brutal violence they employ stems from the role they play, along with the military, courts and prisons, as a core component of the capitalist state. This murderous apparatus of repression cannot be reformed to act in the interest of the workers and the poor. It must be smashed through socialist revolution and replaced with a new state to impose working-class rule—the dictatorship of the proletariat—to expropriate and suppress the capitalist exploiters.

Ciudad Juárez: City Under Siege

The key staging ground for Calderón’s drug war is Ciudad Juárez, an important industrial city of 1.5 million people whose scores of *maquiladoras* have attracted thousands of migrants from the interior of Mexico. Long infamous for the unsolved brutal murders of hundreds of young women workers (see “Capitalism and Anti-Woman Terror,” WV No. 812, 24 October 2003), Juárez is also a key locus of the drug trade due to its proximity to the U.S.—across the border from El Paso. *Narco News Bulletin* online (17 April 2009) described the army’s “Joint Operation Juárez” as a “situation of de facto martial law” in which the planned deployment of 8,500 soldiers and 2,300 militarized police amounted to one officer for every 130 residents, and about 92 troops per square mile. The article reported:

“Soldiers have disarmed 380 transit police and will accompany them as they carry out their duties. Thirteen current and retired military officers have taken control of Juarez’s police force: Ret. Gen. Julian David Rivera Breton, who made a name for himself in Chiapas when he was one of the military officials in charge of anti-Zapatista operations there, is the new police commissioner.”

The troops are scheduled to stay until at least December. The new police officers, replacing those purged, were trained in urban combat at an army base and will carry military-issue German-made assault rifles.

The workers and poor of Juárez are direct targets of the military deployment. As of last June, the Chihuahua State Human Rights Commission was looking into 2,500 reported torture cases involving military personnel and federal police. Longtime activist Géminis Ochoa, leader of the Che Guevara Street Vendors Union, was killed in the midst of organizing a demonstration against the army’s abuse of vendors. At least seven university professors have been murdered; all were involved in labor or social activism. Last May, Dr. Manuel Arroyo Galván, a professor of sociology at the Autonomous University of Ciudad Juárez active around the rights of *maquiladora* work-

ers, was shot six times in the head in downtown Juárez.

Mexico, like other Latin American countries dependent on U.S. imperialism, has never been a stable bourgeois democracy. Its military (the third-largest in Latin America) is not primarily designed for foreign combat but to repress the population, as the 15-year-long campaign against the Zapatistas in Chiapas makes clear. However, unlike in much of Latin America, the Mexican army has done the bidding of the civilian government since the end of the Mexican Revolution. Under the PRI, the state’s bloody arm was seen in the killing or disappearance of thousands of leftists, militant workers and peasants. In the Tlatelolco massacre of 2 October 1968, government forces killed some 1,000 student protesters in Mexico City. In the broader *guerra sucia* (dirty war) against the left from the late 1960s



Spartacist banner at L.A. demonstration for immigrant rights, March 2006.

through the early 1980s, at least 2,000 people were disappeared or killed. Today the Mexican ruling class faces little threat from the left, which mainly operates under the PRD’s umbrella.

The dramatically increased role the military is now playing will only expand the numbers of victims of state terror. Army officers have been put in charge of several local or state police forces. Troops man checkpoints on the streets and highways while soldiers patrol cities in trucks with automatic weapons pointed at all and sundry. Many cities under occupation are industrial centers with histories of militant workers struggles. Army abuses—including illegal searches and arrest without cause, rape, sexual abuse, torture and death—reported to the National Human Rights Commission have surged from 182 in 2006, when Calderón deployed the military, to 1,230 in 2008. When residents of Monterrey, Ciudad Juárez, Nuevo Laredo, Reynosa and Veracruz protested against the military last year, they were denounced in the bourgeois media as being tools of the cartels.

Frontera NorteSur (4 September 2009), an Internet journal published by New Mexico State University at Las Cruces, noted, “As the body count mounts, the violence increasingly resembles the ‘social cleansing’ carried out by death squads in Honduras, Brazil and other Latin American nations.” Critics of the government and social activists have been among those targeted. Journalists in the north of Mexico are regularly intimidated and threatened for exposing government corruption. In southern Mexico, supporters of the Zapatistas have been tortured under the pretext of the drug war, as have indigenous activists in Guerrero, a state long known for murderous state repression against leftists. *Proceso* magazine (22 March 2009) called the permanently militarized areas in that state a “counterinsurgency strategy camouflaged as federal action against the cultivation of

drugs.” Elsewhere in Mexico, rumors have circulated about vigilante groups linked to the police, an ominous echo of the *guerra sucia*.

No Illusions in PRD Populism!

The “war on drugs” has been endorsed by politicians across the spectrum of bourgeois politics in Mexico. Harking back to when the country’s rulers offered some social programs and populist rhetoric along with brute force, leading PRDers like López Obrador blame the violence and chaos on Mexican neoliberal regimes, especially those of the PAN, for their corruption and gutting of state institutions. But when a rumor circulated that traffickers were planning to kill Calderón, the PRD closed ranks behind the Commander-in-Chief, with Senate PRD leader Carlos Navarrette declaring that “the Mexican state must make use of all its resources and strength” (*El Imparcial*, Hermosillo, 11 August 2009). The PRD has for a number of years carried out the “war on drugs” in Mexico City—for example, the raids in Tepito.

Echoing the reactionary anti-drug hysteria is the reformist Militante group, co-thinkers of the International Marxist Tendency of the late Ted Grant. When the government was planning to lessen penalties for possession of small portions of drugs—a supportable if minimal reform—Militante denounced Calderón from the right, claiming in a 2 May 2009 article on its Web site that “the PAN governments have tried to legalize drugs with the objective of undermining the political and organizational capacity of the Mexican youth.” This is of a piece with the Grantites’ long history of retrograde social positions internationally, including hailing anti-drug vigilantism in France, where black African and North African youth are specially targeted by the cops (see the 1994 Spartacist pamphlet, *Militant Labour’s Touching Faith in the Capitalist State*).

In the U.S., *International Socialist Review* (July/August 2009), published by the International Socialist Organization (ISO), opined that through decriminalization, “The billions of dollars wasted on the war on drugs in Mexico could go to rebuild the Mexican economy in order to provide the education and jobs that the Mexican people so desperately need. In the United States, the money could be put toward drug treatment instead of incarceration.” One might think that the ISO was smoking some peculiar stuff here. But the dream that the imperialists who ruthlessly exploit workers at home and abroad and their bagmen south of the border would open jail-cell doors and “rebuild” an economy they systematically loot is illustrative of reformism’s entire framework: the notion that the bourgeois state can be pressured to serve the interests of the exploited and the oppressed.

The ISO’s reformist plea was a faint echo of the plan offered by the PRD’s López Obrador, who appealed last March in an open letter to Hillary Clinton: “We think that it is a mistake to confront the problem of the lack of safety and of violence with an iron hand, with the military, with jails, with more severe laws and longer prison terms. The solution to the scourge of criminal behavior must come by retaking control of the state, by changing the current economic model and by guaranteeing better living and working conditions to the population.”

Bourgeois-populist parties like the PRD *cannot* fundamentally better the living and working conditions of the workers and peasants. When in power, their job is to administer the capitalist profit system and enforce its needs against the working people, occasionally adding some social programs to try to maintain class peace. And when faced with workers, students and others fighting for their rights and livelihoods, the PRD no less than the PRI and PAN uses organized state violence.

Offered as an alternative to neoliberalism, populist appeals serve to reinforce the chains binding the combative Mexican proletariat to the capitalist order. By preaching the common interests of “the people,” populist nationalism obscures the irreconcilable class divide between the working class and the bourgeoisie that exploits its labor for profit. As the GEM wrote in defending the SME electrical workers union:

“The proletariat has unique class interests and enormous social power based on its role in the productive process; this means it is called upon to play the leading role in championing the aspirations of all the poor and oppressed through its own emancipation and the establishment of a workers and peasants government. The working class does not lack the will to fight; but as long as it remains dominated by the politics of bourgeois nationalist populism, it will be derailed towards illusions in the democratic reform of capitalism.”

The GEM fights to break militant workers and radical youth from the PRD and all forms of bourgeois nationalism. As the North American sections of the ICL, the GEM, SL/U.S. and TLC are dedicated to the struggle to forge Trotskyist workers parties that will lead the fight for socialist revolution from the Yukon to the Yucatán.■

Chicago...

(continued from page 3)

The bosses are now gunning for the public sector unions. Daley has already forced most city unions to accept unpaid furlough days, and those that did not were hit with layoffs and reduced hours. The unemployment rate in Chicago has spiked over 10 percent. Economic times are tough. But it is necessary to fight; not fighting will only assure greater misery in the future. The solid six-day transit strike in Philadelphia last November held off the worst of an offensive by the transit bosses and local Democrats, although the union misleaders gave ground on the key issue of pensions.

The ATU bureaucrats sell the lie that effective labor action, including strikes, is impossible or illegal. During an earlier CTA “doomsday” budget crisis in 2007, these misleaders helped foist a rotten binding arbitration contract on the workforce, burying the union’s strike weapon.

In fact, the unions were built through class struggle, often in defiance of bourgeois law and the capitalist state—the cops, courts and military—that enforces it. The way forward lies in replacing the bureaucrats with a class-struggle leadership in the unions.

In the lead-up to the February 7 cuts, there were rallies outside CTA headquarters on January 18 and 20. ATU officials participated in the January 20 rally with only a token presence of workers. The earlier rally was organized by a host of reformist “socialist” groups—including the International Socialist Organization (ISO), Socialist Alternative (SAIt), and the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL) and its front groups “NoCTACuts.org” and ANSWER Chicago. The strategy presented at both rallies was the same: pressuring the racist capitalist rulers for a few more crumbs for working people.

Along these lines, the PSL rolled out a variation of their usual slogan of “Money for jobs, not for war” while other leftist fakers (ISO, SAIt) endorsed the January

18 demonstration, which included the call to “Tax the rich, not working people.” The aim of such reformist pipe dreams is to conceal the reality that the bourgeois state and its political representatives exist to defend capitalist rule and profit, not to provide for the well-being of the downtrodden.

Like the trade-union bureaucrats, whom they serve as water boys, the reformists determine their politics by what is “practical” under capitalism. In their drive for ever-greater profits, the capitalist rulers have looted the wealth of this country, sabotaged its vital infrastructure and unleashed the catastrophe of joblessness. The capitalist system deserves to perish. As our comrade at the November 3 public hearing observed, until the working class takes control of the resources of this society, “we are not going to have a just and rational society.” He concluded: “And in order to get there, we’ve got to have a workers party to fight against this capitalist system, a workers party to fight for a workers government.”■

1917...

(continued from page 7)

that this support existed in the countryside or at the front. On more than one occasion in July the Bolsheviks had to restrain the workers in Petrograd from taking power because, without support in the countryside, they risked losing power again. After initially opposing the July demonstrations, the Bolshevik leadership decided that it was better to go with them. And when this wave broke, a period of severe counterrevolutionary repression followed. Bolsheviks were killed; Trotsky was arrested and Lenin went into hiding. The repression however was useful in helping the workers to understand the true nature of the supposedly “democratic” government of Kerensky, the Mensheviks and the SRs, which was in fact the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The Mensheviks and SRs emerged discredited from the July Days, whereas the Bolshevik Party emerged with increased support. The credibility of the Bolsheviks would also be enhanced by their role in the Kornilov episode that was to follow.

Military Defense Against Kornilov; No Political Support to Kerensky

Kornilov, the commander-in-chief of the armed forces, was a monarchist general of the “Black Hundred” type (Great Russian chauvinists who carried out pogroms against Jews). When he attempted a coup in August, the Bolsheviks quickly mobilised workers from the Petrograd factories to repulse him, in contrast to Kerensky who would have sat back while Petrograd was invaded. A victory for Kornilov would have meant not only a slaughter of the Bolsheviks and the workers and soldiers in the soviets but would also have been fatal for many of the compromisers as well. The failed coup by Kornilov showed that bourgeois democracy, as represented by the Provisional Government, was not viable in the historic sense in Russia in 1917. The real choices were represented by the Bolsheviks on one hand, and Kornilov and the forces of reaction on the other.

The Bolsheviks formed a *military* bloc with Kerensky against Kornilov, but gave him no *political* support. In fact they used the military bloc as a way of undermining Kerensky’s remaining political support. When Kronstadt sailors asked Trotsky if they shouldn’t arrest the government, he replied: “No, not yet.... Use Kerensky as a gun-rest to shoot Kornilov. Afterwards, we will settle with Kerensky.” Putting it another way he said Kerensky and Kornilov were “two variants of one and the same danger...the one chronic and the other acute” and one must: “Ward off the acute danger first, in order afterwards to settle with the chronic one.”

Lenin continued to fight against the conciliators in his own party who wanted to use the military bloc with the Provisional Government as an excuse to slide over into a political bloc with the Mensheviks and SRs, leading to a defensist policy on the war. The pressure on the Bolsheviks to adapt to defensism was



Spartacist
International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) banner raised at 1991 demonstration on anniversary of October Revolution in Moscow.

greatly increased by the German capture of Riga on August 20. A conspiracy was entered into by the Kerensky government and the Anglo-French imperialists to surrender Petrograd to the Germans and in this way to suppress the revolution. Rodzianko, the former head of the State Duma, said: “Petrograd appears threatened” adding “I say, to hell with Petrograd.”

Occupation by the German army would have meant an end to the soviets and to dual power. Baltic sailors had been fighting to protect the approaches to Petrograd, the centre of the revolution, which was necessary. But Lenin was clear that the Bolsheviks must not become defensists, writing: “We shall become defencists *only after* the transfer of power to the proletariat.... Neither the capture of Riga *nor the capture of Petrograd* will make us defencists.” From prison, Trotsky said: “The fall of Riga is a cruel blow. The fall of Petersburg would be a misfortune. But the fall of the international policy of the Russian proletariat would be ruinous.” The Kornilov coup fizzled by the end of August. The Bolsheviks never abandoned their defeatist posture towards the Russian bourgeois government and even in this tricky situation maintained their internationalism.

Lenin’s Fight for the Seizure of State Power

In September the Bolsheviks obtained a majority in the Petrograd Soviet and, unlike in July, Bolshevik support among the masses outside the cities was growing rapidly. With land wars raging in the countryside, in which the peasants were seizing land, Lenin recognised that the time had come for the overthrow of the Kerensky government and the seizure of power by the proletariat. From mid-September on Lenin fought relentlessly to put the insurrection on the order of the day. The task he said was “*armed uprising* in Petrograd and Moscow (with its region), the seizing of power and the overthrow of the government. We must consider *how* to agitate for this without expressly saying as much in the press.” The Democratic Conference that took place at this time was a parliamentary diversion from the seizure of power, as was the Pre-Parliament.

The crucial upcoming event was the Second Congress of Soviets, which was very popular with the masses because it

was sure to have a Bolshevik majority and which the Mensheviks and SRs kept trying to put off. Trotsky and [Yakov] Sverdlov thought that the seizure of power could coincide with the congress of the soviets; Lenin feared this was a smokescreen for not organising an insurrection, which was understandable given the opposition in the Central Committee to the seizure of power. On October 10 a crucial meeting of the Bolshevik Central Committee, which Lenin managed to attend although he was still in hiding, voted for insurrection by a majority of ten to two. Zinoviev and Kamenev who were against went so far as to publish a letter in Maxim Gorky’s newspaper on October 18, a gross breach of discipline that alerted the class enemy to the planned insurrection. Lenin called for their expulsion from the party but they were saved by the revolution itself.

Despite Lenin’s worries, an insurrection was in fact being organised through the means of the Military Revolutionary Committee (MRC). The MRC arose from a joint motion by the Mensheviks and SRs to disguise the fact that they were planning to move the Petrograd garrison to the front. To their surprise the Bolsheviks voted for the MRC, knowing they would have a majority in it, and when it was set up the Mensheviks boycotted it. A body that was legally identified with the soviets was an ideal vehicle for the Bolsheviks to prepare the seizure of power under the slogan of defending the upcoming congress of the soviets.

A decisive event towards the seizure of power was when the Petrograd Soviet, at the behest of the Bolsheviks, invalidated an order by Kerensky to transfer two-thirds of the Petrograd garrison to the front. Trotsky noted: “The moment when the regiments, upon the instructions of the Military Revolutionary Committee, refused to depart from the city, we had a victorious insurrection in the capital, only slightly screened at the top by the remnants of the bourgeois-democratic state forms. The insurrection of October 25 was only supplementary in character” (*Lessons of October*).

When the soldiers’ section of the Petrograd Soviet voted to transfer authority from army headquarters to the MRC, the Soviet had power in all but name.

The First Proletarian Socialist Revolution

On October 24 Kerensky foolishly tried to shut down the Bolshevik newspaper. The MRC immediately sent a detachment to reopen it and also to start taking over the telephone exchange and other key centres. Even at this point Lenin was frustrated with the lack of progress of the insurrection and went in disguise to Smolny, the Bolshevik headquarters, to oversee preparations personally. The battleship *Aurora* was still firing on the Winter Palace when the Second Congress of Soviets opened.

The October Revolution was no coup d’état. The seizure of power was based on the support of the majority of the proletariat. The actual military plans were not made public, but the masses of workers and soldiers were fully aware that the

Bolsheviks intended to take power. Days before the revolution, the Bolsheviks organised rallies throughout Petrograd attended by *hundreds of thousands* who knew that the upcoming Congress of Soviets would decide the question of power. Workers raised their hands and dedicated themselves to defence of the proletarian power based on the soviets.

At the opening session of the Congress of Soviets, the Mensheviks and the right-wing SRs were enraged that the Bolsheviks had taken power and walked out, some declaring that they were going to the Winter Palace to die with the Provisional Government. Trotsky vehemently denounced these deserters, saying: “All these so-called Socialist compromisers, these frightened Mensheviks, Socialist Revolutionaries, *Bund*—let them go! They are just so much refuse which will be swept away into the garbage-heap of history!” (quoted in *Ten Days That Shook the World*, John Reed, 1919).

The Bolshevik Party refused to cede power to the conciliators who would hand it back to the bourgeoisie. The Mensheviks and SRs immediately started organising a counterrevolutionary uprising against the Bolsheviks. Based in the Petrograd city Duma, the “All-Russian committee for salvation of the country and the revolution” tried to organise an insurrection using the Cossacks but it was quickly repulsed.

Consistent with their opposition to the seizure of power, the conciliators in the Bolshevik Party leadership around Kamenev argued for a coalition government but they backed down when it became clear that there was nobody to form a coalition with. This layer would re-emerge after Lenin’s death and the defeat of the German Revolution of 1923, when a bureaucratic caste began to coalesce around J. V. Stalin in 1923-24.

One particular question that the Mensheviks and SRs seized on was the Bolsheviks’ dispersal of the Constituent Assembly after the October Revolution. During the spring and summer of 1917 the Bolsheviks had called for a Constituent Assembly, at a time when the Provisional Government refused to convoke one out of fear of sparking a peasant uprising. After the seizure of power this stage had passed but the Bolsheviks didn’t simply call off the elections to it because a Bolshevik majority could have strengthened the authority of the soviets among the backward masses, especially in the countryside. But the election list system did not reflect the dramatic shift towards the Bolsheviks that had taken place in recent months and this, combined with the nature of parliamentary elections, gave the petty bourgeoisie a disproportional weight of the vote. Faced with a Constituent Assembly dominated by the bourgeois Kadets as well as the SRs and Mensheviks, the Bolsheviks rightly demanded that it recognise the soviet power; the assembly refused and it was soon dissolved. I should note that for the good reformists of the SWP the Russian Revolution was all about democracy and so their account is that the Bolsheviks won the masses by promising bread, peace and land. The small detail they leave out is that in order to grant this, all that was needed was the smashing of the bourgeois state and overthrow of the Provisional Government, followed by the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

I want to conclude with Lenin’s opening remarks at the second session of the Congress of Soviets. He was met with tumultuous applause. When he spoke, his now-famous words were: “We shall now proceed to construct the socialist order!” There was a three-point agenda: an end to the war, land to the peasants, and establish a socialist dictatorship. One of the tasks that the Bolsheviks proceeded with after the revolution was regrouping revolutionaries across the world into a new international, as a necessary instrument to spread the revolution to the advanced countries of Europe, and to bring about world socialism. Our fight for Leninist-Trotskyist parties worldwide is a continuation of this task. ■

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WORKERS VANGUARD

(continued from page 12)

and offered it to a number of journalists and civil liberties organizations. The most receptive response came from EFF lawyers, who were already pulling together a lawsuit against AT&T based on the *Times's* revelations. The EFF showed Klein's documents to an Internet expert, J. Scott Marcus, who confirmed that the NSA technology was designed to sweep up a massive amount of data and had probably been deployed in 15 or 20 locations, likely diverting "well over half" of AT&T's total domestic wire traffic.

Klein knew it was critical to have his information publicized in order to provide some protection against government and company blowback. As soon as his sworn statement was filed in the EFF suit, AT&T lawyers went to court seeking to gag Klein and force him to return all his evidence on the ground that what he knew constituted “trade secrets” and “state secrets.” Vaughn Walker, the conservative judge hearing the EFF case, rejected AT&T’s claims, ruling that there were no “secrets” because the cat was already out of the bag—the fact that AT&T had turned over its lines to the NSA was already being widely publicized.

Klein tried without luck to find someone on the intelligence committees in Congress who would investigate the NSA's domestic spying. An attorney for Senator Dianne Feinstein promised to call Klein back, but never did and would not return Klein's calls. In the end, no one in Congress called on Klein to testify about what he knew. Klein also pushed to get his story into the bourgeois media, but the government leaned hard on the press to keep quiet. The *New York Times*, which had sat on the original wiretapping story for over a year, dithered for months before finally running Klein's revelations in April 2006. The *Los Angeles Times* quashed a story based on Klein's revelations after discussions with both the White House and Senator Feinstein's staff! As Klein remarks, "The two of them apparently had no problems discussing my evidence with each other in private, but deliberately kept it from the public's view." To its credit, *Wired.com* published Klein's material on its Web site, and later Klein would be featured on liberal radio and TV shows including *Frontline*, *Countdown* and *Democracy Now!*

NSA: “No Such Agency”

The NSA is by far the largest and at the same time the most secretive of U.S. spy agencies, three times the size of the CIA. It was founded in 1952 by secret order of Democratic president Harry Truman, mainly to spy on the Soviet Union during the Cold War. During the late 1960s and early '70s, the NSA went through a massive expansion as the government targeted radicals, Vietnam antiwar activists and black militants based on "watch lists" of citizens given to the NSA by the FBI, CIA and other agencies. After the Watergate scandal in the early 1970s and under the impact of the social struggles of that period, some of this sordid history was publicly exposed through the investigation and hearings of the Senate's 1975-76 Church Committee.

The spying continued, but with some new window-dressing to add an appearance of legality. In 1978, the Carter administration signed the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA), a special secret court to vet requests for “national security” wiretaps. While FISA is often invoked by liberals as a check on the nation’s secret police, it has in fact never been anything more than a rubber stamp. In its first 27 years, it denied *only five* of nearly **20,000** wiretap applications!

America's rulers long viewed the telephone companies as a key military "asset," Klein recounts how the high-rise AT&T building on Thomas Street in Manhattan, which was built in 1974, "was reputedly designed for nuclear war and evoked a gloomy Kafkaesque world: There were

no windows, as the outside was clad in giant pink granite slabs, while the internal structure had tons of reinforced concrete and, said the rumors, special shielding against the electromagnetic pulse from high-altitude nuclear detonations that could fry unprotected electronics and electrical equipment.” As far back as 1919, Western Union handed over to a secret government spy outfit called the Black Chamber all international cables sent by foreign embassies in Washington.



Oakland, February 2002: Labor-centered, united-front mobilization initiated by Partisan Defense Committee and Labor Black League against government's "war on terror" and in defense of immigrant rights.

The NSA was already pressuring the telephone companies to open up their lines in early 2001, *before* the September 11 attacks. Former Qwest CEO Joseph Nacchio has disclosed that in February 2001 Qwest lost its bid for a fat government contract after he refused the NSA's demands for access to Qwest's customer calling records and to install monitoring equipment on the phone lines.

By the time that Room 641A was being built, the Bush administration was launching the notorious Total Information Awareness (TIA) program, run by convicted Conragate criminal John Poindexter. As Poindexter put it, the TIA would give the government “instant access to information from Internet mail and calling records to credit card and banking transactions and travel documents, without a search warrant” (*New York Times*, 9 November 2002). TIA prompted a public outcry, and Congress made a show of cutting off funding for it, but TIA’s methods simply migrated to the NSA and other agencies. One NSA program, “Novel Intelligence from Massive Data” (NIMD), is based on software called the Glass Box, which tracks and mimics the techniques of human NSA analysts. In his 2008 book, *The Shadow Factory*, James Bamford explained that NIMD aims to allow computers to crunch the data in all of our computer records in order to “create a society where everyone’s words and actions would be screened by secret surveillance machines programmed to watchlist anyone who matches a complex algorithm created by a secret agency.”

The NSA's data feeds into the government's digital "clearinghouse" of potential "terrorists," called the Terrorist Identities Datamart Environment (TIDE), which has grown to *over half a million* names. Nonetheless, in the aftermath of the Christmas 2009 "underwear bomber" incident, President Obama has fretted that the government's spy agencies are still not doing enough "to connect the dots" and demanded that the "no fly" list be expanded even further.

Down With the “War on Terror”!

Wiring Up the Big Brother Machine vividly illustrates the role of the Democratic Party in endorsing the NSA's warrantless data sweeps. In 2007 and 2008, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate leader Harry Reid were instrumental in getting Congress to pass legislation in support of Bush's executive orders author-

izing the NSA wiretaps and also giving the phone companies immunity from lawsuits for their part in the surveillance.

In November 2007, Klein went to Washington with the EFF to help lobby against these laws, and again was given the cold shoulder by the Congressional Democratic leadership. The notable exception was Connecticut Senator Christopher Dodd, who made a point of reading Klein's evidence into the Congressional Record from the Senate floor as part

of an unsuccessful filibuster to stop the wiretap legislation.

Whatever objections Congressional Democrats raised when the extent of the domestic spying program became clear during the last years of the Bush administration, they were mainly over the unfocused character of the NSA spying operations. Such objections had the character of the corrupt police chief in the movie *Casablanca* who suddenly announces he is “shocked” to find gambling going on in Rick’s café. Far from having been a plot by the Bush gang, government spying on the population—be it by the NSA, FBI, CIA or other such agencies, past and present—has been carried out by Republican and Democratic administrations alike.

Contrary to the claims of reformist “socialists” and liberals that Barack Obama would represent some kind of “change” from the Bush regime, Obama made clear in his presidential campaign that he supported the shredding of civil liberties. After his swearing in as imperialist Commander-in-Chief in January 2009, his Justice Department asked Judge Walker to dismiss the EFF suit against AT&T on the ground that AT&T was only doing what the government asked it to do. “In effect,” as Klein notes, “Congress had endorsed the infamous Nuremberg defense at the postwar trials of Nazi war criminals who said that they were ‘just following orders.’”

While the Bush administration was brazen and open about its attacks on the Bill of Rights, the Democrats prefer that domestic spying be done behind closed doors, like the FBI's "black bag" break-ins during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations in the 1960s. In fact, it was during the administration of Democrat Bill Clinton that the ground was laid for Bush's attacks on civil liberties. In the 1990s, the NSA had already begun scanning international e-mails without warrants through its Echelon program. In response to the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing of a federal office building, Clinton launched an assault on immigrant rights, including secret trials, while virtually eliminating the right of *habeas corpus* appeals for death row inmates.

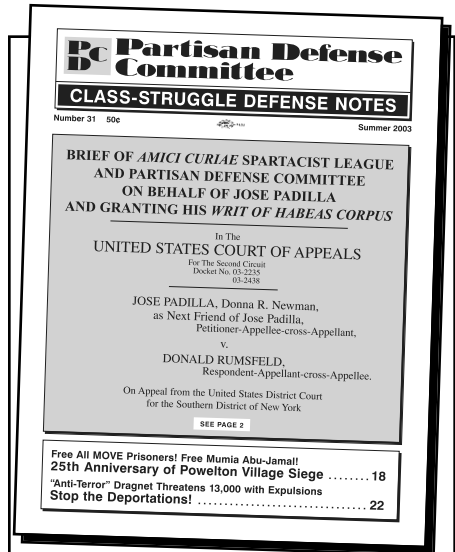
Just as the Democrats were up to their necks in the Bush administration's program of open torture—with House Speaker Nancy Pelosi getting a 2002 “virtual tour” of CIA detention sites that included descriptions of waterboarding and other

torture techniques—they have also been neck deep in the government’s internal spying programs. The Democrats have always been staunch supporters of the “war on terror,” voting for the USA Patriot Act and other attacks on democratic rights. Indeed, both capitalist parties aim to cow the population into accepting blatant attacks on their rights as necessary for “national security.” The difference between the Democrats and Republicans is not what they do, but how they do it. With their posture as friends of labor and minorities, the Democrats have generally been the bourgeoisie’s preferred party of war, better equipped than the Republicans to sell U.S. imperialism’s atrocities as exercises in “human rights” and “democracy.”

An important pillar of support to the government's shredding of democratic rights has been the defense of the reactionary "war on terror" by the pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy, including the CWA's leadership. In his book, Klein notes how the CWA "originated in the 1930s as a literal company union which evolved into one that was forced to actually lead strikes for better pay, benefits, and just plain respect from the arrogant management." Part of the CWA bureaucracy's sordid history included playing an important role in U.S. imperialism's Cold War drive against the Soviet Union. For example, the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD)—which worked with the CIA to destroy militant, left-led unions, especially in Latin America—was the brainchild of Joe Beirne, the CWA's longtime president.

Whether carried out by Democrats or Republicans, the extensive attacks on the population's civil liberties serve to strengthen the apparatus of the capitalist state, which at its core is a machinery of repression and violence against those the bourgeois rulers exploit and oppress. *Wiring Up the Big Brother Machine... And Fighting It* is an important contribution in exposing the government's spying apparatus, which the working class has every interest in opposing. As we wrote in "Government Wiretapping: Big Brother Is Listening" (WV No. 909, 29 February 2008):

"What the government is able to get away with will ultimately be determined by the level of social struggle. What is necessary is a fight to forge a new, class struggle leadership in the labor movement. This must be linked to the fight to build a revolutionary, multiracial workers party that acts as the tribune of the people and stands for the political independence of the working class against the capitalist state and its parties—an internationalist beacon, capable of mobilizing the social power of the proletariat on behalf of all the oppressed. In the course of such political struggle, we seek to win the working class to the understanding that only a fight to smash the capitalist state through socialist revolution and to establish workers rule can emancipate labor and rid the planet of the horrors of U.S. imperialism." ■



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Phone Worker Exposes Government Spying Network

Every time you send an e-mail or a text message, search Google or read a Web page, there is a good chance that National Security Agency (NSA) computers are tracking you, all as part of the government's "war on terror." In Utah and Texas, the NSA is building data warehouses as big as small towns to house copies of literally *trillions* of private citizens' Internet posts and downloads. According to American intelligence expert James Bamford, whose 1982 book *The Puzzle Palace* was the first major account of the NSA, "once vacuumed up and stored in these near-infinite 'libraries,' the data are then analyzed by powerful infoweapons, supercomputers running complex algorithmic programs, to determine who among us may be—or may one day become—a terrorist" (*New York Review of Books*, 5 November 2009).

That we know the extent of the government's massive cybersnooping is largely thanks to retired Bay Area AT&T worker Mark Klein. In 2006, Klein came forward with detailed revelations of how the NSA had tapped into AT&T's fiber-optic Internet cables to offload a copy of the entire data flow. Klein's revelations became Exhibit A in a civil liberties lawsuit filed by the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) to expose and stop the illegal government data mining. The upshot was that Congress stepped in to *bless* the NSA wiretaps in 2007 and 2008, killing the EFF lawsuit with bipartisan support, including from then-Senator Barack Obama.

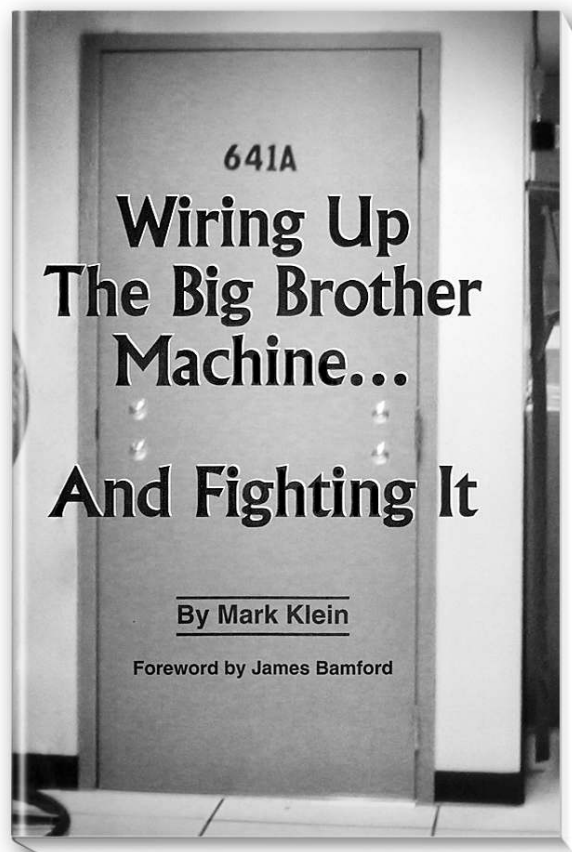
Last year, Klein published his own account of how he discovered the NSA spying operation. His short book, *Wiring Up the Big Brother Machine...And Fighting It*, details his courageous efforts to bring the snooping operations to light, and the government's counterattack to keep the lid on the story and keep the wiretaps running. *Wiring Up the Big Brother Machine*, which contains a foreword by James Bamford, is a fascinating and chilling read that details the collusion between the NSA and the telecommunications industry in spying on the population.

The NSA's wholesale downloading of telecom traffic is a graphic example of how the capitalist rulers have used the "war on terror" domestically to target whomever they want as a potential "terrorist." Abroad, the "war on terror" has been a pretext for imperialist rampage, from the occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq to the aerial bombardment of Pakistan. In our 2003 *amici curiae* (friends of the court) brief on behalf of Jose Padilla, a U.S. citizen seized and detained by the government as an "enemy combatant," the Spartacist League and the Partisan Defense Committee described the "war on terror": "Like the 'war against communism' and the 'war against drugs,' this 'war' is a pretext to increase the state's police powers and repressive apparatus, constricting the democratic rights of the population."

We have repeatedly warned that the repressive measures enacted in the wake of the September 11 attacks, initially directed at Muslims and immigrants, would lead to an assault on political dissent and the rights of all, particularly those of black people and the labor movement. As Marxists, we expect that the capitalist state, whether administered by Democrats or Republicans, will continue to eavesdrop on what the rulers term "persons of interest"—not least those who oppose the blood-soaked capitalist order and its brutal repression. Illegal or not, spying, harassment and repression are the norm for the capitalist state, which exists to defend capitalist rule and profits. As we wrote in "NSA/FBI Spying and the War on Our Rights" (WV No. 861, 6 January 2006): "Short of the overthrow of capitalist rule, none of the rights and gains that working people hold dear are secure. What's needed is a thoroughgoing socialist revolution led by a multi-racial workers party to establish the rule of the working class and usher in a society based on production for human needs not profit."

Secret Room 641A

At the time of the September 11 attacks, Klein worked in downtown San Francisco as an AT&T technician. He was a Communications Workers of America (CWA) unionist with over 20 years experience who had walked the picket lines during phone strikes in 1983 and 1986. One day in 2002, Klein and his co-workers got a com-



A Review by John Perry

pany e-mail saying that an NSA agent would be coming to their workplace. Klein, who had been a Vietnam anti-war activist in the late 1960s and knew of the NSA's history of illegal spying, grew suspicious when he heard that the NSA was training a management-level technician for a "special job." Several months later, in January 2003, Klein was taken on a tour of AT&T's downtown hub on Folsom Street. There he saw that there was a secret room being built on the sixth floor, labeled 641A, which was to house special equipment of some kind. During a company downsizing, Klein was transferred to work in the seventh floor Internet room directly above the secret NSA chamber.

Reading like a Len Deighton spy novel, *Wiring Up the Big Brother Machine* details how Klein pieced together one clue after another until he cracked what Big Brother was up to in Room 641A. A light bulb went on after a retiring co-worker gave Klein some technical documents show-

ing that a splitter cabinet in the seventh floor Internet room was connected to panels in the secret room below.

It was obvious to Klein that the splitter—a special glass prism—was being used to split the light beams in the fiber-optic cables into two signals—one signal carrying the message to its normal destination, the other carrying a copy to the NSA computers a floor below. Klein writes: "The important fact is that *each separate signal contains all the information*, nothing is lost, so in effect the entire data stream has been copied.... What screams out at you when examining this physical arrangement is that the NSA was vacuuming up *everything* flowing in the Internet stream: e-mail, web browsing, Voice-Over-Internet phone calls, pictures, streaming video, you name it." Klein learned from a co-worker that similar splitter cabinets were being used in other cities, including Seattle, San Jose, Los Angeles and San Diego.

The next big piece in the puzzle came when Klein found out that the NSA's secret room included a piece of equipment called a Narus STA 6400. "I looked it up, and it turned out this was a very sophisticated and specialized product that not only was perfectly suited for sorting through the data stream in real time looking for things, but it was already being marketed specifically to telecommunications and other companies for intelligence and police spying." Klein quickly realized the hair-raising implications of the splitter/Narus setup:

"The Narus enables them to look at the *content* of every data packet going by, not just the addressing information. It is the dream machine for a police state, one that even George Orwell could not imagine. Not only does it enable the government to see what millions of people are saying and doing every day, but it can build up a database which reveals *the connections among social groups—who's calling and e-mailing whom.*"

Big Brother's Cover-Up Machine

It was a relief for Klein when he got the chance to take a retirement package at the end of 2004. "I realized I was wiring up the Big Brother Machine, and I was not happy about it—I had not signed up to be a spy for the NSA, but to maintain the public telecommunications system. But what could I do? It was apparent that the orders for this came from very high up." Fearful of a government backlash, Klein bided his time after retirement, waiting for "some change in the political winds that would enable me to come forward."

The chance opened up in December 2005 when the *New York Times* broke the story that for three years President George W. Bush had authorized eavesdropping on phone calls and e-mails of "hundreds, perhaps thousands of people inside the United States without warrants." Klein pulled together the information he had on Room 641A, including a summary memo he had written back in 2004,

continued on page 11



Mark Klein



Declan McCullagh

Left: Entrance to secret room 641A in AT&T's central office on Folsom Street in San Francisco (right).