

## “National Unity”: Bosses Profit, Workers Pay

# Japan Tsunami Disaster and Capitalist Criminality



Asahi Shinbun

The following is based on reports from our comrades of the Spartacist Group Japan.

APRIL 12—The massive earthquake off the northeastern coast of Japan and the devastating series of tsunami waves were a human tragedy of immense proportions. What was once one of the more scenic areas of the country has been reduced to rubble, parts of which may be uninhabitable for decades due to radioactive contamination from the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant. The area continues to be wracked by serious aftershocks: on April 7 an aftershock measuring 7.1 rocked a wide sector of the northeast, jolting the crippled nuclear complex once again and knocking out external power at three other nuclear facilities. Today, the Japanese government announced that the Fukushima plant had released so much radiation that the severity rating of the nuclear disaster was raised to the highest level—the same rating as that given to the 1986 Chernobyl accident in the former Soviet Union.

While tens of thousands have been listed as dead or missing, the exact number of people who lost their lives may never be known because whole families and sections of villages were swept out to sea. For almost a month after the tsunami, the 12-mile area surrounding the nuclear power plant was littered with up to a thousand bodies, victims of the tsunami. They were left there to decompose because the government, citing the elevated levels of radiation, refused to collect and bury them. Among the survivors,



Doro-Chiba

**Top: Northern Japanese city of Natori devastated by earthquake and tsunami, March 13. Above: Nuclear cleanup workers, not given waterproof boots, were forced to use thin plastic bags to walk in radioactive water.**

hundreds of thousands are still homeless, continually being shifted from one evacuation center to another, many still with not enough to eat. Many centers and even some medical institutions refuse entry to those who have not been issued a certificate and a badge they must display at all times showing that they have not been exposed to radiation.

The capitalist government is using the tragedy as a justification to regiment the population. Forty percent of the personnel of the Japanese armed forces have been deployed to restore “order” to the devastated areas. While urgently needed emergency supplies are held up by security checks in the spirit of the imperialists’ worldwide “anti-terrorism” crusade, as well as stalled by the usual bureaucratic indifference, the bourgeois media tell stories of “looting” by desperate tsunami survivors and laud the army for its repressive measures. Meanwhile, the city of

Minamisoma received hundreds of boxes of food and other supplies sent by individuals overseas after YouTube showed an appeal by the mayor describing residents facing starvation, trapped in homes and shelters while the nuclear alert prevented government shipments of food from arriving (*New York Times*, 7 April).

From the beginning, the government lied about the extent of the radiation leaks at the damaged nuclear power plant in an effort to placate the population. But, according to the Ministry of Defense, within five hours of the earthquake the prime minister had declared a “nuclear state of emergency,” a clear indication that the bourgeoisie was immediately aware of the danger.

The cover-ups, disinformation and lies spewed by the capitalist government continue to endanger people in the affected areas and as far away as Tokyo, 150 miles to the south. While those with the finan-

cial means were able to flee to the western part of the country, the majority of the working class, especially the poor, the sick and the elderly, were left to fend for themselves. People were scrounging for food and emergency items such as bottled water, batteries and radios, which continue to be in short supply in the stores. Those caring for their infirm relatives were also trapped; in Japan, supposedly in deference to Confucian values of respect for one’s ancestors, pensions for retired workers are very low, with responsibility for the elderly shunted off to the younger generation of workers.

In an atmosphere of “waiting for the full meltdown,” people returned to the Greater Tokyo region and were then told that milk and some fresh foods contained traces of radiation, as did tap water. (Cynically and stupidly, the government told people to just boil their drinking water.) For three weeks, rolling power outages sporadically disrupted transportation and heating and lighting in homes, hospitals and businesses; energy use over the sweltering summer will likely be restricted. For four weeks, hundreds of heroic electrical power workers have been risking their lives in an effort to gain control of the nuclear power plant, exposing themselves to high doses of radiation, as the government redefines upward what it considers a “safe” level. Living in the nearby areas, many of them had already lost their families and homes.

### Profiteering and Government Collusion

The 9.0 magnitude Tohoku earthquake and tsunami waves, which reached heights of 60 feet in some areas, were natural disasters. But the continuing unfolding

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# April 1961

# Bay of Pigs: Cuban Revolution

# Defeated U.S.-Backed Invasion

This month we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the defeat of the CIA-organized Playa Girón (Bay of Pigs) invasion of Cuba, an attempt to overturn the social revolution that overthrew capitalism in 1960. The attack, launched on 17 April 1961 by counterrevolutionaries and mercenary ground troops using U.S.-equipped bombers, amphibious assault ships and tanks, was defeated within three days by heroic Cuban fighters. The social composition of the invading forces, documented by Cuban authorities, was revealing: 100 plantation owners, 67 landlords, 35 factory owners, 112 businessmen, 179 people living off unearned income, 194 former soldiers of the Batista dictatorship that had been overthrown by Castro's guerrilla forces.

The Bay of Pigs operation was ordered by Democratic president John F. Kennedy at the beginning of his term as Commander-in-Chief of U.S. imperialism. JFK never forgave the CIA for the fiasco, whose planning had been authorized by the Republican Eisenhower administration a year earlier. Kennedy went on to tighten the U.S. embargo of Cuba and put his brother, Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, in charge of "Operation Mongoose"—a campaign of sabotage, destabilization and terror mobilizing the CIA and a range of government departments. The operation included repeated assassination plots against Castro and massive funding for a spy base in Miami involving Cuban counterrevolutionary *gusanos* (worms) and Mafiosi. In the October 1962 Cuban missile crisis, Kennedy took the world to the brink of nuclear war over Soviet nuclear missiles that were placed in Cuba, although later pulled out.

The intrigues and assassination attempts continued under both Democratic and



**Cuban fighters defeated counterrevolutionary 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion (above). Two years later, Cuban *gusanos* presented their sponsor, U.S. president Kennedy, with brigade flag (right).**



Republican presidents. Last week, an El Paso federal court acquitted 83-year-old Cuban CIA-operative Luis Posada Carriles, a veteran of the Bay of Pigs, of charges of lying at an immigration hearing. This assassin is wanted by both Cuba and Hugo Chávez's populist capitalist government in Venezuela for the 1976 bomb-

ing of a Cubana airliner, which killed all 73 people aboard, and for masterminding hotel bombings in Cuba in 1997 that killed an Italian tourist and wounded 12 other people. The Feds prosecuted Posada Carriles on immigration charges as a way to circumvent extradition attempts by Venezuela. We say: Extradite Posada Carriles to Cuba!

Although under the rule of a nationalist Stalinist bureaucracy, the workers and peasants of Cuba have gained enormously from the overthrow of capitalist rule on the island. When Castro's petty-bourgeois guerrilla forces marched into Havana in January 1959, the army and the rest of the capitalist state apparatus of the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship shattered. The new government had to confront U.S. imperialism's mounting attempts to bring it to heel through economic pressure. When Eisenhower sought to lower the U.S. quota for Cuban sugar in January 1960, Castro signed an agreement to sell one million tons yearly to the Soviet Union. Refusal by imperialist-owned oil refineries to process Russian crude led to the nationalization of U.S.-owned properties in Cuba in August 1960, including

sugar mills, oil companies, and the power and telephone companies. By October of that year, 80 percent of the country's industry had been nationalized. Cuba became a deformed workers state with these pervasive nationalizations, which liquidated the bourgeoisie as a class.

The elimination of production for profit and the introduction of a semblance of centralized planning on the island provided jobs, housing and education for everyone. To this day, Cuba has one of the highest literacy rates in the world and a renowned health care system, with more teachers and doctors per capita than anywhere else. Infant mortality is lower than in the U.S., the European Union and Canada. We stand for the unconditional military defense of the Cuban deformed workers state while calling for proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy, whose nationalist program of "socialism in one country" is an obstacle to the necessary extension of socialist revolution to the Latin American mainland and, crucially, to the U.S. imperialist heartland.

The fight to defend and extend the Cuban Revolution has been a hallmark of our tendency from its inception as the Revolutionary Tendency (RT) in the Socialist Workers Party (SWP). Against the SWP majority, which equated the Castro regime with the revolutionary Bolshevik government of Lenin and Trotsky, the RT fought for the understanding that Cuba had become a *bureaucratically deformed workers state*. Indeed, following the Bay of Pigs, the Castro regime tightened its political grip on the country. The Trotskyist press was suppressed, key labor leaders were replaced by Stalinist hacks, a one-party system was instituted, etc. The RT upheld the need to build Leninist-Trotskyist parties in Cuba and in the U.S., where the SWP majority was increasingly abandoning a revolutionary perspective, instead tailing Castroism and black nationalism.

Based on our analysis of the Cuban Revolution, the SL was able to extend Marxist theory to encompass how bureaucratically deformed workers states were created (see *Marxist Bulletin* No. 8, "Cuba and Marxist Theory"). In Cuba, a petty-bourgeois movement under exceptional circumstances—the absence of the working class as a contender for social power in its own right, the flight of the national bourgeoisie, hostile imperialist encirclement, a lifeline thrown by the Soviet Union—was able to eventually smash capitalist property relations. But Castroism (like other peasant-based guerrilla

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**TROTSKY**

## Defend the Cuban Revolution!

*Fifty years ago, the Spartacist League's forebears in the Revolutionary Tendency (RT) of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) advanced the call to defend and extend the Cuban Revolution. In a document presented to the SWP's youth group, the Young Socialist Alliance (YSA), the RT upheld the need for a Trotskyist party against the liquidationist trajectory of the SWP leadership, which uncritically hailed Castro's petty-bourgeois forces as they were consolidating bureaucratic rule. Pointing out that the process in Cuba was*

*that of the formation of a deformed workers state—i.e., a society akin to the Soviet Union under the Stalinist bureaucracy—the RT advanced a program of political revolution, which would open the road to Cuba's further development toward socialism in conjunction with the fight for world proletarian revolution.*

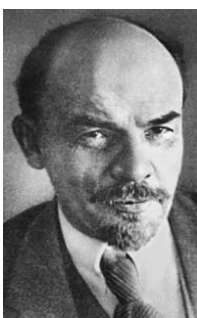
The full victory of every modern revolution, the Cuban revolution included, requires the emergence in a leading role of a mass revolutionary-Marxist party. The small Trotskyist groups, in Cuba and elsewhere, have a vital role as the nucleus of such parties. They can fill this role only if they continually preserve their *political* independence and ability to act, and if they avoid the peril of yielding to non-Marxist and non-proletarian leaderships their own ideological responsibilities and the historic mission of the working class.

In its relation to the Cuban revolution the YSA, like every revolutionary group, has two principal tasks:

a) To exert the utmost effort to defend the Cuban revolution not only against the military and other attacks of U.S. imperialism, but also against the political attacks of the social-democratic agents of imperialism.

b) To struggle for the development and extension of the Cuban revolution and against the attempts of counterrevolutionary Stalinism to corrupt the revolution from within. We seek to further this development and extension both by supporting revolutionary actions of the existing leadership and by constructively criticizing, openly and frankly, the mistakes and inadequacies of that leadership. Both to develop the Cuban revolution and to extend it throughout the Hemisphere, we base ourselves on the imperative necessity for the establishment of workers democracy and the formation of the mass party of revolutionary Marxism.

—"The Cuban Revolution," December 1961, printed in *Spartacist* No. 2 (July-August 1964)



**LENIN**

## WORKERS VANGUARD

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**15 April 2011**

The following is a translation of an April 4 statement issued by the *Ligue Trotskyste de France*, section of the *International Communist League*. On April 11, the Ivory Coast's Laurent Gbagbo was arrested at the presidential palace by French troops and opposition forces.

As of today, French and United Nations imperialist troops are openly intervening into the civil war in the Ivory Coast, attacking the presidential palace and military forces loyal to Laurent Gbagbo with heavy artillery. We demand an immediate stop to the attacks and that all UN and French troops get out now! It is the duty of the working class in France to oppose this new bloody intervention of the French imperialist troops. We also protest against the manhunt of Gbagbo's supporters in the streets of Paris, where police arrested dozens yesterday and brought them to the Clignancourt police station in the 18th Arrondissement, and did so again tonight.

Our position these past few years had been that both sides in the Ivory Coast's civil war were equally reactionary, and in fact pro-imperialist, and that Marxists had no side in that conflict. The Gbagbo regime (which among other things granted the concession for Abidjan's port container terminal to [President Nicolas] Sarkozy's crony [industrial magnate Vincent] Bolloré) embraced the propaganda on "ivoirité." According to this notion, millions of people who have been living in the Ivory Coast (or who were born there) were transformed into non-citizens because they are part of ethnic groups in the north of the country or from neighboring countries to the north. This racist concept was developed by Henri Konan Bédié, currently allied with Alassane Ouattara, leader of the anti-Gbagbo camp. The troops of Ouattara, who used to be a general manager of the International Monetary Fund, recently slaughtered hundreds of people in Duékoué, in the western part

# French, UN Troops Out of the Ivory Coast!



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French patrol in Abidjan, April 2.

of the country.

What has changed is that the imperialists and in particular the French imperialists are now openly fighting on the side of Ouattara's forces. After likely preparing Ouattara's military offensive for a long time and providing him with weapons, the imperialists finally decided to intervene directly when the offensive stalled in Abidjan. As we wrote in "Carnage in Abidjan: Made in France—French and UN Troops Out of the Ivory Coast!" in *Le Bolchévik* [No. 170] in December 2004: "In

any conflict between the French and Ivorian army (or Ivorian rebels), our side is unambiguously against our own imperialism." We also denounce the imperialist attack against Qaddafi's Libya, in which French troops are at the forefront, and defend Libya against this attack (see the March 20 statement of the International Communist League's International Executive Committee [WV No. 977, 1 April]).

French imperialism is responsible for the crimes committed today in the Ivory Coast. This situation is the legacy of

a hundred years of colonialism, which exacerbated interethnic tensions leading to civil war in that country. Using as a pretext the November-December electoral farce which was fraught with fraud on both sides, imperialism, in particular French and American imperialism, has aggravated these tensions. Today French imperialism is directly taking part in the slaughter. We call on workers here in France to mobilize against the blood-soaked imperialists' new colonialist military adventure, without giving any political support to Gbagbo's bourgeois regime.

The Ivorian proletariat is surely weak and torn now by interethnic violence, but it is the only internal social force representing a future for the oppressed of that country. A workers revolution in the Ivory Coast must be tied to revolutions in African countries with a more powerful proletariat, notably South Africa or Egypt, and must spread to the imperialist centers, in particular France.

A substantial number of immigrants from the Ivory Coast and the broader region have come to France in the past few years and are today partly integrated into the proletariat in the Paris area and elsewhere. We fight for full citizenship rights for all those who have made it here. We fight to unite workers internationally and to forge an indissoluble link between proletarian revolution in the countries oppressed by imperialism and in the imperialist centers themselves, a link embodied by these immigrant workers.

**For working-class mobilizations in France against imperialist depredations in the Ivory Coast and in Libya! Defend Gbagbo's troops besieged by imperialism in Abidjan! French imperialist troops, UN troops out of the Ivory Coast, out of Libya, out of Africa! For Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard workers parties, sections of a reformed Fourth International! ■**

## Editorial Note

With anger growing among workers over the attacks on public sector unions, the labor officialdom thought it had to do something to blow off steam. "Unions Rally, Linking Their Cause to Dr. King" was the headline of the *New York Times* (4 April) reporting on the "We Are One" rallies held throughout the country protesting attacks on public workers unions and commemorating the 1968 assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. Larry Cohen, president of the Communications Workers of America, proclaimed, "We're putting all employers and all elected officials on notice that we're mobilizing as we haven't in decades." While the Port of Oakland was shut down when members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) overwhelmingly did not show up for work, the main "mobilization" was for tepid pro-Democratic Party rallies, organized by the labor bureaucrats who have overseen the decimation of the private sector unions with a loss of hundreds of thousands of jobs.

The two capitalist parties, Democratic and Republican, play soft cop/hard cop with the public workers unions. The Democrats demand an arm and a leg, i.e., major concessions on wages and benefits, while helping enforce the anti-strike laws that

## The Anti-Union Drive and Black Workers

affect most public employees. The Republicans demand massive concessions plus the abolition of collective bargaining, i.e., the gutting of the unions. During the just-concluded budget impasse in Washington, the only "debate" between the Democrats and Republicans was over just how much of essential services and jobs to cut. The union bureaucrats and black liberal politicians alibi the soft-cop Democrats by protesting against the hard-cop Republicans. In Madison, Wisconsin, the labor tops quashed any strike sentiment among trade unionists who showed up by the thousands to protest the Republican governor's assault on public workers unions, pushing instead a campaign to recall Republican legislators.

For black workers, who were hit disproportionately hard by the loss of manufacturing jobs in the Midwest and elsewhere, what is posed is an assault on the last major bastion of black employment with decent union wages and benefits. A New

York City transit worker recently told *Workers Vanguard* that in talking about the protests in Madison over the new law against public sector unions, "I thought it was notable that a couple of my black co-workers expressed amazement that 'they're really going after *white* workers out there!'" A construction worker told *WV* that black workers at his union hall were saying, "If they're screwing over the white workers out there in Madison, they sure as hell are going to kick the shit out of us."

The labor misleaders who invoke the martyred King as a prophet of "patient moderation" carry on his bankrupt program of reliance on the Democratic Party, which is helping to *lead* the assault on labor and, together with the Republicans, enforces the brutal segregation of the mass of black people on the bottom of this society. Noting King's support for striking Memphis sanitation workers at the time of his assassination, Clarence Thomas, ILWU Local

10 Executive Board member, intoned that it is Wisconsin's "fierce resistance that is inspiring all of us today." The "resistance" the union bureaucracy displayed in Madison was its untiring efforts to stop any move toward using labor's strike weapon and to channel workers' anger into promoting the Democrats' electoral fortunes.

It will take hard *class struggle* to beat back the anti-union offensive. This perspective does require a political fight: a struggle to break the multiracial working class from the Democratic Party and to build a workers party that fights for a workers government.

\* \* \*

**Flash**—The Pacific Maritime Association (PMA) is suing ILWU Local 10 and the local's president, Richard Mead, for the action taken by union members who overwhelmingly did not work on April 4, shutting down the ports of Oakland and San Francisco that day. The San Francisco Labor Council unanimously passed a resolution calling on Bay Area labor councils and the California AFL-CIO to protest this attack at the PMA's SF headquarters on Monday, April 25. **All out to defend the ILWU! ■**

### Spartacist League/SYC Forums

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(UIC-Halsted stop  
on CTA Blue Line)  
For information: (312) 563-0441  
chicagospartacist@sbcglobal.net

### NEW YORK CITY

**Saturday, May 7, 4 p.m.**  
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## German Reformists Tail Kurdish Nationalists' Appeals to Imperialism

The defense of the Kurdish people, an oppressed population in the Near East, must take as its starting point opposition to the imperialist powers. At a meeting in Berlin, Germany, last fall social-democratic journalist Nick Brauns and the Revolutionary Internationalist Organization (RIO) attempted to give a socialist veneer to the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), effectively promoting its perspective of relying on the imperialists and their junior lackeys, the bourgeoisies of the region.

While we defend the PKK against state repression, including organizing international demonstrations in its defense, we

### SPARTAKIST 4

give it no political support. The PKK is a petty-bourgeois nationalist organization based in Turkey with broad support in the émigré population in West Europe and elsewhere and has a shameful history of abject appeals to the Western imperialists and the Turkish state. Shortly after the U.S. imperialist invasion of Iraq, one PKK leader was quoted in the *Financial Times* explaining that “the movement” “wants to establish a dialogue with Washington on joining its campaign of democratisation in the Middle East” (15 April 2003). Some Kurdish nationalist organizations in Iraq have subordinated themselves to the U.S. imperialists' occupation forces.

RIO originated as a split from the youth organization of the ostensibly socialist Gruppe Arbeitermacht (Workers Power Group) and stands in that organization's tradition of promoting and apologizing for forces that are hostile to the interests of the international working class—something very much on display at this meeting. Against RIO and Brauns' class-collaborationist perspective, our comrades in the Spartakist-Jugend put forward the perspective that the liberation of the Kurdish people can only be accomplished through international proletarian revolution to establish a socialist republic of united Kurdistan within a socialist federation of the Near East. (See “Kurdish Struggle: Near East Flashpoint,” WV No. 527, 24 May 1991.)

The following article was translated from the youth pages of *Spartakist* No. 186 (January 2011), the newspaper of the International Communist League's German section, the Spartakist-Arbeiterpartei Deutschlands.

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On 6 October 2010 Nick Brauns and RIO organized a discussion in Berlin “on the political crisis in Turkey, the workers movement, the Kurdish question and revolutionary perspectives.” Capitalist Turkey, with its oil pipelines and where Europe's biggest NATO forces are deployed, is both a lackey and prized booty

of the imperialists. Militarily subordinate to the U.S. and economically dependent on German imperialism, Turkey acts in their interests in the Near East. Since the mid '80s, the Turkish army, supported and armed by the U.S. and Germany, has waged war against the Kurdish minority, killing roughly 37,000 Kurds and burning

is possible only as part of the struggle for a socialist federation of the Near East. Nick Brauns looks at things differently and set the tone for the conference with his presentation. He started with the repression of Kurds in the 1920s, when hundreds of thousands were dispersed and forcibly relocated in Turkey. However,



AP

Left: Turkish troops invade northern Iraq in 2008 attack against Kurdish PKK. Right: Spartakists at February 2008 Berlin protest against the attack with sign (center) reading: “Turkish Army Out of Kurdish Regions! Imperialists Out of Iraq! Hands Off Iran!”



Spartakist

thousands of villages to the ground. German imperialism has played a key role in the persecution of the Kurds—many of them workers in Europe—with its 1993 ban on the PKK and over 35 Kurdish organizations. Kurds are still ruthlessly repressed in Germany today (see “Stop the Deportation of Leyla!”).

Comrades from the Spartakist-Jugend intervened at this meeting and put forward our perspective of fighting for workers revolution from Diyarbakir [Turkey] to Duisburg [Germany]. The Kurdish nation is divided among four capitalist countries—Turkey, Syria, Iraq and Iran. Therefore Kurdish national independence

he prettified the current petty-bourgeois nationalist Kurdish leadership, the PKK. He argued along the lines of his new book, *PKK—Perspectives on the Kurdish Fight for Freedom: Between Self-Determination, the EU and Islam*. He writes:

“As important as it is to have a critical debate on the PKK program and its leaders' declarations, nevertheless this movement must not be judged solely on this basis. ‘Every step of real movement is more important than a dozen programmes.’ This observation by Marx in 1875 applies all the more to an organization like the PKK, which operates in a political environment where written theory means little and a movement is judged by its actual impact and practical work.”

common class enemies, the Turkish bourgeoisie and its imperialist godfathers—Germany and the U.S.—and for workers revolution. The PKK's strategy, on the other hand, consists of using guerrilla struggle in order to get a seat at the negotiating table with the Turkish bourgeoisie and obtain whatever concessions they can within the framework of capitalism, which they explicitly accept. Their perspective is not connected to any fight for proletarian revolution in the developed capitalist countries, which is why the PKK has repeatedly tried to put pressure on the “democratic” imperialists to compel their Turkish NATO co-member to grant concessions.

With the counterrevolution in the Soviet degenerated workers state and the deformed workers states of East Europe, the attacks on workers and all oppressed peoples have greatly intensified. After capitalist reunification [of Germany], Turkey was given tanks from the former East German deformed workers state by German imperialism, which were used to destroy thousands of Kurdish villages. When the Soviet Union was destroyed, the PKK lost its powerful military ally. Giving up the fight for independence, they turned to promoting a “Kurdish intifada” for “self-determination” within a “democratic Turkey,” which Brauns in his presentation found “logical.” Against Brauns' strategy of reconciliation with capitalism, a comrade from the Spartakist-Jugend put forward our Leninist-Trotskyist perspective:

“We defend the PKK against the bourgeois state, of course, that's a precondition of any criticism—but we give them

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WV Map

Kurdish homeland was carved up as imperialists divided Near East at end of World War I.

## For a Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan!

# Tear Up Conviction of Evan Emory! *Michigan Bigots Hate YouTube, Sex, Children*

On March 14, 21-year-old aspiring Michigan comedian, singer and songwriter Evan Emory pleaded no contest to charges of “unlawful posting of an Internet message with aggravating circumstances,” agreeing to serve 60 days in jail with two years on probation and to perform 200 hours of community service. He originally faced a felony charge of “manufacturing child pornography,” a charge that can carry 20 years in jail and 25 years more on the state sex offender registry. His “crime” was filming himself singing “Lunch Lady Land” to a group of first graders and, later, posting on YouTube an edited video that made it appear he was singing a song he wrote about sex to them. Even after Emory apologized repeatedly, removed the video from YouTube and expressed gratitude for his jail sentence, the witchhunt against him continued. One parent decried the plea bargain: “It was sexual and he should be put on the sex offender registry.”

In an interview following his conviction, Emory made clear that he accepted the plea bargain out of fear of facing the rest of his life as a convicted “sex offender” and being listed on Michigan’s sex offender registry. And with good reason. Signed into law by Bill Clinton in 1996, “Megan’s Law” requires “sex offenders” to maintain constant contact with local authorities, who notify the neighborhoods where they move, go to school and work. Emory would have been condemned to live as a social pariah, a criminal for life, like the roughly 40,000 people already on Michigan’s registry. Not only are those on sex offender registries subject to police harassment and public humiliation, sometimes driving them to suicide, but they are also prime targets for reactionary vigilante terror. In 2006, William Elliott, who spent time in jail in Maine for having a sexual relationship with his girlfriend when she was just days shy of 16 (Maine’s age of consent), was murdered at his home. Elliott’s name, address and photo had been listed publicly online.

The vindictive and obscene prosecution of Emory not only captures the rigidly conservative views of the small Michigan



Evan Emory sings in front of first graders in Ravenna, Michigan, in January.

town he was charged in, but the overwhelming, puritanical anti-sex atmosphere of society today. “Sex crime” laws are increasingly being used to bolster state authority to intervene into the private lives of citizens and ensure that no deviation occurs from what bourgeois society says is “normal.” “Age of consent” laws, for example, conflate rape with innocent consensual sexual acts, criminalizing acts based on mutual understanding and agreement because of the age of the people involved.

Given the tangle of race, sex and class in this bigoted society, even consensual acts can often be emotionally exploitative and unequal—but to call them “crimes” is to bring in the government, which is the very guardian of oppression and inequality. It is utter hypocrisy for the bourgeoisie to posture as “defenders of children” while they cut funding for education, lock up juvenile offenders in hellhole reformatories and send their “kill teams” to murder youth in Afghanistan.

While it is easy to point out the absurdity of Emory’s case, the reality is that what happened to Emory is part of a broad campaign against even the most PG depictions of youth in sexual situations. For even joking about children and sex, Emory was railroaded to jail for “exploiting children.” Child pornography, like any

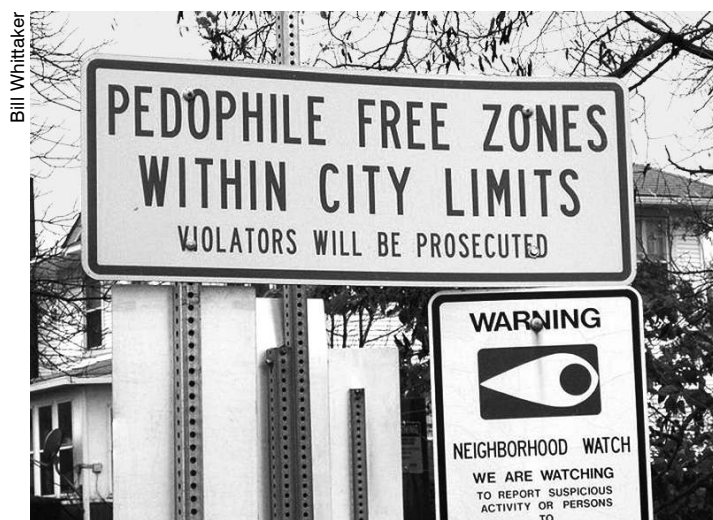
kind of pornography, is simply images and words intended for entertainment, and we are against its criminalization. The law defines child pornography as any sexual depictions featuring at least one person who’s under 18, irrespective of whether they have consented to having sex—or whether they even had sex to begin with. The “child pornography” Emory was accused of making was about as pornographic as a Leno monologue.

Emory’s case reveals American capitalist society’s pathological fear of children learning about sex. What harm came to

the class of first graders Emory filmed, even if they later watched it and began to wonder what Emory meant by “I’ll lick on your chewie”? According to the father of one of the students, his daughter came home crying after being teased for appearing in the video. While this is a rather typical example of the cruelty children display toward each other, there was nothing wrong with Emory’s video. The reality is that children learn about sex one way or another—whether seeing themselves in a humorous video or playing doctor. It is the social climate of religious backwardness and “family values” moralism that makes sex as scarring as possible and learning about it monumentally embarrassing. Further stigmatizing sex, the federal government funds “abstinence only” education that presents pregnancy or STDs as the punishment for teenagers who “disobey” the no-sex-before-marriage rule. Youth should be given a comprehensive, science-based sex education.

Along with the church and the state, the family is a key force for maintaining the capitalist order. The family is an ideological prison for youth and the source of women’s oppression. For the capitalist ruling class, the family is a means for passing on property. For everyone else, the capitalists rely on it as a means to rear the next generation of obedient, god-fearing, sexually regimented wage slaves who have been trained to obey status quo mores or the belt.

The family as an economic unit must be replaced as part of building a classless, egalitarian socialist society, where sexual expression will no longer be distorted by the bigotry and oppression of capitalist society. Our task as the youth of the revolutionary Spartacist League is to help build the vanguard party that will champion the rights of all the oppressed and lead the working class in building a new society through the revolutionary destruction of the capitalist state and all its reactionary laws. **Overturn his conviction! Free Evan Emory now!** ■



Sign posted in Wapello, Iowa, following 1996 passage of “Megan’s Law.”

## Stop the Deportation of Leyla!

We reprint below a translated article by the Spartakist-Jugend, youth organization of the Spartakist-Arbeiterpartei Deutschlands, from the January issue of *Spartakist* (No. 186). In February a German court temporarily suspended the deportation order against the young Kurdish woman known as Leyla, pending the outcome of a related court case. However Leyla still faces the threat of deportation.

On March 17, eight of the 18 Kurdish youth arrested for repelling a fascist attack were outrageously sentenced to 33 months in prison on charges of aggravated assault and “serious breach of the peace.” Moreover, these leftists were ordered to apologize to the fascist scum and pay them 1,000 euros “for personal

suffering.” The prosecutors have announced plans to appeal the 33-month sentence and reintroduce the original charges of attempted murder.

\* \* \*

Shortly after her 18th birthday, Leyla received notice of her deportation from Nürnberg, Germany. The “reason”: she is a danger to German security since she took part in Kurdish demos and, at the age of 13, chanted an allegedly *verboten* Kurdish slogan. At eleven, Leyla was forced to flee with her family from Turkey because she is part of the Kurdish minority, which has been bloodily oppressed there for decades. Her apprenticeship has now been canceled because of the threatened deportation.

Traumatized, she has been placed under psychological care. In imperialist Germany, the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) and other Kurdish organizations are banned as “terrorist,” as are Turkish left groups like DHKP-C [Revolutionary People’s Liberation Party-Front] and THKP-C [Turkish People’s Liberation Party-Front]. Kurdish activists are regularly subjected to brutal state terror. The racist “war on terror,” which initially put the Muslim minority in the crosshairs of state repression and ultimately targets the left and the workers movement, has escalated even further.

In [the southern German state of] Baden-Württemberg, 18 Kurdish youth were arrested for defending themselves against Turkish fascists in Nürtingen on

May Day 2010. These youth have been charged with attempted murder and stand trial on January 17. One is being investigated under Paragraph 129 [of German criminal law] (membership in or support to a criminal organization). On December 16, three alleged members of the left group DHKP-C received heavy sentences for supposedly having been leaders and members of a foreign terrorist organization.

We Spartakists will publicize this state repression against Kurds and leftists in the workers movement in order to build solidarity with the victims. An injury to one is an injury to all. We demand: **Down with the ban on the PKK and Kurdish organizations! Down with the ban on the DHKP-C and THKP-C! Down with the racist “war on terror”!** We join the protests against the deportation of Leyla and demand: **Full citizenship rights for all who live here! Free the arrested Kurdish youth!**

# Join the Spartacus Youth Clubs!

The Spartacus Youth Clubs intervene into social struggles armed with the revolutionary internationalist program of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky. We work to mobilize youth in struggle as partisans of the working class, championing the liberation of black people, women and all the oppressed. The SYCs fight to win youth to the perspective of building the Leninist vanguard party that will lead the working class in socialist revolution, laying the basis for a world free of capitalist exploitation and imperialist slaughter.

## What We Fight For

**1** Mobilize students behind the social power of the multiracial working class! Picket lines mean don't cross! For union-run minority job recruitment and training programs! For union hiring halls! Down with union-busting "workfare" schemes! Jobs for all at union wages! Organize the unorganized! Unionize the South! Down with multi-tier wages, which pit younger and older workers against each other! Cops, prison guards, security guards out of the unions! Keep the bosses' government and courts out of the unions!

**2** Black oppression is the bedrock of racist American capitalism. Finish the Civil War! For black liberation through socialist revolution! For mass labor/black mobilizations to stop the fascists and race-terrorists! No to gun control! For the right of armed self-defense! No reliance on the capitalist courts or politicians! Fascist terror is not a question of "free speech." Stop the Nazis! Stop the KKK!

**3** For free, quality, integrated public education for all! Nationalize the private universities! Down with the racist purge of higher education—defend affirmative action, no to tuition hikes! No to budget cuts! For an end to tracking! For open



SYC at demonstration in defense of public education at New York City's Hunter College, March 2010.

admissions, no tuition and a state-paid living stipend for all students! Abolish the administration—the universities should be run by those who work and study there! Down with police occupation of public schools! Cops off campus!

**4** For women's liberation through socialist revolution! For mass, labor-backed mobilizations to defend abortion clinics! Down with parental consent laws and "squeal rules"! For free abortion on demand! For free, quality 24-hour child-care! For free, quality health care for all! Equal pay for equal work! Down with anti-gay laws! Down with reactionary age of consent laws! Full democratic rights for homosexuals! Government out of the bedroom! Down with the anti-sex witch-hunt! Down with all laws against consensual activities, called "crimes without victims," like pornography, gambling, drug use, prostitution and "statutory rape"!

**5** Down with racist anti-immigrant laws! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! Organize foreign-born workers into the unions! No deportations! No to

racist "English only" laws! Down with anti-Hispanic, anti-Arab, anti-Asian, anti-Semitic and all racist bigotry!

**6** Down with the "war on terror," which is a war aimed at immigrants, labor, the left and minorities! Free all the detainees! Abolish the racist death penalty! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Free all class-war prisoners! There is no justice in the capitalist courts! Defend victims of racist cop terror and police frame-up! No illusions in civilian review boards or "community control" of the police! For labor mobilizations against racist cop terror! Down with the "war on drugs," a racist war by the ruling class against black and Hispanic youth! The capitalist state—at its core consisting of the cops, courts, prisons—is the executive committee of the ruling class, an instrument of organized violence by the capitalists against the workers and the oppressed. It must be smashed through workers revolution!

**7** Defend separation of church and state! Defend science against superstition and mysticism! Keep religion out of the schools!

No prayer in the schools! Down with the teaching of creationism! For the teaching of evolution! No government funding for religious, private or "charter" schools!

**8** Defeat U.S. imperialism through workers revolution! U.S. and allied forces out of Iraq, Afghanistan now! Down with the neocolonial occupations! For class struggle against U.S. capitalist rulers at home! No illusions in the UN—a den of imperialist thieves, their victims and their lackeys! All U.S./UN/NATO troops out of the Balkans, Haiti! For the right of independence for Puerto Rico! U.S. troops out of Puerto Rico and the Caribbean! U.S. imperialist butchers: hands off the world! No to the draft! Not one man, not one penny for the imperialist military! Drive ROTC, CIA and police recruiters off the campuses!

**9** For international working-class solidarity! Down with the chauvinist poison of protectionism! Workers of the world, unite! For unconditional military defense of the deformed workers states of Cuba, Vietnam, China and North Korea against capitalist counterrevolution and imperialist attack! For workers political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucrats and establish regimes of workers democracy, based on the power of workers councils, and revolutionary internationalism!

**10** Break with the racist, warmongering Democratic and Republican parties of capitalism! No support to any capitalist parties, including Greens! For a revolutionary, multiracial workers party that fights for socialist revolution! Look to the example of the heroic, Bolshevik-led workers of 1917 Russia! For new October Revolutions! For the international rule of the working class!

27 July 2010

The Spartacus Youth Clubs are the youth groups of the revolutionary Marxist Spartacist League/U.S., section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

## Kurdish...

(continued from page 4)

no political support. Nick Brauns, on the other hand, throws sand in the eyes of Kurdish militants. The PKK no longer even espouses "socialism in a fourth of a country" and openly appeals to the imperialist EU and the Turkish bourgeoisie. The only solution is a socialist republic of united Kurdistan—and that requires socialist revolution in four countries."

With regard to Turkey and other economically backward countries, we stand for Trotsky's program of permanent revolution—"that the complete and genuine solution of their tasks of achieving *democracy and national emancipation* is conceivable only through the dictatorship of the proletariat as the leader of the subjugated nation, above all of its peasant

masses" (Leon Trotsky, *The Permanent Revolution*, 1930). This requires that revolutionary Trotskyist-Leninist workers parties be built in the Near East as part of a reformed Fourth International. As our comrade explained further:

"The key is winning Turkish workers over to the defense of the Kurds and Kurdish independence. Therein also lies the connection to Germany: Kurdish and Turkish workers in Germany are a strategic component of the working class and can be a bridge to the struggles in Turkey. It is essential to fight for a revolutionary party to lead a political struggle against social democracy, including against Nick Brauns' employer, the Left Party group in the *Bundestag* [parliament]. The Left Party feeds illusions in a 'bourgeois-democratic' solution by looking to the EU. Meanwhile, the SPD [Social Democratic Party]/Left Party *Senat* [Berlin Senate] deports immigrants and its cops terrorize Kurdish activists. One must not forget that [Thilo] Sarrazin [longtime SPD member, infamous for anti-Muslim attacks against immigrants] was a rabble-rouser in the *Senat* for seven years. What's needed is a break with reformism, whether of the SPD or Left Party—for a revolutionary multi-ethnic workers party."

Simply a social-democratic follower of *Realpolitik*, Nick Brauns justified the politics of "collaboration across classes": it's "dictated by circumstances," since parties close to the PKK in Turkey, like the Peace and Democracy Party, are often the "major employers" because they run local bourgeois governments—against whom one does not strike. While posturing as an adviser to the Kurdish liberation movement, Brauns, a longtime collaborator of the Left Party *Bundestag* group, helps to chain Kurdish immigrants in Germany to the reformism of the Left



Moscow, August 1991: Capitalist counterrevolutionaries fly Confederate flag on Yeltsin's barricades. Workers Power supporters bragged about joining them "no matter what the socially counterrevolutionary nature of Yeltsin's programme" (*Workers Power*, September 1991).

Party. The Left Party and the SPD are bourgeois workers parties: they have a proletarian base but put forward a bourgeois program to help administer capitalism. Especially because the Left Party occasionally appears to oppose certain "excesses" of capitalism, it is often more effective than the SPD or bourgeois parties at pushing through capitalist attacks against the workers they lead and chaining them to the reactionary EU or German imperialism.

In his book, Brauns refers positively to a 2008 Left Party *Bundestag* proposition, which, according to him, demanded that "the peaceful solution of the Kurdish question should be put firmly in the center of the EU's treaty negotiations with Turkey"! That's an appeal to German

imperialism, which plays a leading role in the persecution of the Kurds. Brauns only criticized the proposition's withdrawal—on the basis that it included a provision for the decriminalization of the PKK and other Kurdish organizations—when the Left Party cravenly capitulated before an anti-PKK campaign.

Aside from isolated grumbling, RIO counterposed nothing to Brauns' presentation. On paper they call for "dissociation from all bourgeois forces [in Turkey], whether AKP [the ruling Justice and Development Party] or CHP [Republican People's Party]"; they emphasize the significance of the working class; they criticize the trade-union bureaucracy; they argue against the subordination of workers as "junior partners in a bourgeois anti-

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# Britain: For Class Struggle to Defend Public Sector Jobs!

The following article is reprinted from Workers Hammer No. 214 (Spring 2011), newspaper of the Spartacist League/Britain, section of the International Communist League.

## WORKERS HAMMER

On 26 March, a massive turnout of up to half a million trade unionists demonstrated in London against the savage budget cuts announced by David Cameron's government. The demonstration consisted of a sea of trade union banners, representing local council workers, teachers and lecturers, health workers and fire-fighters—in a show of anger against the Conservative-Liberal Democrat government's assault on healthcare, social services, pensions and much more. The public sector jobs massacre saw 132,000 jobs lost in 2010, while the overall unemployment figure stands officially at 2.5 million, the highest for 20 years.

Low-paid public sector workers, a high proportion of whom are women and minorities, are the core of the trade union movement today. But rather than a strategy to mobilise that social power for a class-struggle fight to defend jobs, the TUC's [Trades Union Congress's] "March for the Alternative" was intended to channel this anger into supporting another Labour government. For the first time in over a dozen years, a trade union demonstration in Britain was addressed by the Labour Party leader. Ed Miliband, who was elected leader last September with the support of the trade unions, intoned on the platform that "there is an alternative," adding that "there is a need for difficult choices, and some cuts" to reduce the budget deficit, but this government "is going too far and too fast." For a clue as to what Miliband's "alternative" might be, one only has to recall that before the last election Labour promised cuts deeper and tougher than under [1980s Tory prime minister Margaret] Thatcher.

Deep cuts, fast or slow cuts: these are the "choices" being offered to the working class by the servile trade union bureaucracy. Throughout Europe—from Greece to Ireland and Spain—every capitalist government is trying to force the working class to pay for the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression—a crisis that was caused by the capitalist system itself. An effective defence of jobs



London: As hundreds of thousands of trade unionists protested Conservative government's austerity plan on March 26, Labour Party leader Ed Miliband proposed own program of cuts.

today requires hard *class struggle*—strike action across the public sector. But the trade union leadership is an obstacle to the kind of fight that is necessary because they too share the political framework expressed by Miliband, that the alternative to "Tory cuts" are Labour government cuts.

The ground for the present devastating public sector cuts was prepared by 13 years of Labour governments that relentlessly attacked jobs, pensions, health and education services; froze pay below inflation and slashed tens of thousands of civil service jobs. And all the while, the union leaderships stood by and refused to lead battles against the Labour government. Recall then FBU [Fire Brigades Union] leader Andy Gilchrist calling off the firefighters strike in 2002 when it threatened to "hinder" the armed forces preparing to invade Iraq.

Visit any of the public sector unions' websites and find "alternatives," *not* for a fight to beat back the rapacious bourgeoisie *but for solving British capital-*

*ism's budget deficit.* [The public sector union] Unison's recipe calls for "a 50 per cent tax on bankers' bonuses" and a "Robin Hood Tax" on bank transactions. The Public and Commercial Services union, which organises civil servants, offers similar counsel to the bourgeois rulers including "We could free up billions of pounds by not renewing Trident [submarine-launched missile system]."

The "socialist" outfits who ride Labour's coattails look to none other than the bold class warriors of the TUC to call a general strike, while cravenly rebuilding illusions in the election of a Labour government. The Socialist Workers Party (SWP) runs the National Right to Work coalition, whose slogan is "Break the Con-Dem Coalition!" (read: and replace it with a Labour government). When Ed Miliband won the Labour leadership contest last year, they enthused that his win was "another avenue to bring pressure to bear on Labour to fight" (*Socialist Worker*, 25 September 2010). In the meantime a poster



Reuters

on their website lists their own recommendations to the capitalist rulers, "Why There's No Need to Slash Spending." Cuts can be avoided by taxing the rich, clamping down on tax evaders, and cutting defence spending—the tired, hopeless call of reformists everywhere to reorder the priorities of the capitalists in favour of the working class.

The Socialist Party, after calling for a one-day public sector strike and a 24-hour general strike, go on to showcase their abiding faith in the capitalist state, and Labour, approvingly quoting an article from Labourlist.org: "A cascade of 'no cuts' budget decisions by local authorities could be the most effective resistance to the cuts so far." The Socialist Party continues, "By using their reserves and borrowing powers to avoid making cuts, councils can gain time to build a mass movement in their support," and "Ed Miliband could promise that an incoming Labour government would write off all local authority debts incurred from avoiding cuts" (*Socialism Today*, March 2011).

What is necessary to fight against the massacre of public sector jobs and social services is to mobilise the multiethnic working class in a fight for *jobs for all*, through a shorter work week with no loss in pay, and to undertake union organising to draw into their ranks all of the working class, including its minority and immigrant components. In the course of class struggle, workers must replace the Labourite cringers atop the unions with workers' leaders who aim to win battles on the picket lines. Striving to forge such a *class-struggle* leadership of the unions is an integral part of the fight for a multiethnic revolutionary workers party whose aim is no less than doing away with the entire system of capitalist wage slavery through socialist revolution. ■

## Young Spartacus

imperialist front" and they note that a "revolutionary party" is lacking. However, the emptiness of RIO's call for a "common revolutionary organization of the workers of all nationalities" was clear from its joint statement with Nick Brauns, which called on the PKK (vaguely described as "the Kurdish movement") to implement the following demand: "The Kurdish movement, as the only left-wing mass movement in the region, only has the option—if they do not want to resign to another 25 years of oppression and minimum concessions—to launch an international movement of the exploited" ("For a Socialist Kurdistan," 1 December 2009).

Like Nick Brauns, RIO is merely a left appendage of the Left Party. While RIO's predecessor gave "critical support" to the PDS/Left Party for years—even as these parties helped run capitalism in Berlin and [the northern state of] Mecklenburg-West Pomerania—RIO prefers an indirect approach for now. RIO builds platforms for the Left Party while subordinating its

criticisms in the service of "unity" with its bloc partners, the Sozialistische Alternative [German section of the Committee for a Workers' International], the Left Party youth group Solid, and Nick Brauns himself, who all want to pressure the Left Party "to the left." Against this strategy, we Spartakists wage a political struggle to *break* workers and youth from the SPD and Left Party and win them to the fight to build a revolutionary multiethnic workers party.

RIO's performance on permanent revolution is no better:

"Only the working class in Turkey and Northern Kurdistan is in a position to break with imperialism, the feudal structures and the autocratic state apparatus. But the workers can not separate the bourgeois-democratic program from the socialist tasks. Only a program of permanent revolution can significantly change Turkey."

—"Class Struggle Under the Crescent Moon," *Revolution*, September 2010

But in the end, RIO itself falls short of the

socialist tasks and offers instead only democratic demands ("For the unconditional right of self-determination of the Kurdish people!") and trade-unionist ones ("For elected strike committees!"). Even with their demands "For the occupation and nationalization of all enterprises that threaten layoffs or closure, under workers' control!" and "For a program of public works to end unemployment and underdevelopment, under the control of workers' organizations!" theirs is a reformist caricature of the Transitional Program, because what's missing is exactly what constitutes the core of permanent revolution: the revolutionary *overthrow* of the bourgeoisie and the *seizure of power* by the working class supported by the peasantry.

This is not surprising. Along with its ideological forebears, the Gruppe Arbeitermacht, which stood on [Boris] Yeltsin's barricades for capitalist counterrevolution in Moscow in 1991, RIO is pleased by the reconstruction of capitalist rule in the for-

mer Soviet Union: "Today, after the collapse of the Stalinist Soviet Union and the advancing crisis of capitalism, the conditions for us revolutionaries have gotten better" (*Revolution*, 24 April 2006). In their own way, RIO confirms Trotsky's basic point: whoever doesn't defend old gains can never achieve new ones. As Trotskyists, unlike RIO and Nick Brauns, we defended the Soviet Union against capitalist counterrevolution and today stand for the military defense of the remaining deformed workers states of China, Cuba, North Korea and Vietnam against imperialism and counterrevolution. We fight for the overthrow of the parasitic bureaucracies in those countries through political revolution and for building workers and peasants councils. This is an integral component of our fight for new October Revolutions worldwide. The fight against the national oppression of Kurdish people will be a crucial driving force for socialist revolution throughout the Near East and in Germany. ■

Japan...
(continued from page 1)

crisis at Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station is purely man-made, a product of the predatory nature of the capitalist order which values above all else its profits and disdains safety and human life.

As scientific socialists, we are for developing and using energy sources for the benefit of mankind. When the workers of the world rule our planet, energy will be generated and used in the most rational, efficient and safe manner possible, including by developing new energy sources. We have noted that nuclear power plants pose particular risks, leading to the suggestion that they ought not to be located in proximity to major population centers or upwind of them. But there is no means of generating energy that can be safe so long as the controlling principle of the economy is the drive for profit for a class of exploiters who own the means of production.

Under the rule of the capitalists, for whom workers are just a different form of raw material to be used up, hydroelectric dams and natural gas mains will never be made safe from the possibility of large-scale accidents threatening whole communities. Preventable accidents at oil drilling platforms and coal mines claim many lives; more quietly, in the United States, 1,500 retired coal miners die horribly from black lung disease every year. In 2008 the U.S.-based biofuels racket provoked a shortfall in the food grain harvest, helping trigger a world food crisis—producing corn ethanol fuel was more profitable at that moment than growing food that people could eat.

The example of Japan demonstrates the inherent irrationality of the capitalist system and underscores the need for an international planned economy in a socialist world. Japan historically has been a country with scant natural resources along with a dense population. Having closed its last coal mine in 2002, it now imports close to 90 percent of its oil needs from the Near East. In an attempt to attain energy self-sufficiency, this country, which sits atop a patchwork of fault lines, gets close to 30 percent of its electricity from its 55 nuclear reactors (and had plans to increase that to 50 percent).

Illustrating capitalist irrationality on a smaller scale, one factor that contributes to the present power shortage is that the private power companies, which basically hold monopolies for particular regions, produce electricity at different frequencies. The electric power industry was brought to Japan during the era of the Meiji Restoration in the late 1800s. Its construction was marked by fierce competition between the bourgeois class of different areas: the Tokyo-based bourgeoisie imported generators from a German company using 50 Hertz alternating current, while the Osaka-based bourgeoisie

Food distribution line in Ishinomaki, April 3.



Reuters

imported from General Electric, which used 60 Hertz. With only three small frequency converter stations with limited capacity, electricity generated in the western part of the country cannot be easily transferred to the eastern area.

Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO) is one of ten utility companies in Japan. The fourth-largest private utility in the world, TEPCO supplies Japan's most industrialized and populous region. Last year it netted a profit of 140 billion yen (\$1.66 billion), mainly due to exorbitant electricity fees and the Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency turning a blind eye to safety violations. In addition, the company instituted cost-cutting measures: inadequate maintenance at outdated facilities, depriving workers of safety equipment and using contract labor and temporary employees.

In 2002, TEPCO admitted submitting false data on inspection records for its nuclear reactors hundreds of times over the course of years. This included at least 29 cases of falsified reports on cracks or signs of cracks in devices in the core structure of 13 reactors at the Kashiwazaki-Kariwa nuclear plant in Niigata Prefecture and those of the No. 1 and No. 2 Fukushima plants.

Kashiwazaki-Kariwa is the world's largest nuclear power plant. Following an earthquake in 2007, TEPCO falsified the amounts of radioactive substances that leaked into the air and the Sea of Japan. In the aftermath, to compensate for money lost by shutting down the plant for inspection and repair, the company cut maintenance expenses for all its plants.

The Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant is TEPCO's oldest nuclear facility. Built in the 1970s, it houses six reactor units and sits atop a known fault line. Designed by General Electric, the No. 1 reactor at Fukushima Daiichi was scheduled to be decommissioned in February. But it was given a ten-year extended license despite warnings that its backup power generator was vulnerable to water damage. This plant in particular has a record of unsafe practices, repeatedly missing safety checks over a ten-year period, right up to two weeks before the earthquake. A report submitted by TEPCO to the Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency on February 28 admitted that it failed to inspect 33 pieces of equipment in all reactors at the Daiichi plant, including a motor and backup power generator for the No. 1 reactor. In another deadly cost-cutting measure, the company opted to store spent fuel on site rather than invest in safer storage options. At the time of the earthquake, six years' worth of uranium fuel rods had piled up.

As far back as 1972, the U.S. nuclear regulatory agency reported that General Electric's reactor design was more prone to radiation leaks than other designs. Four years ago, a TEPCO research team warned the company that the plant was not adequately protected against earthquakes and tsunami, noting that its seawalls were not high enough. Studying the pattern of earthquakes in the area over centuries, the team argued that a strong quake and tsunami were long overdue, with a 10 percent possibility that the 40-year-old complex would be overwhelmed. TEPCO officials ignored this report.

We fight for workers revolution in

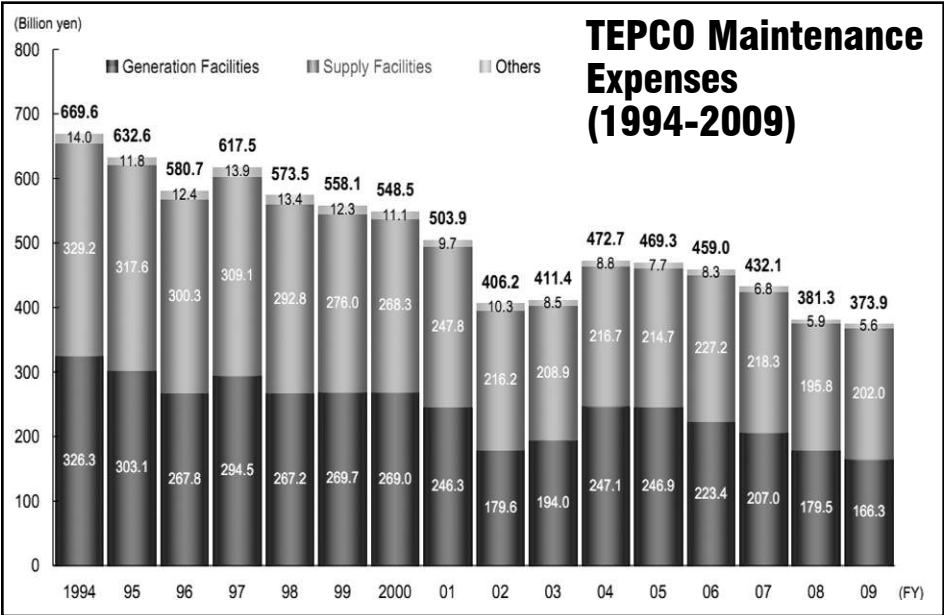
Japan to take industry out of the hands of the profit-bloated capitalist owners. Throughout industry we fight for union control of working conditions and, where there are specific hazards, union action to shut down operations. This requires concerted efforts to organize the nuclear power industry as well as the increasingly prevalent non-union suppliers and contractors throughout industry as a whole. But the sellout bureaucrats at the head of the unions see themselves as "partners" of the Japanese capitalists. Protecting the profitability of the system, they do not act to defend their own members, much less the working people more generally. We fight for a new, class-struggle leadership of the unions that will fight for the expro-

country and every industry, the overriding concern is their profits and not the safety of the workers or the interests of society as a whole."

To date, 21 workers are reported to have been exposed to possibly deadly amounts of radiation while trying to bring the Fukushima plant under control. Many more will become sick: the government recently announced that it will take months before the radioactive leaks can be plugged. The long-term effects of radiation sickness and the various radiation-induced cancers these workers will suffer from cannot now be known, but it is certain that many will die a painful death. We demand free lifetime health care for these workers and their families.

The approximately 400 workers now risking their lives are viewed as disposable by the company. They have not even been supplied with enough dosimeters, which measure radiation levels; some only have gauze-like outer suits that have been substituted for regular protective jumpsuits; there are not enough protective boots to go around, so some workers are made to wrap plastic garbage bags over their shoes; they lack proper gas masks.

According to Kazuma Yokota of the Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency, these workers sleep on the floor of a building near the reactors that is covered with a sheet containing lead to block out radiation. They wrap themselves in blankets and sleep huddled together. For about three weeks, until a public outcry, they had only two meals a day: biscuits



TEPCO

TEPCO corporate graph shows ever-decreasing maintenance outlays by company, which reported \$1.66 billion profit in 2010. Right: Protesters denounce TEPCO's negligence and lies outside company headquarters in Tokyo, March 30.



Getty

priation of the energy bosses without compensation under a workers government. Striving to forge such a leadership is an integral part of the fight to build a revolutionary workers party whose aim is to do away with the entire system of capitalist wage slavery.

Fukushima Workers

On March 19, the Partisan Defense Committee—the defense organization associated with the Spartacist League/U.S.—sent a message to the Federation of Electric Power Related Industry Workers Unions saluting the nuclear workers' heroism:

"The valor and dedication of the Fukushima Daiichi workers stand in sharp contrast to the parasitism and greed of the owners and managers of TEPCO and their unofficial spokesmen in the government. They have endangered the population with their obfuscation and mismanagement. For the capitalists in every

and juice in the morning and boil-in-the-bag rice and a can of food in the evening. Initially there was only one bottle of water available per person per day.

In a country that prides itself on innovation and the use of robotics, no robots were available at Fukushima. Professor Satoshi Tadokoro, Japan's leading rescue robots researcher, said that his team had been working on developing robots that could be used in this type of situation, but this research was discontinued. "Power plant companies mentioned that they did not need such robots because their nuclear power plants never have accidents and are safe" (quoted from the Web site of Texas A&M University's Center for Robot-Assisted Search and Rescue). A French firm shipped robots immediately after the tsunami, but the Japanese government stopped them from being delivered because the shipment had not been made through proper channels.

SPARTACIST

20

Katayama Sen addresses First Congress of Workers of the Far East, Moscow, January 1922. Top of broad banner in Chinese reads, "Solidarity of the World Worker"

The Origins of Japanese Communism, Debate over "Two-Stage Revolution" and the American Occupation

The Meiji Restoration: A Bourgeois Non-Democratic Revolution

SPARTACIST

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Taking a cue from its bigger brothers, GE and Westinghouse, which sent squads of black workers to Japan in the 1970s to perform similar jobs at nuclear plants, TEPCO has a history of hiring Burakumin (Japan's caste of "untouchables") and day laborers from the slum districts of Sanya in Tokyo and Kamagasaki in Osaka as temporary workers. Known as "*genpatsu* (nuclear) gypsies," these workers are not unionized. Usually hired through subcontractors, they travel from plant to plant, labor under lower standards for radiation exposure than regular workers, and get inferior wages and benefits. In the 1980s, attempts to unionize this workforce were thwarted by thugs who threatened to harm union leaders' families.

At the Fukushima Daiichi plant last year, 89 percent of the workers were temporary workers (*New York Times*, 10 April). Their “normal” work includes scrubbing radioactive dust from the hundreds of parts inside the reactors using brushes and rags. Now they are on the front line of efforts to cool down the contaminated plant, at horrendous personal risk.

## Reactionary “National Unity” Crusade

The sudden movement of the Pacific tectonic plate under the North American plate caused the March 11 earthquake, producing a rupture 186 miles long and 93 miles wide in the sea floor. The main island of Honshu was moved eight feet east and the axis of the Earth shifted by four inches. The political and economic ramifications for the populace have also been jarring, with the bourgeoisie using the dire situation for a massive “national unity” campaign in order to escalate attacks on the working class. While working to strengthen its repressive state apparatus, the bourgeoisie presents the Japanese military, a player in the imperialist wars against Iraq and Afghanistan, in the guise of a “humanitarian” force.

There is a lot of justified anger and frustration within the population at the gross incompetence of the capitalist government following the disaster and at the continuing cynical cover-ups. As revolutionary Marxists, we seek to turn this distrust and anger into a broader understanding within the proletariat of the need to overthrow this irrational capitalist order through workers revolution. In contrast, the reformist left seeks to channel the various discontents and frustrations of the workers and oppressed into a campaign to strengthen illusions in the bourgeois state.

Concerned about growing popular anger over its cover-ups, the government rolled out that feudal remnant, Emperor Akihito, to give his first-ever televised statement. This backfired, reinforcing suspicion that the situation was out of control. With less than a 20 percent approval rating prior to the earthquake and an economy in worse shape than that of any of the major imperialist powers, Prime Minister Kan of the Democratic Party, the fifth prime minister in four years, tried to prod the opposition Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), which ruled Japan for decades, into a “national unity” government. Under the given conditions, the LDP is not in a hurry to share the responsibility. But the reformist Japan



EPA

**March 21: Firemen battle fires in neighborhood in Ishinomaki, Miyagi Prefecture, still smoldering ten days after disaster struck.**

Communist Party (JCP), always ready to show its loyalty to the bourgeoisie, announced on March 14 that the upcoming local elections should be postponed because, in party chairman Shii's words, "Now is the time for the whole nation to concentrate on rescue and recovery, regardless of ideological differences." The Social Democratic Party (SDP, formerly Socialist Party) similarly opines that the "national state crisis" requires "a collaborative framework of all political parties."

## Militarization of Aid and the Reformist Left

The declaration of a nuclear emergency gave the green light for the deployment of the military—named the “Self-Defense Forces” (SDF)—placing northeast Japan under virtual martial law. In the largest military mobilization since the end of World War II, more than 100,000 military personnel and reservists, 209 helicopters, 321 airplanes and 57 ships have been deployed.

Legislation allowing the government to mobilize its military so smoothly was crafted under a previous government, that of the coalition led by SDP prime minister Tomiichi Murayama, following the 1995 earthquake in the city of Kobe. Passed in 1999, the law mandated the militarization of seaports, airports and civilian medical personnel in times of “perilous situations.”

By law, firemen are considered part of the state. But unlike the cops and soldiers, firemen are workers who perform a useful social service. We support the efforts of Japanese firemen to organize a union to represent them. The bourgeois media has virtually ignored the efforts of the nuclear power workers and the firemen in Fukushima. In contrast, SDF personnel are portrayed as heroes. The SDF's official mandate is to provide transportation and help with distribution of relief supplies, but the reality tells a different story.

Aid and supplies from other countries sat in warehouses for weeks when they were not simply rejected. Blankets from Indonesia were refused because they were supposedly too thin; 15,000 tons of rice from Thailand were rejected outright; one ton of medical supplies from Ukraine, including iodine pills, was not allowed

into the country because it was “not certified for use” in Japan; Singapore had to hire private trucks to deliver supplies to quake-hit areas. Reminiscent of the aftermath of the Kobe quake, when the government delayed supplying even basic necessities, *yakuza* (organized crime) gangsters managed to deliver tons of materials to the evacuees.

Many evacuees have complained that for weeks they got nothing to eat every day but a rice ball, a cup of noodles and some water, if they were lucky. Trade unionists and others who have traveled to the north in search of relatives and to



Reuters

**April 2: Prime Minister Kan addresses army troops deployed in Fukushima Prefecture under “nuclear state of emergency,” as Japan undertook largest military mobilization since end of World War II.**

bring supplies reported that for weeks the military has blocked aid from getting to those in need, stopping civilians' cars because the SDF had to "secure the rescue routes." Vans with supplies have been turned away on main highways; railway and bus stations are reportedly under SDF control. In the cities and towns, the SDF is also deployed for "anti-crime" patrols alongside the police (*Asahi Shimbun*, 4 April).

The liberal bourgeois *Mainichi* and *Asahi* daily newspapers have called for streamlining government agencies to establish a central command system similar to that launched after the 1923 Great Kanto Earthquake. The 1920s in Japan, marked by anti-Communist witchhunts under the “Peace Preservation Act,” were the period when right-wing militaristic cliques gained the ascendancy in the government.

In keeping with its underlying social-patriotic reformism, the bulk of the Japanese left lines up in support of the “emergency” measures and sometimes complains that the militarization of society is not sufficiently centralized or effective. It is not only the social democrats and so-called Communists who speak in this vein; the smaller groups sometimes described as “New Left” mainly do, too. These organizations historically are characterized as having claimed the terrain of the “third camp” between imperialism and the former Soviet Union, which is a thin veneer for lining up directly with their “own” ruling class.

Thus, the basic criticism of the government raised by the Kakumaru group is that it has not sufficiently mobilized the

military to defend and protect the people, complaining that “the army was dispatched piecemeal” and too slowly and that the “government, the national military, local authorities as well as the police have not set up a unified information center” (*Kaiho*, 15 March). The JCP and Kakumaru have been demanding the publication of pictures of the areas hit by the tsunami taken by satellites put in space to spy on the Chinese and North Korean deformed workers states. Kakumaru writes: “The government should first of all utilize the information collection capabilities of the Japanese national military and fully employ the spy satellites in order to understand the full extent of the devastation in all areas” (*Kaiho*, 15 March). Kakumaru also demands closer collaboration between the army and the cops.

The Chukaku group, meanwhile, takes a more oppositional posture toward the government but still pushes the illusion that the Japanese imperialist military can be made to serve the people. They complain that “the maintenance of national security is given a higher priority and the saving of lives and the provision of aid goods [by the SDF] are put on the back burner” (*Zenshin*, 21 March). While they raise a correct call for “autonomous” efforts by the working class to support the victims of the disaster, they simultaneously claim that soldiers are part of the working class. This notion is an obstacle to the proletariat achieving elementary class consciousness. Seeking to help capitalism readjust its priorities, they argue to

“cut military spending” rather than subsidies to poor families. Chukaku’s reformist orientation is to appeal for upholding the bourgeois Constitution and to work toward a less reactionary government within the capitalist framework; the main slogan of their March 12 emergency statement is to “fight against neo-liberalism.”

One of the main demands of the Kakehashi group, sometimes falsely identified as Trotskyist, is for the immediate closing of all nuclear power plants. Like the more mainstream crusaders for “green” politics, they see technology as more of a problem than capitalism. They are also in sync with the SDP, which calls for “turning away from nuclear power.” The JCP, for its part, does not call for the abolition of nuclear power, having long had an explicit nationalist position for Japanese self-sufficiency in energy. While we have the deepest distrust for the power industry and their claims of safe nuclear reactors under capitalism, we oppose the crusade against nuclear energy as such.

The U.S. is the only country to have used atomic bombs (incinerating Hiroshima and Nagasaki during World War II, when Japan was already effectively defeated) and now rains down death and destruction on Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya. Nonetheless the Japanese government is now working to portray the U.S. military—which has hypocritically called its military mobilization Operation *Tomodachi* (friend)—in a humanitarian light. For the Japanese rulers, the point is to strengthen the U.S.-Japan military alliance, which is first and foremost an

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# Japan...

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anti-Communist alliance, initially directed against the Soviet degenerated workers state and today targeting China and North Korea. With just under 50,000 U.S. forces dispersed among 85 military facilities throughout the Japanese archipelago, the alliance is also aimed at suppressing struggles by the militant working class throughout Asia.

Always seeking to overcome pacifist sentiments in the population—a continuing legacy of Japan’s defeat in World War II—as well as more recent dissatisfaction with the presence of U.S. troops in Okinawa and elsewhere, the Japanese bourgeoisie welcomes the “mutual aid operation” with the U.S. during the present crisis. Defense Minister Kitazawa crowed that “the Japan-U.S. security treaty will be further strengthened” (*Yomiuri Shimbun*, 4 April). We say: ***The SDF troops deployed in northern Japan should get out!*** We call for smashing the counter-revolutionary alliance between U.S. and Japanese imperialism through workers revolution on both sides of the Pacific.

## They Want to Make the Workers Pay

Already holding the world’s largest public debt—double the size of its 425 trillion yen economy—Japan faces initial reconstruction costs estimated at some 4 trillion yen. With most roads, railways and ports in the affected area destroyed and three weeks of rolling blackouts throughout the eastern part of the country, Japanese industry is taking a pounding which has had ripple effects internationally.

The Tohoku region produced 8 percent of the country’s GDP. It was home not just to farmlands and canneries but also to parts factories for giant companies like Toyota and Sony, as well as small and mid-sized firms supplying components to companies as far-flung as Boeing, GM and Peugeot Citroën. Those companies are now scrambling for parts after introducing the much-vaunted Japanese just-in-time inventory system. Global auto production was projected to be reduced by 600,000 vehicles by the end of last month. Mine and mineral processing plants, such as those producing 33 percent of the world’s supply of iodine and 10 percent of the world’s titanium, have been heavily damaged. South Korea and Taiwan are now salivating at the prospect of chipping away at Japan’s share of the world’s semiconductor and electronic component markets. Ports from Rotterdam to Asia expect delayed shipments and lighter loads for the next period.

Within four days of the quake, the Bank of Japan poured 23 trillion yen into the banking system to shore up the crashing stock market. The *zenekon*—large construction companies with close ties to government ministries—are already looking to reap huge profits from rebuilding. The bourgeoisie is determined that the costs associated with reconstruction will

come out of the hides of the working class. Many workers have lost their jobs or are temporarily laid off and are battling for compensation. The government and the powerful Keidanren business federation are threatening tax hikes and cuts in subsidies for poor families; these schemes were already in the works before the disaster. Now there are plans to enact special legislation that would allow the national government to buy up land abandoned by tsunami victims with “speedy lump-sum payments before exact compensation amounts are calculated.”

The displaced masses must be provided with jobs—union jobs at union wages and benefits—and housing, clothing and all other necessities. What is needed is a massive program of public works projects to rebuild housing, public facilities, factories and infrastructure. Workers committees should be established to guard against shoddy designs and other unsafe and cost-cutting measures that endanger lives. These demands—clearly necessary now—are examples of the kind of transitional demands formulated by Leon Trotsky in the 1938 Transitional Program, founding document of the Fourth International. Their purpose is to lead the workers from their present consciousness to an understanding of the need to finish with the capitalist system once and for all.



Zenroren

**March 31: Vice chairman of Zenroren union federation, which is supported by Japanese Communist Party, hands two million yen collected to aid disaster victims over to government official in Iwate Prefecture.**

We call for the ***expropriation of the utilities companies without compensation under a workers government.*** In contrast, some reformist groups push demands for nationalization under capitalism. A glance back at history is instructive. In Japan, the power industry was placed under direct government control in the late 1930s, precisely as part of the mobilization for the upcoming interimperialist conflict, World War II. Against bitter opposition from the bourgeois owners of this industry, the government, representing the larger interests of the capitalist class, pushed the measure through along with the law for “general mobilization for the war effort.” The industry’s present structure was established after the war.

Under other circumstances, struggling capitalist industries may be nationalized because they are deemed necessary for the functioning of the system as a whole or in order that they can be upgraded at



Japan Peace Museum

Hiroshima following U.S. A-bomb blast of August 1945.

public expense to become more modern and profitable. In Britain after World War II, when a number of bankrupt companies were nationalized, their former owners were handsomely compensated while the workers got low wages, and high taxes. While we oppose privatization schemes, which are always accompanied by attacks on unions, wages and conditions, the social-democratic program of capitalist nationalizations has nothing in common

announced the postponement or cancellation of the yearly *shunto* wage contract negotiations. While workers at Fukushima are endangering their own lives to try to bring the nuclear plant under control, their union leadership has cravenly renounced any demands for higher wages or better and safer working conditions (*Asahi Shimbun*, 31 March). The port workers union Zenkowan canceled a strike in March, joining the “national unity” campaign.

While reformist groups regularly denounce the right-wing leadership of Rengo, which in the main politically supports the capitalist Democratic Party, they are silent about the class collaborationism of the leaderships of Zenrokyo (tied to the Social Democratic Party) and Zenroren (tied to the JCP). The appeal by Zenroren for contributions was heeded by many workers around the country and internationally. Outrageously, the union leadership turned this money over to the local capitalist governments of Miyagi, Iwate and Fukushima prefectures—in other words, to those who for years have covered up safety violations at TEPCO. Indeed Zenroren’s appeal began by expressing its “respect” for the government which was supposedly working “day and night” to cope with the disaster!

It is urgently necessary to mobilize the working class ***independently*** of the bourgeoisie and its state, not least to speedily organize massive mobilization of aid and its distribution. But the union misleaders, who accept the framework of the capitalist system, oppose this perspective. There is no shared national interest between the workers and the oppressed on the one hand and the capitalist class and its government on the other. Workers of the world, unite! The death and destruction and the hardships that Japanese working people are now undergoing in the aftermath of the disaster starkly illustrate the need for the proletariat to take state power away from the bourgeoisie, on a worldwide scale. For the construction of a revolutionary workers party! For a workers republic in Japan, part of a socialist Asia! ■

with the fight to take the means of production away from the capitalist class through socialist revolution.

Today, the response from the unions underlines the contradictions within those workers organizations. There has been an overwhelming outpouring of solidarity with the victims of the disaster at the base of the unions, often with an impulse for taking some independent action. Many unions have been collecting funds to help their members and some have organized their own transportation to deliver aid directly. At the same time, the political program of the top leadership of the three trade-union federations—Rengo, Zenrokyo and Zenroren—is to sacrifice workers’ interests for the sake of “national unity” with the bourgeoisie.

In this vein, a number of unions have



U.S. Navy

U.S. and Japanese warships conduct anti-submarine drill in Pacific, December 2007.

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# Troy Davis...

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executed in 1999—the U.S. is still one of the world’s leaders in capital punishment. The death row speedup launched in the mid 1980s was accompanied by a vast expansion of repressive laws and police powers, fueled in large part by the racist “war on drugs.” Untold numbers of black youth were tried, convicted and sentenced as adults. Mandatory sentencing did away with parole. The later adoption of “three strikes” laws meant that one could get life imprisonment for stealing a tape deck out of a parked car. On top of all this, a plethora of state laws limited the right to present new evidence on appeal in capital cases, while the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act signed into law by Bill Clinton in 1996 greatly restricted the right to challenge state convictions through federal *habeas corpus*. Earlier this month, when the Supreme Court reinstated the California death sentence of Scott Pinholster, which had been overturned on new evidence presented in his federal court appeals, Clarence Thomas baldly stated that although state prisoners may sometimes submit new evidence in federal court, federal law “is designed to strongly



WV Photo  
**Protest outside Philadelphia court hearing for Mumia Abu-Jamal, 9 November 2010.**

discourage them from doing so.” Among those whom Clinton’s laws help keep trapped on death row is political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. A former Black Panther Party spokesman, a supporter of the Philadelphia MOVE group and an award-winning journalist, Mumia was framed up on false charges of kill-

ing Police Officer Daniel Faulkner in 1981 and sentenced to death based on his political views. Court after court has refused to consider the mountain of evidence of Mumia’s innocence, including the confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Mumia, killed Faulkner (see the Partisan Defense Committee pamphlet, *The*

*Fight to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal—Mumia Is Innocent!*). For the poor, for fighters against racial oppression, for labor militants, there is no justice in the capitalist courts. As Marxists, we stand for the abolition of the death penalty on principle—for the guilty as well as the innocent—and everywhere. We do not accord the state the right to determine who lives and who dies. The lynching of American black men—by racist mobs and by the august courts—is deeply embedded in this country’s history, particularly but by no means exclusively in Southern states like Troy Davis’s Georgia. In the U.S., capital punishment is the lynch rope made legal, with black people making up over 40 percent of the death row population. The death penalty stands at the apex of the machinery of repression wielded by the capitalist rulers to contain the potentially explosive contradictions between the handful of filthy rich at the top and the many at the bottom. To put a final halt to the grisly workings of the U.S. rulers’ machinery of death—from the judicial guardians of death row to the cops who operate as judge, jury and executioner in gunning down minority youth on the streets—requires sweeping away the racist capitalist system through proletarian socialist revolution. ■

# Jena...

(continued from page 12)

Franklin presented his targets with the “options” to stop dealing or using drugs, move out of town or spend the rest of their lives in prison (“option three”). This case is starkly reminiscent of what happened in the town of Tulia, Texas, in 1999, when a full 10 percent of the black population was rounded up on the basis of a police informer and jailed on drug charges, only to be released four years later after the whole operation was exposed as a grotesque frame-up (see “Tulia Victims Freed, Finally,” WV No. 813, 7 November 2003). Entire generations of blacks and Latinos have been criminalized through the racist “war on drugs,” which was championed early on by such black Democrats as Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton. This underscores the urgent need to fight to *decriminalize drugs*, as well as all other “crimes without victims,” such as gambling, prostitution and pornography. Free Catrina Wallace and all victims of “Operation Option Three”! What happened in Jena and Tulia speaks to how little has changed in the conditions of life for most black people, North and South, since civil rights and voting rights legislation was passed in the mid 1960s, when struggles for black rights rocked the country. Jena, for example, was a stronghold for “former” Klansman David Duke when he ran for governor in 1991. As we wrote in “From Slavery to Mass Incarceration—Black Liberation and the Fight for a Socialist America” (WV No. 955, 26 March 2010): “From



Flaherty/Rag Blog  
**Catrina Wallace (right) with her mother, Caseptla Bailey. Wallace was framed up on drug charges after helping lead campaign to support the Jena Six.**

slavery to convict labor, from the chain gang to the assembly line, American capitalism has been built upon the lash-scarred backs of black labor. Any organization that claims a revolutionary perspective for the United States must confront the *special oppression* of black people—their forced segregation at the bottom of capitalist society and the poisonous racism that divides the working class and cripples its struggles.” The Jena case began in September 2006 when a black student requested and received permission from a school official to sit under the so-called “white tree” at his high school, which is 80 percent white. The next day, black students arrived to find three nooses hanging from the tree, leading to an impromptu protest

some days later. That December, a white student found himself on the ground in a fight that ensued after he hurled the epithet “n---r” at a black youth, leading to the arrest of the six. Mychal Bell, who spent over a year in prison, wrote in “Surviving Jena Six” (*CounterPunch*, 3-5 April 2009): “The kids who put up the noose...nothing happened to them.” At the massive September 2007 protest, black Democrats Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton helped divert the mass outrage into reliance on the capitalist government. Calling for “federal intervention to protect people from Southern injustice,” Sharpton appealed to the same Feds who would take part in the “Option Three” dragnet. For his part, Barack Obama, then looking toward a run at the White House, deigned only to call for “fairness” while claiming the Jena case wasn’t “a matter of black and white”! Once the Democrats’ hot air was spent in Jena, the town’s black population was left to the very untender mercies of the local cops and

prosecutors. Those who had dared stand up for their basic rights, like Catrina Wallace, paid the price. Jackson, Sharpton and other bourgeois politicians spout the lie that racial oppression can be ameliorated through pressure on the government—the executive committee of the racist capitalist ruling class. The truth is that black oppression has been and remains embedded in the foundations of the American capitalist profit system. While fighting against all forms of racist segregation and injustice, we realize that social conditions for workers and the urban and rural poor cannot be fundamentally altered short of the overthrow of the decaying capitalist system and the construction of an egalitarian socialist society. We fight to build a revolutionary workers party, with a strong black leadership component, to lead all the exploited and oppressed in socialist revolution, the only way to get rid of the organized violence of the capitalist courts, cops and prisons. ■

# Bay of Pigs...

(continued from page 2)

movements) could not bring the working class to political power. As stated in the International Communist League’s “Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program”: “Under the most *favorable* historic circumstances conceivable, the petty-bourgeois peasantry was only capable of creating a bureaucratically deformed workers state, that is, a state of the same order as that issuing out of the political counterrevolution of Stalin in the Soviet Union, an anti-working-class regime which blocked the possibilities to extend social revolution into Latin America and North America, and suppressed Cuba’s further development in the direction of socialism. To place the working class in political power and open the road to socialist development requires a supplemental *political* revolution led by a Trotskyist party.” The Soviet Union, which provided Cuba with crucial military support and economic aid, is no more, destroyed in 1991-92 by capitalist counterrevolution after decades of Stalinist misrule and imperialist pressure. The Cuban economy has suffered massively in the aftermath, although not evenly and uniformly. While the predominant section of the U.S. capitalist ruling class seeks to keep a stranglehold on the island through the trade embargo, some elements seek to relax the embargo along with Cuba’s diplomatic isolation from the U.S., seeing this as a more effective means of subverting the gains of the revolution. Meanwhile, Cuba remains in

the imperialists’ military crosshairs, a fact that its people are reminded of every day by the presence of the U.S. naval base (and detention-torture center) at Guantánamo Bay. U.S. out of Guantánamo Bay now! Our defense of the Cuban deformed workers state against the class enemy is an integral part of our program for the overthrow of bloody U.S. imperialism through proletarian revolution here, in the “belly of the beast.” ■

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## Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!

# Supreme Court Gives Green Light to Troy Davis Execution

In a supreme act of racist contempt, on March 28 the highest court in the U.S. greased the skids for the execution of Troy Davis when it refused to consider his appeal. This latest and probably last appeal for Davis sought to reverse a Georgia federal district court ruling last August upholding his conviction and death sentence. Expressing how cheap America's capitalist rulers consider the life of a black man, the Supreme Court made no reference to the extensive evidence of Davis's innocence presented at the district court hearing, dismissing his appeal out of hand. With the stroke of a pen, another black life is to be disposed of.

Davis's sister, Martina Correia, who has campaigned around the world for her brother's exoneration, responded to the Supreme Court ruling by describing the sham evidentiary hearing held last June in Savannah: "Once the judge opened his mouth and looked at my brother with disgust I knew that no matter what Troy's lawyers had to present the judge had already made his decision to deny Troy, so he was just going through the motions like a puppeteer."

Sentenced to death in 1991 for the kill-

ing of off-duty Savannah policeman Mark MacPhail, Davis was convicted based on questionable "eyewitness" identifications, dubious accounts that Davis confessed to the killing and testimony coerced by the cops. Seven of the prosecution's nine witnesses have since recanted. The only hold-outs are one man who may be the actual killer and another who initially denied being able to identify the shooter only to pin it on Davis at trial two years later. At last year's hearing, some of these witnesses were finally able to tell how they were forced by the cops to falsely implicate Davis. But the federal court decision sneered that this testimony was "smoke and mirrors" and declared the accounts of police/prosecution coercion—a regular feature of the capitalist justice system—were not credible...because the cops said it didn't happen that way! (For more on that hearing, see "Troy Davis Appeal Turned Down," WV No. 965, 24 September 2010.)

One day after the Supreme Court turned Davis down, the Court overturned a \$14 million jury verdict awarded to black former death row inmate John Thompson against former New Orleans D.A. Harry



Troy Davis with his sister, Martina Correia.

Connick Sr. Thompson had spent 14 years on death row and came within weeks of execution, when his attorneys found evidence that prosecutors had concealed from the defense blood samples and eyewitness statements that exonerated him. According to the decision written by Justice Clar-

ence Thomas, such frame-up methods did not constitute "deliberate indifference." In an op-ed column he wrote for the *New York Times* (10 April) that powerfully recounts his ordeal, Thompson remarks: "I was lucky, and got lawyers who went to extraordinary lengths. But there are more than 4,000 people serving life without parole in Louisiana, almost none of whom have lawyers after their convictions are final."

The broad exposure of so many men and women on death row proven innocent in recent years has given the ruling-class parties some pause in the accelerated rush to execution that has marked the 35 years since the death penalty was restored in 1976, following a nine-year hiatus. On March 9, Democratic Illinois governor Pat Quinn signed legislation abolishing capital punishment in the state. Illinois thus became the fifth state since 2004 to eliminate the death penalty, either through legislative action or through court decree. Yet some 3,200 people remain on death row, over half of them black and Latino. And while executions dropped last year by 12 percent to 46—less than half of those

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## State Vendetta for 2007 Protest

# Jena, Louisiana: Free All Victims of Racist Cop Roundup!

Before dawn on 9 July 2009, more than 150 cops from nine federal, state and local agencies, complete with a SWAT team and helicopters, raided the black neighborhood of Jena, a small town in rural Louisiana with barely 300 black residents. A dozen people were arrested on drug charges solely on "evidence" provided by a convicted dealer acting as a police informant. No drugs were found in the raid. But under the threat of rural Southern "justice," most of those arrested recently pleaded guilty and now face years-long prison terms. One man who was convicted of drug distribution was sentenced to 25 years' hard labor.

The racist crackdown was more than just the vicious repression that is regularly meted out to black people in urban ghettos and Southern towns in the name of the "war on drugs." For the local sheriff's office and other government authorities, it was payback for the mass protest for black rights that shook Jena in September 2007. Tens of thousands of people from across the country marched through the small town to protest on behalf of the "Jena Six"—black youths framed up on charges of second-degree attempted murder in a case redolent of the lynch law of the "Old South." The 2009 drug sweep,

dubbed "Operation Option Three," was planned by Sheriff Scott Franklin in the immediate aftermath of the 2007 protest, when he was elected. One of those convicted was Catrina Wallace, a single mother of three who received wide acclaim for her role in helping organize

the protests for the Jena Six, among whom was her brother, Robert Bailey.

As reported on the Huffington Post Web site (13 May 2010) by Jordan Flaherty, a co-editor of *Left Turn* who broke the story of the drug raid, cops initially claimed that they found marijuana on



20 September 2007: Tens of thousands from throughout U.S. rallied in Jena against Jim Crow prosecution of six black youth.

Wallace's kitchen table, "but later discovered that they had collected broccoli stems, left over from dinner the previous night." Nevertheless, Wallace was convicted on March 31 of three counts of distribution of a controlled substance, taken to jail after the verdict was read and hit with bail of **one million dollars**. Her sentencing is expected to come this month.

As reported in *Town Talk*, a newspaper in the neighboring town of Alexandria, Franklin prepared the raid by gloatingly telling his posse: "It's going to be like Baghdad out in this community at five am.... They will get put in handcuffs, put behind bars today and never see the light of day again unless they are going out on the playground in prison." One man, Samuel Howard, had his door broken down by cops at 5:00 a.m. and was dragged out of bed naked, his house badly burned by police flares. Tasered by the cops, who also pointed guns at his three kids, Howard was brought to a baseball field, along with other people who had been rounded up, where he spent another hour without any clothes until he was given an orange jailhouse jumper.

The pretext for this racist depravity was an "anti-drug" campaign in which

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