

ILWU Holds the Line Against Union Busting

Lessons of the Battle of Longview



Werth/Longview Daily News

Grain freighter escorted by Coast Guard and police boats docks at EGT terminal in Longview, Washington, on February 7. Below: ILWU Local 21 members and supporters face off against cops in fight to defeat union-busting, 7 September 2011.

On February 7, members of International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 21 began loading wheat destined for South Korea on the first ship to pull into the new, high-tech EGT terminal in Longview, Washington. Two days later, a five-year contract settlement covering both maintenance and production at the terminal was approved by Local 21 members. The scabs of Operating Engineers Local 701 are out and the ILWU is in. This marks the end of a nearly two-year-long showdown pitting the ILWU against the giant EGT grain conglomerate and, behind it, finally, the full forces of the capitalist state.

We salute the militancy and determination of the ILWU members who fought so hard, centrally those of Local 21. Earlier in this battle, the union and its allies flexed their muscle in the kind of labor action not seen in this country for decades. Mass pickets were mobilized to block trains bringing grain into the terminal. The cops retaliated with a vendetta of harassment, intimidation and multiple arrests against ILWU members and their supporters. When police attacked the union's lines on September 7, ILWU International president Robert McEllrath, who had been brutally manhandled by the cops, called to disperse the picket and wait for the backing of other longshoremen. Ports in the region were shut down the following day as ILWU members poured into Longview to give EGT, its hired security thugs and the strikebreaking cops a real taste of union power. With the labor-hating media screaming that thousands of tons of grain had been dumped on the tracks, EGT, backed by Obama's



Brock Lile

National Labor Relations Board, went to the courts, which leveled over \$300,000 in fines against the union.

The ILWU International leadership backed off, retreating to filing suits in the capitalist courts and pushing a referendum appealing for the recall of the local Cowlitz County sheriff. Trainloads of grain were driven unhindered into the terminal, where it was unloaded by scabs from Operating Engineers Local 701. By late last year, the company was moving to get the grain shipped out, with the backing of the Obama administration's "Homeland Security" apparatus. The union was now looking down the barrels of a flotilla of armed Coast Guard ships and helicopters being mobilized to escort the first ship up the Columbia River to the EGT terminal. Citing the ILWU's previous "violent" actions, the Coast Guard ordered a temporary "safety zone" around the terminal and any incoming ships, giv-

ing itself authority to take whatever action was necessary to enforce it. Any violation could bring fines of up to \$250,000 and six years in prison.

The Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Counties Central Labor Council issued a "Call to Action" urging workers and their allies to mobilize in Longview when the first ship came in. McEllrath wrote a letter to all ILWU locals calling on them to be prepared for protest action. The populist Occupy movement was organizing for caravans from the Pacific Northwest and down the West Coast. Individual unions and labor councils around the country passed motions and sent letters protesting the deployment of the U.S. military against the ILWU.

A showdown pitting military forces deployed by the Obama administration against unionists and Occupy protesters could have damaged the Democrat's political fortunes in the lead-up to the

2012 presidential elections. With news spreading of the imminent arrival of the first ship, Washington State's Democratic Party governor stepped in and brokered a tentative agreement between the ILWU and EGT.

The "Partnership" of Labor and Capital Is a Lie!

The ILWU's International president is now saluting "the partnership between the ILWU and EGT" as the beginning of "many years of safe, productive operation at the facility, and stability in the Pacific Northwest grain export industry." But the whole battle at Longview gives the lie to the bureaucracy's promotion of a "partnership" between the longshoremen and the EGT owners, a lie that is at the heart of the virtually unchallenged offensive by the bosses and their state that has gutted the unions in this country.

The "stability" of the multibillion dollar U.S. grain industry, the biggest and most profitable in the world, means skyrocketing food prices and the starvation and death of millions around the globe. The world's grain supply is controlled by a handful of agribusiness giants, including U.S.-based Cargill and Archer-Daniels-Midland. At home, their profits are created through the increasing exploitation of the working class, which is why EGT was out to bust the ILWU at its Longview terminal. They didn't succeed. The West Coast-wide organization of the union, and the jobs at the Longview port the union has worked for 80 years, were preserved.

ILWU Local 21 president Dan Coffman told *Workers Vanguard* that the union prevailed in its demand that the company pay into the ILWU/Pacific Maritime Association (PMA) health and welfare package and pay into the pension plan as well. EGT will also pay the

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On Posse Comitatus Law

January 14, 2012

Editor, Workers Vanguard:

In discussing the erasure of democratic rights under the rubric of the “war on terror”, the lead article in WV 993, “Obama Ramps Up ‘War on Terror’ at Home”, states: “This is not to mention the direct violation [by the NDAA—National Defense Authorization Act] of the Posse Comitatus Act of 1878, which prohibits military forces from engaging in domestic law enforcement.” Two problems with this: 1. It’s technically incorrect. The Posse Comitatus Act (PCA) prohibits use of military forces domestically except when approved by Congress or explicitly allowed in the U.S. constitution. Since the NDAA was passed by Congress, its implementation would not be in violation of the PCA. 2. As for the NDAA violating the *spirit* of the PCA, the PCA was a post-Reconstruction law of racist and reactionary intent, designed to prevent local Reconstruction governments from appealing to the Federal

government for protection against the terror that overthrew the democratic gains of the Reconstruction period. It is not exactly something one should refer to as an historical standard of bourgeois-democratic rights, such as *habeas corpus*, which WV properly cited in the previous sentence. So why is this being cited in WV?

Comradely,
J.H.

WV replies:

It may indeed have been more precise for the article to state that President Obama’s signing of the NDAA further eroded—rather than “directly violated”—the Posse Comitatus Act. J.H.’s second objection, though, is historically inaccurate as there were no Reconstruction governments left to defend, which is not to deny that the Act served a reactionary purpose. J.H. misses the main point. Eliminating the formal restrictions on the military engaging in domestic law enforcement could only have dangerous consequences



TROTSKY

Black Liberation: A Key Task of Proletarian Revolution

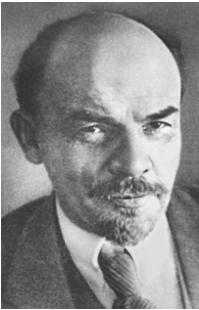
To celebrate Black History Month, we print below an excerpt from a 1933 document by Max Shachtman, then a leader of the U.S. Trotskyist movement. Addressing the central importance of the fight against black oppression, the document was written a few years before the explosive class battles by black and white workers that built industrial unions in this country. What Shachtman stressed at a time of Jim Crow segregation in the South is just as true today: the

liberation of black people in the U.S. can be achieved only through the overthrow of capitalism by the revolutionary proletariat.

The Civil War and the Reconstruction Period, so far as the bourgeoisie was concerned, completed the bourgeois democratic revolution commenced in 1776 with the declaration of independence from England. For the Negro masses, this second revolution—to destroy the stranglehold of slavocracy over the unfoldment of industrial capitalism—yielded all that the democratic revolution in this country will ever yield them. It gave them “legal” rights; it freed them from chattel slavery. It ended with their betrayal: the “legal” rights were confined to paper; the emancipation ended with the partial restitution in parts of the South of semi-serfdom instead of with converting the plantation slaves into free landed peasants, as the French bourgeois revolution did. More than this, the bourgeoisie could not give. Since that time, these outdated economic forms have been merged into the general capitalist economy of a decadent, parasitic imperialism....

There is only one correct way of formulating the problem of the remnants of slavery and serfdom under which hundreds of thousands of southern Negroes live to this day, and it gives the key to the whole problem: the Negro was liberated from chattel slavery as a by-product of the military-political struggle of the progressive northern bourgeoisie to consolidate the nation on a modern capitalist basis, free from the fetters of a reactionary slavocracy. The Negro will not only be liberated from the wage slavery of today but the survivals of feudalism and slavery will be exterminated, as a “by-product” of the military-political struggle of the last progressive class in American society—the class of black and white proletariat—to establish a socialist nation by means of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The historical aims of the imperialist bourgeoisie are not incompatible with the preservation of social and caste inequality for oppressed peoples, or with the preservation of antiquated modes of production and exchange. The historical aims of the socialist proletariat *are* incompatible with the maintenance of any anti-democratic institutions, of any capitalist or pre-capitalist modes of production. In this fact lies the only guarantee that the victorious working class will truly and completely emancipate the Negro masses by emancipating itself.

—Max Shachtman, “Communism and the Negro” (1933),
reprinted as *Race and Revolution* (Verso, 2003)



LENIN

for the workers and oppressed. We want to defend such restrictions against any attempt to limit or repeal them.

The U.S. bourgeoisie has long upheld the formal separation of the military from domestic repressive duties as a benefit of bourgeois democracy as distinct from a military police-state dictatorship. The Posse Comitatus Act stands as a centerpiece of this distinction. We have no illusions that this or any other law will restrain the bourgeoisie from unleashing the military when it perceives a sufficient threat to its class rule. Over the years, the government has come up with many ways of restricting the Posse Comitatus Act or getting around it by militarizing police forces, providing them with armed personnel carriers, drones, etc. There have been quite a few amendments to the Act, including authorizing the president to call out the armed forces to restore order in cases of civil disturbance, to assist in the “war on drugs” and to aid enforcement of the racist immigration laws. We trust that J.H. agrees that these are not positive developments.

Posse Comitatus, meaning the “force of the county,” dates back to English common law. Carried over to North America, it authorized local sheriffs to compel members of the community to assist in making arrests and maintaining order. Federal posse comitatus originated with the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, which “commanded” all citizens to “aid and assist” U.S. marshals in the capture of escaped slaves. By the time the slavocracy was defeated in the Civil War, the state power was no longer in the business of catching slaves. For a brief and unique period in American history—Reconstruc-

tion—its job in the South was enforcing the newly won rights of black people. Since few white southerners could be pressed into defending these rights, this left federal troops to be the “posse.”

By 1877, the last of the Reconstruction governments had already been replaced by the white Southern “Redeemers,” in some cases following bloody massacres of recently freed blacks during which the second Grant administration refused to dispatch additional troops. By the time the remaining federal troops were withdrawn from the South in 1877, the Northern bourgeoisie had already aligned with the remnants of the slavocracy to force the freed slaves back onto the former plantations as brutally exploited tenants or sharecroppers. As KKK nightriders were terrorizing the South, the Posse Comitatus Act was enacted the following year to prevent the use of the military to protect black people and enforce their civil rights. The law codified what was already a ruling-class consensus. The Civil War and Reconstruction were the last progressive acts of the U.S. bourgeoisie, which would rapidly develop into an imperialist capitalist class, marking its emergence as such with the 1898 Spanish-American War.

The military could no longer play any progressive role. Continuing a military campaign against American Indians that followed the tail end of the Civil War, some of the troops withdrawn from the South following Reconstruction were dispatched to drive the Nez Percé from their home in Oregon. Others were sent to break the 1877 strike by thousands of rail workers—the first nationwide strike in this country.

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Against Sexual Puritanism

January 6, 2012

Letter of appreciation from Colombia:

To Workers’ Vanguard:

I felt such a sense of relief—and amazement—to see your article “Sentenced to Life in Child-Porn Witchhunt”, p. 2 Workers’ Vanguard Nov. 2011, which has just arrived out here in the Colombian jungle.

I have railed for decades against the New Suffocating Puritanism and the shameful unanimity in all sectors of society and all groups regarding it... most especially the utterly ridiculous fascistic “Age of Consent” laws that have ruined so many people’s lives, not to mention the vicious

insane “child abuse” swoops on communities in the 70s and onward, of which we ourselves were victims (which was why we moved to the mal-named “third world” so we could bring up our kids in freedom).

I am particularly impressed (as in many other areas of your writings) with your bravery in the face of the present-day asphyxiating new wave puritanism and violent reactions to expression of any opposition to it.

I have forwarded your article with full acknowledgement and praise for WV to my political and personal mailing lists.

Congratulations.
Jenny J.

Spartacist Black History Month Forums

Eyewitness Account by an Activist from the Civil Rights Movement

For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

- Contradictions of the Civil Rights Movement: A Marxist Analysis
- Detroit: The Rise and Fall of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers

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at Manila, enter on Manila)

For info: (510) 839-0851
slbayarea@sbcglobal.net

LOS ANGELES

Saturday, Feb. 25, 3 p.m.

Mount Hollywood
Congregational Church
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Vermont-Sunset Red Line Station)

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The Rehabilitation of Booker T. Washington in Racist Capitalist America

For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

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Tuesday, March 6, 7 p.m.

322 W. 48th St., 1st Floor, Manhattan
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Take A, C or E train to 42nd St.)

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WORKERS VANGUARD

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TV Executive on Trial for Blasphemy

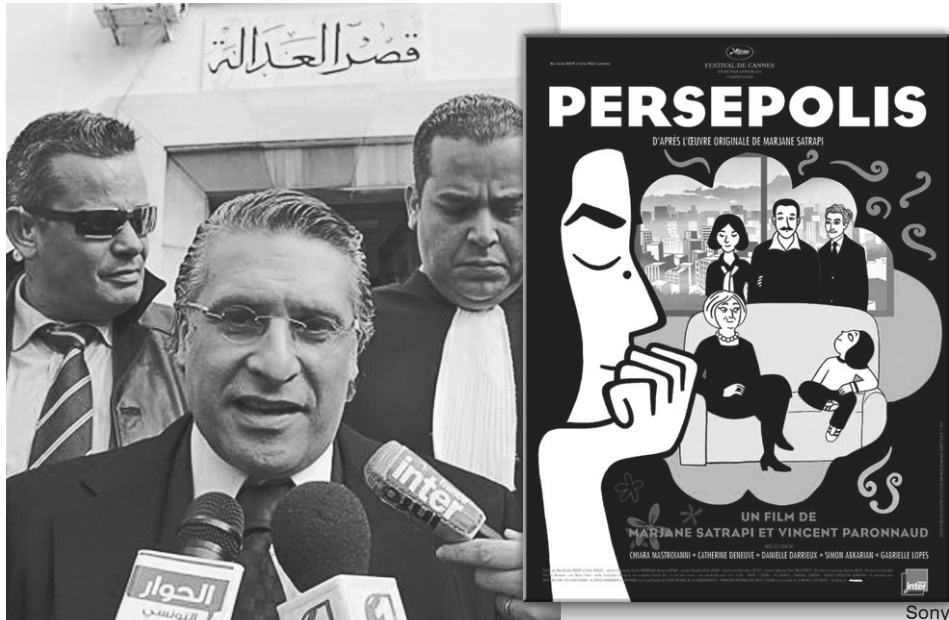
Islamist Furor over *Persepolis*

Tunisia

Following on the popular revolt that ousted hated despot Ben Ali early last year, a ruling coalition dominated by the Islamist Ennahda party was brought to power in elections last fall. In an ominous sign of what the Islamists have in store for the Tunisian population, Nabil Karoui, the director of the TV station Nessma, is facing up to eight years in prison. His “crime” was to air the French movie *Persepolis*, which recounts the childhood of an Iranian woman during the last years of the Shah and brilliantly captures the terror that followed the rise to power of the Islamic hierarchy under Ayatollah Khomeini in 1979. Following the broadcast, thousands of Islamists stormed the TV station, setting it on fire. They later firebombed Karoui’s house, claiming that the fantasy scenes in the movie where God is seen talking to a young girl are an insult to Islam. Ennahda leader Rached Ghannouchi hailed these reactionaries as “defenders of Islam.”

Karoui has been charged with “insulting sacred values, offending decent morals and causing political unrest.” While the government is eager to prosecute him, it was forced to postpone the trial several times in the face of massive support for Karoui. Huge crowds of supporters have been gathering at the courthouse, and on January 28, thousands marched through the capital, Tunis, in one of the biggest demonstrations in recent months. On February 1, the National Union of Tunisian Journalists joined with media associations such as Independent Radio Stations in a one-day nationwide strike in support of press independence and freedom of expression and in defense of the rights of journalists and communicators. As we demanded in our article “Tunisian Elections: Victory for Islamic Reactionaries—Workers Must Fight for Their Own Class Rule!” (WV No. 993, 6 January): Drop the charges! Stop the persecution of Nabil Karoui!

Persepolis is an award-winning animated film based on the Iranian artist Marjane Satrapi’s autobiographical graphic novel, which has sold over a million cop-



AP
Nabil Karoui, prosecuted for broadcasting animated film *Persepolis*, leaves Tunis courthouse, January 23.

ies and been translated into dozens of languages. The movie, which has been seen by millions, is alive with humor and warmth. What might have infuriated the Islamists is not the depiction of God as an old bearded man; rather it was the movie’s presentation of Satrapi as a rebellious, fiercely independent young woman straining against the forces of intolerance and superstition. When she is not preaching communism, she is predicting her future as a religious prophet, or she is out in the streets of Tehran buying contraband western pop tapes and wearing a Michael Jackson button. When she was 14 years old, her parents sent her to Europe to study, where she discovered boys, booze and drugs.

More galling for the reactionaries are the representations of her intellectual family: her charismatic father, who adores his wine and life of luxury as much as his Marxist-Leninist ideology; her thoroughly modernized mother; her sexy grandmother, who used to bathe her breasts in a bowl of ice water to keep them firm; and her beloved uncle, a Communist who was involved in the establishment of the short-lived Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan during World War II and was later executed

by the mullahs’ regime. The Islamists were no doubt further incensed by Satrapi’s depiction of a dream where Karl Marx gets God to repeat: “The struggle continues.”

Since the fall of the Ben Ali regime, Islamists in Tunisia, which was long regarded as the most secular country in North Africa, have been targeting unveiled women, secular intellectuals and journalists. In February 2011, hundreds armed with Molotov cocktails and knives raided the red-light district of Abdallah Guech Street in Tunis, torching the brothels, yelling insults at prostitutes and declaring that Tunisia was now an Islamic state. Brothels in other cities were also attacked. The red-light districts in Tunisia have thrived since they were regulated and legalized by the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century.

Islamists occupied a university campus in Manouba, near the capital, for two months until their eviction last month. They were demanding segregation of the sexes in classes and the lifting of the ban on wearing the full-face veil on campuses. We are opposed to the veil, no matter what form it takes, as both a symbol and instrument of women’s oppression. At the same time, we are equally opposed to

state bans or restrictions on it. The reality is that these bans mean the expulsions of Muslim girls and women from schools, universities and the workforce, deepening their isolation from society and oppression within the confines of the family.

As Marxists, we uphold the democratic principle of separation of religion and state, everywhere. Islamic fundamentalists will use any easing of bans on the veil to exert social pressure on women to cover themselves. Nonetheless, we oppose state interference in private religious practices, which paves the way for broader intrusions by the state into other aspects of social life. It is the task of the workers movement to champion the rights of women and all those under attack by the forces of religious reaction.

The historic aim of the Ennahda party is to establish a theocratic state ruled by *sharia* (Islamic law). Following the October election, Rached Ghannouchi pledged to maintain a secular course, declaring that his party has no interest in establishing *sharia*. However, Hamadi Jebeli, secretary general of Ennahda and currently the head of the government, was more forthright when he told a rally in the city of Sousse: “We are in the sixth caliphate, God willing,” referring to reviving an Islamic state. One can practically hear Mahdi, the hero of Haydar Haydar’s Arabic-language novel *Banquet for Seaweed*, screaming, “In the age of the atom, space exploration and the triumph of reason, they rule us with the laws of the Bedouin gods and the teaching of the Koran. Shit.” (For a review of this book, see “Islamist Furor in Egypt Over ‘Heretical’ Novel,” WV No. 770, 7 December 2001).

The aftermath of the mass upheavals in Tunisia and Egypt last year has been marked by the growing influence and dominance of Islamic fundamentalists. In the absence of an established revolutionary Marxist leadership, the working class in Tunisia and Egypt, whose strikes played a major role in bringing down their despotic rulers, has been politically engulfed by the forces of Islamic reaction and bourgeois nationalism. The fight against such reactionary forces is integral to the proletariat becoming a class for itself, fighting for the liberation of all the oppressed. ■

Defend Electric Power Unionists!

Greece

The following February 4 protest letter was sent by the *Komitee für soziale Verteidigung* (Committee for Social Defense), which is associated with the Spartacist Workers Party of Germany, to Greek prime minister Lucas Papademos and to his Labor and Justice ministers.

The *Komitee für soziale Verteidigung* strongly protests the outrageous persecution of 15 trade unionists of the Greek public power company union, GENOP-DEH, including its president, Nikos Photopoulos. The unionists had occupied the offices of the state power company DEH, to stop the company printing letters cutting off the electricity supply to thousands of families who refuse to pay the new property tax and thousands more who can no longer pay their bills. Squads of riot police violently removed the unionists, who were



LabourStart

Electrical workers union president Nikos Photopoulos at prosecutor’s office.

then charged with trespass, “obstructing the functioning of a public institution” and “obstructing the forces of order.” For their courageous action in defense

of working and poor families they now face possible jail terms of up to five years.

The Greek capitalist government’s agencies of repression are carrying out the dictates of the European Union, which is dominated by German imperialism. From its formation, the purpose of the European Union was to serve the interests of the imperialist powers and their junior partners in squeezing their own working classes and attacking their unions, and more effectively dominating the weakest countries like Greece. The multiethnic working class in Germany has also seen its wages, pensions and living standards driven down by the German capitalists’ drive to rule Europe.

Class-conscious workers in Germany applaud the actions of the victimized trade unionists. The KfV will make this case known to workers here. In solidarity with our class brothers in Greece, we demand: **Drop all charges against the Greek power worker unionists!**



\$.50 Workers Vanguard No. 992
(9 December 2011)

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Burying History of Chicanos and All Oppressed

Tucson School Book Ban

In another chapter out of Arizona's Anglo-chauvinist, anti-immigrant handbook, last month Tucson Unified School District (TUSD) officials stormed into classrooms to confiscate books used in the Mexican American Studies (MAS) program, effectively banning them. The pretext was that books such as *Occupied America: A History of Chicanos*, *Critical Race Theory* and *Rethinking Columbus: The Next 500 Years* violated a 2010 state law axing ethnic studies. Specifically, the law prohibits any courses that are "designed primarily for pupils of a particular ethnic group," "advocate ethnic solidarity" or allegedly "promote resentment toward a race or class of people." Presumably, the texts are to be replaced by the likes of *Little House on the Prairie*.

In signing the 2010 law, Republican governor Jan Brewer—notorious for the earlier apartheid-style anti-immigrant law SB1070—aimed her fire at the MAS program in Tucson, where 60 percent of the student body is Latino. Signaling the likelihood of broader censorship, the language in the law also goes after courses that supposedly "promote the overthrow of the U.S. government." Consequently, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* by Brazilian radical intellectual Paulo Freire, which references the term "oppression" as used in the 1848 *Communist Manifesto*, was added to the list of forbidden works.

Although a state-ordered audit last year concluded that the Tucson MAS program broke no law and cultivated a climate "conducive to student achievement," Arizona Superintendent of Public Instruction John Huppenthal was determined to bring the program down. Threatening to pull around \$14 million of state funding from the school district, Huppenthal declared that MAS courses promote the "harmful, dispiriting message" that "Latino minorities have been and continue to be oppressed by a Caucasian majority." This in Arizona, of all places, where for years "English fluency police" were sent in to monitor teachers, threatening them with dismissal for having heavy accents!

Last month, angry students marched to



June 2011: Phoenix protest in defense of Tucson ethnic studies program.

the TUSD headquarters in protest against the suspension of MAS. Assistant Superintendent Lupita Garcia railed at them that Mexico is where Mexican studies is taught, "this country is called America and we study U.S. history." In fact, U.S. history includes the far from minor detail that the entire Southwest, including Arizona, and more was stolen from Mexico. Imitating Newt "let poor kids scrub toilets" Gingrich, administrators punished protesters by assigning them to Saturday janitorial duties—a glaring demonstration of the utter racist contempt the bourgeois authorities have for the Latino poor.

The banning of MAS and its instructional texts is part and parcel of an ongoing crackdown on immigrants across the country. In states like Arizona and Alabama, police have been given free rein to interrogate and detain anyone appearing to be a "foreigner." There, and everywhere else, the cops continue their racial profiling of blacks, Latinos, Muslims and other minorities. As Republican presidential hopefuls bait each other on who can be the most virulently bigoted against immigrants, it is the federal government under Democrat Barack Obama that is the main enforcer of anti-immigrant repression. Last year, the government set a record of some 400,000 deportations, due largely to

the expansion of the "Secure Communities" program initiated by George W. Bush.

The capitalist rulers' crackdown has fueled nativist rants painting immigrants as criminals and bemoaning the 14th Amendment—a central gain of the Civil War granting citizenship to children born on American soil—in order to go after so-called "anchor babies." Against both the Republican and Democratic parties of capital, we say that anyone who has made it to this country should have the same rights as those born here: Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! And after socialist revolution rips power from the U.S. capitalist rulers, a workers government would return to Mexico certain contiguous regions of the Southwest that were seized from Mexico.

Illustrating the ideological thrust of the campaign against "un-American" ethnic studies, Huppenthal singled out a MAS classroom that had a poster of Che Guevara, telling *Democracy Now* (18 January) that students were being "indoctrinated into a Paulo Freirean-Marxian kind of style of thinking about racial attitudes and creating hatred." When it suits his purposes, Huppenthal, who ran for Superintendent on a campaign to "stop La Raza," also compares the MAS texts to Hitler's *Mein Kampf*—this from Arizona's chief book-burner!

Programs like ethnic studies are the result of social struggle—especially the civil rights and Vietnam antiwar movements and other movements of the '60s

and '70s—and not the "benevolence" of an enlightened ruling class. In fact, Tucson's MAS program resulted from a 1974 federal desegregation order following a suit by black and Latino families. But with the rollback of school integration and the ratcheting up of anti-immigrant racism, the bourgeois authorities are increasingly burying any teaching of the long history of racial and ethnic oppression in this country. We defend ethnic studies courses as part of our defense of the oppressed and our fight for free, quality, integrated education for all, from preschool to postgraduate.

While ethnic studies programs cover the history of blacks, Native Americans and other minorities—a history not otherwise taught through whitewashed U.S. textbooks—they do not fundamentally challenge the dominant ideology of the racist capitalist system. In fact, such programs are typically packaged to promote the myth that one can escape oppression and become "empowered" by being represented in this so-called "democracy." The education system as a whole reinforces bourgeois ideology, serving the interests of the ruling class.

The uncensored truth is that racial oppression and national chauvinism are endemic to capitalism, wielded by the ruling class to divide the proletariat—i.e., the working class—and weaken its struggles. As a Marxist newspaper offering a revolutionary perspective, we quote what Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels laid out in the *Communist Manifesto*:

"The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralise all instruments of production in the hands of the State, i.e., of the proletariat organised as the ruling class.... In place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and class antagonisms, we shall have an association, in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all."

It will take workers revolution to usher in the dawn of socialist society. As we stated in a previous article on the ban of ethnic studies in Arizona (WV No. 963, 27 August 2010): "It will ultimately require the overthrow of the capitalist system to end oppression—and for the real history of the struggles against oppression and exploitation to be taught." ■

Letters...

(continued from page 2)

Federal troops have been repeatedly sent to put down strikes: from the 1894 Pullman strike by the newly formed American Railway Union to the 1899 miners strike in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, to the seizure of railroads and coal mines ordered by Democratic president Truman in 1946 to break a strike by 400,000 coal miners. Just recently, the Coast Guard was deployed, along with other forces of the state, to escort a ship up the Columbia River to the Port of Longview, Washington, to prevent any interference from ILWU longshoremen in their battle against the EGT bosses (see article in this issue). In this, the military was true to its purpose as a core component of the capitalist state, which is to defend the class rule, interests and profits of the bourgeoisie, internationally and domestically.

When struggles for black rights emerged following World War II, they were met with brutal KKK and state terror. The liberal leaders of the civil rights movement, epitomized by Martin Luther King Jr. and tailed by reformist socialist organizations, called for federal troops to the South, sowing the deadly illusion that the imperialist army that was smashing workers and peasants in Vietnam would somehow defend fighters for black freedom at home. We are opposed to such calls on the armed forces of the capitalist state. In 1957, Eisenhower's troops were sent to put down an upheaval

of the Little Rock, Arkansas, black population, which was fighting to defend black students against racist mobs. The troops thus prevented the total rout of the retreating racists. From the 1943 racist riots in Detroit to Birmingham, Alabama, in 1963, federal troops were sent in only after blacks armed and mobilized to defend themselves. In 1967, the 82nd Airborne was brought in to suppress the Detroit ghetto explosion.

As Marxists, we assess laws such as the Posse Comitatus Act not by the motivations of their authors but by how they concretely impact class and social struggles. From the same vantage point, we judge what legal protections exist from how they serve the interests of the working class and the oppressed. Thus, while we recognize *habeas corpus* as an important democratic right in most periods, we support Lincoln's suspension of *habeas corpus* during the Civil War as a necessary measure to put down forces acting in support of the secessionist South in a war over slavery. Similarly, many of the democratic protections embodied in the Bill of Rights emerged from the experience of winning independence from the British monarchy, subsequent social struggle and hostility to a centralized state power in a society divided between slave and free labor social systems.

These protections, including the right to bear arms and later formal restrictions on military police powers, are important gains for the working class, which must defend the rights won through struggle against the rulers' inevitable attempts to restrict or reverse them. ■

Protest Prison Vendetta Against Jalil Muntaqim

On February 9, the Partisan Defense Committee sent the following protest letter on behalf of Jalil Muntaqim (Anthony Bottom), a former member of the Black Panther Party and then the Black Liberation Army. Muntaqim was one of the New York 3 who were convicted in 1975 in a COINTELPRO frame-up on charges of killing two New York City cops in 1971. Muntaqim was also targeted in the recent campaign against former Panthers known as the San Francisco 8 (see "COINTELPRO Charges Dropped Against Four SF8 Defendants" in WV No. 941, 28 August 2009).

We are writing to protest the campaign of harassment being meted out to Anthony Bottom, also known as Jalil Muntaqim, since his transfer to Attica Correctional Facility. Mr. Bottom has now been sentenced to six months in Special Housing Unit (SHU) on the outrageous pretext that he possessed photographs taken at memorials for former Black Panthers. These were confiscated as supposedly "gang-related," or representative of an "unauthorized organization."

The false characterization of the Black

Panther Party as a "gang" has long been used by prison authorities as a means to repress outspoken advocates of black rights incarcerated throughout the country. This continues even at a time when the Black Panther Party has ceased to be a social force for many decades now.

That Mr. Bottom's photos were not in any way contraband is attested by the fact they were transferred to him by the prison's Correspondence Department. Clearly this persecution is due to his political beliefs and past affiliations. We demand that Anthony Bottom be taken out of SHU, that all his photographs be returned to him and this campaign of harassment be stopped.

* * *

Protests should be sent to: New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman, Office of the Attorney General, The Capitol, Albany, NY 12224-0341; and Commissioner Brian Fischer, NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision, Building 2, 1220 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12226-2050. Letters should reference Anthony "Jalil" Bottom, Attica inmate, DIN number 77A4283. ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

On the Murder of Women in Ciudad Juárez

In their most recent issue of *Espartaco* (No. 34, Fall 2011), our comrades in the Grupo Espartaquista de México corrected a wrong position taken in print on the notorious murders of women in the border city of Ciudad Juárez, situated just across from El Paso, Texas. The correction centers on how we undercut our Marxist politics by embracing the bourgeois liberal framework of the Juárez campaign against “femicide,” thereby politically accommodating the feminists as well as the Catholic church. Of the three separate articles on this theme appearing in *Espartaco* over the last 12 years, one was translated and printed in *Workers Vanguard* in 2003 (see “Capitalism and Anti-Woman Terror,” WV No. 812, 24 October 2003).

Espartaco initially addressed the situation for women in Ciudad Juárez in 1999, several years after the implementation of the NAFTA “free trade” agreement brought a *maquiladora* factory expansion to Mexico-U.S. border cities. With cross-border commerce on the rise, the population boomed and women—mostly from poor, rural regions of Mexico—flooded the labor market. Ciudad Juárez soon became known for its economic immiseration, drug trafficking and crime. Alongside this, the homicide rate skyrocketed for both men and women.

Soon a campaign emerged surrounding the murders of women, some of whom were reportedly raped, tortured and even mutilated. The campaign encompassed a broad range of liberal and feminist organizations both in Mexico and the U.S., including NGOs, religious groups and so-called socialist groups. The famous 2001 documentary *Señorita Extraviada* [Young Woman Missing] by Lourdes Portillo early on popularized the idea that these murders were part of an organized conspiracy. In our article from 2003, we praised Portillo’s documentary and wrongly accepted as fact that these murders might be a result of a serial killer or a high-level government plot—or even possibly involve some kind of “ritual.”



AP

Massive federal police column descends on Ciudad Juárez, March 2009.

The correction in *Espartaco* explains:

“As revolutionary Marxists we understand...that violence against women—including violent crime—is inherent to capitalism. Far from the tabloid stories of serial killings or an orchestrated terror campaign against women, this phenomenon is based on much broader social problems, including the growing level of criminal and state violence in the region throughout approximately the last decade and a half.”

In fact, according to liberal American writer Debbie Nathan—who critically analyzed some of the fundamental assertions of the Juárez “anti-femicide” campaign—in most of the 270 murder cases presented by Lourdes Portillo in her documentary, the killers were a rela-

tive or a partner of the victim (“Missing the Story,” *Texas Observer*, 30 August 2002). *Espartaco* further notes that the majority of the 3,726 women murdered in the whole of Mexico between December 2006 and October 2009 were victims of domestic abuse. Clearly, anti-woman violence is not unique to the border cities of the north; in the city of Toluca in central Mexico, the murder rate of women nearly *triples* that of Ciudad Juárez.

Today, Ciudad Juárez is considered one of the most violent cities in the world. The “drug wars,” which have claimed almost 50,000 lives in Mexico since 2006, have been the pretext for the Mexican government’s militarization across the country, leading to increased bloodletting and state repression against the working class and the poor. But contrary to the notion that women are being killed in disproportionate numbers, during the last decade and a half the murders of men have constituted the overwhelming majority of total homicides in Ciudad Juárez. One analysis based on death certificates and other data concluded that 942 men were killed between 1994-1997 while 143 women were killed in the same period. More recently, in 2010 out of some 3,000 total homicides in Ciudad Juárez 306 were women.

Since its inception in the ’90s, the “anti-femicide” campaign has called for increased military presence and government support to bring “justice” to the victims and their families. The correction in *Espartaco* states:

“The entire movement around Juárez has been characterized from the begin-

ning by calls ‘against impunity,’ for the capitalist state to mobilize to protect women, to do ‘its job’ right, etc. Indeed, the perspective of massive police mobilization and draconian legislation supposedly aimed at ‘protecting’ women is a fundamental part of feminist ideology. In fact, one of the purposes of the term ‘femicide’—popularized by the reactionary bourgeois feminist Diana Russell, who made a career out of her anti-pornography campaigns—is to appeal to the authorities to strengthen penal legislation.”

The capitalist state—at its core the cops and army as well as the prisons and the courts—is the biggest force for violence in society. The central role of the state is to keep the ruling class in power through repression and terror. It cannot

be reformed to act in the interests of the workers and the oppressed, including women.

The article printed in WV No. 812 correctly warned against deadly illusions in the state, but at the same time asserted that “we completely solidarize with the demands for justice from the families of the victims and from organizations like Mujeres de Negro [Women in Black] and Casa Amiga [Friendly Home].” These demands included call-

Members of Women in Black in Ciudad Juárez hold pink crosses with slogan “Not One More,” November 2009.

Reuters



ing for a “binational task force” of the U.S. and Mexican governments to investigate the crimes and for the declaration of a “national state of emergency” (i.e., the restriction of rights and the massive mobilization of the armed forces). As Marxists, we should not have, and cannot, solidarize with such demands.

The feminist organizations got what they asked for. In 2003, then-president Vicente Fox authorized the deployment of the Federal Preventive Police to Juárez. This set the stage for current president Calderón to put the city under military occupation in the escalation of the “war against *el narco* [drug trafficking].” The result has been a surge in brutal army abuses against labor and the poor—including illegal searches and arrests without cause, rape, sexual abuse, torture and killings.

Women’s oppression is not simply a question of backward ideology or the denial of democratic rights. Male chauvinism is propagated to justify the economic oppression and subjugation of women within the institution of the family. *Espartaco* explains how feminism views the main division in society as that between men and women as opposed to that between the exploiters and the exploited, i.e., between the classes. It goes on to observe that the “anti-femicide” campaign around Juárez promotes “the feminist perspective of the oppression of women as something that can be eliminated within the framework of capitalism by means of reforms and a change of attitudes, while extolling the bourgeois nuclear family, one of the fundamental pillars of women’s oppression.”

The centrality of the family in class society flows from its role in the inheritance of property along the male line, which requires women’s sexual monogamy and social subordination. For the working masses and the poor who have no wealth to pass on to new generations, the family serves to raise the next generation of wage slaves. Alongside other institutions such as the church, the

family’s role is to teach respect for authority, enforce sexual “norms,” regiment the population (especially youth) and instill adherence to bourgeois morality.

In her 2002 article about Ciudad Juárez, Nathan observed that the campaign—which adopted a pink cross as its symbol—is imbued with the pious moralism rampant in Catholic-dominated Mexico. She stated:

“Infuriatingly, Mexico is still a place where politicians, police, and society in general love to hunt for reasons why a young woman who experiences sexual violence is a whore who ‘deserved’ to be raped and even killed. Things are probably even worse in Juárez, with its special hatred of prostitutes. The state governor during the 1990s, Francisco Barrio, said the city’s females were inviting their own murders by hanging out with the wrong crowd at bars. The state assistant attorney general, Jorge Lopez Molinar, blamed staying out late and skimpy

dress. Between a rock and a hard place, families are thus loath to deal with the fact that many beloved daughters *do* go to cantinas, and many *do* communicate sexuality through their clothing. Yet to acknowledge this is to imply that one’s child is a slut undeserving of redress. It’s a cruel conundrum that has forced activists in Juárez to use a public rhetoric in which victims are all church-going, girl-ish innocents.”

By uncritically retailing the notions of the campaign around the Juárez dead, we in fact diverted attention away from the gruesome, everyday reality for women, i.e., the misery, abuse and social backwardness endemic to the capitalist system of exploitation and oppression. The liberation of women can be realized only with the victory of socialist revolution, which will lay the material basis to free women from age-old family servitude, eliminate all forms of social oppression and reorganize society in the interest of all. ■



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Myth of Solidarność “Left” Falls Flat

Polish Elections and the Bogus Labor Party



Rencistów-Weterani Pracy



Platforma Spartakusowców

Left: Polish Labor Party (PPP), heir to counterrevolutionary Solidarność, with banner “We Will Not Pay for Your Crisis,” February 2009. Above: Warsaw PPP office with flags of imperialist European Union, November 2009.

The following article was written by the Spartakusowska Grupa Polski, Polish section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

Shortly after Poland’s parliamentary election in October, the daily *Gazeta Wyborcza* (18 November 2011) declared that the economic crisis raging through Europe meant that “prime ministers fall not as a result of elections but because of the economic situation, external pressure and the pronouncements of rating agencies.” Yet the Polish elections resulted in the return of the incumbent government for the first time since the restoration of capitalism in 1989-90. So far, Poland has been spared the sort of violent assaults on the masses’ standard of living that have been seen in Greece, Hungary and many other European countries. In Hungary, the right-wing Fidesz party not only ousted the ex-Stalinist Socialist Party from power in elections nearly two years ago but has now pushed through a new constitution that brands the Socialist Party with “responsibility” for its predecessor “criminal organizations.”

In Poland, with a turnout of only half the electorate the Civic Platform (PO) of prime minister Donald Tusk won 40 percent of the vote and again formed a coalition with the PSL peasant party. Tusk’s PO is for “European integration,” as opposed to the deeply chauvinist Law and Justice party of Jarosław Kaczyński, which came in second with 30 percent of the vote. Despite the Tusk government’s recent cuts in social spending, the social-democratic

Alliance of the Democratic Left (SLD), heir to the Stalinist party that had ruled the former deformed workers state, had its worst showing ever. The SLD’s former drawing, which was largely based on the nostalgia of the masses for the social security of “People’s Poland,” dissipated after SLD prime minister Leszek Miller led Poland into the European Union in 2004. Emboldened by Civic Platform’s electoral victory, Tusk announced further cuts in social benefits, e.g., by gradually extending the pension age of women and men to 67 years (now 60 and 65 respectively).

The SLD came in behind even the newly established liberal bourgeois Palikot’s Movement (RP), which got 10 percent of the vote. The RP was founded by a wealthy capitalist and Civic Platform parliamentarian, Janusz Palikot. The RP recruited the leader of a large youth protest in the summer of 2010 against the placing of a crucifix in front of the Presidential Palace in Warsaw. The RP also recruited several bourgeois feminist, gay movement and anti-clerical activists who had earlier worked with the SLD.

In a situation where the pressure of public opinion compelled the government to dissolve the Property Commission for the Catholic church, RP proved to be more clearly anti-Kaczyński and anti-clerical than the SLD. For the past 20 years, that commission had been handing over vast properties to the church, ostensibly as compensation for church property nationalized under the deformed workers state. Meanwhile, not so long ago, RP leader Palikot was the publisher

of a strongly Catholic-nationalist paper, *Ozon*, and took an oath in the Sejm (lower house of parliament) calling on god to help him in his role as a Civic Platform MP.

The SLD’s misfortune eclipsed another result of the October elections: the fall of the myth that the Polish Labor Party (PPP) is a left-wing workers party. The PPP (officially called PPP-Sierpień [August] 80) is the political arm of the “Free Trade Union” WZZ Sierpień 80, a splinter from Lech Walesa’s counterrevolutionary Solidarność movement. Until recently, this bogus “labor” party had been enthusiastically embraced by a number of fake-Trotskyist social democrats who had earlier supported Solidarność. Among these were the Revolutionary Left Movement (NLR), publishers of *Dalej!*, who are associated with the United Secretariat of the late Ernest Mandel; the Group for a Workers Party (GPR), affiliated to Peter Taaffe’s Committee for a Workers’ International (CWI); and Employee Democracy (PD), linked to the British Socialist Workers Party of the late Tony Cliff.

A little over a year ago, in November 2010, the GPR rhapsodized over “the perspective of evolution” of the PPP, in which these “Trotskyists” were ensconced, “into a mass workers party, capable of presenting an alternative to capitalism” (www.wladzarobotnicza.pl). But the PPP’s leftist apologists panicked when it came out with an electoral slate featuring contemporary proponents of the viciously chauvinist and anti-Semitic National Democracy (Endek), which predated the establish-

ment of the deformed workers state. An August 2011 statement of the erstwhile Group for a Workers Party announcing a “Change of Name” to Socialist Alternative (AS) offered:

“The experience of the Polish Labor Party demonstrates that it’s not enough to build a party which is composed of workers and says that it wants to represent them. A workers party also must have a socialist program, which strives to overthrow capitalism.”

This was followed by a September 7 statement titled “Socialist Alternative Resigns from Polish Labor Party,” which declared:

“The fact that PPP started to collaborate with nationalists and anti-Semitic elements is shocking to us.... Such people are being placed on the electoral lists now, while socialists are being removed.”

As long as there were places on the PPP’s slate for these “socialists,” it somehow did not inconvenience them that this “workers party” was built by nationalist and anti-Semitic elements, with whom the Taafeites cohabited for years! Did they not notice that the membership statement they signed upon joining the PPP committed them to “embrace the precedence of the national interest”?

Then there is the PD, which cynically admitted in an 11 September 2011 open letter to PPP: “We knew, of course, about the collaboration of part of the WZZ Sierpień 80 leadership with various forces of the right wing in the past.” This did not, of course, stop these dyed-in-the-wool opportunists from defending the honor of the PPP against critics who pointed to its unsavory connections and from promoting



Der Spiegel

Solidarność leader Lech Walesa praying in front of Gdansk shipyard, 1980. Solidarność spearheaded drive for capitalist counterrevolution in East Europe, Soviet Union.

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its “essentially leftist positions” in elections: “Thus we had been actively supporting those campaigns, e.g., by organizing public meetings with the participation of the party’s electoral candidates several times.” But “after the electoral lists were published,” the Polish Cliffites could no longer squirm out of the fact that “this time there were candidates on them not only with a right-wing past, but persons actively propagating nationalist politics.”

For its part, *Dalej!*, an early advocate for Sierpien 80, published an article as far back as its May/June 2010 issue describing the PPP as an “agency” of the fascistic KPN (Confederation for an Independent Poland), delicately sidestepping its own years of support for the PPP. And while politely foreshadowing support for the PPP in their statement on the October elections, *Dalej!* could not help but laud its “many social slogans which deserve support” (www.pismodalej.pl).

Accomplices to Solidarność Counterrevolution

The fake Trotskyists’ policy of camouflaging the PPP as a leftist organization was fully in keeping with their earlier betrayal of the proletariat’s interests by supporting the forces of capitalist counterrevolution in East Europe and the USSR, first of all Solidarność. That mass clerical-nationalist movement, born out of a wave of strikes in the summer of 1980, consolidated at its first national congress in September 1981 around an open program of capitalist restoration, marked by appeals for “free elections” and “free trade unions,” a battle cry of Cold War anti-Sovietism. Not by accident, Solidarność had support from, among others, imperialist leaders Reagan, Thatcher and Mitterrand as well as the “Polish pope,” John Paul II. An analysis of the development of Solidarność can be found in *Platforma Spartakusowców* [PS] No. 14 (Summer 2007), which includes a Polish translation of the October 1981 Spartacist pamphlet, *Solidarność: Polish Company Union for CIA and Bankers*.

True to the Trotskyist position of unconditional military defense of the workers states, our comrades of the international Spartacist tendency (forerunner of the ICL) raised the call: “Stop Solidarność counterrevolution!” At the same time, we indicted the Stalinist bureaucracy for driving the mass of the historically socialist Polish proletariat into the arms of clerical reaction, pointing to the need for proletarian political revolution. While the military-police action of General Wojciech Jaruzelski in December 1981, which we supported, checked Solidarność’ drive to power, in 1989 these same Stalinists (backed by Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev) organized “free elections” as the first step to handing power over to the counterrevolution. This defeat was sealed when Walesa replaced Jaruzelski as president in 1990.

It was necessary for Marxists to seek to break a section of Solidarność’ working-class base from the clerical-nationalist leaders before they embarked on an open drive for counterrevolution. But such a split could only be carried out by a party based on the program of Trotskyist internationalism, not by left apologists for clerical-nationalism. As members of the Young Left Movement (RML) who went on to fuse with the ICL and found the Spartakusowska Grupa Polski wrote in a July 1990 letter to the ICL’s German section: “In the Trotskyist movement in Poland, we often meet with activists who have a ‘Solidarność’ pedigree, or in any case put all their hopes in ‘Solidarność’... It is increasingly more difficult for us to have a common language with them” (quoted in “Spartacist Group of Poland Founded,” *Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 45-46, Winter 1990-91).

For the Taaffeites, Mandelites and Cliffites, support to Solidarność was an expression of their capitulation to “democratic” imperialism. Similarly, they supported the counterrevolutionary coup led by Boris Yeltsin and his imperialist patron, George Bush, in the USSR in August 1991; Taaffeites were even present at the



May 2009 Krakow fascist mobilization targets gays.

Yeltsin barricades in Moscow. These traitors to the cause of the working class alibied their support to Solidarność counterrevolution with the line that “ten million Polish workers can’t be wrong.”

When, once in power, Walesa and Co. immediately proceeded to implement capitalist “shock therapy,” becoming discredited in the eyes of millions of workers, the pseudo-Trotskyists, especially the NLR, turned to Solidarność 80, which came out of a 1989 split headed by Marian Jurczyk, a Solidarność leader in Szczecin. The opportunists preferred not to remember that in 1981 Jurczyk declared that three-quarters of the Stalinist leadership were really Jews who had changed their names, and that in his opinion “a couple of gallows would come in handy” for those “traitors to Polish society.” They preferred not to remember the pogromist cries of Solidarność mobs in the 1980s: “And on the trees instead of leaves will be hanging communists!”

When Sierpien 80 emerged from a split in Solidarność 80 in 1993 with a sizable base among the Silesian miners, it became the new hope for the pseudo-Trotskyists intent on maintaining illusions regarding a supposed “left wing” of Solidarność reaction. Having fulfilled its role as the battering ram for counterrevolution, Solidarność lost much of its middle-class and peasant base and became more proletarian in composition, leading some defensive labor struggles while continuing to be a “political movement closely allied to the Catholic hierarchy and explicitly right-wing nationalist parties” (“Right Wing Wins Polish Elections,” *PS* No. 13, December 2005; printed in *WV* No. 857, 28 October 2005). Likewise, the Sierpien 80 trade union was dominated from its inception by socially reactionary forces.

The PPP issued out of an electoral coalition, the Alternative Social Movement, set up in 2001 with extreme rightists, including the fascist National Revival of Poland (NOP). At the end of 2001, the Alternative Social Movement was transformed into Alternative-Labor Party. In May 2002, this outfit sent a contingent of Polish miners to Paris to join a march by the fascist Le Pen’s National Front against the European Union. When it changed its name to the Polish Labor Party in 2004, adopting the image of an allegedly social-democratic party, this gave the pseudo-Trotskyists a last chance at maintaining their tattered fiction that Solidarność had ever had a socialist wing.

The truth is that the PPP was never even a reformist workers party. Against the likes of the GPR, PD, NLR and the pro-Stalinist Communist Party of Poland, which all supported the PPP in the 2005 parliamentary elections, we insisted in our 2005 article: “Judged by its political program and history, the PPP is a bourgeois formation” steeped in Polish nationalism and clerical reaction. Finally, it is now no longer possible to ignore or cover up the facts, irrespective of how much the various leftist orphans chasing after an imaginary pro-socialist wing of Solidarność have tried. Remember that the Cliffite PD even called itself Socialist Solidarność at one time! Those groups

are an obstacle on the road to building a Leninist-Trotskyist party in Poland. Like its Marxist predecessors, such a party will be established as a fusion of revolutionary intellectuals with the most class-conscious workers.

October Revolution: Our Tradition

It would be wrong to believe that, after the scandal of Endek nationalists being placed on the PPP’s electoral list, there are no more fake communists in the service of that bourgeois party. The SGP received an invitation from the editorial staff of the Internet site *Władza Rad* (Soviet Power) for a meeting—in the PPP’s Warsaw office—on the occasion of the 94th anniversary of the October Revolution. *Władza Rad*, a self-avowed “Marxist portal,” writes about the “counterrevolution executed on the initiative and in the interest of the ruling stratum described as the ‘red bourgeoisie’ or ‘Stalinist bureaucracy’,” *without even mentioning Solidarność* (www.1917.net.pl).

In a presentation to the meeting, a *Władza Rad* representative described themselves as “Trotskyists” and referred to the tradition of early American Communists James Cannon and John Reed. Cannon went on to become the founder of the American Trotskyist movement, and Reed became famous for his account of the October Revolution, *Ten Days That Shook the World*. One wall was painted all in red and a banner featured portraits of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky. A second presentation was given by Dawid Jakubowski, a candidate on the PPP’s electoral list who was placed 20 positions behind one of the Endek nationalists. That was the place for the PPP’s leftist losers.

While Socialist Alternative and Employee Democracy absented themselves from the meeting, among those present was Zbigniew Kowalewski, who was connected for a number of years with the Revolutionary Left Movement and the United Secretariat. Kowalewski was a delegate to the 1981 Solidarność congress and culti-

vates the myth that the Solidarność of that time had the character of “a workers’ revolution conducted in the name of authentically socialist values” (*International Viewpoint* online, September 2005). In 2007, Kowalewski became a member of the Programmatic Council of the PPP attached to party chairman Boguslaw Zietek.

We reprint below an excerpt of the intervention by an SGP spokesman during the floor discussion at the *Władza Rad* meeting. After our comrade spoke first on the discussion round, those in attendance were encouraged to take a break at the sandwich table. We didn’t avail ourselves.

* * *

This is a supposed celebration of the October Revolution and, as expressed in the invitations, “ideological integration.” Yet there is one very small problem: I’m sorry, but the tradition of Cannon, the tradition of Reed, the tradition of the October Revolution is not the tradition of *Władza Rad*! Why? Well, the recent parliamentary elections exposed some things pretty well. Members of *Władza Rad* here have been seen many times at various demonstrations with flags and propaganda of PPP-Sierpien 80, in whose headquarters, by the way, we are at the moment. As an interesting detail, I can say that here on this wall, not so long ago, a white eagle was visible, which is in the PPP logo and is the symbol of the Polish bourgeois state. Really, a very interesting place to celebrate the anniversary of the October Revolution!

In 2005, we wrote in our press what the PPP was in fact. And here I’m quoting from our press, which by the way is available here if somebody is interested; I recommend it very much. I quote: “Sierpien 80’s political arm, the PPP, originated in March 2001 before the parliamentary elections as an electoral bloc of the right-wing, anti-Semitic” organizations. “In 2004, the PPP refurbished its image.... This ‘turn to the left’ is meant to provide the PPP with access to the social-democratic salons—and, no doubt, money—of the Party of European Socialists in the European Parliament.” “The PPP is a bourgeois formation. To call for a working-class vote to these Polish nationalists and clerical reactionaries amounts to betraying the interests of the Polish proletariat” [*PS* No. 13, December 2005].

The International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) from the beginning opposed Solidarność counterrevolution. Our perspective is the struggle for new October Revolutions. We strive to build new Leninist parties, like the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky. And as Lenin himself wrote in *What Is To Be Done?*, this party is built through fusions and splits, not through tailing bourgeois parties, I’m sorry. I’m saying this here mainly to young subjective socialists, who were invited here, so that they don’t let themselves be deceived by the helpers of PPP-Sierpien 80. The October Revolution is our tradition and not the tradition of *Władza Rad*. ■

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Longview...

(continued from page 1)

overtime rate for any work over eight hours per day. Nonetheless, the fact that EGT can mandate ILWU members to work 12-hour shifts is a real threat to the workers' health and safety. (The ILWU's contract with the PMA allows shifts of at most ten hours, and then only if the ship is scheduled to sail immediately.) Moreover, EGT will pay straight time for night shifts instead of the standard time-and-a-third shift differential.

The union also beat back EGT's refusal to recognize maintenance/repair and other inside workers in the terminal as members of the ILWU. These workers were selected and separately hired by the company from the Local 21 hall as permanent "steady men." They were then required to decide on whether they would be represented by the ILWU. Steady men, who are guaranteed work with individual shipping and stevedoring companies, have long been allowed under the ILWU contract with the PMA, subverting the union hiring hall and rotary dispatch system. Those gains of the historic 1934 strike that forged the union are designed to equalize work opportunities for ILWU members. Coffman also told us that the union lost its demand to man the control room in the EGT terminal, which means that the central operations will be run by the company.

With unions like those of public sector workers in Wisconsin being mowed down by the capitalist union-busters, it is a real achievement that the ILWU in Longview was able to hold the line against EGT. But the fight is hardly over. The ILWU is still saddled with more than \$300,000 in fines, which it is appealing in the federal courts. While the courts acquitted some of those arrested, there are still ILWU members facing charges, including felony counts. The ILWU and its supporters must fight for all of these charges to be dropped! And the next battle will be with other grain exporting companies when the Grainhandlers' Agreement with the ILWU comes up on October 1.

EGT's \$200 million Longview facility is the first new grain terminal to be built in 25 years in the U.S. It is equipped to handle an average load rate of 3,000 metric tons per hour, far surpassing the 750 to 2,500 metric ton rate of other grain export elevators in the Pacific Northwest. Expected to load 150 to 200 ships a year at Longview, EGT—a multinational conglomerate of St. Louis-based Bunge North America, the Japanese Itochu Corporation and the South Korean STX Pan Ocean shipping company—is positioned to come out on top of the profit bonanza that will flow from the projected increase of U.S. corn, wheat and soybean exports to Asia. Faced with such competition, the other grain exporters will be looking to take their losses out of the hide of the ILWU.

Grain handling by the ILWU in the Pacific Northwest, overwhelmingly bulk cargo, is covered by agreements that are



September 7: Cops attack unionists blocking train en route to EGT's Longview terminal.

separate from the ILWU's contract with the PMA, which is dominated by container shipping companies. That contract is up in 2014, and the PMA will be carefully watching the grain negotiations in order to press any advantage against the ILWU. With the newly enlarged Panama Canal scheduled to open the same year, the PMA will be playing to fears that the shipping companies will send their container ships directly to the East Coast instead of offloading containers in the West Coast ports and shipping them by rail across the continent. The APM Terminal at Hampton Roads, Virginia, which opened in 2007, is highly automated compared to West Coast ports and is the third-largest container terminal in the country. Shipping companies on both coasts seek to pit the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA), which organizes East Coast and Gulf Coast ports and whose master contract expires September 30, against the relatively more powerful ILWU, in a race to the bottom over jobs.

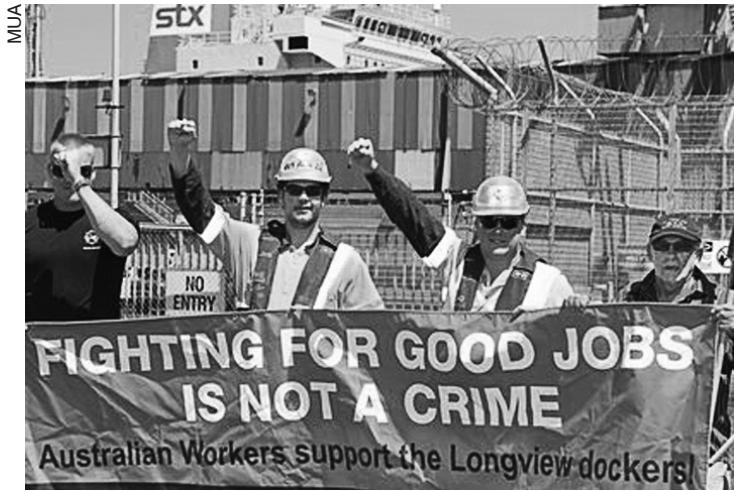
The ILWU and ILA are both increasingly isolated union outposts amid a sea of low-wage, non-union workers in the ever-growing chain of world trade, from port truckers to warehouse and intermodal rail facility workers to sailors manning the mammoth cargo ships. The strength of the longshore unions has been further and increasingly eroded by the allegiance of their leaderships to the profitability and national interests of America's capitalist rulers. The power of workers united on the basis of their own class interests in struggle against the employers was seen in the mass pickets and other actions in Longview. But this initial militancy ran straight up against the class collaborationism of the union misleaders.

Front Lines of an International Class Battle

The ILWU leadership portrayed the fight against EGT as that of a small community against a "foreign" multinational

corporation. On the contrary, it was a *class battle* pitting the workers against the capitalist owners of EGT. In any such battle, the owners can depend on the forces of the capitalist state, which exists precisely to defend their interests—from "community" cops and sheriff's departments all the way up to the forces of "Homeland Security" and the military. The workers' power lies in their collective organization and ability to stop production and shut off the flow of profits. In marshaling this strength, solidarity actions between different unions and with workers interna-

October 21: Maritime Union of Australia members at Newcastle rally in solidarity with Longview longshoremen.



tionally are crucial. This is all the more so with just-in-time delivery and increasingly interconnected global production. It is precisely because such actions as "hot-cargoing" and solidarity strikes are so effective that they have been outlawed.

As in any other conflict, the question of who wins or loses is decided by the relative strength of the opposing forces. The union's power lay in its ability to stop grain coming in or going out of the EGT terminal. At the height of the grain harvest season in late summer and early fall, the company was particularly vulnerable. The ILWU urgently needed the backing of the strength and solidarity of other unions, most importantly those in the EGT grain cargo chain.

Early on, the union and its allies mobilized mass pickets that stopped trains carrying grain. These trains were driven by members of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers (BLE), which is affiliated with the Teamsters. When the ILWU backed down in the face of massive police repression, the trains started rolling in. Teamsters president Jimmy Hoffa Jr. sent a letter pledging support to the ILWU in its fight with EGT. But the most elementary solidarity was for the BLE to stop the train shipments. That would have meant defying Taft-Hartley and the myriad other laws banning such actions. Defiance of anti-labor laws, with workers battling the cops and other strike-breaking forces, was how the unions were built in this country. And just as surely, they have been decimated by sacrificing labor's weapons of struggle on the altar of capitalist legality.

Operating Engineers Local 701, which supplied the scab labor for EGT, was given cover by AFL-CIO president Richard Trumka. Trumka declared that this was simply a "jurisdictional" dispute between two unions that needed to be resolved in the chambers of the national labor traitors! As we wrote in "ILWU Fights Deadly Threat" (WV No. 986, 16 September 2011): "The only 'jurisdictional' dispute in Longview is between capital and labor! And Trumka has taken the side of the bosses." This treachery was in service to the Democratic Party, which is every bit as much a party of the bosses as the Republicans but one to which the labor officials pledge their allegiance, peddling the Democrats as the "friends of labor." Trumka didn't want a big class battle in Longview upsetting Obama's electoral fortunes. When it came down to it, neither did the ILWU tops.

The union was in a tough spot. It is not easy to prevail in the face of the full force of the capitalist state. But the union's capacity to fight was undermined by its leadership's support for the very forces of "national security" the ILWU was up against. In 2002, the ILWU International leadership collaborated in the drafting of the Maritime Transportation Security Act, which is aimed at policing the docks as part of the government's "war on terror." Despicably pointing a finger at the largely immigrant, non-union port truckers as a potential "security" threat, the ILWU tops acquiesced to the implementation of the Transport Workers Identification Credential (TWIC), objecting only after it had been implemented. Forced to submit to criminal background and immigration status checks, tens of thousands of port

workers were denied "security" clearance. Many immigrant truckers chose not to apply, fearing deportation.

Among the offenses that would permanently bar workers from the waterfront under TWIC is involvement in a "transportation security incident" including "transportation system disruption or economic disruption in a specific area." Coast Guard officials showed up at the Longview ILWU Local 21 hall threatening to revoke union members' TWIC cards if there were any union protests interfering with the loading of the grain ship.

In the face of the military might of its "own" government, the ILWU desperately needed to appeal for international working-class solidarity. Last fall, there had been small solidarity protests against EGT's union-busting in Japan, Korea and Australia. These needed to translate into action by appealing to dock workers in Korea and throughout Asia to refuse to unload scab grain shipped from EGT's Longview terminal. But the ILWU was not well positioned to do so when its leadership was braying that the union was defending the U.S. grain export industry against a "foreign" multinational. Grain and other food exports are wielded as weapons by U.S. imperialism against the workers and oppressed of the world and to keep less developed countries under the boot of the "world's only superpower."

The very nature of longshore work, which is dependent on world trade, underlines that labor's fight is international. Longshore and other transport workers



WV Photo

Spartacists at Occupy rally at Port of Oakland, November 2.

Spartacist Speaker at Occupy Oakland Forum

No Illusions in Police “Reform”— For Workers Revolution!

OAKLAND—The city administration and Oakland Police Department (OPD), backed by the local bourgeois media, have been on a campaign of arrests, smears and intimidation against Occupy Oakland protesters. Following the arrest of 409 people at a January 28 protest, a dozen activists have been charged with a combination of felonies and misdemeanors. “Stay away” orders bar them from being within 300 yards of City Hall and Frank Ogawa Plaza (renamed Oscar Grant Plaza by protesters in remembrance of the young black worker killed by a BART transit cop in 2009).

At least one activist, a black man known as Truth, has been in jail since his arrest the night of the November 2 mass protest at the Oakland port. Marcel Johnson, a black homeless man better known as Khali who was part of the Occupy Oakland encampment, has been incarcerated since his arrest on December 16 and could face a life sentence under California’s draconian “three strikes” law. *Free Truth, Khali and all Occupy protesters! Drop all the charges!*

At a February 1 Occupy Oakland press conference, many of those arrested recounted the horrors they experienced after being trapped and rounded up by police the week before. Dozens were crammed into cells designed to hold five people at most. Several were held for 50 hours or more without charges. Many, including people with HIV, were denied their medication. Meanwhile, the media has joined Democratic mayor Jean Quan and the City Council in accusing protesters of “violence,” particularly targeting anarchists. In a menacing move, the *San Francisco Chronicle* posted on its Web site the names and addresses of several of those arrested on January 28. What really drove the Oakland city administration and local media crazy was that some protesters had burned an American flag they found inside City Hall. Several Occupy Oakland activists have since taken to carrying American flags at demonstrations in an effort to show their patriotic credentials.

A February 7 City Council meeting was convened to vote on a resolution allowing the use of any “lawful” means to prevent future shutdowns at the port and strengthening police enforcement powers against protesters overall. Representatives of the International Longshore and Ware-

house Union spoke against the resolution, pointing out that it would be aimed against the union. The resolution, which failed, had been introduced by Councilman Ignacio De La Fuente, who earlier denounced Occupy Oakland for engaging in “domestic terrorism.”

Addressing the City Council meeting, prominent Occupy Oakland activist Barucha Peller stated: “I know you guys used to be progressive. But right now you’re on the wrong side of history” (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 8 February). The idea

weapon to smear the whole movement” (“The Backlash Against Occupy Oakland,” *socialistworker.org*, 6 February). In fact, the ISO is handing the bourgeois media and politicians more ammunition by echoing the violence-baiting dished out against protesters.

The brutality of the OPD has become so infamous that a federal judge is threatening to put the department under receivership. This stems from a nearly decade-old settlement of the case of the Oakland “Riders”—a gang of cops unleashed on



Reuters

Cops brutalize Occupy Oakland protester on January 28.

that these capitalist politicians could ever represent anything but the interests of the bourgeoisie is a stark expression of how the populist notion of the “99 percent” promotes illusions in American bourgeois democracy and its representatives.

Under the guise of debating “tactics” for “our movement,” the reformist International Socialist Organization (ISO) treacherously denounced the few dozen protesters who went to City Hall late at night on January 28 after braving hours of police tear gas, flash-bang grenades and rubber bullets. Accusing them of “vandalism” and “stupid and inexcusable” actions, the ISO lectured that “this irresponsible and backward behavior handed city officials and the media a perfect

the West Oakland ghetto. The repeated cop attacks against Occupy Oakland activists have brought increased attention to the OPD, which has been ordered to comply with various “reforms.”

When a Citizens Police Review Board meeting originally scheduled for February 9 was “indefinitely postponed,” Occupy Oakland organized its own “forum on police actions,” which was attended by up to 500 people. A video presentation powerfully showed the brutality meted out to protesters since late October, and many individuals spoke at the end of the forum about the violence they regularly face at the hands of the cops, whether as demonstrators or as residents of Oakland’s ghettos. But the political focus of the event,

exemplified by the official speakers, including members of the review board, was how best to “reform” the OPD and bring it under “community control.” Police Chief Howard Jordan was even invited to a “Q&A” session (of course, he did not show). We print below the remarks of a Spartacist League comrade during the “public speaking section” at the end of the forum.

* * *

I am speaking for the Spartacist League; some of you may have seen our paper, *Workers Vanguard*. We are here to say that we defend Occupy Oakland protesters against police repression and demand that everyone who’s been arrested be released and that all charges be dropped. Plain and simple, the cops are the enemy. They’re part of the capitalist state, which exists to defend the interests and rule of the bourgeoisie against the workers and the oppressed. And no amount of civilian review boards, community control or federal oversight or takeover is going to change that. All these things are a sham, designed to whitewash the cops while giving the illusion of accountability. They’re designed to clean up their image so the cops can carry out their repression all the more effectively.

The cops that killed Oscar Grant and terrorize the ghettos are part of the same capitalist system that imprisons over two million people, most of them black and Latino, in this country and wages war abroad. And it doesn’t matter whether it’s a Republican or a Democrat in the White House. When Quan was running, you were sold a bill of goods that she was “progressive.” The same bill of goods was sold about Obama. In fact, Obama’s message to black people is racial oppression. His message to immigrants is deportation. His message to working people is union-busting. His message to the population is to shred our rights. And his message to the world is imperialist war. There’s been a lot of hand-wringing about the flag that was burned outside of City Hall. Well, the truth is, from Haiti to the Philippines, Korea, Vietnam, that flag is dripping with the blood of millions of American imperialism’s victims.

Their styles might be different, but the Democrats and the Republicans are capitalist parties and they serve the same capitalist class, and you better remember that when the elections come around and they try to sell you the poison pill of “lesser evilism.” But the “99 percent” populism of Occupy disguises the class nature of the capitalist state and its parties. It is counterposed to the understanding that the fundamental class divide in society is between the working class and the capitalist class. What we need is a workers party to fight for a socialist revolution. What we need is a new ruling class, the workers. ■

in the global cargo chain have immense potential social power. This was laid out in an article by JoAnn Wypijewski titled “On the Front Lines of the World Class Struggle—The Cargo Chain” (*Counter-Punch*, 1 March 2010):

“As important as productivity is to the shipping industry’s fortunes, all the speed of automated ports is worthless if there are ruptures anywhere in the relay from factory to consumer.... In the U.S.A. that means smooth acquiescence not only from 60,000 longshore workers, but also from 28,000 tugboat operators and harbor pilots, 60,000 port truckers, 850,000 freight truckers, 165,000 railroad workers, 2 million warehouse and distribution workers, 370,000 express package delivery people, and 160,000 logistic planners—and from similarly interlocked clusters of workers all around the world. They are not all organized, but then they would not all have to say No: just enough of them, acting in concert at vital points in the chain.”

But thanks to the treachery of the trade-union misleaders, there were no such ruptures in the cargo chain bringing grain in and unloading it in the EGT terminal. The one notable and honorable exception

when it came to getting the grain shipped out was the Inland Boatmen’s Union (part of the ILWU), which refused to man the tugs to take the ship in and out. With its back up against the wall in the face of U.S. military forces, the ILWU leadership’s “America first” patriotism cuts across their ability to appeal for international solidarity.

Let those union militants and their allies who fought so courageously draw the lessons to prepare for future battles. If the unions are to be instruments of struggle against the bosses, they must break the chains forged by the labor misleaders that have shackled the workers to the interests of the capitalist exploiters and their political parties. The continued existence of the ILWU as a powerful industrial union cries out for a class-struggle fight to unionize the masses of unorganized workers, such as the port truckers, which would require combating anti-immigrant chauvinism and organizing them at full union pay, benefits and working conditions. For two weeks, hundreds of truckers at the Port of Seattle have been on strike against their

unbearable working conditions, demanding their right to unionize.

The red-white-and-blue bureaucrats must be ousted in a fight for a class-struggle leadership, one whose banner will be the red flag of working-class inter-

nationalism! Such a leadership will arm the workers for some hard-fought battles against the capitalist exploiters and lay the basis for forging a multiracial workers party, one that will fight for a socialist

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Longview...

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revolution to uproot the whole system of wage slavery, racial oppression, poverty and imperialist war.

Substituting the Populist Occupy Movement for Class Struggle

It is a measure of the betrayals by the labor misleaders that the populist Occupy movement has emerged as the central locus of any protest against the ravages of the economic catastrophe created by Wall Street financiers and corporate magnates. Occupy overwhelmingly believes in the myth of some “good old days” of American capitalist rule, with a government that represented the “will of the people.” Yet much of the “socialist” left in this country has opportunistically hailed Occupy as the key to revitalizing the labor movement. On the contrary, its “99 percent” populism—which extends to the racist, strikebreaking cops—dissolves any understanding of the fundamental class line between the workers and their capitalist exploiters.

In the Bay Area, left-talking labor fak-ers like retired ILWU bureaucrat Jack Heyman and former Local 10 executive board member Clarence Thomas promoted the “community pickets” by the Occupy movement that blockaded the Oakland port on November 2 and again on December 12. In the lead-up to the December 12 Occupy blockades, which also shut down the ports in Longview and Portland in proclaimed solidarity with the ILWU’s fight in Longview, Heyman argued: “If Occupy is successful now, then momentum for a coastwide shutdown by longshore workers is highly likely when the scab ship arrives.” But far from building any such “momentum,” the blockade reduced the workers to at best being passive observers, standing by awaiting a decision by an arbitrator as to whether crossing these picket lines was a threat to their health and safety.

As enthusiastically described by the International Socialist Organization’s *Socialist Worker* (13 December 2011), there was much cheering in Oakland on December 12 when it was announced that the arbitrator had ruled and “workers had headed home.” What a farce! The workers were little more than pawns in a game of media and legal theater. This is not a new game for Heyman and Thomas, who have built their “militant” reputations with the Bay Area rad-lib milieu through such community pickets.

As symbolic actions that pose the need for the workers to champion solidarity with the struggles of their class brothers and sisters, such pickets can episodically be an effective tactic. But they do little to raise workers’ consciousness of their social power and class interests. Although upheld as evidence of the militancy of the ILWU, these pickets of left-ists, liberals and other forces are premised on the same acquiescence to anti-labor laws behind which the ILWU and other union tops hide their sellouts of militant



9 May 1934: Seattle longshoremen and supporters block entry to pier during 84-day coast-wide strike.

labor action. This was expressed by an “Occupy the Ports” statement building for December 12 arguing that “labor unions are constrained under reactionary, anti-union federal legislation...from taking job actions on the basis of solidarity.”

Picket lines are not public relations shows on behalf of the workers. Nor are they actions of civil disobedience by masses of petty-bourgeois and other declassed elements in Occupy who have no relation to, or corresponding power at, the point of production. They are battle lines in the class struggle between the workers and the capitalists who derive their profits from the exploitation of labor.

talist institutions.” This, Heyman went on to argue, is “the wonderful thing about this Occupy movement.... We have different tendencies in it and we can raise our differences and yet come together for one goal, which is to win victory for the Longview longshoremen.” It’s kind of hard to win such a victory for workers fighting to preserve their union with people who think that unions are capitalist institutions! But Heyman has been peddling his credentials as a union “militant” to liberal radicals for so long that he can’t even recognize the class line.

Like the U.S. labor bureaucracy as a whole, the ILWU International embraced

cheerleads for Heyman, subsequently wrote us asking “where the Spartacist League stands on this disruption”? As we had made perfectly clear in writing to the IG: “We stand on the side of the defense of the union against EGT’s union-busting offensive, backed by the military and other police forces of the federal government, not with those in the Occupy movement who share the belief that the unions should be eliminated.”

While describing the politics of Occupy as “bourgeois populism,” the IG simultaneously condemns it for trying to go around the union bureaucracy “when what is needed is a fight to *defeat* and *drive out* these ‘labor lieutenants of the capitalist class.’” But Occupy is not part of the labor movement, which is where such a fight has to be waged. Our struggle with the labor bureaucrats is a political one, in opposition to its subordination of the unions to the national interests and profits of America’s capitalist rulers. Those like Heyman, the IG and others who promote the Occupy movement—whose populist politics in fact mirror those of the labor misleaders—as a substitute for the union reaped the fruits of their own grotesque opportunism at the Seattle meeting.

Those Who Labor Must Rule!

Occupy is not, and cannot be, the vehicle for revitalizing the American labor movement. That is the task of the workers themselves. What is posed is not simply the preservation of the existing unions, many of which have already been reduced to a mere shadow of their former existence, but the struggle to transform them into workers’ battalions of class struggle. The majority black membership of Bay Area ILWU Local 10 bridges a key fault line in U.S. society, giving the union the ability to harness its social power to the anger of the masses of the inner cities whose lives have been written off as worthless to American capitalism. Likewise, the Latino members in the ILWU’s L.A./Long Beach local provide a key link to the huge number of Latino immigrants in Los Angeles. This would be a key to the fight to organize the non-union, majority immigrant port truckers who are vital to shutting down the ports.

To wage such battles, the union must inscribe on its banner the fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants and champion the cause of black freedom. But the union itself is rent by the same racial and ethnic fault lines that the shipping bosses play on to divide and weaken the ILWU, pitting the overwhelmingly white ILWU workers in the Pacific Northwest, the black members in the Bay Area and the Latino members in L.A. against each other. It was a *coastwide* strike in 1934 that laid the basis for the founding of the ILWU, uniting longshoremen, seamen and other maritime workers. In San Francisco, where the longshore struggle sparked a general strike, the union leadership consciously appealed to the oppressed black population and fought against the bosses’ attempts to use racial and ethnic divisions to break the workers’ struggle.



Militant coal miners thumb their noses at slave-labor Taft-Hartley Act in 1947.

Their success is predicated on the consciousness and organization of the workers mobilized as a class against their class enemy.

There is no question that the ILWU Longview local appreciated the attention that Occupy protests drew to their fight against the EGT union-busters. And who can blame them? When the ILWU International retreated, the Longview workers were taking all the casualties while EGT was riding high in the saddle, its terminal being filled with grain and the forces of Obama’s federal government at its back to get it shipped out. Solidarity with labor on the part of Occupy activists is certainly welcome. But the Occupy blockades were no substitute for the mobilization of the class power of the workers in struggle. Whatever the intention of the protesters, their pickets could easily end up pitting the protesters against the workers and their union. That is precisely the program of the more “radical” wing of Occupy exemplified by the Black Orchid anarchist collective in Seattle, which openly counterposes the largely petty-bourgeois Occupy forces as a “new movement of the working class” to the unions.

Evidently this is no problem for Jack Heyman. A central speaker at a January 6 Seattle Occupy meeting to mobilize for a caravan to Longview when the first ship pulled into the EGT terminal, Heyman embraced Occupy “sister Barucha” who “thinks that trade unions are capi-

Occupy’s “99 percent” populism, no doubt hoping that it would further Obama’s chances of re-election. But the longshore union tops were hostile to the December 12 port shutdown. In his January 3 letter to ILWU locals about protesting when the first ship arrived, McEllrath warned longshoremen to approach those organizing for Occupy caravans to Longview with “extreme caution.” Several ILWU local bureaucrats and members from the Pacific Northwest attended the January 6 Seattle Occupy meeting and demanded that this letter be read. After being made to wait for close to two hours, they got out of their seats to protest and a melee ensued. In putting off the request by regional officials of the union under fire, the event organizers had invited such a confrontation.

In fact, the Black Orchid Collective seems to have relished it. In a statement issued after the event titled “Unity vs. Union Goons,” they condemned the ILWU officials for “trying to prevent us from transcending their dying structures.” In the aftermath of the confrontation, the Seattle local of the ILWU passed a motion banning its members from “all support for ‘Occupy’ formally or informally,” laying the basis to witch-hunt ILWU members who have worked with Occupy. Such a witchhunt could be in the offing, and it should be rejected by the ILWU.

The Internationalist Group (IG), which

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China...

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with the result that amid the worldwide Great Depression of the 1930s the Soviet workers experienced no unemployment and the economy continued to grow. As a military and industrial power, the Soviet workers state also acted as a counterweight to the rapacious imperialists. However, decades of imperialist military and economic pressure, combined with Stalinist bureaucratic mismanagement and betrayals of revolutionary opportunities around the world, prepared the fall of the Soviet workers state to capitalist counterrevolution in 1991-92.

The post-World War II revolutions in China, Vietnam, North Korea, Laos and Cuba were deformed by bureaucratic rule from their inception, but nevertheless, the overthrow of their respective capitalist masters set the stage for advances not seen in similarly backward circumstances in Asia, Africa or Latin America. It is not fundamentally the growing economic power of China that infuriates America's rulers but the continued existence of its social revolution, which the imperialists are dead set on overturning.

The list of economic concessions sought by the full spectrum of American manufacturers and financiers reflects their aspiration to return China to something akin to its former colonial status. Efforts to strengthen the military vise around China—e.g., the shift of U.S. armed forces to the Pacific Rim, the recent strengthening of military alliances with Japan, Australia and the Philippines and the continued arming of capitalist Taiwan—are another prong of that attack, along with the promotion of counterrevolutionary forces inside China. Just as workers in the U.S. must defend their unions against the bosses despite the sell-out labor leadership, it is the duty of the international working class, especially in the U.S., to defend China against imperialism and internal counterrevolution.

When the U.S. rulers launched the Cold War against the Soviet Union in the aftermath of WWII, anti-Communist hysteria swept the nation, and reds and other militants were purged from the unions that they had played a crucial role in building. The U.S. labor bureaucracy picked up the cudgels for the imperialists, particularly by wielding the banner of “free trade unions.” One of its notorious instruments was the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD), a front for the CIA that helped engineer right-wing coups throughout Latin America. Among the AIFLD's godfathers was Irving Brown, an American Federation of Labor operative for the CIA who planted agents, bought union officials and hired goon squads to crush left-led unions in Europe and elsewhere. In the 1980s, the AFL-CIO hierarchy funneled millions of dollars in CIA money to Polish Solidarność—a

The San Francisco general strike was not the only major class battle of 1934. There was also a mass strike sparked by auto parts workers in Toledo and truck drivers' strikes in Minneapolis, out of which the Teamsters was forged as a powerful industrial union. They were all led by reds. As James P. Cannon, the founder of American Trotskyism, whose supporters led the Minneapolis strikes, wrote in an article on the 1936 West Coast maritime strike (printed in *Notebook of an Agitator*, 1958), a contract settlement “is only a temporary truce and the nature of such a settlement is decided by power; ‘justice’ has nothing to do with it. The workers will not have justice until they take over the world.... The bosses are powerful in the first place, because they own the ships and the docks, and the workers have not yet challenged their fraudulent claim to such ownership. And because they own the ships the bosses own the government.”

The workers struggle against increasingly brutal exploitation will not end short of getting rid of a system based



Weibo

Chengdu, China: Steel workers on strike against low wages, January 4.

reactionary movement masquerading as a trade union that was in the forefront of the drive for capitalist restoration in East Europe. (For more on Solidarność, see the article on page 6.)

Far from a pot of gold for American workers, the alliance of the trade-union tops with their imperialist masters is responsible for the current desperate straits of organized labor. As regards China, it sets workers here against the increasingly militant Chinese proletariat. In recent months, workers in China have engaged in a renewed strike wave to improve their economic well-being and organizational strength, in the process squaring off with police forces deployed by the Stalinist Chinese Communist Party (CCP). The current wave of class struggle points to the need for unions independent of bureaucratic domination and devoted to the defense of the gains of the revolution.

In recent years China has helped fuel its continued growth by emerging as an infrastructure powerhouse, even fabricating key sections of the new San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge. The U.S. labor bureaucracy's protectionist campaign is its reactionary response to the fact that steel and auto parts production in China is increasingly integral to the U.S. auto industry. Where the pro-capitalist labor bureaucrats scream about a threat to American workers, Marxists see in the Chinese proletariat a potentially powerful international ally of the U.S. working class.

The Chinese bureaucracy is responsible for introducing virtually untrammelled capitalist exploitation in sections of the economy. Xi Jinping, who has held posts in four provinces, is all but certain to ascend to the presidency as a reward for his successes in attracting foreign investment and expanding government support for model entrepreneurs. He is the first “princeling” (the contemptuous term for the sons and daughters of old party leaders whose connections have greased their access to wealth and power) to be tapped to rule the country. His meeting with Obama is seen as a test of his mettle in standing up to this leader

of bullying U.S. imperialism. Insofar as he does so, it is a good thing.

But whatever transpires, it will mark a continuation of the CCP's longstanding conciliation of imperialism based on the Stalinist dogma of “socialism in one country” and its corollary, “peaceful coexistence.” Its many ties to the capitalist exploiters, as well as the increasing corruption that permeates the top levels of the party regime, ultimately pose the threat of the overturn of the 1949 Revolution. The answer is a working-class

Bettmann



Irving Brown (left), CIA operative and organizer of anti-Communist “free trade unions,” with other American Federation of Labor officials in London, 1948.

political revolution that ousts this parasitic caste and replaces it with organs of proletarian political power, workers and peasants councils modeled after the soviets that played an instrumental role in the October Revolution.

For Internationalist Proletarian Leadership!

In the 1930s, revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky frequently pointed to the similarity between reformist trade unions in capitalist countries and the bureaucratically degenerated workers state in the USSR—that is, to their contradictory nature. Insofar as the bureaucracy's rule in the deformed workers states is threat-

ened by counterrevolution, it may act to defend the gains of the revolution. In a like manner, the trade-union tops in capitalist countries are occasionally capable of resisting by strike action the bosses' attacks on the membership whose dues pay their exorbitant salaries. Fundamentally, however, both these bureaucratic strata seek to prosper and maintain their status by accommodation to the imperialist world order.

For decades, the union bureaucrats in this country have prostrated themselves to almost each and every demand of the bosses. Today, some public employee unions, which together make up the largest remaining unionized sector of the working class, are on the verge of extinction. In the case of those unions stripped of any role in contract negotiations, many of their members are simply failing to pay their dues. In this demoralized atmosphere, not a few workers question the value of unions.

The preference of the Republican Party is to crush the unions outright, while that of the Democrats is to maintain them as stockyards for voting cattle, at least as long as they remain prostrate before capital. The very capacity of the working class to resist any of the depredations of the capitalist system requires revitalizing the unions based on the understanding that the working class shares no common cause with its capitalist exploiters. Fundamen-

tal to this perspective is the fight to break labor from the parties of the bourgeoisie.

The wrenching, grinding worldwide economic crisis starkly illuminates Trotsky's statement in the 1938 Transitional Program, the founding document of the Fourth International: “The question is one of guarding the proletariat from decay, demoralization and ruin.... If capitalism is incapable of satisfying the demands inevitably arising from the calamities generated by itself, then let it perish.” It is urgently necessary to reforge the Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution, to weld together the vanguard forces of the proletariat from the U.S. to China in the fight for a world socialist order. ■

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Serving the Democrats, Selling Out the Workers



AFL-CIO



White House

Left: United Steelworkers president Leo Gerard at protectionist rally at U.S. Capitol, September 2010. Inset: Barack Obama's January 24 State of the Union address indicted China for not playing by trade "rules."

Down With Labor Tops' China Bashing!

On the heels of President Obama's January 24 State of the Union address, a coalition of union officials, rust-belt Democratic Party politicians and trade advocacy groups is promising a campaign against China's supposedly nefarious trade policies, with particular focus on the auto industry. Once again, the labor bureaucrats espouse not the weapons of class struggle but the poison of anti-China protectionism—at a time when General Motors has resumed its status as the world's leading maker of cars and Ford, Chrysler and leading U.S. auto parts manufacturers are well in the black. Hoping to pressure Obama to take up their plight in his February 14 Washington meeting with Chinese president-in-waiting Xi Jinping, the union leaders were gaga over the State of the Union, in which the president vowed to stand tough against competitors who "don't play by the rules," specifically indicting China.

In a statement the day after Obama's address, United Auto Workers (UAW) president Bob King crowed, "The recovery of the American automotive industry is one of our country's greatest economic success stories." Attributing this salvation to Obama's "bet on U.S. workers," King proceeded to pledge to "work to re-elect President Barack Obama in November." King's greatest "success" to date has been to deliver Ford the same massive concessions that were granted to bankrupt GM and Chrysler as part of the 2009 bailout overseen by the White House. Then UAW head Ron Gettelfinger, King & Co. worked hand in glove with Obama to achieve the layoffs, wage/benefits slashing, no-strike pledge and second-class union membership demanded by the industry's bosses.

The America first and foremost chauvinists at the top of the UAW, the United Steelworkers (USW) and other unions are especially exercised over China's recent

imposition of steep tariffs of \$4.9 billion a year on imports of sport utility vehicles and large cars from the U.S., as well as its supposedly illegal restrictions on the export of rare earth metals, 97 percent of which are mined in China. Helping lead the charge against China is the Alliance for American Manufacturing, formed by the USW and the steel bosses. This class-collaborationist combine projects a virtual Armageddon for American automakers, claiming that 1.6 million jobs in the industry are at risk and that the "global domination" of auto parts manufacture by China looms in the near future.

If this doomsday scenario smells a little like "weapons of mass destruction" hype, it's because it's no less ridiculous and similarly designed to mask reality. To be forgotten is that the massacre of

jobs and social benefits and the grinding poverty that now stalks this land are in the purest sense "made in America" by its rapacious ruling class, which is driven to exploit and oppress in the quest for profits, the motive force of the capitalist system. One must forget, too, that these rulers are not only unscathed by this carnage but are rolling in dough, their well-being aided and abetted by the policies of their government and the imperialist Commander-in-Chief, Barack Obama. Most importantly from the standpoint of the trade-union tops, the workers are to forget that in the face of the attacks, not least the accelerating decimation of the unions, these types have refused to mobilize labor's power, including for the crucial fight to organize the roughly 90 percent of workers who are non-union.

They have also openly collaborated with the bosses in packaging and selling to the union rank and file such savageries as the corporation heads demand.

The stock in trade of these "labor lieutenants of capital," who in this country are largely a constituent part of the Democrats, one of the dual parties of the bourgeoisie, is the holy union of the bosses and the proletariat against the foreign "enemy." This poison is dished out through protectionism and its ultimate extension, working-class support for the wars of the U.S. imperialist rulers. Under Republicans and especially Democrats, the U.S. since World War II has engaged in a virtually unending series of military actions and all-out wars with millions upon millions of corpses left in their wake. The victimization of working and poor people here is but the domestic counterpart of the conflagrations abroad in the service of this decaying imperialist order.

Defend the Gains of the Chinese Revolution!

The current China-bashing is intended in part to establish which candidate for the presidency will be the most resolute in advancing the claims of the U.S. against its "enemies." And from the standpoint of the U.S. imperialists, China is not just any enemy. It is the largest and strongest of the remaining societies in which capitalist rule was overthrown and private ownership of the means of production was replaced by nationalized planning.

Such societies owe their existence to the 1917 October Revolution in Russia and the working-class state power, the USSR, which issued from it. Although that power was vitiated by the bureaucratic usurpation of proletarian political rule, the historically progressive social content of the Soviet Union prevailed,

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July 2010: Aircraft carrier USS George Washington en route to joint military exercises with South Korea. U.S. is strengthening military vise around Chinese deformed workers state.