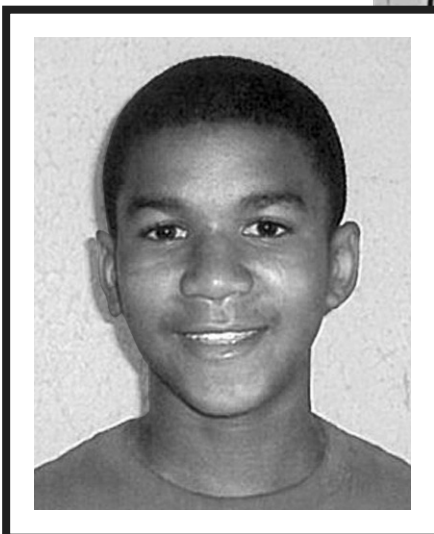


Capitalist State Fuels Racist Vigilantes

Trayvon Martin: Killed for Being Black in America



Sanford, Florida:
Rally by protesters
outraged over killing
of Trayvon Martin by
“Neighborhood Watch”
vigilante, March 22.



Reuters (inset), AP

MARCH 26—The racist killing one month ago of 17-year-old Trayvon Martin by a vigilante in Sanford, Florida, has touched off a wave of protest that continues in cities and towns coast to coast. Trayvon’s anguished parents have spoken a bitter truth known to all black families: what happened on February 26 could happen to *anyone* like him—at the hands of either lone-wolf racists or police thugs-in-blue. Nearly 50 years after civil rights legislation established formal legal equality, a young black man had his life stolen simply for being who he was in this sick, racist society. And his killer to this day remains free, his act sanctioned by a state law that gives free rein to such vigilantism.

The basic story is well known. Trayvon departed from his father’s girlfriend’s home in a gated community to purchase Skittles and an iced tea at a 7-Eleven store. He did not return. Trayvon had been spotted by George Zimmerman, a self-appointed Neighborhood Watch enforcer. When Zimmerman called police, he described Trayvon, who had put on his hoodie in the rain, as a “real suspicious guy.” A frightened Trayvon was aware that he was being followed by a white male stranger in a car, a *really* suspicious guy. So he ran for safety after seeing Zimmerman stop and exit the car. Zimmerman pursued Trayvon, complaining to the police department that

“these assholes...always get away.” The cops say that when they arrived, they found Trayvon dead with a gunshot to the chest and Zimmerman armed with a 9mm pistol and splattered with blood.

Trayvon’s parents then faced sheer contempt from Sanford police. Tracy Martin, the father, believed his son was missing after he didn’t return from the store. The following day, he called to report a missing person, to no avail. He then called 911 and was asked to describe his son. Police officers eventually arrived to show him a picture of his dead son with blood dripping from his mouth. Police had listed the slain teen as a “John Doe” and *made no attempt* to identify his body or locate his family on the day of his death.

Police who were at the crime scene helped build an alibi for Zimmerman, himself a cop wannabe. Zimmerman claimed that he fired in self-defense when Trayvon, three inches shorter and nearly 100 pounds lighter than himself, gained the upper hand in an alleged scuffle. At least three witnesses heard the “desperate wail of a child, a gunshot and then silence.” So the cops “corrected” one witness to claim that the cry for help came not from Trayvon but from Zimmerman. The officer in charge was also in charge in 2010 when cops covered up the assault on a homeless black man by a police lieutenant’s son. (The white assailant was charged only after videotape of the assault appeared on YouTube.) In 2005, a black teenager in Sanford was fatally shot in the back by two white security guards, one of them a police volunteer and the other a

cop’s son. A judge dismissed the charges against them for “lack of evidence.”

When the facts of Martin’s killing and the cop cover-up eventually came to light, masses of people demonstrated their outrage, from a student protest at historically black Florida A&M University on March 19 to a “million hoodie march” in New York City two days later and another round of demonstrations today. LeBron James and his Miami Heat basketball teammates made a powerful protest simply by being photographed in hooded sweatshirts with their heads bowed. An editorial in New York’s *Amsterdam News* (22 March) linked the killing to the everyday hell black people endure in this country:

“We are prejudged every day in almost every way, from the neighborhood watch captain to the rookie cop to the sales clerk who works on commission to the taxi driver who won’t pick us up to the guidance counselor who steers our children away from AP classes because they are not ‘college material.’

“We are prejudged. And that prejudice means all too often the difference between life and death, a future or a grave.”

Black Democrat and TV host Al Sharpton called it a “paradox” that a black man could be elected president while young black men were still viewed with suspicion for wearing hooded sweatshirts. What paradox? For this country’s capitalist rulers, Barack Obama’s election provided a facelift for murderous U.S. imperialism and its capitalist profit system. The day-to-day functioning of American capitalism is measured in mass unemployment, home foreclosures, cop terror and other brutality-

ties that come down heaviest on blacks and other minorities. Putting Obama in the White House meant only that now there is a *black overseer* for a system that criminalizes young black men in maintaining the racial oppression that has been embedded in this country since the days of slavery. It will take nothing less than a socialist overturn of capitalism by the multiracial working class—a third American Revolution—to finally achieve black freedom and provide a decent life for all.

Vigilantism in Racist America

Zimmerman’s Neighborhood Watch was organized in September 2011 by a homeowners association under the auspices of the Sanford Police Department. Zimmerman, who was studying to be a cop, was its sole volunteer. He was well known to the cops, having made 46 calls to 911 this year. As one of his black neighbors described it, it was always: “A black guy this. A black guy that.” A Zimmerman supporter claimed with sheer racist contempt that problems in the area began when foreclosures forced homeowners to rent out property to “low-lives and gangsters,” so that the housing complex now has a slight majority of non-whites. The Sanford police chief declared that cops working with Neighborhood Watch types must determine “who in that community is not supposed to be there.”

Zimmerman’s claim of self-defense is based on a Florida “Stand Your Ground” law, an open invitation to racist vigilantism. The law was passed in 2005 amid a

continued on page 8



Oury Jalloh Killed in Police Cell in 2005

Germany: Cop Terror, Nazi Provocations Over Commemoration of African Immigrant

The following article is translated from Spartakist No. 192 (March 2012), newspaper of our comrades of the Spartakist Workers Party of Germany.

SPARTAKIST

On 7 January 2005, Oury Jalloh, a refugee from Sierra Leone, burned to death in a police station jail cell in Dessau, Germany. Since then, to keep his memory alive, his friends and supporters have been protesting against cop harassment and criminalization of immigrants in Dessau. In a trial going on now, they are demanding that murder charges be brought against the police.

A December 2008 district court trial in Dessau-Rosslau acquitted two cops who were on duty when Jalloh died, citing a purported lack of evidence. The cop in charge that night is again standing trial



Umbrech Bildarchiv

Dessau, Germany: January 7 demonstration in memory of Oury Jalloh.

following a 2010 Federal Court decision overturning the earlier verdict. Reflecting the state's contempt for immigrants like Jalloh, the charges brought in the first trial were limited to "manslaughter" and "bodily harm with fatal consequences." In

the latest instance showing that judicial neutrality is a farce, the bourgeois state is again trying to cover up its responsibility for Jalloh's death. The judges and the cops are determined to conceal the truth about this ghastly immolation. They go so far as to absurdly claim that Jalloh, his hands and feet chained to a bed with a fireproof mattress, ignited himself and is thus responsible for his own death.

In the lead-up to this year's demonstration on the anniversary of Jalloh's death, the cops threatened that the slogan "Oury Jalloh—that was murder" would not be tolerated. When the 200 demonstrators refused to be cowed, they were beaten with truncheons and several were injured. Police pepper-sprayed protesters in the eyes and snatched veteran black activists out of the demonstration. Mouctar Bah, one of the initiators of the demonstration, was beaten unconscious and had to be taken to the hospital with a concussion. From the moment he began demanding an investigation of Jalloh's death, Bah has been subjected to regular harassment by police and other state authorities. Hands off Mouctar Bah!

This latest orgy of state violence was followed by a campaign to criminalize leftists that has also incited Nazi terror. Already on January 16, a Nazi-led mob in Dessau was spewing racist slogans. Following a January 18 arson attack on the police station where Jalloh had died, Sachsen-Anhalt's interior minister Stahlknecht ranted that the "leftist autonome [anarchoid] milieu" was "consciously carrying out provocations against the police," prompting a "disproportionate" reaction from the cops.

Thus encouraged, 370 Nazis marched on the evening of January 21 through Dessau, some of them attacking a festival in commemoration of the Jewish composer Kurt Weill. Prior to the Nazi march, two counter-demonstrations were

canceled by their initiators. In a January 24 "self-critical explanation," a representative of the "No Nazis Dessau" group admitted that the organizers had thought that the police would not permit the Nazis to march. They believed that since knowledge of "possible racist complicity on the part of police headquarters had grown following all the entanglements of the Oury Jalloh case and again after the scandalous and violent tirades at the Oury Jalloh demo of January 7," the cops could "no longer justify" allowing a Nazi march.

Confronting an increasingly dangerous situation for the left and immigrants in Dessau, 30 leftists occupied the town hall on February 7 to demand that "the city distance itself from the racist demonstrations and seriously consider how these could be prevented in the future." The mayor then did what he is paid to do...and pressed charges against them. As irreconcilable opponents of bourgeois rule, we Marxists defend leftists and immigrants against criminalization and attacks by the state. **Drop all charges against the occupiers of City Hall!**

The events in Dessau and elsewhere in the state of Saxony-Anhalt are but a few examples of the flagrant collaboration between the state and the Nazis, already evidenced by the complicity of the Verfassungsschutz [domestic intelligence service] in the series of murders by the fascist "National Socialist Underground" (see "The Fourth Reich and Its Nazis," WV No. 995, 3 February). The starting point must be the understanding that society is divided into antagonistic classes: The capitalist state and its laws serve to maintain private ownership of the means of production by the bourgeoisie. That is why the state cannot be made to represent the interests of the oppressed and working masses. The capitalists use the Nazis as a means of inflicting fear and terror; they keep the fascists in reserve against the working class for times of social upheaval, should police violence and illusions in bourgeois democracy no longer suffice to maintain capitalist rule. This is why their state protects the Nazis and sharpens its repression against the left and immigrants.

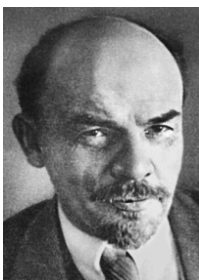
It is necessary to smash the murderous Nazi gangs by mobilizing the multiethnic working class, independently from the state and the bourgeoisie, at the head of all the Nazis' potential victims. Through its position in the process of production, the working class has the social power and historic interest to sweep away through socialist revolution this system that breeds poverty and racism. ■

Those Who Labor Must Rule!

In the midst of a hard-fought 1936-37 West Coast maritime strike, Trotskyist leader James P. Cannon emphasized that labor can advance its cause only by relying on its own class strength and solidarity against the capitalist class enemy. Ben Hanford, who is referred to in the selection below, was a leader of the U.S. Socialist Party in the early 20th century.



TROTSKY



LENIN

A good deal is said about strike "strategy"—and that has its uses within certain clearly defined limits—but when you get down to cases this strike, like every other strike, is simply a bullheaded struggle between two forces whose interests are in constant and irreconcilable conflict. The partnership of capital and labor is a lie. The immediate issue in every case is decided by the relative strength of the opposing forces at the moment. The only strike strategy worth a tinker's dam is the strategy that begins with this conception.

The problem of the strikers consists in estimating what their strength is, and then mobilizing it in full force and pressing against the enemy until something cracks and a settlement is achieved in consonance with the relation of forces between the unions and the organizations of the bosses. That's all there is to strike strategy. You cannot maneuver over the head of the class struggle.

We pass over entirely the question of who is "right" in the maritime strike, for we believe with Ben Hanford that the working class is always right. From our point of view the workers have a perfect right to the full control of industry and all the fruits thereof. The employers on the other hand—not merely the shipowners; all bosses are alike—would like a situation where the workers are deprived of all organization and all say about their work and are paid only enough to keep body and soul together and raise a new generation of slaves to take their places when they drop in their tracks.

Any settlement in between these two extremes 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 demands of the workers in a strike are to be judged solely by their timeliness and the way they fit realistically into the actual relation of forces at the time.

—James P. Cannon, "The Maritime Strike" (November 1936), reprinted in *Notebook of an Agitator* (1958)

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Canada

Harper's Creeping Police State

The following article is reprinted from Spartacist Canada No. 172 (Spring 2012), newspaper of our comrades of the Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyiste.

SPARTACIST CANADA

The Canadian state has a long and sordid history of violent repression, from the genocidal Indian wars of the French and English colonialists to the crushing of the 19th century Métis rebellion, the suppression of Quebec's national rights, racist police terror against ethnic minorities and, most significantly, the unending capitalist war on labour and the left. For over a century, such repression has been carried out by Tory and Liberal governments alike and, provincially, no less adamantly by NDP [social-democratic New Democratic Party] governments in Ontario, B.C. [British Columbia] and elsewhere.

Today, as the economic crisis deepens and the working class is battered by devastating plant closures and mass unemployment, [Prime Minister] Stephen Harper's now-majority Tory government is poised to bring in some of the most draconian "anti-crime" and "security" laws Canada has ever seen. Aimed at ramping up state surveillance, spying and police repression, they will put many thousands more people in jail, overwhelmingly minorities and the poor, and roll back democratic rights across the board.

Hand in hand with the Tories' "war on crime" are mounting assaults on union rights and leftist political activity. The rulers of this country are fully aware that the grinding poverty and gross inequality produced by their system are creating a huge pool of social discontent, anger and fear. So they are sparing no expense to increase their already considerable powers of repression. The message: dare to protest, and we'll throw you in jail too.

The scope and speed of the Conservatives' "security" agenda is truly scary. Everyone to the left of Don Cherry [jingoist ice hockey commentator] has decried the omnibus "anti-crime" Bill C-10 as costly, mean and irrational. The Canadian Civil Liberties Association (CCLA) called it "unwise, unjust, unconstitutional" and a "dangerous route that is unsupported by the social science evidence and has already failed in other countries." Former Liberal justice minister Irwin Cotler termed its mandatory minimum sentencing provisions "ineffective, unfair, injurious." After an Ottawa meeting on the bill, Quebec justice minister Jean-Marc Fournier fumed: "I don't recognize myself in this Canada. This is not a government of Canada. It is a government of the Reform Party." Of course, these bourgeois opponents of the bill would prefer a more "effective" and less costly approach to "fighting crime."

The reality is that under capitalism the state—at its core, the cops, courts and prisons—has but one purpose: to serve and protect the handful of filthy rich capitalists in power by suppressing the working class and the oppressed. As Russian revolutionary leader V.I. Lenin pointed out in his 1919 lecture *The State*: "The state is a machine for the oppression of one class by another, a machine for holding in obedience to one class other, subordinated classes."

"War on Crime" Targets Native People, Blacks

The most immediate victims of the "law and order" offensive will be Native people and blacks. In Western Canada in particular, Native people are the pri-

mary targets of police brutality, criminal proceedings and incarceration. The government's own Correctional Investigator reports that aboriginals, who make up 2.7 percent of the adult Canadian population, constitute 18.5 percent of inmates in federal custody. In Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, this number shoots up to 60 percent! And Native women represent 30 percent of all federal female inmates across Canada. Statistics Canada reports nearly identical numbers in provincial institutions.

In Ontario, change "Native" to "black," and the picture is starkly similar. Twenty percent of Ontario's federal inmates are black. The Toronto cops have carried out a decades-long reign of racist terror in minority neighbourhoods, going after black youth in particular. A recent instance was the 2010 police killing of Junior Manon, an unarmed 18-year-old black Latino youth who had tried to flee a traffic check. Several witnesses saw the brutal killing, which the cops are typically trying to cover up. This is business as usual for these thugs in blue, and not just in Toronto, whether the victims are aboriginal, black, South Asian or Latino.

Under the Tories' new law, mandatory minimum sentences will take away any hope of alternatives to jail even for minor drug offences. Chances for pardons will be eliminated or made much more difficult, and there will be more pre-trial detention. These ever more severe forms of legal retribution, combined with the habitual racism of the cops, are designed to make it even more difficult for minority communities to escape the vicious cycle of poor education, joblessness, mental illness, addiction, violence and prison. Federal and provincial governments are already planning to add close to 10,000 new prison spaces.

Other aspects of Bill C-10 have been decried by refugee, civil liberties and gay organizations. One provision could bar potential refugees from entering the country if the government deems they are "at risk" of being exploited—a definition that pretty much describes 99.9 percent of refugees. We say: full citizenship rights for everyone who has made it to this country!

One amendment to the criminal code would mean two years in jail for anyone who "wilfully does an indecent act in a public place in the presence of one or more persons." As the Queer Ontario group noted, "People of any gender could

be charged and convicted of an 'indecent act' for engaging in consenting sexual acts on a beach, in a park, in a parked car, at a sex party or in a bathhouse." The CCLA also remarked that the "child pornography" provisions of the bill "criminalize, and would impose mandatory minimum jail sentences, for the consensual, legal sexual activities of youth and young adults."

Marxists oppose all laws against "crimes without victims" such as drug use, gambling, prostitution and consensual sex, including between adults and youth. We have long warned that the "child pornography" and "anti-pedophile" hysteria, endorsed by all manner of liberals, feminists and reformist leftists, is intended to jack up state repression against *everybody*. While children and youth are victims of real abuse—mental, physical and/or sexual—this is most often at the hands of state agencies or within the confines of the nuclear family. The rulers' hypocritical moral crusades are intended to further regiment society and punish youth and adults for sexual relations that do not fall within the acceptable "norms" of religious and bourgeois morality. The only guiding principle in sexual relations should be effective consent—whether those involved were agreeable at the time—regardless of gender, number or age.

It's not surprising that the right-wing Tory regime would whip up such moral hysteria to push its racist agenda of police repression and more jails. This is, after all, a government teeming with anti-abortion bigots and death penalty advocates. While Stephen Harper keeps such ghouls in check (for now), the "anti-

crime" bills are only the thin edge of the wedge. The government's revving up of military and monarchical symbols—with the English queen in every federal building—is grotesque, but it is only an expression of the bourgeois "values" embraced by all the "honourable" members of parliament, whether in government or in opposition, the NDP very much included. These values are rooted in the capitalist system of exploitation and war.

State Repression and the Internet

Aside from C-10, a slew of "security" laws and measures will make it even more difficult to participate in any kind of public protest, including online. Left-wing activists and even mealy-mouthed environmentalists are being publicly vilified, slandered, spied on, and in some cases arrested and jailed. This reached a peak around the June 2010 G20 protests in Toronto, when nearly 20,000 cops descended on the city, arrested 1,100 protesters and held them in degrading conditions. Leftist organizers were seized and framed up on "conspiracy" charges, a device long used by the capitalists to persecute perceived opponents against whom there is no evidence of any crime.

Particularly since the September 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, governments around the world have used the "war on terror" as a pretext to victimize both Muslim minorities and left-wing activists. In Canada, the Liberal government of Jean Chrétien (with then justice minister Irwin Cotler in tow) ramped up a series of "anti-terror" measures meant to instill fear, scapegoat minorities and curtail the right to protest. As we warned at the time:

"The rulers aim to shred the democratic rights of the whole population, starting with those who have the fewest rights to begin with—immigrants and refugees. Make no mistake: this campaign is aimed at regimenting and repressing everybody through fear, not least through fear of the state itself—and working people and their organizations are right in the gun-sights.... Racism based on the terror scare is a wedge the capitalists intend to use to split and wreck any effective working-class resistance to their austerity plans."

—"Down With the Anti-Immigrant Witchhunt!" SC No. 132, Spring 2002

Harper's Tories picked up where the Liberals left off, with vicious "anti-terror" witchhunts and legislation of their own. Another new bill, the outrageously named "Protecting Children from Internet Predators Act," would give the cops unrestricted access to anyone's personal identity without a warrant and the capability to intercept any online activity.

continued on page 8

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Speaker: Amy Rath, editor of *Women and Revolution*

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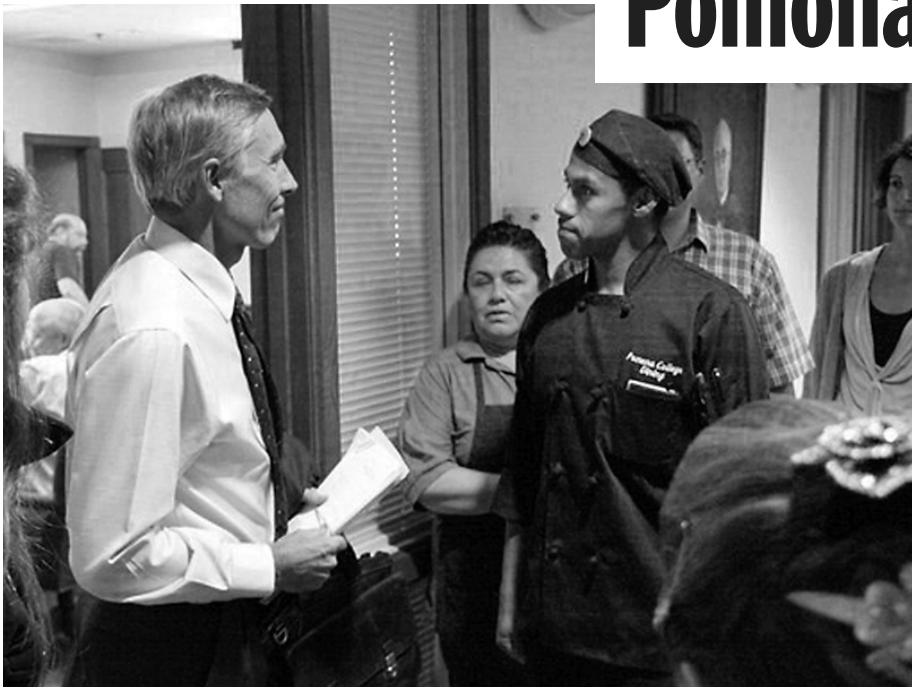
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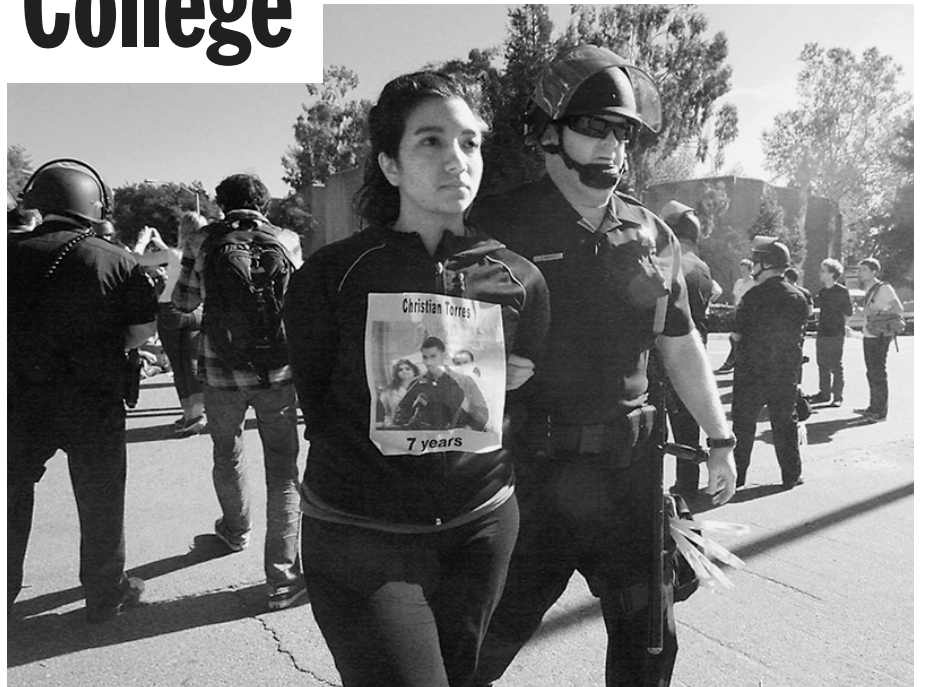
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Young Spartacus

Immigrants Fired to Bust Union Organizing Drive Pomona College



Patel/Student Life



Hong/Student Life

Left: Campus union organizing leader Christian Torres confronts Pomona College president David Oxtoby over threatened firings, November 28. Right: Claremont cop arrests protester at December 2 march demanding reinstatement of 17 fired immigrant workers.

Students Must Ally with the Working Class

LOS ANGELES—Last December the Pomona College administration fired 17 Latino immigrants, almost all of whom were dining hall workers, claiming they could not provide proof of legal eligibility to work in the U.S. Since March 2010 the dining hall staff, mobilized in a group called Workers for Justice (WFJ), have been on a union organizing drive with UNITE HERE Local 11 in an effort to combat miserable working conditions, outrageously low pay, forced unpaid overtime, inadequate medical benefits and management abuse.

The administration's drive to block the unionization effort is what prompted its investigation of the workers, several of whom had worked there for more than a decade. As pointed out by Christian Torres, a WFJ leader who was fired: "We were here for a very long time and there was never a complaint. But now all of the sudden we were suspect, and they didn't want us to work here anymore." *Reinstate the fired workers now with full back pay and benefits!*

This act marked a sharp escalation in the anti-union offensive waged by the administration of Pomona College, one of the wealthiest liberal arts schools in the country. In an earlier attempt to head off campus support for the organizing drive, the administration instituted an outrageous policy in July 2011 prohibiting the staff from conversing with students during their shifts. WFJ, along with their student and faculty supporters, fought against the gag rule and it was eventually rescinded.

The college also hired the law firm Sidley Austin to audit the records of dozens of workers in a hunt for so-called "illegals." As Sidley Austin proudly advertises on its Web site: "For clients who desire to remain union-free, we advise on pro-active steps to reduce the likelihood of union organizing drives and enhance the likeli-

hood of defeating any campaigns that are initiated." The law firm boasts of "defeating one of the largest Teamster organizing drives in recent times for a large services company."

In response to the Sidley Austin audit, WFJ and their supporters held protests last November in defense of the immigrants, including a dining hall boycott. The day after the December 1 firings, some 150 protesters marched through campus demanding that the 17 workers be reinstated. Cops arrested 15 demonstrators on charges of "obstructing traffic." On December 8, four students went on a fast in solidarity with the workers. Activists organized themselves in a group called Concerned Pomona Students to protest the firings.

It is important that students have rallied in defense of the fired workers and continue to support the ongoing union drive. If the dining hall workers eventually decide to go on strike, they must be able to count on the support of students, professors and other workers to help build picket lines and shut down the campus. Since campus workers do not have as much social power as other sectors of the proletariat, support from the labor movement outside of the college is vital.

We are in favor of extending organizing drives to all unorganized campus workers, including part-time staff and faculty members (but excluding administrators and campus cops!). This would be a step toward building campus-wide unions to overcome divisions that allow the university administrations to play one section of the workforce off against another.

Unionization and the Fight for Immigrant Rights

Unions are elementary economic defense organizations of the working class. It is the proletariat, not students, that has social

power because it is the class that builds and moves everything. If proletarians stop working then society stops running. But this power can be brought to bear only through organization. The capitalist class, the irreconcilable enemy of the workers, tries to ensure that the working class remains unorganized.

Pomona's firing of WFJ leader Torres and the 16 other Latinos demonstrates how the fight for immigrant rights is crucial to the fight for the interests of the whole working class. Anti-immigrant laws are designed to keep a sector of the proletariat in a desperate situation of illegality, subject at any time to firing, detention or deportation if they attempt to struggle for their class interests. *For full citizenship rights for all immigrants! No detentions or deportations!*

The American trade-union bureaucracy's refusal to fight against anti-immigrant laws flows from their loyal adherence to the capitalists' rules of the game, rules which accept unemployment as good for business and production for profit as good for everyone. The labor tops' pro-capitalist program is an obstacle to any attempts to organize the unorganized or to defend the very existence of unions.

Break with the Democrats!

An effective struggle for unionization and immigrant rights requires breaking workers from the two parties of capitalism. No less than the Republicans, the Democratic politicians defend the capitalist system of exploitation. They wage imperialist wars, they break strikes and currently they are running the American capitalist state. President Obama moved away from Bush's policy of anti-immigrant cop raids on businesses only to vastly increase the number of "desktop raids"—computer-based investigations into residency status of workers to

get them fired. Desktop raids fulfill the same purpose as cop raids, but by another means. Obama has also surpassed Bush's rate of deportations, with about 400,000 undocumented immigrants deported each year since he took office.

What is true on the national level is also true on the state and local levels. California's Democratic governor Jerry Brown has been pushing drastic cuts to the University of California's budget. A rainbow coalition of "progressive" Democratic mayors from Antonio Villaraigosa in Los Angeles to Jean Quan in Oakland have unleashed their police forces in the brutal repression of Occupy protesters, bloody attacks on ghetto youth and mass arrests of immigrants who are then turned over to Obama's federal agents for deportation.

Meanwhile, the U.S. labor tops announced this month their plans to shovel \$400 million of union dues into the Democrats' 2012 election coffers. The AFL-CIO and SEIU leaders plan to send hundreds of thousands of their overworked and underpaid members to knock on doors and "get out the vote." In opposition to the capitalist parties, it is necessary to build a workers party to fight for socialist revolution.

College Administration: Enemy of Campus Workers

Under capitalism colleges and universities serve an irreplaceable function: training the future administrative, technical and ideological personnel of bourgeois society. For children of the working class and minorities, the capitalist rulers seek only to provide as much for education as they can see back in profits. We are for nationalizing private institutions and making them open to all, free of charge, with a state-paid living stipend so that all working-class youth have access to higher education.

Victory to Quebec Student Strike!

TORONTO, March 23—Some 200,000 young protesters took to the streets of Montreal on March 22 in a massive show of support for an ongoing strike by Quebec college and university students. The demonstration, which stretched across some 50 city blocks, drew students from all over the province and was supported by all three Quebec union federations as well as the main nationalist parties. Supporters of the Spartacus Youth Clubs and the Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyste of Canada, sister organization of the Spartacist League/U.S., intervened at the protest, selling an array of Trotskyist literature in French, English and Spanish.

The student strike, which began at a handful of colleges and universities in mid-February, now includes more than 300,000 students throughout Quebec. The provincial Liberal Party government of Jean Charest has refused to budge on its plans for huge tuition hikes and continues to unleash police repression against the protesters. Earlier this month, riot police hit 22-year-old Francis Grenier in the face with a stun grenade during an attack on students who were seeking to occupy the office of Quebec university rectors. Now the young student risks the loss of sight in one eye. “To occupy a building, to scare people—that obviously has consequences,” warned Charest, channeling the sadism of the Catholic school wardens who meted out corporal punishment in Quebec’s not-so-distant past.

We reprint below an article on the student strike first published in the *Young Spartacus* pages of *Spartacist Canada* (No. 172, Spring 2012), newspaper of the TL/LT.

SPARTACIST CANADA

Since mid-February, tens of thousands of Quebec college and university students have been on strike against the provincial Liberal government’s plans for a 75 percent increase in tuition. As of March 1, the strike had spread to nearly 100,000 students with many more set to join in the coming days.

Montreal and other cities have seen a series of mass protests, starting last November when 35,000 students took to the streets. On March 1, several thousand

student protesters marching toward the National Assembly [parliament] in Quebec City were attacked by police riot squads and tear gas. On February 23, police using pepper spray attacked student protesters who had shut down Montreal’s Jacques Cartier bridge during afternoon rush hour. Six days earlier, the admin-



Spartacist Canada

Montreal, March 22: Mass protest against college tuition hikes.

istration of CÉGEP [junior colleges] du Vieux-Montréal called the cops on a student occupation, leading to 37 arrests. **Drop all charges now!**

Typically, the English Canadian bourgeois media outside Quebec has been almost totally silent on these very large student protests. University tuition in Quebec is much lower than in most other provinces, in part due to repeated waves of student protests over the last decade and a half. In 1996, a widely supported student strike forced the then Parti Québécois government to abandon a proposed tuition hike. Similarly in 2005, the Liberal regime had to drop plans for big cuts to student grants in the face of militant protest. The government did manage to end the tuition freeze two years later, but faced with yet another round of protests it was only able to implement a small increase.

A statement by the CLASSE student federation, which has been leading many of the current strikes, noted that the government’s proposed hikes “would deny 30,000 students from low-income families and other socioeconomic groups their right to education.” The capitalist rulers maintain elite schools to ensure

quality education for their children and to train the managers and technicians needed to administer the capitalist system. When it comes to the working class and the poor, the capitalists seek to spend on education only what they calculate they can get back in profit. In order for education to be truly accessible to all, we fight for the abolition of all fees and for open admissions plus a government-paid living stipend for students.

Today, the bourgeois-nationalist PQ claims it would freeze tuition if it wins the next provincial election. This is a cynical maneuver by a party that only recently was criticizing the Liberal government for failing to balance the budget through cutbacks. Marxists advocate independence for Quebec and oppose English Canadian chauvinism in all its forms. At the same time, we seek to break Québécois workers and radical youth from any illusions in the

PQ, which represents the interests of the Québécois capitalists.

For their part, leaders of the petty-bourgeois Québec Solidaire have joined the student protests. But during the militant 2007 student protests, QS actually solidarized with the campus administrations, writing: “These institutions are of course protecting the security of their personnel and property” (quebecsolidaire.net, 16 November 2007)! Most of the pseudo-Marxist left in Quebec has joined QS and gives it more or less uncritical support. But these petty-bourgeois nationalists are another trap for workers and youth, as shown most recently by QS leaders’ on-and-off discussions with the bourgeois PQ over a no-contest pact for the next Quebec elections.

The way forward for students battling tuition hikes, and for all those victimized by the vicious capitalist offensive, lies through mobilizing the power of the working class. Student struggle can provide a spark for the broader social struggle necessary to beat back these attacks. What’s needed is an alliance with the working class, which must be mobilized independently of the PQ and all other capitalist parties. Due to its central position in social production—in the factories, transport and service industries—the working class uniquely has the power to strike real blows against the bourgeoisie’s profit system, and to provide leadership to all the many victims of racist capitalism.

Securing the right of all to free quality education, health care, decent jobs and housing will become possible when the working class has seized the mines, factories and banks and placed them in the service of meeting the needs of the working people instead of a tiny handful of capitalist exploiters. That requires socialist revolution to sweep away the capitalist state and expropriate the bourgeoisie. The Spartacus Youth Clubs fight to win students and other youth to the perspective of forging a multiracial, binational revolutionary workers party to lead such a struggle. ■

The campus administration and the board of trustees serve as the representatives of the bourgeoisie, defending its class interests. For example, the chairman of Pomona’s Board of Trustees is one Paul Efron, a Goldman Sachs executive who got the ball rolling on Sidley Austin’s union-busting audit of the presumed “illegal immigrants” in the dining hall. The administration works hand in hand with the state to regiment the student population and to repress workers and their supporters, as clearly shown by the 15 arrests at Pomona on December 2. While the administration raises the already astronomical tuition, it cuts the wages of faculty and campus workers, laying them off at whim or singling out “troublemakers.” **Abolish the administration, including the Board of Trustees!** Colleges and universities should be run by those who work and study there.

The Concerned Pomona Students do not see the campus administration and the board as irreconcilably hostile to workers’ interests. Instead, they promote the illusion that union-busting and anti-immigrant firings could be permanently ended through better communication among all parties involved. They urge meetings to “address the deficiencies in the current relationship between the Board and the Pomona College community.” Concerned Pomona Students spokesper-

son Alice Chan declared a meeting with the trustees “really promising” and hoped to “keep them accountable.” As if the blood-sucking representatives of finance such as Goldman Sachs will ever allow themselves to be held accountable to workers and students!

Many students believe colleges are or should be close-knit, morally pure “ivory tower” communities isolated from the rapacious exploitation of bourgeois society. But as Pomona’s anti-union campaign illustrates, capitalism doesn’t stop at the campus gates—immigrants and all workers are still exploited at institutions of higher education. Nor does the class struggle stop at the campus gates. Workers will fight for their interests and their employers will use whatever tools they have at their disposal to try to defeat them.

Paul Efron and the other trustees were more than happy to oblige Concerned Pomona Students’ pleas for dialogue. They held two meetings with workers they had fired, current dining staff, members of Concerned Pomona Students and others. For good measure, the trustees brought along to the meetings campus cops and private security guards carrying firearms (*Student Life*, 19 December 2011). Then Efron and company issued a communiqué: “We want to thank everybody who met with us last week on Tuesday and Wednesday to discuss the work authoriza-

tion issue. All of us understood the human cost of the difficult actions we had to take and wish there was an alternative course of action we could have followed.”

Subsequently the board created a “Trustee-Student Task Force on Campus Community Communication” to co-opt students and derail campus support for the workers. After sticking a knife into the union organizing drive, Pomona president David Oxtoby made declarations to the press about how his liberal heart bleeds over unjust laws and the poor workers he canned.

Every victory that the working class has achieved has been due to hard class struggle and not by appeals to the good faith of the bosses or reliance on federal agencies like the National Labor Relations Board. By looking to the class enemy and its agencies, workers are disarmed of their only effective weapons—those of class struggle—and disoriented as to who are their friends and who are their enemies.

A successful struggle to end anti-immigrant attacks and the hideous exploitation of all workers will require the overthrow of capitalism through a workers revolution, led by a communist vanguard party. As youth auxiliaries to the Spartacist League/U.S., the Spartacus Youth Clubs are a training ground for the young militants who will form the cadre of that party. Join us! ■

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

LANSING, MI

Saturday, April 7, 3 p.m.

The Russian Revolution: How the Working Class Took Power

Part One

MSU Student Union, 3rd floor
Lake Michigan Room

Information and readings:
lansingsyc@gmail.com

LOS ANGELES

Wednesday, April 18, 6:30 p.m.

For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

Contradictions of the Civil Rights Movement: A Marxist Analysis

UCLA, Rolfe Hall, Room 3131

Information and readings:
(213) 380-8239 • slsycla@sbcglobal.net

NEW YORK CITY

Tuesday, April 3, 7:30 p.m.

Women and Revolution: Feminism vs. Marxism

CCNY, NAC Room 1/211

Information and readings:
(212) 267-1025 • nysl@tiac.net

Visit the ICL Web Site:
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For a Multiethnic Revolutionary Workers Party!

French Elections:



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No Choice for Workers

MARCH 25—Three days ago, a special police unit killed Mohamed Merah, a 23-year-old Frenchman who, police say, had killed three paratroopers of black and North African origin and four Jewish civilians—three children and a rabbi—near Toulouse in Southern France over the previous eleven days. Reportedly, Merah had been in Afghanistan and claimed to be appalled by the crimes of the French military, which led him to target soldiers. Police say that on the morning of March 19, Merah arrived too late to kill another soldier he had picked out and instead decided to go on a killing spree in front of a Jewish school, an abominable anti-Semitic crime.

This has become a central issue in the campaign leading up to the presidential election, the first round of which is scheduled for April 22. In the likely event that no one gets an absolute majority, there will be a runoff on May 6 between the two top-polling candidates. Ramping up his anti-immigrant “security” pitch, President Nicolas Sarkozy seized on the case to immediately announce new measures

LE BOLCHEVIK

targeting primarily Salafist Muslims in France, threatening to jail people who “regularly” consult Web sites declared *haram* (illicit) by the French government. Sarkozy plans to introduce new legislation that would outlaw “propagating and advocating extremist ideologies.” This is an open threat to criminalize the dissemination of all “forbidden” opinions—a weapon historically wielded by capitalist governments against the left and the workers movement.

The “war on terror” is currently being used primarily against Muslims, but all opponents of the racist capitalist system, and ultimately the multiracial working class, are targeted. In this heightened atmosphere of racist witchhunt, dark-skinned youth in the heavily immigrant ghettos of the suburbs (*banlieues*) who are suspected of having Muslim backgrounds will be targeted more than ever for daily state repression. ***Down with the racist “war on terror”! The workers movement must defend banlieue youth!***

The Toulouse killings have been an opportunity for the various candidates, including those on the left, to stand by the President in a despicable show of “national unity.” Green candidate (and former judge) Eva Joly, along with Socialist Party (SP) hopeful François Hollande, joined the fascist Marine Le Pen at the memorial service for the paratroopers, where Sarkozy himself delivered the eulogy. Jean-Luc Mélenchon, the candidate of the Left Front (mainly

Left: Socialist Party’s François Hollande with French and European Union flags during campaign speech in Rouen, February 15. Right: February 28 campaign rally in Montpellier for right-wing president Nicolas Sarkozy.

composed of the Communist Party and a split from Hollande’s SP), rushed to “congratulate” the cops for the extra-judicial killing of Merah. Mélenchon seized the opportunity to promote his program for hiring more National Police, which he terms a “public service.” The candidate of Lutte Ouvrière (LO), Nathalie Arthaud, claimed to not partake of the “national unity” hype. However, its initial statement on the anti-Semitic crimes in Toulouse and the killing of the French elite forces stationed in nearby Montauban, a March 20 declara-

French/NATO troops out of Afghanistan!

The following excerpted article is translated from *Le Bolchévik* No. 199 (March 2012), newspaper of the Ligue Trotskyste de France, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist). The LTF explained in its article that “the President of the Republic is the chief executive, that is to say, the executive director of the capitalist state, chief advocate for the interests of the capitalists as a whole.” As the comrades wrote, as Marxist revolutionaries, we refuse in principle



AFP

Paris: Airport workers demonstrate on February 6 as part of four-day strike to protest state restrictions on right to strike.

tion by Arthaud, was published in *Lutte Ouvrière* (23 March) with the headline: “The Killings in Montauban and Toulouse: Odious Acts.”

For Marxists there is a distinction between the slaying of Jewish children and a teacher on the one hand and the killing of soldiers from the elite paratrooper units, which have a long history of murderous terror on behalf of French imperialism from Algeria to Afghanistan and Indochina, on the other. The second is not a crime from the standpoint of the working class. But such individual terrorist acts are an obstacle to mobilizing the collective struggle of a politically conscious working class against the capitalist system. One thing is certain: the killings will bring fierce repression down on the heads of minorities and others in the state’s crosshairs. ***Down with the Vigipirate campaign of racist cop terror! U.S./***

to hold executive positions in the capitalist state—president, governor or mayor. From the same standpoint, we refuse to run for such offices, since doing so would only give legitimacy to the reformist notion that a “revolutionary” at the head of the state could advance the interests of the working class.

* * *

Marxists may consider giving critical support to another organization, even in presidential elections, when doing so can in some way raise the class consciousness of the proletariat. But in this election, there is no one to whom Marxists can even contemplate giving critical support because all the candidates who in any way claim to represent the labor movement are at best a left cover for the SP candidacy, thereby helping to sow illusions in the “change” that it would supposedly bring.

The SP candidate, François Hollande, simply promises to pursue the same policies as Nicolas Sarkozy, but without the “bling-bling” (hobnobbing with the rich and famous). Hollande launched his campaign, in the January 26 televised debate, by declaring his opposition to a “windshield wipers” policy—in other words, Hollande will not sweep away the anti-working-class measures that have been enacted during the ten years of right-wing rule. Hollande promises to deprive of a full pension all those who have not actually worked for at least 41 years.

An entire section of the bourgeoisie is irritated by Sarkozy—not so much because of his *nouveau riche* vulgarity but because he has not fulfilled his promise to break the labor movement and dramatically increase the capitalists’ rate of profit. Since French imperialism continues to lose ground against its German rival, it is imperative that its next Commander-in-Chief carry out even more radical attacks against the working class and the oppressed. For the capitalists, Hollande would have the advantage of receiving the support of the union bureaucrats, whom he promised to “consult” and soft-soap as “social partners” in leading French imperialism. ***No vote for François Hollande!***

Hollande has also promised a “relentless” fight against undocumented immigrants. The “solution” he promised for the Roma (Gypsies) is putting them in “camps” to “avoid this constant moving around” (*Le Monde*, 18 February). Meanwhile, he promised to hire more cops, criticizing Sarkozy from the right for insufficient results in maintaining “law and order.” He promised to hire 60,000 teachers—thereby perpetuating a third of the 90,000 job cuts made in education by the right-wing government in recent years—by eliminating jobs in other areas of the public sector.

While Hollande has promised to withdraw French troops from Afghanistan—troops that were initially sent by the Socialist government of [Lionel] Jospin and [Jean-Luc] Mélenchon ten years ago, when Hollande himself was the head of the SP—this is from the standpoint of serving the best interests of French imperialism. The current military losses are no longer justified by the “advantage” of being able to train troops to kill real people and enabling France to negotiate with the United States to obtain certain advantages for its own capitalists. Besides, Hollande has personally declared his support for the bloody military interventions of French imperialism organized by Sarkozy in the Ivory Coast and Libya.

French troops out of Afghanistan, Africa, Lebanon, the Balkans and the Arabian Peninsula!

Moreover, François Hollande is running as the joint candidate of the SP and the Left Radical Party, a bourgeois party. This kind of coalition is a “popular front,” a bloc between bourgeois parties and bourgeois workers parties—that is, parties like the SP or the Communist Party (PCF), which have ties to the labor movement and claim, in one way or another, to be part of it, even though their leadership and program are totally bourgeois. In such coalitions, it is the bourgeois parties that inevitably determine the class character of the alliance, guaranteeing that it will loyally serve the capitalists.

By tying the workers to their class enemy, popular-front alliances have always paved the way for defeat. That is why it is a matter of principle for Marxists to oppose them. The June 1936 Popular Front led to [the Nazi collaborator] Pétain; the 1936 Popular Front in Spain led to the Franco dictatorship which ruled for nearly 40 years; in Chile it led to Pinochet’s coup in 1973. Beginning with [Socialist Party leader François] Mitterrand in 1981, a succession of popular fronts has each time been followed five years later by a return to power of right-wing reactionaries. Meanwhile, the fascists of the National Front have taken root.

We also refuse to give any support to the candidates of the “left of the left.” The social democrats of the PCF and the Left Party (PG) have united behind Jean-Luc Mélenchon, formerly a longtime Socialist Party leader who had held a minor ministerial post during the last years of the Jospin government. The latter boasted of having performed more privatizations than all of the previous right-wing governments. The PCF and PG are unconditionally determined to “defeat the right” on the second round, which decoded means “vote for Hollande.” They are thus acting simply as vote-getters for the popular front.

This is also the role of the NPA [New Anti-Capitalist Party] of Olivier Besancenot and Philippe Poutou. In fact, much of the NPA has been going over to Mélenchon’s party in order to support the popular front more directly (and have a better chance at getting sinecures if the “left” wins the elections). As for Lutte Ouvrière’s candidate, Nathalie Arthaud, she refuses, for the time being, to oppose voting for Hollande. In the 2007 presidential elections, these opportunists called for a vote for [SP candidate] Ségolène Royal on the second round. We call on workers not to vote in the presidential elections, neither on the first nor the second round.

Workers should also not vote in the coming parliamentary elections. This is how Lenin described parliamentarism:

“To decide once every few years which members of the ruling class is to repress and crush the people through parliament—this is the real essence of bourgeois parliamentarism, not only in parliamentary-constitutional monarchies, but also in the most democratic republics.”

—*The State and Revolution* (1917)

However, in parliamentary elections, unlike presidential elections, Marxists may consider running candidates and using the

Current Left Front presidential candidate Jean-Luc Mélenchon (right) in March 2000 with Socialist Party prime minister Lionel Jospin, who picked him to join capitalist government.

Joel Saget



election campaign and, if elected, the parliamentary podium as *oppositionists*, that is, in opposition to the capitalist executive power, no matter who is running the state. The purpose is to disseminate *revolutionary* propaganda and act as a tribune of the workers and the oppressed.

Down With the European Union!

The chauvinist and anti-working-class program of the SP appears particularly clearly in regard to the European Union (EU). The EU is an entirely reactionary institution—a consortium of imperialist states and weaker states—led by Germany. The initial purpose of the EU’s predecessors, the European Coal and Steel Community, the Europe of Six, etc., was to strengthen the economic cohesion of capitalist West Europe—mainly France and Germany—in order to consolidate the NATO military alliance against the Soviet Union.

In the 1980s, the SP of Mitterrand and Mélenchon contributed in no small measure to the victory of capitalist counter-revolution in East Europe. We Trotskyists were for the unconditional military defense of the USSR. In 1989-1990, the left in general, from the SP to Lutte Ouvrière, rejoiced at the prospect of a capitalist reunification of Germany. In contrast, we fought against the absorption of the East German deformed workers state by capitalist West Germany and for *revolutionary* reunification, through a proletarian political revolution against the parasitic Stalinist bureaucracy in East Germany and a *socialist* revolution in the West to overthrow and expropriate the German bourgeoisie.

With the USSR now destroyed, the EU is merely a trading bloc of competing imperialist powers, mainly Germany, France and Britain, which went to war with each other twice in the last century alone to achieve supremacy in Europe and to seize their rivals’ global market share. Supposedly, the only purpose of the EU is to promote “free and fair competition” (even though capitalism over a century ago entered the era of cartels and monopolies). This is an ideological cover for increasing attacks against the gains that workers were able to wrest through their struggles when the Soviet Union still existed. Thus, the anti-union Bolkestein Directive aims at pitting *the workers* of the various European countries against each other. As we wrote in a leaflet (reprinted in *Le Bolchévique*, March 2006), “The Bolkestein Directive gets to the heart of what the European Union is.”

More recently, we stressed in the most recent *Le Bolchévique* (December 2011):

“The EU is a fragile formation exposed to continuous tensions stemming from the disparate national interests of the European imperialists, which are constantly threatening to tear it apart. Nor can it be otherwise. Although the productive forces have long since outgrown a national framework, capitalism is a system that rests essentially on nation-states: each of the various national capitalist classes needs its own state to push through and defend its interests at home and abroad. Hence under capitalism, the goal of political union or a European superstate is necessarily reactionary and an empty utopia.”

—see “Economic Crisis Rips Europe,” WV No. 992, 9 December 2011

The International Communist League has always opposed the EU and its monetary instrument, the euro. In May 1997, as the imperialists’ negotiations for the

for intensifying attacks on workers in the rest of Europe, including Germany and France.

In France, the social democrats have always played a decisive role regarding the EU and the euro. In December 1989, seeking to maintain some leverage over Germany, Mitterrand negotiated a common currency with Chancellor Kohl in exchange for agreeing to the capitalist reunification of Germany, which inevitably would lead to strengthening the power of Germany relative to France. He had the Maastricht Treaty approved by referendum in 1992. (It was approved only by a narrow margin, thanks in part to Mélenchon’s vote in favor and LO’s abstention.) The euro itself was introduced under Jospin’s SP-PCF-Green government, which Mélenchon was part of from 2000 to 2002. Hollande’s SP later campaigned for the Lisbon Treaty [approving a new EU constitution]. (The treaty was rejected by referendum in 2005, but nevertheless adopted in 2008 thanks to the abstention or “yes” vote of over 150 SP members of parliament.) Recently, by deciding to abstain in parliament, the SP saved the latest scheme by “Merkozy” to asphyxiate Greece, called the “European Stability Mechanism.”

That is the EU’s balance sheet for French imperialism. Thanks to the capitalist counterrevolution in East Europe, and the concomitant wage cuts and loss of workers’ gains, the German bourgeoisie was able to outsource a growing share of the inputs of its industrial products to those countries, which are increasingly its economic hinterland. The strength of the



Stefan Boness

Berlin, 1 May 2003: Trade-union protest against Hartz Plan enacted by Social Democratic/Green government to slash welfare and unemployment benefits.

creation of the euro were being finalized, we wrote a leaflet calling for not voting for the PCF/Jospin popular front, which declared: “If in the future, because of workers’ struggles, the ‘monetary union’ is abandoned or postponed indefinitely, this would be a victory for workers, who throughout Europe have militantly resisted the capitalist offensive.” We explained at the time that a single currency was not viable in the absence of a single European government, and that such a government “can only be achieved by the methods of Adolf Hitler, not by those of Jacques Delors, the French social-democratic architect of Maastricht [treaty establishing the euro]” (see “For a Workers Europe—For Socialist Revolution!” WV No. 670, 13 June 1997).

Hollande’s opposition to Sarkozy on the question of Europe is solely from the standpoint of the interests of *French imperialism*, not those of the working class. Hollande accuses Sarkozy of capitulating to France’s German rivals. He went to London not only to reassure the financiers of the City that they had nothing to fear from his speech against “the world of finance,” but also to advocate closer ties between France and Britain against Germany. Hollande has, for example, no intention of changing the conditions imposed by [German chancellor Angela] Merkel and Sarkozy on Greece, which are strangling that country and literally driving its people into extreme poverty. Those measures are also laying the groundwork

euro against the local currencies has further lowered the cost of these products for German capitalists. In addition, wage cuts in Germany itself, particularly under the social-democratic governments headed by Gerhard Schröder in the 2000s, gave German capitalists an increased competitive advantage over the French. The French reformists, who supported the counter-revolution (in the name of “democracy”) and the European Union, are now very disappointed with the outcome: Their own bourgeoisie is the loser.

In fact, no candidate of the workers movement in these elections stands in any way opposed to the EU. Mélenchon and the PCF want the European Central Bank to give money to the poor (to be paid for ultimately by the *German* capitalists through depreciation of the euro and/or through “euro bonds”). Thus, they spread illusions that the EU and its monetary instrument could be placed at the service of the oppressed. While they’re at it, why not call on the fascist Le Pen to defend immigrants?

But the rest of the “left of the left” are no better. For years the NPA, following its predecessor, the misnamed Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire, has called for a “democratic and social” Europe. In other words, they pretend that there can be a capitalist Europe that is more humane than the existing one. The NPA thus deflects the working class away from struggle to overthrow the entire capitalist

continued on page 10



Reuters

December 8: Hellenic Steel workers outside factory in Athens suburb during months-long strike against job and wage cuts.

Canada...

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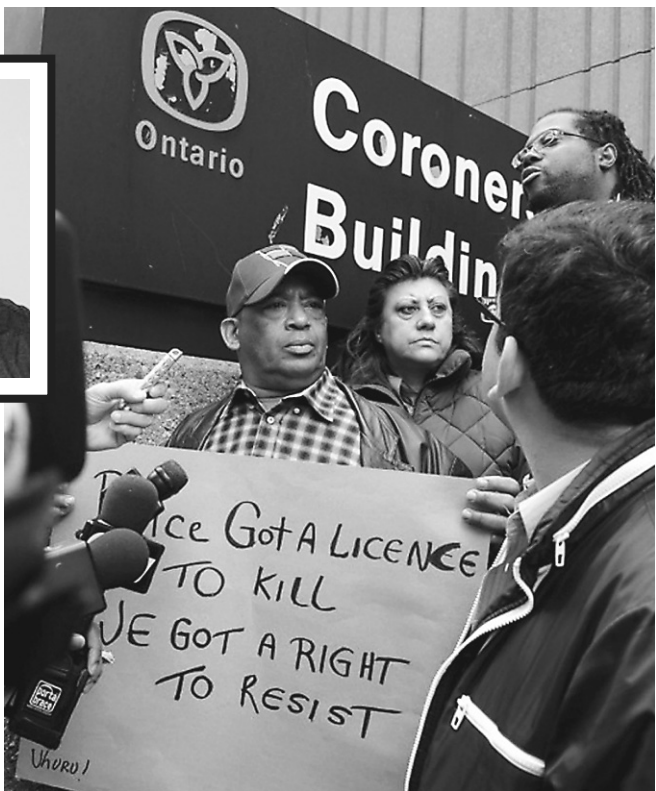
The outcry over public safety minister Vic Toews’ smears against critics of the bill forced the government to recalibrate its pitch, but the legislation is expected to pass without fundamental change (the Liberals earlier introduced similar measures). Also tightening the screws on the population is the Canada-U.S. “Beyond the Border” agreement, another project begun under the previous Liberal government. This promises almost limitless sharing of information among the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police], the Border Service Agency, U.S. Customs and Homeland Security—at a time when, for example, a staggering 85 percent of British Columbians are in the cops’ computer database.

The government’s “security” mania has it shooting in all directions, from the merely deranged to the outright monstrous. The spectacle of resource minister Joe Oliver going after groups like the lofty Sierra Club environmentalists as foreign-funded “radical groups” for opposing the Gateway pipeline project underlines how *anyone* can be a target. In a statement promoting the Tories’ “anti-terrorism” strategy, Toews promised vigilance against “domestic extremism” including “the promotion of various causes such as animal rights, environmentalism, white supremacy and anti-capitalism” (*Globe and Mail*, 11 February). More ominously yet, it was recently revealed that the government has instructed CSIS [Canadian Security Intelligence Service] to use information obtained under torture “in exceptional circumstances.” This is no abstraction. Just recall the case of Maher Arar, an innocent Muslim citizen of Canada who was sent by the U.S. to torture chambers in Syria based on information and acquiescence from Canadian security services.

The ultimate target of the crackdown on dissent is the organized working class. The Tory government cites “national security” to justify its attacks on the labour movement. “War on terror” measures have taken particular aim at unionized workers



Alejandro Manon protests outside Toronto coroner's office in May 2010, two days after his son Junior Manon (inset) was beaten to death by police.



no credit (inset), Eglington/Toronto Star

in the ports and airline industry. In its own way, this testifies to the immense potential power of organized labour to throw back government repression and the attacks on the rights of the population.

A number of protests have taken place against the various “security” bills, in particular the omnibus crime bill. Most were organized in the wake of the Occupy movement that emerged in most major cities last year. Many of the youthful Occupy protesters have themselves been victims of police crackdowns, and it is to their credit that they seek to protest the larger implications behind the Tory bills. Yet they are mired in populist liberal politics which obscure the class line between workers and capitalists. Some even embraced the cops as part of the “99 percent.” Such ideology is an obstacle to the necessary mobilization of the working class in its own name, rallying all the oppressed in a fight against the capitalist system.

The main obstacles to such mobilization are the pro-capitalist labour bureaucracy and its political arm, the social-

democratic NDP. Despite its current posture of opposing Harper’s most egregious measures, the NDP has always supported the enforcement of capitalist “law and order.” Four years ago, the New Democrats supported a Conservative “anti-crime” law that established mandatory minimum sentencing for “gun-related” offences and raised the age of consent from 14 to 16. In the election later that year, [late NDP leader] Jack Layton demanded “tough action on crime, gangs, and guns.” Last year, the NDP again promised to hire thousands more cops, an unashamed pledge of fealty to the racist capitalist order.

The NDP has also always supported the Canadian rulers’ national oppression of Quebec. Historically under the boot of British and then Anglo-Canadian rule, Quebec experienced mass social struggle in the 1960s and early ’70s which led to throwing off the shackles of the repressive Catholic church. With the Québécois population generally more liberal on social issues than that in English Canada,

bourgeois politicians of just about every stripe in Quebec have denounced the Tories’ “crime” bills.

But Quebec has its own variants of racism and state repression. It is there that the furor against the right of Muslim women to wear the *niqab* (full-face veil) has been most intense. In the 1990s, the nationalist Bloc Québécois was the most vocal advocate for “anti-gang” laws, which were eventually adopted. Supposedly aimed against bikers, these have been used almost exclusively to justify cop terror against minority youth in Montreal—and to go after the construction unions. Marxists advocate independence for Quebec, in part because this would create the best conditions for workers in both nations to see the reactionary nature of their “own” capitalist exploiters.

Various labour federations have come out against the Tory crime bill. On the West Coast, the BCGEU public sector union issued a February 13 statement against the bill. But the BCGEU bureaucracy’s sole concerns are about “cost” and the negative effect on screws and sheriffs! That’s right, the BCGEU (and others such as Ontario’s OPSEU) criminally organizes such forces which, as much as the cops, are enforcers of racist capitalist repression. Cops and jail guards are not workers—they have no place in the unions!

The organized labour movement has a crucial role to play in beating back the climate of racism and fear that is only getting worse amid today’s deepgoing economic meltdown. To do so, the working class must be won to the understanding that its own liberation from wage slavery and poverty requires defending the rights of *all* the oppressed and opposing *all* manifestations of state terror against minorities and the left. With its central position in social production, the working class has both the social power and the material interest to stop the creeping police state in its tracks. We Marxists fight for the forging of a multi-racial revolutionary workers party, the necessary instrument to bring this understanding to the ranks of the proletariat. ***Down with Harper’s reactionary “crime” bills—Mobilize the power of labour! ■***

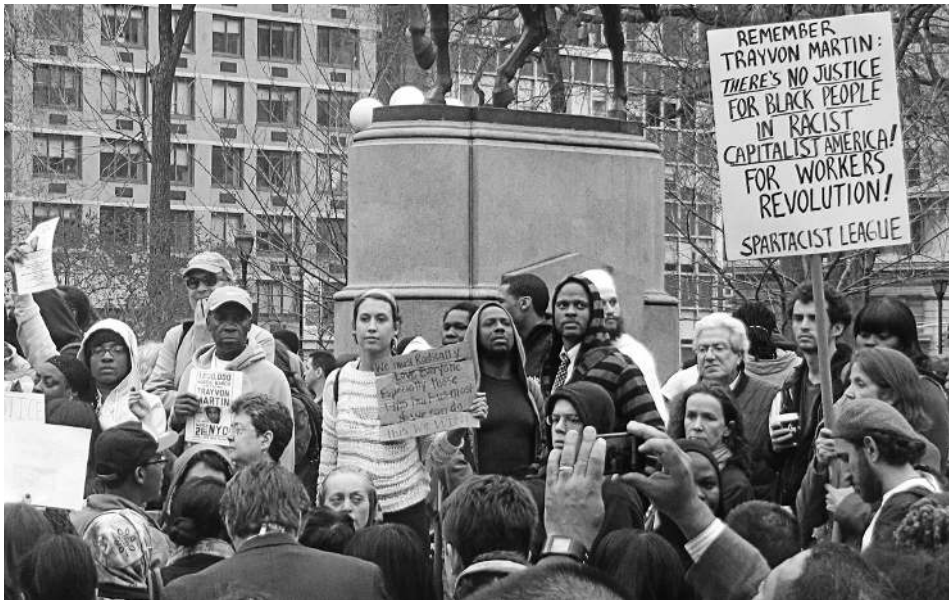
Trayvon...

(continued from page 1)

“get tough on crime” campaign—code for targeting black people. The 2005 law supplanted an earlier Florida law that, like those in many other states, traced its roots to English Common Law. That standard held that self-defense is justified if a person faced with attack first tries to remove himself, if feasible, from immediate danger before using deadly force. Florida’s 2005 law allows for the use of deadly force by anyone who claims a “reasonable belief” that such force is necessary, without even attempting to disengage. And in racist America, a black kid in a hoodie is enough to claim “reasonable belief” of danger. The law also promises criminal and civil immunity for people who claim to have acted in self-defense.

As Marxists, we oppose gun control laws, which are most often promoted by Democratic Party liberals and black politicians, and uphold the right to armed self-defense. But we oppose the “stand your ground” law, which, in removing retreat as a criterion for self-defense, sanctions vigilantism, including murder.

The working class and the black population must zealously defend the Constitutional right to bear arms, a product of the Revolutionary War against British colonial rule. Gun control kills, and it kills blacks in particular. It is a means to enforce a monopoly of violence in the hands of the capitalist state. Gun control leaves guns in the hands of cops, criminals and Klansmen while making the country’s black, poor and working people defenseless. Trayvon Martin might be alive today if he had been carrying a gun. But as the Martin family’s attorney said, had Trayvon been the shooter, “he would have been arrested day one, hour



WV Photo

New York City: Thousands gathered in Union Square on March 21 for “million hoodie march” initiated by Occupy Wall Street, part of nationwide Trayvon Martin protests.

one, and wouldn’t have been given bail.”

In capitalist America, black self-defense against racist terror has historically been met with frenzied state repression. The earliest 20th-century gun control laws were passed in states like South Carolina, Tennessee and Mississippi as a way to disarm blacks in the face of KKK terror. In 1965, the New York City Council passed a bill especially to keep Malcolm X from carrying a carbine for his protection; he was assassinated shortly afterward. In 1967, the California legislature banned the carrying of a loaded gun after legally armed Black Panthers began patrolling ghettos where police terror was rampant. The state’s ban was followed by gun control laws nationwide, especially after the ghetto upheavals that broke out following Martin Luther King’s assassination in 1968.

From day one, liberal political spokesmen have tried to steer the outrage over Trayvon Martin’s killing into the time-worn call for the federal government to step in to make things right. At a town hall meeting in Sanford on March 21, dozens of black residents told of being profiled, humiliated and physically assaulted by the cops. National NAACP leader Ben Jealous took that occasion to say that the local police department had “gone a bit rogue” and that’s why they needed to bring in the Department of Justice. The Justice Department are the *top cops* of a system where daily racist terror is meted out by police in the ghettos and barrios—from NYC’s “stop and frisk” dragnet to L.A.’s “anti-gang” crackdowns. When the Feds step in, at most they enact some meaningless “reforms” or get rid of some “bad apples.” Their purpose in doing so is to clean up

the cops’ image to make them more effective, and to get angry people off the streets.

Along with the military, the police, courts and prisons form the core of the capitalist state, an instrument of coercion and organized violence for the suppression of one class, the working class, by another class, the capitalists. While even many Florida state authorities say that Zimmerman went beyond his mandate in gunning down an unarmed 17-year-old, the fact is that the cops’ constant drumbeat of cracking down on crime and pursuing the “war on drugs” fosters the growth of such vigilante scum. And the police themselves feed off of vigilante violence. In promoting Neighborhood Watch outfits, the cops are building up auxiliaries to their enforcement of the murderous racist status quo. The role of such racist vigilantes was seen in 2005 after Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast, as armed white patrols, along with the cops, forcibly blocked blacks from evacuating as the flood waters rose, including through outright murder.

Central Florida: Racist, Anti-Labor Bastion

Sanford is located in central Florida, whose history is indelibly marked by bloody racist terror—legal and extra-legal. A center of the citrus industry, this region was developed in the aftermath of the North’s victory over the South in the Civil War that smashed slavery. Northern capitalists, such as the town’s namesake, Henry Shelton Sanford, grabbed up real estate, developing orange groves and tourism as well as winter homes. When black laborers were brought in to work the orange groves, a campaign of race-terror soon followed that attacked them as competitors for “white jobs.”

In the early 1930s, the bosses struck with bloody vengeance against a union

As Cops Launch New Attacks at Zuccotti Park DSA Ropes In Occupy Youth for the Democrats

MARCH 24—On the night of March 17, protesters from Occupy Wall Street gathered in Zuccotti Park in lower Manhattan to mark the six-month anniversary of the start of the tent protest. Then the NYPD moved in. Not content with their brutalization of protesters in November, when the park was cleared in a nighttime raid, cops again viciously attacked protesters and arrested more than 70. One woman who went into seizures after arrest was prevented from receiving medical attention for over ten minutes, and she is now facing a felony charge of assaulting an officer. As protesters left the Wall Street area and marched up Broadway, cops slammed the head of a medic into a glass door, breaking the panel.

At least three of the protesters face felony charges. Billionaire mayor Michael Bloomberg was bullish on the cop assault, saying, “You want to get arrested? We’ll accommodate you.” There have been more arrests since then, including today at an Occupy protest against police brutality. We demand: ***Drop all the charges now!***

Looking for some answers to the grinding capitalist economic crisis and the constant cop attacks on protesters, some Occupy activists were drawn to the annual Left Forum last weekend only a few blocks from Zuccotti Park. Run by the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), the event adopted the theme “Occupy the System: Confronting Global Capitalism.”

From the time of its origins under Michael Harrington, the DSA has “occupied” a position *inside* the Democratic Party of U.S. imperialism. What it seeks to do today is to channel protest against the austerity demanded by Wall Street to make working people pay for the global capitalist economic crisis into support for the same Democratic Party that is overseeing these attacks from the White House. The Occupy movement’s refrain of the “99 percent” versus the “1 percent” has touched a chord among broad sections of society. But that vague populist notion obscures the fundamental class divide in society between the working class and the capitalist class, whose obscene wealth is gained through exploiting work-

ers’ labor. Occupy spokesmen’s embrace of this country’s supposed “democratic values”—certainly music to the DSA’s ears—also serves to disguise the class nature of the capitalist state and its political parties.

Leading DSAers Frances Fox Piven and Cornel West were featured at a showcase session on Occupy and “the Future of the Democratic Left” that trumpeted

the country. But for Piven, this policy turned the Democrats into the “party of the poor.” Piven also proclaimed that Harrington’s notion of a “culture of poverty” among the country’s dispossessed would later be “misunderstood” by mainstream and right-wing bourgeois ideologues to blame impoverished blacks and whites for their own condition.

In the discussion period, a Spartacist

people. Three years since, auto workers are working themselves to death, if they are new workers, for \$15 an hour in wages because of Obama’s bailout of the auto companies. We’ve had an expansion of the ‘war on terror’; attacks on democratic rights at home and the codification of assassination of U.S. citizens overseas; an expansion of the war in Afghanistan.

“This is the Democratic Party of U.S. imperialism. If you want a question, here’s one: What does the Democratic Party becoming the ‘party of the poor’ in the ‘60s mean for the Vietnamese workers and peasants, who scored the biggest victory for poor people around the world when they defeated U.S. imperialism, under the Democratic Party and the Republican Party?”

Calling for a revolutionary workers party, our speaker concluded by saying that the way to get rid of the capitalist exploiters was to take the road of the Bolsheviks.

It is not lost on the DSA that some radical-minded Occupy protesters are less than enthusiastic about becoming voting cattle for Obama’s re-election. In response to our speaker, Cornel West played up his image as a “radical” black spokesman in offering that “the Democratic Party has never been a party fundamentally concerned with poor people.” But this statement was in the service of promoting pro-Democratic Party pressure politics, a strategy embraced by not only the DSA but the entire reformist left. West declared that the Democratic Party “has made concessions when poor and working people created movements and put pressure, and brought pressure to bear on the system.” Piven said straight out that she would be very glad to see Obama and the Congressional Democrats win big in November.

The false notion that the interests of the working class and minorities run through the Democratic Party has long served to chain the exploited and the oppressed to the brutal, crisis-ridden capitalist system. In peddling this lie to generations of activists, the DSA faithfully follows Michael Harrington’s dictum to be the “left wing of the possible,” acting as a roadblock to the development of class consciousness and its political expression: the independence of the working class from all the parties of the capitalist class enemy. ■



Arafin/Demotix

NYPD assault on Occupy protester in Zuccotti Park, March 17, when more than 70 were arrested.

the 50th anniversary of Harrington’s book *The Other America*. The book was one way that Harrington helped braintrust the bogus “war on poverty” declared by Democratic president Lyndon Johnson in 1964. (Harrington, it should be noted, was the titular head of the Socialist Party for years while that party supported U.S. imperialism’s counterrevolutionary war in Vietnam.) The “war on poverty” was one part of the capitalist rulers’ attempt to undercut and co-opt the tumultuous struggles for black equality that had shaken up

League speaker pointed out that, three years ago, his comrade was shouted down at a very similar panel when she declared that it was criminal for socialists, working-class and black militants to support the Democrat Barack Obama’s election as president. Our speaker continued:

“I don’t know about Michael Harrington’s ‘culture’ being misunderstood, but there’s no misunderstanding that he said the place for socialists was in the Democratic Party, perpetuating the lie that that’s the party for poor people, for workers, for immigrants and black

organizing drive by the United Citrus Workers (UCW). KKK nightriders terrorized organizers, crushing the UCW. In 1935, Joseph Shoemaker, a Socialist, was abducted by the Klan assisted by Tampa police. He was castrated, tarred and feathered, dying of his injuries after two weeks of suffering. In the face of such brutal terror, the Communist Party-led United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing, and Allied Workers of America, a CIO affiliate, soon arose and led a heroic fight for unionization. But it also faced a devastating wave of Klan terror, employer scabherding and government repression.

Florida has the distinction of being among the most brutal of Southern lynching states, as exemplified by the 1934 lynching of Claude Neal, a 23-year-old sharecropper. Neal was arrested by the Jackson County Sheriff and charged with the murder of a white woman. The illiterate man was forced to sign a written confession with an X. He ended up in the hands of a mob, tortured for hours and then lynched, his body parts distributed as “souvenirs.” Liberal icon Franklin D. Roosevelt steadfastly refused to support federal anti-lynching laws because that would have posed a break with the segregationist Dixiecrat components of his 1930s New Deal coalition.

Sanford, Florida, is itself branded in rac-

ist infamy. Isabel Wilkerson’s *The Warmth of Other Suns*, a study of the Great Migration of blacks out of the South, recounts the story of George Swanson Starling, who barely escaped the town with his life in 1945 after attempting to organize black tangerine pickers to demand higher wages. The following year, Jackie Robinson was run out of town when the Montreal Royals, part of the Brooklyn Dodgers’ farm system, went there for spring training. In response, Dodgers’ owner Branch Rickey packed up and moved the team to Daytona Beach.

It took the tumultuous struggles for black rights in the 1950s and ‘60s to break the back of official Jim Crow segregation in the South. The success of the liberal-led civil rights struggles was in bringing the South into alignment with the bourgeois-democratic norms in the rest of the country. This development did not—and could not—address the poverty, unemployment, rotten housing, segregated education and rampant cop terror that afflict the bulk of the black population. These conditions are deeply rooted in U.S. capitalism, whether or not they are officially codified in the legal sanctions of the bourgeois state. While today blacks possess formal equality under the law, this is pervasively violated in practice. And there could be no sharper example of that than the gun-

ning down of Trayvon Martin.

The enduring color bar is the greatest obstacle to working-class unity in the U.S., serving to obscure the fundamental class divide in society by providing an illusion of common interest between white workers and their class enemy, the white capitalist exploiters. As Karl Marx declared in Volume I of *Capital* (1867): “Labor cannot

emancipate itself in the white skin where in the black it is branded.” It is through united class struggle that the workers can and must overcome these divisions, promoting their interests as a class against their common enemy. What is crucially needed is to forge a workers party that emblazons on its banners: Black liberation through socialist revolution! ■

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(continued from page 7)

“Such a step backward would lock the workers into the national straitjacket at the mercy of their own implacable national bourgeoisies, each one bitterly defending its own position within the new international division of labor. There is another way out, a democratic and progressive one, within the European framework, which has become the new arena for struggles by workers and by the peoples.”

The [Lambertist] Parti Ouvrier Indépendant (POI) has its own chauvinist line of ultra-French delirium. At a February 13 Paris demonstration over the crisis in Greece, its members chanted slogans against the EU as an “American agency” and called for the EU/International Monetary Fund/European Central Bank troika to get out of Paris, presumably to protect “la belle France” from their misdeeds. Thus the POI covers up the role of French imperialism in the oppression of Greece.

Throughout Europe, nationalism is on the rise, an ideological expression of the sharpening of rivalries between the continent's bourgeoisies. To fight this, it is necessary to break openly with the reactionary fiction of European capitalist unity and to fight for revolutionary proletarian internationalism. Today this particularly means solidarity with our class brothers in Greece who are being crushed under the jackboot of the French BNP bank, the Deutsche Bank and the European Central Bank. It is necessary to oppose the protec-

Ditto for the PCF with its “produce French” slogan, which it just dredged up



again a few months ago, and which has been picked up by the National Front. Today the National Front presents essentially a parliamentary package. But at bottom the fascists are paramilitary shock troops who carry out racist terror and whose ultimate target is the working class. The decaying capitalist system is the fertile terrain that nourishes the fascists. In the event of a sharp crisis, the bourgeoisie mobilizes them against the working class as it did in Germany in 1933. This is why the struggle against fascism cannot be separated from the struggle for socialist revolution. To crush them it is necessary to mobilize the working class in defense of Muslims, immigrants, homosexuals and all the designated targets of the fascist scum. It is necessary to fight to overthrow capitalism—a perspective rejected by the union bureaucrats, since they seek to keep the unions chained to the capitalist order.

This requires struggle for *industrial unions*, which bring together in the same fighting organization all the workers at a given location—including those provided by subcontractors—whether it is a French or foreign company. And this in turn requires a fight for a new leadership in the unions, a revolutionary internationalist leadership replacing the bureaucrats, who are content with the division of unionized

The division of the working class along national lines, accompanied by protectionism, goes hand in hand with the division of the workers within the country along ethnic, racial and sexual lines. Mélenchon, protectionism's clearest advocate among the candidates of the workers' movement, has virtually nothing to say against the government's racist campaigns in his 96-page platform. What is at stake, however, is nothing less than the unity of the multiethnic and multiracial proletariat of this country. *Full citizenship rights for everyone who has made it here! Down*

No Vote to LO!

Nathalie Arthaud, Lutte Ouvrière's candidate, presents herself as the only "communist candidate." She is trying to take advantage of the hesitancy of a significant number of PCF members about voting for Mélenchon. But Arthaud's program has nothing to do with communism. Furthermore, LO has always been in favor of the EU and the euro. In their latest conference document (*Lutte Ouvrière*, December 2011-January 2012), they lament that in recent times "the few steps forward made by the bourgeoisie to overcome national rivalries, as in the field of monetary unification, are now in jeopardy." They have always celebrated the supposedly "open borders" created by the Schengen Treaty [which ostensibly allows free movement between member states while erecting barriers against non-European immigrants]. Yet at any given time an estimated 100,000 people in the EU are in jail because they lack the required papers, and 140,000 are deported each year. And about 15,000 peo-

At bottom, LO's election program boils down to wanting to "impose on the bosses a ban on layoffs," to "force the state to hire" and to "impose workers control in

10

WORKERS VANGUARD

(continued from page 12)

One need look no further than what happened with the Australian MUA's fight against the union-busting Patrick Stevedores outfit in 1998. With the backing of the Liberal/National Coalition government, Patrick sacked its entire unionised workforce, sparking a massive show of union power. We wrote at the time that a solid nationwide strike shutting down the ports was necessary ("Smash Bosses' Union-Busting Offensive in Australia!" WV No. 689, 24 April 1998). But the union tops demobilised labour action, counterposing faith in the courts and the election of a Labor government. The Australian High Court eventually ruled against Patrick's termination of the whole workforce. But this didn't stop Patrick from getting rid of hundreds of MUA members and blacklisting others.

In Auckland, MUNZ leaders have repeatedly made appeals to Labour mayor Brown and turned to him to end the lock-out, with Parsloe declaring, “Governance at the Ports of Auckland is out of control. It’s time for the mayor and council to step in and sack this board, and replace them with a group who are willing to run this important asset properly” (*New Zealand Herald*, 22 March). The role of the mayor and other Labour Party politicians is to subordinate workers to the capitalists and their state. As one sign carried at the March 10 MUNZ rally expressed: “Len Brown Is a Scab.”

Workers of the World, Unite!

Workers in Australia and New Zealand do have an internationalist labour tradition. Following World War II, as Dutch and Allied imperialists sought to move troops and supplies into Indonesia to shore up colonial control, Australian and New Zealand waterfront workers, alongside Indonesian, Chinese and

A black and white photograph showing several police officers in uniform attending to a man lying on the ground. One officer is leaning over the man, while others stand nearby. The man is wearing a cap and glasses.

Sydney, Australia: Cops assault dock workers on picket line in 1998 during fight against Patrick Stevedores union-busting.

For a Revolutionary Workers Party!

A fighting labour movement could attract allies amongst broad sections of the population. Already on hearing of

With its significant Maori membership, the MUNZ bridges a key fault line in New Zealand society. Like Australia, the history of New Zealand is marked by deep-going xenophobia and racism. However, unlike Australia, where the Aboriginal population suffered near-genocide through European settlement, New Zealand was officially founded on the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi signed by the British Crown and Maori chiefs, although Maori land was later stolen through the Maori Wars. Today, almost 15 percent of the population are Maori. They suffer a special oppression reflected in almost every aspect of society, including highly disproportionate levels of unemployment, homelessness and poverty, and are targeted for racist state abuse and terror. Nevertheless, similar to black people in the U.S., Maori form a critical component of the New Zealand proletariat. A key to the struggle to overthrow New Zealand capitalist rule will be the fight for full equality and justice for Maori people, including restoring stolen land. Future Maori communist leaders will be in the forefront of the revolutionary struggle.

The New Zealand proletariat needs a multiracial revolutionary party. Such a party will be built through a political struggle to split the working-class base of the Labour Party away from the pro-capitalist tops. Under the red banner of communist internationalism, such a party will unleash the power of the proletariat leading behind it all the diverse sectors and layers of society devastated by capitalism in the struggle to expropriate the profit-gouging rulers in a thoroughgoing socialist revolution. Those who labour must rule! ■

LO thinks that the workers' vital needs can be "imposed...by a collective working-class struggle that is so massive and so explosive that it really threatens the capitalist class.... The capitalist class will not concede anything without feeling the anger of the working class and the threat to its own profits and wealth." But when such an explosive struggle occurs, that's when serious business starts, not where it ends: Either one is satisfied with having obtained these "basic needs" by posing threats or one goes forward to overthrow capitalism. LO clearly limits itself to the former perspective, thereby promising to repeat the PCF's betrayals in the June 1936 and May 1968 general strikes, when the PCF made the workers return to work with a few economic concessions from the bourgeoisie, betraying the possibilities for socialist revolution. As always in such cases, the concessions achieved were immediately undermined by the capitalists, who are only satisfied when gains are emptied of their content.

organs of power, at the factory level and at the level of society as a whole, and to liquidate capitalist property for good. If such a perspective is not posed from a revolutionary standpoint, which LO does not do, it simply amounts to joint management, in which the union bureaucrats participate in decisions by the shareholders on how to increase the rate of profit on their investment. In this period of sharp capitalist crisis, it also means jointly overseeing layoffs and plant closings. The following words by Trotsky in the Transitional Program (1938) directly apply to LO:

"Classical Social Democracy, functioning in an epoch of progressive capitalism, divided its program into two parts independent of each other: the *minimum program* which limited itself to reforms within the framework of bourgeois society, and the *maximum program* which promised substitution of socialism for capitalism in the indefinite future. Between the minimum and the maximum program no bridge existed. And indeed Social Democracy has no need of such a bridge, since the word *socialism* is used only for holiday speechifying.... Insofar as the old, partial, 'minimal' demands of the masses clash with the destructive and degrading tendencies of decadent capitalism—and this occurs at each step—the Fourth International advances a system of transitional demands, the essence of which is contained in the fact that ever more openly and decisively they will be directed against the very bases of the bourgeois regime. The old 'minimal program' is superseded by the *transitional program*, the task of which lies in systematic mobilization of the masses for the proletarian revolution."

The workers movement has been beset by demoralization for the last 20 years, since the counterrevolution in the Soviet Union and the so-called “death of communism.” This demoralization only sharpens the contradiction between the objective tasks facing the proletariat and its low level of consciousness. But that does not change the fact that the only way to resolve this contradiction is to fight for a revolutionary working-class party. In the course of the class struggle, the working class acquires socialist consciousness not spontaneously (as LO preaches in its holiday speechifying) but through the intervention of a Leninist party.

In these elections there is no choice for the working people. No candidate presents—even on the first round, even in the crudest way—a line of class independence against Hollande and Sarkozy, the two main candidates whom the bourgeoisie is considering for leadership of French imperialism in the period ahead. Whoever is elected, the working class confronts a strengthening of the capitalist offensive against its gains. The workers will be all the better prepared for that confrontation if they refuse to heed the siren song of the popular front or vote for it. Above all, the working class needs a new leadership, a revolutionary leadership. We are fighting to build the Leninist party that will one day lead the workers to the victorious overthrow of capitalism. *Reforge the Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution! For the Socialist United States of Europe!* ■

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Obama/Gillard's Anti-China Provocation-No to U.S. Marines!

Defend China!

**Down With Counterrevolutionary
U.S./Australia Alliance!**

On 12 October, the Australian Prime Minister, John Howard, announced that the Australian Government will support the U.S. Marines' deployment to the Philippines. This is a direct provocation to China, which has repeatedly warned that it will take strong action to prevent the U.S. Marines from being deployed to the Philippines. The U.S. Marines' deployment to the Philippines is a clear sign of the U.S. Government's intention to use military force to maintain its imperialist rule over the Philippines. The U.S. Government's intention to use military force to maintain its imperialist rule over the Philippines is a clear sign of the U.S. Government's intention to use military force to maintain its imperialist rule over the Philippines.



These men who stand against U.S. imperialism have been arrested by the Philippine police and are being held in a U.S. detention facility in Manila.

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Down With the EU! For a Socialist United States of Europe!

Economic Crisis Rips Europe

The economic crisis in Europe has reached a point of no return. The European Union is now facing a deep and prolonged recession, with unemployment rates rising sharply and government budgets in deficit. The crisis has exposed the weaknesses of the capitalist system and the need for a socialist alternative. The European Union is now facing a deep and prolonged recession, with unemployment rates rising sharply and government budgets in deficit. The crisis has exposed the weaknesses of the capitalist system and the need for a socialist alternative.



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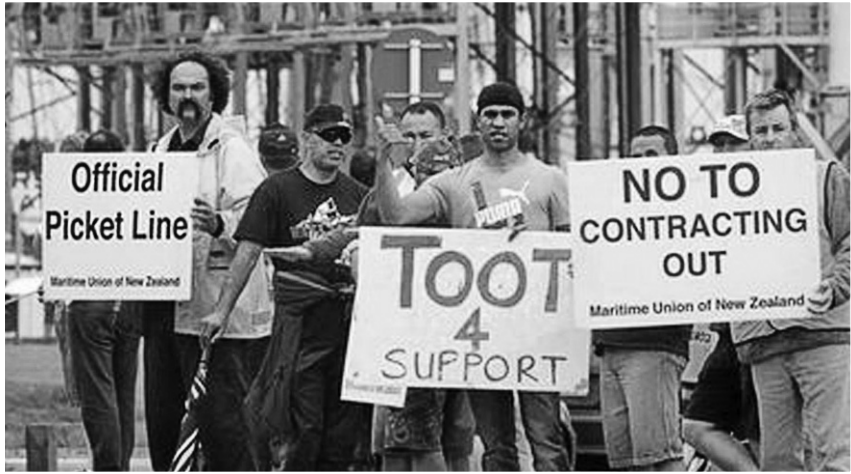
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WORKERS VANGUARD

New Zealand: Auckland Port Bosses Wage War on Union Dock Workers



Purcell/New Zealand Herald

The following article was written by the Spartacist League of Australia.

MARCH 26—For more than six months, Maritime Union of New Zealand (MUNZ) Local 13 has been engaged in a battle with the union-busting Ports of Auckland Limited (POAL), which is dead set on casualising the workforce on the docks of New Zealand's largest container port. This showdown is part of an offensive by shipping bosses and capitalist governments worldwide to break dockers unions. Ripple effects from the outcome are sure to be felt all around this island nation, which is highly dependent on shipping, across the Tasman Sea in Australia and beyond. At stake is the very existence of MUNZ—historically one of the most powerful and militant unions in New Zealand, with a membership that includes a sizable number of Maori, the brutally oppressed indigenous population.

Auckland port bosses have decreed that if workers want to keep their jobs they must accept an end to regular shifts and concede complete flexibility in rostering (scheduling). In response to a raft of such ultimatums issued by POAL especially since the expiration of the Local 13 collective agreement in September, the union called a series of short strikes. Fed up with management's intransigence, MUNZ workers downed tools on February 24 for three weeks and began to picket the port. Port traffic dried up to a trickle. On March 7, the port declared that 292 workers, including 235 striking MUNZ members, would be sacked and their jobs outsourced to three stevedoring companies. In response, unionists and others across the country and internationally—themselves suffering the ravages of the capitalist economic crisis—have rallied to the defence of the embattled MUNZ workers.

A March 10 rally in Auckland organised by MUNZ and the New Zealand Council of Trade Unions (NZCTU) drew thousands of dockworkers and their backers, including dockers from Lyttelton and Wellington, as well as nurses, firefighters and manufacturing workers. A contingent was fielded by the Meat Workers Union, which is itself fighting a union-busting drive by beef and lamb processor AFFCO. Joining the rally from overseas were a Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) contingent, Australian Electrical Trades Union workers and members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) in the U.S. Spartacist League of Australia supporters in attendance reported a palpable desire among workers at the demo and on the picket line to strike back against these anti-union attacks. In the middle of



Sherring/New Zealand Herald

Auckland, March 10: Some 2,000 people marched in support of striking dock workers, shown in inset at port picket.

No Reliance on the Capitalist Courts! For International Labor Solidarity Action!

the rally, there was great applause after 50 Maori union militants spanning generations commenced a *haka*—a traditional war dance meant to overawe and terrify the foe.

Amid the outpouring of support for Local 13 wharfies (longshoremen), on March 21 POAL agreed to temporarily halt contracting out jobs for four weeks and resume negotiations with MUNZ. But this was a ruse. The very next day, as MUNZ members were preparing to return to work, a POAL statement declared that the port would continue to employ contract stevedores—i.e., scabs—for the next two weeks. POAL's plan is to then indefinitely lock out the workforce with, in the words of POAL chairman Richard Pearson, the aim of "maintaining an existing right to move to a competitive stevedoring system." This provocation was followed on March 23 by Pearson's violence-baiting picketers for "intimidation and threats of physical violence" against the scabs who are doing his dirty work.

If the POAL bosses get their way, conditions at the Auckland port will match those at the notoriously hazardous, privately owned Port of Tauranga, a POAL rival located at Mount Maunganui on the east coast of New Zealand's North Island. Management at Tauranga has succeeded in fragmenting the workforce into competing units employed by several stevedoring companies. Two of these outfits set up company unions to better control workers and keep out MUNZ and the Rail and Maritime Transport Union (RMTU). Workers at the different companies are played off against one another, driving down wages far below Auckland levels.

Work is heavily casualised, with high turnover, and already dangerous working conditions are getting worse. In less than two years, three workers have been killed on the job. Workers say they hold back from reporting frequent accidents and injuries for fear of being blacklisted.

This union-busting assault can be turned back. The strength of the proletariat lies in its numbers, organisation, discipline and, above all, in the fact that through its labour it uniquely makes the wheels of profit turn in capitalist society. The union has found plenty of allies, both domestically and internationally. But union power has been kept in check by a Labour Party-loyal leadership whose overwhelming fealty is to New Zealand capitalism. POAL is owned by Auckland Council Investments Limited, the investment arm of the city council, which in turn is presided over by Labour Party mayor Len Brown.

A February 3 MUNZ and NZCTU "Port of Auckland Dispute Fact Sheet" declares that "union members are committed to the success of the company, and to building on the performance improvements already achieved." Such class-collaborationist rot pushes the lie that there can be a partnership between the exploited and their exploiters. In negotiations, the union has agreed to givebacks amid the port's drive for more "flexibility." Even under the previous agreement, 20 percent of workers are casual, with no guarantee of work, while 27 percent can count on only 24 hours a week and the entire workforce can be rostered to work any shift, night and day, seven days a week. Predictably, POAL's response to

the givebacks and the grovelling has been to demand more of the same.

The situation cries out for a class-struggle fight, up to and including a national port strike. In response to the bosses' divide-and-rule schemes, there needs to be a struggle to organise the unorganised—beginning with Tauranga—and fight for uniform wages and conditions at the highest level on an industry-wide basis. *Victory to the Auckland dockworkers!*

No Reliance on the Capitalist Courts!

Dockworkers elsewhere in New Zealand have been eager to aid their class brothers and sisters in Auckland. Union workers at Wellington and RMTU members at Tauranga refused to handle ships loaded by scabs in Auckland until they were ordered to do so by New Zealand's Employment Court. Similarly, port workers at Lyttelton announced that they would not service a scab-loaded ship. But while that ship was at sea, the court at Christchurch ruled that it must be worked as usual, and it was unloaded when it called. In each case, the union tops bowed to injunctions issued by the bosses' courts. Meanwhile, MUNZ president Garry Parsloe has treacherously sown illusions in the very same Employment Court as a tool in the union's fight against POAL.

Any reliance on the capitalist courts can only disarm and derail workers struggle. The courts, including the arbitration courts, and cops are core components of the capitalist state, which exists to defend the interests of the class enemy.

continued on page 11