

Billionaire Bloomberg Squeezes NYC Workers



The Rockaways, Queens: With power out two weeks after Superstorm Sandy hit, people gather for donated food on November 12 (left); sanitation workers clear debris, November 27 (right). Getty photos

Hungry and Homeless in the Shadow of Wall Street

DECEMBER 4—Five weeks ago, a weakening Hurricane Sandy, which had devastated parts of the Caribbean and the U.S. East Coast, combined with a Nor'easter to steamroll much of the coastal areas of New York City. From the east and south shores of Staten Island across the Lower New York Bay into Brooklyn's Coney Island and Red Hook and the Rockaways in Queens, the densely populated banking center and port metropolis was slammed with killer winds, a record storm surge and massive flooding. Since then, what stands in stark contrast is the extent of recovery for the city's rich and poor, for the capitalist owners and for the workers who make the city run.

Wall Street was back online within two days of the storm's landfall. In little more than a week, a grueling, 24-7 deployment of transit, sanitation and utility workers had restored life in most of Manhattan to conditions little changed from the holiday shopping season one year prior. But for the largely black and Latino residents of public housing projects and the homeless, the picture was very different. Many were served their Thanksgiving dinners from volunteer food lines in outdoor parking lots or inside parish halls. More than a month after the storm, thousands of people still lack heat, water, power or working elevators, at best getting intermittent service. The high-traffic emergency room of Bellevue, the 276-year-old free public hospital evacuated in the storm, is still closed and will not resume operation as a Level One trauma center before February.

After Sandy flooded the Red Hook Houses in Brooklyn, it took the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) two weeks to dispatch workers to knock on tenants' doors to see if they were alive. When agency workers finally did arrive,

they found 127 residents requiring medical care, six of whom needed ambulances. When the NYCHA showed up in the Rockaways, one member of a family of 12 living in a single apartment told the *New York Daily News* (13 November), "We're living like animals and all they were worried about was the \$1,000-a-month rent."

Even in fair weather, it is a struggle for the impoverished families who live in the projects to get apartments painted, elevators maintained or broken boilers fixed. But after the storm, even as the NYCHA announced that it would be weeks or months before heat was restored, it initially threatened to evict anyone who didn't pay rent. No surprise, then, that Red Hook residents lining up for Red Cross blankets were furious when NYCHA chairman John Rhea showed up on November 12 to magnanimously announce that they would get a partial rent credit, calling this "a nice little Christmas present." Evidently NYCHA bureaucrats view the public housing residents in about the same light as the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) bosses and city admin-

istrators view their workforces, which is to say, as master to subject.

The disaster brought on by the storm threw into sharp relief the everyday cruelties of life in the financial center of U.S. capitalist society, which is run for the profit of the tiny group of families who own industry and the banks. The number of New Yorkers who are dependent on food pantries or soup kitchens—a number that includes many working poor as well as unemployed—has swelled far beyond the 1.4 million (17 percent of the population) who survived in this way before Sandy hit. Already before the storm, there were 47,000 homeless in shelters across the city, many of them victims of bank foreclosures, others too poor to afford the cost of rent. Sandy increased the number of homeless by tens of thousands, with most of those driven from public housing in low-lying areas. The new homeless have been shuffled chaotically from evacuation centers in public schools to armory floors to hotel rooms without cooking facilities. One Far Rockaway evacuee, roused from his bed for a transfer, declared: "It's like

you were being processed to go to jail."

The scourge of homelessness, though compounded by natural disasters like Hurricane Sandy, is firmly rooted in the normal functioning of the capitalist system. A study early this year by the advocacy group Picture the Homeless estimated that the thousands of properties in New York City that are kept vacant, largely for the purpose of real estate speculation, could house some 200,000 people. The same is true nationally as banks have driven millions from their homes, leaving the properties vacant until real estate prices rebound. According to the 2010 census, almost 19 million homes in this country sit vacant while some 3.5 million people remain homeless.

By the lights of the capitalist profit system, it is entirely just that the bourgeoisie and its high-priced executives possess mansions and vacation homes around the world, with more rooms than they can count, while the poor are consigned to crumbling, rat- and roach-infested projects. Meanwhile, working people who buy homes are prey to the banking and insurance vultures. As long ago as 1872, Friedrich Engels, who co-founded with Karl Marx the modern communist movement, addressed the problem in his work *The Housing Question*:

"One thing is certain: there is already a sufficient quantity of houses in the big cities to remedy immediately all real 'housing *shortage*,' provided they are used judiciously. This can naturally only occur through the expropriation of the present owners by quartering in their houses homeless workers or workers overcrowded in their present homes. As soon as the proletariat has won political power, such a measure prompted by concern for the common good will be just as easy to carry out as are other expropriations and billetings by the present-day state."

Engels concluded:

"As long as the capitalist mode of production continues to exist it is folly to hope for an isolated settlement of the housing question or of any other social question affecting the lot of the workers. The solution lies in the abolition of the capitalist mode of production and the

continued on page 8



Red Hook, Brooklyn: Public housing residents without power or heat wait for supplies, November 12. AP



After Decades-Long Anti-Woman Witchhunt

Court Finally Exonerates Lindy Chamberlain

Australia

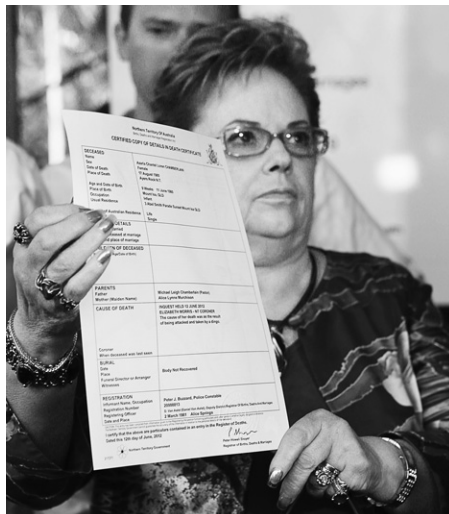
We reprint below an article from *Australasian Spartacist* No. 216 (Winter 2012), newspaper of the *Spartacist League of Australia*, section of the *International Communist League*.

**Australasian
SPARTACIST**

Almost 32 years after the tragic death of nine-week-old Azaria Chamberlain in August 1980 and the subsequent vicious witchhunt and wrongful jailing of her mother Lindy for her murder, on 12 June this year a Northern Territory (NT) coroner finally ruled that the Chamberlains' baby daughter died as a result of being taken from her tent by a dingo [wild dog] or dingoes in a campground near Uluru (then, Ayers Rock) in central Australia. Lindy Chamberlain-Creighton, as she is now known, and her former husband, Michael, welcomed the ruling. For over

three decades they and their supporters have tenaciously fought to have the truth recognised.

The witchhunt of Lindy Chamberlain and her family was a lightning rod for the mean-minded bigotry and deep misogynist prejudice that permeates Australian capitalist society. From early on, the case captured international headlines. The basic facts of Azaria's disappearance were quickly submerged in a spiralling police, court and media witchhunt. The police particularly hated Lindy who emerged as an articulate and strong-willed fighter. Picking up on tidbits fed them by the cops, the bourgeois media created a garish circus of rumour and malice, including sensational stories of devils and bizarre black rituals [witchcraft]. An endless stream of gruesome "forensic" reports complemented the medieval hysteria. That the Chamberlains were members of the Seventh Day Adventist church, a small and devout millenarian sect outside mainstream Christianity, made them an easy target. Hand-in-hand with anti-woman bigotry went racism, with crucial evidence of Aboriginal track-



Sydney Morning Herald

Lindy Chamberlain-Creighton displays daughter's amended death certificate outside courthouse in Darwin, Australia, on June 12.

ers ignored for years following the first inquest. One of the first responses of the Alice Springs cops to Azaria's disappearance was to raid the Aboriginal settlement near Uluru.

The coroner at the first inquest, which rightly found that the baby was killed by a wild dingo, condemned the months of malicious gossip and sharply criticised the NT police force for non-reporting of crucial information and "lack of complete objectivity." With its authority challenged (and no doubt concerned for the reputation of Ayers Rock as a money-making tourist attraction), the Country-Liberal Party NT government of the day swung into a new "investigation." By late 1982, Lindy had been framed up and convicted of murdering her daughter and sentenced to life imprisonment with hard labour. Michael was convicted as an accessory after the fact.

In jail Lindy gave birth to another daughter, who was taken from her. After three gruelling years in prison, she was released in 1986. A growing public campaign by witnesses and supporters defending her innocence, including John Bryson's powerful 1985 book, *Evil Angels*, exposing the prosecution's parade of "forensic evidence," was beginning to embarrass the

national and territory governments. The finding of evidence that the prosecution had insisted never existed compelled the NT government to release Lindy and set up a Royal Commission to quell the outcry. The inquiry found there was "insufficient evidence" to convict the Chamberlains—while whitewashing the state prosecution and exonerating the cops. In response, the NT government granted the couple an insulting "pardon"! It was not until 1988 that the convictions were quashed. Azaria's death certificate wasn't amended until 1995 and even then the inquest returned an "open finding" on the cause of death.

Lindy Chamberlain was framed up by the courts and cops of territorial, state and federal governments. The role of the sycophantic bourgeois media was to sow suspicion, ignorance and fear, whipping up a broad base of support for the witchhunt within this brutally sexist capitalist society. As we wrote in "Lindy Chamberlain: Victim of Anti-Woman Witchhunt" (*Australasian Spartacist* No. 121, July/August 1987):

"The rampant sexism in this remote white imperialist enclave made a woman of the calibre of Lindy Chamberlain a perfect target for witchhunting. The bourgeois media focussed on the fact that Lindy is an intelligent, assertive woman, who has displayed enormous reserves of strength.... 'It is precisely these qualities, manifested in a woman, which were used by the media to portray Lindy as an aberration in Australian society. It speaks volumes about the oppression of women in Australia that it is held that women should be dumb, passive subjects....

"Lindy Chamberlain was witchhunted in a manner worthy of the Salem witch trials. She was vilified by the media because she would not cry, and because she would not smile. Her stony appearance in the courtroom was portrayed as cold unrepentance.... Little matter that she had nothing to repent; that her 'emotionless' exterior was evidence of her resilience and self-respect in the face of the massive campaign against her....

"The witchhunt of Lindy Chamberlain played a part in reinforcing the position of women as the core of the nuclear family—in this role women are to be subservient, not defiant and outspoken. The hypocrisy of the official bourgeois morality, which sanctifies the nuclear family, was sharply exposed in the state witchhunt of Lindy Chamberlain, which sought to destroy *her family*."

In this bourgeois society, "justice" serves the ruling class and the courts are primarily vehicles to keep everyone else in line. True justice for the years of state terror inflicted on the Chamberlains, and for all those who suffer at the hands of the state, will come with the sweeping away of this exploitative, racist and sexist capitalist society and its replacement by the state power, collectivised industry and planned economy of the victorious working class, the only road to a decent, egalitarian world. ■

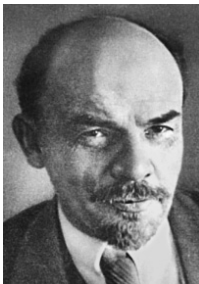


TROTSKY

Bourgeois Philanthropy and Working-Class Misery

As the capitalist ruling class and its media mouthpieces once again trumpet the virtues of helping the needy in the holiday season, we offer Friedrich Engels' scathing depiction of the 19th-century English bourgeoisie's self-serving "charity" toward its victims.

The relation of the manufacturer to his operatives has nothing human in it; it is purely economic. The manufacturer is Capital, the operative Labour. And if the operative will



LENIN

not be forced into this abstraction, if he insists that he is not Labour, but a man, who possesses, among other things, the attribute of labour-force, if he takes it into his head that he need not allow himself to be sold and bought in the market, as the commodity "Labour," the bourgeois reason comes to a standstill. He cannot comprehend that he holds any other relation to the operatives than that of purchase and sale; he sees in them not human beings, but hands, as he constantly calls them to their faces; he insists, as Carlyle says, that "Cash Payment is the only nexus between man and man."...

Let no one believe, however, that the "cultivated" Englishman openly brags with his egotism. On the contrary, he conceals it under the vilest hypocrisy. What? The wealthy English fail to remember the poor? They who have founded philanthropic institutions, such as no other country can boast of! Philanthropic institutions forsooth! As though you rendered the proletarians a service in first sucking out their very life-blood and then practising your self-complacent, Pharisaic philanthropy upon them, placing yourselves before the world as mighty benefactors of humanity when you give back to the plundered victims the hundredth part of what belongs to them! Charity which degrades him who gives more than him who takes; charity which treads the downtrodden still deeper in the dust, which demands that the degraded, the pariah cast out by society, shall first surrender the last that remains to him, his very claim to manhood, shall first beg for mercy before your mercy deigns to press, in the shape of an alms, the brand of degradation upon his brow.

—Friedrich Engels, *The Condition of the Working-Class in England* (1845)

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No. 1014

7 December 2012

27th Annual PDC Holiday Appeal

Free the Class-War Prisoners! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!

CHICAGO

Sunday, December 9
3 to 7 p.m.

U.E. Hall

37 S. Ashland (at Monroe)

Information: (312) 563-0442

NEW YORK CITY

Friday, December 7
6 to 9 p.m.

CWA Local 1180 Hall

6 Harrison Street, Manhattan

(1 train to Franklin, west on Franklin to Hudson, 1 block south to Harrison)

Information: (212) 406-4252

OAKLAND

Sunday, December 9
1 to 5 p.m.

Humanist Hall

390 27th Street

(near 19th St. BART)

Information: (510) 839-0852

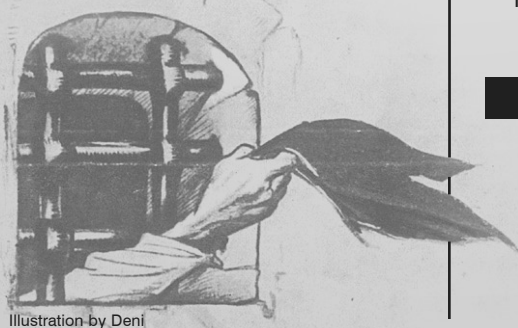


Illustration by Deni

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Veteran Spartacist cadre Tweet Carter died on November 20 at the age of 69 from complications of diverticulitis following six weeks of hospitalization. Taking seriously the *Communist Manifesto's* declaration that “the Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims,” Tweet was fearless in public work and often sparked controversy by saying exactly what she thought inside the party. Her greatest strength was her appetite and skill for political combat with organizations falsely claiming to uphold revolutionary Marxism. Tweet will be deeply missed by her comrades, particularly comrade Dimir, her husband.

Later in life, Tweet often spoke in New York local meetings about her experiences as a nurse trying to care for impoverished patients. So we note with bitterness that the criminal lack of preparation for Hurricane Sandy by the management at New York University's hospital in all likelihood contributed to her death. Only three days after being operated on, Tweet had to be carried down 14 flights of stairs and moved to another hospital when backup generators failed, an experience she described as utterly terrifying.

In an appreciation following her death, Dimir described how Tweet, growing up in the Jim Crow South, “was seared to the depths of her being by the horrors of black oppression.” He continued, “A scion of the stone-racist white elite in Florida's capital, she rejected the legacy of slavery root and branch. While her classmates focused on upcoming cotillions and becoming cheerleaders, Tweet read Voltaire and Spinoza looking for a guide to escaping the barbarity of Southern capitalist society.” In a document written a decade ago, Tweet recalled watching TV in 1963 as white Birmingham, Alabama, cops used fire hoses and police dogs to attack black protesters, including schoolchildren. She told her father, “That settles it, we have got to have integration.” But, she noted, “my father with equal conviction declared, ‘Integration is a Communist plot and Martin Luther King is a Communist.’ Bells went off in my head. I set out looking for the communists and didn't stop until I found the Spartacist League.”

Tweet was further radicalized in the late 1960s, a period of tumultuous political and social struggles and ferment on the left, especially over the Vietnam War. Though her family's conceptions of Southern womanhood did not include women getting a college education, Tweet made her way to Florida State University in Tallahassee. She had become involved in the burgeoning New Left and was active in Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). And this was how she found the Spartacist League.

In a gathering in New York the day after Tweet's death, one comrade recalled meeting her in 1969. Aware that there was a leftist SDS branch in Tallahassee, our party center had sent two people to meet them. A couple of male SDS members did a lot of the talking at first, but it did not take our comrades long to see that



Tweet speaking at SDS conference in Memphis, 1969.

Tweet Carter



Dimir Z.

1943–2012

Tweet was the one who was really serious about revolutionary politics. In early September of that year, she joined the SL at its National Conference. She rapidly became known among leftists all over the South and within SDS as a powerful fighter for our views. The SL had belatedly entered this heterogeneous student radical organization, especially after a 1969 split gave rise to a wing led by the eclectic Stalinist group Progressive Labor that crudely espoused an orientation to the working class. Our supporters in SDS formed the Revolutionary Marxist Caucus (RMC).

Her correspondence in those days was characteristically full of ideas to build the party. At the time, she was already married to Dimir, an erudite professor of languages some nine years her senior, and she set about recruiting him to Spartacist politics, with some help from her comrades. She noted in one report that it had been a great relief to Dimir when she stopped reading him bits from Mao's “little Red Book.”

In her early years in the party, she participated in and led many interventions at public meetings held by opponent groups viscerally hostile to our Trotskyist program. Tweet was without peer at unmasking the socialist pretensions of a wide spectrum of political opponents, earning our internally coveted “Mad Dog Trotskyite” award in 1970.

The early 1970s were crucial years for the Spartacist League. In the hotbed of that time, we were often able to engage members of ostensibly revolutionary organizations in political debate that would be unimaginable today. Tweet was shaped by this environment, and she helped shape the party that responded to it. The SL grew not only through individual recruitment but also through important fusions with groupings won from ostensibly Trotskyist as well as Stalinist organizations. This accretion of cadres made possible a transformation of our organization, especially by constructing a stronger national center and producing for the first time a regular press, launching *Workers Vanguard* in 1971, at first as a monthly paper.

Tweet was also involved in our increased efforts to break out of national isolation in the U.S. In early 1971 she went to Europe to meet with groups claiming to be anti-revisionist Trotskyists. As a speaker at our New York gathering in Tweet's honor recalled, some previous forays had worked out poorly. One SL representative was recruited to the politics of the French workerist group Voix Ouvrière, while a bit later in Germany another would-be leader of our international work showed himself to be an unprincipled maneuverer. But from Tweet “you got the straight stuff.” After talking with one group in Britain, she stripped away their pretenses, writing in

her reports of their anti-woman “humor” and anti-Irish chauvinism, which are characteristic of the Labour Party milieu.

In the early 1970s, Tweet was political chairman of the Los Angeles branch. She worked to educate, train and assimilate young comrades during that time of rapid recruitment and regroupment, which included a 1971 fusion with the ex-Maoist Communist Working Collective. Also in L.A. in that period, the SL succeeded in winning several important cadres out of a milieu of subjectively revolutionary black militants.

Tweet cut a wide swath in party work, serving on the Central Committee during the 1970s and much of the '80s and on local executive committees in L.A., the San Francisco Bay Area and Chicago. She served as deputy political chairman in the Bay Area local, helping to oversee several trade-union fractions and other areas of work. In 1979, Tweet was part of the SL/U.S. delegation to the first International Conference of our tendency.

After Tweet moved to New York in the early 1990s, periodic bouts of serious ill health slowed her down. But she continued to produce valuable reports on our opponents and frequently phoned local organizers with tips on what such groups were up to. As recently as this summer, Tweet alerted the party to the vile position taken by the Socialist Equality Party (SEP), a group of political counterfeits led by David North, on the killing of 17-year-old Trayvon Martin by a racist vigilante in Florida. This prompted the polemical article “SEP Denies Racism in Trayvon Martin Killing” (WV No. 1005, 6 July).

Known for her passionate opposition to all forms of special oppression, Tweet had nothing but contempt for the sanctimonious, puritanical straitjacket of bourgeois society, with its anti-sex, anti-gay “morality.” Her moral compass was that of the liberation of all humanity, the fight for a communist world. Tweet was a signatory to a 1969 document titled “The Fight for Women's Liberation” that was submitted by the RMC to SDS (reprinted in the *Young Spartacus* pages of WV No. 910, 14 March 2008).

In a 2001 document urging that the party issue more propaganda about AIDS as well as homelessness in America, Tweet, who had a Master of Science nursing degree, observed: “After spending 15 years as a nurse working with AIDS patients it has become clear to me that while the *direct* cause of the disease is the HIV virus, the reasons for the *scale* of this epidemic are largely social and political.” She noted, “When you don't know where your next meal is coming from and your life is totally disorganized, it's almost impossible to take multiple pills three times a day.” Tweet concluded her document with Lenin's admonition that the party must be the tribune of the people, actively opposing every kind of oppression and injustice.

Inside the party, we saw another side of Tweet: her great generosity. She regularly provided food to get comrades through long meetings as well as for the Partisan Defense Committee's annual Holiday Appeal benefits for class-war prisoners. After scouring the thrift stores, Tweet was always replenishing the “free box” in the New York local hall, where comrades can pick up articles of clothing. With her Master of Fine Arts degree, she loved to share her knowledge of art with comrades. Tweet and Dimir's vacations included visiting major cultural sites in Europe, Egypt and Turkey, as well as connecting with ICL comrades. She loved classical music and read omnivorously, with a special appetite for U.S., Soviet and other novelists around the world.

In a letter to Dimir, a comrade who recently transferred out of the center wrote: “I have difficulty imagining the New York local without her. She livened up many a meeting with her interesting and often provocative remarks and I don't think we will ever be able to replace her ceaseless muck-raking on the opponents and witty reports on information skillfully gleaned from her sources outside the party.... She was the kind of troublemaker who helped keep the party on its toes and that alone is a huge loss for the ICL.”

As Dimir has recounted to comrades, prior to her most recent illness Tweet said to him: “I have led exactly the kind of life I wanted to.” Tweet was a Bolshevik, an old-school, hard-bitten Spartacist. We salute Tweet, and in her memory we rededicate ourselves to the cause she first embraced as a young woman—that of international proletarian revolution.



Accused of Lifting Veil on U.S. War Machine

Bradley Manning Pretrial Hearing: Drop All Charges!

DECEMBER 4—Army private Bradley Manning spoke publicly last week for the first time since he was detained in May 2010 for allegedly handing over a trove of classified documents to WikiLeaks that exposed U.S. imperialism's schemes and wartime atrocities. Charging Manning with 22 offenses including espionage and "aiding the enemy," military prosecutors are threatening him with life imprisonment, having decided not to pursue the death penalty. Taking the stand at a hearing on a defense motion to dismiss all charges on the grounds of unlawful pretrial punishment, Manning recounted the torturous conditions of his confinement, which one prison psychologist described as worse than at Guantánamo or on death row. The hearing is continuing as we go to press.

The suffering and deprivation inflicted on Manning is meant as a message: the U.S. imperialists will not tolerate any light shed on their workings. This vendetta was also designed to break him so that he would implicate WikiLeaks and its founder Julian Assange, who remains holed up in the Ecuadorian Embassy in London to avoid extradition to the U.S., via Sweden (see "Hands Off Julian Assange!" WV No. 1010, 12 October). In the past week, protests demanding Manning's freedom have taken place from the court site, Fort Meade near Baltimore, to Berlin and other cities.

Last month, Manning offered to accept responsibility for providing, as an act of conscience, at least some of the 250,000 diplomatic cables, 500,000 Army reports from Iraq and Afghanistan and video from Baghdad that WikiLeaks made public. Shortly before Manning testified last week, the presiding military judge accepted the framework that would allow

him to plead guilty to some lesser charges, which carry a maximum sentence of 16 years. Manning has not yet filed a formal plea. Even if the plea were to be accepted, Manning still faces trial on the maximum charges unless the case is dismissed and could receive a life sentence if found guilty of only one of them. The court martial is now slated to begin in March.

If Manning did make available the material attributed to him in the tentative plea, he provided a major service to working people and the oppressed the world over. In seeking to galvanize proletarian opposition to the capitalist order, we welcome even a slight lifting of the veil on the imperialists' war machine. The video Manning is accused of leaking shows an Apache helicopter gunning down and killing at least 12 people in Baghdad in 2007, including a Reuters journalist and his driver, while the pilots laugh and gloat. The war logs document 120,000 civilian deaths in Iraq and Afghanistan and a formal military policy of covering up torture, rape and murder. The cables address all manner of lethal operations within U.S. client states, from the "drug war" in Mexico to drone strikes in Yemen.

With over 20 supporters attending the court hearing, Manning detailed the depravity of his enraged military jailers. His first two months in custody were spent in what Manning described as an "animal cage" in Kuwait, where he was kept isolated and disoriented. "I just thought I was going to die in that cage," he told the court. Returned to the U.S., he was thrown into what he called "a shark-attack environment" at the Quantico Marine brig in Virginia, where he was kept for nine months. He spent at least 23 hours a day alone in

a six-by-eight-foot cell with no window or natural light, forbidden to exercise, lie down or even lean against a wall if not sleeping. Even when he was allowed to sleep, he was periodically awakened by guards who also subjected him to daily strip searches and forced nudity.

Quantico commanders justified their handling of Manning by classifying him first as a "suicide risk" and then putting him on "prevention of injury" status. While Manning had been driven to despair by the unrelenting abuse he suffered in Kuwait, at least 16 official reports from brig psychiatrists at Quantico concluded that Manning was not a threat to himself or others. Nevertheless, his status did not change until he was transferred to Fort Leavenworth in April 2011 amid international condemnation of his treatment. By the admission of the colonel in charge of Quantico at the time, a blind eye was turned to these reports because a staff dentist made assessments more to the liking of the brass!

Court documents show that one base commander instructed staff to "do whatever we want" to Manning. The parameters of the torture regime were run up the chain of command to the Pentagon. Meanwhile, the handprint of the White House is all over the case. With a push from the Obama administration, Manning was charged under the 1917 Espionage Act, with the Commander-in-Chief himself declaring last year that Manning "broke the law."

The government is intent on painting a portrait of Manning as a traitor who aided and abetted Al Qaeda, with the judge even giving the go-ahead to prosecutors to introduce the contents of Osama



Getty

Bradley Manning leaves hearing in Fort Meade, Maryland, November 27.

bin Laden's hard drives. The prosecution does not feel compelled to present evidence that any tangible aid was provided to an "enemy." Rather, it argues that it is sufficient to establish that Manning knew that U.S. adversaries could access the information that was now in the public domain. Thus Washington equates disclosure of classified information by "whistleblowers," journalists or anyone else with treason. And by the lights of the "war on terror," an "enemy" could mean virtually any opponent of the U.S. government.

It is the norm for the imperialists to accompany their depredations around the world with official silence and secret dealings. In 2011 alone, U.S. officials classified more than 92 million documents. Revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky observed in November 1917: "Imperialism, with its dark plans of conquest and its robber alliances and deals, developed the system of secret diplomacy to the highest level." Opponents of imperialist occupations and war must be won to the understanding that it will require a series of socialist revolutions around the world to put an end to the capitalist order, which maintains itself through systematic violence and lies. ■

Extradited to Spain for Defending Basque Rights

Free Aurore Martin!

We reprint below a November 2 leaflet by the Comité de Défense Sociale (CDDS)—a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense organization associated with the Ligue Trotskyste de France, section of the International Communist League. It was distributed in French and Spanish at a 15,000-strong demonstration on November 10 in Bayonne, in the French Basque country, protesting the extradition of Aurore Martin to Spain. Martin was arrested on the grounds that she had attended several meetings of the pro-Basque independence

organization Batasuna, even though this organization is not illegal in France. Her arrest was made possible by a European Union (EU) agreement that introduced the so-called European Arrest Warrant. Under this agreement, any EU member state must arrest and extradite to the requesting EU state anybody deemed by the latter to be a criminal suspect.

The CDDS condemns the extradition by the French state of Aurore Martin to Spain, where she faces up to 12 years in prison. Just days before Martin's detention yesterday, two other Basque activists, Izaskun Lesaka and Joseba Iturbe, were arrested near Lyon in a joint operation by the RAID [elite French cop unit] and the Spanish Guardia Civil. Both Lesaka and Iturbe are suspected of belonging to the ETA pro-Basque independence group, and Lesaka is purported to be one of three activists who in October 2011 read out the ETA statement that it was definitively renouncing armed struggle.

The French and Spanish capitalist states have no intention of dropping their bloody vendetta against the Basque nationalists, despite ETA's renouncing armed struggle. The Basques, as well as other national minorities such as the Catalans and the Corsicans, along with the Muslim population, are used by the French and Spanish bourgeoisies as all-purpose scapegoats. As the worst economic crisis in decades rages, this serves to divide and weaken the working class in order to push through the bosses' renewed austerity attacks as well as to justify the raft of new laws increasing state repression, which are also ultimately aimed at workers struggling against capitalist oppression. This is not to mention the opaque maneuvers and rivalries at play around the European Union, in which the lives of militants are cynically traded as bargaining chips for imperialist interests. The Aurore Martin case and the European Arrest Warrant vividly show how the EU, insofar as it is

"united" at all, is united over the oppression of minorities and the workers movement. **Down with the EU!**

Already this year, the total number of arrests of alleged ETA members stands at 24. Sixteen of those took place in France, three in Spain and five in other countries. **We demand that all charges be dropped immediately against Aurore Martin, Izaskun Lesaka and Joseba Iturbe and that they be immediately released from the clutches of the French and Spanish states. We also demand that the hundreds of other Basque nationalist activists jailed in French and Spanish prisons be freed!**

Aurore Martin Extradition: Valls Finishes Job Begun by Sarkozy and Guéant

Back in October 2010, a European Arrest Warrant was issued by the Spanish government against the French Basque activist Aurore Martin, demanding her extradition on the basis of alleged "participation in a terrorist organization." The "evidence" cited is that she attended six public meetings of Batasuna in 2006 and 2007—four in Spain and two in France.

NOTICE

Workers Vanguard skips an issue in December.

Our next issue will be dated January 11.

Witness Helped Expose Mumia Abu-Jamal Frame-Up

“As I lay in a coma for two months in early 2007, I could hear the voices around me.... All I knew was that I wanted to live. I did not want to die, not like this. There’s a lot I want to do and say and have wanted to say for years.”

Veronica Jones did live for another three years, and before she died in 2009 at the age of 48, finally got her say in an autobiography as told to her sister Valerie, which was posthumously published earlier this year. *Veronica and the Case of Mumia Abu-Jamal* is the riveting story of a 20-year-old mother of three and part-time prostitute who was an eyewitness at the scene of the 9 December 1981 murder of Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner. This was the killing for which Mumia Abu-Jamal, a former Black Panther Party spokesman, a MOVE supporter and acclaimed journalist, was falsely accused and sentenced to death.

Jones’ personal story cuts a large chunk out of the heart of the racist frame-up and decades-long conspiracy to legally lynch Mumia, an innocent man, or to keep this fighter for the oppressed locked in prison hell for the rest of his life. Several days after Faulkner’s killing, Jones told police she saw two black men run from the scene. Neither of these could have been Mumia, who was found slumped on the sidewalk profusely bleeding from a shot from a policeman’s gun. Jones’ report of two men running away would have been devastating to the prosecution scenario, which is that Mumia “must have” been the one who shot Faulkner because no one else but Mumia and his brother William Cook were on the street corner with Faulkner. But under intense intimidation from the Philly cops, at Mumia’s 1982 trial Jones recanted her account, dealing a blow to his defense. Although several witnesses saw one or more black men flee the scene, almost all of these witnesses’ accounts were kept from Mumia’s jury.

However, 14 years later, Jones came forward at a post-conviction hearing and stood

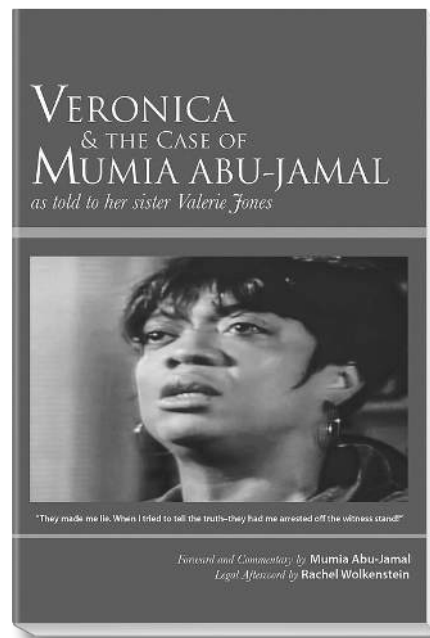
up to the prosecutors, cops and “hanging judge” Albert Sabo to explain how the cops had pressured her to lie at the 1982 trial. In retaliation, Sabo and the prosecutors had her *arrested on the witness stand* and dragged off to jail on the basis of a New Jersey bench warrant (for supposedly trying to pass a bad check!) that had been issued more than two years earlier. Jones defiantly told Sabo’s court: “You think that’s going to make me change my story. It’s not!” Returning to the hearing after being released from jail, Jones demonstratively sat with Mumia’s supporters.

In her 1996 post-conviction testimony, Jones revealed how only days before Mumia’s trial, two detectives visited her in jail where she was held facing robbery charges. In her book, she describes how the sadistic cops laughed at her pleas to go to the bathroom, forcing her to urinate on herself. The cops threatened Jones with a long prison sentence on gun possession charges if she didn’t play ball, adding that her three daughters would be taken and placed in foster care. She recalled that one “detective stepped over to me only inches from my face, the whole while staring me directly in the eyes, never taking his eyes away from mine and with a straight face said, ‘We want you to tell the court that Mumia Abu-Jamal is the person that shot Officer Faulkner and we will make those five to fifteen years disappear.’”

At trial Jones refused to finger Mumia but denied her initial report that she had seen two men flee the shooting. What she did say, though, was that the cops had offered her the same deal they gave prostitute Cynthia White—to work the streets without cop harassment in exchange for saying that Mumia shot Faulkner. This had the potential to blow the frame-up apart, and for that reason was suppressed by Judge Sabo as “not relevant.”

The pressure put on Jones to echo White’s false account underscores the fragility of the prosecution’s case. Cops and prosecutors disappeared evidence

exonerating Mumia and manufactured such fake “evidence” as a confession purportedly uttered by Mumia as he lay near death shortly after the shooting—a tale that was concocted by prosecutors and



cops two months after Faulkner’s killing. White, the prosecution’s star witness, was the only one to testify seeing Mumia with gun in hand. No other witness even recalled seeing her in the area at the time. In the months leading up to Mumia’s trial, White repeatedly changed her account of what she saw. One reason the cops put intense pressure on Jones was that they feared that White couldn’t keep her fabricated story straight at trial. (For a fuller account and documentation of Mumia’s frame-up, see the 2006 Partisan Defense Committee pamphlet, *The Fight to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal—Mumia Is Innocent!*)

The most dramatic new revelation in Jones’ book is that she was having sex with Faulkner over a period of time before the shooting. In previous testimony, Jones had made clear that she knew Faulkner

and that he had helped her. Jones’ book recounts how Faulkner assisted her one night after two other Philly cops viciously raped and robbed her, recalling, “He didn’t seem surprised by my story of what happened that night.” According to her memoirs, they had sex the night of Faulkner’s shooting, when he was in a strange mood as if “something really confidential” was “going to go down out there.”

Jones’ account of Faulkner’s frame of mind accords with the situation detailed in the subsequent confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Mumia, shot and killed Faulkner. Beverly’s 1999 sworn affidavit (one of the documents in the PDC pamphlet) tells how he and another man were hired for the job because Faulkner “was a problem for the mob and corrupt policemen because he interfered with the graft and payoffs made to allow illegal activity” such as prostitution, gambling and drugs.

Veronica Jones remained a visible supporter of the fight to free Mumia until her death, and for that she paid a great price. “She was determined to tell the whole story,” Valerie Jones writes in the book’s introduction, “for herself, for her family and above all, for an innocent man on death row. She believed, as I do, that Mumia Abu-Jamal is guilty of nothing except surviving that night and her own experience points to a deliberate police frame-up.” The book concludes, “The state’s determination to execute Mumia impacted the entirety of Veronica’s adult life.” The book includes a foreword by Mumia and a legal afterword by Rachel Wolkenstein, formerly a PDC counsel who was part of Mumia’s legal team in the late 1990s and continues to provide him legal assistance.

In 2011, ten years after a ruling by a federal judge overturning Mumia’s death sentence, the Philly district attorney’s office announced that it would not seek to reinstate the death penalty. Mumia, who never should have spent one day in jail, now faces the living death of life in prison without parole. *There is no justice in the capitalist courts!* Since first taking up Mumia’s defense in 1987, the Spartacist League and the PDC have favored every possible legal action against the frame-up while at the same time stressing that fighters for Mumia’s freedom must place their reliance on the power of mass, labor-centered protest. It will take a workers revolution to smash the greater prison house that is racist American capitalism, opening the road to an egalitarian socialist society. The future American workers state will honor the memory of Veronica Jones for her brave defiance of the executioners in black robes. ■



Aurore Martin at Bayonne protest against European Arrest Warrant, December 2010.

The Batasuna party, outlawed in Spain, is a perfectly legal party in France. Aurore Martin is also accused of writing an article for the (legal) Basque newspaper *Gara* and of having dealings with the Basque Lands Communist Party (EHAK), which was outlawed in Spain in 2008. There is not even the slightest attempt by the French or Spanish government to produce evidence linking Aurore Martin to any armed activity; this French citizen was extradited by France’s top cop, Manuel Valls, and is today imprisoned in a Spanish jail solely because of her opinions and political solidarity with the cause of Basque independence. Her extra-

dition, based on no tangible evidence, provoked outrage against Valls from practically all National Assembly members from the Basque country, even the most “republican” among them.

When an arrest warrant was issued against Aurore Martin in 2010, she went into hiding. But six months later, in early June 2011, she decided to “lead a normal public life again” and attended a public meeting in Biarritz on the subject of the European Arrest Warrant. Days later, on June 21, [then-president Nicolas] Sarkozy’s minister of the police, Claude Guéant, sent in his cops to arrest her in

Bayonne. But they were literally pushed back by the activists and local people, and Aurore Martin eluded arrest. At the time, Guéant stated that France would do its “duty” and that her extradition would be carried out. However, after a 3,000-strong march in Bayonne demanding that her arrest warrant be lifted, there was no further attempt by the French government to arrest her. That is, until Valls and the popular-front government under [Socialist president François] Hollande stepped in to finish the job. In a recent interview in *El País*, Valls praised the “exemplary” cooperation between the French and Spanish governments and declared that the French government would “help Spain 100 percent” in pursuing the fight against ETA “with full firmness.”

The arrest and extradition of Aurore Martin are very much in line with the sinister crusade against the Basque nationalists carried out by the Socialist predecessors of Valls and Hollande. As we wrote in a short statement denouncing the European Arrest Warrant against Aurore Martin back in March 2011: “We denounce the police cooperation between France and Spain, which, starting with the GAL [“Anti-Terrorist Liberation Groups”] state terrorists under [French president François] Mitterrand and the Spanish Socialist Workers Party government of Felipe González in the 1980s and continuing up

to today, has cost the lives of dozens of people and led to the arrest and imprisonment of hundreds of activists.” *The workers movement must protest the extradition of Aurore Martin! For the right of self-determination of the Basque people, south and north of the Pyrenees! Down with the European Arrest Warrant! Down with the capitalist European Union!* ■

Partisan Defense Committee
CLASS-STRUGGLE DEFENSE NOTES
Number 37 50c Summer 2012

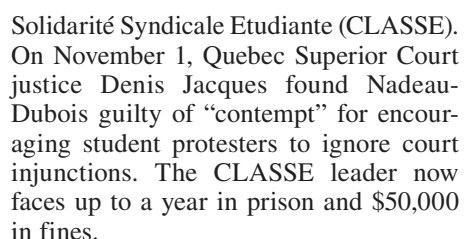
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In the aftermath of the student strike that rocked Quebec this past spring and summer, the capitalists' cops and courts are pursuing a vindictive campaign against strike activists. A particular target is one of the student movement's most prominent spokesmen, Gabriel Nadeau-Dubois of the Coalition Large de l'Association pour une



The judge railed that Nadeau-Dubois had advocated “anarchy” and that his comments could pave a “road to tyranny.” Underlining the political nature of this frame-up, his ruling cited the precedent of the May 1972 convictions of the leaders of Quebec’s three trade-union centrals [federations] for contempt of court. The jailing of these union leaders for refusing to order workers to obey strikebreaking injunctions sparked a spontaneous eleven-day general strike, the most deepgoing working-class struggle in Quebec history.

Other student militants face even more serious charges. Over 3,300 protesters were arrested during the strike, a number far exceeding even the mass roundups of leftists, nationalists and union leaders under the War Measures Act in the “October Crisis” of 1970. Among them is Yalda Machouf-Khadir, the daughter of Québec Solidaire MNA [National Assembly member] Amir Khadir. She faces charges of “conspiracy,” assault and breaking and entering following her alleged participation in the trashing of a former Quebec education minister’s office. Other activists face the Orwellian charge of “inciting fear of terrorism,” which carries a potential five-year jail sentence.

In order to hunt down and frame up political activists, the notoriously vicious Montreal police set up a special unit last year called GAMMA—Guet des Activités des Mouvements Marginaux et Anarchistes (Surveillance of the Activities of



Above: Yalda Machouf-Khadir arrested at her home in June. Left: Gabriel Nadeau-Dubois, former CLASSE spokesman, with his lawyer outside Quebec City hall of justice, November 9.

Marginal Movements and Anarchists). The ongoing witchhunt of left-wing activists highlights a basic truth: the capitalist state, including the cops and courts, is not neutral, but is the repressive fist of the ruling class, to be mobilized against striking workers, student radicals and anyone else who dares challenge the oppressive status quo. We say: *Drop all charges now!*

The sustained, militant struggle by tens of thousands of students won wide support among working people in Quebec. In the end, the students were able to win their bottom-line demands for withdrawal of a massive tuition hike and repeal of the draconian Bill 78, the "law of the nightsticks" enacted by Jean Charest's Liberal government in an attempt to break the strike. But nothing fundamental has been resolved, and many student militants recognize that the newly-elected Parti Québécois regime will soon launch a new round of attacks on workers

and student youth, as PQ governments have always done in the past.

PQ premier Pauline Marois cancelled the Liberals' tuition hike to put a lid on social struggle. But the PQ is already vowing to increase tuition in line with inflation, and its promised "summit on higher education funding" explicitly excludes the student unions' just demand for free education. Amid the sordid corruption scandals exposing (some of) the dirty deeds of Quebec mayors and other politicians, the PQ's overriding priority has been to assure the "business community" that it can "balance the budget" and effectively manage the capitalist order. This will mean yet more austerity measures against workers and the poor.

The election of the bourgeois-nationalist PQ is *not* a victory of any kind for workers and student youth. History has shown repeatedly that the PQ in power is an enemy of the working class. In 1982-83, the government of party founder René Lévesque launched sweeping attacks on public-sector unions. In 1999, Marois, then minister of health in Lucien Bouchard's PQ regime, introduced a bill ordering nearly 50,000 striking nurses to return to work. These and other attacks by the last PQ government paved the way for the even more savage assaults of the Charest Liberals.

Student struggle can provide a spark for the broader social struggle necessary to beat back capitalist attacks. However, as we emphasized throughout the student strike, it is the *organized working class*—in the factories, mines and transportation systems—that uniquely has the social power and material interest to bring the bourgeois profit system to its knees. Despite its history of militant struggle, the Quebec working class is tied to the capitalist order by union misleaders who have long supported the PQ in the name of “national solidarity.” The student strikers

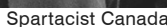
received both “advice” and financial support from the union tops, who used their authority and influence to limit the struggle and secure “social peace.” To unleash the social power of Quebec labour, a new leadership must be forged that can mobilize the workers independently of the PQ and all other capitalist parties.

Social Struggle and the National Question

Marois' victory in the polls unleashed the usual wave of chauvinist hand-wringing in the English Canadian bourgeois press, though the fact that the PQ was only able to garner a minority government led to sighs of relief that no new sovereignty referendum would soon be on the agenda. However, the question of Quebec independence still looms large as a central feature of Canadian politics, one that will, sooner or later, erupt anew.

The national question in this country—the forcible incorporation of the francophone Québécois nation in an Anglo-dominated Canada—has long served to divide the working class. In English Canada, anti-Quebec chauvinism is fostered by the “Canadian unity” demagoguery of the NDP [New Democratic Party] social democrats and their allies in the top trade-union bureaucracy. Within Quebec, national oppression is manipulated by the bourgeois nationalists and their labour lieutenants to bind the working class to its own francophone oppressors. As revolutionary internationalists who oppose all forms of chauvinism and discrimination and work to unite the workers in anti-capitalist struggle, we advocate Quebec independence. This is the best means to get the national question off the agenda, so that the workers of both nations can see clearly that their enemies are their own respective capitalist exploiters.

As the student struggle came to a head, the strike leaders increasingly dissipated the energies of the student movement into the parliamentary shell-game: "Anybody but the Liberals." Léo Bureau-Blouin, former head of the Fédération Etudiante Collégiale du Québec (FECQ), ran for the PQ and was elected to the National Assembly. While declining to endorse any political party, the more radical CLASSE federation began organizing its protests around slogans like "Neoliberals out!" A CLASSE position paper issued just before the election opined that "The only way to



Toronto: Canadian Trotskyists at Quebec student strike solidarity rally, June 5.



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Subscription Drive Success

WV Welcomes Our New Readers

To widen the reach of our press, the Spartacist League and the Spartacus Youth Clubs hold an annual subscription drive for six weeks from late August to early October. This year we again exceeded our quota, selling 2,389 points, which include 1,092 subscriptions to *Workers Vanguard*, 87 to *Espartaco* (newspaper of the International Communist League’s Mexican section) and 83 to other sectional press. Congratulations to comrade Alan of the Bay Area for winning the national sub drive.

This campaign is an opportunity not only to motivate our revolutionary Marxist politics to potential readers but also to get a wider sample of the political mood of the country, especially in places where we do not have branches. With the presidential election campaign in full swing, many discussions centered on our class opposition to all capitalist parties—whether Democrat, Republican or small-time outfits like the Greens—and our aim of forging a workers party to lead the struggle to overthrow the capitalist order.

Support for Obama among students and black workers was less effusive than in 2008, as he has since carried out his duties as U.S. imperialist Commander-in-Chief, from attacking unions, shredding civil liberties and deporting immigrants to overseeing drone strikes, military occupations and bombing campaigns abroad. Even so, many were still intent on voting for Obama as the “lesser evil.” This notion is what often makes the Democrats more effective at dishing it out to the exploited and oppressed.

We found black workers and students in hotly contested Southern “battleground states,” a key focus of Democratic “get out the vote” efforts, to be particularly committed to supporting Obama. Elsewhere we encountered black youth who, while not overly excited about the electoral circus, were lining up behind Obama out of racial solidarity in the face of the unabashed racism of right-wing Republicans.

The coterie of union bureaucrats at Labor Day events in Detroit and Los Angeles was smaller than usual, undoubt-

edly because most were away at the Democratic National Convention (DNC) in Charlotte, North Carolina. Of like mind were the reformists, who either explicitly or implicitly backed Obama. At the Workers World Party (WWP)-initiated DNC

line used by the labor bureaucracy in politically chaining workers to the Democrats, the other party of racist capitalism. The CPers were visibly shocked that we polemicized against their views, and in short order they stormed out.

NYC: August 30 rally outside South African consulate protests massacre of Marikana platinum miners. Coverage of workers struggles against neo-apartheid capitalism played prominent role in 2012 sub drive.

WV Photo



protests, we caused a stir with a display on a placard comparing what WWP wrote in adulation of Obama in 2008 with what we said against such illusions. And at our “Meet the Marxists” event in Eugene, Oregon, three members of the Communist Party (CP) showed up to stump for the Democrats, bemoaning the prospect that the Republicans in office would destroy the unions. This is the same tired

One of the main purposes of WV is to promote consciousness of the common interests of the international working class. In this spirit, we have provided ongoing coverage of the August 16 massacre of strikers at Lonmin’s Marikana platinum mine in South Africa, for which the African National Congress (ANC)-led government was responsible, and the strike wave that followed. The bloody crime visited on the Marikana miners finds an echo in the attacks on the unions and the livelihoods of working people in the U.S. and other countries where the capitalists are making workers pay for the ongoing economic downturn. Notably, black union longshoremen in Charleston, South Carolina, who at the time were headed toward a contract showdown with the port bosses, saw a parallel in their own situation.

The struggles of the embattled South African miners featured prominently in our work. Our New York local kicked off its sub drive by building a Partisan Defense Committee-initiated united-front protest demanding: “Free jailed miners—Drop all charges! Victory to the striking miners!” (see “For International Solidarity with South African Miners!” WV No. 1008, 14 September). Our placards and articles that denounced the treachery of the South African Communist Party and COSATU trade-union tops, part of the ruling bourgeois Tripartite Alliance along with the ANC, drew special interest from students at Howard University in Washington, D.C., and Mills College in the Bay Area. A large proportion of the subscriptions sold to other ICL publications were to *Spartacist South Africa*.

In Chicago, Democratic mayor Rahm Emanuel’s heavy-handed efforts to gut the teachers union sparked a strike that gripped the city for nine days. We sold 37 introductory and two full WV subscriptions on the picket lines and at rallies. Comrades reported that the teachers felt a sense of pride for setting an example for

other unions to follow, although few were thrilled by the concessionary settlement. Our article “Victory to Chicago Teachers Strike!” (WV No. 1008, 14 September) also struck a chord in Bloomington, Indiana, especially now that Indiana has officially declared itself a “right to work” state.

One goal of the sub drive was to get back to our readership in the Pacific Northwest, which markedly expanded over the past year as a result of our intersection with the struggles of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) against the union-busting EGT grain conglomerate in Longview, Washington. The ILWU contract with EGT’s rivals was due to expire at the end of September, posing a possible strike or lockout at the time, until the union tops pulled back and the contract was extended. One longshoreman told us that he disagrees with our socialist conclusions but considers it important for working people to read WV, especially the international material. An ILWU casual worker appreciative of our understanding that the labor movement must take up the fight for full equality for black people, immigrants and women commented: “We realized we were somebody after we started getting the paper.”

On some Pacific Northwest campuses, we sold fewer subscriptions than in the recent past, in no small part due to widespread preoccupation with electoral politics and a lower level of student activism. In Portland, we did make a splash among youth familiar with the reformist International Socialist Organization (ISO). Several of them were disgusted that the ISO has for years championed woman-hating Islamic reactionaries, as seen not least in its defense of the call by the Revolutionary Socialist group in Egypt for a vote to the Muslim Brotherhood candidate who came out on top in that country’s recent presidential elections.

The work of the Spartacus Youth Clubs helped net a higher than usual number of subscriptions on several local campuses. In New York, the SYC held a protest in late September at City College against a visit by the secretary general of NATO, the U.S.-dominated military alliance (see WV No. 1011, 26 October). Across the country, our placards on literature tables demanding “Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!” and “Free Abortion on Demand!” drew a lot of attention. The latter especially resonated among women disgusted at the filth spewed about “legitimate rape” by Republican troglodytes. A packet of WV issues containing articles on the fight for women’s liberation was a popular giveaway. Another was, once again, our 2009 pamphlet, *Karl Marx Was Right: Capitalist Anarchy and the Immiseration of the Working Class*, an indication that a layer of politicized youth was driven to check us out by their hatred of the ravages of capitalism.

Working with the Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyste of Canada, our comrades also made trips to Montreal, where students waged a strike this spring and summer against tuition increases. This strike, which ballooned into a larger social crisis, has lessons relevant to students in the U.S. who are reeling under extortionate debt for attending college.

WV welcomes our new and returning readers. The Leninist press plays a crucial role in applying Marxist program and theory to political events and class and other social struggles, promoting the understanding that socialist revolution is the only road to a world free of exploitation and oppression. Let us know what you think, and get involved in the activities of the Spartacist League and SYCs. ■

force the government to truly respond to the popular will is to put in place a sufficient balance of power and to not give it any respite.”

Unable to conceive of any other strategy than putting pressure on the capitalists’ government, the CLASSE leadership promotes illusions that the “popular will” can be forced upon the ruling class. Such illusions are spread in a more crude form by various reformist left groups. For example, an article on the International Socialists’ (I.S.) website (10 September) was headlined “Quebec Election 2012: A Major Victory for Students and the Left.”

The I.S. and other reformists have worked overtime to spread illusions in the PQ’s “left” appendage, Québec Solidaire (QS). As we have noted, the purpose of QS, a petty-bourgeois populist party, is to channel the anger of youth and workers back into the safe channels of bourgeois parliamentarism and Québécois nationalism. At the height of the struggle and the police repression, QS joined in the violence-baiting of student activists, attacking “vandalism” by “rioters.” When his own daughter was arrested, Amir Khadir told a press conference, “If reprehensible acts were committed by my daughter or whoever else, one must take responsibility for one’s actions” (*La Presse*, 7 June). QS leader Françoise David made clear in the build-up to the election that QS would be prepared to support a PQ minority government.

Tear gas, stun grenades and rubber

bullets rained down on student protesters during the strike, providing a crucial lesson about the brutality of the capitalist state to a generation of youth engaging in political struggle for the first time. Conclusions must be drawn from these and other experiences to provide a road forward against the unceasing attacks of the ruling exploiters. As we wrote in one of our French-language supplements distributed at the mass student protests:

“Only the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of workers rule can put an end to poverty and all-sided oppression and open up new vistas for humanity. This is not just a task for Quebec, but for all of Canada, the U.S. and the entire world. The way forward for Quebec student radicals is to commit their energy to forging a binational, multiethnic Marxist vanguard party, part of a reformed Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution.”

—“Students: Ally with the Working Class!” SC No. 174, Fall 2012 [reprinted in WV No. 107, 31 August]

* * *

To aid the legal defense fund for students and other protesters arrested during the strike, send contributions to: Association pour une Solidarité Syndicale Etudiante, 2065 rue Parthenais, Local 383, Montreal QC H2K 3T1. You can also contribute directly to the defense fund for Gabriel Nadeau-Dubois: Comité de Soutien à Gabriel Nadeau-Dubois, 2065 rue Parthenais, Bureau 08, Montreal QC H2K 3T1. ■

NYC Workers...

(continued from page 1)

appropriation of all the means of subsistence and instruments of labour by the working class itself.”

Picking the Pockets of Heroes

The heroes of the Hurricane Sandy disaster are those unionized workers who were key to saving lives and getting the city back up and running, even as many of their own homes were destroyed. Transit workers have been lauded for rapidly restoring subway and bus service. Sanitation workers, who worked 12-hour shifts for weeks, have been hailed by those in hard-hit neighborhoods for removing mountains of storm debris at great personal risk. But even as NYC mayor Michael Bloomberg and his cronies pat workers on the back with one hand, they’re picking their pockets with the other.

The MTA docked the pay of thousands of transit workers who could not get to work in the first days of the disaster because mass transit was shut down and bridges and tunnels were knocked out of commission. For workers who needed emergency leave because their lives had been upended, the MTA bosses came up with a cynical scheme to allow them time off from work—by having other transit workers “donate” their own vacation days or sick leave! Yet even that plan cannot trump the artifice of Mayor Bloomberg. A capitalist in his own right with a net worth of \$25 billion, Bloomberg e-mailed city workers to press them to contribute, through an automatic payroll deduction, to a “Mayor’s Fund” that supports volunteer relief efforts.

This is just a sick twist to the lie of “shared sacrifice” that government agencies and corporations, echoed by the pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucracy, have foisted on workers for years. Throughout the five-year-long economic crisis, both Democratic and Republican state and local governments have cut into wages, pensions and other benefits as part of their war against public employees unions, which are portrayed as public enemies. Even before that, bourgeois politicians invoked budget crises to slash the workforce rolls.

During a blizzard that hit NYC two years ago, the same sanitation workers lauded in the press today were targets of a tabloid hate campaign for a supposed work “slowdown.” In fact, the workers had to deal with the emergency after 400 jobs had been cut in Bloomberg’s austerity budget and in the face of utter negligence by the city administration, which was completely unprepared for that storm. Today, the unions in every single municipal bargaining unit in the city, plus the subway and bus workers in the Transport Workers Union, are working without a contract or with their old contract extended, and some have been doing so for many years. In fact, *all* the unionized workers who are laboring mightily to provide necessary services in the New York-New Jersey region have been under attack. Last summer Con Edison, backed by Democratic NY governor Andrew Cuomo and rolling in profits, strong-armed the Utility Workers union into making major concessions to end a lockout. This gave the lie to the union tops’ tired refrain that Con Edison bosses and workers are a “family.”

The labor officialdom has played dead in the face of the anti-union assault, bowing to New York State’s Taylor Law, which bans public employee strikes, and the whole gamut of laws and regulations aimed at hog-tying union struggle. To fight for what’s needed, the labor movement must be broken from the program of class collaboration, which has its political expression in the union misleaders’ support to the Democratic Party.

The labor movement should be fighting for a *massive program of public works* to restore the damage done by Sandy and rebuild the decaying infrastructure that the capitalist rulers have allowed to rot. This would necessarily be combined with a fight

ment. Chiming in from the left side of the choir, the reformist International Socialist Organization gushed that Occupy Sandy signaled that “a push for a people’s recovery is beginning to emerge” (*Socialist Worker*, 28 November).

In a brief appearance in the Rockaways on November 29, Bloomberg told Occupy Sandy volunteers, “You really are making a difference.” He then hopped into his SUV to flee the wrath of residents still without heat. Earlier, a reporter for the left-liberal *Nation* (5 November) observed Occupy Sandy volunteers joining with FEMA personnel and city cops who brutally drove Occupy protesters from Zuccotti Park in Manhattan last year, in chanting, “We are

with the intent that they never return. In the months and years that followed, the bourgeoisie used every opportunity to reshape the previously majority-black city—it was even blithely argued that a city at or below sea level (a requirement for a port) is by nature uninhabitable. The public school system was largely privatized and the teachers fired, decimating the union and making the city the epicenter for the charter school movement. Intact and scrubbed of damage, Charity Hospital, a public institution, was nonetheless closed down. Large- and small-scale construction speculation abounds to this day. The port has grown, but the International Longshoremen’s Association has lost more ground to scab outfits. Although consisting of solid low-rises that survived the storm well, most public housing was simply razed.

While the devastation wrought by Katrina was on a scale far greater than that of Hurricane Sandy, both crises, in their own way, laid bare the social reality of capitalist America. Why were the 40 nursing homes in flood-prone areas of New York City not evacuated? A report in the *New York Times* (3 December) showed that it was all about saving money. According to the *Times*, the evacuation of patients last year in the face of Tropical Storm Irene “led to millions of dollars in health care, transportation, housing and other costs.” Thus “when Hurricane Sandy loomed, the officials were acutely aware that they could come under criticism if they ordered another evacuation that proved unnecessary.” Nor were the highly vulnerable Bellevue and New York University hospitals evacuated until after the storm knocked out power, forcing workers to carry patients down flight after flight of darkened stairways. Bloomberg’s focus was on the NYC marathon money machine—for which dozens of generators had been reserved—until a public outcry forced the cancellation of the race.

There is a fundamental divide in society between the capitalist class and the working class, whose labor is the source of the capitalists’ immense profits. The working class is not just one more victim of austerity within the “99 percent.” It is the only force with the potential social power and historic interest to sweep away the barbarous capitalist system. As we wrote in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina (“New Orleans: Racist Atrocity,” WV No. 854, 16 September 2005):

“Despite differences over particular policies, the Republicans and Democrats are united in defending capitalism—an anarchic, irrational profit-driven system that cannot even provide for the safety and welfare of the population. The situation cries out for a socialist planned economy, in which natural resources and the technological and productive forces of society would be marshaled *on behalf of human needs*, not profit. What is urgently required is to build a workers party that can lead a workers revolution to rip power from the hands of the capitalist class and its political agents, right-wing Republican and liberal Democrat alike.” ■



April 2006: Seven months after Hurricane Katrina ravaged New Orleans, demonstrators push past security guards to reclaim their homes at St. Bernard public housing project.

to *organize the unorganized* and for *jobs for all* through a shorter workweek at full union wages. Struggles for these necessities point to the need to fight for a *workers government* that would seize the productive wealth that has been squandered by the capitalist rulers and put it toward rebuilding this society. This calls for the forging of a new, class-struggle leadership of the union movement as part of the struggle to build a revolutionary workers party.

Bourgeoisie Appeals to Volunteerism

If one feature has clearly stood out in the aftermath of Sandy, it is the massive volunteer effort that continues into the second month of the disaster. Out of basic human decency, thousands of people have manned food lines and free clinics and assisted with debris removal, or have simply passed out bottles of water. But their efforts can fill no more than a tiny part of the void created by the capitalist rulers’ refusal to mobilize the resources—like massive amounts of money and hired labor—required to address the crisis.

The volunteer effort has been promoted by bourgeois politicians from Barack Obama to Bloomberg and New Jersey governor Chris Christie, who are seizing on it to *alibi* their neglect of the needs of the population. Thus it does not come as a surprise that Bloomberg and the publishers of the *New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal* have hailed the aid provided by Occupy Sandy, a grouping that harks back to last year’s Occupy Wall Street move-

unstoppable, another world is possible.” The reporter thought this was “a truly bizarre moment.” But in fact the populist Occupy movement from the beginning saw the cops—the racist, strikebreaking enforcers of capitalist rule—as part of the “99 percent,” promoting the lie that the police and those they are paid to suppress have common interests.

As seen today in New York, this country’s ruling class possesses boundless contempt for workers, the poor and everyone they have relegated to the bottom of society. At the same time, they moved with alacrity to get the stock market and other major businesses back in gear after the storm hit.

On a much more massive and deadly scale, the same “priorities” were at play when Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast and especially New Orleans seven years ago. For the capitalist class, what mattered in New Orleans was the port and the tourist trade. Poor and black residents of the city were left to die or suffer horribly in the sweltering heat. With the National Guard patrolling the streets, black people were criminalized as “looters,” shot at by cops and vigilantes and locked up in “Camp Greyhound.” Those whose homes were flooded were shipped out of state,

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For example, articles about the occupation of Afghanistan will be found under AFGHANISTAN.• Articles under the <i>Class-Struggle Defense Notes</i> (CSDN) masthead are by the Partisan Defense Committee, a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League.• Abbreviations used in entries are: C: Correction CSDN: <i>Class-Struggle Defense Notes</i> article E: Editorial Note L: Letter R: Review S: Series YSp: <i>Young Spartacus</i> article• Entries for articles that first appeared in the press of another section of the International Communist League indicate the name of the press in parentheses, for example: (<i>Le Bolchévique</i>).
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