

## Imperialist Troops Out of Mali Now!

JANUARY 21—In a stark assertion of French imperialism's domination over its former colonies in West Africa, Socialist Party president François Hollande has launched a bombing campaign and intervention by some 2,000 ground troops in Mali. Billed as part of the global "war on terror," the military assault was intended to force a retreat by Islamic fundamentalist forces that, having seized the northern half of the country, were threatening to march on the capital, Bamako. Hollande bluntly

ordered: "Destroy them. Take them captive, if possible" (London *Guardian*, 15 January). His defense minister candidly declared that the aim of the Mali mission is "total reconquest."

However, as battles continue to rage in and around key towns that had been seized by the fundamentalists, Hollande's critics within the French ruling class are beginning to fret about sinking in a quagmire if left to go it alone. Meanwhile, the seizure of scores of hostages at a natural gas field in Algeria by

Islamists declaring their solidarity with the Malian rebels—and the considerable loss of life when Algerian security retook the installation—may offer a sampling of future fallout from the imperialist occupation of Mali. After initially expressing concern over the intervention in Mali, the Algerian regime saluted the effort, crucially allowing the French military overflight rights.

While rulers of the major capitalist powers rushed to express their solidarity with the French operation in Mali, they

are also reticent about contributing forces and money. The UN Security Council voted unanimously last month to approve an African "peacekeeping" mission of some 3,300 troops, and some countries of the Economic Community of West African States already have hundreds of troops on site. But the imperialists have little expectation that these forces will be an effective gendarmerie. Meanwhile Washington, after initially distancing itself from the French operation, has

*continued on page 2*

## Imperialist Diktat Means Hunger, Disease U.S. Ramps Up Killer Sanctions Against Iran



Reuters

**Above: President Obama threatens more sanctions against Iran, March 2012. Right: With price of poultry and other foods soaring, crowd gathers to buy subsidized chicken in Tehran, July 2012.**



MEHR

With a stroke of a pen, on January 2 Barack Obama consigned millions of Iranians to further devastation by strengthening economic sanctions as part of the annual National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). The fourth time that Obama has ramped up sanctions since 2010, this current round was coordinated with similar measures adopted by the European Union (EU) two weeks before.

In the name of stopping the Islamic regime's purported drive to develop nuclear weapons, U.S. imperialism and its allies have unleashed their own weapon of mass destruction by strangling the Iranian economy, in particular through blocking the oil exports that are its lifeblood. Already in 2010, sanctions were crippling Iranian industry by depriving

it of replacement parts. As oil revenues dried up, Tehran cut crucial subsidies for food, gasoline and other necessities. With hundreds of thousands thrown onto the streets as factories close their doors, food prices have skyrocketed and life-saving medicine has become increasingly scarce.

Iran's nuclear enrichment program, which Tehran has always insisted is not aimed at producing weapons, is just the most recent pretext for the crippling sanctions that have been imposed on the country by both Democratic and Republican administrations. The first sanctions were issued by President Jimmy Carter as payback for the seizure of the U.S. embassy in Tehran in November 1979 by forces loyal to Ayatollah Khomeini, whose reactionary "Islamic revolution" had ousted the brutal and despised Shah Pahlavi. In 1995, the Clinton administration issued an executive order barring American companies from investing in Iranian oil and gas and from trading with Iran, followed a year later by a law imposing penalties on foreign firms with substantial investments

in that sector. In 2006, the UN adopted sanctions aimed at stopping Iran's nuclear development program, with further measures levied over the next few years.

The Obama administration has qualitatively tightened the economic vise on the Iranian population, including by barring companies that trade with Iran from access to the U.S. financial system. In January 2012, the White House slapped sanctions on Iran's central bank, the country's main clearinghouse for oil exports. In June, Washington banned the world's banks from completing oil transactions with Iran. The EU followed suit the next month by banning the import of Iranian oil, going on to prohibit transactions with the country's banks and declaring an embargo of its natural gas. The latest sanctions point toward a complete trade embargo, closing a loophole that enabled Tehran to barter oil and gas for precious metals. They also bar trade with Iran's energy, port, shipping and shipbuilding sectors and include penalties for supplying Iran with graphite, aluminum and steel.

Amid the growing threat of mass hunger and untreated disease, Washington spokesmen crow about the "success" of sanctions in weakening the regime of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. This course is integral to U.S. imperialist strategy under Obama's watch. As it begins to shift most of its armed forces to the Asia Pacific—a particular threat to the Chinese bureaucratically deformed workers state—the White House is steering away from outright military occupations and concentrating instead on more "cost effective" war measures, from attacks by drones and special ops forces to increased use of economic sanctions. John Brennan, Obama's nominee for CIA chief, is a major architect of the drone program that has wreaked terror on the populations of Pakistan, Yemen and elsewhere. Chuck Hagel, slated to take over the Defense Department, is a champion of sanctions, although he prefers the fig leaf of a United Nations mandate.

Thus, the U.S. imperialists currently

*continued on page 8*



# Mali...

(continued from page 1)

dispatched about 100 “trainers” to African countries that are providing troops. Last week, European Union foreign ministers agreed to send 450 “non-combat” troops to Mali, supposedly to train its armed forces.

The Obama administration, still smarting from having its Libyan ambassador killed by Islamist forces that had been armed and financed by the U.S. and its allies in the drive to topple Muammar el-Qaddafi, has ruled out sending its warplanes to Mali. The White House has also turned a deaf ear to requests that it provide air tankers to help refuel French jets, which France views as vital to its imperialist marauding given the vast distances it has to cover in crossing over North Africa. However, Washington has offered to provide limited logistical support to the French operation, as have Britain, Germany, Italy, Belgium, Canada and Russia.

Immediately following the announce-

**French troops leave Bamako heading to north Mali, January 15.**



ment of the French imperialist expedition, our comrades of the Ligue Trotskyste de France issued a leaflet demanding French troops out of Mali and all of Africa and calling for defense of the insurgents against the imperialist intervention. The leaflet notes that among France’s multiple

security interests in the region are the uranium mines in northern Niger, which have been operated for decades by the French Areva nuclear power conglomerate and its predecessors.

The American bourgeoisie has its own imperialist interests in Africa. A Congressional report last summer titled *Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interests and the Role of the U.S. Military in Africa* emphasized “the increasing importance of Africa’s natural resources, particularly energy resources” and expressed “mounting concern over violent extremist activities.” The report cited, in particular, oil production in Nigeria—Africa’s largest oil exporter and the fifth-largest supplier of oil to the U.S.—and the potential for deep-water drilling in the Gulf of Guinea.

Washington has paid out tens of millions of dollars to beef up the military in Mali and neighboring countries in order to prevent jihadists from getting a foothold in the region. Under Barack Obama, the Horn of Africa port of Djibouti, where more than 2,000 U.S. troops are stationed at Camp Lemonnier, has become the busiest Predator drone base outside the Afghan war zone. Since 2007, the U.S. military has also set up a dozen small air bases in Africa, from which Special Ops forces launch surveillance flights. The U.S. military presence in Africa has grown steadily under Obama, with an average of 5,000 troops spread across the continent at any one time and 30 ships patrolling the Indian Ocean. *All U.S. bases and troops out of Africa!*

As the LTF leaflet stresses, our military defense of the insurgents in Mali

implies not the least political support to the reactionary Islamists, whose atrocities include floggings, amputations and the stoning to death last summer of a couple accused of having an extramarital affair. In an act reminiscent of the destruction by the Afghan Taliban of two ancient Buddha statues in Bamiyan, the fundamentalists in Mali took pick-axes to Timbuktu’s historic mausoleums and Sufi shrines, threatening as well its collection of rare archives. Much less prominently reported by the Western bourgeois press are the wholesale killings, disappearances and torture inflicted by the military regime in Bamako on its perceived opponents.

The armed rebellion in northern Mali was initially led by the secular National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA), which has variously called for independence or autonomy for the Tuareg region of Mali. Distressed that the rebellion was gaining momentum, a group of officers seized power in a coup in Bamako last March, suspended the constitution and launched a campaign of terror against their political opponents. Within days, taking advantage of the chaos, the MNLA seized the whole of northern Mali in alliance with Islamic fundamentalist forces. The Islamists promptly turned on their MNLA allies and drove them from the population centers. Today, the marginalized MNLA warns of genocide if French air strikes allow the Malian army to “cross the demarcation line” separating northern Mali from the south. Nevertheless, the MNLA declares that it is “ready to help” the French intervention.

A particular target of the blood-soaked regime in Bamako has been the civilian Tuareg population. The Tuaregs, the dominant ethnic group in northern Mali, are a semi-nomadic people stretching across the Sahara who are ethnically distinct both from Arabs, who constitute the majority in the countries to the north of Mali, and the black Africans who inhabit southern Mali and control the national government and military. When the northern rebellion heated up a year ago, the military went on a killing spree, bombing the civilian population and arresting, torturing and killing Tuaregs for the “crime” of their ethnic origin. Not surprisingly, such atrocities spurred Tuaregs serving in the Malian army, including a number trained by U.S. Special Forces, to go over to the rebels.

Last February, mobs in Bamako attacked

continued on page 10



TROTSKY

### Neocolonial Slavery and World Socialist Revolution

*In May 1940, as Germany was invading France during the second interimperialist world war, the Trotskyist Fourth International convened an Emergency Conference in New York City, drawing delegates from sections in North and South America, Europe, China and Australia. Among its resolutions was one, excerpted below, linking the struggle for liberation in the colonial and semicolonial world with the fight for proletarian revolution in the advanced imperialist countries.*

Under the banner of bourgeois “democracy” and bourgeois “equality,” the great capitalist empires were built upon the exploitation of the proletariat at home and the enslavement of weaker peoples overseas. In the three centuries of their growth, the capitalist nations warred constantly to acquire and expand their colonial domains, to defend them against the raids of rivals, or to suppress revolts of the colonial peoples. In 1914-18, the great imperialist powers fought to redivide an already divided world. They succeeded only in hastening the catastrophic decline of the capitalist system. The revolutions the war engendered, however, failed to establish in the advanced West and the backward East the proletarian power which could and can alone reorganize the world on a socialist basis. The workers won and held power only in backward Russia. Capitalism survived, but only to subject the world to the further agonies of its passing. Twenty-two years after the armistice of 1918, contorted by a crisis they were powerless to surmount, the imperialists plunged the world once more into bloody conflict—Germany, Italy, and Japan to “expand or die”—England, France, and the United States to defend and extend their world hegemony....

In the colonies, in the past, imperialist rule has meant the stifling of economic development and the perpetuation of backward economic and social relations in their most oppressive forms. If an imperialist “solution” of the present world conflict is imposed, a still greater rate of exploitation will be forced upon the colonies and the thralldom of the past deepened multifold. The Western Allies once more offer promises of “freedom” and “cooperation” after they win the present war. But acceptance of such promises only paves the way for the crueler deceptions of the Versailles [treaty at end of WWI] of tomorrow. Germany, for its part, does not bother with deceptive illusions but fights openly to rule the peoples it can conquer by blood and iron alone.

The hopes of liberation of the colonial peoples are therefore bound up even more decisively than ever before with the emancipation of the workers of the whole world. The colonies shall be freed, politically, economically, and culturally, only when the workers of the advanced countries put an end to capitalist rule and set out together with the backward peoples to reorganize world economy on a new level, gearing it to social needs and not to monopolist profits. Only in this way will the colonial and semicolonial countries be enabled to emerge from their varying stages of backwardness and take their places as integral sections of an advancing world socialist commonwealth.

—“The Colonial World and the Second Imperialist War” (May 1940), reprinted in *Documents of the Fourth International: The Formative Years (1933-40)* (Pathfinder Press, 1973)

# WORKERS VANGUARD

**Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League of the U.S.**

DIRECTOR OF PARTY PUBLICATIONS: Liz Gordon  
EDITOR: Ray Bishop  
ASSISTANT EDITOR: Michael Davissou  
EDITOR, YOUNG SPARTACUS PAGES: Tricia Seneca  
CIRCULATION MANAGER: Susan Fuller  
EDITORIAL BOARD: Laura Zamora (managing editor), François Donau (production manager), Blandine Hauser (letters editor), Bruce André, Bonnie Brodie, Jon Brule, Ed Clarkson, Paul Cone, George Foster, Walter Jennings, Michael Joyce, Jane Kerrigan, James Robertson, Joseph Seymour, Alan Wilde  
The Spartacist League is the U.S. section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).  
*Workers Vanguard* (ISSN 0276-0746) published biweekly, except skipping three alternate issues in June, July and August (beginning with omitting the second issue in June) and skipping the last issue in December, by the Spartacist Publishing Co., 299 Broadway, Suite 318, New York, NY 10007. Telephone: (212) 732-7862 (Editorial), (212) 732-7861 (Business). Address all correspondence to: Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116. E-mail address: [vanguard@tiac.net](mailto:vanguard@tiac.net). Domestic subscriptions: \$10.00/22 issues. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Workers Vanguard*, Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116.  
*Opinions expressed in signed articles or letters do not necessarily express the editorial viewpoint.*  
The closing date for news in this issue is January 22.

No. 1016

25 January 2013

# ICL Letter of Condolence to PKK

*We reprint below a January 14 letter by the International Communist League to the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) expressing condolences for the execution-style killing of three female PKK members who were found dead in their Paris office four days earlier. The letter was delivered to PKK representatives in Paris on January 15 at a commemoration for the Kurdish activists that was attended by thousands. Against the backdrop of renewed Turkish military air strikes against PKK mountain camps, tens of thousands of Kurds turned out for their funerals two days later in Diyarbakir, Turkey. The letter, now available in Turkish, was also distributed at a Kurdish demonstration in London on January 18.*

The International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) extends our sincere condolences to the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) on the brutal murder of their three women comrades in Paris last week. Whoever fired the shots that killed Sakine Cansiz, a founding cadre of the PKK, Fidan Dogan and Leyla Soylemez, responsibility for this gruesome killing lies squarely with the Turkish state, whose army has for decades waged a war resulting in the deaths of some 37,000 Kurds. We demand freedom now for Abdullah Öcalan and for

the thousands of other Kurdish nationalists who languish in prison in Turkey and elsewhere. The blood of the Kurdish militants slain in Paris is also on the hands of Turkey’s imperialist backers. The U.S. and the European Union have labeled the PKK as “terrorists.” The NATO imperialist powers, who arm the Turkish state to the hilt, are in fact the most powerful and dangerous terrorists on this planet.

For many years our organization internationally has defended the PKK against state persecution in Germany, Britain and other countries, notwithstanding our political differences with the PKK. We believe that the Kurdish masses must look to an alliance with the proletariat in the countries of the region that oppress the Kurdish nation—particularly Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria—and in turn the proletariat in these countries must champion the right of Kurdish self-determination against their own capitalist rulers. From our perspective of workers revolution internationally, we look to Kurdish and Turkish workers as a key component of the proletariat in West Europe who can be a bridge to the struggles in Turkey. Our program is for a socialist republic of united Kurdistan, within a socialist federation of the Near East. ■

# Imperialism, the Cold War and the Creation of Pakistan

We reprint below an edited version of a document dated 23 November 2012 that was submitted by a comrade as a contribution to party discussion. It originally appeared in *Workers Hammer* No. 221 (Winter 2012-2013), newspaper of the Spartacist League/Britain, section of the International Communist League.

## WORKERS HAMMER

In Part Three that concluded the series of articles “A Marxist Critique of the New Atheists” (*Workers Vanguard* No. 1009, 28 September 2012) it is noted that: “The state of Pakistan was deliberately created as an Islamic political entity in 1947 when the British partitioned the Indian subcontinent, over which they were no longer able to maintain colonial rule.” The article makes the point that, contrary to some leftist groups like the [former cothinkers of the International Socialist Organization, the British] Socialist Workers Party (SWP), there is no basic conflict between Western imperialism and Islamic fundamentalism. It goes on to quote John Foster Dulles on the common bond between imperialism, religions of the East and anti-Communism. In 1950, Dulles, soon to become secretary of state, observed: “The religions of the East are deeply rooted and have many precious values. Their spiritual beliefs cannot be reconciled with Communist atheism and materialism. That creates a common bond between us, and our task is to find it and develop it” (quoted in Paul Baran, *The Political Economy of Growth*, 1957).

The British imperialists have maintained that the partition of India was aimed at creating a homeland for Muslims where they would be protected from Hindus, a claim belied by the fact that far more Muslims were left behind in India than those incorporated in the new entity of Pakistan. Besides, in the provinces that became Pakistan, the Muslims were dominant; they were neither threatened by post-independence Hindu domination nor were they interested in a separate Muslim state. In fact, the majority of Muslims were fearful of the economic and social impact of uprooting and relocation. They resented the fact that they would be confined to the two corners of the subcontinent and have to abandon the heartland of India, where Muslim rulers held sway for over 600 years before their defeat by the British, and in which lie some of the magnificent symbols of past Muslim power and glory such as the



Bodies of victims of intercommunal slaughter loaded onto trucks, New Delhi 1947. Partition of India left an estimated one million dead.

great forts of Delhi and Agra, the Taj Mahal and others. Muslim merchants and businessmen opposed the partition out of concern for the loss of a long developed market. The sizable Shi’ite Muslim population, dreading living in a Sunni-dominated Pakistan, was opposed to the partition scheme.

Up until World War II the British depended on the strategically situated India as a military base to safeguard their interests—in the Middle East, Southeast Asia and their colonies across the Indian Ocean in east Africa. As India’s independence dawned, the British, fearing that the Hindu nationalists who would rule post-independence India would deny them military cooperation, settled for creating a weak, truncated entity that would serve their imperialist interests, would depend on Britain for its defence and would be ruled by their pliable lackeys of the Muslim League of Mohammed Ali Jinnah. Through their divide-and-rule policy and using religion as a tool, the British drove a wedge between Hindus and Muslims, built close ties with Jinnah, in whom they nourished separatist aspirations, and recognised him as the sole spokesman of the Muslims of India.

In his well-documented book, *The Shadow of the Great Game: The Untold Story of India’s Partition* (2005), Narendra Singh Sarila laid bare the true intentions of the British behind the partition: a meticulously calculated scheme to detach Pakistan from India, create a militarily strategic foothold aimed at the Soviet Union and maintain control over the oil fields of the Middle East. Sarila, who served as an

aide-de-camp to Lord Louis Mountbatten, the last viceroy of India, was privy to the British manipulative machinations. He unearthed piles of documents pertaining to the partition: correspondence of British colonial officials; archival papers of major players, British and Indian; etc.

On 5 May 1945, the same day Ger-

ish India as the viceroy’s chief adviser, foreign secretary and governor of the North West Frontier Province, which later became incorporated into Pakistan.

After his retirement Caroe was sent by the British Foreign Office on a lecture tour to the United States to solicit a joint Anglo-American alliance against the Soviet Union and to control Middle East oil. The theme of his lectures, in his own words, was: “The importance of the [Persian] Gulf grows greater, not less, as the need for fuel expands, the world contracts and the shadows lengthen from the north [i.e., the USSR]. Its stability can be assured only by the close accord between the States which surround this Muslim lake, an accord underwritten by the Great powers whose interests are engaged.” Caroe wanted the U.S. to join a “partner full of garnered knowledge but overcome for a while with weariness, [as] both are faced with the imminence of Soviet Russia towering over these lands.” Caroe’s lectures were later published in a book titled *Wells of Power: The Oilfields of South-Western Asia, a Regional and Global Study* (1951). His schemes found resonance with American imperialists who were eager to control the oil resources and to expand the boundaries of the Cold War by ringing



Nikita Khrushchev inspects wreckage of U.S. U-2 spy plane shot down over Soviet Union, 1960. Pakistan hosted bases for U-2s during Cold War.

many surrendered, Churchill ordered an appraisal of the long-term policy required to safeguard the interests of the British Empire in India. The report presented to him stressed the strategic importance of India “from the northwest of which British air power could threaten Soviet military installations.” Churchill told Lord Archibald Wavell, then viceroy of India, to “keep a bit of India.” According to Sarila, a more candid Lord Wavell, who prepared a blueprint of the partition borders as early as February 1946, grasped the fact that: “The breach to be caused in Britain’s capacity to defend the Middle East and the Indian Ocean area could be plugged if the Muslim League were to succeed in separating India’s strategic northwest from the rest of the country, a realizable goal considering the close ties that Lord Linlithgow, Wavell’s predecessor, had built up with the Muslim League leader Mohammad Ali Jinnah.”

Dulles’ idea about utilising reactionary religious forces as a battering ram in the Cold War against the Soviet Union echoed British imperialist schemes. In his writings in the late forties and early fifties, British colonial official Olaf Caroe posed the question: “Will Islam stand up to communism?” He advocated turning Pakistan into a base for a community of Muslim states that “would show the way for reconciliation between the Western and Islamic models.” A major architect of the partition, Caroe served in Brit-

the Soviet Union with a series of alliance systems in the region.

By the early 1950s Pakistan became, in the words of a Pakistani leader, “America’s most allied ally in Asia.” In 1954 it signed a mutual defence agreement with the U.S. Later that year Pakistan became a founding member of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), even though the country is thousands of miles away from Southeast Asia. The next year Pakistan joined the Anglo-American sponsored Baghdad Pact along with Turkey, Iraq and Iran, constituting what Dulles called “the northern tier” that linked the southernmost member of NATO, Turkey, with the westernmost member of SEATO, Pakistan. Pakistan went on to host secret bases for the CIA U-2 planes conducting espionage over the USSR, one of which was shot down by the Soviets in May 1960. In one of the Cold War historical moments, Khrushchev, with no small degree of pleasure, displayed the mostly intact wreckage of the supposedly invincible U-2 and its captured pilot, Francis Gary Powers. In the 1980s Pakistan provided a base for launching attacks against the Soviets in Afghanistan.

### Workers Hammer Adds:

Following the entry of Soviet troops in 1979, Afghanistan became the front line of the imperialists’ relentless drive to destroy the Soviet Union. As the CIA

*continued on page 9*

Spartacist



Black History Month Forums

## August 2012: Miners Strikes Shake Neo-Apartheid South Africa

- Down With ANC/SACP/COSATU Capitalist Alliance!
- For a Black-Centered Workers Government!

LOS ANGELES

Metropolitan Community Church  
4607 Prospect Ave.

Saturday, Feb. 9, 3 p.m.

(2 blocks north of Vermont/Sunset Red Line Station)

For info: (213) 380-8239, slsycla@sbcglobal.net

## 150 Years Since the Emancipation Proclamation: Finish the Civil War!

CHICAGO

University of Illinois at Chicago  
African American Cultural Center

Saturday, Feb. 16, 4 p.m.

830 S. Halsted St., Addams Hall, Room 207

For info: (312) 563-0441, chicagospartacist@sbcglobal.net



# Young Spartacus

## Miners Strikes Shake Neo-Apartheid South Africa

*We are pleased to publish an edited presentation given by comrade Jon Brule, member of the International Executive Committee of the International Communist League, to a Spartacus Youth Club forum held at City College of New York on November 27.*

A little over three months ago in Marikana, South Africa, police attacked a picket line of mineworkers striking against the Lonmin platinum company. As a result, 34 strikers were killed and 78 were wounded. For many South Africans this brought back memories of the massacres at Sharpeville in 1960 and Soweto in 1976. But there was a key difference: those massacres had been carried out by the white apartheid regime and this massacre was carried out by the mainly black African National Congress (ANC) government, which is in an alliance with the largest trade-union federation in the country, called COSATU, and the largest workers party, which is the South African Communist Party (SACP).

Subsequently the government stood by the cops, as have the SACP and COSATU, and they have sought to blame militant strikers for the violence. For example, Blade Nzimande, who is head of the SACP, issued a September 17 statement that the SACP fully supports the government's crackdown and asserted that the "ring-leaders must be dealt with." In contrast, our organization in South Africa, Spartacist/South Africa, said, "Make no mistake: the blood of these massacred workers is on the hands of the *leaders* of the ANC/SACP/COSATU Tripartite Alliance and their government, who have demonstrated yet again their reliability to the Randlord rulers and their imperialist senior partners" ("Blood on the Hands of ANC/SACP/COSATU Government," reprinted in WV No. 1007, 31 August 2012).

So there has in fact been a real witch-hunt of the strikers on the pretext that these people are "criminals," which is allegedly proven by the fact that they were "violent" and carried arms onto the picket line. In fact, it is true they did have arms, mainly things like homemade spears and so forth. The cops were heavily armed with assault rifles. And of course the cops have claimed that they were defending themselves against these workers, and there has been one lie and cover-up after another. So for example, one independent investigation showed that many strikers were not even shot on the picket line; rather they had sought to escape and were killed some distance away from the incident. Then there was something else: the police, in order to "prove" that these guys were violent, showed photographs of the bodies of the dead strikers with spears and pangas [machetes]. Well, unfortunately for the government they had issued photos of the same individuals some time earlier without the weapons on them. In other words, they subsequently planted the weapons.

From our standpoint this was a major class battle and we communists have a side with the workers. We believe that they have a right to defend themselves against strikebreakers and police scabherders. And our line on self-defense was stated squarely by our organization



January 16: Anglo American Platinum workers, who were part of last year's strike wave in Rustenburg, down tools after company announced shaft closings and job cuts.

AFP

Union of Mineworkers (NUM). So at the time, the COSATU leader, whose name is Zwelinzima Vavi, issued a statement on Twitter saying, "Cosatu and NUM will have to act fast or this deal can collapse...every bargaining system in place...it can communicate [sic] the message workers can lead themselves and get what they want" (*Mail & Guardian* online, 19 September 2012).

Indeed, that's what has started to happen. The strike at this particular platinum mine spread to other platinum mines, and then gold mines and chrome mines, and at least one iron ore mine, and also to other sections of the country. Currently there is a big, hard-fought strike in the Western Cape, another strike that is being waged by probably the most oppressed section of the working class in South Africa, the farm workers. In fact, only about 5 percent of these people have ever been organized into unions. But they are on strike today. In total there were some 100,000 mineworkers who

were on strike at one time or another when these strikes were going on. The economy lost something like 10 billion rand, which is a little over a billion American dollars. In retaliation, the companies dismissed, or rather attempted to dismiss, thousands of miners from their jobs. Numerous miners are still facing charges.

When I was over there in September, there was a COSATU conference. Our comrades took three different placards and set up a literature table outside this conference. And the placards said: "Drop All the Charges! Victory to the Striking Mineworkers!" "Cops and Security Guards Out of the Unions!" and "Break With the Bourgeois Tripartite Alliance! For a Black-Centred Workers Government!" The literature sale was going briskly. There was a lot of interest in our material. Then all of a sudden, a large number of bureaucratic goons attacked the lit table and the comrades. They made a bonfire and threw all of our literature on it and burned it.

Why did they do this? It was not particularly because they felt threatened by a small Trotskyist organization. Rather, it was because they were hysterical and quite frenzied over the example of this mineworkers strike, this wildcat strike, and the fear that it would spread to other sections of the working class.

## Presentation to SYC Forum

in South Africa, which said, "To listen to the sanctimonious bourgeois editorialists and Alliance tops talk, the Zulu, Xhosa and other native African warriors who were mowed down by the guns of British and Dutch colonisers should also have accepted part of the blame for the 'senseless loss of life,' because they tried to fight back with spears and other primitive weapons! We stand forthrightly for the right of *armed self-defence* of the working class against the bloody violence of the capitalist state, the bosses' security guard thugs and other professional strikebreakers. *For workers defence guards to protect the picket lines!*"

### Tripartite Alliance Government vs. Miners

What this incident shows clearly is the class character of the state. When I was in South Africa some years ago, I remember having a lot of arguments with members of the SACP who assured me that the cops were now different, that this was no longer apartheid, that the cops served an allegedly progressive government, that many of them had even fought in the liberation

forces of the ANC against apartheid. We had big arguments about this.

The massacre demonstrated yet again that, in fact, the state, which is based on armed bodies of men (with the police, army, courts, etc. at its core), exists as an organ of repression of one class over another. I gather you have read some of Lenin's *The State and Revolution*, if you've been participating in this class series. This was a real demonstration that the black and white cops who carried out this massacre are the bourgeoisie's thugs just as they were under the apartheid regime.

Notwithstanding the horrific violence and repression meted out by the government against the strikers at Lonmin, they persevered and won a substantial wage increase for many of their members. This caused a big problem not only for the government but also for the existing trade-union federation COSATU and for the SACP, who provide most of the cadre for COSATU. Not only was it an illegal strike that won but also it was a wildcat strike—i.e., the workers went out on strike in defiance of their own leadership, as they had been members of the National

Marikana, South Africa: Aftermath of cop massacre of striking Lonmin miners, 16 August 2012.



Gallo

After this incident, Spartacist/South Africa issued a statement (reprinted in WV No. 1009, 28 September 2012) that noted, “The COSATU bureaucrats fear that other sections of the working class, inspired by this, will take the road of class struggle, thereby upsetting the cosy relationship of the bureaucrats with the capitalists and their government. That’s why the Alliance tops are now denouncing the Lonmin bosses for ‘caving in’ to the wildcat strike.” And that’s exactly what happened.

## Capitalism and Its Black Front Men

Since these strikes broke out, it’s not uncommon to read, even in the capitalist press, that over the last 18 years it has been in power, the ANC government has benefited only a small handful of blacks and the rest of them have not been helped. The left organizations—who up until now have been courting one or another wing of the Tripartite Alliance—have been making haste to put a little distance between themselves and the people they have been supporting. This is not true of us, because we consistently opposed the Tripartite Alliance.

When they came into power in 1994, we wrote “Mandela/ANC Front for Racist Capitalist Rule” (WV No. 600, 13 May 1994), stressing that black freedom requires socialist revolution. In 1995, we put out one of our *Black History and the*



**Mining magnate Patrice Motsepe, one of three South Africans on Forbes 2008 World’s Billionaires list.**

*Class Struggle* pamphlets (No. 12) with a series on South Africa. One article has a headline, “South Africa Powder Keg: ANC Fronts for Racist Exploiters.” We always make available our back literature, unlike many other organizations, because actually we’re proud of what we stood on in the past and are not embarrassed by it. We don’t seek to cover it up, like many organizations on the left.

Now, I talked about the cops attacking the picket line. It’s also important to understand, however, that the capitalist ruling class usually doesn’t maintain itself in power simply by the use of armed force. They also have ideological weapons. They control the media, they control the schools, etc. If you want to explain why the ANC government has held on the way it has, you also have to understand this aspect. In particular, the ANC has utilized African nationalism as a way of justifying its regime. At bottom, black African nationalism asserts that the common interests of the black population are higher than the class divisions in society.

This is very, very different from the Marxist perspective. A Marxist would argue that class divisions are fundamental. You have two main classes in society: the capitalists (who own the means of production like the factories, the mines, the banks and the land) and the wage workers (who have only their labor power to sell).

Suppose we take a look at what has happened in South Africa. These events



Popperfoto

**Sharpeville massacre, 1960: Apartheid police kill 69 men, women and children protesting the pass laws.**

demonstrate and confirm that the Marxist perspective is superior for explaining what went on. If you look at the lineup, what do you have? On the one side you have the black workers, who are out on strike. And on the other side you have the mainly black government, black and white cops, and another element: several thousand black people—a small minority of the black population—who were admitted to the elite of South Africa when apartheid ended. Up until that time, there were really no black capitalists. Now it’s different. For example, there is a guy by the name of Cyril Ramaphosa [elected the ANC’s deputy president in December], who in apartheid days was actually the leader of the NUM mineworkers union. Today he has amassed about \$675 million dollars worth of industrial and mining holdings. And he happens to be a major stockholder in Lonmin.

So, you have an alliance of the imperialists, the white Randlords with their black junior partners in the government, and the black and white cops. It isn’t black against white. The decisive division here is class against class. And this is a very important lesson about how society actually functions.

## The Rise of Apartheid

Having said that, it raises a question: Why does black nationalism have the influence that it does? You can’t deny that it has had a lot of influence in South Africa. I think in order to explain that you have to first do a little excursion in history. So I’m going to have to do this rather rapidly and I’m going to leave things out.

In the 17th century, Dutch Calvinists and French Protestants settled the country, and they were given the name Afrikaners, the “white African tribe.” Later during the Napoleonic Wars, the British decided they needed to at least control the coast, because it was a convenient way station to their most important colony, India. So they seized Cape Town. But nothing much happened and the country was kind of a backwater until the discovery of diamonds and later gold in the second half of the 19th century. At this point, the British took interest.

The British imperialists realized that the gold and diamonds were located in provinces run by the Afrikaners, so they started a war called the Boer War and took over. They had to find people to work in the mines. Up until that time, most of the Africans were subsistence

peasants and they raised cattle, etc. So in order to *make* them work in the mines, the capitalists had to take their land away, and some 87 percent of the land in the country was given to the whites. They also had to institute a rigorous system of taxes, like poll taxes, to force the Africans to make money in order to pay taxes; this meant the Africans had to go to work in a mine or someplace like that.

That’s how the British did it. Now, there is more to it than that, but that sort of is fundamentally the process. It’s important to keep this in mind because, if you talk to liberals, they say everything racist about South Africa was done by the Afrikaners, but this was actually done by the British.

After World War II, the apartheid regime came into power, and it was based on a mainly Afrikaner party called the Nationalist Party. They set up a series of rigorous stratifications of the population, which they divided into whites, mixed-race, Indians and blacks. They had these pass laws, which meant you couldn’t go anywhere if you were black unless you were carrying an appropriate pass that gave you permission. Group Areas Acts were also enacted to separate where different so-called “racial categories” could live. This was all kind of a refinement and intensification of what had existed before. What they used the pass laws for was to find a way of getting people to go where they wanted them to work, which were generally places considered least desirable, like the mines and the white-owned farms.

## Neo-Apartheid South Africa Today

Today, if you look at the way the mining industry works, a lot of this is still true. Mining is still done by migrants, people who live in other parts of South Africa or in neighboring countries. Men go to work in these mines and once or twice a year they go home and see their family. And it’s still among the most dangerous kinds of work that you can do: one miner in South Africa dies every three days. It’s extremely difficult work. The mines are deep underground and the temperatures run up to about 115 degrees at the rock face.

There have been some modifications since the apartheid period. They don’t depend on pass laws to make people work in the mines, but what they have now is economic compulsion. You’ve got an official unemployment rate of 25 percent in the country, which is higher among blacks. So people go to work in mines

because they have to earn a living; they have to eat.

And there is another important difference. While there are still workers from neighboring countries like Zimbabwe, Lesotho and Mozambique, some years ago the ANC government passed a law making it much more difficult for foreign black workers to work in the mines. We’re very much opposed to this discrimination against immigrants. We believe that anyone who gets to a country should have the right to stay there. In other words, we fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants in South Africa and here in the U.S.

The ANC also has a view that South Africa is a “rainbow nation,” namely, that all races are going to be treated equally in South Africa. This is not true of blacks and whites and also other sections of the population. Nine percent of South Africans are called the coloured or mixed-race population. They are basically descended from the earlier period when the Afrikaners came and had offspring through unions with the Khoisan people, and then later with Malay women slaves. These people were Christianized and were taught to speak Afrikaans, which is the language of the Afrikaners.

Also in the 19th century the British brought over a number of people from India to work on the sugar plantations there. So one of the things you see today, and you have this in every capitalist country, is that it’s not just blacks pitted against whites, but also different layers of the oppressed are pitted against each other. Blacks against the coloureds, Indians and so forth. You don’t resolve these differences unless you get rid of capitalism.

If you look at the overall picture, South Africa is a unique society established by European colonialism. It is very different from other countries like India, which was a British colony with only a thin layer of whites who were the top military officers or the top administrators. When the British left, they left too. In contrast, the white population in South Africa is much more substantial and they actually settled the country, and they did it in a particular way. When Europeans settling the U.S. or Canada ran into the indigenous population, they killed them or ultimately drove them onto reservations. Whereas in South Africa, what the settlers did was exploit the native population.

People often make analogies between the race question in South Africa and in the United States. Of course there are parallels there. Many American blacks thought that apartheid was like a magnification or a mirror of their own oppression in this country. At the same time, there are obvious differences, starting with the fact that blacks are a minority here, whereas in South Africa they are the majority of the population. There is another very important difference: although whites in the U.S. on average are better off than blacks, if you look at the working class you have whites, blacks and Hispanics. You go out to a picket line and you’re going to see workers from different races and ethnic backgrounds. Whereas in South Africa, it is much more a question of the whites being like a privileged caste. It’s more like one race on top of others, which is not saying there aren’t a few poor or working-class whites.

So this sort of gets back to the question I raised earlier, which is, why does nationalism have the impact that it does? Because

*continued on page 6*

### Spartacist South Africa Leaflet 23 August 2012

spears and other primitive weapons! We stand forthrightly for the right of *armed self-defence* of the working class against the bloody violence of the capitalist state, the bosses’ security guard thugs and other professional strikebreakers. *For workers defence guards to protect the picket lines!* As the bloody massacre showed, the

### Democratic Socialist Movement Statement—17 August 2012

was attacked. We stand for workers’ right to defend themselves, in a disciplined way. It was a mistake for Lonmin workers to respond by killing first two security guards, on Saturday, and then two police officers on Monday. This did not move the workers’ struggle forward but divided it. It gave the police, the mine bosses and the state cover behind which they could crush the strike.

**The DSM rebuked Lonmin strikers who defended themselves against police and security guards. The DSM and their affiliates in the Committee for a Workers’ International have a long history of embracing cops as part of workers movement.**



# “Traditional Culture” vs. Fight for Women’s Liberation

We publish remarks by Karen Cole and Jon Brule made during the discussion at the Spartacus Youth Club’s November 27 class on South Africa. Comrade Karen’s intervention sparked a debate with a young South African woman of Zulu origin who decried “cultural dispossession” and argued, “On the question of polygamy and some of the traditional aspects of our culture, the problem has a lot to do with dispossession of land, which has affected our ability to practice our culture the way we used to.” She asserted that “traditionally” women asked their husbands for co-wives to help with the housework. She said people get married “in order to build nations, and to look out after national interests,” adding, “We have to be careful not to mix Western ideas about what it is about culture.” Comrade Jon responded to her arguments in his summary remarks. The transcripts were excerpted and edited for publication.

**Karen:** The woman question is key to socialist revolution in South Africa. In South Africa, women are specially oppressed. It is common for black women to be forced to be married and men forced to pay a bride price, which is called *lobola*. There is polygamy, both African traditional polygamy and Muslim polygamy. There is child abduction for marriage. There is female genital mutilation. And the migrant labor system itself was a system where women were left back in the most arid, terrible places that no one else wanted, while the men migrated to the mines.

Black women in this country have nothing. They are the slaves of the



A miner’s wife in shack near Lonmin’s Marikana mine. Over 30 inhabitants of this settlement share two toilets and one water tap.

slaves. The nationalists have no program for them, no solution for liberating these women or the men. In South Africa you have this very democratic Constitution drafted in 1994. It’s very, very democratic on paper but it means nothing for women in impoverished areas where there are no hospitals, no doctors, no roads, no electricity, or no running water. The Constitution is just fine words that mean nothing for the material conditions of women.

The only way that can change is through socialist revolution to overthrow the capitalist system and institute a planned economy based on human need, not on private property. That’s

why we fight for a revolutionary party in South Africa, here in the U.S., in Egypt as well. Everywhere you look in the world, the struggles for the emancipation of the oppressed cannot begin to be addressed without fighting for a planned economy where workers rule.

**Jon:** I wanted to address the comments by the young woman who spoke. I have some differences with what she said. We are not cultural relativists when it comes to the treatment of women. There are traditions and there are traditions. One of the really horrifying things that happened in South Africa is that the life expectancy there has plummeted by about ten years. This is largely due

to the fact that HIV and AIDS are so widespread in that country. The previous ANC president of South Africa did not believe there was a connection between the HIV virus and AIDS. Therefore the regime recommended traditional herbal remedies. The result was quite predictable. There is not a “Western” way of treating HIV or AIDS; there is a scientific way of treating it, whether it is in the West or in Africa.

Similarly with these traditions. I think you really understate how these “traditions” victimize women. *Lobola*, which is otherwise known as bride price, is common in many countries in the world. It is something that we oppose. What it means is that in order for a woman to get married, the husband has to pay. It used to be cattle, now it is generally cash. That is not something that is in the interests of women. When you buy a bride, then she belongs to the husband—that is the trade-off here. It leads to bad things.

Ditto with some of these other questions. Polygamy can mean different things in different societies. But when it’s something that’s used as a coercive element, as it often is in backward societies where the women don’t have a choice, it is not a good thing. If people want to read more, we have a good deal of material on the woman question in South Africa, including the fact—and this is borne out by many statistics—that women are increasingly the victims of a high level of personal violence and rape in that society.

So liberation of women is a fundamental task of a proletarian revolution, just as it was in backward, peasant-dominated Russia where they had to deal with all sorts of similar crap. This is important. I talked about AIDS. Gays and lesbian women who campaigned for decent treatment for AIDS in South Africa were lynched in their communities. I hope people read the material we have on the woman question in South Africa.

## South Africa...

(continued from page 5)

race corresponds largely to class in South Africa. If you are poor and working-class, you’re much more likely to be black or some other non-white. Therefore, it’s very easy to confuse the two conceptions of race and class. When apartheid ended in 1994, there was an enormous expectation among the black masses that not only would they have political rights, but also their conditions of living would improve dramatically. That’s not happening.

### The Deal to End Apartheid

In order to conclude this rather potted history of the country you have to take into account the final period of apartheid in South Africa and recognize that it wasn’t about just what went on in the country. There were, to be sure, many militant struggles by workers against apartheid, but there were also other things that happened outside the country that shaped the outcome. One of them was that the countries that are now Mozambique and Angola were Portuguese colonies at the time. The Portuguese colonies got their independence by 1975, and this destabilized southern Africa. That year there was a civil war in Angola, and the South Africans, who considered this part of the world theirs, intervened on one side, while Brezhnev, who was the leader of the Soviet Union, got the Cubans to go in on the side of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA).

We didn’t politically support the left-nationalist MPLA, but in this conflict we had a side because it was a proxy war and we wanted to see the Cubans smash the South Africans. They did, and as a result

“Power-sharing” for racist capitalist rule: Nelson Mandela joins Thabo Mbeki (left), later South Africa’s president, and former apartheid leader F.W. De Klerk in celebrating new constitution, 1996.



of that a lot of people in South Africa concluded that the South African army was not invincible, as had been claimed. This helped trigger a major upsurge of struggle in South Africa, which broke out around the time of the big student protests in Soweto in 1976. As a result, the regime in South Africa cranked up the level of repression, killing a lot of people and jailing many more.

The regime was not defeated, but it was an extremely expensive way of running the country. The Americans were worried. You have to remember, South Africa was a junior partner of U.S. imperialism this whole time. But the U.S. said, “Well, you know, ultimately you’re just going to have to fight the same battles over and over again and, furthermore, the communists in South Africa are gaining influence.” So at a certain point, they pulled the rug out from underneath the apartheid regime, or tried to, and they started selling off their stocks and bonds and calling in their loans to the government. They basically said to the apartheid regime, “OK, you guys had better start negotiating with the ANC.”

Now nothing much happened for three or four years. Then—we are now reaching the Gorbachev years in the second half of the ’80s—Gorbachev starts to give away the store. He gives away East Europe to the imperialists and everybody realizes that, if Gorbachev is going to do that in his own backyard, there is no way that this guy is ever going to establish a client state in Southern Africa. Up until that time, the Soviets had given a modicum of diplomatic support and weaponry for what was basically a tokenistic guerrilla army of the ANC. So at that point the apartheid guys said, “Well, the ANC has nowhere to go now. So we can drive a bargain that’s to our advantage.” And the ANC basically said, “OK, we’ll do it.” (For a more detailed account, see “Growth of the Black Workers Movement,” *Black History and the Class Struggle* No. 12, February 1995.)

So you got what happened, which was that legally and politically they changed the state in South Africa. Whereas before the end of apartheid, non-whites could not vote in that country, now they got to vote. That’s on the one hand. But economically

and socially, *nothing* changed. Nothing. The same companies that had been running the country previously—like Anglo American, the largest mining company in South Africa—continued to run the country. Except for one thing I alluded to earlier, that a small layer of blacks were now inducted into the elite. Actually, working people in South Africa have a somewhat contemptuous term for these guys. They say they are “riding the gravy train” or they call them “gravy trainers.” One example is this character I mentioned before, Cyril Ramaphosa.

### SACP: Obstacle to Revolution

The effect of this, however, is that workers in South Africa generally saw the ANC as having liberated people from apartheid. The other important glue here is the SACP, which for years has been an integral part of the ANC. By 1994, overwhelmingly the most militant workers supported the South African Communist Party. This is why they have a thing called the Tripartite Alliance, and this is why the Communist Party is in the government, because it gives the impression that this government, if not a socialist government, is not hostile to socialism and will pave the way for it. They say, “See? We have our comrades from the Communist Party in the government.” Now, you would never find that in the United States, would you? You would not find the AFL-CIO made part of Obama’s government. The reason is the capitalists don’t have to worry. There is no organized political party of the working class in this country, and indeed one could say that the political consciousness of the working class is lower here than it is in South Africa.

The role of the SACP is important because it’s the only organized mass

# SYC Speaker at NYC Holiday Appeal

## Take a Side for a Socialist Future

We print below a speech, edited for publication, by Dianna Faustine of the New York Spartacus Youth Club. The speech was given on December 7 at the Partisan Defense Committee's Holiday Appeal for Class-War Prisoners in New York.

The Spartacus Youth Club is the youth auxiliary of the Spartacist League, and we solidarize with the class-war prisoners, many of whom were thrown into prison when they were around our age because they hated the injustice of this capitalist system.

There is no future for youth in a capitalist system. Young people, particularly black and Latino youth, have been driven from the universities with rising tuition. The bourgeoisie seeks to channel youth anger and militancy into voting for the Democrats, a prettier face of the bourgeois state whose task is to protect the property of the capitalist overlords. Our opponents on the left, some of whom campaigned for Obama in recent elections, seek to pressure the Democratic Party into being less repressive. But the only way forward for youth is to ally with the working class, which is the class that creates all the wealth in society and has the power to shut down capitalist production and smash the bourgeois state.

After Hurricane Sandy some residents, particularly in poor and working-class neighborhoods, are still struggling to get basic needs like food, water and shelter. They have only been able to obtain anything through volunteers, like those involved with the populist movement of Occupy Sandy, which Occupy defines as "people-powered relief." While we are not opposed to those who choose to volunteer, the bourgeoisie hails volunteerism because it's not in the interest of the capitalists to provide genuinely decent living conditions for the masses. Reformist groups like the International Socialist Organization (ISO) have attached themselves to Occupy Sandy as a way to build a liberal "movement." The ISO has its niche in the sellout union bureaucracy and among bourgeois liberals, and is ready toglom onto whatever is moving to shore up the capitalist system.

There's a lot of anger about the outrageous cost of tuition and cutbacks to educa-

tion. Right now there is a student occupation happening at Cooper Union, a historically free campus where the administration is attempting to impose tuition for the first time in 110 years. There is a racist purge of colleges and universities occurring through tuition hikes. A small number of black and Latino students have had limited gains through affirmative action. But the black-robed purveyors of the injustice system are again in the midst of ruling on its legality

university! Cops off campus!

While student struggles have sometimes been the ignition source for social battles especially around youth unemployment and imperialist wars, students have no direct relationship to the means of production and must ally with the working class. There were massive student protests in Quebec around draconian tuition hikes this summer. The working class mobilized in support of the students

York against a speech by war criminal Anders Fogh Rasmussen, Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). NATO is a U.S.-dominated imperialist alliance formed after World War II whose aim was the destruction of the degenerated Soviet workers state. Today these war criminals are responsible for imperialist terror around the world. We say: **U.S./NATO hands off the world!** A leading activist for the Freedom Road Socialist Organization in New York stood apart from our anti-NATO protest and refused to join it.

The FRSO [the New York group's split-off in the Midwest, which publishes *Fight Back!*] wrote "it is better to vote against Romney" and we all know that means voting for the lesser evil of the Democratic Party or the Greens—both capitalist parties. Like the ISO, they adapt to prevailing bourgeois consciousness. We fight to break the working class and militant youth from false consciousness and argue for the need to get rid of the whole capitalist system of exploitation, poverty, racism and war.

People may have heard of the recent outrageous death of a woman who was denied an abortion in Ireland. Here in this country both the Democrats and Republicans have carried out a war against abortion rights. Just look at Obama's ban of over-the-counter access to morning-after pills for teenagers! The SYC fights for free abortion on demand, for free public health care for all, and separation of church and state.

We seek to win a new generation of young workers and students to the principles and program of Trotskyism, recognizing that a revolutionary party is built through the fusion of declassed revolutionary intellectuals with the most advanced layers of the proletariat. We do so through exemplary action, as illustrated by our NATO protest and participation in picket lines, and through education like the class series we held this semester on basic Marxism. So, if you don't want to live in a world of war and starvation, in the words of the Harlan County coal miners and the women who bravely stood alongside them fighting for a decent life, ask yourself: "Which side are you on?" **Join the SYC!** ■



WV Photo

New York: SYC participates in protest against Marikana massacre, August 2012.

because, like all things wrested from the capitalists, these gains are reversible.

Fundamentally, the capitalists only support education insofar as it produces the future maintainers of this anarchic system. Students who are burdened with thousands of dollars of debt (which often can only be canceled by death) live in indentured servitude hell after college, if they can even afford to graduate! We demand: **Open admissions, no tuition and a state-paid living stipend for all! Abolish the student debt! Nationalize the private universities! Abolish the administration—for worker/student/teacher control of the**

but the union misleaders and the petty-bourgeois populists of Québec Solidaire channeled anger into Québécois nationalism and bourgeois electoralism. Throughout their courageous struggle, the protesters faced intense police repression. The PDC defends these protesters and we say: **An injury to one is an injury to all!**

Friedrich Engels wrote that Marxism is not a dogma, but a guide to action, and from that we take our cue. In August we brought students to a PDC-initiated protest against the massacre of South African miners. In late September, the SYC initiated a protest at City College of New

party of the working class. Their theory is a theory of two-stage revolution, which holds that the way to get to socialism is to have an initial stage, which they claim is happening now, and they call it the "national democratic revolution." In this stage they say they are going to do away with racial inequality, but they're not going to get rid of capitalism. Then some time by and by, there's going to be socialism. And in order to do this, according to their view, well of course you go out and join the government now and pressure it to act more and more in the interests of the working class. In fact, they deny that there is a **capitalist** state in South Africa. The term they use is "class contested," implying falsely that the workers could take power without overthrowing the existing state.

This whole conception is a lie, and it has been demonstrated over the last two decades why it's a lie. You don't end up forcing the government to carry out pro-working-class policies. Instead, when you become part of a capitalist government, like the SACP is, you have to take responsibility for the policies of that government, which are premised fundamentally on maintaining capitalist profit. You become complicit and part of anti-working-class atrocities like the massacre

at Marikana—which is not the only time the SACP has played a strikebreaking role in South Africa, but it is certainly the most recent and dramatic example.

At the same time, like I said, the expectations of the masses have been dampened. The ANC made all kinds of promises in '94: everyone's going to get a house, electricity, running water, and we'll do away with unemployment. None of this has come about. Inequality, if anything, is probably higher than it was at that time. I think the average white household income is something like 365,000 rand a year, which is about \$40,000, compared to 60,000 rand

for a black family, which is \$6,600 a year. So it's an income ratio of about 6 to 1. And a generation has passed since the ANC came in. It has dawned on people that obviously nothing much has changed.

So to sum up, when you look at two-stage revolution, it's a lie. First of all, the first premise is false: there was no revolution that put an end to apartheid. There was a **deal** that the ANC made with the imperialists and the former apartheid rulers. We have a saying in the International Communist League that two-stage revolution means that in the first stage, you put a nationalist bourgeoisie in power; in

the second stage, the workers and the reds get massacred. Well that was Marikana. That's two-stage revolution!

### Tasks of a Revolutionary Party

If you persevere in this class series you will study the Russian Revolution. The Russian Revolution is what we stand for; it's our positive example. In 1917 Russia was a country of belated capitalist development, with some of the biggest modern factories in Europe in a mainly backward peasant country, with lots of illiteracy and stuff like that. They didn't have a

*continued on page 8*

## Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

### CHICAGO

Wednesday, January 30, 7 p.m.

#### Marxism and the Fight for Socialist Revolution

University of Chicago  
Reynolds Club

Information and readings: (312) 563-0441  
chicagosyc@sbcglobal.net

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

### VANCOUVER

Thursday, February 7, 7 p.m.

#### 1917 to 1991/92: Revolution and Counterrevolution in Russia Fight for New October Revolutions!

UBC, Irving Barber Learning Centre  
Room 460

Information and readings:  
(604) 687-0353  
trotskyist\_vancouver@shawcable.com

### TORONTO

Wednesday, February 13, 6 p.m.

#### Marxism and the National Question: Independence for Quebec!

University of Toronto  
Sidney Smith Hall  
100 St. George Street  
Room TBA

Information and readings:  
(416) 593-4138  
spartacan@on.aibn.com

Iran...

(continued from page 1)

deploy sanctions, cyber-warfare attacks on Iran’s nuclear industry, etc., instead of outright military engagement, similarly figuring that they will help topple Syria’s bonapartist Assad regime, an Iranian ally, by enforcing sanctions and aiding the reactionary opposition forces. But make no mistake: Behind sanctions stands the threat of war, which Obama reaffirmed last year when he declared that for Iran “all options are on the table.” A NATO anti-missile radar system and U.S. Patriot missiles have been installed in neighboring Turkey, while Washington has strengthened its military alliance with several Persian Gulf states that are bitterly hostile toward Shi’ite Iran. And, as it has for years, Iran faces the threat of attack from Zionist Israel—the only nuclear power in the Near East.

Whether or not Iran is moving toward developing nuclear weapons, the fact is that in today’s world, possession of nukes is crucial to deterring military attack and resisting imperialist diktat. It is not lost on Tehran that the 2003 U.S.-led invasion of Iraq and last year’s NATO bombing of Libya were made all the easier because Saddam Hussein and Muammar el-Qaddafi’s regimes lacked such weapons. As Bill Keller notes in the *New York Times Book Review* (13 January):

“The fact that we invaded Afghanistan while paying court to terrorist-breeding (but nuclear) Pakistan taught Iran that weapons of mass destruction command deference. Then, in the Bush axis-of-evil years, our hard-liners convinced their hard-liners that nothing short of regime change would satisfy Washington.... It would be astounding if Iran didn’t at least contemplate acquiring the bomb.”

Yet even the possession of nukes is no guarantee of security from attack by U.S. imperialism, with its massive nuclear arsenal and overwhelming military power. It is the duty of the U.S. proletariat to oppose sanctions and all other means by which “its own” ruling class seeks to impose its diktat around the world. This includes standing for the defense of Iran against any military attack by the U.S. or its ally Israel. As Marxists, our defense of Iran in the military sense does not imply the least political support to the bourgeois Islamic regime, which enforces the fierce



August 2012: Iranian metal workers demand back wages at protest outside Tehran government building.

oppression of women, gays and national minorities and brutally represses labor struggle. But what must be understood is that it is U.S. imperialism that is the greatest danger to the working people and downtrodden of the planet, as it has demonstrated repeatedly: e.g., the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 and its later counterrevolutionary wars in Korea and Vietnam. Nothing short of the overthrow of the capitalist-imperialist system through workers revolution will rid the world of this menace and open the road to a socialist future.

Murder by Sanctions

The cruel effectiveness of the sanctions is based on the domination of world banking, industry and trade by the handful of advanced capitalist countries that constitute the imperialist powers, chiefly the U.S., which acts through its own banks and through its leading role in the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. That domination is enforced through sheer military might, of which the U.S. has had the overwhelming preponderance ever since the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state in 1991-92. UN sanctions against Hussein’s Iraq led to the deaths of some 1.5 million

people while hollowing out the country in the lead-up to the imperialist war and occupation. Most of the sanctions’ toll was taken on children and the elderly, the most vulnerable to malnourishment and lack of medicine. Speaking of the mass murder by sanctions, Bill Clinton’s secretary of state Madeleine Albright infamously declared that this “is a very hard choice, but we think the price is worth it.” This cold-blooded calculation was echoed by California Democratic Congressman Brad Sherman in 2010 concerning sanctions against Iran. Dispensing with diplomatic artifice, Sherman offered that “critics also argued that these measures will hurt the Iranian people. Quite frankly, we need to do just that.” While Iran is more populous and powerful than was Iraq and has not experienced the same degree of mortality, it is still a dependent country, with a population that is increasingly suffering under the weight of sanctions. Last year, oil production in Iraq surpassed that in Iran, which had been the world’s third-largest oil exporter after Saudi Arabia and Russia. The choking off of Iran’s oil exports has spelled catastrophe for a country that normally imports much of its food, machinery and refined oil products. Between late September and early October last year, the

value of Iran’s currency, the rial, plummeted some 40 percent as inflation spiraled. According to one analysis of Iran’s black-market currency exchanges, prices were doubling every 40 days. The most dramatic impact of the sanctions has been on drugs and medical supplies. Western governments point to waivers in the sanctions that supposedly allow the import of essential medicines. Belying this “humanitarian” claim is the fact that there is no banking channel by which payments can be transmitted to pharmaceutical suppliers abroad. Iranian drug manufacturers, who are dependent on imports for more than half of their raw materials, have to pay with a greatly depreciated currency, when they can pay at all. Meanwhile, hospital equipment is breaking down due to lack of spare parts. The *Washington Post* (4 September 2012) wrote that the effect of sanctions “is being felt by cancer patients and those being treated for complex disorders such as hemophilia, multiple sclerosis and thalassemia, as well as transplant and kidney dialysis patients, none of whom can afford interruptions or delays in medical supplies.” Julian Borger and Saeed Kamali Dehghan report in the London *Guardian* (13 January) that “85,000 new cancer patients are diagnosed each year, requiring chemotherapy and radiotherapy which are now scarce.” While more than 8,000 hemophiliacs are finding it harder to get blood clotting agents, some 23,000 Iranians with HIV/AIDS have had their access to vital drugs severely restricted. With outside supplies blocked, the drug market is being swamped with smuggled products of dubious value, much of which arrives on donkeys from Turkey. In the words of the head of the Iranian Hemophilia Society, it all amounts to “blatant hostage-taking of the most vulnerable people by countries which claim they care about human rights.” From the oil fields to the assembly lines and small shops, sanctions have taken an enormous toll on the proletariat. Placing the burden on the backs of workers and the poor, the Ahmadinejad government slashed subsidies for food, gas, electricity and other necessities in 2010. Last year, according to *Iran Labor Report* (10 October 2012), a petition signed by some 10,000 people protesting this economic austerity stated that slim wage increases

South Africa...

(continued from page 7)

two-stage revolution. The Bolsheviks fought against that idea. What happened is that the Bolshevik Party led the masses, including the peasantry, which was the bulk of the population, and made a workers revolution. This is *our* program. The present situation in South Africa presents an opportunity for Trotskyists. The miners strikes have cast a sharp light on what the ANC-led Tripartite Alliance government is. Keep in mind there is a contradiction in the SACP. The top layer of the SACP really wants to administer capitalism and remain a part of that as

they currently are. But many rank-and-file members joined the SACP because they wanted to be communists, as they understood it. We know, we talk to them. Among these people there are those who really don’t like the SACP’s support for crushing or attempting to crush the mine-workers strikes. A lot of these people would love to get their hands on Lenin’s writings. I sold at SACP conferences. Although it is supposed to be a Leninist party, their leadership doesn’t make Lenin’s works available to them. So you go and you sell there, and your literature table is picked clean of all the Lenin and also Marx and so forth. That wouldn’t happen in the U.S. So what do we call for? We call for

a black-centered workers government, which would undertake much needed improvement in the living standards of the black toilers. Such a government would uphold the democratic rights of the coloureds and Indians and those whites who accept a government essentially based on the black working class. My final point is about why a proletarian internationalist perspective is essential. If you had a revolution in South Africa, the imperialists would seek to strangle it economically and militarily. So a workers government there would have to fight like hell to extend workers power to the advanced industrial countries. Maybe some of you were at a demonstration we organized in New York a

few months ago in defense of the striking mineworkers. This was a concrete act of solidarity designed to underline our commitment to make national liberation and working-class emancipation in South Africa the cause of the whole international proletariat, cutting against bourgeois nationalism in South Africa which falsely holds that workers in the West, and particularly in the U.S., are “bought off” by imperialism. More broadly, this points to the importance of constructing a revolutionary party here in what we call the belly of the imperialist beast and that such a party will take its place alongside its revolutionary comrades in South Africa as part of a Trotskyist international vanguard party. ■

### Spartacist South Africa

Newspaper of the South African section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)

Issue No. 8 (28 pages)  
**US\$1 R2**

Subscription (4 issues)  
**US\$4 R10**

**Make checks payable/mail to:**  
Spartacist Publishing Co.  
Box 1377 GPO  
New York, NY 10116

**In South Africa:**  
Spartacist, P.O. Box 61574  
Marshalltown, Johannesburg 2107  
South Africa

From the Archives of Women and Revolution.....2

Malawi's Populist Mystique and the ANC Succession Battle.....3

Tunisian Elections: Victory for Islamic Reactionaries.....3

Imperial Strike Beats Back Mass Dismissals, Betrayals by NUM Tops.....10

Hue and Cry over China's Role in Africa.....15

Printed by trade union laborer at the print facility of L.A. Photo Co. 28

## WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League

☐ \$10/22 issues of *Workers Vanguard* (includes English-language *Spartacist* and *Black History and the Class Struggle*) international rates: \$25/22 issues—Airmail \$10/22 issues—Seamail

☐ \$2/6 introductory issues of *Workers Vanguard* (includes English-language *Spartacist*)

☐ \$2/4 issues of *Espartaco* (en español) (includes Spanish-language *Spartacist*)

☐ I would like to contribute \$\_\_\_\_\_ to the production of *Workers Vanguard*.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Apt. # \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

1016

**Make checks payable/mail to: Spartacist Publishing Co., Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116**

8

WORKERS VANGUARD



have been far outpaced by price rises, and that “millions of workers cannot afford their monthly housing costs.” As the *Wall Street Journal* (3 January) wrote, “Poor families now go months without eating meat or poultry, which have seen some of the biggest price hikes.”

Reporting on the industrial area of Delijan, the *Journal* article also noted that the 2012 sanctions caused many small factories to shut down due to lack of parts for maintaining aging machinery, with many larger plants struggling to avoid bankruptcy. Iran’s car industry, the largest in the Near East, posted a 60 to 80 percent decline in production last year, with hundreds of thousands losing their jobs. France’s Peugeot carmaker, for example, was forced to suspend sales of assembly kits to Iran because of tighter sanctions.

Iran’s Chamber of Commerce now reports that **67 percent** of the country’s industry has been shut down (*Financial Times*, 16 January). It should not be lost on anyone that U.S. imperialism and its cohorts have, through conscious policy, qualitatively worsened the plight of Iranian workers in the midst of the five-year-long world recession. Brought on by the speculative binges of the finance capitalists of the imperialist centers, that crisis has meant ruin for millions upon millions of workers in the U.S. and around the world. In Iran, cascading unemployment is undermining the ability of the working class to wield its social power, based on its role in production, in its own defense. This underscores the need for the proletariat internationally to oppose the sanctions in support of its Iranian class brothers and sisters.

Iranian Prison House

A big reason for Washington’s gloating over the “success” of the sanctions are signs that increased social turmoil is posing a challenge to the Iranian government, which is due to hold presidential elections in June, when Ahmadinejad’s term expires. In early October, the Majlis (parliament) struck a political blow against Ahmadinejad by voting to consider halting a second round of subsidy cuts. The vote took place several days after a protest against the government, precipitated by the sharp fall in the rial, shook Tehran’s main bazaar. This marked the first time in three decades that the bazaar merchants—a highly conservative

layer that formed a principal social support for the 1979 “Islamic revolution”—publicly turned against the regime. (The merchants had already been alienated by government policies favoring the business interests of the Revolutionary Guards and others.) The tens of thousands of protesters included many workers, but the protest was firmly under the leadership of the shopkeepers and traders.

The harsh fact is that the Iranian proletariat has never recovered from the historic defeat it suffered with the rise to power of Khomeini and his mullah regime in 1979. What followed was a reign of terror in which trade unionists and any and all forces of the left were simply smashed. Vicious repression continues to this day, with Kurds and many others charged with *moharebeh* (waging war against God) subject to execution.



Jahangir Razmi

August 1979: Kurds and others executed by Iranian mullah regime. Khomeini inaugurated “Islamic revolution” with massacre of minorities, leftists, workers.

Amid rising crime brought on by austerity, on January 20 the regime staged the public hanging of two unemployed men from poor families who had robbed a man of the equivalent of \$20 and wounded him with a knife. The *New York Times* (20 January) reports that many in the crowd shouted in protest.

The defeat of the Iranian working class in 1979 was not preordained. Militant struggles by oil workers and other sectors

of the proletariat against the Shah’s hated U.S.-backed dictatorship had posed the possibility of a fight for workers power. But those struggles were *betrayed* by the workers’ putative leaders, centrally the Stalinist Tudeh (Masses) party, which led its proletarian base into a bloc with the reactionary Islamists in the name of “anti-imperialism.” That treacherous path was followed by almost the entire left internationally, from the fake-Trotskyist United Secretariat of Ernest Mandel to the Stalinophobic followers of Tony Cliff. In sharp contrast, the international Spartacist tendency, forerunner of the International Communist League, declared: Down with the Shah! Don’t bow to Khomeini! For workers revolution!

To this day, the opportunists of the Cliffite school, who grooved on not only Khomeini’s “revolution” but also the war

bollah. The utter phoniness of Tehran’s anti-imperialist credentials can be seen in the fact that as NATO troops occupied Afghanistan early last decade, Iran armed the Northern Alliance forces that fought alongside U.S. troops.

There is and has long been enormous discontent in Iranian society: workers struggling to survive on pitifully low wages; peasants and the unemployed eking out an existence under conditions of intense austerity; women and youth yearning for freedom from deeply oppressive Islamist strictures; Kurds, Azeris, Baluchis and Arabs groaning under Persian chauvinism. However, with the workers movement severely repressed, the most visible opposition to the government comes from reactionaries like the bazaaris or pro-imperialist forces adopting the guise of “reformers.” The latter describes the “Green Movement” that led mass protests in 2009 during the rigged presidential elections pitting Mir Hussein Moussavi against Ahmadinejad. A “reform” cleric, Moussavi served as prime minister under Khomeini for eight years in the 1980s, when thousands of leftists, women’s rights activists and Kurds were slaughtered in the prisons and buried in mass graves.

As the only class with the social power to sweep away capitalist rule, the proletariat in Iran must begin to emerge as a class fighting for itself and for the liberation of all the oppressed masses. The central lesson of the disaster it suffered more than 30 years ago is that it can do so only by maintaining strict independence from and opposition to all bourgeois political formations, all forms of religious reaction and all imperialist forces. The remnants of the Tudeh party operating in exile continue to trample on this fundamental Marxist principle. In 2009, Tudeh called for support to Mousavi, whose hands are covered with the blood of their own comrades.

In Iran as elsewhere, the key to mobilizing the class power of the proletariat is the leadership of a revolutionary workers party modeled on the Bolshevik Party of V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky, which led the workers to power in Russia in the October Revolution of 1917. The ICL is dedicated to building such parties internationally, not least in the belly of the U.S. imperialist beast, to lead the fight for new October Revolutions. ■

Pakistan...

(continued from page 3)

undertook its biggest covert operation ever, Pakistan played a strategic role. The U.S., Britain, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, among others, armed, funded and trained reactionary *mujahedin* (holy warriors) to kill Soviet soldiers. The Soviet Red Army intervened on the side of a regime that sought to introduce minimal social reforms and faced a *jihad* (holy war) led by reactionary landlords, tribal chiefs and mullahs. That war, in which imperialist-backed forces threatened the southern flank of the Soviet Union, posed an acid test for revolutionaries.

The Soviet intervention was progressive, underlining the Trotskyist understanding that despite its degeneration under a Stalinist bureaucratic caste, the Soviet Union remained a workers state embodying historic gains of the October Revolution of 1917, centrally the planned economy and collectivised property. These were enormous conquests, not least for women and the Muslim peoples of Soviet Central Asia, where conditions before the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution had been as backward and benighted as in Afghanistan. For Afghanistan, which is not a nation but a patchwork of tribes and peoples, with its minuscule proletariat, progress would have to be brought in from the outside. The international Spartacist tendency, now the International Communist League, said: “Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!” and called to extend

the gains of the October Revolution to the Afghan peoples. In stark contrast, the bulk of the left internationally lined up with the imperialists by denouncing the Soviet “invasion” of Afghanistan. The SWP in Britain criminally stood foursquare with the imperialists. The 12 January 1980 issue of *Socialist Worker* blared, “Troops Out of Afghanistan!” (For fuller treatment of our position on the Soviet Union in Afghanistan and Moscow’s treacherous withdrawal, see “Afghanistan: Women Under Imperialist Occupation,” *Workers Hammer* No. 219, Summer 2012 [reprinted from WV No. 998, 16 March 2012].)

Following counterrevolution in the USSR, the end of the Cold War meant that Pakistan’s usefulness to the imperialists was greatly diminished. Pakistan is today subject to U.S. imperialist drone attacks aimed at the Taliban and Al Qaeda—reactionary fundamentalists whose fore-runners were created in the 1980s by the Pakistani military and Inter-Service Intelligence as well as the American CIA.

Pakistan, like India, is a prison house of peoples, a legacy of three centuries of British colonial divide and rule that culminated in the partition of the Indian subcontinent. Pakistan’s claim to constitute “one nation” of all Muslims masks the domination of the Punjabi ruling class over Pashtuns, Baluchis and other oppressed nationalities. Kashmir epitomises the seething complex of national and communal conflicts that extend from Afghanistan to Pakistan and India. India’s brutal repression in Kashmir, the only

majority Muslim state in India, gives the lie to New Delhi’s claims that it is a secular democracy. The Indian state was founded on naked Hindu chauvinism, and brutal oppression of minorities has been the rule under the Congress Party as well as the avowedly chauvinist BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party). For their part, Pakistan’s rulers can ill afford to support independence for Kashmir, which would

pose the same question for the minorities within their own borders.

The task of liberating all the exploited and oppressed of the Indian subcontinent demands the forging of Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard parties dedicated to the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeoisies in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh and the establishment of a socialist federation of South Asia. ■

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

- Web site: www.icl-fi.org • E-mail address: vanguard@tiac.net
- National Office: Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116, (212) 732-7860
- Chicago..... Box 6441, Main PO, Chicago, IL 60680, (312) 563-0441  
chicagospartacist@sbcglobal.net  
Public Office: 1st Sat. of every month, 2-5 p.m., and by appointment, 222 S. Morgan (Buzzer 23)
- Los Angeles..... Box 29574, Los Feliz Sta., Los Angeles, CA 90029, (213) 380-8239  
slsycla@sbcglobal.net  
Public Office: Sat. 2-5 p.m., 3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215
- New York..... Box 3381, Church St. Sta., New York, NY 10008, (212) 267-1025  
nysl@tiac.net  
Public Office: 1st and 3rd Sat. of every month, 1-4 p.m., and by appointment, 299 Broadway, Suite 318
- Oakland..... Box 29497, Oakland, CA 94604, (510) 839-0851  
slbayarea@sbcglobal.net  
Public Office: Sat. 1-5 p.m., 1634 Telegraph, 3rd Floor

TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA/LIGUE TROTSKYSTE DU CANADA

- Toronto..... Box 7198, Station A, Toronto, ON M5W 1X8, (416) 593-4138  
spartcan@on.aibn.com
- Vancouver..... Box 2717, Main P.O., Vancouver, BC V6B 3X2, (604) 687-0353  
trotskyist\_vancouver@shawcable.com

(continued from page 2)

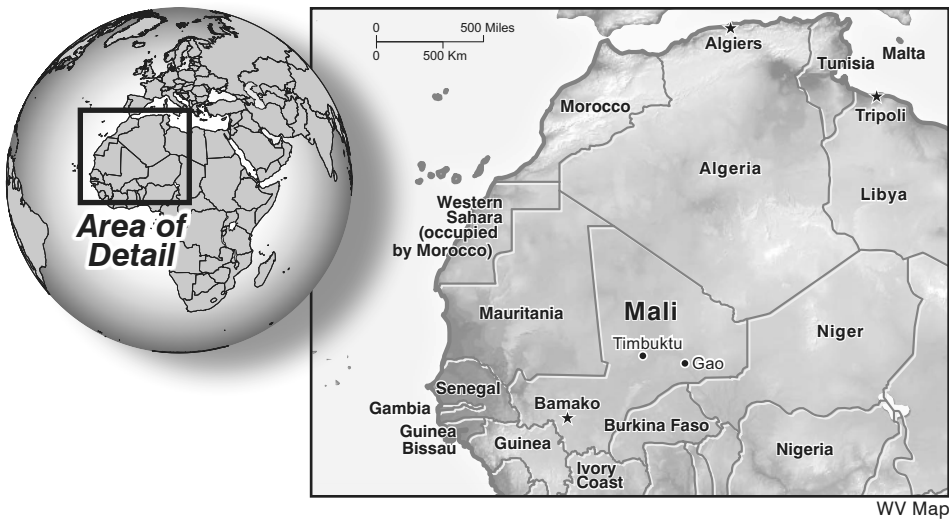
homes and businesses owned by Tuaregs and other ethnic groups there—including Arabs, many of whom also inhabit the north of the country—while security forces looked on. Last week, as the French military pushed north to confront Islamist forces in the town of Diabaly, Human Rights Watch reported that Malian soldiers in Niono, a town on the road to Diabaly, were again massacring Tuareg and Arab civilians.

The rebel offensive that broke out in northern Mali was an indirect consequence of the imperialists' successful drive in 2011 to oust Qaddafi. Many Malian Tuaregs worked in Libya's oil fields, as well as in Qaddafi's armed forces, as a way to escape from conditions in northern Mali, which successive regimes have left bereft of schools, hospitals and paved roads—to say nothing of job opportunities. In the Sahel region south of the Sahara, almost a quarter of a million children die of malnutrition-related causes each year, according to Oxfam.

With the fall of Qaddafi—and the racist pogroms carried out by imperialist-supported rebels in Libya—those Malian Tuaregs returned home, bringing with them their military know-how and, in some cases, heavy weapons. Many of the arms for the northern Malian rebels have been funneled in by reactionary Islamists who were part of the imperialist-supported anti-Qaddafi forces.

The imperialist onslaught will no doubt deepen the already intense interethnic tensions in the region. These were highlighted in an article in the London *Guardian* (6 July 2012) by its West Africa correspondent, Afua Hirsch. Reporting from a Tuareg refugee camp in Burkina Faso, she wrote that the black NGO staff were refusing to work with the lighter-skinned Tuaregs because they “felt aggrieved by the reputation of the Tuaregs for enslaving black Africans.” She noted that this history “still plays itself out in the Tuareg caste system—where ‘Bella,’ dark-skinned members of the tribe who were once slaves, still occupy the lowest positions.” In return, many Malian Tuaregs claim that they have fled their country not only because of atrocities carried out by the army but because Bella militias “are also targeting anyone with light skin.”

That interethnic tensions and racial discrimination in the region remain so poisonous today is a legacy of French colonialism, which *reinforced* these and other reactionary aspects of the societies they conquered. After subduing the Tuareg region of what was then called French Sudan in the late 19th century, the colonialists set up a racially discriminatory system that pitted Tuaregs and black Africans against each other. Implementing a policy of divide and rule, the French



government encouraged the Tuaregs' traditional supremacy over black Africans. Though the French colonialists largely ended the slave trade in the first decades of colonial occupation, they helped to ensure that black slaves remained subject to their Tuareg masters long afterward. Their system of forced labor and compulsory military service was based on racial criteria, with an exemption for the Tuareg elite.

The French also played the Tuaregs off against black Africans—and Algerian nationalists—through their drawing of territorial boundaries. In the 1950s, after it was discovered that the Saharan region was rich in mineral resources, they floated the idea of creating a new French-controlled colony, dominated by Tuaregs and Arabs, and limiting the soon-to-be independent Mali to the overwhelmingly black south. France dropped that proposal, and independent Mali was formed as a powder keg of ethnic tensions between Tuaregs and black Africans, who led the first post-colonial government. Those tensions led directly to the first Tuareg rebellion in 1963 and its brutal repression by the Malian army.

There will be no end to the interethnic bloodshed and abject poverty of the region within the framework of capitalism. Just as the October Revolution in Russia in 1917 opened up the perspective of revolutionary change in the backward regions of Central Asia, the emancipation of the masses in the Sahel and other parts of Africa whose development has been so dreadfully retarded must be linked to the international struggle of the working class for socialist revolution. Proletarian revolution in South Africa, Egypt or other countries in Africa that have experienced significant industrial development would propel social transformation reaching into the most backward areas of the continent. Such a perspective must include the fight for socialist revolution in France and other imperialist centers, where Malian and other immigrant workers can provide a living link to the struggles of the dispossessed in Africa. What is necessary is the forging of Trotskyist vanguard parties committed to the fight for new October Revolutions.

The following is a translation of the LTF leaflet, which was issued on January 11.

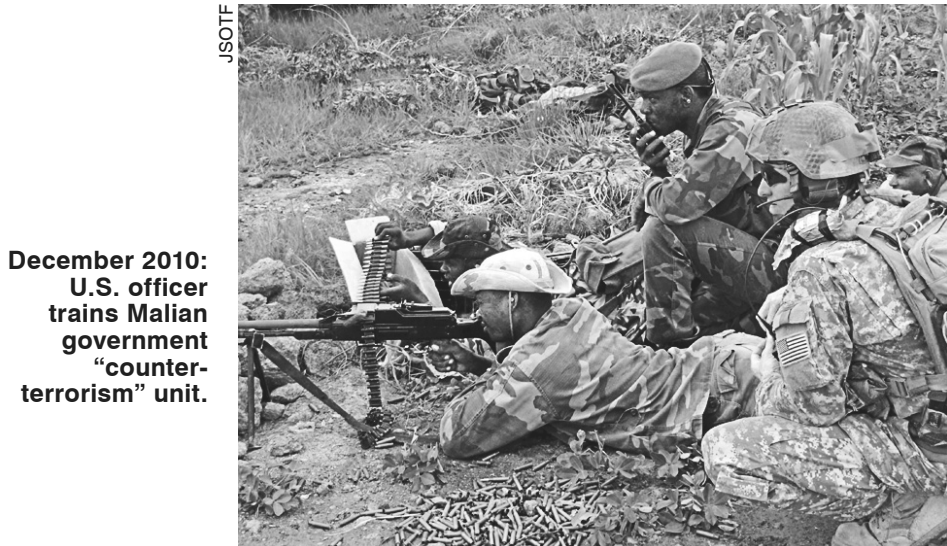
\* \* \*

The head of French imperialism, François Hollande, announced tonight a military intervention of the French air force and special forces in Mali as part of so-called “anti-terrorist” operation. For months now, French imperialism has been looking for a pretext to launch its killers into action in its neocolonial backyard. Today we are told that the reactionary Islamists who now control the north of Mali have supposedly launched an offensive against the rest of the country, and that the Malian army supposedly collapsed when faced with a hundred pickup trucks filled with Islamist forces, thus opening up the road to the south all the way to Bamako. We have no idea what is true or not about this story. Regardless, we denounce the French intervention. ***French military out of Mali and out of Africa!***

For the past year, Mali had been torn by a reactionary civil war in which the international workers movement had no interest in supporting either the military regime in Bamako or the anti-woman

Islamists of the north. Now, however, it is necessary to unequivocally defend the people who are being bombed in the north against the neocolonial French military, without giving the least political support to the benighted reactionaries. *Defend the northern insurgents against the French intervention!*

Today's *New York Times* reports rumors that a French military helicopter was shot down by the northern troops. Any military setback for French imperialism in this operation would weaken it and would thus be a boost to class struggle in France against this capitalist-imperialist government, now led by the Socialist Party and the bourgeois



Greens, with the support of the Communist Party (PCF). That is why the working class in France, with its strong component of Malian workers—thousands of whom live in the Paris region—has a vested interest in opposing French imperialism's latest neocolonial military adventure. We can say this even more forcefully because we called on workers not to vote for Hollande as Commander-in-Chief, unlike the PCF and the New Anti-Capitalist Party. As for the [fake-Trotskyist] Lutte Ouvrière, they did not want to choose between abstaining and voting for Hollande.

The current disaster in Mali is the product of a long history of French colonial and neocolonial oppression. French imperialists plundered the country during decades of colonial occupation, marked by the systematic practice of forced labor (only officially abolished in 1946). They then arbitrarily drew the borders of an “independent” Malian state, which only had the bare trappings of sovereignty. The currency, the CFA franc, is directly managed by the Banque de France, which controls its exchange rate as well as deposits. The French imperialist military intervention takes place in what France considers its exclusive preserve. Its purpose is to maintain French imperialist domination in the entire region—and especially to protect the profits of the Areva company, which exploits enormous uranium deposits in neighboring Niger.

The situation in northern Mali today is a direct result of both the oppression of the Tuareg population by the central Malian state and the imperialist intervention in Libya in 2011, which François Hollande and [social democrat] Jean-Luc Mélenchon supported. Not only did this military intervention bring various rival Islamist militias to power in Libya, institutionalizing *sharia* against women, but it also enabled reactionary Islamist groups throughout the region to get arms. When it suits French

interests, as in Libya and Syria, Paris promotes the Islamists. But elsewhere, as in Afghanistan and now Mali, they are massacred. This in itself shows the boundless cynicism of the Hollande government and its interior minister Valls when they brandish “Islamic terrorism”—a code word for launching racist police operations in France against a population considered suspect because they are Muslims, in particular workers of North African or West African origin and their families.

Algeria now rightly sees the French intervention directly on its borders as a threat, a first since it gained independence in 1962 after seven years of war. This casts a harsh light on Hollande's "confession" speech [admitting that the French had committed atrocities during the Algerian War] when he traveled to Algeria just a few weeks ago. Meanwhile the war minister, Jean-Yves Le Drian of the Socialist Party, had just honored the memory of General Bigeard, the French general who came to symbolize torture during the Algerian War.

For the last 30 years, Mali has been used mainly as a pool providing ruthlessly exploited labor in France. Thousands of Malian workers in France today are undocumented, even after years of living and working here. Many youth of Malian origin participated in the 2005 revolt of the ghetto neighborhoods and in

[illegible]

# SPARTACIST 4

NUMBER 63

ENGLISH EDITION

WINTER 2012-13

## Fake-Trotskyist Posers Promote Anti-Bolshevik Tract

### Bourgeois Liberalism vs. the October Revolution

A Review of *The Bolsheviks in Power: The First Year of Soviet Rule in Petrograd*, by Alexander Rabinowitch

PAGE 4

## Marxism and Bourgeois Parliamentarism

### Why We Reject the “Constituent Assembly” Demand

A Review by Fyodor Dingelstedt ..... 32

PAGE 18

## The Neo-Kautskyites: Recycling the Second International ..... 41

## Women and Revolution

### Larissa Reissner on Trotsky's Red Army

The Battle of Svryazhsk, a Revolutionary Legend

PAGE 56

## Fred Zierenberg, 1949–2012 ..... 2

ASTORIA, OR ..... 30

BOSTON, MA ..... 31

CANANDA, OR ..... 32

CHICAGO, IL ..... 33

DETROIT, MI ..... 34

HOUSTON, TX ..... 35

LOS ANGELES, CA ..... 36

MINNEAPOLIS, MN ..... 37

NEW YORK, NY ..... 38

PHILADELPHIA, PA ..... 39

PITTSBURGH, PA ..... 40

PORTLAND, OR ..... 41

SEATTLE, WA ..... 42

SAN FRANCISCO, CA ..... 43

SPRINGFIELD, MA ..... 44

ST. LOUIS, MO ..... 45

WASHINGTON, DC ..... 46

WICHITA, KS ..... 47

WISCONSIN, WI ..... 48

WYOMING, WY ..... 49

YORK, PA ..... 50

**English edition**  
No. 63, Winter 2012-13  
**\$1.50** (56 pages)  
*Spartacist* is sent to all *WV* subscribers.

**Make checks payable/mail to:**  
Spartacist Publishing Co., Box 1377 GPO  
New York, NY 10116

# Abortion...

(continued from page 12)

and expenses that make the process as difficult as possible for both women and doctors. These “salami tactics” include waiting periods, parental consent requirements for minors, ultrasound tests, mandatory disinformation under the guise of “counseling,” bans on doctor-patient consults by telephone, the elimination of state funding and restrictions on private insurance coverage. Abortion clinics also are increasingly being made to expand procedure rooms and widen hallways to match ambulatory surgical centers—medically useless but hugely expensive requirements that will force many facilities to shut down. “It’s never been this frightening before,” the longtime director of a Pittsburgh abortion clinic recently commented on such requirements. “I don’t know if we’re going to make it” (*Washington Post*, 14 January).

A longstanding goal of the anti-abortion forces is to set up a test case to overturn *Roe v. Wade*. To advance this agenda, the God squad has pushed for “fetal pain” and “fetal homicide” laws that are on the books in many states. On January 11, the Alabama Supreme Court ruled that prosecutors can treat a fetus as an “unborn child,” upholding the convictions of two mothers on felony charges of “chemical endangerment of a child” because they had allegedly taken drugs during pregnancy. An anti-abortion bill enacted last month in Michigan originally included a ghoulish provision, ultimately removed, that would have required fetal remains to be disposed of “by means lawful for other dead bodies, including burial, cremation or interment.”

The same day as the Alabama ruling, the last remaining abortion clinic in Mississippi missed the state-mandated deadline for its doctors to obtain privileges to admit patients at a local hospital. This requirement was signed into law last year by the governor vowing that it would “end abortion in Mississippi,” the state with the highest teen pregnancy rate in the country. No local hospital was willing to affiliate with the clinic, and the state medical journal even refused to run the clinic’s ad seeking a doctor with the required privileges.

The legislative assault on abortion rights is backed by harassment of patients and staff at clinics and at times raw terror in the form of bombings and murders. We honor the many courageous doctors and staff whose lives have been taken by the anti-abortion zealots. Most recently, Dr. George Tiller was gunned down in

2009 in Wichita, Kansas, because of the medical services he had provided women, including late-term abortions. The new wave of laws will only embolden the anti-abortion terrorists. Speaking to the fears of many abortion providers, the director of Red River Women’s Clinic in Fargo, North Dakota, told *Time*: “Even if I’m at Target looking at clothes, I never let my guard down.”

The anti-woman bigots view abortion as a threat to the patriarchal family—the main source of women’s oppression—that along with religion is a key prop of capitalist class rule, helping to regiment the population and instill social conservatism. As Marxists, we fight for full democratic rights and social services for women, including *free abortion on demand*. Unrestricted access to abortion and contraception is essential for all women, including teenagers, to exercise control over whether and when they will

teens. In advancing the interests of the capitalist exploiters, both bourgeois parties espouse “family values” that serve to keep women “in their place.”

Despite their pro-choice rhetoric catering to higher income and bourgeois women who already have the means to get an abortion if needed, the Democrats have repeatedly slashed access to abortion for working women and the poor. The first major post-*Roe* attack on abortion rights took place under “born again” Democrat Jimmy Carter, who in 1977 sneered, “There are many things in life that are not fair,” as he signed into law the Hyde Amendment that eliminated abortion coverage from the Medicaid health plans of 23 million poor women. The Hyde Amendment has been renewed every year since, regardless of whether Democrats or Republicans were in the White House.

The Democratic administration of Bill Clinton carried out a relentless campaign



WV Photo

**San Francisco, July 2005: Clinic defense action protected patients from anti-abortion bigots.**

have children. There is an urgent need for mass struggle to defend abortion rights.

Faced with attacks on their livelihoods, benefits and bodies, over two-thirds of single women who cast ballots in the 2012 election voted for Obama. It was not hard for Democrats to pose as allies of women, with Mitt Romney vowing to take steps to overturn *Roe v. Wade* and Tea Party troglodytes spewing on about “legitimate” rape. But although the Republicans may forthrightly prefer to keep women “barefoot and pregnant,” the Democratic Party—the other party of racist U.S. capitalism—is no alternative. Obama has pandered to religious reaction, including by reversing the FDA’s approval of over-the-counter access to the morning-after birth control pill for

against poor and black women that went virtually unopposed by feminists as long as abortion remained formally legal. In 1996, as part of his campaign to “end welfare as we know it,” Clinton signed the “Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act,” which slashed benefits for women and children, leaving the most vulnerable members of society to starve and die. Already ground down by the entrenched racial and ethnic oppression and anti-woman bigotry of American capitalism, minority and poor women have been hit especially hard by the attacks on abortion rights. Over two-thirds of U.S. women who have abortions are economically disadvantaged, and black and Hispanic women are more than twice as likely as white women to experience unwanted

# NYC Strike...

(continued from page 12)

many bids came in from low-wage, non-union companies. Abetted by the editors of the city’s tabloid press, hizzoner used children dependent on bus transport as pawns in his union-busting game. A large fraction of them also had special needs, which Koch tried to wield as a cudgel against the strikers. As we noted at the time:

“Many unions, faced with tear-jerking stories of home-bound wheelchair-confined children, would have buckled under. But the Amalgamated Transit Union Locals 1181 and 1061 refused to budge....

“When a number of the offending cabs [used to transport students] were subsequently found with their windshields broken and tires slashed, New York’s war of the crippled children was on.”

—“Is There Anything Koch Won’t Do?” (WV No. 226, 2 March 1979)

The Koch administration went on to commandeer chauffeured city vehicles and prison vans from Rikers Island to replace the garaged buses. But the union answered every move by the city with hard-nosed class struggle. Picket lines remained solid, and other scab vehicles ended up just like the taxis. Strikes were breaking out across

the city, giving the bosses and their mayor plenty to worry about—sanitation workers refused to cross picket lines of apartment house workers, striking tugboat crews kept boats at bay, and picketing Teamsters milk drivers left the milk to be dumped down the drain. Having wasted \$10 million trying to break the strike, the city finally buckled, and the ATU won the EPP.

The same kind of boots-on-the-ground labor solidarity would go a long way toward beating back the union-busters today. A good step would be for other unions, beginning with Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 100, the UFT and Teamsters, to swell the ATU picket lines and help extend them to every depot gate. The school bus drivers and matrons have some 300,000 potential allies in city unions who are working without a contract or under a contract extension. The president of Teamsters Local 854, which also organizes bus workers, has pledged to honor picket lines. At the same time, buses driven by Teamsters, as well as non-union drivers, have kept on rolling, pointing to the need for mass pickets to keep *all* buses locked up tight. If the ATU is defeated, it is only a matter of time before the city takes it to the Teamsters. The two unions should have a common contract expiration date to facilitate joint class struggle.

The lineup against Local 1181, the largest ATU local in the nation, includes not only City Hall and the bus companies but also Democratic Party politicians and the courts, cops and labor boards of the class enemy. Union officials representing NYC public workers, from the subways to the classroom, would like nothing better than to elect a “friend of labor” Democrat to replace Bloomberg later this year. But the Democrats, no less than the Republicans, are a party of capital. Among the favored Democratic mayoral candidates is NYC Comptroller John Liu, who last week issued an official statement defending the EPP. But last year Liu approved new school bus contracts covering pre-kindergarten children *without* the EPP after Cuomo had vetoed a bill, at Bloomberg’s urging, that would have mandated its inclusion.

A 2011 New York State court ruling opened the door to this rollback of the EPP and gave the mayor a club to wield against the union. The bosses’ state—including the courts and cops—is an instrument of coercion that safeguards their interests. To date, the NYPD has arrested at least two ATU supporters, including a striker who tried to block a departing scab bus in the Bronx, underscoring that the cops are *strike-breakers*, not “workers in uniform.” It is

pregnancies and to have abortions.

For decades, bourgeois feminist groups like the National Organization for Women and NARAL Pro-Choice America have campaigned to elect Democrats to “fight the right” and “save *Roe v. Wade*.” Last November, feminists and liberal activists celebrated the defeat of Indiana’s Republican U.S. Senate candidate Richard Mourdock, who had outrageously remarked that pregnancies conceived in rape are what “God intended to happen.” But the Democrat who beat Mourdock, Joe Donnelly, has bragged that he has “consistently opposed abortion and will continue to do so in Congress.”

The war on abortion rights, a battering ram for social and political reaction, is part of the generalized and *bipartisan* assault on the rights and living conditions of working people—from union-busting and mass layoffs to skyrocketing medical costs and the shredding of what is left of the social safety net. It is no coincidence that last month’s Michigan anti-abortion package came out of the same “lame duck” legislative session that enacted a union-busting “right to work” law (see article in WV No. 1015, 11 January).

It is in the interest of the working class, with its hands on the wheels of production, to use its social power to fight to defend itself as well as the rights of women and all the oppressed. Such struggles must be waged independently of all the capitalist parties as part of the fight for free, quality health care for all, along with 24-hour childcare facilities at work and in the community. With untold millions of American families staggering from wage cuts, pink slips and home evictions amid the seemingly intractable economic downturn, it is clearer than ever that the capitalist rulers do not accord living children the same solicitous concern as the fetus.

The legalization of abortion 40 years ago was the product of the tumultuous struggles of the 1960s, especially the fight for black equality and the Vietnam anti-war movement, which were catalysts for the women’s rights movement of that era. In the face of class and social struggle, the capitalist class may cede some reforms. But the only way to ensure those gains are not undone is for the working class to wrest power and the wealth of society from the capitalist rulers. Women’s emancipation can be realized only with the victory of proletarian revolution, which will smash all forms of social oppression, lay the material basis to free women from age-old family servitude and reorganize society in the interests of all. The Spartacist League/U.S. is committed to fighting to build a revolutionary workers party to lead that struggle. ■

crucial for labor to rally to the defense of any arrested striker.

Meanwhile, the bus companies have turned to the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) to put an end to the strike. Time and again, whether composed mainly of Democratic or Republican appointees, the NLRB has stepped in to demobilize labor struggle. When longshoremen fought an attempt by the EGT grain exporter to introduce scab labor at a new terminal in Longview, Washington, in 2011, the NLRB filed an injunction to stop “aggressive picketing” and later sought massive fines against the union. Last year, Local 1181 fended off an earlier unfair labor practices case brought by the city. Yet the labor tops would have trade unionists believe that Obama’s NLRB can be made to work for them.

By the same token, the union bureaucrats bow before the supposed good will and omnipotence of the capitalist state and the labor law it enforces. A case in point is the Taylor Law, which forbids New York State public employees from using their strike weapon. Out of labor’s struggles, a new leadership must emerge that is independent of all capitalist parties and committed to the policy of class struggle. *Victory to the school bus workers strike!* ■



# WORKERS VANGUARD

## Forty Years Since *Roe v. Wade* Defeat the War on Abortion Rights!



Left: Religious zealots pray outside Mississippi's only abortion clinic in Jackson, July 2012. Right: Woman examined at Pittsburgh clinic targeted by anti-abortion protest and recent legislation, December 29.

On 22 January 1973 the U.S. Supreme Court legalized abortion in its historic *Roe v. Wade* decision. The Bible thumpers immediately launched a counteroffensive, and not long after, the federal and state governments began to chip away at abortion rights. Over the last two years, Republican-controlled state legislatures, with the support of some Democrats, have passed an unprecedented barrage of anti-abortion measures across

### For Free Abortion on Demand!

the country. Although he lauded *Roe* on its last anniversary, President Barack Obama signed an executive order in 2010 to "ensure" that federal funds from his signature health care plan "are not used for abortion services."

The existing arsenal of state and federal restrictions has all but eliminated abortion as an option for many women. As a *Time* magazine cover article titled "What Choice?" (14 January) notes: "The number of abortion providers nationwide shrank

from 2,908 in 1982 to 1,793 in 2008, the latest year for which data is available. Getting an abortion in America is, in some places, harder today than at any point since it became a constitutionally protected right 40 years ago this month."

The wave of state anti-abortion measures, which include 92 enacted in 2011 and 43 in 2012, aims to whittle away abortion rights piecemeal by piling up delays

*continued on page 11*

## Victory to NYC School Bus Workers Strike!

JANUARY 22—The 8,800 school bus drivers and matrons of Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 1181 hit the picket lines at depots around New York City last Wednesday in their first strike since 1979. The pickets are braving freezing weather to defend the Employee Protection Provisions (EPP) won in that hard-bitten 12-week battle. Over the last two years, billionaire mayor Michael Bloomberg has sought to shred the EPP, which provides a measure of job security for the workforce by requiring the private bus companies chartered by the city to hire according to seniority. Even as Bloomberg rails against supposedly illegal "job guarantees that the union just can't have," he has solicited new bids for bus service without the EPP in an unvarnished attempt to bust the union. With the city rulers putting the squeeze on working people throughout NYC, every public worker, every trade unionist and everyone who struggles to make ends meet has a stake in the outcome of the strike.

The mayor's union-busting scheme is said to aim to cut the city's "irrational" busing costs and comes wrapped in "concern" for special-needs and other students. The real extent of this concern was on display when Bloomberg was shutting down public schools and slashing millions from



January 16: Striking ATU 1181 members picket outside school bus facility in Bronx.

education programs. For all the howling against the strike in the bourgeois media, it is popular among many parents, who entrust their children to the care of these dedicated workers every weekday and blame the effects of the walkout on the city. The wages of the ATU membership, which represents a cross-section of the city—black, white, Latino, Carib-

bean and East European—average only \$35,000 a year, a figure that City Hall wants to slash. In the process, the mayor is hoping to set a precedent for ripping up union contracts and getting away with it in NYC, a historic labor stronghold.

The city's assault on the education workforce extends to some 75,000 members of the United Federation of Teachers

(UFT). Together with Democratic governor Andrew Cuomo, Bloomberg is hell-bent on gutting seniority rights by imposing an evaluation system that would allow it to dismiss "ineffective" teachers. The Obama administration has intervened in this dispute—by threatening to withhold \$700 million from the state if some such scheme is not soon in place. Indeed, the White House has led a nationwide war against teachers unions, marked by an expansion of non-union charter schools, longer workdays and raises keyed to student test scores. Obama himself endorsed the mass firing of all 93 teachers in a Rhode Island town because they resisted such "reforms." Seeing no profit in educating black and Latino urban youth or others they deem superfluous, the racist capitalist rulers have driven U.S. public schools into ruin and then held the teachers unions responsible.

Bloomberg appears to be taking his cue from the 1979 strike, and the union would do well to borrow a page from its own history, too. Back then, the vicious, labor-hating Democratic mayor Ed Koch provoked a strike by seeking to eliminate job protections for the bus drivers and matrons. When Koch's school chancellor put the service contract out to bid for the first time in eight years,

*continued on page 11*