

## Bourgeoisie Debates Drones, Military Costs

# Fine-Tuning U.S. Imperialist Terror Machine



Above: Rubble in Yemen after drone strike killed 16-year-old U.S. citizen Abdulrahman al-Awlaki and six others in October 2011. Left: Counter-terrorism adviser John Brennan nominated by President Obama for CIA director, January 7. Right: Drone armed with Hellfire missiles, Iraq, February 2011.



Reuters



U.S. Army

In the nearly 12 years since the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, America's capitalist rulers have implemented an unprecedented enhancement of their repressive powers in the name of fighting the "war against terrorism." While unleashing its unrivaled military might from Iraq to Afghanistan, Washington has instituted massive wiretapping, surveillance and detention without trial at home. This trampling of basic rights was implemented first by the Bush administration and expanded by the Obama White House, as the ruling class sought to inculcate fear and acquiescence in the population. In obtaining legal sanction for its crimes at home and abroad, the government has made permanent fixtures of measures that in the main were portrayed as temporary exigencies. This is a deadly danger to the working class and oppressed minorities, the principal targets of capitalist repression.

The recent sparring between some on Capitol Hill and the White House over the targeted killings of U.S. citizens is all about making the state apparatus more effective in its murderous work. For weeks, various Senators made noises about holding up the confirmation of John Brennan as Obama's CIA chief. Four years ago, Brennan was so tarred by his association with torture under George W. Bush that Obama did not pursue his nomination to the same post. But he since became the architect of Obama's drone program.

Brennan's critics demanded that the White House release secret legal memos that had authorized the assassination of U.S. citizens, although neither Democrats nor Republicans have batted an eye over

the thousands of Pakistanis, Yemenis and others slaughtered by drones. When the Justice Department White Paper summarizing the memos surfaced in February, politicians on both sides of the aisle overwhelmingly hailed this augmentation of the lethal powers of the imperial presidency. In urging Brennan's rapid confirmation, Democratic Senator Dianne Feinstein intoned, with presumably unintended menace: "He draws on a deep well of experience."

It was to be expected that the Democrats would go along with their Commander-in-Chief. So it was right-wing Republican Senator Rand Paul of Kentucky who challenged Obama, mainly about the prospect of the assassination of U.S. citizens on American soil. Paul's 13-hour filibuster on March 6, aimed at blocking Brennan's confirmation vote, was widely covered in the media and received plaudits from some liberal antiwar activists and others. Make no mistake, libertarians like Paul, a Tea Party favorite, hate unions and spending government money on black people—or anyone else for that matter—far more than they object to the evisceration of civil liberties.

The Obama administration demonstrated its determination to assassinate U.S. citizens when it killed New Mexico-born Islamist Anwar al-Awlaki by a drone strike in Yemen in 2011. His son and several Yemenis were similarly blown away some months later. And all along, the White House has kept open the option of assassinating U.S. citizens on American soil as well. In a March 4

letter to Rand Paul, Attorney General Eric Holder dismissed the scenario of drone strikes inside U.S. territory as "entirely hypothetical" but granted that the president could "conceivably" authorize such attacks in the context of a "catastrophic attack" like Pearl Harbor or September 11.

On the day after the filibuster, Holder issued a curt follow-up letter claiming the right of the president to assassinate anyone, anywhere except for citizens "not engaged in combat" on U.S. soil. For the imperialists, who is "engaged in combat" is a very elastic concept. In May 2002, U.S. citizen Jose Padilla was arrested at Chicago's O'Hare Airport on trumped-up charges. One month later, he was declared to be an "enemy combatant" and was disappeared into a Navy brig in South Carolina. In the end, he was railroaded to 17 years in prison. In an *amicus* brief filed by the Spartacist League and the Partisan Defense Committee on Padilla's behalf, we stressed that the "rationale of the 'war against terrorism' is a construct justifying not only the right to disappear citizens, but the right to assassinate them as well."

### Imperialist Crimes

A week after Brennan's confirmation, a UN official presenting an investigation into U.S. drone strikes declared that such attacks carried out in Pakistan over the objections of local authorities violated international law. The UN investigation, carried out at the request of Russia and China as well as Pakistan, identified some 330 strikes in that country, totaling at least 2,200 dead. With U.S. drones firing with

impunity on the population, including emergency response personnel, funeral processions and schools, life in the tribal areas along the Afghanistan border has been shattered. Some imperialist strategists worry, with reason, that the unbridled drone program is creating a lot more "enemy combatants" around the world.

To mollify those in Washington who worry about the excessive secrecy of the drone program and have qualms about deploying drones against U.S. citizens, proposals have been made for a special court to approve the "targeted killings." This is a total sham. Such a court would be modeled on the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) courts for wiretapping applications. FISA courts have never been more than a rubber stamp for the executive office.

In another proposal to refine U.S. imperialist policies, a *New York Times* (9 March) editorial called for repealing the 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military Force (AUMF). This legislation, which was adopted three days after the September 11 attacks, gave the executive *carte blanche* in the global "war on terror," providing a go-ahead for the invasion of Afghanistan and also much of the basis for "anti-terror" measures on the home front. The *Times*—whose services to the "war on terror" included reporter Judith Miller retailing the fiction of Saddam Hussein's "weapons of mass destruction"—now laments "an unintelligible policy without express limits or protective walls" implemented under the 2001

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# More Capitalist Cruelty: Companies Looting Retired Miners' Benefits

In “U.S. Health Care and the Elderly: Capitalist Cruelty” (WV No. 1019, 8 March), we noted that “for the owners of banks and industry, government spending on caring for the aged is an unnecessary overhead expense that ultimately lowers the overall profit rate.” And it’s not just government spending they’re after. The top two U.S. coal mining companies, Peabody Energy (the world’s largest private producer) and Arch Coal, have schemed to rob 22,000 retired union miners and their families of their pensions and health care. Peabody started the process by spinning off a company called Patriot Coal in 2007. While covering only 13 percent of Peabody’s coal reserves, Patriot was assigned 40 percent of the parent company’s health care and other obligations under its contract with the United Mine

Workers of America (UMWA). A year later, Patriot acquired Magnum Coal, an offshoot of Arch. The result is Peabody and Arch offloading \$1.37 billion in liabilities. As the UMWA puts it, Patriot was “set up to fail,” created to purge the books of pension and health care obligations. Sure enough, Patriot is now in Chapter 11 bankruptcy proceedings. This is the route that was earlier taken by steel, auto and airline companies to shred retiree benefits in the interest of corporate profits. Now the same ax hangs over people who risked life and limb—and lungs!—every day in the mines and, if they survived, carry debilitating injuries and illnesses into old age. Black lung disease, for example, has undergone a resurgence in recent years. Retired Kentucky miner I.G. Camp, who suffers from black



Retired coal miner suffering from black lung disease, with his miner son in West Virginia.

lung contracted in the Peabody mines, put it bluntly in a union video: “All of us old people that can’t work no more, they’d like to put us plum out.” The UMWA’s cradle-to-grave health and retirement benefits, financed by tonnage royalties paid by the companies, are a direct product of hard-fought miners’ strikes in 1946 and 1948. Democratic president Harry Truman temporarily nationalized the mines in response to the first walkout. But the miners refused to return to work until the fund was created. The UMWA struck again two years later to force the mine owners to write the first pension check. A by-product of these struggles was the establishment of a network of Miners Memorial Hospitals up and down the Appalachian mining belt, where medical care had been all but nonexistent. It’s been a while since the pro-capitalist union tops played hardball, however, and the UMWA has steadily given up ground to non-union outfits, which are often subsidiaries of the giant conglomerates. In regard to Patriot, the UMWA bureaucracy is pinning retirees’ hopes mainly to the union’s seat on a creditors’ committee in the bankruptcy proceeding and a class action suit against Peabody and Arch. The bureaucrats are also counting on the good graces of West Virginia Democratic Senator Jay Rockefeller, who is pushing a measure to have the federal government pay some of the retiree pension and health care

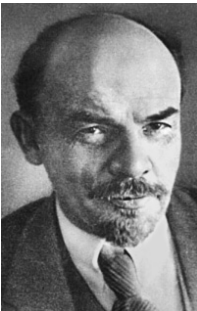
liabilities that the coal companies won’t. The entire history of organized labor—not least that of the miners—shows that whatever workers have won has been gained through class struggle, not reliance on the courts and politicians of the capitalist enemy. That understanding must come to the fore in the struggle to defend past gains and to carry out the crucial task of organizing the unorganized. This is a burning issue in the mining industry, where union health and safety committees are the workers’ only real protection against the life-threatening hazards of the work, and against the companies that cut corners on safety to save a few pennies. But the UMWA leadership has acceded to the loss of union membership, particularly with the shift to strip mining, which requires far fewer workers than underground mines and often takes place in Western states where the UMWA lacks strong roots. As we suggested in our article last issue, the labor movement would find many ready allies if it were to take up the fight for free, quality medical care for everyone. The Patriot case would be a good place to start. Tens of thousands of unorganized miners would see the struggle to guarantee the 22,000 UMWA pensioners and their dependents the benefits due them as in their own interests. To win such battles requires breaking with the labor bureaucracy’s class-collaborationist policies, which have only helped the bosses to throw the union movement so far back. ■



TROTSKY

## Lenin on Women’s Emancipation

Writing nearly two years after the 1917 Bolshevik-led proletarian seizure of power in Russia, V.I. Lenin gave a critical progress report on the status of women in the fledgling workers state. Under conditions of extreme backwardness, civil war and imperialist invasion, the early Soviet government sought, insofar as it was able, to make women full participants in the work-force and all realms of life by taking steps to replace the family with collective institutions to perform household tasks. The Bol-



LENIN

sheviks understood that the oppression of women would ultimately be rooted out only with the development of a socialist society based on material abundance, requiring the extension of proletarian revolution to the advanced capitalist countries.

Take the position of women. In this field, not a single democratic party in the world, not even in the most advanced bourgeois republic, has done in decades so much as a hundredth part of what we did in our very first year in power. We really razed to the ground the infamous laws placing women in a position of inequality, restricting divorce and surrounding it with disgusting formalities, denying recognition to children born out of wedlock, enforcing a search for their fathers, etc., laws numerous survivals of which, to the shame of the bourgeoisie and of capitalism, are to be found in all civilised countries. We have a thousand times the right to be proud of what we have done in this field. But the more *thoroughly* we have cleared the ground of the lumber of the old, bourgeois laws and institutions, the clearer it is to us that we have only cleared the ground to build on but are not yet building. Notwithstanding all the laws emancipating woman, she continues to be a *domestic slave*, because *petty housework* crushes, strangles, stultifies and degrades her, chains her to the kitchen and the nursery, and she wastes her labour on barbarously unproductive, petty, nerve-racking, stultifying and crushing drudgery. The real *emancipation of women*, real communism, will begin only where and when an all-out struggle begins (led by the proletariat wielding the state power) against this petty housekeeping, or rather when its *wholesale transformation* into a large-scale socialist economy begins. Do we in practice pay sufficient attention to this question, which in theory every Communist considers indisputable? Of course not. Do we take proper care of the *shoots* of communism which already exist in this sphere? Again the answer is *no*. Public catering establishments, nurseries, kindergartens—here we have examples of these shoots, here we have the simple, everyday means, involving nothing pompous, grandiloquent or ceremonial, which can *really emancipate women*, really lessen and abolish their inequality with men as regards their role in social production and public life.

—V.I. Lenin, “A Great Beginning” (28 June 1919)

## CLARIFICATION

In “India: Deadly Rape Sparks Mass Protests” (WV No. 1017, 8 February), we observed that “the fake-Trotskyist New Wave Group, affiliated with the Morenoite International Workers League, published a January 19 statement proposing ‘more representation of women in police’ (www.litci.org).” This has caused some confusion among readers familiar with the left in that country. We were referring to the Pune-based outfit that in early 2011 split from a Delhi-based organization of the same name. The Delhi group, whose online organ remains *New Wave*, renamed itself the Workers’ Socialist Party in November 2012.

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# Japanese Imperialism Steps Up Threats Against North Korea, China

*This article is based on a recent report from the Spartacist Group/Japan, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).*

The economic situation for Japan continues to be dire even compared with other imperialist countries, with less than 1 percent growth of the gross domestic product in 2012. With a contracting domestic market, the only perspective for the bourgeoisie is to increase overseas investments and seek increased profits from those investments. The protection of those investments, ultimately through military means, is a life-and-death question for the ruling class.

Intertwined with this goal is the imperialist bourgeoisie's strategic aim of undoing the social revolutions that overturned capitalist rule in countries of Asia (China, North Korea, Vietnam and Laos). China, with its massive economy and population, is the central target. Imperialism will never cease its quest to reverse the Chinese Revolution, which in 1949 ripped a quarter of the world's population out of the realm of direct imperialist exploitation. Japan is continuously building up its military and related technology in the framework of its strategic alliance with the U.S. Massive Japan-U.S. military exercises were held in the fall of 2012 in the Okinawa area, with close to 50,000 soldiers.

For the first time in years, under the right-wing Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) government elected in December, Tokyo has increased the war budget and plans to increase the size of the armed forces by almost 20,000. This is explicitly motivated as "countering the threat" from China and North Korea. The LDP is the perennial ruling party of big business. Before being ousted by the Democratic Party (DP) in the 2009 elections, it was in office for all but ten months since 1955. Formed out of split-offs from the LDP, the DP—which also picked up numerous defectors from the Social Democratic Party (formerly Socialist Party)—is a bourgeois party that postured as being more sympathetic to the common people. The DP, which gets electoral support from the pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucracy, championed renewed militarism when it held office by, for example, relaxing the law that had restricted the export of military goods and establishing Japan's first overseas military base since World War II, in Djibouti.

Disgruntlement with the LDP over the world financial crisis propelled the DP's 2009 victory. But just over three years later it was swept out. The DP had promised to move an American military base from Okinawa but reneged in the face of the enraged response of the U.S., Japan's key ally. In December the LDP took over again as the DP lost three-quarters of its seats in the parliament's lower house. Aggressive support for increased militarism and China-bashing was at the center of the whole bourgeois electoral circus.

The Japanese Communist Party (JCP) occasionally mildly protests that such militarism is "unconstitutional," but for the most part these reformists promote social-chauvinist defense of "our" country. When the government deployed its own missiles to shoot down North Korea's recently launched missile (in case "it fell down" on Japanese territory), the JCP made no protest. True to form, the JCP saluted recent UN sanctions against North Korea. Amid the imperialist military build-up, there have been massive mobilizations in Okinawa against U.S. military bases, with the direct support of a number of local bourgeois figures. The JCP and the rest of the reformist left seek to chan-



White House



U.S. Navy

**U.S. and Japanese warships in joint exercise last fall. Inset: New Japanese prime minister Shinzo Abe at February 22 White House meeting with Obama, where they agreed to push for tougher sanctions against North Korea.**

nel popular anger against the U.S. bases in a nationalist direction. The JCP calls to "abrogate the U.S.-Japan alliance" and likes to portray Japan as a nation subjugated by U.S. imperialism.

The slogan of the Spartacist Group/Japan is "Smash the counterrevolutionary alliance of Japanese and U.S. imperialism through workers revolution on both sides of the Pacific!" It remains our strategic task to raise the proletariat's consciousness of the connection between the struggle to defend its own living standards against the capitalist bosses at home and the need for the defense of the deformed workers states against capitalist counter-revolution. The defense of those states is linked to our program for workers political revolutions against the anti-revolutionary Stalinist bureaucracies.

## Propping Up South Korea

A key pillar of capitalist rule in Asia is military cooperation by the U.S.-Japan alliance with the South Korean bourgeoisie. The Japanese government hailed the election of conservative candidate Park Geun-hye in December and expects relations with South Korea to improve under her government. Notably, her father, Park Chung-hee—who headed the brutal anti-Communist military dictatorship for close to 20 years—received his military training in Japan so that he could serve as an officer in Japan's colonial military police in occupied China in the 1940s. He had warm relations with Japan's right wing, in particular the WWII war criminal Nobusuke Kishi, going back to the Japanese occupation of Manchuria. Shinzo Abe, the new prime minister, happens to be Kishi's grandson. The Japanese media has approvingly cited an anecdote about Park Geun-hye from the time her father was killed in 1979: rather than cry, her immediate reaction was to worry whether the border with North Korea was secure.

In the summer of 2012, the visit of then-South Korean president Lee Myung-bak to the contested and uninhabited Takeshima/Dokdo islands inflamed both Korean and Japanese nationalist feelings. Hugely unpopular at home, Lee tried to use nationalism to increase his support. We are indifferent to the ownership of these rocks. While denouncing Japanese revanchism in the strongest terms, we oppose the nationalist campaign in both

countries. The JCP, naturally, immediately joined in the national unity chorus against the South Korean president's visit. But even the JCP has to admit that Japan first claimed those islands at a time when the Korean peninsula was under the thumb of the Japanese colonial administration.

U.S. imperialism has been concerned that its two key anti-Communist allies in the region are going at each other over some rocks. The JCP's posture very much mirrors this position. In the territorial dispute with China over the Senkaku islands (known as the Diaoyu in China), the JCP demands an "aggressive" diplomatic anti-China stance. But in regard to the dispute with South Korea, the JCP demands a more careful and "softer" approach. The JCP thinks that Tokyo should start by "apologizing" to South Korea over Japan's crimes when it was the colonial overlord...and then convince Korea that these rocks are Japanese.

In the context of this territorial row, Lee Myung-bak demanded an apology from the Japanese Emperor over Japan's colonial crimes in Korea. This predictably caused

an uproar in bourgeois circles. While the JCP voted against the parliamentary resolution denouncing South Korea over this conflict (because it "escalated tensions"), the party was silent on the question of the emperor itself, a glaring capitulation to the reactionary emperor system.

East and Southeast Asia remain an arena of fierce economic competition among the imperialists, centrally the U.S. and Japan. The U.S.-South Korea Free Trade Agreement, which went into effect in March 2012, eliminates South Korean tariffs on two-thirds of U.S. farm products; U.S. grain exporters are salivating over anticipated profits (see "U.S.-South Korea Trade Pact Targets China, Korean Workers," WV No. 1008, 14 September 2012).

A key target for Japanese imperialism is the Philippines (as well as Thailand and Indonesia). The government has been noting with satisfaction an increase in political stability in the Philippines neocolony under the current Aquino leadership. The Japanese army is in Somalia, but there has been virtually no press coverage about Somalia in recent months. The longest-standing foreign deployment by the Japanese army, in the Golan Heights, was terminated recently due to the heightened tensions in Syria, which Japan fears getting embroiled in. There continue to be tensions over oil with the U.S. Still relatively dependent on Iranian oil, Japan demanded—and received—an exemption from Washington's sanctions aimed at strangling Iran while agreeing to increase imports from countries like Saudi Arabia, thus strengthening Iran's isolation.

## Targeting China

Overall, China continues to be the most important location for Japanese investment and Japan's biggest trading partner by far. At the same time, under the slogan of "China plus one," companies seek to decrease dependence on China by pursuing other Asian countries. For the past two years, new investments in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations have exceeded new investments in China. Shinzo Abe's first trip as prime minister was to this region. One aim of the bourgeoisie is to "roll back" Chinese economic and political influence in Southeast Asia, using massive amounts of aid, loans, etc.

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The aim of destroying the Chinese deformed workers state through capitalist counterrevolution remains central to all maneuvers by the bourgeoisie. An important shift in the Japanese domestic political situation was triggered by a “proposal” by right-wing hawk Shintaro Ishihara (at the time the governor of Tokyo) to buy the Senkaku islands in order to bring them under direct Tokyo government control. Showing the popular appeal of this nationalist plan, he collected enormous amounts of money from the population. This was at bottom a demagogic play, seeking to force the hand of the government to “nationalize” these islands, which is exactly what happened.

This move in turn led to an enormous nationalist, anti-Japan outburst in China, the largest in decades according to the Japanese bourgeois press, with retrograde nationalism being encouraged by the Stalinist bureaucrats in Beijing. The ICL takes no position on whether the uninhabited Senkaku/Diaoyu islands belong to Japan or China. But in the event of a military conflict threatening the deformed workers state, we unconditionally defend China against imperialism.

The protests in China had a negative impact on the Japanese capitalists' profits by bringing about a decrease in exports from Japan as well as a decrease in production in their factories in China. Initially, there were dissenting voices within the bourgeoisie, denouncing Ishihara as "irresponsible," and Japan's ambassador to China was fired after voicing soft opposition. Outrageously, but not surprisingly, the JCP danced to Ishihara's tune, demanding that the national government, not the city of Tokyo, "nationalize" these islands.

## The Domestic Situation and the General Elections

The LDP swept the general elections to the lower house, gaining a two-thirds majority of seats together with its bloc partner, the Buddhist Komeito party. Abe is on the right wing of the LDP and was prime minister for about a year between 2006 and 2007. The LDP victory is a result of a combination of factors: hatred for the previous DP government, the lowest electoral participation since World War II (with less than 60 percent of the electorate voting) and the very undemocratic voting system. Ominously, Ishihara's even more right-wing Japan Restoration Party (JRP) did well. The reformist workers parties were battered, particularly the Social Democratic Party.

In Abe's previous term, while mending relations with China somewhat, his main achievements for the bourgeoisie were a number of ideologically driven measures, e.g., upgrading the Defense Agency to the Defense Ministry, pushing for more reactionary educational policies and laying the groundwork for a referendum to change the "Peace Constitution." Imposed on Japan by the victorious U.S. imperialists after WWII, the Constitution decrees, in its Article Nine, that Japan will "forever renounce war... and the threat or use of force as a means of settling international disputes." The

SGJ opposes any changes in Article Nine that would aid Japanese imperialism in deploying its military might in Asia. At the same time, in combatting pacifist illusions, we stress that no constitution can prevent the bourgeoisie from using its military forces to defend its interests. The main effect of Article Nine is that the army is euphemistically called "Self-Defense Forces." Nonetheless, opposition to the Constitution remains a rallying cry for bourgeois right-wingers.

To a large extent, Abe's fall in 2007 was



Nationalist squabble over unpopulated Senkaku/Diaoyu islands picks up, September 2012: Poster in Tokyo subway station (above) claims islands as Japanese; demonstrators in Beijing (right) march on Japanese embassy with banner reading “Get Out of the Diaoyu!”

provoked by economic problems, with anger at the base of society and, significantly, among the small capitalists. The previous LDP prime minister, Junichiro Koizumi, had strongly emphasized questions of the economy while Abe pushed patriotism, racism and “family values.” It is not an accident that this time around Abe has been stressing “economic recovery” as his highest priority. At the same time, one of the first acts of the new government was to finalize the racist decision taken by the prior Democratic Party government to exclude Korean high schools in Japan from receiving the subsidies that make public high schools free of charge.

Abe has been on a public relations campaign promising to deal aggressively with economic woes by large-scale investment in public infrastructure (hardly a new idea) and massive “financial easing,” i.e., throwing money at the banks for investment and especially financial speculation. This plan provoked quite a discussion within the bourgeoisie. With the DP denouncing the LDP for “wasteful spending,” even the *Keidanren* bosses’ federation initially attacked Abe as “reckless,” which they later retracted. At bottom, sections of the bourgeoisie warned Abe that this policy of limitless buying of government bonds by the central bank was Japan’s pre-WWII policy, which ended in catastrophe and collapse.

And of course, even if such measures “work” in bourgeois terms, they will only prepare the next bubble. Fundamentally, what this debate signifies is the lack of alternatives for the bourgeoisie, with no perspective of rebuilding an economy that has been in decline for more than 20 years. Even the business daily *Nikkei* warned: “Economic recovery. There is no magic.” In 2012 alone, the stock market saw an overall increase of over 20 percent. While the finance capitalists were raking it in, the masses were simply getting poorer.

Since the 2011 earthquake and tsunami disaster, the ruling class has pushed a campaign of massive attacks on living standards while promoting “national unity.” The question has been posed: In what direction will anger and frustration among the population go and how will it be expressed? It is widely noted that in addition to anti-China nationalism, it was worries about the economic situation that largely determined voters’ decisions not to support the DP. In this regard, it is also notable that by December 2012 the issue of nuclear power was not a central issue in the election. (The LDP all along has said it intends to restart the reactors, an unpopular position.)

The domestic situation over the last cou-

ple of months has been centrally marked by a sharp turn to the right in bourgeois discourse and more open militarism and nationalism over the territorial disputes. In a major speech to the Diet (parliament) in late February, Abe claimed there was “no ownership dispute” over the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands because they “clearly belong to Japan.” Ludicrously alleging “continued challenges to our borders and sovereignty,” which he claimed constituted a “clear and present danger,” Abe ominously evoked the war between Brit-



ain and Argentina over the Falklands/Malvinas islands in 1982 (*Wall Street Journal online*, 27 February).

A month before the elections, the hard-core right-wing ideologue Shintaro Ishihara joined Toru Hashimoto's Japan Restoration Party, which had been formed by Hashimoto (mayor of Osaka) in September. The party's name harks back to the Meiji Restoration of 1867-68, and its spokesmen borrow a number of terms from that period for their speeches. This is intended to stress how they want to "radically" change Japan. Ishihara is a longtime, all-purpose reactionary and militarist. Always a hawk against China, in 2002 he went on a rant demanding that Japan declare war on North Korea. He has also denied that the 1937 Nanjing Massacre, carried out by the Japanese during their occupation of China, even occurred, describing it as just Chinese propaganda. Hashimoto, for his part, is known for his strong nationalist positions and for his aggressive line in going after trade unions, targeting in particular public employees and teachers.

The Japan Restoration Party sees itself as a right-wing pressure group on the LDP, openly proclaiming the need for nuclear weapons, advocating abolition of the minimum wage, etc. They see the current political situation as an opportunity to push forward with reactionary Constitutional revision. Following the upper house elections in the summer, they might increase their weight and impact on the direction of the government.

## The Long Shadow of the Fukushima Disaster

The March 2011 tsunami and nuclear disaster continue to cast their shadow on Japanese society (see “Japan Tsunami Disaster and Capitalist Criminality,” *WV* No. 978, 15 April 2011). There are still nearly 320,000 people who have not been able to return to their homes, many of whom lost their jobs. The workers on temporary contracts who heroically fought to bring the meltdown at the Daiichi nuclear power plant under control have been mostly cast off—fired and sent back to their hometowns, making it nearly impossible to track the impact on their health of the exposure to high radiation. After Fukushima, the JCP made a turn to a line of “zero nuclear power,” and its daily paper *Akahata* now regularly exposes the plight of former workers and residents of the devastated region. The JCP’s perspective is going to court to challenge the big electrical companies for their undeniably illegal abuse of the workers.

The tsunami was a natural disaster, but the appalling toll in human lives was in

large measure a product of the unbridled greed and corruption that flow naturally from an anarchic economic system premised on the drive for private profit. In the interests of holding down costs, the TEPCO electric utility company had for years ignored every kind of basic safety consideration, with the eager collusion of the government. In the aftermath of the disaster, the government enraged the population with a stream of cover-ups and disinformation aimed at downplaying the danger of leaking radiation. In

the aftermath, the bourgeois rulers used the tragedy as a justification for further militarization of society, with the largest call-up of military forces since the end of WWII. Prattling about supposedly shared “national interests” and touting the army as “heroes,” they imposed security measures that prevented food and other urgently needed assistance from reaching desperate people.

Last summer a massive anti-nuclear campaign developed, based on widespread fears about nuclear power and a stream of exposures of how the government and electrical companies never cared about safety at these plants. Mobilizations were as large as 200,000 people, including outraged youth, workers and the petty bourgeoisie, religious groups and all types of "greens." While working-class contingents were mobilized by the JCP, these protests were class-collaborationist through and through, with a number of bourgeois organizations participating in or leading them. Sponsors of the anti-nuclear energy campaign gathered close to eight million signatures on a petition to the government demanding that nuclear reactors throughout Japan not be restarted. Showing its contempt, one day after the signatures were handed in, the government restarted the first reactor, which is likely sitting right on top of an earthquake fault. While the mass of people supporting this campaign are motivated by fully justified distrust of the government and the greedy energy conglomerates, the central demands ("No to nuclear power! Turn to natural energy sources!") are not pro-working-class or socially progressive demands.

As communists, the ICL does not give advice to the ruling class about what might be more rational energy policies for running capitalist industry. While nuclear plants may be a particularly risky business in Japan, a country vulnerable to serious earthquakes, no form of energy production is without risks to workers and nearby communities. Throughout industry, we call for trade-union control of working conditions and, where there are specific hazards, for union action to shut down dangerous operations. But ultimately, under capitalism concerns about workers' safety will always be sacrificed to the bosses' unremitting drive for greater profits.

## The Workers Movement and the Reformist Left

Deindustrialization has accelerated: over the last 20 years six million manufacturing jobs were lost, with close to 1.5 million lost over the past four years. This has hit the mainstays of union power in the manufacturing sector hard. There is

the fact of job losses, a decrease in union membership and the undermining of the potential power of the unions. This has a real impact on proletarian consciousness, as do the betrayals of the trade-union leaders who refuse to fight to defend jobs. Official unemployment for people under 24 is around 10 percent. Union membership is at the lowest point since the postwar period, with fewer than ten million members, some 20 percent less than at the highest point in 1994. The huge number of workers in unstable employment (including temporary and part-time workers and those who work for small subcontractors), whom the trade union bureaucracy is not fighting to unionize, is a large factor in demoralizing the working class as a whole.

The JCP has waged a big campaign over the last few months protesting a plan to fire 130,000 workers in the electronics industry. However, the campaign is counterposed to any independent mobilization of the working class, instead consisting of complaints that layoffs and plant closures also hurt the local petty bourgeoisie and are bad for local tax revenues. The JCP wraps its campaign in nationalism, attacking huge companies for their “American management style”—in other words, companies more easily firing workers—and for Japan’s “loss of technology” when plants are moved to lower-wage countries (*Akahata*, 30 September 2012).

The number of industrial accidents—not only at nuclear power plants—has drastically increased in recent years. An accident in the Sasago tunnel in December 2012 received international press coverage. In this atrocity, nine people were killed near the city of Otsuki, about 50 miles west of Tokyo, when concrete slabs weighing 1.2 tons apiece fell onto vehicles from the ceiling of a highway tunnel. This “accident” was a direct outcome of the privatization of the national roadway system under Koizumi, undermining the maintenance of that system. Another widely publicized case last fall was a gas fire in a chemical plant where the firemen arriving at the scene were blown up by a further explosion. Compounding the bourgeoisie’s refusal to spend money on infrastructure and safety procedures is the increasing use of inexperienced and untrained casual workers.

The Social Democratic Party, having joined the DP government in 2009, was thrown out like a squeezed lemon after opposing the deal with the U.S. over military bases in Okinawa. In the recent elections, the JCP lost one parliamentary seat, reducing its seats from nine to eight, while the SDP barely got two seats and lost close to 50 percent of its former votes. The SDP is hugely dependent on government financial subsidies for its survival, and defections of top leaders to the openly bourgeois camp have been frequent.

Neither JCP- nor SDP-related unions are centrally anchored in the core manufacturing industries, although both have a base in rail. Following the anti-Communist offensive in the early postwar period and the dissolution of the powerful union federation it led, the JCP was to a large extent driven out of manufacturing, although today it organizes some part-time and irregular workers in industry. Concomitantly the JCP has a relatively strong base in the petty bourgeoisie, which is a material basis for the particularly obnoxious nationalist and reactionary positions the party has taken. Given that it became anti-Soviet decades before the final destruction of the USSR by capitalist counterrevolution, it was less affected by that cataclysmic event than Communist parties in Europe. It remains a mass party, social-democratic rather than Stalinist.

While the reformist left is only offering illusions in making Japanese imperialism slightly less rapacious or exploitative, the SGJ continues the fight to crystallize a communist vanguard in order to build a revolutionary workers party. That party will struggle to lead the working class in the overthrow of Japanese capitalist rule, joining with the proletariat of the entire region in the fight for a socialist Asia. ■

# Chinese Stalinists: Running Dogs for Imperialist Drive Against North Korea

When North Korea successfully conducted its third nuclear test in February, the U.S. predictably responded with saber rattling, and more. As new U.S. defense secretary Chuck Hagel announced that “missile defense” batteries along the West Coast would be expanded to counter the North Korean “threat,” joint exercises are under way involving thousands of U.S. and South Korean troops engaged in land, air, sea and special operations drills. The imperialists also pushed through a new round of United Nations economic sanctions, adding to past measures that have served to throw much of North Korea’s population into hunger. Treacherously, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) regime has supported previous sanctions and helped broker six-party “talks” aimed at the nuclear disarmament of North Korea, which, like China, is a bureaucratically deformed workers state. This time around, Beijing *helped draw up* the sanctions, an abject expression of the Stalinist policy of “peaceful coexistence” with imperialism.

The UN resolution obligates member nations to take actions to enforce the embargo against North Korea, rather than simply requesting that they do so. Playing a balancing act, Beijing has never taken such action against Pyongyang. China is North Korea’s only significant trading partner, helping maintain an economy that was thrown far back by the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union—North Korea’s former economic lifeline—in 1991-92. However, there are voices in the CCP saying that China should wash its hands of its one-time ally. The London *Financial Times* (27 February) published

Korean advances, the U.S. juggernaut was able to push back close to Korea’s border with China, the Yalu River.

It was the massive intervention by the Chinese People’s Liberation Army (PLA) that turned the tide. A series of human wave assaults, a heroic effort costing one million Chinese lives, threw the imperialist forces back across the 38th parallel. Mao Zedong’s CCP regime, which had taken power the year before, realized that the imperialists aimed to roll back social revolution not only in Korea but in China as well. Indeed, several U.S. political and military representatives at the time mooted the possibility of dropping atomic bombs on China.

A 1953 armistice sealed the division of the Korean peninsula between the deformed workers state in the North and the capitalist state in the South. The imperialists had reduced Korea to rubble, with a staggering four million Koreans dead. Ever since, the U.S. has maintained a massive military presence in the South, numbering 28,500 troops today. For decades, this force propped up hated dictatorships. At all times, the U.S. military deployment has been a dagger pointed at both the Chinese and North Korean workers states and at the South Korean working class fighting against exploitation and oppression.

Defense of North Korea as well as China against imperialism and capitalist counterrevolution is the duty of the proletariat internationally, not least in the U.S. But you will certainly *not* hear this from the International Socialist Organization (ISO), followers of the late Tony Cliff. In “Why Are Tensions Rising in Korea?”

to the Demilitarized Zone, make their anti-Communist stance unambiguous. A 23 February article on the socialistworker.co.uk Web site by Young-Ik Kim, titled “North Korea: A Nuclear Bogeyman Created by the US,” denounces the North Korean nuclear test as having “nothing to do with anti-imperialism or socialism.” The article goes on to opine that the North’s “nuclear programme—pursued at the expense of its people’s livelihoods—will only increase tension in the region.” This sentence could have been written word for word by the *Wall Street Journal*.

Those who, unlike the Cliffite bootlickers, see the need to stand with the workers states against the capitalist class enemy must understand that this includes supporting their development of nuclear weapons and necessary delivery systems—a crucial means of deterrence against imperialist attack. Chinese leftists would do well to remember China’s own struggle to achieve nuclear weaponry. As we wrote in “Bureaucracy and Revolution in Moscow and Peking” (*Spartacist* No. 3, January-February 1965): “China’s development of the A-bomb must be greeted by all revolutionary Marxists as a welcome strengthening of Chinese defenses at a time when the Chinese Revolution is not only being aggressively threatened by U.S. imperialism but when it is also being systematically betrayed by the Soviet bureaucracy in the search for ‘peaceful coexistence’.”

Some may see a fundamental discontinuity in the PLA’s heroic struggle in 1950-53 and Beijing’s toadying to the imperialists over North Korean nukes today. In fact, these events speak to the contradictory nature of the parasitic Stalinist bureaucracy. Deriving its privileges from the collectivized economy that is at the core of the workers state, the bureaucracy is forced at times to defend that state against capitalist forces. At the same time, the Stalinist dogma of “socialism in one country” means that the needs of one’s own state are paramount. Inevitably, this leads to seeking accommodation with world imperialism, stabbing other Communist regimes in the back and selling out revolutions elsewhere.

After the Soviet and Chinese bureaucracies fell out in the late 1950s and ’60s, Mao’s China forged a counterrevolutionary alliance with U.S. imperialism against the USSR. In sharp opposition to both regimes, we Trotskyists declared: For Communist unity against imperialism! The *continuity* between Mao’s CCP and today’s regime, with its “socialist market economy,” lies in their shared opposition to the Marxist program of world proletarian revolution. Ultimately, as Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky pointed out in *The Revolution Betrayed* (1937) and other works, unless the Stalinist caste is swept away by the workers, bureaucratic privilege, political suppression of the working class and appeasement of imperialism threaten the very existence of the workers state. That prognosis was tragically borne out in the Soviet Union.

In North Korea, “socialism in half a country” à la the Kims has been particularly vulgar in its nepotism and cult of personality. Despite strident rhetoric against the U.S. and its South Korean lackeys, the Pyongyang regime renounces any perspective for the revolutionary overthrow of the South Korean capitalist class. We call for the *revolutionary reunification* of Korea, through proletarian political revolution in the North and workers socialist revolution in the South. This is part of the International Communist League’s perspective for a socialist Asia, which requires as well a political revolution to sweep away the Chinese Stalinist regime and, crucially, the proletarian overthrow of Japanese imperialism. The ICL is dedicated to forging Leninist-Trotskyist parties to lead such struggles around the world. ■



**December 12:  
North Korea  
launches satellite  
into orbit.**

a piece by Deng Yuwen, deputy editor of *Study Times*, journal of the CCP’s Central Party School, which baldly declared: “Beijing should give up on Pyongyang and press for the reunification of the Korean peninsula.” China’s new foreign minister, Wang Yi, who helped lead the disarmament meetings that collapsed in 2008, is known for wanting to cut the ties binding China to North Korea.

Deng Yuwen’s article conceded that people in China commonly “view their relationship with Pyongyang through their shared sacrifice during the Korean war” of 1950-53. That war was launched by an imperialist invasion led by the U.S. in an attempt to smash social revolution. Under Soviet military protection following World War II, a workers state modeled on the USSR under the Stalinist bureaucracy was created in the North under Kim Il Sung, and workers and peasants engaged in struggle to smash the capitalists and landlords across the peninsula. The U.S., in its postwar role as the chief imperialist gendarme, used a United Nations fig leaf to unleash its war machine against the Korean masses, as the peninsula became the front line in the Cold War against the Soviet Union. After major initial North

(socialistworker.org, 15 March), the ISO’s David Whitehouse allows that “the current crisis is made in the U.S.A.” But he also takes pains to denounce North Korea as “a tyranny in which most of the population lives in poverty.” Retired basketball superstar Dennis Rodman displayed a far better impulse, joining North Korean Stalinist leader Kim Jong Un at an exhibition basketball game in Pyongyang and reporting that Kim had one thing to relay to Obama: call me. For his simple act, Rodman was vilified, ridiculed and smeared by everyone from the White House press secretary on down to local media. To his credit, Rodman remains defiant.

The ISO article warns about possible plans by the U.S. and South Korea for a land invasion of the North. This is rather rich considering that the last time such an invasion took place, in 1950, Cliff and his cohorts *capitulated to the U.S. and British imperialists* by refusing to defend North Korea, marking their definitive break from Trotskyism. Since then, the Cliffites have supported every imperialist-sponsored counterrevolutionary movement arrayed against the former Soviet Union, China and other non-capitalist countries. The South Korean Cliffites, operating closer

# Young Spartacus

## Church of Avakian Decrees: No Nudes Is Good Nudes

Ordering his acolytes once more unto the breach, Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) leader Bob Avakian has anathematized *Playboy*, porn shops, strip clubs, Xtube and *50 Shades of Grey*. These puritanical Maoists, steeped in reactionary “family values” moralism, have taken an outlandish turn with their “End Pornography and Patriarchy: The Enslavement and Degradation of Women” campaign.

Since 2012, the RCP has despicably used International Women’s Day, a proletarian holiday, as a platform to march through New York and other cities, shrieking at billboards that “objectify women” and protesting sex shops and local strip clubs. Giving the evangelicals some stiff competition, RCPers can be found on street corners and college campuses handing out palm cards that order people to “STOP WATCHING PORN” because it “corrupts the humanity of those who watch it.” RCP proselytizers are known for urging male fighters for women’s rights (e.g., abortion clinic defense guards and abortion rights demonstrators) to confess to their past porn-viewing habits and sin no more.

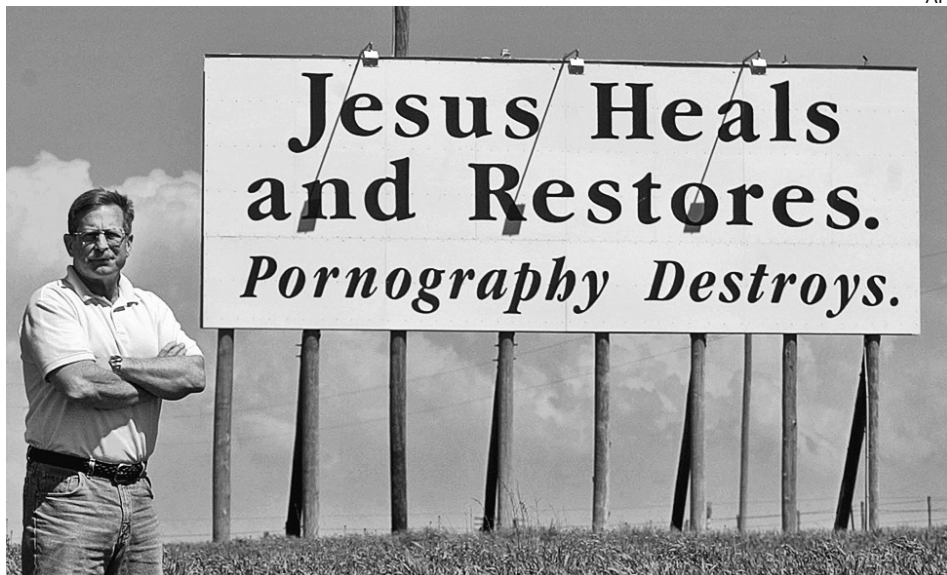
The meat of the “End Pornography” campaign, which is spearheaded by RCP spokeswoman Sunsara Taylor, is laid out in a 2011 “Call to Action.” In this call they ludicrously claim that pornographic images are the cause of rape, murder and other violent crimes against women. They posit that there is a “culture of rape and pornography” that is reinforcing the “enslavement and degradation of women.”

Keeping abreast of the latest developments, they claim U.S. culture has recently been “pornified,” as evidenced by the national phenomenon of (gasp) teen sexting and women taking pole-dancing classes at gyms! Underlying this patronizing absurdity and holier-than-thou mentality is the age-old “women are victims and can’t possibly enjoy sex” (or porn) garbage. For these neo-Victorian morality police, the “new” offenses in porn include depositing seminal fluid on a lady’s visage, penetrating orifices in a sequence not to the RCP’s liking, and other sexual practices they decry in lurid detail.

What kind of a sick cat does one have to be to determine (with some precision, mind you) which positions, organs, ori-



Above: RCP’s reactionary “End Pornography and Patriarchy” campaign comes to New York City, August 2012. Below: Billboard erected adjacent to sex shop in Abilene, Kansas, 2005.



fices and/or exchanges of bodily fluids are degrading and abusive rather than based on “mutual love and respect”? A very sick one, indeed. In fact, what’s truly obscene in all this is Bob Avakian’s diktats on “normalcy.” If they would just keep it to themselves in their prayer halls, with the membership kneeling at the altar of the mind-numbing, 6-hour-plus documentary

of Avakian’s preachings, we wouldn’t be compelled to comment on it. But the RCP’s proselytizing plays right into the hands of a very real anti-sex witchhunt by the very real capitalist state.

In his tirades against pornography, Avakian trivializes not only the horrific crime of rape but also America’s racist history of murders of black men by the Ku Klux

Klan. Speaking of the photo postcards of lynchings that KKK supporters circulated in the early 20th century, Avakian outrageously claims that pornography “is the equivalent of those ‘Postcards of the Hanging.’ It is a means through which all women are demeaned and degraded.” These words inspired Avakian’s followers to produce a grotesque poster that equates images of Jim Crow lynchings with pornographic stills and a Dolce & Gabbana fashion advertisement! This shows a contemptuous disregard for KKK terror; you don’t have to be a Marxist to find this absolutely repulsive.

This reactionary anti-sex campaign, which argues that the basis for women’s oppression is “impure thoughts” rather than the capitalist system of exploitation, is as far from the goal of liberating women as you can get. Try telling a woman in Saudi Arabia or Iran—two countries where porn is banned—that dirty magazines and videos are the source of her oppression! Pornography is simply images and words intended for entertainment. It reflects, and only reflects, some human behavior. In this violent, irrational capitalist society, some of those reflections aren’t pretty. But you can’t change society by changing images on a screen. Only socialist revolution can create the economic basis to replace the institution of the family—the main source of women’s oppression—and ensure genuine freedom for women.

The RCP capitulates to the pervasive religious backwardness that causes youth to suffer shame, humiliation, self-loathing and traumatic fear about activities that would otherwise be considered fun. Aping the Vatican, for years the RCP raised the slogan for “stable monogamous relationships between men and women.” They still bemoan the fact that men “avoid or delay marriage” and “seek instead...to find sexual gratification without obligations, in casual encounters and through pornography/prostitution” (“A Declaration: For Women’s Liberation and the Emancipation of All Humanity,” *Revolution*, 8 March 2009).

The RCP couples their anti-porn tirades with a call for “Abortion on demand and without apology!” But in fact the organi-

## Nina Hartley on RCP Puritanism

We print below part of a February 24 letter from Nina Hartley, porn star, author, sex educator and high-profile fighter against the censorship of sexual expression. The Spartacist League defended her and ten other women sex performers in 1993 when they were arrested and threatened with up to 12 years in prison on “felony lesbianism” charges (see “‘Felony Lesbianism’ in Las Vegas,” WV No. 573, 9 April 1993). Young Spartacus asked Nina to send us her views on the Revolutionary Communist Party’s anti-porn crusade. We appreciate her insights.

\* \* \*

As a sex worker with, now, thirty years’ experience, I continue to be amazed and angered at the anti-worker tone of the RCP’s stance on pornography and sex work.

When I started as a sex worker I knew that religious people and institutions would hate what I do. I knew that certain factions of the Feminist movement would take issue with what I do (though their intransigence does continue to astound me) and it was disappointing that Communists would do so, as well.

I’m a sex WORKER, emphasis on the “worker.” I freely chose my job and would enjoy it a lot more if the eroto-phobic, Puritanical, sex-and-men-negative attitudes did not prevail in the culture or the conversation.

In our Capitalistic society, all people must work to survive. Not all are so lucky to like their jobs, so we promote unions to at least give workers a living wage and some minimum safety on the job. In our eroto-phobic world, with its religiously

based notions of “modest” and “pure womanhood,” and bestial and aggressive “manhood,” we create the need and the market for sexual commerce.

You’d think that the RCP would recognize Judeo-Christian notions of “natural” male and female roles/natures/places as the basis of their anti-sex and sex-worker rhetoric. They don’t. They’ve so deeply internalized these notions as to think they’re natural, and that pornography and sex work are somehow demeaning, ON THE FACE OF IT, to all sex workers.

Only those people stuck in jobs they hate are being demeaned by their jobs. People who LIKE their jobs, like their jobs.

Some of us are well-suited, emotionally and temperamentally, to sex work.

My sex-worker friends, all of whom



Courtesy of Nina Hartley

identify as Feminists, only want the laws to change to stop their harassment by clients, police and the court system. ■



zation makes common cause with those whose keenest ambition is the destruction of *Roe v. Wade*. The RCP's anti-porn campaign is strikingly similar to Republican Tea Party politician Michele Bachmann's 2011 pledge to provide "humane protection of women and the innocent fruit of conjugal intimacy...from human trafficking, sexual slavery, seduction into promiscuity, and all forms of pornography and prostitution, infanticide, abortion and other types of coercion or stolen innocence.... So help us God."

## Government Out of the Bedroom!

Sexuality is *personal*, not political. The capitalist rulers are the ones who politicize sexuality, victimizing those who run afoul of its writ. While raining death on Pakistani and Afghan youth, the U.S. rulers are on a domestic rampage to regiment people's sex lives in the name of "protecting the children." To wit: charging teens with distributing "child pornography" and "obscene materials to a minor" when they flirt by sexting nude pictures of themselves; arresting teenagers' adult lovers; incarcerating thousands of men who view

ever *you* don't happen to be into." It is no one's business how people get a small measure of sexual enjoyment in this otherwise miserable capitalist existence. We oppose all attempts at the puritanical censorship of pornography. Similarly, we are opposed to all laws against "crimes without victims," such as prostitution, drug use and "age of consent" laws. We advocate the concept of *effective consent*—which means that as long as all parties involved consent to the act, nobody, least of all the state, has any right to tell them they can't do it.

Who does the RCP expect will enforce their porn-abstinence campaign? In their "Call to Action" there is a fine-print disclaimer stating that (of course!) they're not looking to establish new laws to ban pornography. But words are cheap. A so-called communist organization that not only does not fight against censorship, but also encourages it, *is a pawn of the state*. When the RCP and supporters picket a sex shop, they cannot turn around the next day and protest its shuttering by the state and religious reaction. They have already taken a side.

## Chairman Bob Knows It When He Sees It

What is too "obscene" to be allowed? Like U.S. Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart, who opined on pornography in a 1964 case, Chairman Bob knows it when he sees it. He had a similar reaction to women's lingerie—namely, thongs—described in his press as "hideous symbols and embodiments of the degradation of women" in the same vein as *burqas*. That's right, *burqas*! A few years ago, the RCP sponsored a speaking tour called "From the Burkha to the Thong," which equated the *burqa*, an oppressive symbol and instrument of religious reaction, with a skimpy undergarment many women (and some men, actually) enjoy wearing.

This sort of nonsense takes a page from the feminists who, for decades, made common cause with the religious right in sundry porn censorship campaigns. With its cries to "End Patriarchy," the RCP engages in contemptible pandering to feminists, pushing the idealist notion that social change is effected through moral suasion and not class struggle. Contrary to popular belief, feminism does not mean women's liberation. Rather, it places the dividing line in society as one of gender and not class, and it seeks the advancement of women to a more equal participation in government and corporations at the top of the repressive capitalist system. The bourgeois ideology of feminism is an obstacle to the real emancipation of women.

In keeping with its time-dishonored Maoist-Stalinist heritage, the RCP embraces the family. In the 1970s, the RCP,



B. Dejkin

**1932 Soviet poster reads, "March 8: Working Women's Day of Rebellion Against Kitchen Slavery. Down With the Oppression and Suffocation of Household Routine!"**

then called the Revolutionary Union (RU), decried homosexuality—along with pornography and promiscuity—as diseases of capitalist society, and banned gays and lesbians from the organization. The RCP forebears wrote in their 1974 "Position Paper of the Revolutionary Union on Homosexuality and Gay Liberation": "Gay liberation is anti-working-class and counterrevolutionary. Its attacks on the family would rob poor and working class people of the most viable social unit for their revolutionary struggle against the imperialist system" (see "RU on Homosexuals: Malicious Maoist Bigotry," *Young Spartacus* No. 26, November 1974). This was followed by their rants in the 1980s against gay men's so-called "self-indulgent lifestyle," along with a list of practices they found highly objectionable, including pornography and casual sex.

By the beginning of the 21st century, the RCP apparently discovered that it was hard to recruit young activists while sounding like bigot Rick Santorum. So the RCP repudiated its anti-gay ban. As we later noted in our article, "RCP: Anti-Gay Moralists Then and Now" (WV No. 947, 20 November 2009), "The RCP's present enthusiasm for gay marriage apparently has more to do with their enthusiasm for forcing people into the stultifying institution of monogamous marriage than with any opposition to the oppression of homosexuals."

Their 2001 New Draft Programme position represented a change of line, but not a change of heart. Today they "do not see a homosexual orientation or the practice of homosexuality *per se* as something that constitutes an impediment to the emancipation of women." Then they add, "Male gay culture in bourgeois society is not a departure from—and in fact there are elements in which it is a concentration of—male right." Thus speaketh the Lord Avakian: male same-sex relationships are still assertions of male chauvinism.

Today, the RCP engages in the socially acceptable form of anti-gay bigotry: slandering the North American Man/Boy Love Association (NAMBLA) as "child molesters." NAMBLA is an organization that calls for the decriminalization of consensual relationships between adult men and minors (e.g., *Queer as Folk* TV heart-throb Brian Kinney's affair with a high school student in Season One).

Anti-pedophile hysteria is used by the state to justify the grossest intervention into people's private lives—and especially to police the behavior of youth. Despicably, almost all gay rights organizations and leftist groups refuse to defend NAMBLA, leaving it at the mercy of the capitalist state. The Spartacist League has a proud history of defending NAMBLA, opposing "age of consent" laws and all laws curtailing the privacy and sexual

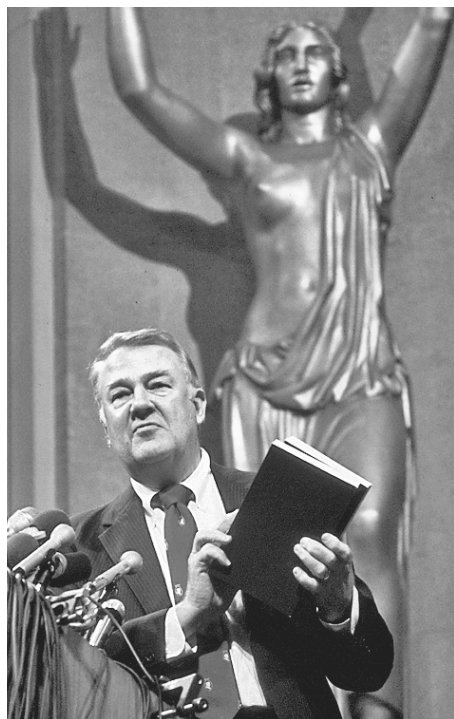
freedom of consenting individuals.

As porn star Nina Hartley puts it, "Sexual desire is, by its nature, unruly, chaotic, transgressive and boundary-crossing." Writing more than 50 years ago, Dr. Alfred C. Kinsey debunked the prevailing myth that monogamous, heterosexual relationships were the norm in society. Interviewing almost 18,000 people, his team laid out in undeniable detail the fact that 19 out of every 20 Americans had broken at least one law (adultery, sodomy, etc.) when having sex. Although no longer cutting such a wide swath, today's anti-sex laws still seek to force people into a sexual straitjacket and to cruelly punish transgressions (see "In Defense of Sex and Science," WV No. 839, 7 January 2005).

## The Family: Main Source of Women's Oppression

The RCP follows the tenets of Chinese leader Mao Zedong, who advanced not only the nationalist dogma of building "socialism in one country" but also promoted the family as an ideological prop for bureaucratic caste rule. The 1949 Revolution against capitalism transformed lives and provided unprecedented opportunities for Chinese women who, in pre-revolutionary times, were barely recognized as humans. Yet there remained, as Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky put it in *The Revolution Betrayed* (1937) when describing the Soviet Stalinist bureaucracy, "the philosophy of a priest endowed also with the powers of a gendarme." Under Mao's regime, divorce was difficult to obtain, premarital sex was a crime, homosexuality was regarded as an "illness" and masturbation was warned against in mass-distributed hygiene manuals. (See "Maoism and the Family," *Women and Revolution* No. 7, Autumn 1974.)

The Maoist ideology is the legacy of



Time Life

**1986: Reagan's attorney general Edwin Meese III delivers report calling to crack down on shops and media offering porn.**

images classified as child pornography or who engage in sexual cyberspace chats with youth (or undercover cops posing as such). Porn doesn't destroy lives, but being on a sex offender registry for the rest of your life sure does. *Down with reactionary anti-sex laws! Government out of the bedroom!*

As the saying goes, "Perversion is what-



Xin Liliang

**"The Happy Life Chairman Mao Gave Us": 1954 Chinese poster glorifies reactionary institution of the family.**

Stalinism in the former Soviet Union. The USSR issued out of a victorious workers revolution in 1917. (This was different from China, where the peasant army under Mao led the revolution.) Following the 1924 political counterrevolution that usurped power from the working class, the Stalinist bureaucracy maintained and reinforced its parasitic caste rule by promoting social conservatism and respect for authority. The bureaucrats dredged up the old bourgeois ideology of Great Russian chauvinism and the cult of the family.

The Stalinist/Maoist glorification of the family is antithetical to V.I. Lenin and the Bolsheviks' struggle for women's liberation (see Quote on page 2), and to the entire history of the Marxist movement. In *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* (1884), Friedrich Engels explained that the monogamous patrilineal family arose "to make the man supreme in the family, and to propagate, as the future heirs to his wealth, children

*continued on page 11*

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# For the Right of Gay Marriage...and Divorce!

## Uproar Over Same-Sex Marriage

The following article was translated from *Le Bolchévik* No. 203 (March 2013), which is published by the *Ligue Trotskyste de France*, section of the ICL. A law legalizing gay marriage and adoption, which was passed by the National Assembly on February 12, is due to be debated in the Senate in early April.

### LE BOLCHEVIK

The LTF has joined in the recent mobilizations for “marriage for all,” which are aimed at winning some degree of basic rights for gay couples, including finally the right to adopt children. In fact, the first limited legal recognition of gay couples dates back only to 1999 with the introduction of the Civil Solidarity Pact [a form of civil union]. As Marxists, we support the right of homosexuals to marry—and to divorce freely—because we are for full legal equality and democratic rights for gays, just as we support any legal advances that the working class and oppressed can wrest from the capitalists and their state. At the same time, we fight for a society in which no one is forced into a legal straitjacket to get the basic rights that capitalist society grants only to those locked in the traditional legal mold of “one man on one woman for life.”

In the wake of parliament’s adoption of the new bill, the Communist Party (PCF) writes that “marriage is no longer (or not exactly) a patriarchal institution, outdated and reactionary” and that “the National Assembly has revolutionized the institution of the family” (*l’Humanité*, 13 February). On the one hand the PCF captures a certain truth: the law on gay marriage is intended to adapt marriage to the reality of how people live today *in order to better defend* the institution of the bourgeois family. As Jean-Jacques Urvoas, the Socialist Party president of the parliamentary law commission, stated in an interview in *Le Monde* (15 January): “It is mistaken to accuse us of attacking the family when what we want is to make all families secure.”

But until the day capitalism is destroyed, the function of marriage as a key pillar of the bourgeois family unit will not change. Like the oppression of women, the oppression of homosexuals is not primarily the result of right-wing reaction and social backwardness but is rooted in the institution of the family, whose historical function is to transmit private ownership of the means of production to “legitimate” heirs through inheritance. This is why France forbids single people and gay couples from using artificial insemination or medically assisted procreation (including in vitro fertilization) as well as surrogate motherhood. The family is also one of the means through which the ruling class seeks to instill respect for authority and obedience to its moral codes. Homosexuality is deemed “sinful” and “deviant” by the Catholic church and the bourgeois order because it deviates from the patriarchal structure of the monogamous one man/one woman family.

The PCF’s opposition to surrogate parenthood, a practice that benefits gay men in particular, also speaks to its faith in the institution of the family. Surrogate parenthood currently carries a fine of 45,000 euros and a three-year prison sentence. It was strongly denounced by Justice Minister Christiane Taubira and the PCF’s Marie-Georges Buffet during the parliamentary debates on gay marriage



Above: January 27 Paris rally supporting legalization of same-sex marriage and adoption. Below: As Catholic church and right-wing parties mobilized against gay marriage, banner of far-right Action Française at November 18 Paris demonstration read: “The Family Is the Bedrock of the Nation.”



and is also attacked by feminists in the New Anticapitalist Party (NPA). They all argue that it commercializes women’s bodies: “Giving power to a third party over a woman’s pregnancy is a threat to the right to abortion. Moreover, the ability to alienate her body by a contract opens the door to the legalization of prostitution” (*Tout Est à Nous! La Revue* magazine, April 2011).

At bottom, they uphold the bourgeois model that decrees that it is the job of the woman (and not two men) to raise children. They also deny a woman’s fundamental right to choose what to do with her body. If a woman decides to carry a baby for someone else, that’s her decision and the state and its politicians should stay out of it. Likewise, if she becomes a prostitute to make a living rather than being exploited by some factory owner at a job where she breaks her back or suffers relentless harassment, that’s her business and not something for the capitalist state to legislate.

We stand for the decriminalization of prostitution, which we regard as a “crime without a victim,” like drug use, gambling, pornography, homosexual and intergenerational sex—activities that are generally illegal or heavily regulated under capitalist law. For us Marxists, the guiding principle in sexual relations is that of *effective consent*, not age, relationship, sex, number of people or degree of intimacy. This means nothing more and nothing less than mutual agreement and understanding as opposed to coercion. As long as those who take part agree to do what they are

doing, no one, least of all the state, has the right to tell them they cannot. *State out of the bedroom!*

### Homophobic Hysteria and the Fight for Democratic Rights

The church and the right-wing parties have mobilized hundreds of thousands of bigots in the streets against gay marriage. The level of homophobic hysteria can be so grotesque as to seem farcical. Take the diatribe by Dassault, a leading French capitalist, predicting the end of civilization if gay marriage became law: “There will be no more reproduction, so what is the point? Do we want a nation of gays? If so, in ten years there will be no one left; it’s stupid.... Look at history, ancient Greece; it is one of the reasons for its decline” (*Le Monde online*, 7 November 2012). But some things are more sinister. The youth group of the UMP [Union for a Popular Movement of former president Nicolas Sarkozy] of the Haute Garonne *département* [administrative division] published on its Web site a photo of a bare-chested young man hanging from a rope with the words above him: “You will not be a queer, my son.” All this will fuel violent assaults against gays and lesbians...as well as their kids. One out of every four homosexuals has been the victim of a physical attack over the last ten years, according to a poll conducted for the gay magazine *Têtu*. The gay rights association SOS Homophobic in its last annual report lists 29 murders in France during the past decade in which homophobia or transphobia was the motive.

A revolutionary party must vigorously make known to the workers movement all attacks and discrimination on homosexuals and every oppressed sector of the population, vigorously protesting against these assaults. Such attacks are ultimately aimed at weakening the entire working class and dividing it along sexual and racial lines, serving to strengthen the capitalist state’s repressive powers and maintain capitalist rule. The working class must come to understand that in order to liberate itself from the shackles of capitalist oppression and exploitation, it must seize its historic task: to abolish class society in order to open the road to human freedom for *everyone*.

But to mobilize the immense social power of the organized working class against capitalism necessarily means an intransigent *political* struggle against the leaders of the social-democratic parties of the Left Front, the NPA and others who take up the defense of the bourgeois family, albeit in its refurbished form. They promote the lie that if only sufficient pressure is applied from the streets, capitalism can be “revolutionized” and made more humane by means of a “left” government. In this way they work to preserve capitalist exploitation and the social reaction that goes with it.

### Anti-Woman, Anti-Youth “Republican Values”

Given the reactionary rubbish being spewed by the right, the Socialist Hollande government has had little trouble appearing “progressive” by promoting “marriage for all” (which does not diminish its capitulation to the church and right-wing parties over in vitro fertilization). The government hopes to use this as political capital to get on with presiding over factory closures, criminalizing the trade unions and implementing the rest of its racist, anti-worker agenda without too much opposition. In Britain, it is the Conservative prime minister who has just steered a vote on gay marriage through Parliament in order to strengthen the institution of the family and also, as in Hollande’s case, to give itself a “social” cover in order to better push through its relentless austerity attacks.

Justice Minister Taubira declared of the new marriage law: “Marriage for everyone well illustrates the slogan of the Republic...freedom of choice, equality of all couples, fraternity, because no differences should serve as pretexts for discrimination by the state” (*l’Humanité*, 30 January). Talk about hypocrisy! The French state, whether run by the right or the left, has no qualms over breaking up families when it comes to the working class, immigrants and other oppressed layers. A gathering in Aubervilliers recently marked the first anniversary of the deportation of Changfeng Mo, an undocumented immigrant with two young children born and educated in France, who was deported after ten years living and working in the country. *Full citizenship rights for all immigrants and their families!* There is, of course, no sign of “fraternity” coming from cop minister Valls to reunite this man with his family.

Or take France’s latest *département*, the small island of Mayotte [part of the Comoros Islands in the Indian Ocean, near Mozambique], which in 2010 carried out 26,400 deportations, of whom 6,400 were children. This number was not far below the 33,000 immigrants deported from metropolitan France. Under Valls &





# France...

(continued from page 9)

participated in the labor movement’s traditional May Day demonstrations, although not without hostility from the leaders of the PCF at that time. Speaking of the FHAR’s participation in the 1972 May Day demonstration, the PCF’s Roland Leroy wrote in *l’Humanité*: “This riffraff does not represent the vanguard of society but the rottenness of capitalism in its decay.”

But it was the refusal of the workers movement (centrally the PCF) to embrace the fight for gay rights that led to the development of petty-bourgeois sectoralism, i.e., a view that the fight for gay rights was a separate issue, to be engaged mainly by those concerned. Today’s gay rights groups have few links with and are often hostile to the workers movement and class struggle, the only means by which gay liberation can be won. Finally in 1974, access to contraception was opened up, including for minors, and the Pill reimbursed by the national health care system. A year later, abortion was legalized. Then between 1980 and 1982, under [conservative president] Giscard d’Estaing followed by [Socialist president François] Mitterrand, the laws criminalizing homosexuality were also for the most part repealed at last.

## The Russian Revolution and Social Emancipation

For Marxists, contrary to gay rights organizations like the FHAR in the 1970s or groups like Act Up today, there is no special program for homosexuals. The communist program includes demands

### Gay rights activists march in 1971 May Day demonstration in Paris.



that address the special oppression of gays, and we understand that the fate of homosexuals—like all other oppressed groups—is determined by the class struggle. But under capitalism, gains and advances are reversible and social reaction is always strengthened during periods of economic crises, as can be seen today.

Only a socialist revolution can lay the basis for definitively putting an end to social oppression. Our model is the 1917 October Revolution, led by the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky. Immediately after the seizure of power, the Soviet workers state began to undercut the old bourgeois prejudices and social institutions responsible for the oppression of women and homosexuals. The Bolsheviks abolished all legal impediments to women’s equality and all laws against homosexual

acts and other consensual sexual activity. Their position was explained in a 1923 pamphlet by Dr. Grigorii Batkis, Director of the Moscow Institute for Sexual Hygiene, titled “The Sexual Revolution in Russia” (see also “The Russian Revolution and the Emancipation of Women,” *Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 59, Spring 2006):

“[The new Soviet legislation] declares the absolute non-interference of the state and society into sexual matters, so long as nobody is injured, and no one’s interests are encroached upon.... Concerning homosexuality, sodomy, and various other forms of sexual gratification, which are set down in European legislation as offenses against public morality—Soviet legislation treats these exactly the same as so-called ‘natural’ intercourse. All forms of sexual intercourse are private matters.”

# Kimani Gray...

(continued from page 12)

a field day, portraying the outpouring of visceral anger as “rioting.” On March 13, with police helicopters swarming overhead, at least 46 protesters were arrested, mostly for disorderly conduct, as they attempted to march to the 67th Precinct. Kimani’s sister, Mahnefah, was nabbed by cops while crossing the street and only released after protesters chanted: “That’s the sister!” She was eventually let off with a summons. We demand: **Drop all charges against the protesters!**

Kimani Gray’s fate is the lethal result of the NYPD “stop and frisk” campaign, which last year alone victimized **over half a million people**, the overwhelming majority of them black or Latino. Indicating just how sweeping this policy is, one speaker at a Kimani Gray protest pointed out that there is now a cell phone app that sends details of a victim’s ordeal directly to the New York Civil Liberties Union! Sandra Mitchelin, a protest organizer whose 14-year-old daughter went to school with Kimani, said, “The whole community is fed up.... These were 13, 14, 15-year olds at a party. It never deserved to go down how it went down.” Spartacist League

comrades at one protest noted that older residents had come out in part to protect youth from the cops’ menacing presence.

As is true across the country, the cops in NYC act as an army of occupation in the ghettos and barrios as they enforce capitalist “law and order” against the entire working class. No amount of “overhaul” or “sensitivity training” will ever change that. What should be happening now is massive labor-centered protest on the streets to unite the social power of the working class with the anger of the ghetto and barrio masses. New York City is a union town with a multiracial working class—black, white, Latino, Asian; native-born and immigrant. Many of these union members know that Kimani Gray could have been their son.

Black bourgeois politicians have had to move fast to try to quell the anger of the people they claim to represent. Democratic city councilman Jumaane Williams, whose district includes East Flatbush, pleaded with Mayor Bloomberg and Police Commissioner Kelly to come there to repair “police and community relations.” While Williams welcomes the racist top cops to the neighborhood, he tells anti-racist protesters to get lost, tweeting, “Furious at adults from OUTSIDE the community who incite our angry young

people!!!” So to keep a lid on things, Williams regurgitates the kind of “outside agitator” charge that sheriffs and Klansmen 50 years ago threw out at civil rights activists for “stirring up” black people in the Jim Crow South. And people in East Flatbush aren’t buying it. “Ask the youth in the community what they want!” said one man at a Williams press conference. “Investigate the investigators!” called out a union steamfitter.

City Councilman Charles Barron, the Democratic Party’s in-house “militant,” intoned at a March 12 protest that “we are fighting capitalism,” and that the real crimes are poverty, unemployment and racist institutions. But this was just his usual attempt to get ahead of the anger in the community. The next day, Barron said that instead of just buying the cops’ story, there needs to be more investigation “to see if the shooting was justified” (*Amsterdam News*, 13 March). So Barron tells people to dig around looking for “justification” for cops blowing away a 16-year-old kid. He and Jumaane Williams play the same game: derailing anger at the murderous injustice of the racist capitalist system into “responsible” channels, or, as Williams put it, “to channel the anger properly” (*New York Times*, 14 March). While the reformist Workers World Party lauds Barron, the one-time member of the Black Panther Party, as a “revolutionary,” as a Democrat Barron is no less a representative of the capitalist ruling class than his nemesis, billionaire mayor Bloomberg.

Police Commissioner Kelly has said that there was “nothing to indicate that this shooting was outside the guidelines.” Indeed, by the standards of bourgeois legality, the cops who killed Kimani Gray—and Sean Bell in 2006 and Ramarley Graham last year—were doing the job they are paid to do: to protect the interests of the tiny class of fabulously wealthy capitalist exploiters that lords it over working people and the poor. The hard truth is that the only way to eliminate police brutality is to do away with the capitalist system.

Whether run by Democratic or Republican administrations, the same system that has thrown millions of workers out of their jobs and homes over the last five years offers nothing but contempt—and certainly no future—for the masses of black and Latino youth. Brooklyn Democratic state assemblyman Dov Hikind

For the Bolsheviks, women’s emancipation was an integral part of the emancipation of the working class itself, not something subordinate to it. The Bolsheviks, informed by their Marxist program for women’s liberation, sought to build socialized alternatives to the family, within the limits of their capacity in backward Russia. The country had been bled white by World War I and the civil war that broke out soon after the October Revolution and was under the immense pressure of hostile imperialist encirclement. They struggled, amid the harsh economic situation, to provide the material and economic means to abolish the family unit and release women from the isolation of childcare and domestic work. These glimmers of a new society and an end to the oppression of women and gays later faded under the political counterrevolution led by Stalin in 1923-24 in the context of the isolation of the young workers state. In 1934 a law was passed punishing homosexuality with imprisonment, and in 1936 abortion was outlawed.

Sexuality is not in itself a political question. It is the bourgeoisie that politicizes this issue by victimizing those who do not fit the norms established by the family, church and state. We seek to carry forward the program of Lenin and Trotsky’s Bolsheviks and to mobilize the proletariat in defense of the rights of all the oppressed as part of the fight to overturn capitalism through socialist revolution. To create genuinely free and equal relations among people in all spheres, including sex, requires nothing less than the destruction of capitalist class rule and the creation of a communist world. ■

drove this home with a vengeance last month when, to celebrate the Jewish holiday of Purim, he donned an Afro wig, brown make-up and a jersey and sunglasses to dress up as a black basketball player—with a photo posted on Facebook. Hikind smugly dismissed the outrage his racist minstrel routine touched off as “political correctness.”

As we wrote after the execution of Oscar Grant, a young black worker, by a transit cop in Oakland in 2009:

“To really change the systematic demonization and degradation of black youth trapped in ever more hellish conditions requires shattering the entire system of racist American capitalism, in which the subjugation and segregation of the majority of the black population at the bottom of this society is rooted. Only then will it be possible to eliminate the material roots of black oppression through the integration of black people into an egalitarian socialist society based on a collectivized economy, with jobs and quality housing, health care and education for all.”

—“Racist Police Terror U.S.A.,” WV No. 935, 24 April 2009

Above all, what needs to be done is to build a workers party that understands that it took a Civil War—the Second American Revolution—to smash chattel slavery and that it will take a third, socialist American revolution to finally achieve black liberation. ■

# Stewart...

(continued from page 12)

surgery and the urgent necessity of care and recovery.

It amounts to cruel and unusual punishment, in violation of human rights.

There is immediate remedy available for Lynne Stewart. Under the 1984 Sentencing Act, after a prisoner request, the Bureau of Prisons can file a motion with the Court to reduce sentences “for extraordinary and compelling reasons.” Life threatening illness is foremost among these and Lynne Stewart meets every rational and humane criterion for compassionate release.

To misconstrue the gravamen of this compassionate release by conditioning such upon being at death’s door—released, if at all, solely to die—is a cruel mockery converting a prison sentence, wholly undeserved, into a death sentence.

*The New York Times*, in an editorial (2/12), has excoriated the Bureau of Pris-

ons for their restrictive crippling of this program. In a 20-year period, the Bureau released a scant 492 persons—an average of 24 a year out of a population that exceeds 220,000.

We cry out against the bureaucratic murder of Lynne Stewart.

We demand Lynne Stewart’s immediate release to receive urgent medical care in a supportive environment indispensable to the prospect of her survival and call upon the Bureau of Prisons to act immediately.

If Lynne’s original sentence of 28 months had not been unreasonably, punitively increased to ten years, she would be home now—where her medical care would be by her choice and where those who love her best would care for her. Her isolation from this loving care would end.

Prevent this cruelty to Lynne Stewart whose lifelong commitment to justice is now a struggle for her life.

Free Lynne Stewart Now!  
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U.S. Terror Machine...

(continued from page 1)

authorization. The Times editorialists worry mainly that the greatly enhanced powers of the executive will someday be wielded by one less enlightened than the former constitutional law professor Obama—namely, a Republican less to their liking.

Whatever their policy differences at various times, the Democratic and Republican parties are united in furthering the interests of U.S. imperialism against the exploited and oppressed around the world. During the recent “sequestration” circus, there was bipartisan consensus that the U.S. military could stand some trimming, particularly now that the Iraq occupation is officially over and the deployment of troops to Afghanistan is coming to a close. Of course, any cuts to the Pentagon budget that Washington comes up with would still leave the U.S. as the overwhelmingly predominant military force on the planet. There is also bipartisan consensus on the strategic military “pivot” toward Asia announced last year by Obama, the primary target of which is the Chinese deformed workers state. The retailing of endless scare stories about Chinese “cyberattacks” is above all a means for the administration to justify its increased belligerence toward China.

Blood-Soaked American “Democracy”

The New York Times has apparently decided that it, too, lacked some transparency in regard to Army Private Bradley Manning. After providing WikiLeaks with a trove of classified material documenting U.S. imperialist crimes and duplicity, Manning was thrown into a military brig three years ago, suffering enormous abuse, and now faces a potential life sentence. Last month, WV wrote a letter to Margaret Sullivan, the Times’ Public Editor, noting the omission of any mention of Bradley Manning in two February 9 articles condemning cover-ups in the drone program and charging that this was “simply cowardice on the part of the Times” (see WV No. 1018, 22 February). With his court martial approaching, Manning confessed on February 28 to having released the materials to WikiLeaks after unsuccessfully trying to interest the New York Times and the Washington Post.

Judging by Sullivan’s subsequent article “The Danger of Suppressing the Leaks” (9 March), we were not alone in calling

attention to Manning’s disappearance by this major bourgeois mouthpiece. Sullivan’s column notes that the military has charged Manning with “aiding the enemy” for breaking through the wall of official secrecy. The next day, the Times ran an op-ed piece by Bill Keller, its former executive editor, which suggested that the Times might well have suppressed many of the files and would certainly feel no obligation to come to his defense in any case.

In “Hail Bradley Manning! Free Him Now!” (WV No. 1019, 8 March), we wrote: “In lifting a bit of the veil of secrecy and lies with which the capitalist rulers cover their depredations, Bradley Manning performed a great service to workers and oppressed around the world. All who oppose the imperialist barbarity and machinations revealed in the material he provided must join in demanding his immediate freedom.” Manning’s admission to being the source of the leaks has garnered him wider support, forcing even the Times to take note. With his trial slated to begin on June 3 at Fort Meade, Maryland, his supporters should turn out to demand his immediate freedom.

One writer in the bourgeois media who has given Manning extensive coverage is Glenn Greenwald. In a March 4 speech at Brooklyn College, the London Guardian columnist observed that the torture of Manning by the U.S. military was intended as a message to chill political dissent. In condemning the open-ended “war on terror,” Greenwald noted, among other things, how what started as a crack-down on immigrants from the Muslim

Chicago Black Panther Party residence after 1969 FBI/police raid that killed Fred Hampton, Mark Clark.



world after September 11 became a far broader net of repression, even extending into the Occupy protests.

The civil libertarian Greenwald painted a picture of democracy dying after September 11. But attacks on the working class, minorities and perceived political opponents of the ruling class are built into the very fabric of this “democracy,” which is but a veil over the class dictatorship of the capitalist exploiters. As Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin taught:

“There is not a single state, however democratic, which has no loopholes or reservations in its constitution guaranteeing the bourgeoisie the possibility of

dispatching troops against the workers, of proclaiming martial law, and so forth, in case of a ‘violation of public order,’ and actually in case the exploited class ‘violates’ its position of slavery and tries to behave in a non-slavish manner.”

—The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky (1918)

U.S. history is replete with the intentional slaughter of citizens, from gunning down workers in strike battles to cops shooting black youth in the streets. As a Spartacist comrade said in the discussion period following Greenwald’s talk: “I have a memory of what American capitalism is all about: Black Panthers killed in their beds while they’re asleep, 1969, Chicago; internment of Japanese Americans. These are not excesses. The deception and the repression are inherent within the capitalist system. It has to be abolished through fighting for workers revolution.”

In the last five years, millions of workers in the U.S., and many more around the world, have lost their livelihoods and even their homes due to the grinding capitalist economic crisis. The enormous tensions between the tiny class of exploiters and the mass of people at the base of society are the seeds of future sharp class battles. When the workers are propelled into struggle against their conditions, they will be confronted with the exercise of naked state repression. This underscores the crucial need for the proletariat to oppose all imperialist wars and occupations and all domestic measures strengthening the capitalist state apparatus. The principal task for Marxists is to forge a revolutionary workers party—a tribune of the people—to lead the proletariat in sweeping away capitalist class rule and replacing it with a workers government. ■



February 2002: Oakland united-front protest initiated by Labor Black League and Partisan Defense Committee against Patriot Act and Maritime Security Act.

Young Spartacus

Avakian...

(continued from page 7)

indisputably his own.” Under capitalism, the family remains the central source of the oppression of women and is crucial in ensuring that the bourgeoisie’s property is transmitted from one generation to the next through “legitimate” heirs.

For the working class, the nuclear family means breeding and raising the next generation of wage slaves for the ruling class, the drudgery of housework, the caring for the sick and aged, as well as the instilling of bourgeois morals and ideology needed to reinforce obedience to authority. That is why any deviation, like gay rights and the right to abortion, is seen as a threat to the family.

The oppressive institution of the family cannot simply be abolished. It is necessary to replace the family as a legal and economic unit, as part of the transition to a classless, communist society. Through the creation of alternative institutions that would collectively perform the work now performed by women in the home, we aspire to emancipate women from the endless drudgery (as full-time babysitter,

cook, washerwoman, housecleaner, etc.) and from the social, cultural and political isolation imposed upon them by the family structure. In order to achieve this, the working class, with women as a crucial component within it, must smash the bourgeois state and lay the basis for a planned, collectivized economy. For women’s liberation through socialist revolution!

Both men and women workers are oppressed by the daily violence of capitalist exploitation—poverty, hunger, untreated illness, homelessness and alienating labor. But the sanctimonious RCP would have you believe that the main problem in society today is “objectified” women vs. their working-class brothers who allegedly “corrupt their humanity” by enjoying images that Chairman Bob and Sunsara Taylor disapprove of.

During its (now defunct) World Can’t Wait campaign, the RCP’s dividing line was the purportedly “fascist” Bush Regime vs. the Whole World that just couldn’t wait to drive him out and put the Democrats in office. Now they’ve got the world they fought for: capitalist rule by the other party of the class enemy. And what does the RCP have to show for its efforts? Two million people rotting

away in prison, 1.5 million immigrants deported and thousands dead in Obama’s drone strikes.

The common thread is that the opportunistic RCP, absent any working-class compass to guide it, seeks out alien class forces: here the capitalist party of the class enemy, there the anti-sex wing of the petty-bourgeois feminists, every-

where the amorphous mass they call “the people.” The RCP will embrace anything and everything except a proletarian class axis. While the RCP persists in its reformist and puritanical campaigns, the Spartacist League and its youth auxiliary, the Spartacus Youth Clubs, carry forward the programmatic struggle for women’s liberation through socialist revolution. ■

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# WORKERS VANGUARD

## East Flatbush: Anger Erupts, Cops Lay Siege Kimani Gray Killed in Cold Blood by NYPD

MARCH 17—Fresh from celebrating a friend's "sweet 16" party, black teenager Kimani Gray was gunned down by the NYPD near his home in East Flatbush, Brooklyn. As the 16-year-old hung out with friends on the evening of March 9, undercover cops who saw him "adjusting his waistband in a suspicious manner" sprang out of an unmarked car and surrounded him. Kimani screamed, "Stop, I'm not running!" seconds before seven bullets tore through his body, three from the back. As the youth pleaded with the unidentified cops, "Please don't let me die," one of them snarled, "Stay down or we'll shoot you again." He was pronounced dead at the hospital.

As news of the coldblooded execution spread, the neighborhood erupted in anger. The police quickly put out a report that Kimani had pointed a .38-caliber revolver, which cops claim to have recovered at the scene. Tishana King, who witnessed the killing from her apartment window, said that Kimani had nothing in his hands. She was just one of many neighborhood residents, including Kimani's family, who countered the police claim that the youth was armed. His mother, Carol Gray, asked tearfully at a news conference, "Why was Kimani saying, 'You got me. I'm down. Don't shoot no more?' Why was Kimani

saying that, if Kimani had a weapon to point at the officer?"

The cops who gunned down Kimani—one Latino and one of Egyptian origin—were given hospital treatment for "trauma" and ringing in the ears from the barrage of bullets they fired and, as usual, were given time off ("administra-

tive duty"). Meanwhile the gutter press, as mouthpieces for the killers-in-blue, has put *Kimani on trial*. After a media barrage seeking to justify his killing through allegations that he was in the Bloods gang and had a prior record, his high school principal responded by issuing a letter to parents, staff and students praising



Cops arrest protester following vigil for Kimani Gray in East Flatbush, March 13.



Kimani's academic progress and calling him an "energetic, kind, playful, independent young man."

A *New York Post* (14 March) editorial grotesquely blared: "Blame Kimani Gray: The Cops Were Doing Their Job." This is the raw expression of American capitalism's impulse to genocide of black people, who have been kept on the bottom since they were brought to this country in chains. Today, inner-city black youth are overwhelmingly deemed an expendable population to be warehoused in prisons or shot down in the street. Each evening since the killing, residents of the heavily black working-class neighborhood, where many families come from the Caribbean, have joined with young activists to show their outrage, chanting "NYPD, KKK, how many kids did you kill today?" Area residents remember that just last June, 23-year-old Shantel Davis was shot dead by a cop a few blocks from where Kimani Gray was gunned down.

Protesters have been met with a massive deployment of cops in full riot gear, subjected to pepper-spray and baton attacks. With the neighborhood locked down, businesses are complaining that they have no customers. After some shops and cars were vandalized, the bourgeois press had

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## Appeal by Husband of Imprisoned Leftist Lawyer Lynne Stewart Critically Ill—Free Her Now!

The Partisan Defense Committee joins with the family of Lynne Stewart, whose cancer has metastasized, in calling for her immediate release from prison. To date, prison authorities have refused all requests for her to receive medical care outside the walls of America's dungeons. In response to a January letter from the PDC, the warden of the Federal Medical Center in Carswell, Texas, where the 73-year-old Stewart is incarcerated, admitted that she is dying. But in the same breath he coldly stated that "a terminal illness is a life expectancy of one year or less," concluding that by the state's sadistic logic she does not qualify for compassionate release.

The PDC—a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense organization which champions cases and causes in the interest of the whole of the working people—has defended Stewart since she was first indicted over a decade ago. The government went after her for vigorously defending her client, an Islamist cleric, concocting the charge of conspiracy to provide material support to terrorism. After Stewart's original sentence was quadrupled in 2010, we wrote: "This is a loud affirmation by the Obama administration that there will be no letup in the massive



lynnestewart.org

attacks on democratic rights under the 'war on terror'" ("Vindictive Transfer to Texas Prison: Free Lynne Stewart Now!" WV No. 975, 4 March 2011).

We print below a petition by Stewart's husband, Ralph Poynter, and family, available at [lynnestewart.org](http://lynnestewart.org). The PDC has signed the petition as well as contributed to her legal defense, and we encourage our readers to do the same. Send donations to: Lynne Stewart Organization, 1070 Dean Street, Brooklyn, New York 11216. Those wishing to cor-

respond can send letters to: Lynne Stewart, #53504-054, Federal Medical Center, Carswell, P.O. Box 27137, Fort Worth, TX 76127.

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Lynne Stewart has devoted her life to the oppressed—a constant advocate for the countless many deprived in the United States of their freedom and their rights.

Unjustly charged and convicted for the "crime" of providing her client with a fearless defense, the prosecution of Lynne Stewart is an assault upon the basic freedoms of us all.

After years of post-conviction freedom, her bail was revoked arbitrarily and her imprisonment ordered, precluding surgery she had scheduled in a major New York hospital.

The sinister meaning of the relentless persecution of Lynne Stewart is unmistakably clear. Given her age and precarious health, the ten-year sentence she is serving is a virtual death sentence.

Since her imprisonment in the Federal Prison in Carswell, Texas her urgent need for surgery was delayed 18 months—so long, that the operating physician pronounced the condition as "the worst he had seen."

Now, breast cancer, which had been in remission prior to her imprisonment, has reached Stage Four. It has appeared in her lymph nodes, on her shoulder, in her bones and her lungs.

Her daughter, a physician, has sounded the alarm: "Under the best of circumstances, Lynne would be in a battle of the most serious consequences with dangerous odds. With cancer and cancer treatment, the complications can be as debilitating and as dangerous as the cancer itself."

In her current setting, where trips to physicians involve attempting to walk with ten pounds of shackles on her wrists and ankles, with connecting chains, Lynne Stewart has lacked ready access to physicians and specialists under conditions compatible with medical success.

It can take weeks to see a medical provider in prison conditions. It can take weeks to report physical changes and learn the results of treatment; and when held in the hospital, Lynne has been shackled wrist and ankle to the bed.

This medieval "shackling" has little to do with any appropriate prison control. She is obviously not an escape risk.

We demand abolition of this practice for all prisoners, let alone those facing

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