

Guantánamo Hunger Strike: Free the Detainees Now!

APRIL 15—A mass hunger strike at the U.S. military's Guantánamo detention center in Cuba is now in its third month. Precipitated by a raid in February during which prisoners' Korans were desecrated, the hunger strike includes a number of men who are near death as they protest being consigned to endless incarceration in the prison's notorious torture chambers. Lawyers for the detainees report that some 130 prisoners are participating in the hunger strike, with the military force-feeding

13 of them. As one striker told attorney David Remes, detainees "feel like they're living in graves" (*Al Jazeera*, 19 March). There has been at least one attempted suicide as well as reports of prisoners coughing up blood and others hospitalized for dehydration. On April 13, shortly after a Red Cross delegation investigating the strike had left the camp, guards fired "non-lethal" rounds at prisoners who resisted being forcibly moved to single-cell lockups. In another display of cruelty, a federal judge today

dismissed an emergency motion from a hunger striker that sought an end to the mistreatment, sneering that the prisoner had "self-manufactured" his condition.

The hunger strike is a cry of despair over the legal limbo that detainees have suffered under since U.S. imperialism launched its "war on terror" following the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. As the U.S./NATO began its murderous occupation of Afghanistan, hundreds of detainees were incarcerated indefinitely without

a shred of legal rights. Of the 166 men still imprisoned at Guantánamo, 86 were cleared for release years ago. Most of the remaining 80 have not been charged with any crime, and only 30 detainees are subjects of active "investigations."

A March 14 letter to Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel by detainees' attorneys described the prisoners as "feeling hopeless in the face of 11 years of detention without prospect of release or trial and the continuing inability of the

continued on page 3

More Austerity for Working People

Imperialist Bankers Strangle Cyprus



AP

Left: Cypriots line up on March 28 to withdraw money from bank after savings were threatened by "bailout" scheme imposed by European Union. Right: Bank workers in Nicosia march on parliament to protest threat to pensions, April 4.



Reuters

The following article was written by the Trotskyist Group of Greece, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

Unable to contain the debt crisis that has roiled the European Union (EU) since 2010, the imperialist overlords of the EU and their International Monetary Fund (IMF) cronies have struck again. Their latest "rescue package" for the bloodsucking banks, centered as always on savage attacks against work-

For a Socialist United States of Europe!

ing people, is aimed at the tiny Republic of Cyprus—the southern, Greek Cypriot state on the partitioned island. The Troika of the IMF, European Central Bank and EU responded to the Republic of Cyprus' request for funds to prop up its failing banks by demanding nothing less than the destruction of its economy as an offshore banking and tax haven. As reported in the

Cyprus Mail (23 March): "German Chancellor Angela Merkel told lawmakers that while she wanted to keep Cyprus in the eurozone, it must first recognise it had no future as an offshore financial centre for wealthy Russians and Britons."

What sent shockwaves through the populations of EU member states was not the demand that the Greek Cypriot

government raise funds through an austerity program of the kind already imposed on Greece, Ireland and Portugal—slashing wages, benefits, jobs, health care and education. It was the initial demand that the Republic of Cyprus tax the deposits of anyone with money in its banks. This provoked a rebellion by the parliament,

which aptly referred to it as "bank robbery." More importantly, it raised the spectre that people would rush to pull their money from teetering banks in the euro zone (countries using the euro currency), causing a banking collapse in the much larger economies of countries like Spain. A run on the Greek Cypriot banks

continued on page 10



On Caste and Women's Oppression in India

7 March 2013

To the editor:

We agree with the political substance of your February 8, 2013 article [WV No. 1017] on the Delhi rape protests. We are writing to comment on the wording of a few passages.

You refer to mob attacks by caste Hindus on “entire dalit villages.” The village is a basic social unit in rural India. Caste arises from an enforced, hereditary division of labor *within* the village. A village is thus necessarily made up of several castes, each of which traditionally has its own segregated place inside it to live. The place allotted to dalits (as untouchables are now known among journalists

and activists) is typically farthest from the village center, at or just beyond the boundary of the village proper. To call these settlements “dalit villages” is to suggest that dalits have an independent society. Whereas in fact, as Harsh Mander points out in his preface to *Untouchability in Rural India* by Ghanshyam Shah et al. (2006), “[u]nlike the tribal people in India, who have lived until recently in relative isolation from the dominant culture, society and economy, Dalits have always been an integral part of these, but placed at the bottom.” Thus, for instance, the areas attacked by Vanniyar-caste mobs in an incident in Tamil Nadu last November which you go on to cite were dalit *colonies*

attached to Vanniyar-dominated villages.

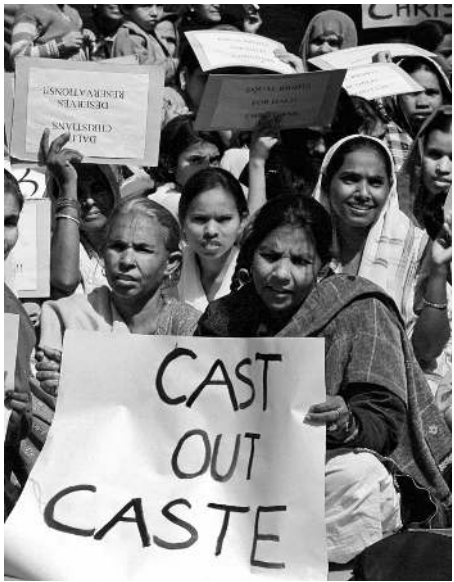
We question your skeptical use of quotation marks around the word *upper* in the phrase “‘upper’ caste.” Hierarchy is inherent to the caste system. Insofar as there are castes (which is to say, not in nature but in social reality), there are indeed higher ones and lower ones. Obviously, communists are not for the equality of castes (a contradiction in terms, like “separate but equal”), but for a casteless society.

You write that “Congress co-opted dalit leader B.R. Ambedkar to head up the drafting of the constitution, which banned ‘untouchability’ but left the caste system intact.” We are concerned, first of all, that this might give the impression that untouchability has been effectively outlawed in India. While the Indian government regularly cites the provision of its constitution to which you allude and related legislation to defend itself against international criticism, this “de jure prohibition,” as the bourgeois humanitarian group Human Rights Watch has rightly observed, “does not reflect the daily reality of the continued practice of ‘untouchability’ and persecution of Dalits in India. Dalits are systematically discriminated against and abused by public authorities and private actors, who act without any fear of punishment as they rarely face sanctions for their violations of Dalits’ fundamental rights.” (*Hidden Apartheid: Caste Discrimination Against India’s “Untouchables,”* 2007) In the second place, your implied criticism of the Indian constitution for having “left the caste system intact” could be taken to suggest that caste can be removed by an act of legislation. In reality, as you go on to say at the end of the article, it is “the enormous task of eliminating scarcity” which only a proletarian revolution will inaugurate that can “alone lay the *material* basis for eradicating the oppression of women and caste.” A revolutionary workers government will of necessity wage an active fight against caste oppression and caste-based discrimination in all its forms. But like the family—that fundamental locus of women’s oppression with which in South Asia it is inseparably bound up—caste cannot simply be abolished. Rather, its real social and economic function must be replaced within an egalitarian socialist order founded on abundance.

Fraternally,
Alan and Sarah

WV replies:

We appreciate the point in this letter that *dalit* colonies are not separate villages but physically segregated areas within the village structure. The village is central to caste domination and to women’s oppression, as we noted in the article: “Caste oppression is enforced through the *panchayat* system of village councils that dictate what is acceptable in all aspects of



AFP

Christian and Muslim *dalit* (“untouchable”) women demonstrate in New Delhi, March 2007.

social relations. These councils have the authority to punish anything from cross-caste marriages to violations of dress codes for women. Women’s liberation and the destruction of the caste system are inextricably bound together.”

The Indian constitution *formally* outlawed untouchability. However, as our article made clear, this had little effect on the reality of caste oppression. The caste system was preserved and strengthened, not only under British colonial rule but also after independence. As our article noted, Ambedkar himself said: “The same old tyranny, the same old oppression, the same old discrimination which existed before, exists now, and perhaps in a worse form.”

Elsewhere in the article we warn against liberal illusions that the Indian capitalist state will legislate the hideous oppression of women or of caste out of existence. We wrote that dowry deaths are widespread, but “the practice of dowry has been prohibited by law since 1961—so much for the liberal notion that rape and violence against women can be ended by legislation.” As for equality for women, we noted:

“The explosive nature of any attempt to fight against the oppression of women in India gives the lie to the liberal pipe dream of effecting a gradual transition to equality for women through reliance on the state and its laws. Indeed, women’s equality is already enshrined in the Indian constitution, for all the good that does. The burning issues facing women pose questions that only proletarian revolution can answer.”

The political premise of our article is that the Indian bourgeoisie is incapable of bringing about an end to the caste system or to the oppression of women, which are deeply rooted in capitalist rule in that country. India represents a striking confirmation of the Trotskyist program of permanent revolution, which means that only a workers and peasants government can lead India’s masses out of the depths of poverty and grinding exploitation. Working-class power on an international scale, throughout the subcontinent and extended to the imperialist centers, will lay the basis for genuine equality for all. ■



TROTSKY

Imperialism: Monopoly Capitalism

Writing during World War I, Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin defined imperialism as the most advanced stage of capitalist development, with the industrial powers oppressing weaker states in their drive to reap ever more profit. The ongoing crisis in the European Union and the rest of the capitalist world demonstrates yet again that the only way out for the working class and the oppressed is through socialist revolutions that expropriate the bourgeoisie’s

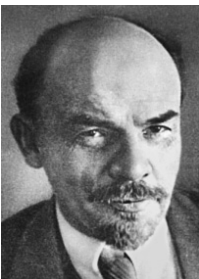
capital and establish an internationally planned socialist economy.

Imperialism emerged as the development and direct continuation of the fundamental characteristics of capitalism in general. But capitalism only became capitalist imperialism at a definite and very high stage of its development, when certain of its fundamental characteristics began to change into their opposites, when the features of the epoch of transition from capitalism to a higher social and economic system had taken shape and revealed themselves in all spheres. Economically, the main thing in this process is the displacement of capitalist free competition by capitalist monopoly. Free competition is the basic feature of capitalism, and of commodity production generally; monopoly is the exact opposite of free competition, but we have seen the latter being transformed into monopoly before our eyes, creating large-scale industry and forcing out small industry, replacing large-scale by still larger-scale industry, and carrying concentration of production and capital to the point where out of it has grown and is growing monopoly: cartels, syndicates and trusts, and merging with them, the capital of a dozen or so banks, which manipulate thousands of millions. At the same time the monopolies, which have grown out of free competition, do not eliminate the latter, but exist above it and alongside it, and thereby give rise to a number of very acute, intense antagonisms, frictions and conflicts....

Without forgetting the conditional and relative value of all definitions in general, which can never embrace all the concatenations of a phenomenon in its full development, we must give a definition of imperialism that will include the following five of its basic features:

(1) the concentration of production and capital has developed to such a high stage that it has created monopolies which play a decisive role in economic life; (2) the merging of bank capital with industrial capital, and the creation, on the basis of this “finance capital,” of a financial oligarchy; (3) the export of capital as distinguished from the export of commodities acquires exceptional importance; (4) the formation of international monopolist capitalist associations which share the world among themselves, and (5) the territorial division of the whole world among the biggest capitalist powers is completed. Imperialism is capitalism at that stage of development at which the dominance of monopolies and finance capital is established; in which the export of capital has acquired pronounced importance; in which the division of the world among the international trusts has begun, in which the division of all territories of the globe among the biggest capitalist powers has been completed.

—V.I. Lenin, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1916)



LENIN

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Waco Massacre: We Will Not Forget

April 19 marks the 20th anniversary of the government's massacre of over 80 men, women and children of the integrated Branch Davidian religious sect outside Waco, Texas. For more than seven weeks, an array of police forces had laid siege to the Branch Davidian compound following a raid by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms aimed at arresting the group's leader, David Koresh, on false charges of illegal weapons possession. The government was out for blood—and lots of it—after four Feds were killed in the initial assault, which took the life of a two-year-old girl and a number of church members. Finally, the state got its revenge through a massive attack that burned the compound to the ground, with the trapped members of the sect perishing in the inferno.

From the outset of the siege, the Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee—a class-struggle legal and social defense organization associated with the SL—protested the government vendetta against the Branch Davidians. On 8 March 1993, as tanks rolled into Waco, the PDC sent a protest to Democratic president Bill Clinton demanding that “all troops, tanks, police and federal agents be removed from the area.” The letter pointed out, “We think you would do well to take the advice of the newly elected President Lincoln, who when asked what he proposed to do about the polygamous Mormons replied, ‘I propose to let them alone.’”

Attorney General Janet Reno justified the assault by raising the spectre of “child abuse.” This was forcefully answered by Bob Buck, a West Virginia steel worker who had been railroaded to prison for defending his union on the picket line during a bitter 1991-92 strike. In a letter to the PDC, Buck wrote: “They were so damned concerned for the children they unleashed an armed assault on the house they lived in and filled it full of bullet holes;...gassed them, and ultimately burned them to death. Ain't America great. I'm glad Mrs. Reno isn't concerned about me.”

The SL and PDC protested the Waco holocaust outside federal offices in New York, Boston, Chicago and San Francisco. Shamefully, the reformist left turned a blind eye to the atrocity or joined in blaming the victims, just as almost every one of them did when Philadelphia's black Democratic mayor Wilson Goode ordered the bombing of the predominantly black MOVE commune in 1985. Our intention was, and is, to sear the memory of these acts of government mass murder into the consciousness of the working class, whose



Reuters

19 April 1993: Mass murder of Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas, ordered by President Bill Clinton and Attorney General Janet Reno.

Getty



historic interest lies in revolutionary struggle to sweep away the murderous capitalist state.

We print below the bulk of the press release issued by the SL announcing the protest demonstrations, which began in Manhattan the day of the massacre.

* * *

The charred corpses of 87 men, women and children who perished in the firestorm resulting from the FBI's barrage of CS gas, flash-grenades and battering rams are the direct responsibility of the White House. President Clinton gave the green light, Attorney General Janet Reno personally supervised the plan, and the FBI's storm troopers moved in to carry out the government's “final solution” against the small, integrated Branch Davidian religious sect in Waco, Texas. After a murderous raid by federal Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms agents armed to the teeth and a 51-day siege, almost a hundred people have now been subjected to a flaming apocalypse for the sole “crime” of being a non-conformist religious sect which dared to defend itself against government assault.

An SL spokesman, in condemning this outrage, noted that the Branch Davidians received the same death sentence meted out to the black MOVE commune in

Philadelphia, bombed by the Philadelphia police on Mother's Day (May 13) 1985, using C-4 plastic explosives donated by the FBI. Eleven black people were murdered there, including five children, and an entire black neighborhood was laid to waste. “Like the racist cop beating of L.A. black motorist Rodney King,” said Spartacist spokesman Marjorie Stamberg, “the Waco holocaust is the domestic image of America's ‘New World Order.’ This is U.S. imperialism's ‘Desert Slaughter’ in Iraq brought home.”

A banner outside the compound of the racially integrated Branch Davidian religious sect said, “Rodney King—We Understand.” It is no accident that the feds' onslaught in Waco came two days after the slap-on-the-wrist verdict for two racist cops in L.A. With troops poised to occupy the inner cities coast to coast, amid a massive police-state mobilization, the racist rulers breathed a collective sigh of relief that the urban ghettos and barrios did not explode in outrage over another outright racist acquittal. They seized the moment to incinerate the Waco commune.

In the gray light of dawn, the FBI moved in the heavy artillery—M-60 Combat Engineering Vehicles, Bradley fighting vehicles and heat-seeking reconnaissance planes—in a bid to drive out or exterminate the 70 adults and 25 children still

inside the wooden structure. The whole area had already been ringed with razor-sharp concertina wire. Electricity and water were cut off. The intent was to create a firetrap with no escape. Naturally there were no firefighting vehicles present to put out the flames. Now the government wants to blame the victims, but *the Waco assault was deliberate mass murder, decided at the White House.*

On Sunday, Vice President Al Gore wept tears for those who died 50 years ago in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. But the methodical burning down of the Waco commune, carried “live” on television, recalled nothing so much as the Nazis' razing of the Warsaw ghetto. Clinton/Gore have carried out their own holocaust against another religious minority who evidently have “no right to exist” in this racist capitalist society. The Clinton administration has carried out its own Operation Prairie Slaughter, igniting a massive firestorm against its perceived domestic “enemies,” a small group who did no harm to anyone.

The Spartacist League spokesman noted, “From Republican Bush to Democrat Clinton, the racist rulers show what they have in store for anyone who dares to defy the state. The murder of these innocent people, burned at the stake by this bloodthirsty government, cries out for vengeance. It will take a socialist revolution to mete out real justice to the police torturers of Rodney King, to the FBI arsonists in Waco, to the U.S. military bombers of Baghdad.” ■



WV Photo

Spartacist League banner at 25 April 1993 Washington gay rights demonstration.

Guantánamo...

(continued from page 1)

political branches to carry through on their commitment to close the prison in a just manner” (ccrjustice.org). It is not only that Barack Obama has reneged on his 2008 campaign pledge to close Guantánamo. The letter reports “a background of increasingly regressive practices at the prison taking place in recent months,” described by prisoners as a return to conditions in the Bush era that were widely recognized as constituting torture.

Hunger striker Shaker Aamer is one of those who have been held since 2002, never charged, never tried or convicted, cleared to go home but still in detention despite protest from the government of Britain, where his family resides. In a statement published in the *New Statesman* (5 April), Aamer describes the plight of Yemeni detainee Abu Bakr, a/k/a “171,” who has been on hunger strike since 2005

and has now become a special target of the prison administrator: “Back in October, 171 was tied in the feeding chair, and just left there for 52 hours. Then, from 4 January, he was isolated for a full month.... He thinks they'll kill him off, to encourage the others to give up their strike.”

In an op-ed piece in the *New York Times* (14 April), another Yemeni hunger striker, Samir Naji al Hasan Moqbel, movingly recounted his ordeal, not least the excruciating pain of the force-feedings. Moqbel observed: “The only reason I am still here is that President Obama refuses to send any detainees back to Yemen.” Indeed, the U.S. president in early 2010 halted the repatriation of detainees to Yemen under the pretext of “current security conditions” in that country. Today, a majority of the remaining Guantánamo detainees are Yemeni nationals. With the detentions provoking protests in Yemen, its president, who has given his unqualified blessing to the U.S. campaign of terror-by-drone in Yemen, felt compelled to intone: “We believe that keeping

someone in prison for over ten years without due process is clear-cut tyranny.”

Whereas the Bush administration rounded up hundreds of men (some under 18 years old) and tossed them into the CIA secret prison and rendition network, the Obama White House has preferred to simply kill its targets, mainly through drone strikes. At the same time, under Obama's plan to shutter Guantánamo, the system of indefinite detention would have continued, simply relocated onto American soil. But with Congress working to ensure that Guantánamo remain a detention center, the military's Southern Command has requested up to \$170 million to upgrade existing facilities and an additional \$49 million for a new prison building to hold “special” detainees.

Meanwhile, the Obama administration cynically paints the force-feeding of prisoners—officially recognized by the United Nations and others as a form of torture—as supposedly protecting their safety and welfare. This was too much even for the Obama-friendly *New York*

Times, which ran a 5 April editorial declaring that “the truly humane response to this crisis is to free prisoners who have been approved for release, end indefinite detention and close the prison at Guantánamo.” For such bourgeois liberals, Guantánamo stains the veneer of “democracy” with which America's capitalist rulers cover their depredations around the world.

As revolutionary proletarian opponents of imperialism, we call for closing Guantánamo as well as for the release of all the remaining detainees, despite the enormous gulf between our Marxist worldview and that of the reactionary Islamist forces that the detainees are alleged to support. Our program is not that of liberal reformers who seek to perfect the mechanisms of imperialist rule by cleaning up its “excesses.” Our fight is to mobilize the working class in opposition to imperialist wars and occupations and in defense of all the exploited and oppressed, a struggle that must culminate in proletarian revolution to destroy the imperialists' machinery of state terror once and for all. ■

Neo-Apartheid Police Terrorize Workers, Immigrants, Township Poor

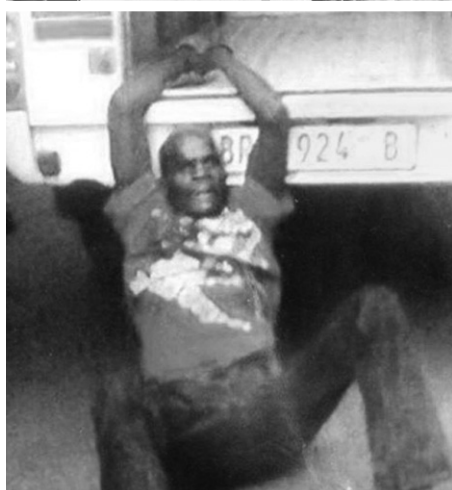
South Africa

JOHANNESBURG—On February 26, in broad daylight, nine police gruesomely tortured Mozambican taxi driver Emidio Macia before the eyes of dozens of people in Daveyton, east of Johannesburg, before he died in custody. A video taken by someone in the crowd shows the cops tying Macia's hands to a police van and dragging him away toward the police station, where he died of head injuries, internal bleeding and lack of oxygen. As the horrific images of the dragging went around the world, there has been an outpouring of anger over this latest demonstration of naked cop terror. The killing of Macia came just over six months after the Marikana massacre of 16 August 2012, when police gunned down 34 striking black mineworkers like wild animals. As one protester put it, on a placard held at a demonstration outside the bail hearing for the cops who killed Macia: "What Have We Done to Die Like Dogs?"

In response to the outcry, the police brass and ministers of the Tripartite Alliance government, which is led by the African National Congress (ANC) and includes the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), have gone into "PR mode," feigning shock and dismay at the actions of the Daveyton cops. Don't be fooled for a second by this cynical stage acting: These are the top cops responsible for commanding the whole machinery of racist state repression, and they have no qualms about spilling the blood of workers and the oppressed to maintain the rule of capital. Take police commissioner Riah Phiyega, who cried crocodile tears for Macia and condemned the cops in a press conference the week after the killing. Directly after the Marikana massacre, Phiyega told a gathering of cops, "Don't be sorry about what happened."

President Jacob Zuma and Police Minister Nathi Mthethwa ludicrously try to portray the Daveyton cops as just a few "bad apples" in an otherwise benevolent police force. Just a few weeks after the Daveyton incident, another cop was arrested in North West Province for an assault just like the one that killed Macia! The victim in this case, a court interpreter, was targeted because he had advised a youth being harassed by two policemen. According to Independent Police Investigative Directorate spokesman Moses Dlamini, one of the cops "grabbed the complainant by the neck and asked him if he knew what police were capable of these days" before dragging him for 100 metres behind a police car.

In the face of erupting social discontent, the bourgeois Alliance tops have increasingly given the police free rein to terrorise striking workers, immigrants and the township poor. Here are some of the other people killed by police and private security guards during strikes and service delivery protests over just the past two years: Petros Msiza, a shop steward from the COSATU-affiliated South African Municipal Workers Union who was picketing during a March 2011 strike by bus and refuse workers in Tshwane/Pretoria; Andries Tatane, a teacher and activist, during a service delivery protest in Meqheleng, Ficksburg, in Free State Province in April 2011; three farmworkers in De Doorns and other towns in the Western Cape during the farmworkers strike between November 2012 and Janu-



Daily Sun

ary 2013; four people during service delivery protests in February in Zamdela township, Sasolburg, in the Free State. The list goes on and on.

Last year, 30 cops from the infamous Cato Manor Organised Crime Unit in KwaZulu-Natal were charged with over 100 crimes, including 19 counts of murder. In Cape Town, 12 cops are also facing murder charges. There have been numerous reports of torture of arrested protesters, including many survivors of the Marikana massacre and strike leaders from other mines whom the cops have tried to intimidate. Over 900 people died in police custody in the space of a year during the reporting period 2008-09, a number that declined only slightly to 720 during the reporting period 2011-12. According to Cape Town journalist Palesa Morudu, "The highest number of killings by the apartheid police reached 763 in 1985, the year PW Botha declared a state of emergency" ("Human Rights Lessons from Mthethwa and Company," *Business Day*, 12 March).



Protesters at March 8 bail hearing for cops who killed Macia.

Reuters

Above: March 6 memorial service for Mozambican taxi driver Emidio Macia in Daveyton township. Shown shackled to police van in video still at left, February 26, Macia died in custody after being dragged to police station.

The Tripartite Alliance government administers the capitalist state in defence of the same capitalist system as under apartheid and British colonial rule—a system that is still based on the superexploitation of mainly black labour and the grinding oppression of the mass of the non-white majority. And they have borrowed wholesale from the repressive machinery of apartheid white minority rule. Don't forget that some 270 Marikana mineworkers who survived the massacre were initially charged by the National Prosecuting Authority for murdering their own comrades on the basis of the apartheid-era "common cause" law! Many of these and other striking mineworkers still face various charges. *Drop all the charges against wildcat strikers!* It is urgently necessary for the entire working class to defend these workers and other victims of police repression, because otherwise the cops will be emboldened to clamp down on all of labour. *An injury to one is an injury to all!*

It is notable that there was a sharp increase in police killings before 2009. In those years, Zuma and his supporters campaigned for him to take over as leader of the ANC and the government, with a central focus on the call to "get tough on crime." In April 2008, then-deputy cop minister Susan Shabangu declared to a group of cops at an "anti-crime imbizo" [gathering] in Pretoria: "You must kill the bastards if they threaten you or the community.... I want no warning shots. You have one shot and it must be a kill shot.... There are to be no negotiations with criminals." She was supported by Zuma, and in the years since, police commissioners and numerous government tops have declared that the cops must "shoot to kill."

The government then began "militarising" the police and creating and expanding special forces units like the Berets, who are regularly unleashed to brutalise and harass street vendors and anyone else trying to eke out a desperate existence. Of course, in the eyes of the capitalist rulers and their government ministers, the worst "crime" imaginable is for the working class to "violate public order" by challenging its position as wage slaves of the capitalists. It's no surprise that in the days before 16 August 2012 Susan Shabangu, now minister of mines in Zuma's government, howled along with other Tripartite Alliance tops for the blood of

the striking workers in Marikana, whom they denounced as "criminals"!

For a Socialist Federation of Southern Africa

The grisly killing of Macia, an immigrant from Mozambique, has reminded many people of the sadistic cops who in 1998 were filmed using three Mozambican immigrants as training bait to incite police dogs against blacks. While in 1998 it was six white Afrikaner cops who revealed in carrying out that racist atrocity, this time it was a group of black cops. As we have repeatedly argued since 1994, the cops in this neo-apartheid system, whether black or white, are hired thugs of the (still mainly white) bourgeoisie who enforce racist terror against the black toilers and oppressed. This understanding is opposed to the false consciousness of black nationalism, which says that all black people—from black police and mining capitalists like Patrice Motsepe to the rock drill operators working in the mines—share a common interest that stands above class divisions.

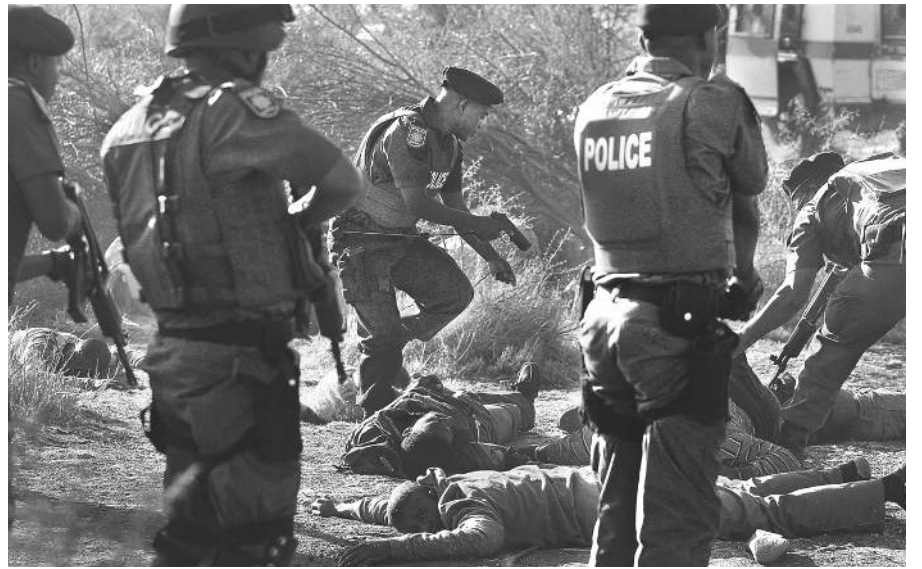
When the racist attack on Mozambican immigrants was uncovered in 2000, we described how this and other racist atrocities at the time exposed the fairy tale of the "rainbow nation" ("Racist Terror in the 'New South Africa,'" *WV* No. 748, 15 December 2000). We emphasised in that article: "It's either going to be multiracial class struggle or interracial, intertribal bloodletting. There can be no non-racial bourgeois democracy in South Africa. It is only through a working-class social revolution that racial domination can be put to an end." If the masses' frustration does not find expression along *class* lines, it will continue to fuel every other kind of division as different sections of the oppressed fight and kill each other over a few meagre crumbs from the capitalists.

This warning was confirmed, in the negative, most starkly by the outbreak in May 2008 of the anti-immigrant pogroms that spread across townships throughout the country and took the lives of 62 people. These attacks were encouraged by state repression against immigrants. For example, almost 205,000 Zimbabweans were deported in 2007. During the May 2008 pogroms that followed, the police mostly looked on approvingly or joined in terrorising immigrants. In 2010-11, the state began a campaign to crack down on immigrants, ending the "special dispensation" that had allowed Zimbabweans to stay in the country without documentation. As a result, there were nearly 43,000 deportations to Zimbabwe between October 2011 and October 2012. Many other immigrants are still being held at the Lindela deportation camp in West Rand, where inmates rioted in March 2012 against hellish conditions. State terror is wind in the sails of the reactionary mobs carrying out attacks in the streets, which have been on the rise.

Class struggle provides the basis on which ethnic, national and other divisions within the working class can be overcome and class unity forged against the bourgeoisie's divide-and-rule tactics. An example of this can be seen in De Doorns in the Western Cape. In 2009, some 3,000 mostly Zimbabwean immigrants were forced to flee De Doorns following anti-immigrant attacks. Three years later, De Doorns was at the heart of the wildcat strikes by farmworkers throughout the Western Cape demanding an increase in the minimum wage to R150 (\$17) per day. The white farmers and the racist Democratic Alliance provincial government tried to foment divisions between



From white-supremacist apartheid to neo-apartheid under ANC, police are deadly enemies of workers and the poor. Left: Cop attack on women demonstrators in Cato Manor near Durban, 1959. Right: Police slaughter of striking Lonmin Platinum miners near Rustenburg, 16 August 2012.



coloured (mixed-race, partly Malay-derived) and Xhosa workers, and between South African and foreign workers. But the workers resisted this, and immigrants from Lesotho and Zimbabwe played a prominent role in the leadership of the strike. Now there are threats by farmers to hire immigrant workers as a way of getting around the increased minimum wage of R105 per day and of fueling anti-immigrant bigotry. It is an urgent task of the workers movement to fight to organise immigrant workers into trade unions, linking this to a fight for *full citizenship rights* and against state repression and discrimination of any kind.

The key is to build a revolutionary internationalist leadership which recognises that the interests of the working class are irreconcilable with the capitalist system. A Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party that will act as tribune of the oppressed, fighting against all manifestations of capitalist oppression and opposing all forms of bourgeois nationalism, must be built. The national borders in sub-Saharan Africa, as in many parts of the Third World, are completely artificial. They were imposed by the imperialist colonisers, who fought among each other to carve out spheres of domination, drawing arbitrary borders that would suit this purpose.

Our perspective is for a *socialist federation of Southern Africa*. Then the current domination of the region by South Africa's racist rulers will be replaced by a system in which the relatively advanced South African economy can be put to use on the basis of rational planning and collectivised ownership of the means of production, to raise the living standards of the masses throughout the region. This must be part of fighting to link up with workers revolutions in the imperialist centres and creating an international planned socialist economy, which is necessary to lift Africa out of poverty.

It is from our revolutionary internationalist framework that we address the recent death of 13 South African army (SANDF) troops who were deployed in the Central African Republic (CAR). They were killed when some 200 South African troops were sent packing by

insurgents of the Seleka military coalition, who went on to depose the regime of Francois Bozizé that the SANDF was trying to help prop up. In response, there has been an outpouring of chauvinism in the bourgeois media and by the government in South Africa about the “fallen heroes” of the SANDF. Amid this, there has been little note taken of the carnage wreaked on the population of the CAR, one of the world’s poorest countries, where it is estimated that more than 200,000 people had been displaced by mid 2012, and up to 30,000 have fled the country since the latest fighting broke out.



January 9: Striking black and coloured farm workers from De Doorns rally in Cape Town for higher wages.

Both Bozizé and the insurgents who deposed him are reactionary tin-pot dictators who have appealed to the American and European imperialists for support. For its part, the South African army was deployed in an attempt to demonstrate the Zuma government's reliability in guaranteeing "stability" so that the South African capitalists and their imperialist senior partners could plunder the diamonds and other mineral wealth in the CAR. (The government suffered a black eye with the death of the 13 soldiers and has apparently withdrawn the others at least temporarily.) South African troops are currently stationed in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Sudan as part of African Union (AU) contingents, which act as adjuncts to the United Nations and other imperialist forces.

In September 1998 the South African government launched a military invasion of Lesotho by South African and Botswana troops. While using the pretext of saving the government from the threat of a developing mutiny, the first target of the South Africans was a group of 16 sleeping Lesotho Defence Force members who were killed guarding the Katse Dam away from Maseru (the capital of Lesotho), where the uprising was taking place. The Katse Dam provides fresh water to South Africa's industrial hub of Gauteng Province. Scores of other Lesotho citizens lost their lives as a result of this invasion.

The use of the military abroad is a reflection of how the bourgeois state is used at home to oppress the working

class and the poor: Don't forget that the SANDF was also sent to Marikana and surrounding areas to reinforce the police against the striking mineworkers. We say: *South African, AU troops out of the CAR, DRC and Sudan! UN, French and other imperialists get out!*

The State and Revolution

The National Prosecuting Authority took the step of charging the Daveyton cops caught on video killing Macia with murder, and the judge denied them bail. This is “damage control,” designed, like the bogus Farlam commission of inquiry

machinery of state repression can change the viciously racist and brutal nature of the neo-apartheid police. V.I. Lenin explained in *The State and Revolution* (1917): “The state is a product and a manifestation of the *irreconcilability* of class antagonisms. The state arises where, when and insofar as class antagonisms objectively *cannot* be reconciled.” The state is an instrument for the oppression of one class by another—under capitalism, for the oppression and exploitation of the working class by the bourgeoisie.

As Lenin wrote, the state power “consists of special bodies of armed men having prisons, etc., at their command.” There is no way to reform the capitalist state machinery to make it serve the interests of the workers and oppressed. It must be smashed through workers revolution and replaced by a state that can serve the interests of the majority, the dictatorship of the proletariat. In Lenin’s words: “Every revolution, by destroying the state apparatus, clearly shows us how the ruling class strives to restore the special bodies of armed men which serve *it*, and how the oppressed class strives to create a new organisation of this kind, capable of serving the exploited instead of the exploiters.”

Since the 1990s, the pass laws, Group Areas Act and countless other apartheid laws upholding white minority rule are no more. But the material, social basis of apartheid, which is rooted in the super-exploitation of black labour, remains unshaken. The Tripartite Alliance government administers a neo-apartheid capitalist system. In almost 20 years, nothing has changed in the grinding poverty and exploitation suffered by the overwhelming majority of blacks and other non-whites, and in many ways their conditions have deteriorated. On the other hand, a handful of black elites have enriched themselves by joining in the exploitation of “their own people” and acting as political front men and labour lieutenants for the white Randlords and their imperialist senior partners, who continue to dominate the economy.

The reformist leaders of COSATU and the SACP spout all kinds of anti-Marxist nonsense about the South African state being a “class-contested terrain,” etc. This is just an attempt to justify the countless wretched betrayals they have carried out in the service of their alliance with the ANC. The Tripartite Alliance is a nationalist

continued on page 9

The image shows the front cover of a Spartacist Pamphlet. At the top left is a small logo of a fish inside a circle. To its right, the text 'A Spartacist Pamphlet' is printed. Further right, the price '\$1' is displayed. The main title, 'Black History and the Class Struggle', is in large, bold, white letters on a black background. Below the title, 'No. 23' is printed in white. The subtitle, 'South Africa: Marikana Massacre', is in large, bold, black letters. To the left of the subtitle is a small black and white photograph of several people, some holding flags. To the right of the subtitle is the main headline, 'The True Face of Neo-Apartheid Capitalism', in large, bold, black letters. Below the headline is a larger black and white photograph showing a large group of people, mostly men, standing in a line. Below this photograph is a small caption in white text: 'Massacre of 34 striking platinum miners by police in Marikana on 16 August 2012 (enraged did not break the workers fighting apart. More than 1,000 militant miners marched in protest in Marikana on September 5.)'. At the bottom of the cover, a black banner contains the text 'Break with the Bourgeois Tripartite Alliance! Forge a Leninist Party!' in white, bold, sans-serif font.

Spartacist South Africa

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

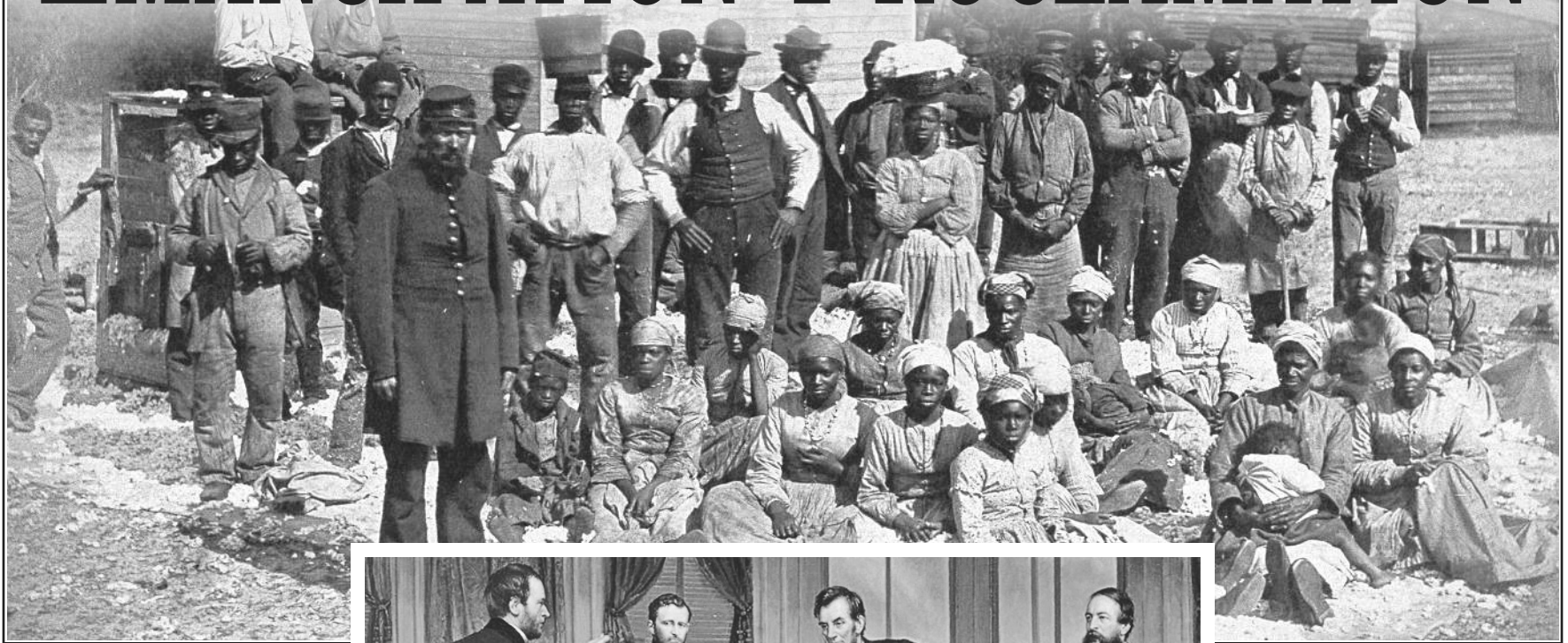
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150 YEARS SINCE THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION



Henry P. Moore

Spartacist Forum

PART TWO

Part One of this article, which concludes here, appeared in WV No. 1021 (5 April).

A hundred days elapsed between the announcement of the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation on September 22, 1862, and when it was to take effect on January 1, 1863. Did the Army support the Emancipation Proclamation? A resounding “yes.” The old vets in particular wanted to strike at the heart of the rebellion. And many in the North greeted it heartily, such as the abolitionists, the Radicals. And Northern public opinion followed the Army’s. Northerners were getting radicalized en masse as well.

The Emancipation Proclamation was an unprecedented assertion of presidential and federal power, altering forever the constitutional balance of powers. Congress had challenged Lincoln’s authority to control war policy and military appointments, but now, with the stroke of a pen, \$3.5 billion worth of property was legally annihilated. In purely economic terms it approaches Henry VIII’s seizure of church properties during the Reforma-



G.P.A. Healy

Top: Slaves of Confederate general Thomas Drayton on Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, being freed by Union forces, late 1861 or early 1862. Above: Painting of President Lincoln meeting with (left to right) Generals Sherman and Grant and Rear Admiral Porter, March 1865.

Finish the Civil War!

tion and the Bolsheviks’ nationalization of the factories and farms after the Russian Revolution. The preliminary emancipation also stated of the freed slaves that the government “will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons, and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom.”

Oh, the howls of protest! Echoing the concerns of the rebels, the London *Times* wrote that this was an incitement

to servile insurrection. Well, the British ruling class was maybe a little paranoid. They had just finished putting down the 1857 Sepoy mutiny, the massive rebellion across the Indian subcontinent sparked by the Sepoys, who were the Indian soldiers in service to the British military. The abolitionist Senator Charles Sumner’s nice riposte to this was that if servile insurrection happens, they’re only getting what they deserve. But that phrase was taken out and replaced with an admonition to the freedmen “to abstain from all violence unless in necessary self defense.”

This was still quite radical. That a slave could never raise his hand against the master was fundamental to slavery. And then the preliminary emancipation stated that blacks “will be received into the armed service of the U.S.” The abolitionists had been fighting for that since the beginning of the war. By extending the right to join in common defense through the use of federal power, it fundamentally altered the civil status of blacks in the North as well as the South, setting a precedent and stimulating a political movement for equal citizenship.

The preliminary decree had a call for continued colonization efforts. But by January 1, 1863, when he signed the Emancipation Proclamation, Lincoln changed his mind. The final proclamation was silent about colonization, and Lincoln would never again mention it in public.

The Emancipation Proclamation was a pledge, a promise. It only freed slaves in areas that were not yet controlled by Union armies, true enough. But in that sense it was like the Declaration of Independence in 1776, which didn’t make any

of the colonies free—it took a victorious war to free the colonies from British rule. The Emancipation Proclamation bound the defense of the Union to the destruction of slavery. Given the rebel determination to defend slavery, the war could not be prosecuted as anything but a war of subjugation. Once the power of the government was enlisted on the side of freedom in one place, it couldn’t be restricted in another. Over three million slaves were affected by the Emancipation Proclamation; 830,000 were exempted, but nothing anywhere was untouched. Slaves in the exempted areas voted with their feet as well.

The Emancipation Proclamation did not sound like much; it was a pretty dry document. The abolitionists were disappointed because the proclamation was only issued on account of military necessity; they wanted some high-sounding phrases about advancing the cause of freedom. It was only because Salmon Chase said he should put something in there that Lincoln actually put in a sentence saying that it was sincerely believed to be an act of justice. Nevertheless, as Karl Marx wrote in *Comments on the North American Events* (October 1862): “The manifesto abolishing slavery, is the most important document in American history since the establishment of the Union, tantamount to the tearing up of the old American constitution.” The only way the war could end was by the outright victory of one side over the other, and the victory of the North meant a revolutionary transformation of American society.

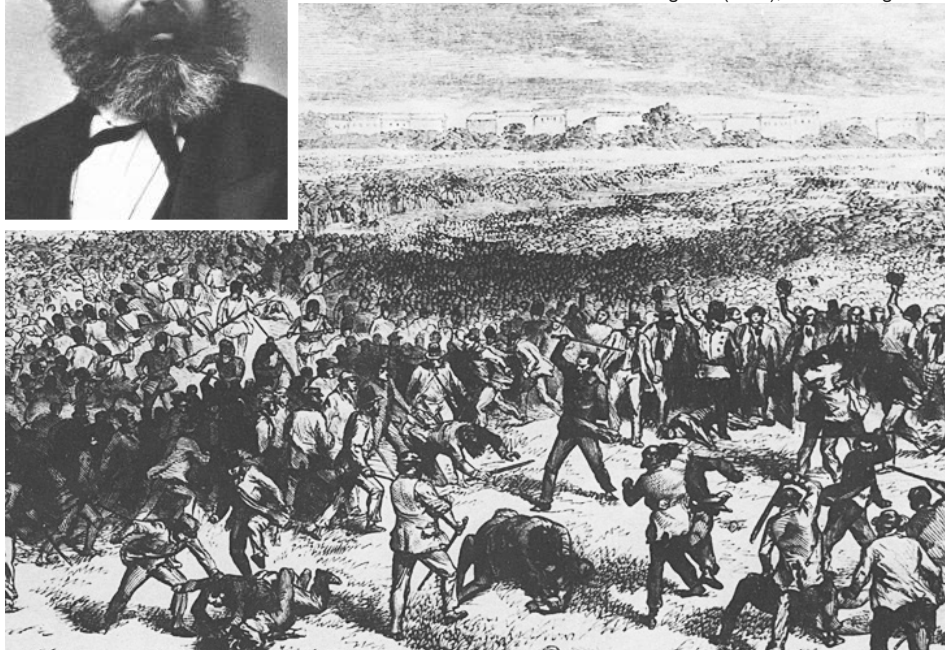
Since the beginning of the war there was a threat that Britain and France would enter on the side of the South. But once emancipation was proclaimed, Britain especially was unable to intervene. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels and others organized support for the Union among workers in Britain, then the most powerful capitalist country in the world. They were quite successful, too, despite the desperate attempts of the ruling class to win the workers to the side of the slavocracy. British textile workers in particular exercised militant and heroic solidarity with their white and black brothers and sisters across the Atlantic. Impoverished to begin with, many endured years of unemployment due in part to the war. But they never wavered. Marx wrote:

“The English working class has won immortal historical honour for itself by thwarting the repeated attempts of the ruling classes to intervene on behalf of the American slaveholders by its enthusiastic mass meetings, even though the prolongation of the American Civil War



Police attack workers meeting in London’s Hyde Park, 1862. Karl Marx (inset) helped organize solidarity by English workers with Union war against slaveholders.

Progress (inset); Dietz Verlag Berlin



subjects a million English workers to the most fearful sufferings and privations.”

—*Proclamation on Poland by the German Workers' Educational Society in London* (October 1863)

Who Freed the Slaves?

Lincoln both led and responded to a transformation in public sentiment. He was later quoted as saying, “It is my conviction that, had the proclamation been issued even six months earlier than it was, public sentiment would not have sustained it.” The same was true with enlisting black men. He said, “The step taken sooner could not, in my judgment, have been carried out.” So was Lincoln too slow in proclaiming emancipation, turning the Civil War into an abolition war? Well, fast and slow are relative terms. Perhaps he agonized too long on the border states. Perhaps he fretted too long about the Northern Democrats. But by the standards of the American people as a whole, Lincoln’s pace was radical and swift.

The bulk of the Northern populace, and particularly white soldiers, came to see the need to fight for black freedom. The soldiers came to that understanding much sooner. That’s not to say that the Army was free from prejudice, far from it. But especially once blacks proved themselves in battle, they earned the respect of their white comrades-in-arms.

Of course, there was opposition to the Emancipation Proclamation from the Democrats, the most rabid of whom were known as Copperheads, after the poisonous snake. The antiwar Democrats



Illustrated London News

1863: Anti-draft riots in New York City became a racist pogrom.

escalated racist hysteria among workers and immigrants, with Democratic politicians and newspapers declaring that the freed slaves would steal the jobs of white workers. We’ve heard that before, haven’t we? I mean, the ruling class is whipping up that same hysteria over immigrant workers today. Then in 1863 the anti-draft riots in New York City turned into a racist pogrom. In 1864, during a period of defeat and demoralization in the North in the lead-up to the elections, the Democrats fomented racist opposition to emancipation. They actually coined the word miscegenation and published material replete with lurid racist cartoons. McClellan was the Democrats’ presidential candidate in 1864.

Starting in the 1960s and 1970s, many in the black nationalist movement and the New Left questioned Abraham Lincoln’s role: Did he free the slaves? The short answer is yes, because without a Civil War victory there would be no emancipation. And Lincoln was the primary architect of that victory. Lincoln has also been slandered as a racist by, for example, the historian Lerone Bennett and the so-called Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP). The RCP has a sordid history in the fight against black oppression anyway, most notoriously in Boston during the 1974 busing crisis when they sided with white racists against the fight for integration. Lincoln was not a racist—the racists were the ones Lincoln was fighting against.

And then there is the Spark organiza-

Engraving depicts General Sherman’s 1864 march to the sea, which cut the heart out of Confederacy.

F.O.C. Darley



tion. They’re agnostic on the Civil War. They say it was a civil war in the South against Yankee capitalist oppression and they have no problem with the Confederate flag. Progressive Labor (PL), similarly, ignores the centrality of the fight against slavery. Even worse, PL lauds the New York City draft riots without mentioning slavery.

They all imbibe the racist myth, born out of the defeat of Reconstruction and perpetuated by generations of historians and defenders of the Confederacy, that the Civil War was *not* about slavery. Lincoln changed and the aims of the war changed. The Abraham Lincoln who said he was against “remorseless revolutionary struggle” in 1861 is not the same Lincoln who, at his second inaugural in 1865, said:

“Fondly do we hope—fervently do we pray—that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bond-man’s 250 years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash, shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said 3,000 years ago, so still it must be said ‘the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.’”

But we are not uncritical of Lincoln. I would like to quote Frederick Douglass from a speech he delivered in April 1876 at the dedication of the freedmen’s memorial to Abraham Lincoln in Washington, D.C. You had all the luminaries of the Republican Party there: President Ulysses S. Grant, Salmon Chase, who was at this point chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. And Frederick Douglass says:

“Abraham Lincoln was not, in the fullest sense of the word, either our man or our model. In his interests, in his associations, in his habits of thought, and in his prejudices, he was a white man.... “Abraham Lincoln saved for you a country, he delivered us from a bondage, according to Jefferson, one hour of which was worse than ages of the oppression your fathers rose in rebellion to oppose.... “Abraham Lincoln was at the head of a great movement, and was in living and earnest sympathy with that movement, which, in the nature of things, must go on until slavery should be utterly and forever abolished in the United States.”

—*The Life and Writings of Frederick Douglass*, Vol. 4

The Role of Black Troops

A key provision of the Emancipation Proclamation was the arming of the slaves. Black troops played a critical role in the Union victory. With the recruitment of regiments of former slaves against their former masters, it was clear that a revolution was in progress. The Black Spartacus was on the march! It was very demoralizing to the slaveholders.

But it was a question: Would the former slaves fight? Would they be good soldiers? Many doubted that after the degradation of slavery blacks could be good soldiers and not just humble, subservient, oppressed people. But the heroic Massachusetts 54th Regiment decisively settled that question when they charged into the guns of Fort Wagner, South Carolina, incurring massive casualties. Black soldiers became some of the best fighters for the Union, fighting for freedom, fighting for the freedom of their families, fighting with nooses around their necks. They were sent back into slavery if they

were captured and their white officers faced execution if they were captured.

If black soldiers surrendered, the Confederates often massacred them. One of the worst examples was at Fort Pillow, Tennessee, a federal garrison composed of black regiments and white regiments. When the garrison surrendered after being attacked by the cavalry of Nathan Bedford Forrest, scores of black soldiers were massacred. Forrest was a slave trader before the war, a dealer in convict labor after the war, and he was a founder of the KKK. But after the massacre, black soldiers seldom surrendered. When they went into battle, they would fight like hellcats, with a battle cry on their lips: “Remember Fort Pillow!”

The 54th was a great black regiment. But there were not a whole lot of blacks in the North where the 54th was recruited. So Lincoln and Secretary of War Stanton sent Adjutant General Lorenzo Thomas to the Mississippi Valley to recruit black soldiers and dispel the opposition of white soldiers. I like to use Lorenzo Thomas as an example of how people change during a revolution. Thomas was a 60-year-old paper-pusher, a bureaucrat in Washington, D.C., for years and years. He had not seen the field of battle for ages. But he got sent to the Mississippi Valley to recruit black soldiers, and he did it. He would go from camp to camp and make speeches to the white soldiers. What he would say to them about the black people coming into the lines was to “receive them kindly and cordially. They are to be encouraged to come to us; they are to be received with open arms; they are to be fed and clothed; they are to be armed.” He was instrumental in recruiting 100,000 black soldiers. Two hundred thousand black soldiers were recruited, all told.

Also illustrative of the contradictions of this bourgeois revolution is William Tecumseh Sherman, who was a stone racist. He sabotaged the effort to recruit black troops to the point of insubordination, all the while dealing some of the deadliest military blows to the Confederacy. He refused to allow the recruitment of black troops near his armies because he wanted blacks only as laborers. Lincoln tolerated this because Sherman could win battles. With his march to the sea and then up through South Carolina, Sherman did more than any other Union general to burn the heart out of slavery. Sherman epitomized the hard war that Lincoln and Grant had pushed.

It’s not about the ideas in people’s heads but what they do. As materialists,

we understand that social being determines social consciousness—that is, most people can only transcend their own history to a limited degree. So banish moralism and focus on the act! I’m sure the modern-day fans of the Confederacy don’t care very much what Sherman thought. But they sure can’t forget what he did!

The Dawn of Reconstruction

Bourgeois mythology would have it that it was a straight shot from the Emancipation Proclamation to Martin Luther King and the civil rights movement to Obama. No! The *Chicago Tribune* (3 February) had a little piece on the Emancipation Proclamation headlined: “Lincoln’s Proclamation Inspired Slaves to Leave Plantations, Embrace Hope.” Embrace hope? Please! Where have we heard that before? Obama’s campaign literature, of course. It conjures up images of tear-stained black faces turning their eyes to the sky, when the reality was war and revolution!

At the end of the war, emancipated slaves, many with guns in their hands, were at the very center of the Second American Revolution, pushing ahead, without organization, toward the redistribution of land and toward political liberty. These measures necessitated turning the entire structure of the old South upside down. The confiscation of the land owned by the big proprietors and its partition and distribution among the landless laborers meant an agrarian revolution. The triumphant capitalists wanted to perpetuate their grip upon the national government, increase their control over industry and agriculture and grab natural resources. In order to promote this program, their political representatives had to maneuver with other forces in the country.

What started out at the close of the Civil War as an alliance between the Northern capitalists and the black and white plebeians of the South against the landed aristocracy terminated in 1876 with a union between the capitalist magnates and the planters against the Southern masses, particularly the black freedmen. In 1865, aside from the military and the Freedmen’s Bureau, which had been established by the federal government, there was no government in the South. Everything was up in the air. The 13th Amendment was on the books, but little else was settled.

There were several hundred thousand black people either in the Army or recently demobilized. They felt it was time to cash in on what was due them. Perhaps the most idealized version of

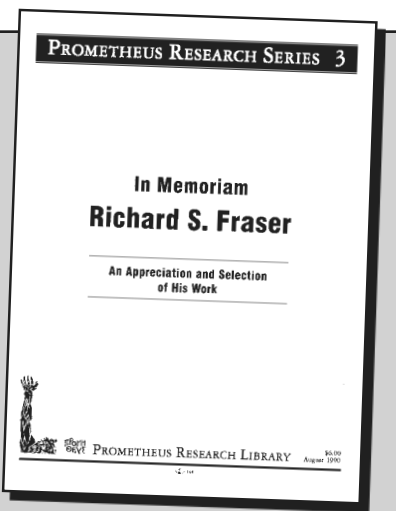
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150 Years...

(continued from page 7)

what black people thought Reconstruction was supposed to turn into was “40 acres and a mule.” This comes from Sherman’s Special Order No. 15, which he issued in Savannah in 1865, right after he finished his march through Georgia. That order gave 40 acres of abandoned land and also unneeded old Army mules to newly freed black families.

The way this happened is that Secretary of War Stanton had come down to visit Sherman’s army in Savannah. He and Sherman met with black preachers from the area. Sherman was very well known for his hot temper. I can see him just seething, having to sit down with all these black preachers and talk with them man to man. But out of that meeting came the Special Orders. This relieved Sherman of the problem of what to do with the thousands of former slaves who had followed in his train. Then Stanton ordered Sherman to add a black regiment to his army, which he did, except that regiment was abused all the way from Georgia up through South Carolina. I told you that Sherman was hardly a racial egalitarian. Yet and still, despite his subjective beliefs, Sherman was caught up in a revolution. And he wrote that Order, which put land into the hands of black freedmen and helped to inspire the fight for black freedom.

Radical Reconstruction

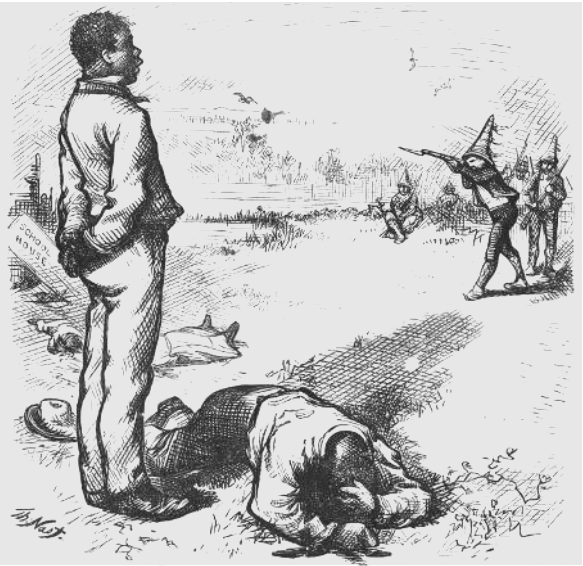
In the summer of 1865, the redistribution of abandoned and confiscated land was Freedmen’s Bureau policy, supported by the military. But it was very quickly turned around. Many Southern states passed Black Codes. This was slavery in everything but name—vagrancy laws, forced apprenticeships, forced contracts—to regulate and control black labor. The precedent for Black Codes was set in the North where, despite the abolition of slavery prior to the Civil War, there were many legal proscriptions against black people. But the Black Codes were not rigorously or uniformly enforced, unlike the Jim Crow laws that came later. Things were still volatile and were so much up in the air, with lots of victorious black soldiers with guns roaming around.

Let me note the importance of the right to bear arms, and how important that has always been for the defense of black rights. The right of self-defense was key. We say, “Gun control kills blacks.” Obama and a whole section of the ruling class are bemoaning gun violence. But the whole history of gun control in this country is the story of the ruling class trying to disarm the population, particularly in periods of social struggle. Hence the reactionary Black Codes passed in various Southern states tried to outlaw the possession of firearms by black people. In response, the Freedmen’s Bureau widely distributed circulars that read in part: “All



Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper

Above: Under Radical Reconstruction, Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-68 included two dozen black delegates, provided universal male suffrage. Right: 1876 drawing depicts racist terror by paramilitary White League aimed at reversing gains made by black freedmen.



Thomas Nast

men, without distinction of color, have the right to keep and bear arms to defend their homes, families or themselves.”

Every gain that black people have made was a battle. In a letter to Lincoln’s successor, Andrew Johnson, on behalf of the First International, Marx wrote: “Yours, Sir, has become the task to uproot by the law what has been felled by the sword, to preside over the arduous work of political reconstruction and social regeneration.” But Johnson did exactly the opposite. He tried to restore the old social order in everything but name. Johnson started amnestying former slaveowners and weeded radicals out of the Freedmen’s Bureau. Johnson had an all-consuming hatred of black people. He was a former slaveowner with the mentality of poor white trash, a racist appeaser of remnants of the slavocracy. Johnson was really fearful of a link-up of black and white poor. The idea of real social and political equality repelled him. Johnson’s amnesty proclamations were an abrogation of Sherman’s Field Order No. 15. Forty thousand freedmen were deprived of 485,000 acres of land.

The hallmark of any revolution is the independent mobilization of the masses in defense of their rights and aspirations. That occurred all over the South, with committees, councils and armed self-defense groups springing up. Could black people, arms in hand, have seized the land? In some cases they did. But they

were mostly forced off the land. Thaddeus Stevens, probably the most consistent American Jacobin, recognized that land was the key. By being landholders, black freedmen would have an economic basis to defend their rights instead of being beholden to the landlords. Most others, including Frederick Douglass, focused more on the right to vote.

The bourgeoisie was horrified by the thought of confiscation. The free-soil ideology meant that through thrift and hard work you could own a little shop or a farm. As if 250 years of unrequited toil didn’t count. The bourgeoisie was quite class-conscious. It paid close attention to the restive working class in Europe, where, in 1871, the French proletariat seized power in Paris and held it for some months—the Paris Commune. The American bourgeoisie recoiled from that. The *New York Times*, then as now a mouthpiece for that class, wrote: “An attempt to justify the confiscation of Southern land under the pretense of doing justice to the freedmen, strikes at the root of all property rights in both sections. It concerns Massachusetts quite as much as Mississippi.”

During Johnson’s presidency, blacks were beaten and shot down by the hundreds. Black people were no longer anybody’s property, so life was cheap. The slaughter of black and white Republicans led directly to military Reconstruction. Many in the North started to be alarmed. They had just finished a brutal civil war and did not want the slaveholders back in power. There was a polarization. The

moderates were driven into the arms of the Radicals. The *Chicago Tribune*, hardly known today as a radical journal, wrote that the North would convert Mississippi “into a frog pond” before allowing slavery to be reestablished.

The Radicals got the majority of support in Congress and began to set the tone of Reconstruction. The South was placed under military control by Congress. As General-in-Chief, U.S. Grant appointed the generals running each district. Grant was allied with the Radicals on many issues and was generally sympathetic to the struggles of black people, even if like Lincoln he did not personally believe in social equality. During his presidency, starting in 1868, his policy was a real mixed bag.

It took a battle to preserve black rights. There were the Freedmen’s Bureau, the Union Leagues, black militias. But federal troops were the key. Reconstruction could not have succeeded as much as it did absent even a halfhearted commitment to smash and crush forces of reaction by the federal government. Congress wanted to readmit the former Confederate states to the Union. But the only way these states could be admitted was on the Union’s terms. And the only way those terms would be met was if black people got the vote. Under military Reconstruction, with the passage of the Reconstruction Acts and the 14th Amendment, blacks were given the vote and elected to state constitutional conventions and Reconstruction governments.

Once black people gained the franchise, the Republicans dominated Reconstruction governments across the South. The majority of officeholders were white with a significant minority of blacks, based on the support of blacks and some poor whites. Black Republicans became the major focus for political, social and economic justice in the South. They agitated for more political rights, more schools, more hospitals, more land, more debtors’ relief—things that benefitted the vast majority of Southern labor, black and white. The passage of the 15th Amendment in 1870 codified the right to vote, all across the North as well as the South.

Racist Reaction

But Northern capitalists had other interests: profit. They were willing to invest in the capital-starved South, but when those profits were threatened by agitation and unrest, they pulled the plug. Reconstruction governments and black people were always under attack by the KKK and similar groups that wanted social and economic control of the black population. Black schools were particularly a target, and scores went up in flames. Intimidation and murder were rampant. Congress adopted all sorts of paper measures protecting blacks, including the 14th Amendment that guarantees “equal protection of the laws.” But the government betrayed the promise of black liberation in the Compromise of 1877, when almost all the remaining Union troops were withdrawn from the South. Reconstruction

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

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

TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA/LIGUE TROTSKYSTE DU CANADA

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

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

CHICAGO

Wednesday, April 24, 7 p.m.
China, Cuba, North Korea, Vietnam, and Laos
Defend the Deformed Workers States Against Capitalist Counterrevolution! For Workers Political Revolution!
University of Chicago, Reynolds Club
5706 South University
Information and readings: (312) 563-0441
chicagosyc@sbcglobal.net

LOS ANGELES

Tuesday, May 14, 6:30 p.m.
Defend the Workers States!

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

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Tuesday, April 23, 7 p.m.
The Russian Revolution of 1917:
— Part Three —
The Revolution Betrayed: Stalinist Betrayal and the Russian Question Today
CCNY, NAC Room 1/211
138th St. and Amsterdam Ave.
Information and readings: (212) 267-1025
nysl@tiac.net

UCLA, Ackerman Union Room 3516
Information and readings: (213) 380-8239
slsycla@sbcglobal.net

was defeated by blood and fire.

The post-Reconstruction period, called Redemption by the racists, was marked by a political counterrevolution aimed at black people and enforced by racist terrorists. A new system of racist exploitation was established by restricting the rights of freedmen across the board. In 1896, the Supreme Court codified “separate but equal” segregation as the law of the land in *Plessy v. Ferguson*. Segregation took the place of chattel slavery as the main prop of the new racist order. This rigid system of legally enforced racial segregation, called Jim Crow, was imposed and maintained by police-state repression and the terror of the KKK which, in the words of Civil War historian James McPherson, “became in effect armed auxiliaries of the Democratic party.” It took a long and often bloody struggle for the civil rights movement 80 years later to restore some of the rights black people won during the Civil War and Reconstruction.

With the triumph of capitalism across the continent also came the creation of the class destined to become the gravediggers of that same system, the working class. Once freed from the retarding effects of the slavery question, the labor movement took off with agitation for the eight-hour day, agitation for unions. This culminated in the Great Rail Strike of 1877, which was brutally suppressed by the Army that was no longer defending black people in the South. However, concomitant with the entrance of the American bourgeoisie onto the world stage as an imperialist power in the 1890s, there developed a layer of hardcore trade-union bureaucrats bought off by the spoils of imperialism and sharing the values of the ruling class. They imported and continued to import this retrograde consciousness into the working class.

Now I would like to acknowledge the debt we owe to Dick Fraser, a leading member of the Socialist Workers Party in the 1940s and ’50s, when it was still a revolutionary organization. Fraser developed a trenchant Marxist analysis of slavery, the Civil War and Reconstruc-



WV Photo

Left: Spartacist supporter dressed in Union Army uniform tears down Confederate flag of slavery at San Francisco Civic Center, April 1984. Right: Labor/black mobilization organized by Spartacist League stopped Klan from marching in Washington, D.C., November 1982.



Washington Post

tion, of the origins of the racist system in this country and the material basis for black oppression. Fraser wrote: “After the Civil War and Reconstruction destroyed the old slave owning class, northern capital, from economic and political motives, betrayed its promises and created a revised, capitalist form of race relations, based upon many of the traditions and social relations of slavery” (“Revolutionary Integration: the Dialectics of Black Liberation,” *Revolutionary Age*, Vol. 1, No. 1 [1968]).

Fraser took as a starting point the lessons he had learned from studies of the 1917 Russian Revolution, particularly Bolshevik Party policies on the many nationalities in Russia. And that is the point on which I want to conclude—the Bolshevik Revolution. The Bolsheviks united the struggles of all the oppressed behind the banner of the working class, and that is what we must do. Today, we take up struggles for immigrant rights, for women’s rights, and we fight to replace the trade-union misleaders with a militant, class-struggle leadership.

We wrote in one of our basic documents, “Black and Red,” in 1967:

“Only common struggle for common aims can unite the working class and overcome the lifelong racial prejudices of American workers. A victory of the socialist revolution in this country will be achieved through the united struggle of black and white workers under the leadership of the revolutionary vanguard party. In the course of this struggle, unbreakable bonds will be forged between the two sections of the working class. The success of this struggle will place the Negro people in a position to insure at last the end of slavery, racism and super-exploitation.”

The forcible segregation of black people, integral to American capitalism, has been resisted by the black masses whenever a perceived possibility for such struggle has been felt. The entire history of mass black struggle—from the abolitionists through the Civil War and Radical Reconstruction to the civil rights movement—has been in the direction of integration, not separation.

While combating every manifestation of racist oppression, fighting in particular to mobilize the social power of the multi-

racial labor movement, we underline that full equality for the black masses requires that the working class rip the economy out of the hands of the racist capitalist rulers and reorganize it on a socialist basis. Only then will it be possible to eliminate the material roots of black oppression through the full integration of black people into an egalitarian socialist society based on a collective economy with quality jobs, housing, health care and education for all. You see, it was the Russian working class led by the Bolsheviks who carried out the first and thus far only successful socialist revolution. We aim to build a vanguard party that will fight for the next one.

In the midst of the Second American Revolution, Lincoln said in the Gettysburg Address, “It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced.” Well, there is still a lot of unfinished work. Join us in the fight for a Third American Revolution. Join us in the fight to build a revolutionary party. Finish the Civil War—For black liberation through socialist revolution! ■

South Africa...

(continued from page 5)

popular front through which the working-class base of COSATU and the SACP are subordinated to their own exploiters, while the leaders of those organisations have joined the capitalist government, thereby taking responsibility for administering the racist capitalist system.

While SACP leader Blade Nzimande currently serves as minister of higher education in the Zuma government which oversaw the Marikana massacre, earlier SACP government ministers included Charles Nqakula as minister of the cops and Ronnie Kasrils as spy minister, both under the Thabo Mbeki government. COSATU includes among its affiliates the Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union (POPCRU), while other COSATU affiliates also organise security guards and police and the SACP welcomes cops as “comrades” in its own organisation. This is suicidal fraternisation with the capitalist exploiters’ shock troops, the deadly enemies of the working class.

In the fight against police terror, class-conscious militants must demand: *Cops, prison guards, security guards out of the unions!* This is part of the struggle for the political and organisational independence of the working class from the bourgeoisie, its state and its parties. We seek to break the Tripartite Alliance along class lines, winning pro-communist militants from COSATU and the SACP to forging the Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party that can lead a revolutionary struggle against this rotten system. A new leadership of the unions, based on a programme of class struggle, must come to the fore in the course of building the revolutionary party.

The sellout SACP and COSATU tops are aided and abetted by pseudo-socialist outfits like the Democratic Socialist Movement (DSM), Keep Left! and the Workers

International Vanguard Party (WIVP), all of which push the grotesque reformist lie that the cops are fellow workers. The DSM has recently been trying to capitalise on the prominence it gained through the mineworkers strike wave by forming a “new mass workers party,” the Workers and Socialist Party (WASP). At a meeting to launch WASP in Pretoria on March 21, the DSM welcomed a “union” of private security guards and invited them to address the crowd as one of the organisations (another was the WIVP) supporting the formation of WASP!

Despite the SACP’s talk about the “national democratic revolution,” South Africa never had a revolution of any sort. The much-vaunted “most democratic constitution in the world” was the outcome of a *negotiated settlement* between the white rulers and the ANC/Alliance tops, the latter of whom betrayed the struggle for black freedom in order to ensure a “smooth transition,” i.e., to avoid upsetting the capitalist profit machine. As a result, and with the explosive social contradictions of this society, the democratic rights that were granted have always been reversible and bourgeois parliamentary democracy highly unstable. We are witnessing this today, as the social contradictions begin to explode and protests by the working class and other oppressed layers are met with increasingly brutal, deadly state repression.

The workers and the oppressed do not need reformist and liberal sermonising and hand-wringing about the rights supposedly guaranteed by the bourgeois constitution. They need a leadership that points clearly to the class interests behind the machinery of state terror, and to the revolutionary struggle needed to put an end to grinding immiseration and repression. The only salvation is a Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party fighting for a black-centred workers government and new October Revolutions all over the world. ■

New York...

(continued from page 12)

continue unabated, as does the coast-to-coast mass incarceration of those the racist rulers consider a “surplus” population.

The cops and courts work together as part of the bourgeois state apparatus that represses the working class and the ghetto and barrio poor in order to maintain capitalist rule and profits. This elementary Marxist understanding is obscured by the reformist leftists and liberals who peddle fantasies of police behavior modification. Thus an article on the International Socialist Organization’s SocialistWorker.org Web site (26 March), titled “Stop-and-Frisk on Trial,” breathlessly reports that the Manhattan trial “could possibly set legal precedent in regards to racial profiling.” What the cops think about such “precedent” was expressed a few decades ago by the notorious Frank Rizzo, who told a court magistrate when he was chief of the Philadelphia police, “All right, you’re the boss in here, but we’re the boss on the street.”

In “End Stop and Frisk Now!” *Socialist Alternative* (June 2012) raised the time-worn reformist call to “place law enforcement and public safety under democratic community control.” The working class and the oppressed will never “control” the police, who are the instruments of the capitalist class that rules this society. The Socialist Alternative outfit tramples on this truth by portraying the cops, whose job is to suppress class and social struggle, as part of the working class.

This suicidal notion is also sold by the pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucracy. When NYC’s Transport Workers Union Local 100 defied the New York state Taylor Law and went on strike in December 2005, then-president of Local 100, Roger Toussaint, invited Patrolmen’s Benevolent Association president Patrick Lynch

to speak on the union platform. The cops showed their true colors by enforcing a court injunction against the strike, leading to the arrest of Toussaint himself. The multiracial membership of Local 100 is no stranger to stop-and-frisk and other facets of police terror. The father of Sean Bell, a young black man who was killed in a firestorm of cop bullets in 2006 on the night before his wedding, is a TWU retiree.

Unions like the TWU have enormous potential social power that could be unleashed in defense not only of its own members but of the ghetto and barrio masses. But that potential is sapped by the loyalty of the union officialdom to the capitalist profit system and the state power that enforces it, particularly in its Democratic Party face. Current Local 100 officials helped build a rally in March for greater gun control, denouncing “gun violence.” This campaign gives credence to one of the cops’ major pretexts for stop-and-frisk harassment—purported gun possession—while also reinforcing the notion that the capitalist state must have a monopoly on weapons. In the face of the drive to strengthen gun control following the December killings in Newtown, Connecticut, we stress the importance for working people to defend the population’s right to bear arms. We fight as well to decriminalize drugs as a necessary part of the struggle against the racist “war on drugs.”

Stop-and-frisk is no aberration but a particularly glaring expression of the systematic, organized violence that defines the capitalist state. The working class needs a leadership that understands that this machinery of racist capitalist rule cannot be reformed to serve the interests of the workers, minorities and the poor but must be smashed through proletarian revolution. The Spartacist League is dedicated to building the revolutionary workers party that is the necessary instrument to lead the exploited and oppressed in the fight for workers rule. ■

Cyprus...

(continued from page 1)

has been prevented so far only because they were closed for nearly two weeks and then reopened with limits on money taken out of the banks and the country. Additionally, the Troika agreed to limit the tax to deposits over 100,000 euros.

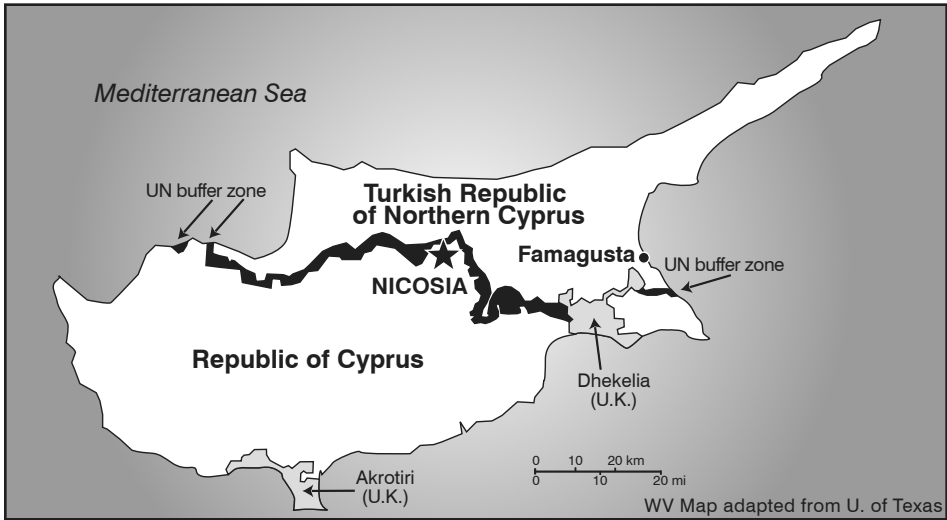
These events stoked fears that the euro was no longer a stable currency, causing it to drop in value against the U.S. dollar. After the Troika tried to pin the blame on Cypriot officials for proposing a tax on all depositors, Dutch Finance Minister Jeroen Dijsselbloem, head of the “Eurogroup” of euro zone finance ministers, told the press that taxing depositors would be the model for any future bank bailouts. Stocks tumbled in response to his comments, forcing him to backtrack somewhat. Troika officials have since tried to contain fears by insisting that Cyprus is a “unique case.”

That events in a place representing 0.2 percent of the euro zone economies could rock the whole EU is an indication of the profoundly unstable nature of this alliance of competing capitalist states. Sections of the bourgeoisie in Europe and internationally are fearful that applying the demands placed upon Cyprus to Italy, Spain or Slovenia could lead to a major economic meltdown.

Blaming southern Europeans and rich Russians for the EU's crisis is a convenient way of deflecting responsibility from the German and other imperialist bourgeoisies, whose banks inundated the currently failing economies with loans and are threatened with insolvencies if the debtors fail to pay. Although a bail-out of banks in the Republic of Cyprus would be mere pocket change, the German bourgeoisie has evidently decided to use this opportunity to send a loud message that they will no longer bear the cost of bailing out countries on the verge of bankruptcy. With national elections coming up later this year, getting tough on Europe's debtor nations plays well politically for both Angela Merkel's Christian Democratic Union/Free Democratic Party ruling coalition and for her opponents—the reformist Social Democratic Party and the petty-bourgeois Greens.

Imperialist Domination and National Rivalries

The modern history of Cyprus is one of subordination to rapacious imperialist powers and rivalry between capitalist Greece and Turkey for control of the island. For over 80 years Cyprus was subject to bloody British colonial rule, the legacy of which was profound and violent communal divisions between the Turkish and Greek Cypriot populations. In 1974, the U.S.-backed Greek military junta attempted to incorporate Cyprus into Greece by orchestrating a coup on the island by right-wing officers, prompting an invasion by Turkish troops. The Turkish and Greek Cypriot communities were then brutally driven apart and the island divided into two states—the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and the



Republic of Cyprus in the south.

The island's strategic position in the eastern Mediterranean has long placed it at the juncture of the interests of several great and not-so-great powers. To this day, Cyprus continues to be occupied by Greek troops in the south, Turkish troops in the north, UN troops in a "buffer zone" and British troops on two bases. As staunch opponents of the Greek nationalism and anti-Turkish chauvinism constantly whipped up by the Greek bourgeoisie over Cyprus, the Trotskyist Group of Greece demands the immediate withdrawal of all Greek troops from Cyprus. We also demand the immediate withdrawal of all Turkish, UN and British troops and bases.

With a population of less than a million people, the Republic of Cyprus built up its economy around banking and tourism following partition. It was in the context of UN-brokered negotiations over the reunification of the island that the Republic of Cyprus was admitted to the EU in 2004 and adopted the euro as its currency in 2008. Many Greek Cypriots saw membership in the EU as giving them the upper hand over Turkey and Turkish Cypriots in the reunification negotiations. But within five years of adopting the euro, the Republic of Cyprus' major banks faced collapse as a result of the financial crisis that has engulfed the EU. So it is no surprise that thousands have rallied in the Republic demanding "Troika Out!" and that a reported two out of three Greek Cypriots now want out of the euro zone.

After a futile attempt to get alternative funding from Russia, the capitalist rulers of the Republic of Cyprus ended up submitting to the EU's revised demands, with the right-wing government of Nicos Anastasiades of the Democratic Rally presenting this deal as much better than the initial round of extortion. Since then, the creditors have doubled their demand for money from the Republic to 13 billion euros to qualify for a 10-billion-euro bailout.

Meanwhile, brutal austerity is planned for workers and the poor, and pensioners and a section of the sizable petty-bourgeoisie face ruin. Particularly vulnerable are immigrant workers—some 100,000 East European, Asian and Near Eastern immigrants were counted in 2011. The Cypriot brethren of the Greek fascist Golden Dawn have been scapegoating immigrants, and violent attacks are on the

rise. The London *Independent* (31 March) reported “a Molotov cocktail thrown at a family home near Limassol; a Bulgarian woman attacked in her house; another fire-bombing at an office of the Kurdish party.” These attacks underscore the need for the workers movement to fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants and to demand no deportations.

Although Turkey is not impacted by the bailout deal and is, relatively speaking, in good financial shape, thousands of workers from the much poorer Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus who have toiled in the south in recent years are also suffering the effects of this economic crisis. The imperialists have long had a hand in starving the working people in the north of Cyprus—its government, which is recognized only by Turkey, has faced decades of international restrictions on trade and travel. These include a 30-year trade embargo by the EU and its predecessors, which was only eased when a large majority of Turkish Cypriots voted in favor of a UN referendum for reunification in 2004. (The plan was overwhelmingly rejected in the south.) This shows that imperialist blackmail has long been practiced on *both* sides of the island.

For a Workers Europe!

The latest round of pillaging of a small, dependent country confirms yet again that the EU is an imperialist trade bloc, dominated by the German and French capitalists, which seeks to increase the exploitation of the working class in Europe while trying to gain advantage over its imperialist rivals in the U.S. and Japan. As the plummeting conditions of life for working people in Greece, Portugal, Spain and Ireland have shown, all the talk of European “convergence” had nothing to do with bringing poorer countries up to the level of the wealthier nations but was about creating “flexible labor markets,” i.e., low-paid workforces with no protections. A case in point is Greece, where labor costs have dropped 20 percent in the last three years and official unemployment has skyrocketed to more than 27 percent.

The International Communist League has consistently opposed the EU and its predecessors. The only way forward for working people is to put an end to the “boom and bust” crises of capitalism through socialist revolution—for the expropriation of capitalist industry and banks and for an internationally planned economy that will overcome the limits of the reactionary bourgeois nation-state. We say: *Down with the EU! For a Socialist United States of Europe!*

The ICL recognized from the beginning that the euro would be an instrument of the imperialist EU, and we opposed its introduction. German imperialism has made huge profits by driving down the wages of workers in Germany and through the intro-

duction of the euro, which has helped keep its industrial exports cheap throughout the euro zone. However, the weaker euro zone countries that have run trade deficits and borrowed heavily do not have the usual capitalist mechanism of devaluing their currency to make their economies more competitive. In reality, the euro has never been viable. A common currency necessitates a common state. The snowballing divergent interests of the member countries threaten to tear apart the euro zone and the EU while consigning the euro to the albums of coin collectors.

The crisis as a whole is rooted in the giant game of speculation and financial swindles that is an integral component of the domination of international finance capital. As Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin explained in *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1916): “Although commodity production still ‘reigns’ and continues to be regarded as the basis of economic life, it has in reality been undermined and the bulk of the profits go to the ‘geniuses’ of financial manipulation.” Banks in the Republic of Cyprus lost billions when they wrongly guessed that investing in high-yield Greek government bonds would pay off. The same imperialist masters of the EU who gave these banks cheap credit to buy up the bonds later forced bondholders to take a 75 percent “haircut” in order to prevent a Greek default. Now the imperialists demand their pound of flesh, overwhelmingly from the working people.

Bourgeois Hypocrisy and Reformist Schemes

The imperialists have added a new twist to their propaganda campaign aimed at covering up their responsibility for the Cyprus crisis: Rich Russians have been added to the list of “lazy” southern Europeans and immigrants as the supposed villains. Actually, the fabulously rich, including the gangsters who looted state property in Russia in the aftermath of the 1991-92 destruction of the USSR, got their money out before the bank doors slammed shut. Behind the sensational stories of Russian oligarchs piling up “hot money” in Cyprus is the supreme hypocrisy of the European bourgeoisies, who have long availed themselves of offshore havens such as Switzerland, Luxembourg and the British Virgin Islands, to name but a few. A recent leak has unsurprisingly revealed that German banks make use of tax havens, while no less than 36 German shipping companies are registered in Cyprus. Meanwhile, France is having its own scandal over high-placed officials with offshore accounts.

Capitalist politicians promising to prevent tax evasion is a long-running joke in Greece, with its “Lagarde list” of Swiss bank account holders (named after IMF chief Christine Lagarde). Such talk is simply a distraction from the real fleecing of working people that takes place through capitalist exploitation. While working people have no power to force a “fair” taxation system upon the rich, as sundry left-talking, pro-EU types like those in Greece’s Syriza coalition propose, the working class can disrupt the flow of profits by withdrawing its labor through strikes. However, sporadic outbursts of outrage will not suffice to resolve the current economic crisis.

The social power of the working class urgently needs to be mobilized in a struggle for decent jobs for all, for a shorter workweek with no loss in pay, for opening the books of the capitalists and their banks (to expose their plunder and theft). Such urgent needs demand seizing the banks, factories and mines from the capitalists with no compensation, placing these under the control of the workers. Only through fighting for such transitional demands and their culmination in the overthrow of the bourgeois state and its replacement with a proletarian dictatorship can the working class—in Europe and internationally—lead the way out of this crisis for all those thrown onto the scrap heap by capitalism.

Mobilizing the power of the working class in such struggle is anathema to the current pro-capitalist misleaders of the General Confederation of Work-

[illegible]

ers of Greece (GSEE—private sector) and the Confederation of Public Servants (ADEDY) unions. While Greek workers have certainly demonstrated their willingness to fight, the GSEE and ADEDY bureaucracies refuse to challenge the capitalist order and thereby help consign the workers to increasing immiseration. Furthermore, an effective struggle against the economic crisis requires an internationalist perspective, linking up the workers of different nations in a common fight against the capitalist exploiters. But both the trade-union misleaders and organizations such as Syriza push the fallacy of reforming the capitalist profit system to serve the workers and the poor. This is explicit in Syriza’s support to the EU and its promotion of the fraud that there can be a “social Europe” under capitalism.

The experience of the Republic of Cyprus shows that even a left capitalist government is subordinate to the imperialist masters. The reformist “Communists” of the Progressive Party for the Working People (AKEL), which held power from 2008 until February of this year, were responsible for implementing the first rounds of Troika-dictated austerity. When AKEL was seen to be dragging its feet on the harshest measures, the imperialists openly backed the right-wing candidacy of Anastasiades, with Merkel flying in to campaign for him in January! Having helped to carry out the attacks on its base and being seen as incapable of solving the economic crisis, AKEL was swept out of power by an electoral landslide for Anastasiades.

Speaking much louder than Syriza’s occasional rhetoric about an international fightback against the Troika’s policies was its recent formation of a “common social and political front to support Cyprus” with the extreme nationalist and anti-immigrant Independent Greeks party. Those right-wing populist opponents of the Troika, who want Greek capitalists to exploit and oppress the workers without the interference of foreign powers, clearly have no

was being carried out in late 2011. Most recently, the Troika demanded that the Republic of Cyprus immediately initiate drilling in the contested area, indicating that the prospect of igniting a war does not deter the avaricious imperialist bankers.

Greek Nationalism: Poison for the Working Class

The British maintained their colonial rule over Cyprus both through bloody repression and by taking advantage of the existence of a Turkish minority to use the old strategy of “divide and rule,” giving some privileges to one people over another in order to prevent joint struggle against the colonial oppressors. Thus the right-wing guerrilla struggle that emerged in Cyprus in the 1950s against British rule and for union with Greece was virulently chauvinist against Turkish Cypriots. Suffice it to say that it was led by the WWII fascist collaborator Colonel Grivas and the head of the Greek Orthodox church in Cyprus, Archbishop Makarios. Cyprus gained its independence in 1960 under the “guarantee” of Britain, Turkey and Greece, but it did not take long for the first post-independence government to fall apart and for the island to descend into civil war in 1963-64. Following years of terror and counter-terror against both the Turkish and Greek Cypriot communities, a UN “peacekeeping” force was introduced in 1964 to police the population along with British troops.

The leading political force at that time was AKEL, which had both Greek and Turkish Cypriot members and leaders. This was anathema to reactionaries of all stripes. Central Committee member Dervis Ali Kavazoglou, a Turkish Cypriot, was assassinated by right-wing Turkish nationalist forces in 1965, and Greek Cypriot leaders and members were victims of right-wing terror carried out by both Greek and Turkish forces. The AKEL-led labor federation controlled half of the organized workers and

September 1955: British troops in Cyprus with trilingual banner threatening brutal suppression of strike.



however, supported the junta-led forces who had just imprisoned and tortured thousands of AKEL members and drawn up lists for their execution! In the end, the defeat of Greek forces in Cyprus rapidly led to the fall of the junta in Greece itself.

The events of 1974 had dire consequences in Cyprus. In “Cyprus Fiasco Topples Greek Junta” (WV No. 50, 2 August 1974), we noted that the Greek and Turkish communities “remain deeply hostile and far more integrated into the social life of their respective mother countries than into any kind of binational Cyprus.” The article continued:

“*None* of the solutions available under present social-economic conditions can possibly satisfy the aspirations of both majority and minority. *Enosis* (union with Greece), ‘double *enosis*’ (partition between Greece and Turkey), ceding sections of Thrace to Turkey in exchange for incorporating Cyprus into Greece and even the continuation of some sort of federated independent Cyprus would involve destructive forced mass population transfers and would contain within them the seeds of further bloody communal and national wars.”

And in fact, about a third of Cyprus’ population was driven from their homes and distinct Greek and Turkish areas were compacted, with thousands killed and wounded on both sides. AKEL’s Stalinist popular-front politics of allying with bourgeois forces for “defense of our homeland” helped pave the way for the resurgence of national antagonisms and communal violence.

As we wrote in “The Founding of the Trotskyist Group of Greece” (November 2004): “Our fight is for a proletarian solution to the national question [in Cyprus], which of necessity requires the revolutionary overthrow of the nationalist bourgeoisies in Nicosia/Lefkosa, Athens and Ankara.” In contrast, AKEL and much of the Greek left talk only of Turkish “occupiers” in Cyprus. Without proletarian revolutions in Turkey, Greece and beyond, the island’s working people will always be subject to the domination of the imperialist and regional capitalist powers.

Instead of such a revolutionary internationalist perspective, both AKEL and the Communist Party of Greece (KKE) look to the enforcement of United Nations resolutions as the basis for solving the “Cyprus problem.” The UN is an imperialist den of thieves and their victims under whose “democratic” fig leaf millions have been slaughtered and starved, from the 1950 U.S. invasion of Korea to the deadly sanctions imposed at the time of the first Iraq war in 1990. While the KKE leadership may sometimes warn against illusions in the UN, they have promoted precisely such illusions by saying that the Cyprus issue “had to be resolved in the framework of the decisions of a General Assembly of the UN” (“Cyprus and the New World Order,” *Rizospastis*, 31 January 2003).

“The Working Men Have No Country”

Far from leading its large working-class membership in opposition to Greek nationalism and anti-Turkish chauvinism in a struggle for workers power, the KKE leadership teaches the workers to swal-

low this poison. The “Theses of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Greece” for an April party congress states: “The struggle for the defence of the borders, the sovereign rights of Greece, from the standpoint of the working class and the popular strata is integral to the struggle for the overthrow of the power of capital.” Then-KKE general secretary Aleka Papariga made clear who the borders supposedly need to be defended against in a talk published in *Rizospastis* (31 March): “Of course we will defend our territory. And why, in other words, does the struggle for power not mean also the struggle for the borders, etc? Are we going to give Greece to the Turks?” She went on to posit that Albania, Bulgaria, Turkey and what she called the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (i.e., Macedonia) might attack Greece.

For the KKE leadership, spewing such nationalist demagoguery goes hand in hand with preaching the absurd Stalinist dogma that socialism can be built in one country, even in a country as small and lacking in resources as Greece. The KKE tops’ nationalism can only serve to repel revolutionary-minded workers in the countries that border Greece while tying Greek workers to the interests of the bourgeois state that is the mainstay of their exploitation and oppression. This lie is best refuted with some words from Lenin during the interimperialist slaughter of World War I:

“With reference...to the tasks of the proletariat in its struggle to destroy, not feudalism but capitalism, the *Communist Manifesto* gives a clear and precise formula: ‘The workingmen have no country.’... The socialist movement cannot triumph within the old framework of the fatherland. It creates new and superior forms of human society, in which the legitimate needs and progressive aspirations of the working masses of *each* nationality will, for the first time, be met through international unity, provided existing national partitions are removed. To the present-day bourgeoisie’s attempts to divide and disunite them by means of hypocritical appeals for the ‘defence of the fatherland’ the class-conscious workers will reply with ever new and persevering efforts to unite the workers of various nations in the struggle to overthrow the rule of the bourgeoisie of all nations.”

—“The Position and Tasks of the Socialist International,” November 1914

The Trotskyist Group of Greece is committed to the task of forging a revolutionary party that, as Lenin said, will fight to unite the workers of different nations in the struggle to overthrow the bourgeoisies of all nations. This is why we and the entire ICL fight against the oppression of national minorities in Greece such as the Vlachs, Pomaks, Turks and Albanians and demand the right of self-determination for the Macedonians, while opposing the oppression of the Kurdish people by the rulers of Turkey, Syria, Iraq and Iran. We call for a socialist federation of the Balkans, the only framework in which the myriad national questions in this region can be equitably resolved. The working class needs a revolutionary leadership that is internationalist not only in words but in deeds, armed with a program to sweep capitalism and all the national divisions it breeds off the face of the earth. ■



Nicosia, July 1974: Turkish military invades Cyprus following coup by right-wing officers backed by Greek junta.

interest in solidarity with the working people of Cyprus, with its immigrant and Turkish Cypriot components. The purpose of this front is to whip up Greek nationalism in the guise of defending Cyprus against the Troika. Such nationalism, particularly anti-Turkish chauvinism, has been used time and again to deflect class struggle against the Greek capitalist rulers. This was demonstrated vividly in 1974 when the Greek military junta organized the coup in Cyprus, attempting to prop up its own shaky regime by rallying “true Greeks” around the flag.

The Greek rulers continue to promote themselves as protectors of Cyprus against their more powerful capitalist rival Turkey, as seen in recent vitriolic exchanges over the question of reunification of the island. Also at issue are the natural gas deposits off its southern coast. The Republic of Cyprus government claims sole sovereignty over these deposits (and the EU made sure to back this claim in the latest bailout memorandum), while Northern Cyprus demands that the gas be exploited jointly—a demand that Turkey backed up by sending warships and fighter jets into the area when exploratory drilling

had some history of leading Greek and Turkish Cypriot workers in joint struggle under British colonial rule. But rather than fighting for a perspective of inter-ethnic working-class unity independent of all representatives of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois nationalism, the AKEL ended up embracing the conservative archbishop and president Makarios. Because of the archbishop’s resistance to U.S. demands that he ban the Communists, which would have been deeply unpopular in Cyprus, and his looking to the Soviet Union for diplomatic support against the imperialists’ machinations, he was falsely painted by Stalinists around the world as a leftist.

The 1974 coup against Makarios resulted in the first-ever united Greek and Turkish Cypriot demonstration against the Greek junta, which took place in London. This indicated the basis at that historic moment for a battle to be waged along *class* lines. But AKEL’s response to the upsurge was to swear undying loyalty to Makarios. Following Turkey’s invasion of Cyprus, Marxists were duty-bound to uphold a position of revolutionary defeatism on both sides—i.e., opposition to both Turkish and Greek military forces. AKEL,

WORKERS VANGUARD

Racist Cops: Guard Dogs of Capitalist Rulers

Stop-and-Frisk Trial and Bogus Police “Reform”

New York City

With black neighborhoods still simmering over the cop killing of 16-year-old Kimani Gray last month in Brooklyn, testimony in the “stop and frisk” class-action lawsuit *Floyd v. City of New York* continued this week in Federal District Court in Manhattan. Filed by the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR) in 2008, the suit seeks to have aspects of the NYPD’s stop-and-frisk policies ruled unconstitutional. On April 1, New York state senator Eric Adams, a former cop, testified that Police Commissioner Ray Kelly told him in a closed-door meeting that stop-and-frisk is intended to “instill fear” in black and Latino youth. Earlier, the court heard a tape recording submitted by Bronx police officer Pedro Serrano in which a deputy inspector told him to target “male blacks 14 to 21.”

None of this is news to ghetto and barrio youth in this city, who already know that they are overwhelmingly the targets of cop terror on the streets. It is right to fight against stop-and-frisk, which recalls the “black codes,” derived from slavery, that were central to Jim Crow—the earlier form of the segregation that is embedded in American capitalism. It’s degrading and humiliating, and deadly. Last year Bronx teenager Ramarley Graham was gunned down in his own home after he tried to elude cops to avoid jail time for the small amount of marijuana he was carrying. Cops said Kimani Gray adjusted his waistband “in a suspicious manner” before they shot him in the streets of East Flatbush in Brooklyn.

With a pretext of searching for guns and drugs, police routinely harass minority youth who, if they so much as ask why they are being stopped, find themselves screamed at with racist slurs and slammed against the wall or forced to the ground, often enough with guns pointed at their heads. Since Michael Bloomberg became mayor in 2002, there have been more than five million stop-and-frisks. How this goes down can be seen in eight blocks of Brooklyn known as the Brownsville Houses, where police blanket the streets every night. Between January 2006 and March 2010, the NYPD made nearly 52,000 stops there—that’s nearly one stop per year for every one of the 14,000 residents of the area. The name of everyone stopped—arrested or not—was logged into a police database.

Judge Shira Scheindlin, who is presiding over the *Floyd* case, ruled in January that elements of stop-and-frisk as practiced in the Bronx are unconstitutional but then lifted her ban shortly afterward. If she rules for the cops, they will no doubt feel more emboldened as they mete out their daily dose of racist brutality. If she rules against the NYPD, stripping this practice of its legal license, the cops will no doubt move to repackage their system-



June 2012 NYC protest against cops’ stop-and-frisk campaign. Right: Kimani Gray (top) and Ramarley Graham, victims of killer cops.

atic abuse. As William Bratton recently blurted out: “For any city to say they don’t do stop-and-frisk...I’m sorry, they don’t know what the hell they are talking about. Every police department in America does it.” Bratton ought to know. He ran police departments in Boston, New York and Los Angeles and now is acting as a “consultant” to the Oakland cops.

The history of the CCR suit itself shows that there should be no illusions in judicial restraint of the cops. *Floyd* is a sequel to the *Daniels, et al. v. the City of New York* suit brought by the CCR in 1999 after New York City erupted in protest over the slaying of Amadou Diallo, a black African immigrant gunned down by the cops in a hail of 41 bullets. That suit challenged NYPD racial profiling and sought to dis-

band the Street Crime Unit (SCU) that killed Diallo. The case was settled in 2003 when the City agreed to break up the SCU and to require that the NYPD “monitor” itself and have officers fill out forms documenting all stop-and-frisk encounters. It was because the cops showed “significant non-compliance” with the settlement that the CCR filed the new suit.

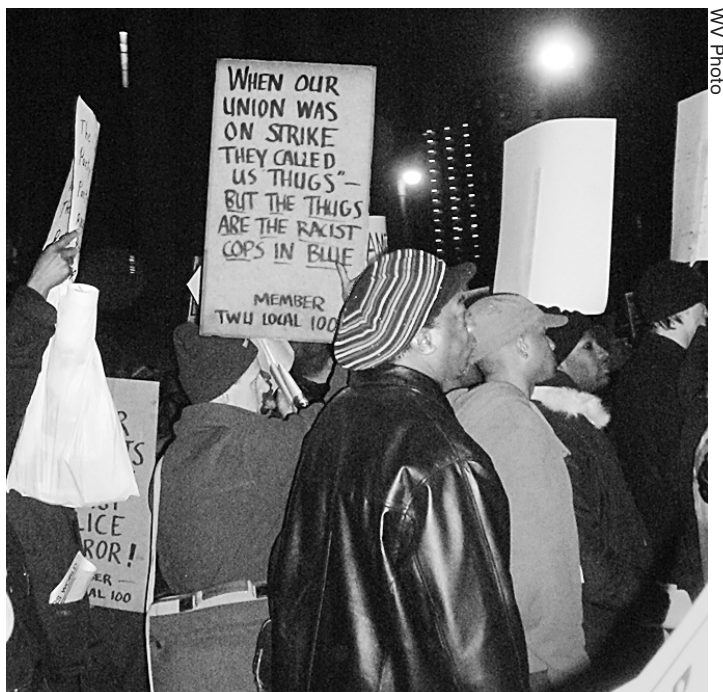
The New York Spartacist League joined with those who poured onto the streets of East Flatbush last month in outrage over the gunning down of Kimani Gray and in the face of a cop lockdown of the area. We demand the dropping of all charges against those who have protested stop-and-frisk, including Revolutionary Communist Party supporter Noche Díaz, who faces more than four years in prison. We also

demand that all charges stemming from protests against the killing of Kimani Gray be dropped. As we explained in “Kimani Gray Killed in Cold Blood by NYPD” (WV No. 1020, 22 March), the police are the guard dogs of racist American capitalism. There will be no end to the terror they mete out until the working class carries out a socialist revolution that overturns the entire system of capitalist exploitation, and with that the special oppression of black people that lies in its bedrock.

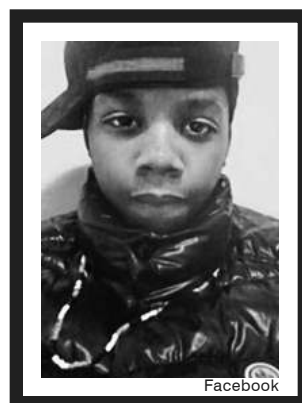
In the five weeks of the *Floyd* trial so far, a variety of protesters have packed the court, including gay rights activists and Muslims who have themselves been victims of NYPD harassment. Also turning out are the four leading Democratic candidates in this year’s mayoral race—in other words, those running to be the cops’ top boss as Bloomberg ends his reign. Their concern is the tarnishing of the NYPD’s credentials, requiring the application of some cosmetic “reform” to appease public anger and to make the cops more effective as a force of repression.

At a March 19 mayoral forum in Queens, the leading Democratic contender, City Council speaker Christine Quinn, trumpeted a proposal that had been raised by councilmen Jumaane Williams and Brad Lander for a police inspector general to “help the NYPD work more efficiently and effectively.” A spokesman for Communities United for Police Reform claims that this “would be an important first step in ensuring New Yorkers have faith that the NYPD is accountable for their actions” (*Amsterdam News*, 11 April). NYC already has a 13-person civilian review board (that goes back decades), a police corruption commission and other “control” mechanisms. Yet racist killings of minority youth

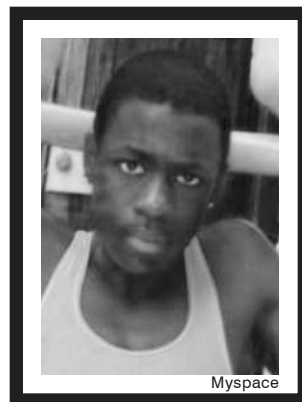
continued on page 9



December 2006 NYC protest against killing of Sean Bell, gunned down by NYPD in hail of 50 bullets.



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