

In Wake of Boston Bombing Ominous Display of Police-State Powers

The bombing that killed three spectators at the Boston Marathon—an eight-year-old child, a young restaurant manager and a university student from China—and wounded more than 260

others was naturally viewed with abhorrence by people in the U.S. and internationally, with many contributing funds for surviving victims of this criminal act of indiscriminate terror. And just as

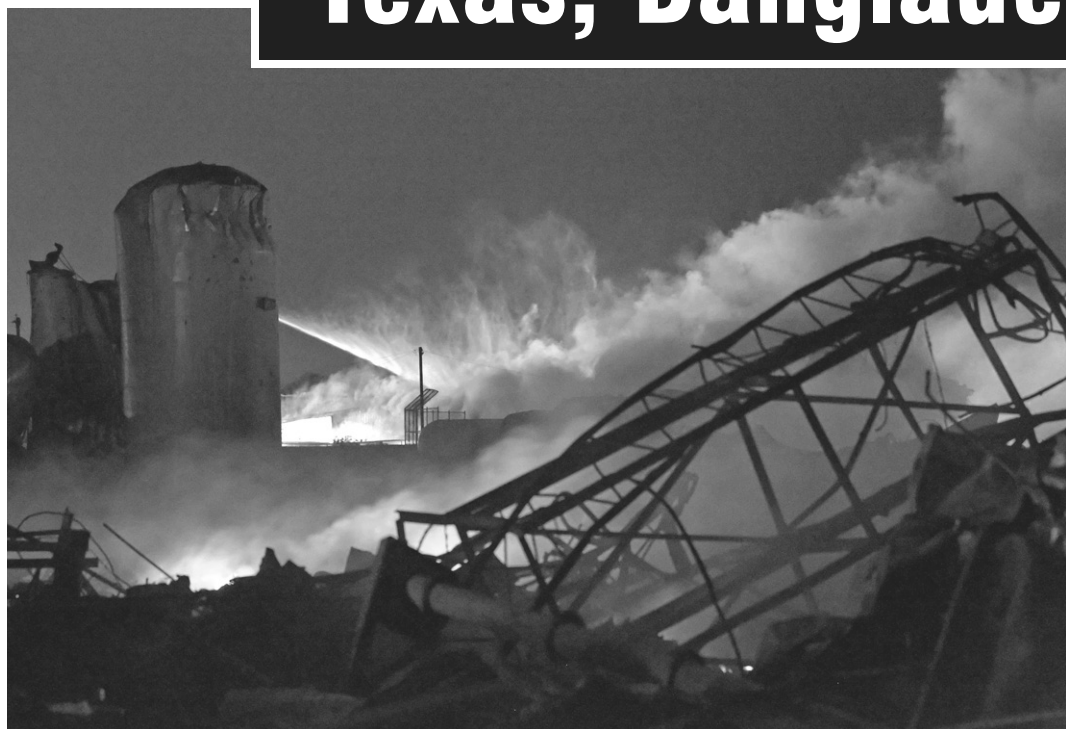
naturally, this country's capitalist rulers seized the opportunity to further their offensive against the rights of the population. Amid a tide of "national unity" patriotism and slogans proclaim-

ing "Boston strong," the government in essence declared that when the "terror" threat is invoked, police-state measures like the lockdown of Boston are the "new normal," and people had better accept that. Portrayed as heroes in Boston were the same cops whose job is to maintain capitalist "order" through organized violence against workers and minorities.

From the first reports of the bombing, the capitalist media did their best to whip up a climate of racist hysteria. Based on no evidence, CNN falsely reported that a "dark-skinned male" had been arrested for the bombing. Every black man in America knows what that can mean. The *New York Post* reported that the prime suspect was a Saudi man, who turned out to be one of those injured in the blast. Then the *Post* fingered two innocent men, one of them a Moroccan.
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Capitalist Profit Drive Kills

Texas, Bangladesh Disasters



Reuters photos

Left: Burning remains of fertilizer plant a day after deadly explosion in West, Texas. Right: Garment worker rescued from rubble of eight-story building that collapsed in Savar, Bangladesh, killing hundreds.

"There was this huge wall of black smoke and people were coming out of it," said one survivor of the April 17 fertilizer plant explosion in West, Texas. "It reminded me so much of 9/11." At least 14 people were killed, mainly firefighters who were battling a blaze at the plant when an enormous cache of ammonium nitrate is reported to have blown up. The blast, which measured 2.1 on the Richter scale and dug a crater ten feet deep and 93 feet wide, injured over 200 people and damaged buildings in a five-block radius.

This disaster was no accident but rather a testament to the murderous workings of the capitalist profit system, in which the bottom line trumps safety. West Fertilizer had been operating for years in flagrant violation of accepted safety standards. Cutting corners to save money is the name

of the game for capitalist enterprise, and tragedy all too often follows. Witness the April 2010 explosions in Massey Energy's Upper Big Branch mine in West Virginia that claimed 29 lives and on British Petroleum's Deepwater Horizon rig in the Gulf of Mexico that killed eleven workers. The leveling of the town of West itself recalled the 1947 explosion of a boatload of ammonium nitrate in the harbor of Texas City, Texas, which left nearly 600 dead and 5,000 injured.

More than 4,500 workers are killed on the job in the U.S. each year, the equivalent of 25 West Fertilizers a month. Another 50,000 are felled annually by occupational illnesses, such as black lung disease, the bane of coal miners. Millions more suffer non-fatal injuries and sickness. And it's not only the workers who pay the price for the capitalists' disregard for basic safety. As West, Texas, expanded over the years, a school, an apartment building and a nursing home were built next to the fertilizer powder keg.

The capitalist government, whether run

by Democrats or Republicans, gives the owners virtually free rein to run their factories and mines as ticking time bombs. Then, when fatalities do occur, government officials are likely to intone that there are "no indications of criminal activity," as one proclaimed following the West explosion. Since its founding in 1970, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has prosecuted 84 cases involving fatalities, with those sentenced serving a total of **89 months** in jail. During this time, there were more than 370,000 workplace deaths.

As Russell Mokhiber, editor of *Corporate Crime Reporter*, aptly remarked shortly after the West disaster:

"Make no mistake, if it becomes clear that the Texas explosion was triggered by a terrorist attack, a la the Oklahoma City bombing, then Obama will begin talking about 'the full weight of justice.'"

"But if the focus is corporate crime and violence, corporate recklessness, workplace safety, 'full weight of justice' rhetoric won't see the light of day."

—"Corporate Terrorism in West Texas," *CounterPunch*, 19 April

Now that the amount of ammonium nitrate stored in the plant has come to light, what has some in Congress, like Democrat Bennie Thompson of Mississippi, exercised is the lack of oversight...by Homeland Security!

Third World Sweatshop Tombs

Barely a week after the Texas explosion, the Rana Plaza building in Savar, Bangladesh, one of the poorest countries on the planet, collapsed on more than 3,000 garment workers toiling in five sweatshops. Mostly young women, they had resisted going to work after walls in the building began to show cracks the previous day. "Management forced us to go up and said there was no problem with the building," recounted one survivor. "Just after that, I sat at my table to work, and the building just collapsed" (*Democracy Now!*, 25 April). Despite heroic efforts by firefighters and other rescue personnel to find survivors, nearly 400 dead bodies have been dug from the rubble in what is
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In Memory of Barbara Sullivan

New York
23 April 2013

Dear Comrades,

I'm very sad to be writing this. The person dearest to me, Barbara Sullivan, died at age 56 on March 18 in New York City after a two-year battle with liver disease. Battle is not an overstatement; she took her treatment seriously, following her doctors' instructions even when they resulted in massive discomfort and short-term debilitation. She sought out other options on her own, discussing them with her doctors.

From a large liberal Catholic family on the South Side of Chicago, Barbara grew up in the 1960s hating injustice, inequality and segregation. As a kid she went on several civil rights marches with her parents and siblings.

She moved to NYC in 1986 to pursue

a career as a painter and to join other friends who'd made the move for similar reasons. I joined her here in 1988. We were both outraged by the brutality and racial oppression of capitalism, and because of that we were drawn to the Partisan Defense Committee in 1995 around the fight to save Mumia Abu-Jamal's life when the death warrant was signed. Beginning then, we went to numerous protests on many issues that were called by the Spartacist League or went as part of their contingents. She was at the 1999 NYC anti-Klan mobilization initiated by the PDC and was very proud that we kept the Klan from marching.

Barbara became a member of the Labor Black League in 1996. As its secretary for several years, she was known for her conscientiousness. She helped produce a

number of LBL newsletters. From then through the mid 2000s, she gave her time and clerical skills to aid the PDC's office work and transcribed some forums for the SL.

Although she wasn't a Marxist, Barbara was a partisan of the working class and understood, respected and appreciated the program of the SL. Like many workers, she became more engaged when there were battles to be fought.

A memorial was held for her on April 20 at the American Federation of Musicians Local 820 hall, a place she'd been to many times before at Spartacist forums. Eighty of her beautiful paintings were hanging around the room. By the end, the hall was packed. A good number of those present were comrades of the SL who had gotten to know Barbara over the



Darinka Chase

years. Barbara was liked by all who knew her and loved by many.

Comradely greetings,
Don D.

An Appreciation of Tweet Carter

The letter printed below, dated March 16, was sent to the Spartacist League/U.S. by John S., a former member of the ICL, writing from Australia. Tweet Carter's obituary appeared in WV No. 1014 (7 December 2012).

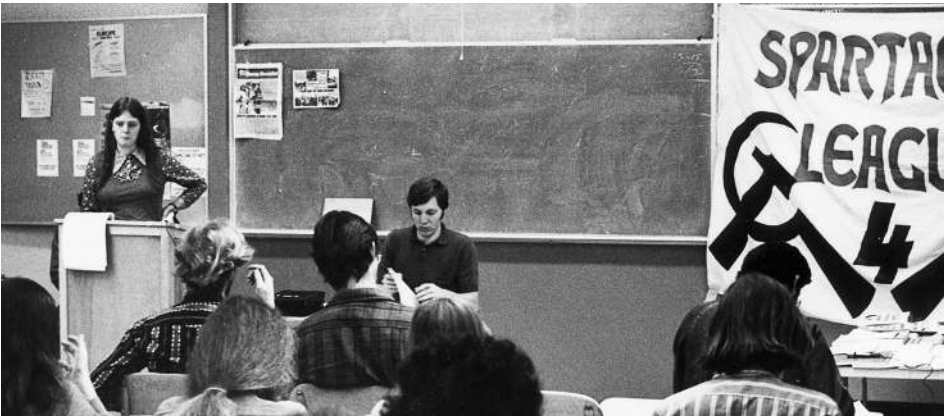
While the timing of this letter is a bit down the track, I wanted to say a couple of things about Tweet Carter. Her death was saddening. She was someone whom I liked and for whom I had some respect.

While I cannot know if the treatment she was subjected to during the recent hurricane contributed to her death, I do

know from my observation of the New South Wales hospital system that older people, particularly older women, are treated abysmally. Given the continuing decay of capitalism generally, I cannot believe that NSW hospitals are unique.

Communists are where you find them. Being the daughter of faded southern aristocracy Tweet was one of the best examples. On occasion, that persona proved to be quite disarming for political opponents.

I worked with Tweet for about a year in Los Angeles from June 1972 until she transferred to the San Francisco Bay Area



WV Photo

Tweet Carter speaks for Spartacist League at May 1973 debate with Workers League in Los Angeles.

in mid-1973. She was the political chairman of a local that had a significant number of young and/or newly-recruited members. The local did a few strange things (what became known as the "rubber mats" campaign at Los Angeles City College is one example that comes to mind). Nevertheless, there were successes. Tweet's work helped lay the basis for recruiting several young black comrades in LA. As well, she played a key role in the acquisition of a grouping in and around the Young Socialist Alliance in Arizona (as a fringe benefit of that effort, we did get to see the Grand Canyon).

Tweet was one of the key comrades who led the fight to lance the eruption of the Cunningham-Treiger clique in mid-1972. In particular, she initiated and led an aggressive intervention into the SF Bay Area local where Cunningham was ensconced. The clique elements, in order to justify their own demoralisation had a view that could be described as "the program is everything; the party is nothing except a personality cult." This was pretty funny given that their basis was largely personal. They did not like Cannon much. He was not warm and fuzzy. All he could do was to build a party.

While Tweet (and I) was perhaps at times over-zealous, she acted in the best

Bolshevik tradition as a hard party loyalist. I think that she was crucial in this battle that defined the role of the party in the tradition of Cannon. I think that was true both nationally and in particular on the West Coast where it made that tradition concrete in a way that was not evident before. As well, it helped to integrate many new and capable comrades.

I recently re-read the account of a debate (*Workers Vanguard* No. 22, 8 June 1973) with the Wohlforthite Workers League. They only agreed reluctantly to the debate and had two speakers. Tweet spoke for the Spartacist League. She systematically picked apart the Workers League presentations both on the specifics and on larger programmatic questions. The article nicely conveys her political capacity and her ability to get the crux of a question.

Her statement that she lived as she had intended reminded me of Susan Adrian who made a similar comment. I think that both of them were fine examples of individuals who overcame *some* of the more invidious aspects of women's oppression, a task made more likely because they were committed communists.

I had not seen Tweet for a very long time and I am sorry for that. She was an individual who never failed to make an impact. She will be long and fondly remembered. ■



TROTSKY

Proletarian Revolution: Answer to Capitalist Decay

The austerity and massive unemployment racking the southern tier of the European Union are hallmarks of the ongoing world economic crisis. In contrast to Eduard Bernstein, who projected that socialism would peacefully evolve from the bourgeois order, and other revisionists who predicted a final capitalist collapse, revolutionary Marxists understand that not even the most severe crisis is sufficient in itself to sweep this sys-

tem away. Rather, as Leon Trotsky wrote, only proletarian revolution can lift humanity from capitalist decay.

The Bernsteinians outlined two perspectives: one, unreal, allegedly orthodox "Marxist," according to which in the long run, under the influence of the internal contradictions of capitalism, its mechanical collapse was supposed to take place; and the second, "realistic," according to which a gradual evolution from capitalism to socialism was to be accomplished. Antithetical as these two schemas may be at first glance, they are nevertheless united by a common trait: the absence of the revolutionary factor. While they disavowed the caricature of the automatic collapse of capitalism attributed to them, the Marxists demonstrated that, under the influence of the sharpening class struggle, the proletariat would carry through the revolution long before the objective contradictions of capitalism could lead to its automatic collapse...

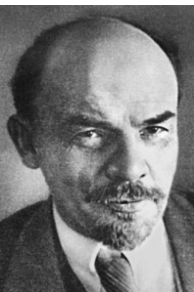
The most important component of the theory of collapse was the theory of pauperization. The Marxists contended, with some prudence, that the sharpening of social contradictions need not signify unconditionally an absolute drop in the standard of living of the masses. But in reality, it is precisely this latter process which is unfolding. Wherein could the collapse of capitalism express itself more acutely than in chronic unemployment and the destruction of social insurance, that is, the refusal of the social order to feed its own slaves?

The opportunistic brakes in the working class have proved to be powerful enough to grant the elemental forces of outlived capitalism additional decades of life. As a result, it is not the idyll of the peaceful transformation of capitalism into socialism which has taken place, but a state of affairs infinitely closer to social decay...

Reformism will be unable to shift the historical responsibility from itself. By paralyzing and curbing the revolutionary energy of the proletariat, the international Social Democracy invests the process of the capitalist collapse with the blindest, most unbridled, catastrophic, and bloody forms.

Of course, one cannot speak of a realization of the revisionist caricature of Marxism except conditionally, in applying it to some given historical period. The way out of decaying capitalism, however, will be found, even if after a great delay, not upon the road of the automatic collapse but upon the revolutionary road.

—Leon Trotsky, "The Only Road" (14 September 1932), reprinted in
The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany (1971)



LENIN

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Young Spartacus

For Free, Quality, Integrated Education for All!

Budget Slashers Attack City College of San Francisco

City College of San Francisco (CCSF), one of the few remaining avenues to higher education for its 85,000 predominantly working-class, poor and minority students, is threatened with being shut down. Last July, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) told the college that it would lose accreditation—i.e., face closure—if it did not sufficiently address the commission's demands for fiscal and structural changes. The ACCJC particularly cited the costs of CCSF's wages and benefits for the unionized faculty and campus workers. Seizing on the threatened sanction, the campus administration unilaterally imposed an 8.8 percent wage cut and began axing faculty and clerical workers' jobs, paving the way to slashing more classes and even entire programs. Already, the administration has announced that it plans to close two of CCSF's nine campus sites.

The ACCJC's own report makes clear that the accreditation sanction has nothing to do with the quality of education at CCSF. In fact, the report commends "several exemplary models of demonstrated educational quality." What they object to is that such programs and the unionized faculty who staff the departments haven't been sufficiently slashed. Their purpose is to streamline programs that educate technicians and other skilled workers as are needed by business and get rid of the rest. Such cuts could potentially target bilingual education, food service and hospitality classes that allow working-class youth to get jobs in SF's unionized hotel industry, as well as job-training programs for those just released from America's prison hellholes.

California's community college system is the largest in the country. For years it had provided working-class and poor youth with their best shot at getting into the elite University of California (UC) system, while offering other such students their only access to any education beyond the increasingly underfunded and decrepit high schools. But having wiped



Young Spartacus

February 21 rally at CCSF protesting threatened closure of college.

out whole swaths of industry and manufacturing, the American bourgeoisie has for decades been choking off funding for public education, seeing little value in educating youth for whom there are no jobs.

The attacks against CCSF are part of a broad nationwide assault on public schools and teachers unions. And California has led the nation on this score, particularly since the passage of Proposition 13 in 1978. A tax revolt by white property owners, Prop. 13 cut spending on social programs benefiting black people, minorities and the poor, with schools taking some of the biggest hits. The 2007-08 capitalist economic meltdown sent the budget-slashing, union-busting drive into high gear. Funding for the community college system has been slashed by over \$1 billion, a quarter of classes have been cut entirely, and despite the fiction of "free tuition" the fees for classes have risen by an astronomical 255 percent in nine years.

Over the last several months, CCSF students, as well as faculty organized in the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), have participated in rallies against the attacks on the college. Protests organized

by the Save CCSF Coalition, in which the reformist Socialist Organizer (S.O.) plays a leading role, have pleaded with CCSF Chancellor Thelma Scott-Skillman and the Board of Trustees to "reverse all cuts" and "promote equity." A banner at a February 21 protest demanded "Trustees: Put Us First! We Are S.F. City College!" Fat chance of that! The whole purpose of the Board of Trustees is to enforce the dictates of the capitalist rulers whose interests they represent, and that means bringing down the budget ax. S.O. couples its entreaties to the good offices of the Chancellor with appeals to the bourgeoisie to fork out more tax money to fund education.

The government's tax code flows from the class and social relations that define racist American capitalism, a system of production for profit based on the exploitation of labor and the brutal subjugation of black people. Look at Proposition A—a property parcel tax intended specifically to provide funds to stop budget cuts and layoffs at CCSF. Recognizing the importance of the school, an overwhelming majority of SF voters supported Prop. A in last November's elections. But the rulers hold the purse strings. As Chancellor Scott-Skillman and the Board of Trustees made clear, they have no intention of using these funds to "save CCSF." Rather, they have pledged that money raised under Prop. A will go to building up the college's financial reserves, while the axing of jobs and classes continues.

There is no lack of money in this rich country that could be used to provide free, quality education for all. But for working people to get their hands on that wealth will require nothing less than socialist revolution to break the power of the bourgeoisie. It is this revolutionary perspective that guides the Spartacus Youth Club, which has intervened into student and labor rallies protesting the closure of CCSF. As a Spartacist speaker declared at a February 21 protest:

"CCSF isn't going to be saved by appealing to the chancellor or the campus administration, which really exists to serve the capitalist rulers on the campus.... And it isn't going to be saved by

appealing for 'bridge loans' to the Democratic Party city administration, which has been cutting wages, benefits and jobs for workers all over the city. Alongside the students, there has to be mobilized the power of the workers, the people who make this city run.... The people who go to school here are the children of working-class people, and working people in this city and the whole Bay Area have an innate interest in fighting to save CCSF. And that fight must be mobilized around the call for free, quality, integrated education for everybody."

The SYC demands: No tuition, open admissions and a full living stipend for all students! Abolish the Board of Trustees and the administration! Those who work, study and teach at the colleges and universities should run them—for worker/student/teacher control!

Race and Class Privilege in Education

Contrary to the myth that college and university campuses are ivory towers that exist apart from the broader society, the attack on CCSF shows in the realm of higher education the race and class privilege at the core of American capitalism. The whole history of the community college system provides a concrete demonstration that the bourgeoisie seeks to spend on educating poor and working-class youth only what they can realize back in profit through the exploitation of their labor. From the beginning, the conception of such colleges was to provide skilled workers and technicians for industry. They massively grew in the aftermath of World War II, particularly to provide workers for the growing defense industries that had moved to California. Indeed, when these industries faced a labor shortage during the war, California shipyard owners recruited untrained and often semiliterate Southern youth, many of them black, who learned how to read and write and often became skilled apprentices in little more than three months.

Following the war, the GI Bill provided free tuition for those who had served as cannon fodder for U.S. imperialism. Working-class and poor families thought that their sons and daughters would finally have access to higher education and a better future. But with enrollment skyrocketing, including many knocking on the door for entry into the prestigious University of California system, a committee headed by UC Berkeley Chancellor Clark Kerr came up with the Master Plan for Education in 1960. Qualifications for getting into UC were ramped up to limit enrollment to the top 12 percent of high school graduates. Meanwhile, the California state colleges, which previously had largely been teacher-training institutions, became officially recognized as liberal arts colleges. Qualifications for entry were tightened to apply to only 33 percent of high school graduates as opposed to the previous 50 to 70 percent. Community and junior colleges were to take and train the rest.

Affirmative action—a limited gain of the civil rights movement—allowed

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NYC: Protest against tuition hike at City University of New York.

Give It Back to the Oglala!

Wounded Knee Massacre Site Up for Sale

There is no more potent symbol of the genocide, wholesale land theft and dispossession meted out to the Native American peoples than Wounded Knee. It was the site of the last battle of the so-called Indian Wars—the 1890 massacre of some 300 men, women and children by the U.S. Army’s Seventh Cavalry. This was the same Seventh Cavalry once headed by one George Armstrong Custer, which was routed in the battle of Little Big Horn by the Lakota and their allies four years earlier. That may well have accounted for just how bloodthirsty the Army’s slaughter at Wounded Knee was. It was due to that legacy that this was also the site of the 1973 American Indian Movement (AIM) occupation and subsequent stand-off with federal agents armed to the teeth.

For the next three years, the Oglala Sioux Pine Ridge Reservation was subjected to a reign of terror by hundreds of FBI and Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) agents, supplemented by trained and armed thugs. Some 69 tribal members were victims of unsolved murders. Mass arrests were carried out and militants like Leonard Peltier were framed up and imprisoned (see accompanying article).

Adding insult to grave injury, the Wounded Knee site is now up for sale by a private owner for \$3.9 million. The Oglala reportedly have a May 1 deadline to come up with the money or the site may be sold to one of the investment groups that have made offers. To say that the Oglala Sioux are cash-strapped is a cruel understatement. Having had their land stolen through broken treaties as well as by legislation sanctioning massive land grabs and sales to non-Native settlers as part of allotment schemes, those who survive at Pine Ridge live in conditions of absolute hopeless poverty. From 1980 to 2000, the counties that make up Pine Ridge comprised the poorest in the country. The 2000 census found them the third poorest, only because things got worse on two other South Dakota reservations. As of



Soldiers bury corpses of Native Americans slaughtered by Army at Wounded Knee in December 1890.

2007, the unemployment rate was a staggering 80-90 percent, per capita income was \$4,000, and teens committed suicide at four times the national rate. Infant mortality is three times the national rate, and life expectancy is the lowest in the United States and second-lowest in the Western Hemisphere, after Haiti.

The U.S. government stole the lands around Wounded Knee. They should be given back to the Oglala to do with as they see fit! There is no way to undo the destruction of the aboriginal tribes by the racist rulers who founded their republic on the backs of black chattel slaves and whose westward march was guided by the spirit of General Sheridan’s infamous remark: “There are no good Indians but dead Indians.” Only the destruction of capitalism through proletarian revolution

and the inauguration of the era of socialist development can ensure the all-sided, voluntary integration of American Indians into society on the basis of the fullest equality and meet the special needs created by a history of injustice and oppression.

Last year, the Departments of Justice and the Interior (which oversees the Bureau of Indian Affairs) announced a \$1 billion settlement over nearly 56 million acres of Indian land held “in trust” by Washington but in fact exploited by timber, farming, mining and other commercial interests with little benefit to the tribes. Attorney General Eric Holder proclaimed that the settlement “fairly and honorably resolves historical grievances over the accounting and management of tribal trust funds, trust lands and other non-monetary trust

resources that, for far too long, have been a source of conflict between Indian tribes and the United States” (London *Guardian*, 4 May 2012). Ha!

The reality is that the successive defeats of the Native Americans in their struggles to preserve some independence from the capitalist state are reflected in the changes in the legal status of the tribes. In 1830, the Supreme Court ruled that the tribes “had always been considered as distinct, independent, political communities, retaining their original natural rights,” only to be informed by President Andrew Jackson that the Court could try to enforce this decision, but he controlled the army and was going to relocate the Cherokee. He did so under his bluntly named Indian Removal Act of 1830. Some 20,000 Cherokees were marched at gunpoint from Georgia to Oklahoma, with a quarter of those perishing on this Trail of Tears.

The Dawes Act of 1887 broke up, with few exceptions, what remained of the native communal holdings through a land-allotment system that gave small parcels to individual Native Americans and threw the rest onto the open market. Although citizenship was finally granted to Native Americans in 1924, the government has maintained an essentially custodial relationship to the reservations, holding the land “in trust.”

Until the New Deal’s Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) of 1934, the reservations were ruled autocratically by BIA agents. Designed as a reform measure to introduce limited self-rule, the IRA resulted in the creation of a layer of Indian bureaucrats on the reservations who rubber-stamp government policies and sell tribal land and mineral holdings. Later the government attempted to terminate tribal status and thereby end federal assistance programs and tax exemptions, the economic margin upon which many survive. Through this, the capitalist rulers washed

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AIM Leader Leonard Peltier: 37 Years in Prison Hell

Leonard Peltier is known throughout the world as one of the most prominent political prisoners in the United States. His 37 years of incarceration due to his courageous activism in the American Indian Movement (AIM) has come to symbolize the U.S. rulers’ racist repression of the country’s indigenous people, survivors of centuries of genocidal oppression.

Peltier emerged as a Native American leader in the late 1960s. In response to the hideous oppression he experienced and saw all around him, he became involved in struggles for Native American rights and joined AIM. It was in his capacity as a trusted AIM activist that he came to assist the Oglala Lakota people of the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota in the mid 1970s. AIM came into the government’s crosshairs because it was attempting to combat the enforced poverty of Native Americans and the continued theft of their lands by the Feds and the energy companies, which were intent on grabbing rich uranium deposits under Sioux land in western South Dakota. The hated Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and the FBI turned Pine Ridge into a war zone

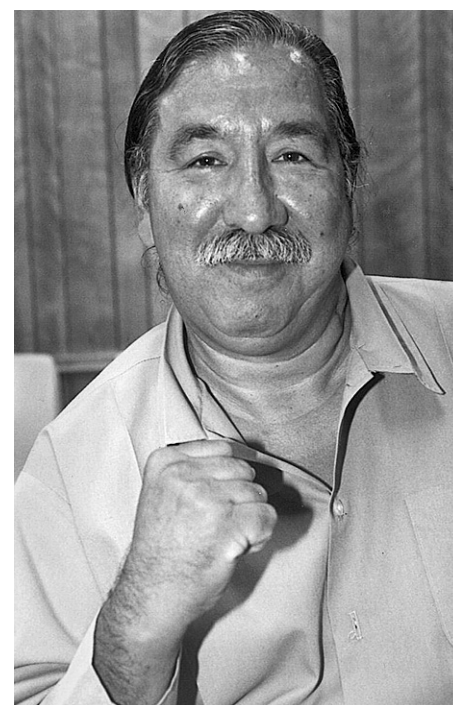
as they trained and armed thugs to terrorize and crush Indian activists. Between 1973 and 1976, these forces carried out more than 300 attacks, killing at least 69 people.

In June 1975, 250 FBI and BIA agents, SWAT police and local vigilantes descended on Pine Ridge and precipitated a shootout. Two FBI agents were killed, and Peltier and three others were charged. All charges were dropped against one AIM activist, and two others were acquitted as jurors stated that they did not believe “much of anything” said by government witnesses and that it seemed “pretty much a clear-cut case of self-defense” against the murderous FBI-led assault.

The government then went into overdrive to assure a conviction against Peltier. His trial was moved to Fargo, North Dakota, a city with strong bias against Native Americans. The prosecution concealed ballistics tests showing that Peltier’s gun could not have been used in the shootings while the trial judge ruled out any possibility of another acquittal on grounds of self-defense by refusing to allow any evidence of government ter-

ror against Pine Ridge activists. In April 1977, Peltier was convicted by an all-white jury and sentenced to two consecutive life terms.

Successive court proceedings have laid bare the evidence of Peltier’s innocence and of massive prosecutorial misconduct. In a 1985 appeals hearing, the government’s lead attorney admitted, “We can’t prove who shot those agents.” In 1986, the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the trial jury could have acquitted Peltier if records improperly withheld from the defense had been made available. In 2003, the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals stated, “Much of the government’s behavior at the Pine Ridge Reservation and in its prosecution of Mr. Peltier is to be condemned. The government withheld evidence. It intimidated witnesses. These facts are not disputed.” Nevertheless, in August 2009 the U.S. Parole Commission again turned down Peltier’s request for parole, declaring that Peltier would not be considered for parole for another 15 years! For Peltier, who is now 68 years old, this in effect was a declaration by the state that this courageous man will die in prison.



Cainmo.com

The long trail of injustice against Leonard Peltier has been documented in the film *Incident at Oglala*, narrated by Robert Redford, and in Peter Matthiessen’s book *In the Spirit of Crazy Horse*. Decades of unjust imprisonment have not only robbed him of the prime years of his life. They have also taken a devastating toll on his physical well-being as he suffers from diabetes, high blood pressure, partial blindness and a heart condition. We join millions around the world in demanding: **Free Leonard Peltier now!** ■

Defend the NATO 3!

Chicago

For nearly a year, Brent Betterly, Jared Chase, and Brian Jacob Church have been locked away in Cook County Jail, facing possible 40-year prison stretches on an array of “terrorism” and other trumped-up charges, with bail set at \$1.5 million each. Last spring, these Occupy activists traveled from Florida to Chicago in the lead-up to protests against a May 20 summit of the U.S.-dominated NATO imperialist military alliance. The city was under a virtual state of siege orchestrated by Mayor Rahm Emanuel, with thousands of National Guardsmen, troops and cops mobilized to shield the summit from over 10,000 protesters. On May 16, Betterly, Chase and Church—now known as the NATO 3—were arrested for a supposed plot to make four Molotov cocktails and hurl them at police stations and other targets. The highly publicized arrests were part of a campaign to brand the protests as violent, in order to chill opposition to the NATO war criminals who have the blood of untold thousands in Afghanistan and elsewhere on their hands.

As the Partisan Defense Committee wrote in a 21 May 2012 protest letter to the Cook County State’s Attorney (printed in WV No. 1003, 25 May 2012), “The arrests of Betterly, Church and Chase have all the earmarks of a classic case of police entrapment and provocation.” The arrests came less than a week after the defendants had posted a video on YouTube of a Chicago cop who had pulled their car over, threatening them: “We’ll come look for you, each and every one of you.”

In January, the NATO 3’s lawyers filed a motion to dismiss the “terrorism” charges on constitutional grounds. The defense motion paints a chilling picture of how undercover cops known as Mo and Gloves tried every trick in the book to set the activists up:

“Despite a more than two-week continuing effort by the undercover Chicago police officers posing as fellow members of Occupy to entice and encourage the defendants to carry out some criminal act, the defendants never did anything.... It was only in desperation, after two weeks of nothing to show for their undercover infiltration of the defendants, and the untold resources expended to facilitate those efforts, that the police suggested at least some bottles of gasoline [Molotov cocktails] be put together. The defendants never discussed a specific plan of what to do with these bottles, let alone a plan to use them to intimidate or coerce a significant portion of the civilian population. In fact, the bottles were always in possession of the under-cover police who suggested their own provocative ideas for how to use the bottles.”

Just moments after the bottles were filled with gasoline, the undercover cops sent a prearranged signal, and the police then raided the apartment with guns drawn. They proceeded to ransack the place, confiscating computers, cellphones and political literature.

The NATO 3 were not the only activ-

ists set up and slapped with felony charges prior to the military summit. Sebastian Senakiewicz and Mark Neiweem were charged with “falsely making a terrorist threat” and “attempted possession of an incendiary device” respectively. Both took non-cooperating plea deals and remain imprisoned. In all, over 100 anti-NATO protesters were arrested, from pacifist liberals to anarchoid activists. Also arrested during the weekend of the May 20 protest were the Tinley Park 5, anti-fascists who have been convicted for helping break up a white-supremacist gathering in a Chicago suburb (see accompanying article).

On March 27, Judge Thaddeus Wilson denied the NATO 3’s defense motion to dismiss, in a court hearing that was clearly designed to intimidate the defendants and everyone who came out on their behalf. Observers noted that while the judge announced his ruling, the defendants were held in a separate room, sealed off by soundproof glass and away from their supporters, with an armed, uniformed cop for each of them. Meanwhile, four armed cops sat in the audience. “It’s what a lot of scholars and people who pay attention to national security call the ‘new normal,’” said Thomas Durkin, a lawyer for Chase. In simple terms, the “new normal” is a creeping police state.

As the NATO 3’s motion pointed out, the Illinois statutory definition of terrorism is so vague and broad that it could include “labor strikes, peaceful occupations and sit-ins, political protests and boycotts.” Ever since the inception of the “war on terror” in 2001, we have warned that while the first targets were mainly immigrants, particularly Muslims and those from the Near East, the ultimate targets would be the labor movement, black people, the left and anyone who would dare to protest the depredations of U.S. imperialism, at home or abroad. And indeed, leftist political activity of many stripes has increasingly become a focal point of “anti-terror” repression.

In 2008, a host of undercover agents wormed their way into the organizing of protests at the Republican National Convention in Minneapolis, entrapping activists on “terrorism” charges. One agent later infiltrated the Minneapolis branch of the reformist Freedom Road Socialist Organization (FRSO—publishers of *Fight Back!*). This led in 2010 to FBI raids and grand jury subpoenas against 23 leftists and trade unionists in Chicago and Minneapolis, many of them FRSO supporters, as part of a witch-hunting investigation falsely identifying solidarity efforts on behalf of Palestinian and Colombian leftists with “material support to terrorism.” Last November, four Cleveland supporters of the populist Occupy movement received prison terms ranging from six to eleven and a half years for a plot concocted by an FBI informant. Meanwhile police “red squads,” which had largely gone underground in the wake of the social upheavals of the 1960s, have resurfaced in many cities under the guise of investigating “terrorism.”



Chicago Tribune

20 May 2012: Virtual state of siege was declared in Chicago as police went after protesters during NATO summit.

A dangerous vise is being tightened around political protest in this country. First Amendment rights and other civil liberties are shredded in the name of “homeland security,” while the state’s moles and rats cook up felonious “plots” aimed at luring political dissenters close enough to slap charges on them. This is a concerted, *bipartisan* effort. The use of anti-terror laws against leftists has accelerated under the Democratic administration of Barack Obama. From San Francisco, Oakland and Portland to Minneapolis, Chicago and Cleveland, it has

been Democratic Party mayors who have led the crackdowns and witchhunts aimed at Occupy and other protesters.

The NATO 3 are scheduled for trial on September 16. The PDC, a legal and social defense organization associated with the Marxist Spartacist League, calls on the left and labor movements to join in demanding: **Drop all the charges now!** The PDC has donated \$200 to the legal defense of the NATO 3 and encourages others to do the same. Donations can be made at <https://www.wepay.com/donations/nato-5-defense>. ■

Free Tinley Park Anti-Fascists!

Last May, some 18 anti-racist militants broke up a gathering of fascists in the Chicago suburb of Tinley Park called to organize a “White Nationalist Economic Summit.” Among the vermin sent scurrying were some with links to the Stormfront Web site run by a former Ku Klux Klan grand dragon. Such fascist meetings are not merely right-wing discussion clubs but organizing centers for race terror against black people, Jews, immigrants, gays and anyone else the white-supremacists consider subhuman. For their basic act of social sanitation, five of the anti-fascist fighters were sentenced by a Cook County court to prison terms of three-and-a-half to six years on charges of “armed violence.” (See “Freedom Now for Tinley Park 5!” WV No. 1018, 22 February.)

The Spartacist League and the Partisan Defense Committee stand by these militants and call on workers, leftists and anti-racist fighters to demand freedom for the Tinley Park Five. The fascists are a deadly threat to the integrated labor movement, which should be in the forefront of efforts to crush them in the egg. Four of the five who were sentenced—Jason Sutherlin, Cody Lee Sutherlin, Dylan Sutherlin and Alex Stuck—have agreed to receive \$25 monthly stipends the PDC sends to class-war prisoners. The PDC program, which includes additional gifts during the holiday season, serves not merely to alleviate some of the harshness of incarceration but also as a message of solidarity from those outside prison walls.

The courage of the Tinley Park defendants was seen in their principled response to the government vendetta. Each of the five was initially charged with 37 felony counts, including armed violence, property damage and mob action. The cops and prosecutors applied continuous pressure to try to get them to give up names of those involved in sending the fascists scattering, which the five steadfastly refused to do. Unable to meet the exorbitant bonds, which ranged up to \$250,000, they spent seven months in Cook County Jail. Facing the prospect of up to another year behind bars awaiting trial, they accepted a non-

cooperating agreement in which each pleaded guilty to three counts of armed violence in return for guarantees of time off for good behavior.

In their letters agreeing to receive PDC stipends, the four expressed appreciation for the contributions and also for the issues of *Class-Struggle Defense Notes* and *Workers Vanguard* that they have received. One noted that his fellow inmates lined up to read the WV article about their case.

Initiated in 1986, the stipend program takes as its model that of the International Labor Defense (ILD), affiliated to the early Communist Party, which provided stipends to over 100 prisoners of the class war. As James P. Cannon, founder and first secretary of the ILD, wrote, “The class conscious worker accords to the class war prisoners a place of singular honor and esteem” (“The Cause That Passes Through a Prison,” *Labor Defender* [September 1926]). Past PDC recipients worldwide include an Irish Republican Socialist Party militant, members of the British National Union of Mineworkers and members of the U.S. miners, Teamsters and Steelworkers unions. Now, the Tinley Park anti-fascists are joined in the program with America’s foremost class-war prisoner, Mumia Abu-Jamal, American Indian Movement leader Leonard Peltier, radical lawyer Lynne Stewart, former Black Panther supporters Mondo we Langa and Ed Poindexter and imprisoned members of the Philadelphia MOVE commune.

We urge WV readers to contribute to the stipend program by sending checks payable to the PDC and earmarked “prisoners stipends fund” to: PDC, P.O. Box 99, Canal St. Station, New York, NY 10013-0099. Letters to the Tinley Park Five can be sent to: Alex Stuck M34020, 2600 N. Brinton Avenue, Dixon, IL 61021; Cody Sutherlin M34021, 13423 E. 1150th Avenue, Robinson, IL 62454; Dylan Sutherlin M34022, P.O. Box 7711, Centralia, IL 62801; Jason Sutherlin M34023, 100 Hillcrest Rd., East Moline, IL 61244; John Tucker M34024, P.O. Box 900, Taylorville, IL 62568. ■

Labour Party Paved Way for Tory Privatizations

Britain: Nationalized Health Care Under Attack

The following article is reprinted from Workers Hammer No. 222 (Spring 2013), newspaper of the Spartacist League/Britain, section of the International Communist League.

WORKERS HAMMER

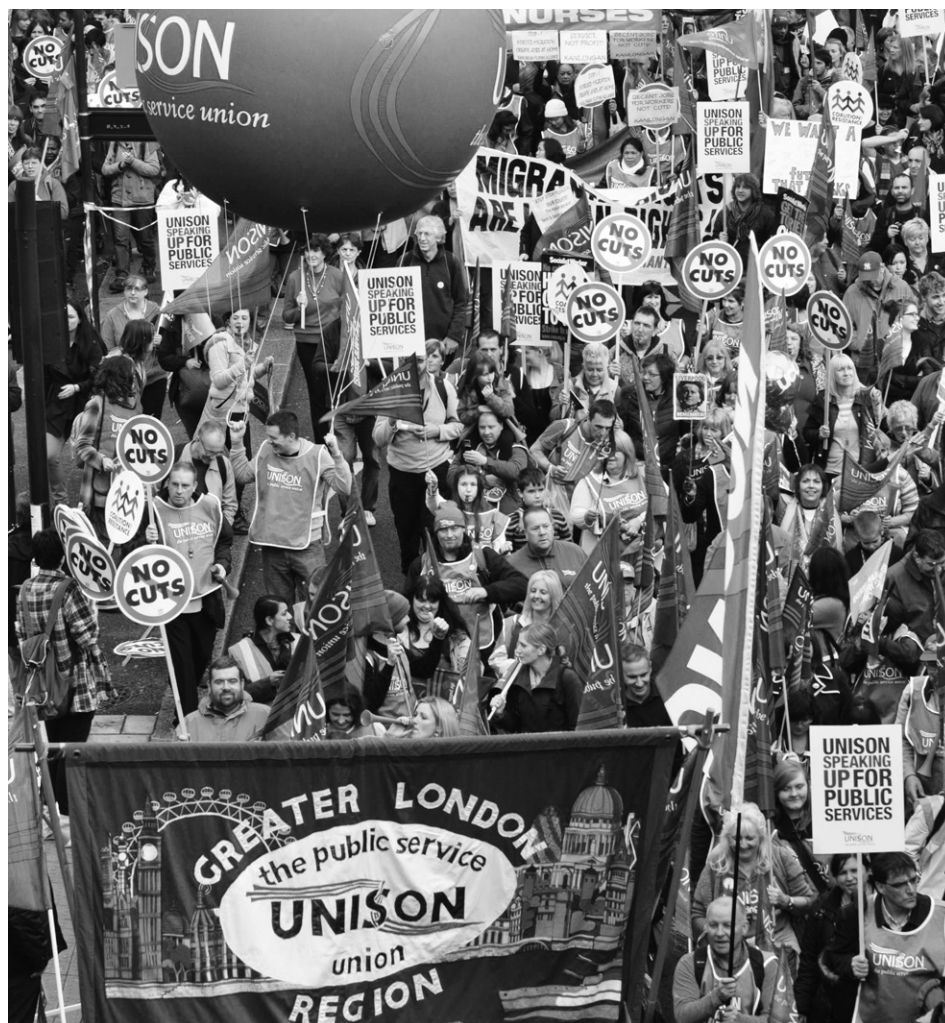
The Health and Social Care Act which takes effect on 1 April amounts to the biggest shake-up of the National Health Service [NHS] in England since its foundation. For the first time since 1948, the government will no longer be obligated by law to provide universal healthcare. In place of a “duty to provide” this fundamental social service, the government now has a “duty to promote” it—an innocuous-sounding change in language meant to obscure a fundamental shift towards the private sector. After the Act was passed by Parliament, Dr. Jacky Davis, co-chair of the NHS Consultants’ Association, said “we no longer have a national health service.”

Among the most controversial provisions of the new legislation are the clinical commissioning groups (CCGs), which will control the lion’s share of the NHS budget—roughly £65 billion [\$99 billion] out of some £100 billion this financial year. Ostensibly under the direction of GPs [general practitioners], CCGs will commission the provision of patient care, including by directing patients to private providers and refusing treatment that does not meet “reasonable requirements.” A recent study by the *British Medical Journal* shows that, of the GPs who are running commissioning groups, one in three help run or hold shares in private healthcare firms. But in reality, most GPs have neither the time nor expertise to “commission” care, so this will be handled by private consultants such as the giant management consultancy firm McKinsey. Under the guise of giving GPs more responsibility, CCGs in fact are a gateway for the outflow of billions in NHS funds to private firms.

Government officials claim that NHS services will still be free at the point of use. But as political economist Colin Leys points out: “This is seriously misleading. They fail to add a key proviso—provided the service is still available on the NHS. In reality, a growing list of services will not be available, and so won’t be free” (*Red Pepper*, April 2012). In fact this process has already begun. In 2006, Croydon Primary Care Trust put together a list of 34 procedures that need not be offered to patients, including surgery for cataracts, hips and knees, to save money. The “Croydon list” has quietly become widespread. People with non-life-threatening but painful or disabling conditions are told they must pay for treatment, if they can; otherwise, too bad. Some GPs are restricted in the number of referrals they can make in a week, no matter the needs of the patients they see. Referrals to specialists have been intercepted and denied by privately run “referral gateways.” The U.S. health insurer UnitedHealth, for one, has been prominent in vetting and sometimes overturning GPs’ judgments. And as more people are driven to the private sector for care, funds are leached from the NHS, which threatens to become a dumping ground for the poor and chronically ill.

Working People Deserve Better!

Hospital closures are sweeping the country. A&E [emergency] and maternity wards are being shut, or downgraded as in



20 October 2012: Health care workers and others at Trades Union Congress demonstration against austerity, London.

For Free, Quality Health Care for All!

the case of Lewisham Hospital in south London. Despite being financially solvent, Lewisham was targeted as part of a restructuring plan when the neighbouring South London Healthcare NHS Trust was taken into administration. That trust had been crippled by £60 million a year in debt repayment incurred as a result of Private Finance Initiatives (PFIs), under which public building projects are financed by private debt. The government aims to slash the healthcare budget by £20 billion by 2015, so for hospitals not faced with closure or downgrading, swingeing [severe] cuts are on the horizon. The Whittington Hospital in north London has announced cost-cutting plans that include making 570 staff redundant [laid off] and selling off several of its buildings to private bidders. There, consultants from former car parts company Unipart Group have been paid £500,000 so far to find savings.

In “The Great NHS Robbery” (opendemocracy.net, 31 January), science writer Marcus Chown explains: “Gradually, the government is starving the NHS of money. This is deliberate. As hospitals run out of money—and the exorbitant repayments on PFI deals are a major factor here—they become prey to takeovers by private companies.” The takeover last year of Hinchingsbrooke Hospital in Cambridgeshire, an NHS hospital facing closure, by private company Circle Holdings has been eyed as a blueprint for the future. Circle—owned by companies and

investment funds registered in the British Virgin Islands, Jersey and the Cayman Islands—intends to make £311 million in savings, and is cutting jobs. Others positioned to profit from hospital privatisation are Virgin magnate Richard Branson and Harmoni, which already runs GP services in many areas.

Privatising healthcare is so deeply unpopular that government spokesmen bandy about terms like “patient choice” and use stultifying vagaries and a dizzying array of initials to obscure what they are doing. Many details of the Health and Social Care Act are still in dispute. Regulations that would have put virtually all NHS services out to tender had to be amended following an outcry. But fol-

lowing each retreat, the government has returned to the offensive. For the British bourgeoisie, the NHS presents an unwelcome overhead—not to mention the easy profits privatisation offers the financial speculators in the City. The interest of the capitalist class in the health of the population comes down to maintaining a workforce fit enough to exploit and soldiers to fight their wars and imperialist adventures. In times of social upheaval, the capitalists may shell out enough to placate the population, but they will always attempt to take those concessions back.

To put the immense wealth generated by the labour of working people at the service of human need will require the expropriation of the bourgeoisie through workers revolution and the establishment of a workers state. A collectivised planned economy will have to be built in order to guarantee not only healthcare but all the other fundamental requirements of life, including a good diet, decent housing, recreation and full employment. The fight to get there must begin with defending what we have now, as inadequate as it is—and the NHS has become a battleground. The solution does not lie in lobbying parliament or bringing Labour into office in the next election. Healthcare workers, who have borne a great burden of cuts, do have the potential and the interest to bring real power to this struggle. Their fight would win enormous support and do more than a million petitions. But it has been hamstrung by the union tops who set as their political agenda putting Labour in government. These misleaders accept that the working class must help to pay the cost of the capitalist crisis but imagine they could negotiate better terms from Ed Miliband’s Labour Party.

Labour’s Privatization of the NHS

When Labour’s shadow health secretary Andy Burnham claimed the government was “trying to force through privatisation of the NHS by the back door,” Tory health secretary Jeremy Hunt accused him of scare tactics. Labour has promised to repeal the Health and Social Care Act, but opening the NHS to huge corporate profits was Labour’s policy long before the Con-Dem [Conservative-Liberal Democrats coalition] government came along. As Colin Leys and Stewart Player describe it: “The reality is that successive Labour health secretaries, working closely with the private sector, had already constructed almost the entire edifice of a healthcare market. The Tory plan merely speeds up the final stage and makes it more clearly visible” (*Red Pepper*, October 2010). Still, Leys concludes: “Unless Ed Miliband and Andy Burnham return to office and honour their prom-

January 26:
Demonstrators
at 15,000-strong
London march
against threatened
closure
of Lewisham
Hospital emergency
room and maternity
wards.



Thatcher...

(continued from page 12)

that gamble paid off.

The coal miners strike of 1984-85 was the defining event of Thatcher’s rule. The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) represented the most powerful and militant section of the working class. They had brought down Edward Heath’s Conservative government in 1974, and Thatcher was out for revenge. She decided to destroy the NUM in order to bring the trade-union movement to heel, and she destroyed the mining industry to smash the NUM.

Thatcher’s victory over the miners was not inevitable. The miners fought heroically against fierce state repression for 12 months. Their strike was supported by broad sections of the working class—there were plenty of examples of dockers and railway workers refusing to touch scab coal. But Labour Party leader Neil Kinnock obscenely echoed Thatcher, denouncing miners for “violence” on the picket lines against the strikebreaking cops. The leaders of some unions openly scabherded, while the “left” union leaders mouthed fine words but curbed the workers’ militancy. In the final analysis, it was not the capitalist state that defeated the miners but the fifth column in the workers movement, including the left-talking leaders of the dockers union, who sent their striking members back to work twice during the miners strike.

We called on all unions to refuse to handle scab coal and for a fighting triple alliance of miners, dockers and railway workers to strike together. This would have amounted to a general strike, posing the question: who was going to start things up again? Which class would rule? It was this perspective the reformist Labour politicians and trade-union bureaucrats hated and feared above all. As our paper *Workers Hammer* (No. 67, March 1985) put it after the defeat of the strike:

“The NUM leadership under Arthur Scargill took this strike about as far as it could go within a perspective of militant trade union reformism, and still it lost. Why? Because militancy alone is not enough. From day one it was clear that the NUM was up against the full power of the capitalist state. What was needed was a party of revolutionary activists rooted in the trade unions which fought tooth and nail to mobilise other unions in strike action alongside the NUM. But all Arthur Scargill had was the Labour Party, and it would rather see the NUM dead than organise to take on the bosses’ state in struggle.”

In 1983, on the eve of the miners strike, Scargill was witchhunted by the misleaders of the Trades Union Congress, aided by Gerry Healy’s Workers Revolutionary Party, for telling the truth that imperialist-funded “free trade union” Solidarność in Poland was anti-socialist. The failure of any delegate to defend him signalled to Thatcher that Scargill was isolated and she could launch her attack. For Thatcher, the miners and other militant workers

represented “the enemy within” while the Soviet Union and East European deformed workers states were the ultimate “enemy without.” Polish Solidarność had a programme for capitalist counter-revolution. This is why, apart from the Union of Democratic Mineworkers who scabbed on the miners strike, it was the only “trade union” Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan ever liked.

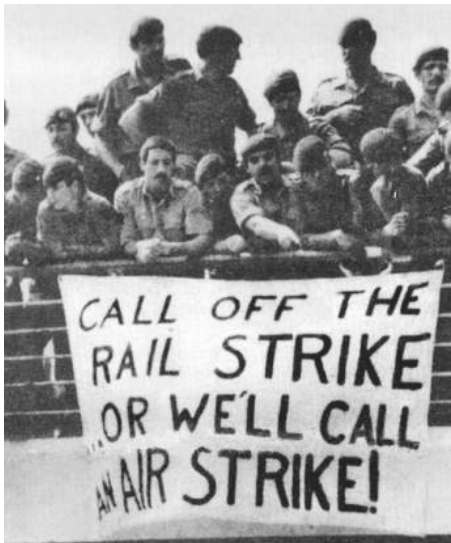
Those trade-union bureaucrats who were the most anti-Soviet were also the most hostile to the miners strike. And the anti-Communist “socialists” like the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), whose devotion to capitalist “democracy” led them to support Solidarność, were far to the right of the majority of striking miners. The SWP had members in the steel plants who crossed miners’ picket lines. When we exposed this at a public meeting, their founder-leader Tony Cliff bragged about how many and where! Workers Power and (retrospectively) the Socialist Party supported the scab ballot Thatcher and Kinnock were trying to force on the NUM, with workers already on strike supposed to hold a strike vote. The miners had voted with their feet; their weapon was not the bourgeoisie’s strike laws but the picket line!

As for Lech Walesa, the leader of Solidarność, during the strike he took a

cause even after the strike: participating in gay rights marches, for example. The miners were predominantly white and from rural areas, but the strike radicalised them. Many miners would say that before the strike they never knew what it was like to be black or Asian, or to be Catholic in Northern Ireland. After they had been on the receiving end of the cops’ violence, they could relate to that oppression.

The miners strike also impacted broader layers of the working class. In 1984, when the IRA set off a bomb at the Tory conference, a common joke was that the culprits should be shot because they missed Thatcher. A worker at a car plant in Birmingham quipped that the police had better get started rounding up suspects because there were 50 million of them. Ten years earlier, Irish workers had been physically driven out of this same plant after the criminal bombing of two city centre pubs was attributed to the IRA. During the strike, in the Catholic areas of Northern Ireland banners went up: “Victory to the Miners!” Large collections of food and money were taken up in Dublin. Irish trade unionists said they were repaying the miners for the support British workers gave them during the Dublin Lockout of 1913.

Thatcher personified the bourgeois onslaught against the working class and



no credit
British victory in Falklands/Malvinas war fueled attacks on unions at home, as returning troops threatened to break 1982 rail workers strike.

The Brixton police riots of 1981 and 1985 are hallmarks of the Thatcher years, when blacks who tried to protest police brutality were attacked by police and denounced by Thatcher as “criminal, criminal.”

Among the more nauseating claims about Thatcher is that by triumphing in the male-dominated world of bourgeois politics she struck a blow for women’s equality. Thatcher was a dedicated *enemy* of women’s liberation. She attacked single mothers and unashamedly campaigned to restore Victorian values. She openly maligned gays and managed to enact Section 28, the first anti-gay legislation in over 100 years, which prevented the “promotion” of homosexuality by school and local authorities. Moreover, the triumph of movements she supported internationally—such as the reactionary *mujahedin* in Afghanistan and capitalist counter-revolution in the Soviet Union and East Europe—came at the cost of women in particular.

Thatcher spearheaded the British capitalists’ reactionary campaigns. But some credit for the dismal situation of the trade unions in Britain today must be given to the “old Labour” misleaders who isolated struggles, disarmed militant workers and supported the drive for capitalist counter-revolution in the East. When asked what her greatest achievement was, Thatcher reportedly answered “Tony Blair and New Labour.” And under Tony Blair the Labour Party earned its claim to the Iron Lady’s legacy, trampling on the working class and gutting social services. Working people need a party that will fight for our own class interests, a workers party committed to sweeping away the bankrupt capitalist system. But we’ll take what comfort this deeply unjust world has to offer. Eighty-seven years old, her last days spent in a suite at the Ritz: it’s not exactly Mussolini’s end. Nevertheless, we are glad to see the last of this exceptionally vile representative of the capitalist class, and finally be able to “tramp the dirt down.” ■

PDC British Miners’ Aid Campaign Revives Traditions of Labor Solidarity

Workers Hands Across the Sea

When they marched back after 12 grueling months of class war, the British miners were able to hold their heads up, defiant and ideal in large part because of the tremendous outpouring of international support which their valiant struggle inspired. The British miners’ strike galvanized the world working class on a scale no recent class battle has. French dockworkers dumped truckloads of scab coal before their scabbed port. The Soviet trade union sent £1 million to the miners. Even the scoundrelly oppressed black South African gold miners, battling the bloody apartheid regime, sent contributions and messages of support. While Tony prime minister Maggie Thatcher was doing her best to rip up the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), the most conscious American activists recalled how her fellow laborer Ronald Reagan destroyed the PATCO air controllers union. Their dollars sent through the Pardon Debtors Committee helped revive traditions of labor solidarity going back to the 1920s, in sharp contrast to the protectionist prison distasteful to the AFL-CIO tops (who didn’t send a penny to support this crucial class battle). The PDC’s Aid to Striking British Miners’ Committee, a coalition of labor, socialist, and peace groups, has been set up to help pay for the costs of the re-education of the Southern League.

Even with our modest resources the ISI raised a quarter of what Labour’s funds’ saw fit to give.

International Response to PDC Campaign

One thing capitalists everywhere agreed on was hating the British miners; while Thatcher’s hired judges imposed NUM funds at home, the courts in Dublin, Luxembourg and elsewhere in Europe stole union money deposited abroad and turned it over to the Iron Lady. The Socialist tendency mobilized its resources internationally to back the embattled British miners against Reagan/Thatcher reaction. In addition to the PDC drive in the U.S., Canada and Australia, our comrades in France and West Germany raised hundreds of pounds; the French section sponsored a highly successful campaign to get the British miners’ strike into the schools. Philip had his out to Hiss. An army pollster Thatcher. The NE called for class

Partisan Defense Committee appeal for support to British miners raised over \$23,000 from U.S. unionists in face of AFL-CIO tops’ hostility to strike.

WORKERS VANGUARD
No. 377, 19 April 1985

stand on behalf of his imperialist patrons, praising Thatcher as a “wise and brave woman” in the *Sunday Mirror* under the headline “Why Scargill Is Wrong—by Lech.” Walesa came to Thatcher’s funeral to pay homage with other Cold Warriors like Henry Kissinger. (Scargill, on the other hand, lay low, reportedly responding laconically to a friend’s text of the news “Thatcher dead”: “Scargill alive.”)

Baroness Bigot

During the miners strike, you saw how various minorities got behind the miners. They saw a powerful working-class struggle taking on their common oppressor: the Thatcher government and her brutal cops. Blacks, Asians, gays, Irish Republicans and Catholics championed the miners and gave them material assistance. In turn, the miners came to the defence of oppressed minorities, championing their

the oppressed overall. In 1981, Thatcher saw Bobby Sands and nine other Irish Republican hunger strikers die grisly deaths rather than discuss their demand to be treated as political prisoners. As support grew around the world for the men’s heroic struggle, Thatcher intoned: “Crime is crime is crime. It is not political.” Under Thatcher, British armed forces colluded with Loyalist death squads in the murder of Northern Irish Catholics, including Pat Finucane, a solicitor who defended Republican prisoners. As Labour’s Peter Mandelson recalls, when he became Northern Ireland Secretary in 1999 she advised him: “You can’t trust the Irish, they are all liars.”

Under Thatcher, the black and Asian youth whose parents had come to Britain in times of labour shortages were treated as a surplus population, left to rot in areas deprived of resources. They were at the mercy of racist cops that she spurred on.

ises to repeal the Health and Social Care Act we must be prepared to see more and more of our healthcare, including hospital care, provided by for-profit corporations, with the rise in cost and loss of quality that invariably follows” (*Guardian*, 16 January). Talk about persistent illusions in Labour! Everything Leys documents points to the fact that, should Labour win the next election, they will carry out essentially the same privatising policies as the Tories...only under a different name.

The policy of deliberately forming an “internal market” inside the NHS, hatched in the 1980s under Thatcher, came to life under the Blair government. Under Blair and Brown, NHS trusts were gradually transformed into “foundation trusts” borrowing on the financial market, entering joint enterprises with private companies and setting their own terms of employment. If a foundation trust lost money, it would be closed or taken over. Mid Staffordshire NHS hospital trust cut £10 million from its budget in 2006-07 in order to gain foundation status. In a horror story worthy of a Victorian poorhouse,

somewhere between 400 and 1,200 people needlessly died in Stafford Hospital between 2005 and March 2009, many of them denied pain medication, some left without being washed for up to a month. Feeding was left to family members, but many went hungry. Labour in office refused persistent demands from relatives for a public inquiry. One was conducted under the Con-Dem government, now cynically using the catastrophe to bolster support for its NHS agenda.

Labour oversaw the creation of “Independent Sector Treatment Centres”—private institutions—to perform low-risk elective surgery. These reduced waiting times for potentially life-transforming procedures like hip replacements (a procedure pioneered, in fact, by the NHS), but they guaranteed a minimum income for private companies. Millions of pounds of NHS cash has been paid for procedures that were never carried out. The Blair government also created the “Extended Choice Network,” allowing private centres to treat NHS patients for a handsome sum. In both cases, private institutions

were free to choose the patients that would earn them the most money, while NHS hospitals struggled with debts, cut staff and services, and were threatened with closure if they failed to prove financial “viability.”

Labour in government was also responsible for the phenomenal growth of Private Finance Initiatives throughout the public sector. PFIs allow governments to borrow massive sums while keeping the debt “off balance sheet.” Begun under the Tories in 1992, under Labour PFIs became about the only way of financing the building of new hospitals and schools. PFIs turn public funds into a cash cow for construction giants like Balfour Beatty as well as for global moneylenders. Though sometimes described as “one hospital for the price of two,” in fact PFIs are not even that—extortionate payments are made for a facility which may never belong to the public sector. Today the NHS owes £65 billion for PFI loans; payments on loans and interest are rising at about 18 per cent each year and can be more than 10 per cent of a hospital trust’s yearly intake. We

can thank Labour for this.

What’s needed is a new leadership of the working class dedicated to the overthrow of the capitalist order. To halt the privatisation drive, a class-struggle leadership would mobilise the healthcare unions around a series of immediate demands, including the return of the privatised hospitals and other health facilities to the public sector and cancellation of the PFI debt. McKinsey, Circle, Harmoni, Richard Branson’s multifarious enterprises and the other capitalist vultures based in the City of London must be driven out of every section of the NHS that has been hived off to them! A revolutionary workers party would fight for the expropriation of the private healthcare, insurance and drug companies, and for free, quality healthcare for all, as part of the struggle for socialist revolution.

Union Bureaucrats: Cold Showers and Hot Air

Hospitals shut. Health workers made redundant. Nurses worked to death in

continued on page 8

Health Care...

(continued from page 7)

understaffed wards, then vilified by the government for “failing to provide quality compassionate care.” It could not be clearer that it is necessary to fight. Despite its shortcomings, the NHS is one of the most significant gains working people won from British capitalism and they want passionately to defend it. Angry mass protests against hospital closures have erupted around the country. But they have been channelled into the dead end of lobbying parliament, with politicians of all stripes campaigning from the speakers platform and local council members, celebrities and the likes of the Socialist Workers Party’s People Before Profit initiative setting the ultimate goal of electing a Labour government.

Hospital workers have come out to protest as individuals while their union misleaders act as though they are merely part of the “community,” not the force with the potential to transform the situation. Unison, the largest union in the NHS with 400,000 healthcare workers, proclaims on its website: “UNISON led the campaign against the Health and Social Care Bill, and we will never stop fighting to defend and improve our NHS.” How do the leaders propose doing that? “UNISON members have a very direct way of getting their message across to politicians—through political lobbying.” The leaders of the other main health service union, Unite, appeal for members to email Cameron and their local MPs [Members of Parliament].

When strikes do break out, such as recently in West Yorkshire, they are left isolated. There some 500 medical secretaries and receptionists struck repeatedly against Mid Yorkshire Hospitals Trust’s attempts to lay them off and rehire them at lower pay. Support poured in from patients, other hospital workers and unions around the country who rightly understood that this struggle was in the frontlines of the battle to defend public healthcare. The Unison leadership hinted they would ballot the rest of the union branch as the secretaries returned to work at the beginning of February. Some two months later, they are still equivocating. Unison national executive council member Paul Holmes told a strike rally in February: “This is the biggest dispute in the health services and every health trust in the country is watching you. And if you lose, they are all going to cut wages, too.” He’s right—but did he and the other union bureaucrats ever call out their other members?

The public sector union leaderships limit strikes to “days of action” a couple of times a year to blow off steam while wages and union protections are eroded. This is as true of “left” officials such as Mark Serwotka of the Public and Commercial Services (PCS) union as of the right-wingers. There have been many

opportunities to launch a fight, not least the 30 November 2011 strike against attacks on public sector pensions. But as soon as the mass demonstration was over, then-TUC general secretary Brendan Barber and Dave Prentis, leader of Unison, called off any further action. Reflecting anger at the base, Unite members in the NHS (and local government) rejected the government’s offer, as did the main civil service union, the PCS. The PCS called a one-day public sector protest strike of its own 270,000 members on Budget Day, 20 March. Rather than bemoaning the refusal of the likes of Prentis to organise joint strikes, a class-struggle leadership would go over their heads and appeal to the members of the other unions in the public sector to strike together.

The general secretary of Unite, “left” talking Len McCluskey, was prominent last autumn in touting a motion calling for the TUC to “continue leading from the front” with “far reaching campaigns including the consideration and practicalities of a general strike” against austerity. It speaks volumes about the trade-union bureaucracy that this motion was raised in the TUC by the Prison Officers Association. These thugs have no place in the workers movement! Yet they are embraced as “workers in uniform” by the Socialist Party and trade-union misleaders, including in the PCS, which grotesquely includes immigration cops.

At the huge 20 October 2012 TUC demonstration—held on a Saturday—many workers cheered those, like McCluskey,



Yevgeni Khaldei

Soviet soldiers raise red flag over Berlin’s Reichstag, 1945. Following WWII, European capitalists enacted series of reforms to head off class struggle, counteract influence of USSR among workers.

who mouthed off about a general strike from the platform. Joint class struggle by all the major unions is desperately needed—but this is far from the intention of the trade-union tops. Nearly six months on, predictably, the motion is a dead letter. The Socialist Party, which is in the leadership of the PCS, has not let the passage of six months diminish their touching optimism that the TUC will “name the day” for a 24-hour general strike. For these ostensible socialists, the perspective is back-handed support to Labour: “A



Workers Hammer

Spartacist League/Britain banner during 1984-85 miners strike.

24-hour general strike, with more action planned to follow, could split the coalition government apart and lead to a general election” (*Socialist*, 21 November 2012). “Kick out the Tories” is likewise the perspective offered by the Unite bureaucracy. Under the title “Save our NHS” their website says: “In two years the country goes back to the polls. Help us make sure that the party that saves the NHS is the party that wins.”

The Old Labour “Spirit of ’45”

At its founding in 1948, the NHS famously promised universal healthcare, free to everyone at the point of delivery. With the health service and a national system of benefits, people were to be taken

Labour in office remained committed to administering British capitalism. The postwar nationalisations amounted to a gigantic bailout of the bourgeoisie. Loach’s film does not show it, but the Attlee government called out troops against dockers on strike in 1945—as any other capitalist government would. A willing servant of British imperialism, it also helped to found NATO, sent troops to fight against the North Korean and Chinese deformed workers states, fought a dirty colonial war in Malaya and presided over the bloody partition of India. Attacks on the benefits provided by the NHS began in 1952 when charges for prescriptions and spectacles were introduced to help finance the war in Korea.

Even at its best, the NHS did not provide adequate care for the needs of the population. In the 1950s, Marxist scientist J.D. Bernal captured its shortcomings:

“It is still a health service in name rather than in fact. Defence of national interests has seen to it that Britain has built few new hospitals and health centres since the end of the war. For the most part the National Health Service still depends on the old surgeries, where overworked doctors dispense ineffective drugs to queues of patients, and give them advice that they cannot take.”

—*Science in History*,
Volume III (1954)

One of the more grotesque aspects of capitalism is that life itself—the number of years a person can expect to live and enjoy good health—inevitably comes down in good part to what social class he belongs to. In the poorer parts of Merseyside, where male life expectancy is 67, men are typically incapacitated by some kind of disability at age 44; in the richer parts of west London those numbers are 89 and 74. A male resident of Kensington or Chelsea can expect to live more than 14 years longer than his counterpart in Glasgow. Within the capital alone—the most unequal city in the developed world, according to Danny Dorling’s book *Injustice: Why Social Inequality Persists*—it’s said that for every stop on the Jubilee Line towards east London, life expectancy drops by a year.

Capitalism: Bad for Your Health!

In the 1990s, following the counter-revolution in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, the bourgeoisies of Western Europe made a push to dismantle what remained of the social welfare programmes instituted after World War II. Now those attacks are being redoubled, driven by the capitalists’ need to compete in a global market that is in profound crisis. Although we Marxists do not share social-democratic illusions in nationalisation schemes, we strongly support workers’ defensive struggles against privatisation which in practice amounts to nothing less than savage union-busting attacks on workers’ jobs and living standards.

For many working people in Britain, life is reaching the breaking point. The standard of living is dropping for the fifth straight year. The chasm between rich and poor is widening. Nearly half a million have been on the dole for a year or more, while those “lucky” enough to have jobs are expected to meekly accept stagnant or slashed wages, increased pension costs and overwork. Nationally agreed pay and working conditions for health

care of “from the cradle to the grave.” A new Ken Loach film, *The Spirit of ’45*, speaks powerfully to the impact the NHS made on the lives of working people, some of whom recall the horrors of life before the NHS—families unable to pay for the doctor to visit sick children; the needless death of a mother due to infection after childbirth; the debt collectors coming on Fridays to demand money for doctors’ bills. Loach eulogises the Labour government led by Clement Attlee that took office following a landslide victory in the 1945 election and then introduced the NHS.

British capitalism emerged from World War II with its empire in a state of disintegration and large chunks of the economy bankrupt. A wave of working-class militancy was sweeping Europe. Despite its deformation under the rule of the parasitic Stalinist bureaucracy, the Soviet Union, and by extension the mass Communist parties in the capitalist world, had enormous authority for having borne the brunt of the fighting to defeat the Nazi armies. Within a few years, capitalism was overturned in many of the countries in Eastern Europe that remained under Soviet military control. West European governments began to expand social programmes both to appease class struggle and to counteract the influence of the Soviet Union. As Tory MP Quintin Hogg put it in 1943: “If you don’t give the people social reform, they will give you social revolution.” In this context, the British capitalist class grudgingly acceded to the establishment of the NHS—on a plan drawn up by William Beveridge, a Liberal economist, during the war.

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National Office: Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116, (212) 732-7860

Chicago Box 6441, Main PO, Chicago, IL 60680, (312) 563-0441
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Public Office: 1st Sat. of every month, 2-5 p.m., and by appointment, 222 S. Morgan (Buzzer 23)

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nysl@tiac.net
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TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA/LIGUE TROTSKYSTE DU CANADA

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spartcan@on.aibn.com

Vancouver Box 2717, Main P.O., Vancouver, BC V6B 3X2, (604) 687-0353
trotskyist_vancouver@shawcable.com

workers are replaced by local agreements and “performance-related pay.” Jobs are slashed in manufacturing and retail industries, workers are dumped on the street. And the relative absence of any serious union fight-back against the attacks by this government—and Labour governments before it—has emboldened the capitalist rulers to keep coming back for more austerity.

The defeat of the miners strike in 1984-85 was pivotal in turning the tide against the working class. Thatcher provoked the strike, aiming to destroy the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) which had been the militant backbone of the proletariat in Britain for decades, as she began to shut down the entire coal-mining industry. The TUC was overtly hostile to the strike, and the Labour Party leadership under Neil Kinnock condemned the NUM as it battled the full force of the capitalist state. From the TUC “lefts” there came plenty of hot air and even more backroom sabotage. Had the railways and dockers unions struck alongside the miners, they could have shut down the country and achieved a historic victory for the working class. But the “leaders” of these unions were not willing to take on the government. Their perspective was limited to replacing the Tories with Labour, and Labour was committed to strikebreaking. The miners held out for twelve months but were isolated and defeated. Arthur Scargill took the miners strike about as far as it could go within a perspective of militant trade unionism, but never broke from his Labourite political perspective.

The lesson that the trade-union misleadership draws from this defeat—that it is not possible to fight—only underscores the need to build a new union leadership, not of Labour toadies overawed by parlia-

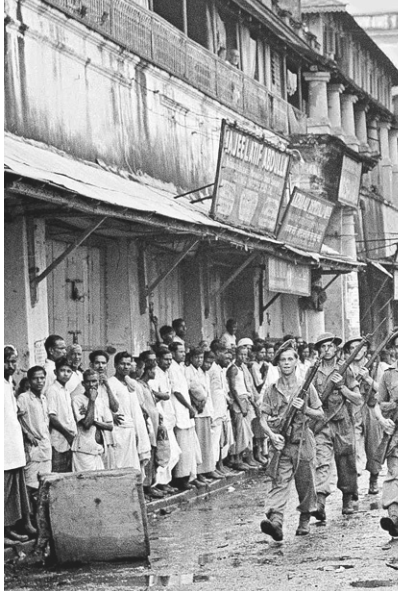
ment, but of workers leaders who rely on the social power of their own class and are committed to win what working people need, not what the bosses say is possible. The NHS relies heavily on agency workers. The unions must demand full union wages and working conditions for them and organise the unorganised. Particularly in the NHS, where immigrant workers have been a key component of the workforce from the outset, it is necessary for the unions to fight in defence of immigrant rights, including free access to healthcare. It is also necessary to address the needs of the many women workers, demanding equal pay, childcare and protection against discrimination.

Freedom of Information Act requests on PFIs have been rejected under the banner of commercial confidentiality, concealing the complex web of schemes British working people are paying for. We demand the government open the books on these backroom deals between the entrepreneurs, financial speculators and their government cronies. The working class has a right, as revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky insisted, “to determine the actual share of the national income appropriated by individual capitalists and by the exploiters as a whole; to expose the behind-the-scenes deals and swindles of banks and trusts; finally, to reveal to all members of society that unconscionable squandering of human labour which is the result of capitalist anarchy and the naked pursuit of profits” (*The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International*, 1938).

No matter which party is in government, capitalism means squeezing workers and boosting profits. Contrary to the dreams of reformists, the point is not to turn the clock back to the days of Old Labour, but to shatter the rotten capitalist order which

Right: Labour cabinet minister Ernest Bevin (left) and Prime Minister Clement Attlee, August 1945. Below: British soldiers patrolling streets of Calcutta in colonial India, 1946.

AP: Popperfoto (inset)



has driven the working people into the ground and replace it with a workers government dedicated to building a socialist society. For this workers need a revolutionary party, not insipid reformists like the Socialist Party or Socialist Workers Party that tail the union bureaucracy and haggle over just how much austerity the working class should accept. As our comrades in the Spartacist League/U.S. wrote:

“Health means much more than shots and pills and surgical knives: it is a decent place to live; plenty of good food to eat; knowledge of human biology; air clean of pollution; safe, decent working conditions; the principles of public health rigorously applied. Medicine can’t save lives

ruined by poverty and malnutrition.... “When we have thrown out the vicious capitalist system which sells human life for dollars, we will be able to build a new socialist society where human life, human worth and human dignity count. Doctors will be servants of the people; hospitals will be havens to heal the sick; research on vaccinations, new medical techniques and improved drugs will be internationally coordinated and to the benefit of all. When the workers of the world are in charge of this planet, the only limits of human health will be scientific—and these will be constantly enlarged by thoughtful, energetic research.”

—*Women and Revolution* No. 39, Summer 1991 ■

Young Spartacus

City College...

(continued from page 3)

some access to the UC system for blacks and other minority youth. But these programs have been destroyed. California was in the vanguard of the campaign to roll back affirmative action. Moreover, poor, black and working-class youth were increasingly priced out of the UC market as tuition skyrocketed. The bourgeoisie increasingly considers the masses of black people in the inner cities as a “surplus population,” no longer needed as a reserve army of labor and thus not “worth” providing with even the basic means of survival, much less education.

As we wrote in early 2010, at a time of massive student and campus worker protests against tuition hikes, education cuts and job-slashing attacks:

“We think everyone should have access to the same quality education available to the sons and daughters of the bourgeoisie. We call to nationalize the private universities and for a state-paid living stipend so working people and the poor can attend. We demand the expansion of remedial programs for students relegated to inner-city public schools, an end to the racist ‘tracking’ system in the high schools and their genuine integration, including through the aggressive implementation of busing. Whether this is possible or not is in reality determined by the outcome of class and social struggle. Under capital-

ism, gains wrested from the ruling class through social struggle are limited and reversible. As communists, our goal is not what is possible within the framework of capitalist society, but the revolutionary overthrow of capitalist class rule and the establishment of a workers state as a transition to the construction of a classless, egalitarian society where scarcity has been eliminated and education is the right of all.”

—“Protests Against Education Cuts and Fee Hikes Sweep California,” WV No. 950, 15 January 2010

The Dead End of Pressure Politics

Reformist “socialists” perennially peddle the lie that capitalism can be reformed to serve the interests of the working class and oppressed. To this end, Socialist Organizer even offers budgetary advice to the bourgeoisie. In a leaflet titled “Don’t Let the 1% Dismantle CCSF,” which was distributed at a March 14 protest at SF City Hall, S.O. opines:

“They tell us that there is no money, so we have to cut back or they will close our school. They are lying. There are many obvious solutions to CCSF’s and California’s financial woes: taxing the rich, taxing oil extraction, cutting prison and war funding, and/or amending Prop 13. *Cuts are not inevitable. The school and the state is [sic] facing a priorities crisis—not a budget crisis*” (emphasis in original).

The only “priority” for the bourgeoisie is the maintenance of their class rule and the protection and expansion of their global imperialist interests. That will not change short of socialist revolution. S.O. stops short of even the utopian call that reformists often raise for the capitalist rulers to end imperialist war. They simply and explicitly accept the capitalist machinery of repression, only urging that less money be spent on maintaining the prisons and subjugating peoples around the world.

At the same time, S.O. can talk out of the left side of its mouth, making a nod in its leaflet to mobilizing the power of organized labor and even writing that this “requires breaking labor’s subordination to the Democratic Party.” They acknowl-

edge that “winning free, quality public education for all...requires eliminating capitalism and replacing it with a socialist society.” But this is window-dressing for their work on the ground as leaders of the Save CCSF Coalition.

From the podium at the March 14 rally, the speech by S.O.’s Eric Blanc had not a scintilla of “socialism.” He complained, “Unfortunately, the politicians have remained silent up until this moment,” adding that “when our school is under attack, the responsibility of the people who are elected from this city is to save our school, not dismantle it.” Indeed, a core demand of the Coalition is that “San Francisco’s elected representatives must step in” as allies providing funds and political support to the fight to save CCSF. S.O. & Co. appeal to Mayor Ed Lee and the Democratic-controlled city administration—the same capitalist politicians cutting the wages, benefits and pensions of city workers, including members of SEIU Local 1021, which also represents CCSF clerical employees.

Thus, like the trade-union bureaucracy, which has long subordinated labor to the Democratic Party, S.O. serves to channel

the protests into the bourgeois electoral shell game. The idea that the Democrats—the other party of American capitalist rule—are the allies of the working class and poor has long served as a key prop for maintaining the system of racist U.S. imperialism.

As the youth auxiliary to the Marxist Spartacist League, the purpose of the Spartacus Youth Clubs is to win a new generation of students and youth to the fight to build a revolutionary workers party. Only under the leadership of such a party can the working class realize its social power and historic interests as the gravediggers of this system of wage slavery, racial oppression, poverty and war. The working class must seize state power and reorganize society on an egalitarian socialist basis, providing for the needs of the many rather than the profits of a tiny class of exploiters. The essential precondition for human emancipation from starvation, exploitation, ignorance and inequality is a planned, socialized economy on a global scale. Only in this way can the accumulated knowledge and culture of civilization be truly appropriated by those who are today deprived of the right to quality education. ■

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(continued from page 1)

Giving the anti-Muslim scare a more “respectable” gloss, the *New York Times* (April 20) quoted an “expert” who evoked the “divided loyalties” of Americans who turn to *jihad*. The question, he said, is “are you American first or are you Muslim first?” The not-so-subtle message is that Muslim Americans represent a potential fifth column, a disloyal and dangerous “enemy within.” To deal with such elements, the state has at its disposal a vastly increased arsenal of repressive powers put in place as part of the imperialists’ “war on terror.”

In a virtual state of martial law, the entire Boston metropolitan area was placed under lockdown for a full day. The Massachusetts governor's order that all residents remain at home with their doors locked was unprecedented for a major American city. Residents watched as hundreds of National Guardsmen in full battle gear and SWAT teams backed up by military helicopters and armored personnel carriers sealed off streets and carried out house-to-house searches. All to track down the wounded, unarmed, 19-year-old suspect Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, who could not show his face in public after the massive media exposure.

A resident of Watertown, where the search was centered, told reporters: "Now I know what it must be like to be in a



April 19: Virtual martial law in Boston area as National Guard and SWAT teams sealed off Watertown streets for house-to-house searches.

ically celebrates the resilience and dignity of Bostonians—as if the capitalists gave a damn about the well-being of the working people. But the resilience and dignity of Iraqis trying to go about their lives, when every trip to school, work or the market can be a death sentence, goes unnoticed in this country's capitalist media.

In self-serving reaction to the Boston bombing, the American rulers and their mouthpieces in the press ask: Why do “they” hate us? From Iraq to Afghanistan and beyond, the U.S. military has

stream of people who hate America, and, in some cases, Americans.

On an immensely greater scale than the Boston bombing, the perpetrators of the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center also took aim at everyday people—native-born and immigrant, black and white, well-heeled and not. Their reactionary mind-set equated the U.S. populace with its capitalist rulers. This is the same equation made by the U.S. rulers themselves in promoting the “unity” of all Americans while grinding the working class, black people and the poor into the ground and taking an ax to basic democratic rights.

With their barrage of announcements that Dzhokhar Tsarnaev would be questioned without being read his *Miranda* warning, police and government spokesmen tried to hammer people into meekly accepting that the right to remain silent and to have a lawyer present during interrogation can be suspended for “emergencies.” During the Ronald Reagan presidency, the Supreme Court cut back *Miranda* protections when police cite “public safety” concerns. This “exception” was invoked in interrogating the suspects in the Christmas 2009 “underwear bomber” incident and the 2010 attempted bombing in Times Square. In 2010, the Obama administration moved to sweep away *Miranda* rights altogether in purported terrorism cases. A Justice Department memorandum instructed federal agents to dispense with *Miranda* simply if they feel it necessary, even if there is not “any immediate threat.”

When Republican Senators John McCain and Lindsey Graham demanded that Dzhokhar Tsarnaev be declared an “enemy combatant,” and therefore subject to indefinite detention without any legal rights, Obama sanctimoniously announced that this would not be necessary, as the civilian courts would suffice. With Tsarnaev’s conviction on any charge all but a certainty, Obama thus got to engage in cheap posturing as standing above the machinations of the Bush White House, which so stained the



April 16: Residents of working-class Dorchester section of Boston at vigil for Martin Richard, eight-year-old victim of marathon bombing.

war zone like Iraq or Afghanistan." If this were Baghdad, the number of those killed and maimed at the marathon would be a small toll for a normal day. Toward the end of April, 215 people were killed over a five-day period in Iraq due to bombings and clashes between Sunnis and Shi'ites.

Once a cultural center of the Near East, Iraq was starved for over a decade by United Nations sanctions that led to the deaths of some 1.5 million people. Those sanctions pulverized Iraq in the lead-up to the U.S. imperialist war and occupation, which completed the country's destruction. Launched in the name of fighting terror and bringing democracy to Iraq, the war has left behind a country torn and bloodied by intercommunal killings and terror bombings. The U.S. bourgeoisie hypocrit-

unleashed staggering levels of deadly terror in the name of the “war on terror.” In what is an almost routine event, special forces in eastern Afghanistan searching for an alleged Taliban militant blew up his home on April 6, killing 18 people, including at least ten children. In February, a NATO airstrike in the same area killed ten civilians, including five women and four children. Several thousand people have been massacred in missile strikes from unmanned U.S. drones in Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia. Whether or not Tamerlan and Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, the alleged Boston bombers, were motivated by opposition to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, as has been reported, there is no doubt that the cycle of U.S. military mayhem is helping to generate an endless



Afghan villagers mourn children killed by April 6 NATO airstrike in Kunar Province.



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CLASS-STRUGGLE DEFENSE NOTES

Number 37 50¢
Summer 2012

**Drive to
Execute Mumia
Halted**

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Number 31 50¢
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AND PARTISAN DEFENSE COMMITTEE
ON BEHALF OF JOSE PADILLA
AND GRANTING HIS *WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS*

In The
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For The Second Circuit
Docket No. 03-2318
03-3438

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as Next Friend of Jose Padilla,
Petitioner-Appellee-cross-Appellant,
v.
DONALD RUMSFELD,
Respondent-Appellant-cross-Appellee.

On Appeal from the United States District Court
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Wounded Knee...

(continued from page 4)

their hands of the remnants of the Native American population.

Denied the old world of the tribe, shattered forever, and the new world of capitalist society, whose doors were closed, Native Americans have borne the full brunt of a capitalist system that long ago entered its period of decay. V.I. Lenin insisted that the revolutionary Marxist party must act as a tribune of the people, and it is as such that we call for the return of the Wounded Knee Massacre site to the Oglala Sioux, whose blood was spilled in a vindictive U.S. war crime. Proletarian revolutionaries seek to sear into the collective memory of the working class and the oppressed the genocidal near-destruction of the Native peoples. Under workers rule, new genera-

tions will be instructed in the history of capitalist barbarism, smashed once and for all through victorious proletarian socialist revolution. As the youth group of the Spartacist League wrote in the concluding part of the *Young Spartacus* three-part series on “Marxism and the American Indian Question” (Nos. 27, 28 and 31; December 1974, January and April 1975):

“Oppressed national and racial minorities throughout the world will look to the future workers state in this country to measure the commitment of the American proletariat to provide for the social emancipation and voluntary assimilation of Indians into society....

“Indians represent a significant part of the historical development of mankind, and revolutionary socialists understand their cultural uniqueness and share a mutual interest in preserving aspects of the Indians’ cultural heritage. This knowledge will help correct centuries of cultural erosion and social stagnation, to overcome the backwardness of reservation life and at the same time allow Indians, if they choose, to maintain their social identity.” ■



Matthew Williams

Squalor of Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, South Dakota, circa 2008.

Disasters...

(continued from page 1)

the worst disaster in the history of clothing manufacture. More than 1,200 other people were injured.

Mass protests erupted as news of the disaster spread, with hundreds of thousands of outraged workers walking out of plants in and around the capital city, Dhaka. Highways were blockaded and two factories whose bosses refused to shut down production were set ablaze. Protesters marched on the headquarters of the garment manufacturers association, chanting: “We want execution of the garment factory owners!” When police firing rubber bullets and tear gas could not quell the crowds, the industry announced on April 26 that all factories would be shut for the upcoming weekend. The Rana Plaza building owner was subsequently arrested trying to flee across the border into India.

The giant retailers who subcontract production to the Savar sweatshops—e.g., J.C. Penney, the French retailer Carrefour and the British Primark—expressed “shock” about the collapse and denied any complicity. But the depraved indifference exhibited by the capitalist magnates to the lives of those they exploit plumbs new depths when it comes to the semi-colonial world, where the U.S. and other imperialist powers have imposed the most wretched conditions. The 5,000 factories in Bangladesh that produce garments for major U.S. and European brands are a cornerstone of the country’s economy. The millions of workers toiling in near-slavery in these deathtraps are paid the lowest wages in the world for that industry—as low as \$37 a month, far below subsistence, even after working 15-hour shifts.

The long trail of capitalist industrial murder in Bangladesh includes an earlier building collapse in Savar that left 73 workers dead and a fire at Tazreen Fashions in nearby Ashulia last November that took more than 100 lives. At Tazreen, a source for Wal-Mart and Sears, managers blocked the stairs to keep workers at their sewing machines even as flames spread on floors below. The truth of the matter is that the multinational corporations are calling the shots and are well aware of what it takes to produce clothing at the prices they contract for, aiming to squeeze out the maximum profit. If orders go unfilled, they pick up stakes and move elsewhere. The local bosses are simply the whip hands, lining their own pockets in the process. (For more on conditions in Bangladesh, see “Women Garment Workers Fight Starvation Wages,” WV No. 974, 18 February 2011.)

To facilitate their many crimes, the garment bosses, aided by the government in Dhaka, brutally suppress unions, the only effective safeguard workers have against the rapaciousness of the capitalist profiteers. Trade unionists are banned from organizing in the factories and are frequent targets of arrest, torture and killing.

A key organizer of the Bangladesh Center for Worker Solidarity, Aminul Islam, was murdered a year ago. As a result, labor unions are almost nonexistent in the garment plants; none of the Rana Plaza factories was unionized. Nevertheless, a number of strikes have swept the industry in recent years.

The industrial murder at Rana Plaza, and Tazreen Fashions before it, is a searing indictment of the daily workings of capitalist-imperialism. The situation cries out for union organizing drives—backed in action by the labor movement internationally—demanding decent wages and



Donaldson/Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Pittsburgh: United Mine Workers members protest Massey Energy’s safety record, May 2010, one month after explosion in West Virginia mine killed 29 coal miners.

working conditions. These sweatshops are the first links in a “just-in-time” global cargo chain extending all the way to the retail stores in the imperialist countries, with key choke points at the ports and in the warehouses. Coordinated solidarity action could go a long way toward advancing the cause of labor in the semicolonial world and imperialist centers alike.

Organize the Unorganized!

The bosses have always rolled the dice with workers’ lives, writing off the human toll as just another cost of doing business. The 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist fire in New York City caused the deaths of 146 garment workers, mainly young Jewish and Italian immigrant women who could not escape because the bosses had locked the doors to the stairwells to prevent unauthorized breaks (not unlike at Tazreen a century later). The atrocity galvanized the labor movement in the city and spurred the growth of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union. Today as well, industrial carnage like that in West, Texas, should be a clarion call to *organize the unorganized*.

Texas, a “right to work” state with one of the lowest unionization rates in the country, had more fatal workplace accidents in 2011 than any other state. The only real measure of protection workers have against their cutthroat exploiters are strong unions with safety committees that

can shut down dangerous operations on the spot. But in place of the kind of hard struggle required to organize unions, the class-collaborationist labor leadership relies on the good graces of the capitalist government, writing letters to Congress pleading for greater workplace regulation. This is the kind of impotent strategy the AFL-CIO tops roll out at their Workers Memorial Day events each April.

Falling in line behind the labor bureaucrats is the International Socialist Organization (ISO), which parrots their calls for beefing up OSHA (socialistworker.org, 23 April). Government agencies like OSHA

The maximum sentence, six months in jail, is half the maximum for harassing a wild burro on federal lands.”

The “compliance” history of West Fertilizer makes a mockery of claims that safety will be improved by reliance on the government. This non-union plant had a decades-long history of violations and petty fines for shady and unsafe practices. The facility lacked fire alarms, sprinklers, shut-off valves and blast walls. When OSHA last inspected the plant in 1985, it found five “serious” violations, for which West Fertilizer was fined all of \$30!

The ISO blames the state of affairs at OSHA on “the neoliberal agenda” (i.e., the Republican Bush administration). What these reformists fail to mention is that the Democratic Clinton White House launched the “New OSHA” initiative that stressed “voluntary compliance” on the part of business, and that Obama has slashed spending for a number of workplace safety initiatives in next year’s budget. No less than the Republicans, the Democrats are a party of the class enemy. Republicans make no bones about going after working people, but Democrats do the same thing while occasionally proclaiming themselves “friends of labor.”

The U.S. capitalist rulers will try to do everything they can to increase profit margins, from busting unions and intensifying the exploitation of workers at home to exporting capital to countries where labor costs are cheaper. Against the chauvinist trade-union tops and their “America first” protectionism, we reiterate the call raised by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in the *Communist Manifesto* (1848): “Working men of all countries, unite!” It is through a series of proletarian revolutions that the working people of the planet can seize the bourgeois rulers’ capital and build an internationally planned economy, lifting the masses of the semicolonial world from their miserable poverty and paving the way to a future of plenty for all. ■

A Spartacist Pamphlet

Karl Marx Was Right

Capitalist Anarchy
and the
Immiseration of the
Working Class

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Margaret Thatcher Finally Dead Iron Lady, Rust in Hell!



Reuters photos

Left: Margaret Thatcher's corpse carried away from funeral service in London, April 17. Right: April 8 celebration in George Square, Glasgow, following news of Thatcher's death.

The following presentation was given by comrade Olly Laing of the Spartacist League/Britain at a public class in London on April 17. It has been adapted for publication.

As everyone here will be only too well aware, it was Margaret Thatcher's funeral today: a publicly funded, pomp-filled ceremonious insult to working people in this country and beyond. Anyone close to central London was subjected to a salute to Thatcher by artillery used in the Falklands in 1982, in her dirty little war against Argentina's Galtieri dictatorship over windswept rocks in the South Atlantic. In that conflict, Thatcher earned the title "Butcher of the *Belgrano*" for a war crime: She ordered the sinking of the Argentine battleship *General Belgrano* outside Britain's own declared war zone, resulting in the deaths of hundreds of young Argentine conscripts.

The death of nobody but Thatcher could be celebrated by such a huge swath of the population in this country. Just look at the "death parties," as the bourgeois press termed them with horror, in Glasgow, Bristol, Brixton and Trafalgar Square. Think of the toasts raised in the pubs of former mining and industrial areas across northern England, Wales and Scotland and in the Catholic areas of Northern Ireland. Surely the outburst of jokes makes some new record, from "Thatcher's only been in hell half an hour and she's already closed down three furnaces" to the Scottish comedian Frankie Boyle's "I was all for a lavishly funded public cremation for Thatcher. Right up until she died." Government officials sniffed that the celebrations are "puerile" and grumbled that some of the participants are too young to remember Thatcher. So what? They know she's a big part of the reason there's no education, no jobs, no future for them. Capturing Thatcher's disdain for everything outside of that citadel of finance capital, the City of London, her biographer, Charles Moore, told Radio 5 that Thatcher was "reviled in parts of the country that are less important."

Reformists point to British society today as proof that Thatcherism didn't work: the devastation of the manufactur-

ing base, insufficient and unaffordable housing, generations of unemployed and financial deregulation for the City. Well, Thatcherism did work for the capitalist class. This is why Thatcher is so celebrated, not only by the bourgeoisie's Conservative (Tory) Party but also by Labour Party leaders: Opposition leader Ed Miliband professed to "greatly respect her political achievements" while Tony Blair offered this "towering political figure" his sincerest form of flattery, noting that his own government retained "some of the changes she made in Britain."

Distancing himself from New Labour's fawning, maverick Member of Parliament George Galloway objected to "spending £10 million on the canonisation of this wicked woman," complaining: "The comparison of Margaret Thatcher with Mr. Churchill is utterly absurd. We'd be conducting this conversation in German if it was not for Mr. Churchill." Galloway's admiration for Churchill, a colonialist pig who engineered the starvation of millions of Bengalis during World War II, is based on the myth that WWII was a war for "democracy" against fascism. In fact, Churchill was defending the interests of British imperialism against its rivals, particularly Germany. Fundamentally it

was the Soviet Red Army that smashed Hitler's military.

The capitalist media talk about how, before Thatcher came into office, Britain was "the sick man of Europe," crippled by strike waves and outdated industry. In fact, British industry had been in decline relative to its imperialist competitors such as the U.S. and Germany since the late 19th century. This was exacerbated by the loss of Britain's empire and near-bankruptcy following World War II. The bourgeoisie needed to increase their competitiveness on the world market, that is, to ratchet up the rate of exploitation of the working class. In the 1960s and '70s, the Labour governments of Harold Wilson and James Callaghan tried to do this by cutting deals with the union tops over beer and sandwiches, through wage controls, strike ballots and a ban on secondary picketing, and when that failed by mobilising the police and army against striking workers.

During this period, miners, railwaymen, dockers and others waged strikes that shook the country, led by a powerful and militant shop stewards movement. However, while trade-union militancy was able to frustrate the capitalist system, it could not resolve the underlying

conflict. There were two alternatives in the long term: either the bourgeoisie would be dealt with by workers revolution or the workers would be dealt with by the bourgeoisie. As it happened, the class struggle was derailed into electing a Labour government. When Callaghan's Labour government proved unable to deliver for them, the bourgeoisie turned to Thatcher.

Anti-Union, Anti-Soviet Crusader for the Bourgeoisie

By 1990, after eleven bitter years of confrontation, Thatcher would be ousted by her own party as protests against the poll tax swept the country. In Scotland, where the tax was first tested out, Thatcher was so unpopular that the Tories' fortunes have never recovered. So it's no surprise that in the 1979 election, the *Economist* noted that Callaghan stood on a "platform of middle-ground conservatism" but Thatcher was dangerously radical and confrontationist. The *Economist* came out for Thatcher anyway, for offering the best hope to revive the economy. The bourgeoisie gambled that the unions did not have a leadership to match Thatcher in hard class war, and

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Press Association



Thatcher declared war on miners to bring trade-union movement to heel. Right: Leeds miners battle scabs, cops in August 1984 during heroic coal miners strike.

John Sturrock/reportdigital

