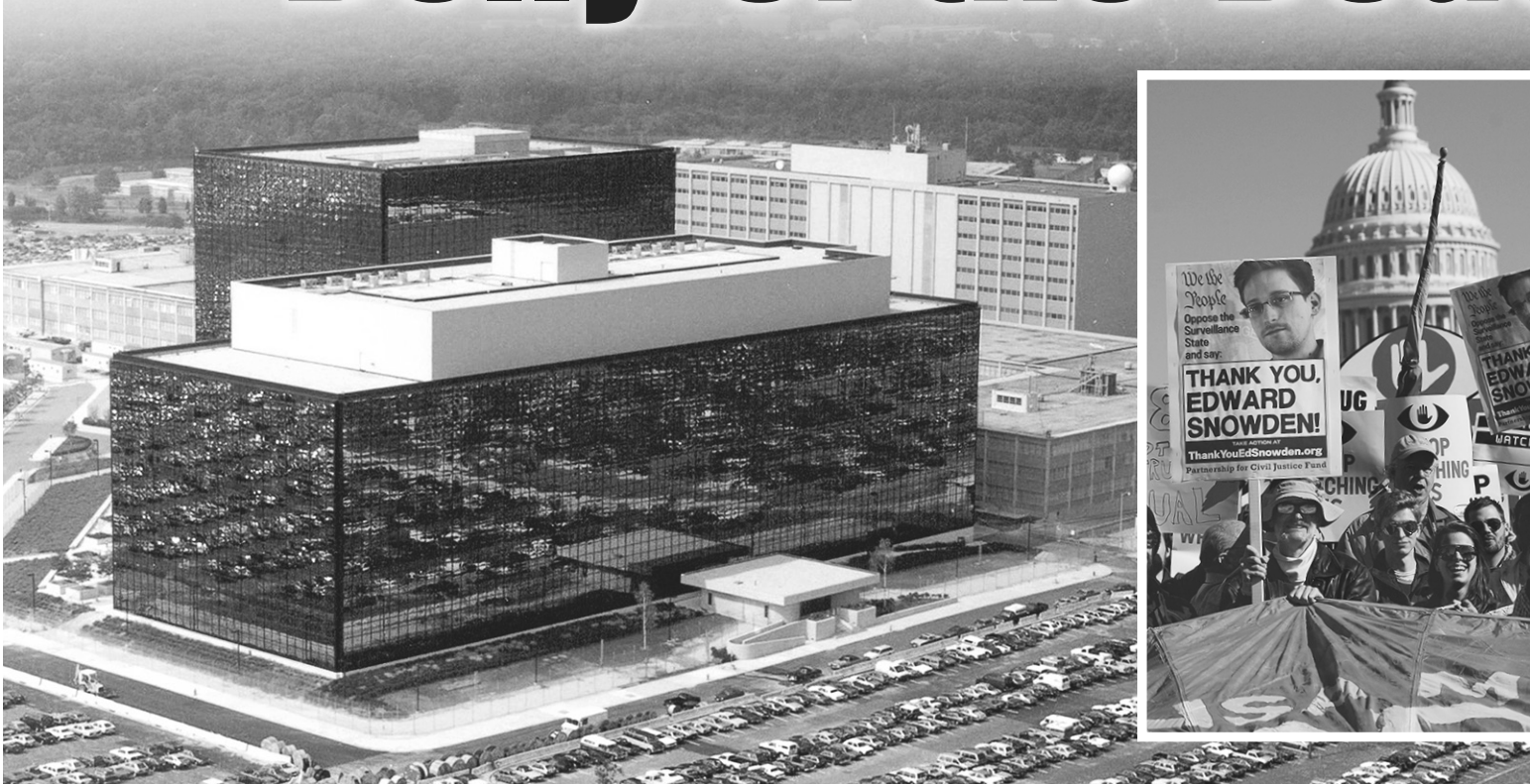


U.S. Imperialists Squirm over Exposures

Spying and Lying in the Belly of the Beast



NSA



ZUMA Press

Left: NSA headquarters in Fort Meade, Maryland. Right: Thousands protest against NSA spying at National Mall in Washington, D.C., October 26.

The highly secretive National Security Agency (NSA) has found details of its snooping activities splashed across the front pages of newspapers the world over ever since its former analyst Edward Snowden made off with a cache of documents earlier this year. Recent disclosures over U.S. surveillance of foreign heads of state have now put the White House in an awkward spot. For its part, the NSA baldly presents itself as the very guardian of democracy. In the words of the agency's own (classified) five-year plan, its electronic eavesdroppers "hold the moral high ground, even as terrorists or dictators seek to exploit our freedoms." In reality, the billions of electronic intercepts the NSA has amassed are simply the covert face of U.S. imperialism's drive to dominate the world. In the seventy years that the U.S. has been the top imperialist power, millions have been slaughtered in wars to enforce its domination.

Snowden, and before him Chelsea Manning and Julian Assange, deserve full credit for revelations that at great personal cost have chipped away at the imperialists' facade of piety. The spying scandal has brought additional discomfort to an administration that lost face when it had to back down from an attack on Syria and then found its credibility further damaged when it bungled the implementation of its signature health care law. The White House is attempting to cover up its responsibility for the "excesses" of the American snoops with an outpouring of lies, obfus-

cations and two-faced apologies. President Obama has surpassed his predecessor when it comes to invading privacy, shredding basic democratic rights and enhancing covert police powers. Meanwhile, Congressmen who voted to pour oceans of money into the NSA (its 2013 budget request was \$10.8 billion) have feigned surprise over the extent of spying.

An article by Henry Farrell and Martha Finnemore in the November/December issue of *Foreign Affairs* makes the obvious point that nothing has been revealed thus far about NSA spying that was really unexpected. The authors observe, "The deeper threat that leakers such as Manning and Snowden pose is more subtle than a direct assault on U.S. national security: they undermine Washington's ability to act hypocritically and get away with it." Hypocrisy is a necessary component of the democratic form of capitalist class rule. It is a sugar coating that masks the bitter taste of the exploitation and oppression inherent to capitalist society.

While attempting to lull the masses with hypocrisy, the bosses also employ the cops, the courts, the military and the prisons as the fundamental guardians of their rule. The NSA's massive accumulation of data facilitates the depredations of U.S. imperialism abroad as well as state control over the American population, including the repression of those who defy the dictates of the capitalist rulers. Never far from the minds of the exploiters is the working class, the only force with the cohesion and social power to overthrow capitalist rule.

The "war on terror" is a convenient fiction, a political crusade that has provided the U.S. bourgeoisie with a pretext for enhancing its repressive arsenal. This apparatus of state terror will be brought to bear

in any future upsurge in workers struggle, when the capitalists' war against labor militancy again flares up. In the 1886 Haymarket massacre, Chicago police attacked workers rallying for the eight-hour day and arrested eight anarchist labor organizers who were subsequently framed up and imprisoned or executed. After World War I, thousands of foreign-born radicals were deported in an attempt to quash the labor militancy that had been ignited in the U.S. by the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia. After World War II, the McCarthy witchhunts purged the reds who built the CIO industrial union federation from the labor movement.

U.S. Spying and the European Bourgeoisies

For their truth telling, Snowden, Manning and Assange have all become targets of the American capitalist rulers. Chelsea Manning, then known as Bradley, was charged under the 1917 Espionage Act, convicted and sentenced in August to 35 years in prison for the "crime" of exposing U.S. imperialism's atrocities in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere. Assange, trapped in the Ecuadorean Embassy in London, is the target of a CIA manhunt for publishing Manning's revelations on WikiLeaks. Snowden depends precariously on a one-year residency permit granted by Russian president Vladimir Putin, who nonetheless described the NSA's mass surveillance programs as "the way a civilized society should go about fighting terrorism." Some German politicians have now mooted offering Snowden political asylum in exchange for his testimony about U.S. spying.

Capitalist rulers like German chancellor Angela Merkel and Brazilian president Dilma Rousseff are no doubt dismayed

that the wheelings and dealings conducted on their cell phones have become the property of the NSA. Merkel, who is seen as the Torquemada of European Union (EU) austerity, and Rousseff, who faces increasing economic discontent at home, have opted to enhance their reputations by demagogically indicting the excesses of the American behemoth and posturing as champions of privacy rights that the U.S. government is trampling.

But the great power competitors of U.S. imperialism are themselves well practiced in turning the tools of espionage against their own populations. Soon after the French and German governments made a show of outrage over the NSA bugging their diplomatic offices, it was revealed that the two EU heavyweights were engaged in the same kind of domestic mass data collection as the NSA, sharing information with the Americans. Among the "Success Stories" trumpeted in one classified NSA document made available by Snowden is the German government modifying its interpretations of privacy laws "to afford the BND [intelligence service] more flexibility in sharing protected information with foreign partners."

Germany has long been miffed by its exclusion from the Five Eyes—the alliance of the U.S., Britain and the junior imperialist suckerfish of Canada, Australia and New Zealand, which supposedly allows these partners access to virtually all of each other's intelligence. Britain has, to date, been especially zealous in its defense of the U.S. super spies. Invoking anti-terror law, British authorities detained David Miranda, the partner of reporter Glenn Greenwald who published Snowden's initial revelations, at Heathrow

continued on page 11



1991-92 Capitalist Counterrevolution Why the Soviet Workers Did Not Rise Up

In our last issue, we marked the anniversary of the 1917 October Revolution with the article “The Proletarian Revolution in Russia” (WV No. 1033, 1 November). Fighting against the revolution’s degeneration under Stalinist misrule, Leon Trotsky insisted that defense of the Soviet workers state against its imperialist and domestic class enemies was an essential precondition to fighting for proletarian political revolution to oust the bureaucratic usurpers.

Based on this understanding, the International Communist League intervened into the crucial events touched off by Boris Yeltsin’s U.S.-backed power grab in August 1991, with our comrades in Russia distributing over 100,000 copies of a leaflet titled “Soviet Workers: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!” However, in the absence of mass working-class resistance, Yeltsin’s forces eventually consolidated power. A historic defeat for the international proletariat, capitalist restoration meant social catastrophe for the Soviet working people, a fate that would surely befall the masses in China and the other remaining deformed workers states in the event of a victorious counterrevolution.

Accommodating the bourgeois “death of communism” lie, self-styled Marxists worldwide rushed to remove any taint of association with Bolshevism. In contrast, the ICL drew the lessons of the bitter defeat in the former Soviet Union in order to *go forward* in the struggle for new October Revolutions. Below we reprint excerpts from our article “How the Soviet Workers State Was Strangled,” which appeared in WV No. 564 (27 November 1992) and later in a pamphlet of the same name.

* * *

Since rising to power over the backs of the Soviet working class through a political counterrevolution in 1923-24, the Stalinist bureaucracy imposed a suffocating isolation on the first workers state, suppressing one international revolutionary opportunity after another. In the name of building “socialism in one country,” the Stalinists—through terror and lies—methodically attacked and eroded every aspect of the revolutionary and internationalist consciousness which had made the Soviet working class the vanguard detachment of the world proletariat.

The isolated workers state was subjected to the unremitting pressures of imperialism, not only military encirclement and an arms buildup aimed at bankrupting the Soviet economy, but also the pressure of the imperialist world market. As

Trotsky wrote in *The Third International After Lenin*: “it is not so much military intervention as the intervention of cheaper capitalist commodities that constitutes perhaps the greatest immediate menace to Soviet economy.” Although the planned economy proved its superiority over capitalist anarchy during its period of extensive growth, as the need for quality and intensive development came to the fore the bureaucratic stranglehold more and more undermined the economy. Finally, through his perestroika “market reforms” and acquiescence to capitalist restoration throughout East Europe, Gorbachev opened wide the floodgates to a direct counterrevolutionary onslaught by Yeltsin & Co.

The bourgeoisie and the Stalinists alike have long sought to identify Lenin’s October with Stalin’s conservative bureaucratic rule. But nationalist Stalinism is the antithesis of Leninist internationalism. The Soviet degenerated workers state (and the deformed workers states which later arose on the Stalinist model) was a historic anomaly, resulting from the isolation of economically backward Russia and the failure of proletarian revolution to spread to the advanced imperialist countries. Stalinism represented a roadblock to progress toward socialism. As Trotsky wrote in “Not a Workers’ and Not a Bourgeois State?” (November 1937):

“That which was a ‘bureaucratic deformation’ is at the present moment preparing to devour the workers’ state, without leaving any remains, and on the ruins of nationalized property to spawn a new propertied class. Such a possibility has drawn extremely near.”

While the Stalinist regime was able to prolong its existence as a result of the heroic victory of the Soviet masses over the Nazi invasion in World War II, Trotsky’s Marxist analysis has ultimately, unfortunately, been vindicated in the negative.

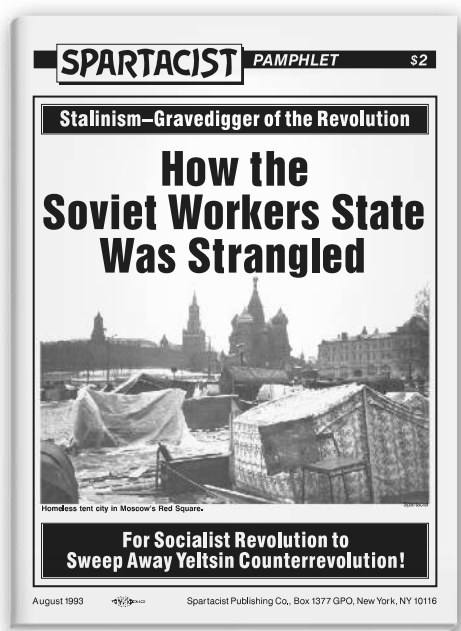
Why did the Soviet working class not rally to defend its gains? How did the counterrevolution triumph and destroy the workers state without a civil war? In his seminal 1933 work laying out the perspective of proletarian political revolution, Trotsky polemicized against social democrats and proponents of various “new class” theories who claimed that under Stalin’s rule, the Soviet Union had imperceptibly changed from a workers to a bourgeois state without any qualitative transformation of either the state apparatus or the property forms:

“The Marxist thesis relating to the catastrophic character of the transfer of

power from the hands of one class into the hands of another applies not only to revolutionary periods, when history sweeps madly ahead, but also to the periods of counterrevolution, when society rolls backwards. He who asserts that the Soviet government has been *gradually* changed from proletarian to bourgeois is only, so to speak, running backwards the film of reformism.”

—“The Class Nature of the Soviet State” (October 1933)

There was certainly nothing gradual or imperceptible about the social counterrevolution in the ex-USSR, which has been extremely violent and convulsive throughout the former Soviet bloc. However,



Pamphlet contains material on unfolding counterrevolution in USSR and ICL’s fight against it. Available for \$2 from Spartacist Publishing Co., Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116.

Trotsky also advanced the *prognosis* that a civil war would be required to restore capitalism in the Soviet Union and undo the deepgoing proletarian revolution.

In a wide-ranging discussion in the ICL two years ago on the counterrevolutionary overturns in East Europe and the DDR (East Germany), it was noted that Trotsky had overdrawn the analogy between a social revolution in capitalist society and social counterrevolution in a deformed workers state (see Joseph Seymour, “On the Collapse of Stalinist Rule in East Europe,” and Albert St. John, “For Marxist Clarity and a Forward Perspective,” *Spartacist* No. 45-46, Winter 1990-91). Where the capitalists exercise direct ownership over the means of production, and thus are compelled to violently resist the overthrow of their system in order to defend their own property, the preservation of proletarian power depends principally on *consciousness* and *organization* of the working class.

Trotsky himself emphasized this point in his 1928 article “What Now?”:

“The socialist character of our state industry...is determined and secured in a decisive measure by the role of the party, the voluntary internal cohesion of the proletarian vanguard, the conscious discipline of the administrators, trade union functionaries, members of the shop nuclei, etc.”

—*The Third International After Lenin*

And again, in “The Workers’ State, Thermidor and Bonapartism” (February 1935), he stated: “*In contradistinction to capitalism, socialism is built not automatically but consciously.*”

When Trotsky wrote these articles, the

memory of the October Revolution was still a part of the direct personal experience of the overwhelming mass of the Soviet proletariat, albeit already considerably warped by Stalinist falsification and revision. In the intervening decades, the nationalist bureaucracy did much to extirpate any real understanding of what came to be iconized as the “Great October Socialist Revolution.” In Soviet mass consciousness, World War II, dubbed by the Stalinists the “Great Patriotic War” and suffused with the Russian-nationalist propaganda Stalin churned out during the war, came to supplant the October Revolution as the epochal event in Soviet history. In the end, Stalin and his heirs succeeded in imprinting their nationalist outlook on the Soviet peoples; proletarian internationalism came to be sneered at as an obscure “Trotskyite heresy” of “export of revolution” or, at best, emptied of any content while paid cynical lip service.

With Gorbachev’s “new thinking”—i.e., his cringing capitulation to each and every imperialist ultimatum—even lip service to the ideals of the Bolshevik Revolution went by the boards. The Soviet soldiers who had been told, and believed, that they were fulfilling their “internationalist duty” in fighting against the reactionary Afghan mujahedin on the USSR’s border, were then maligned for perpetrating “Russia’s Vietnam” against Afghanistan. Gorbachev’s ignominious pullout from Afghanistan and his green light to the imperialist annexation of the DDR served only to further a sense of defeatism and demoralization among the Soviet masses, while the so-called Stalinist “patriots” who denounced Gorbachev’s concessions did so only to beat the drums for Great Russian imperial ambitions, explicitly harking back to the time of the tsars.

Even so, the spontaneous strikes which erupted in the Soviet coal fields in the summer of 1989 against the ravages of Gorbachev’s “market socialism” dramatically demonstrated the potential for militant working-class struggle. As Russian social democrat Boris Kagarlitsky documents in his book *Farewell Perestroika* (1990), the strike committees in many areas became “the actual centre of popular power,” organizing food distribution, maintaining order, etc. As we pointed out at the time, the Kuzbass strikes “have quickly generated organizational forms of proletarian power, including strike committees and workers militias” (“Soviet Workers Flex Their Muscle,” WV No. 482, 21 July 1989).

These developments pointed to the possibility of authentic soviets, which—by drawing in collective farmers, women, pensioners, soldiers and officers—could have served as the basis for a new proletarian political power, ousting the bureaucracy through a political revolution. But when the Gorbachev regime reneged on its promises to the miners, pro-imperialist agitators trained by the “AFL-CIA” moved into the vacuum of leadership and set up the Independent Miners Union, organizing an activist minority of the miners as a battering ram for Yeltsin.

However, a majority of the miners as well as the rest of the Soviet working class remained passive in the three-sided contest between the Yeltsin-led “democrats,” Gorbachev and the more conservative wing of the Stalinists. The mass of workers were wary, if not outright hostile, to the pro-Western advocates of a “market

continued on page 7

WORKERS VANGUARD

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

DIRECTOR OF PARTY PUBLICATIONS: Liz Gordon

EDITOR: Ray Bishop

ASSISTANT EDITOR: Michael Davison

EDITOR, YOUNG SPARTACUS PAGES: Tricia Seneca

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Susan Fuller

EDITORIAL BOARD: Laura Zamora (managing editor), François Donau (production manager), Blandine Hauser (letters editor), Bruce André, Bonnie Brodie, Jon Brule, Ed Clarkson, Paul Cone, George Foster, Walter Jennings, Michael Joyce, Jane Kerrigan, James Robertson, Joseph Seymour, Alan Wilde

The Spartacist League is the U.S. section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

Workers Vanguard (ISSN 0276-0746) published biweekly, except skipping three alternate issues in June, July and August (beginning with omitting the second issue in June) and skipping the last issue in December, by the Spartacist Publishing Co., 299 Broadway, Suite 318, New York, NY 10007. Telephone: (212) 732-7862 (Editorial), (212) 732-7861 (Business). Address all correspondence to: Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116. E-mail address: vanguard@tiac.net. Domestic subscriptions: \$10.00/22 issues. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Workers Vanguard*, Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116.

Opinions expressed in signed articles or letters do not necessarily express the editorial viewpoint.

The closing date for news in this issue is November 12.

No. 1034

15 November 2013

Free the Class-War Prisoners!

This year marks the 28th anniversary of the Partisan Defense Committee's program of sending stipends to class-war prisoners, those behind bars for the "crime" of standing up to the varied expressions of racist capitalist oppression. The PDC's Holiday Appeal raises funds to send monthly stipends to 21 class-war prisoners and also provides holiday gifts for the prisoners and their families. We do this not just because it's the right thing to do. The monthly stipends, just increased from \$25 to \$50, and holiday gifts are not charity. They are vital acts of class solidarity to remind the prisoners that they are not forgotten.

The Holiday Appeals are a stark contrast to the hypocritical appeals of bourgeois charities. Whether it comes from the megachurches of Southern televangelists or the urbane editors of the *New York Times*, the invocation of "peace on earth and goodwill toward men" at this time of year is nothing more than a public relations scam to obscure the grinding exploitation of workers and the beggar-the-poor policies that are the hallmark of both major parties of American capitalism. The lump of coal in the Christmas stocking for millions of impoverished families this year is a drastic cut in their already starvation food stamp rations. Christmas turkey for many is likely to be sculpted from cans of Spam.

The prisoners generally use the funds for basic necessities, from supplementing the inadequate prison diet to buying stamps and writing materials, or to pursue literary, artistic and musical endeavors that help ameliorate the living hell of prison life. As Tom Manning of the Ohio 7 wrote to the PDC four years ago: "Just so you know, it [the stipend] goes for bags of mackerel and jars of peanut butter, to supplement my protein needs." In a separate letter, his comrade Jaan Laaman observed: "This solidarity and support is important and necessary for us political prisoners, especially as the years and decades of our captivity grind on.... Being in captivity is certainly harsh, and this includes the sufferings of our children and families and friends. But prison walls and sentences do not and can not stop struggle."

We look to the work of the International Labor Defense (ILD) under its first secretary, James P. Cannon (1925-28), who went on to become the founder of American Trotskyism. As the ILD did, we stand unconditionally on the side of the working people and their allies in struggle against their exploiters and oppressors. We defend, in Cannon's words, "any member of the workers movement, regardless of his views, who suffered persecution by the capitalist courts because of his activities or his opinion" (*First Ten Years of American Communism*, 1962).

28th Annual PDC Holiday Appeal

Initiated in 1986, the PDC stipend program revived an early tradition of the ILD. The mid 1980s were a time of waning class and social struggle but also a time when the convulsive struggles for black rights more than a decade earlier still haunted America's capitalist rulers, who thirsted for vengeance. Among the early recipients of PDC stipends were members

Tinley Park 5. Stewart is an attorney who spent four decades fighting to keep black and radical activists out of the clutches of the state, only to find herself joining them behind bars on ludicrous "support to terrorism" charges. The youthful anti-fascist fighters known as the Tinley Park 5 were thrown in prison for heroically dispersing a meeting of fascists in May 2012.



Bettmann

PDC is modeled on early Communist Party's International Labor Defense. ILD launched mass campaign to save victimized anarchist militants Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, both executed in 1927.

At the time of the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, we warned that the enhanced police powers being amassed to go after immigrants from Muslim countries would also be used against the oppressed black population and the working class as a whole. That the "war on terror" takes aim at leftist opponents of this or that government policy is affirmed by the massive "anti-terror" police mobilizations and arrests that have accompanied protest outside every Democratic and Republican national convention, among other gather-

and supporters of the Black Panther Party (BPP), the best of a generation of black radicals who sought a revolutionary solution to black oppression—a bedrock of American capitalism.

Foremost among these was Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt), former leader of the BPP in Los Angeles. Geronimo won his release in 1997 after spending 27 years behind bars for a murder the cops and FBI knew he did not commit. FBI wiretap logs, disappeared by the Feds, showed that Geronimo was 400 miles away in San Francisco at the time of the Santa Monica killing. Other victims of the government's deadly Counterintelligence Program (COINTELPRO) remain entombed decades later. Absent an upsurge of class and social struggle that transforms the political landscape, they will likely breathe their last breaths behind bars.

Among the dozens of past stipend recipients are Eddie McClelland, a supporter of the Irish Republican Socialist Party who was framed on charges related to the killing of three members of the Royal Ulster Constabulary in Northern Ireland, and Mordechai Vanunu, who helped expose the Israeli nuclear arsenal. At its outset, our program included five British miners imprisoned during the bitter 1984-85 coal strike. State repression of labor struggle in the U.S. added to our program, for a time, other militants railroaded to prison for defending their union against scabs in the course of strike battles: Jerry Dale Lowe of the United Mine Workers in West Virginia, Amador Betancourt of Teamsters Local 912 in California and Bob Buck of Steelworkers Local 5668 in West Virginia. (For more background on the PDC and the stipend program, see "18th Annual Holiday Appeal for Class-War Prisoners," WV No. 814, 21 November 2003.)

The most recent additions to the stipend program include Lynne Stewart and the

ings, in recent years. Other recent examples include the FBI-coordinated nationwide crackdown on "Occupy" movement encampments and the state of siege in Chicago during the 2012 NATO summit.

The witchhunt against the Tinley Park 5 coincided with and fed into the hysteria whipped up against the anti-NATO protesters, particularly anarchists and participants in Black Bloc actions. Sitting in jail awaiting trial for 18 months are three protesters set up by a police provocateur. They were arrested and charged under Illinois anti-terrorism statutes, the first time these laws were ever used. Free the anti-NATO protesters! Drop the charges!

Continuing the Legacy of Class-Struggle Defense

The PDC is a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense organization that champions cases and causes in the interest of the whole of the working people. This purpose is in accordance with the Marxist political views of the Spartacist League, which initiated the PDC in 1974. The PDC's first major defense effort was the case of Mario Muñoz, the Chilean miners' leader threatened with death in 1976 by the Argentine military junta. An international campaign of protests by unions and civil libertarians, cosponsored by the Committee to Defend Worker and Sailor Prisoners in Chile, won asylum in France for Muñoz and his family. The PDC has also initiated labor/black mobilizations against provocations by the Ku Klux Klan and Nazis from San Francisco to Atlanta to New York to Springfield, Illinois, and mobilized sections of the integrated labor movement to join these efforts.

Cannon's ILD, which was affiliated to the early Communist Party, was our model for class-struggle defense. It fused the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) tradition of militant class-struggle, non-sectarian defense and their slogan, "An injury to one is an injury to all," with the internationalism of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, a revolution made not merely for the workers of Russia but for the workers and oppressed of the world. These principles were embodied in the International Organization for Aid to Fighters of the Revolution (MOPR), a defense organization formed in the Soviet Union

continued on page 4

28th Annual PDC Holiday Appeal

Free the Class-War Prisoners! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Free Lynne Stewart!

CHICAGO

**Sunday, December 15
3 to 7 p.m.**

U.E. Hall
37 S. Ashland (at Monroe)
Information: (312) 563-0442

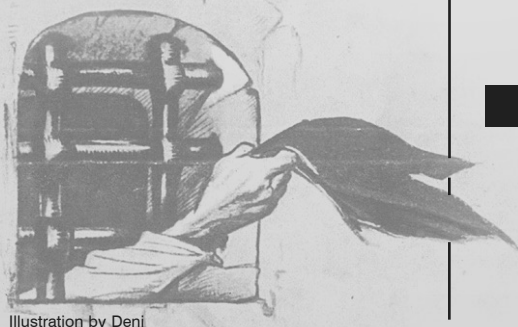


Illustration by Deni

NEW YORK CITY

**Sunday, December 15
4 to 8 p.m.**

The Commons Brooklyn
388 Atlantic Ave., Brooklyn
(B, Q, 2, 3, 4 or 5 Train to Atlantic Ave.-Barclays. A, C or G Train to Hoyt-Schermerhorn)
Information: (212) 406-4252

TORONTO

**Saturday, December 14
7 to 10 p.m.**

Betty's
240 King St. East, upstairs
(East of Sherbourne St.)
Information: (416) 593-4138

Sponsored by the Partisan Defense Committee

(212) 406-4252 • partisandefense@earthlink.net • www.partisandefense.org

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

Drive to Execute Mumia Halted
Mumia Abu-Jamal Is Innocent—Free Him Now!
Page 2

Lynne Stewart Appeal Rejected 5
Solidarity with Longview ILWU and Its Supporters 6
New York City Holiday Appeal Remembering the Life and Struggle of Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt)..... 8
Troy Davis Execution: Racist State Murder..... 12

No. 37, Summer 2012
\$.50 (24 pages)
Order from/pay to:
PDC, P.O. Box 99, Canal St. Station
New York, NY 10013-0099

Class-War Prisoners...

(continued from page 3)

in 1922 that was more popularly known as the International Red Aid.

The ILD was born out of discussions in 1925 between Cannon and Big Bill Haywood, who had been a leader of the Western Federation of Miners and then the IWW. The venue was Moscow, where Haywood had fled in 1921 after jumping bond while awaiting appeal of his conviction for having called a strike during wartime, an activity deemed a violation of the federal Espionage and Sedition Act. Haywood died in Moscow in 1928. Half his ashes were buried in the Kremlin, the other half in Chicago near the monument to the Haymarket martyrs, leaders of the fight for the eight-hour day who were executed in 1887.

The ILD was founded especially to take up the plight of class-war prisoners in the United States. Initially, the ILD adopted 106 prisoners for its stipend program, including California labor leaders Tom Mooney and Warren Billings, framed up for a bombing at the Preparedness Day parade in San Francisco in 1916, and Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, immigrant anarchist workers executed in 1927 for a robbery/murder they did not commit. The number grew rapidly: Zeigler miners in Illinois whose fights over wages and working conditions pitted them head-on against the KKK; striking textile workers in Passaic, New Jersey. The ILD monthly, *Labor Defender*, educated tens of thousands of workers about the struggles of their class brothers and carried letters from prisoners describing their cases and the importance of ILD support.

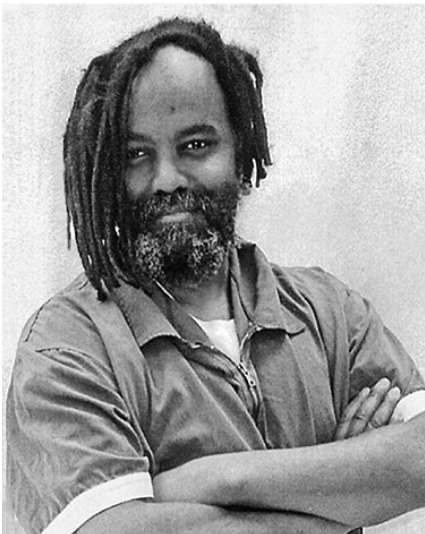
Many of the imprisoned militants were IWW members. After a brief membership in the Socialist Party (SP), Cannon himself had been an IWW organizer and a writer for its press. Witnessing the anarcho-syndicalist IWW crushed by the bourgeois state while a disciplined Marxist party led a successful proletarian revolution in Russia, Cannon rejoined the SP in order to hook up with its developing pro-Bolshevik left wing. In 1919, that left wing exited the SP, with Cannon becoming a founding leader of the American Communist movement. He brought a wealth of experience in labor defense. As Cannon later recalled, “I came from the background of the old movement when the one thing that was absolutely sacred was unity on behalf of the victims of capitalist justice.”

In the year preceding the executions of Sacco and Vanzetti, the ILD and sections of the International Red Aid led mass actions in their defense, including protests and strikes of tens of thousands on the eve of the executions. The SP and pro-capitalist union tops undermined the growing workers mobilization by look-

From Death Row to “Slow Death Row”

For over 20 years, a central focus of the PDC Holiday Appeals was the urgent fight to free Mumia Abu-Jamal from the executioner’s hands. A former Black Panther Party spokesman, renowned journalist and MOVE supporter, Mumia was framed for the 1981 killing of Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner and sentenced to die explicitly for his political beliefs. First taking up Mumia’s defense in 1987, the PDC and the Spartacist League made his case known through publicity and protest to a wide range of death penalty abolitionists, student groups, black activists and the labor movement. From the beginning, we fought for the understanding that the power of labor must be brought to bear in the fight to win Mumia’s freedom. Indeed, it was an outpouring of protest internationally, including by trade unionists, which helped win a stay of execution for Mumia in August 1995.

Mumia’s conviction was based on lying testimony extorted by the cops, a “confession” manufactured by the police and prosecutors and phony ballistics evidence. Time and again, federal and state courts refused to even consider the massive evidence that Mumia was innocent, including the confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Mumia, shot and killed Faulkner. In December 2011, ten years after a ruling by a federal judge that overturned Mumia’s



Workers World

Mumia Abu-Jamal

death sentence, the Philly district attorney’s office announced that it would no longer pursue Mumia’s legal lynching, finally removing him from death row to what he termed the “slow death row” of life in prison without possibility of parole.

The deprivation of basic rights that marked his trial and imprisonment continues unabated. For nearly a month after he was released from death row, Mumia was held in solitary confinement. Then in August 2012, he was secretly resentenced in direct violation of Pennsylvania law, which mandates

ing to the political agencies of the class enemy, a policy accompanied by a vicious anti-Communist campaign of slander and exclusion. Cannon addressed the two conflicting policies:

“One policy is the policy of the class struggle. It puts the center of gravity in the protest movement of the workers of America and the world. It puts all faith in the power of the masses and no faith whatever in the justice of the courts. While favoring all possible legal proceedings, it calls for agitation, publicity, demonstrations—organized protest on a national and international scale.... The other policy is the policy of ‘respectability,’ of the ‘soft pedal’ and of ridiculous illusions about ‘justice’ from the courts of the enemy. It relies mainly on legal proceedings. It seeks to blur the issue of the class struggle.”

—“Who Can Save Sacco and Vanzetti?” (*Labor Defender*, January 1927)

The principle of non-sectarian, class-struggle defense has guided our work, in particular our more than two-decade struggle to free Mumia Abu-Jamal. As a small organization, we don’t pretend that we are able to mobilize the type of hard class struggle that not only built the

unions in this country but also harnessed the social power of the working class to the defense of labor’s imprisoned soldiers in the class war. Such struggles are today a very faint memory. Nor do we want to distribute rose-colored glasses through which even the most minimal stirrings against particular atrocities by the racist capitalist rulers appear as sea changes in the political climate—a practice that is common fare for sundry proclaimed socialists.

Instead, we are dedicated to educating a new generation of fighters in the best traditions of the early Communist defense work before it was poisoned by Stalinist degeneration. As Cannon wrote for the ILD’s second annual conference: “The procession that goes in and out of the prison doors is not a new one. It is the result of an old struggle under new forms and under new conditions. All through history those who have fought against oppression have constantly been faced with the dungeons of a ruling class.” He added, “The class-conscious worker accords to the class-war prisoners a place of singular honor and esteem.” Keeping the memory of their struggles alive helps politically arm a new generation of fighters against the prison that is capitalist society. We urge WV readers to honor the prisoners by supporting the Holiday Appeal.

The 21 class-war prisoners receiving stipends from the PDC are listed below.

* * *

Mumia Abu-Jamal is a former Black Panther Party spokesman, a well-known supporter of the MOVE organization and an award-winning journalist known as “the voice of the voiceless.” Framed up for the 1981 killing of a Philadelphia police officer, Mumia was sentenced to death explicitly for his political views. Federal and state courts have repeatedly refused to consider evidence proving Mumia’s innocence, including the sworn confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Mumia, shot and killed the policeman. In 2011 the Philadelphia district attorney’s office dropped its longstanding effort to legally lynch America’s foremost class-war prisoner. Mumia remains condemned to life in prison with no chance of parole.

Leonard Peltier is an internationally

hearing where the prisoner has the right to be present and heard. Mumia’s appeal of that backroom sentencing, filed in February, was unanimously rejected in July by the Pennsylvania Superior Court.

It appears that Mumia’s legal efforts to win his freedom have now hit a brick wall—not even the prospect of parole awaits him. In commenting on the denial of his most recent appeal, Mumia told two PDC representatives who visited him in August that state authorities never want to see Mumia in their courtroom again. Despite this, Mumia remains strong, unbowed, politically engaged and writing prolifically. In addition to his own musical studies, we discussed the musical genius of Curtis Mayfield, the latest excrescences of the U.S. “war on terror,” the acquittal of Trayvon Martin’s killer, the documentary *Long Distance Revolutionary* about Mumia that was released early this year, the struggle to finally win the right to a contact visit with his son Jamal Hart and the prospects of a Miami Heat “three-peat.”

It has been many years since thousands took to the streets for Mumia. As the PDC said after the D.A.’s efforts to kill him were abandoned: “The state authorities hope with the latest decision that Mumia’s cause will be forgotten and that he will rot in prison hell until he dies. This must not be Mumia’s fate.”

renowned class-war prisoner. Peltier’s incarceration for his activism in the American Indian Movement has come to symbolize this country’s racist repression of its native peoples, the survivors of centuries of genocidal oppression. Peltier was framed up for the 1975 deaths of two FBI agents marauding in what had become a war zone on the South Dakota Pine Ridge Reservation. Although the lead government attorney has admitted, “We can’t prove who shot those agents,” and the courts have acknowledged blatant prosecutorial misconduct, the 69-year-old



lynnestewart.org

Lynne Stewart

Peltier is not scheduled to be reconsidered for parole for another eleven years! Peltier suffers from multiple serious medical conditions and is incarcerated far from his people and family.

Eight MOVE members—**Chuck Africa, Michael Africa, Debbie Africa, Janet Africa, Janine Africa, Delbert Africa, Eddie Africa** and **Phil Africa**—are in their 36th year of prison. After the 8 August 1978 siege of their Philadelphia home by over 600 heavily armed cops, they were sentenced to 30-100 years having been falsely convicted of killing a police officer who died in the cops’ own cross fire. In 1985, eleven of their MOVE family members, including five children, were massacred by Philly cops when a bomb was dropped on their living quarters. After more than three decades of unjust incarceration, these innocent prisoners are routinely turned down at parole hearings. None have been released.

Lynne Stewart is a lawyer imprisoned in 2009 for defending her client, a blind

continued on page 6



WV Photo

NYC, October 1999: Trade unionists were backbone of PDC-initiated labor/black mobilization to stop KKK race terrorists.

On 13 May 1985, black Democratic mayor Wilson Goode and his city administration, acting in collaboration with the Feds, firebombed the West Philadelphia home of the MOVE organization, a mostly black, back-to-nature commune. It was the culmination of a daylong police siege, during which over 10,000 rounds of ammunition had been pumped into the house. With the Fire Department under orders to “let the fire burn,” high-pressure water cannon on site sat idle for over an hour. In the ensuing inferno, eleven people were incinerated, including five children, and hundreds were left homeless as an entire city block in the black working-class neighborhood was reduced to ashes.

A Review by Conor Kristofersen

The operation to “evict” those inside MOVE’s Osage Avenue home, which resembled more the leveling of a Vietnamese village, began with the proclamation: “Attention, MOVE. This is America!” Indeed, the hideous crime that followed was a concentrated expression of the racist state terror meted out to black people every day in capitalist America. None of the perpetrators ever faced charges, while Ramona Africa, the sole adult survivor, was arrested and served every day of a seven-year prison sentence. The only other person to make it out of the MOVE house alive was 13-year-old Birdie Africa, later known as Michael Ward, who recently died at the age of 41.

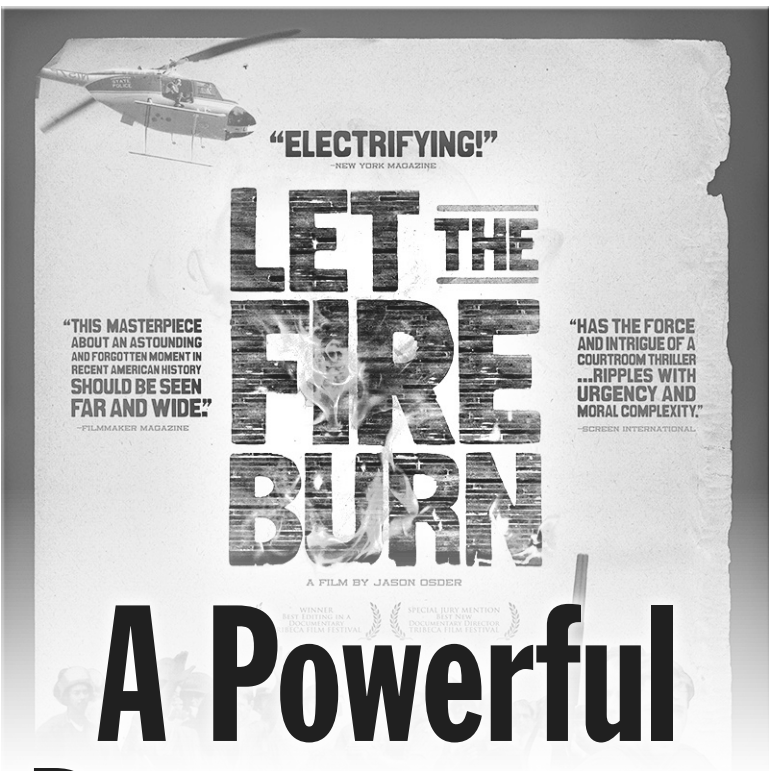
From the day of the massacre, and ever since, the Spartacist League has solidarized with the victims of this racist atrocity and vowed to sear it into the memory of the working class. The recently released documentary *Let the Fire Burn* is a valuable tool for this very purpose, making it a must-see. The director and producer, Jason Osder, has described in interviews the impact that the bombing of MOVE had on him as an eleven-year-old growing up in Philly. He spent more than ten years collecting clips from television news programs, police videos and other archival film footage that comprise the documentary. The result is a vivid chronicle of the day of the slaughter and its background, namely the ever-escalating cop vendetta against MOVE, a group that first appeared in 1972 denouncing “the system” and would come to proclaim the right of armed self-defense in the face of brutal state repression.

Minimal narration (in the form of captions) is given to this footage in an effort by Osder to force his viewers to “interpret and deal with” the events of May 13. What filmgoers are forced to deal with are the visceral and shocking images of mass murder by the state that the capitalist rulers would prefer for people to forget. There is no escaping the devastating explosion of MOVE’s roof, the flames that engulf Osage Avenue and the unapologetic racism of the cops. In one of the more shocking moments, cops can be heard laughing and joking in the background of a police video of the burning house: “They won’t call the police com-

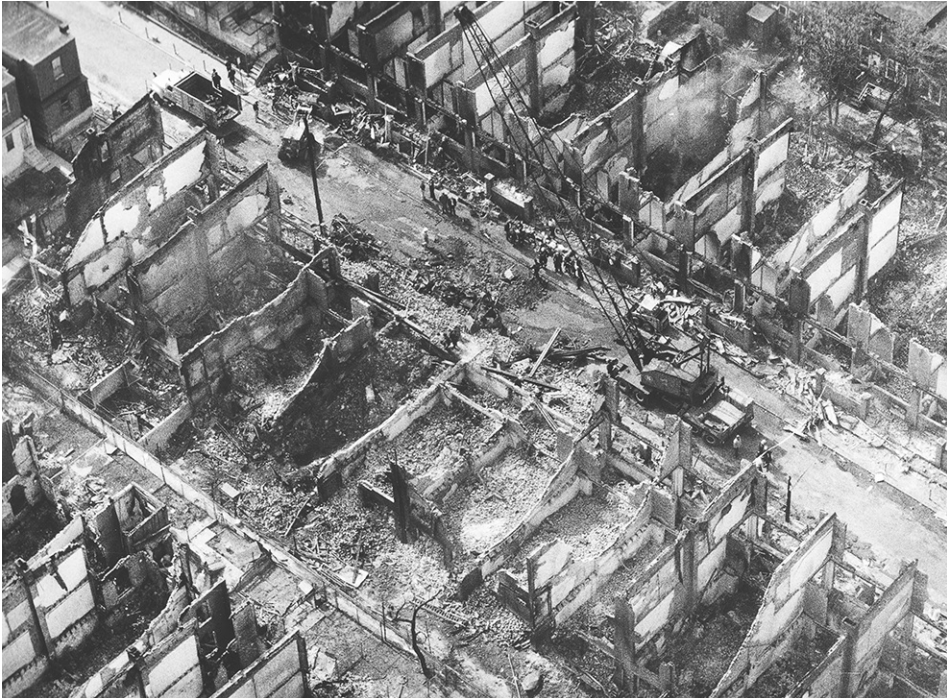


WV Photo

MOVE supporters LaVerne Sims (at mic) and Louise James at July 1985 Spartacist forum held in NYC in solidarity with MOVE martyrs.



A Powerful Documentary on the 1985 Bombing of MOVE



Zeitgeist Films

Philadelphia: The 13 May 1985 bombing of MOVE house on Osage Avenue killed eleven people, including five children. An entire black neighborhood was burned to the ground.

missioner a motherf---r anymore!” The cover-up is also evident, with Mayor Goode and Police Commissioner Gregore Sambor shown blatantly lying and contradicting each other’s stories about who ordered who to put out the fire, if anyone had at all.

The bombing polarized the “city of

brotherly love.” In its aftermath, liberals and virtually the entire left rushed to alibi Goode, Philly’s first black mayor, who vowed: “I’d do it again.” These apologists for Goode exuded disdain for the intended victims of racist state repression, even as they expressed shock at the “excessive” force and the harm done to blacks whose houses were burned down in the process. Among those groups attempting to straddle the line between MOVE and its murderers was the Socialist Workers Party, which helped organize a May 30 demo in Philadelphia, purportedly to protest the massacre. We initially pledged to mobilize 100 supporters to stand with MOVE, which was planning to attend. But after the organizers had the gall to debate whether to censor MOVE at the protest, MOVE pulled out and in solidarity so did the SL. The demonstration was a travesty, with the emcee announcing that organizers “wanted it to be made very clear to the city administration and the City of Philadelphia that we are not marching today in support of MOVE” (*Philadelphia Daily News*, 31 May 1985).

Some weeks later, we held a public forum in New York City where MOVE

supporters LaVerne Sims and Louise James were able to express their outrage and pain. In the discussion period, a member of the League for the Revolutionary Party (LRP) rose to denounce us for not sufficiently polemicizing against MOVE—at a public meeting specifically called to honor the memory of the MOVE martyrs! To attack them would have been obscene. But that’s exactly what the LRP did. In its publication *Proletarian Revolution* (Summer 1985), the LRP blamed the victims, writing: “MOVE’s isolation opened it up for a police siege.”

The mass murder of MOVE members was a signature act of the Reagan years, which were marked by a concerted drive to reverse the gains of the civil rights movement and other social struggles of the 1960s and early ’70s. The bourgeoisie had also thrown down the gauntlet before the organized workers movement, exemplified in the mass firing of 13,000 striking members of the PATCO air traffic controllers union by the White House in 1981. This all-sided social reaction was the domestic reflection of U.S. imperialism’s Cold War push to “roll back Communism” internationally, from the threats of nuclear annihilation of the Soviet Union to efforts to crush leftist insurgents in Central America. Only days before the MOVE bombing, Reagan had returned from saluting Nazi SS graves in Bitburg, Germany.

As we wrote in our front-page article “Philly Inferno: Racist Murder!” (WV No. 380, 31 May 1985), which was part of our coverage of the atrocity reprinted in *Black History and the Class Struggle* No. 3 (February 1986):

“The Osage Avenue massacre was supposed to be a message to anybody who gets ‘out of line’ in Reagan’s America—blacks will get the Philly treatment, labor will get the PATCO treatment and everyone, not least the Marxists, will get the ‘terrorist’ treatment. But you can fight the terrorists in City Hall and the White House and win. Black people do have social power: they are concentrated in some of the key sections of the American proletariat, constituting its most militant layer. But to unlock this power means breaking the capitalist two-party stranglehold, fighting for a workers party to mobilize labor and oppressed blacks in revolutionary struggle against this racist, capitalist system. Avenge the Philly inferno—For black freedom through socialist revolution!”

Lies and Racist Mass Murder

For all its merits, *Let the Fire Burn* shies away from addressing a vital part of the story of the MOVE bombing: the fact that the responsibility for this horrendous crime went well beyond Mayor Wilson Goode and his ghoulish coterie of Philly cops and extended right up to the Ronald Reagan White House. The film leans heavily on footage of the investigation commission that was set up by Goode to absolve his administration but which nonetheless was compelled by the sheer magnitude of the massacre to reveal its horrors. Yet *Let the Fire Burn* does not even allude to some of the most important

continued on page 6

A Spartacist Pamphlet75¢

Black History
and the
Class Struggle
No. 3

13 May 1985: The bombing of black America—signature of the Reagan years.

No. 3, February 1986
\$.75 (32 pages)

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

MOVE...

(continued from page 5)

testimony before those hearings, which implicated the Feds in what was a carefully planned conspiracy to commit state terrorism.

Even before the commission was convened, chief Sambor told the *New York Times* (19 May 1985) that two days before the bombing he had gone over the assault plans with FBI agents, who “found the plan sound.” At the hearings, both Sambor and Goode’s managing director, Leo Brooks, who was nominally in charge of the operation, testified that the use of explosives had been planned for over a year. The commission obtained evidence from the FBI that agents had supplied Philly cops with nearly 40 pounds of the military explosive C-4. Other testimony before the commission revealed that the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms helped the city obtain military-grade arms for the assault, including Browning automatic rifles, an M-60 machine gun and an anti-tank gun.

Mayor Goode’s handpicked eleven-member commission would later seek to whitewash the coldblooded state murder in the report on the findings of its nine-month investigation. The commission acknowledged the obvious racism behind the assault and declared that the deaths of the five children “appear to be unjustified homicides.” At the same time, it called MOVE “an authoritarian violence-threatening cult,” implying the adults deserved to die!

Washington’s role was apparently too hot for the commission members to handle, so they went to absurd lengths to avoid implicating federal authorities. While noting that an FBI agent had delivered the C-4 plastic explosive to the Philadelphia police, the commission report claimed that “neither agency kept any records of the transaction.” As such, the report concluded that FBI officials “unwittingly furnished the commission with inaccurate and untruthful accounts of that agency’s involvement.”

Years-Long Campaign of State Terror

The film depicts the odd lifestyle and social views of MOVE and shows them shouting obscenities at their neighbors and the cops over outdoor loudspeakers. A wave of racist propaganda painting MOVE as violent crazies accompanied the 1985 slaughter. In Reagan’s America, to be black and a social nuisance

was enough to be made a non-person and bombed to smithereens. In fact, the eclectic MOVE group reflects a long tradition in this country of attempted non-cooperation with the state on moral, religious or political grounds, from Quaker pacifists who refuse to fight in wars to right-wing tax resisters.

The cop vendetta against MOVE got its start at a time when Philadelphia was lorded over by Mayor Frank Rizzo, a law-and-order racist. In one scene in the film, he rails against a “vocal minority” that has supposedly gained undue influence over the country. Under his direction, police planted themselves on MOVE’s doorstep, hounding members and supporters every time they left their home. Arbitrary stops, beatings and arrests became the norm. In 1976, blackjack-wielding cops descended on a MOVE celebration, and in the resulting melee Janine Africa’s newborn infant was trampled to death.

Beginning in May 1977, the cops put MOVE under round-the-clock surveillance. The following March, police set up a full-scale barricade, sealing off a four-block area of MOVE’s Powelton Village commune with eight-foot-high fences and cutting off gas and water service. Early on August 8, 600 cops surrounded the home. One member of the Philly cops’ notorious “Stakeout” squad, James Ramp, was killed by his fellow cops when they opened fire on the house. In the documentary, a brief clip of a witness insistently pointing at the source of the gunfire is included, followed by the caption: “MOVE members believed there was a police cover-up and that officer Ramp was actually killed by friendly fire.”

Nine MOVE members were framed up for that killing and eight remain imprisoned to this day, one having died in prison. Radical journalist and former Black Panther Mumia Abu-Jamal would become a supporter of MOVE in the course of reporting on the trial. Already known and despised by local police, Mumia became even more of a marked man as a result.

In the film, officers recounting the 1978 assault to the commission state that Delbert Africa emerged from the house with a knife and was then subdued. The documentary then jumps to footage of the scene showing an unarmed Delbert Africa with empty hands raised in the air. Cops proceed to almost beat him to death, slamming his head into the ground with their boots.

Little changed for the oppressed black masses after Rizzo left office in early 1980. The campaign against MOVE continued unabated for several years, building up



AP
Philly’s Democratic mayor Wilson Goode with Police Commissioner Gregore Sambor at right, three days after bombing.

to 13 May 1985. The documentary shows the overwhelming firepower deployed by the state that day: water cannons, tear gas, automatic weapons and, finally, the powerful mixture of Tovex and C-4 dropped by helicopter on the roof of MOVE’s Osage Avenue home. As the house burned, police were stationed at key locations in a back alley with shotguns and Uzis. When two MOVE members emerged from the blaze, one was gunned down by the cops and the other, a child, was driven back inside to die in the fire.

While some cops may relish it more than others, their job is to enforce racist law and order on behalf of the capitalist rulers. Toward the end of *Let the Fire Burn*, the film highlights the testimony before the commission by one cop who recalled leading Birdie Africa away after he emerged from the burning building. A caption concludes his story: the cop’s locker was later scrawled with the epithet “n----r lover” and he left the police force, suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder.

Of Racist Cops and Black Democrats

Going back before MOVE, Philadelphia was known for its killer cops. Foremost among them were those in the Stakeout unit, an urban death squad made up largely of veteran military sharpshooters. This squad was established by Rizzo, then-deputy police commissioner, as part of the drive by the city rulers to crush any expression of opposition to vicious racism and police brutality after the city’s black ghetto erupted in 1964. Together with the department’s “red squad,” it spearheaded the brutal repression of the Black Panther

Party and other black militants in the city. Later, when the police turned their attention to MOVE, Stakeout cops again played a forward role, from the vicious beating of Delbert Africa to the shooting in the Osage Avenue alley seven years later.

The city itself was a bastion of racist reaction. In the 1920s, Pennsylvania had the fourth-largest Klan concentration in the country; the Philadelphia area alone had 30,000 Klansmen. The city’s capitalist rulers played on racial divisions to pit white workers against black workers, who were last-hired and first-fired. Ethnic and racial hostilities in Philadelphia were further exacerbated with the devastation of its heavy industry, particularly in the 1970s. In this context, the racist bonapartism of the Philadelphia police became even more pronounced as the cops were deployed to keep the lid on this pressure cooker of discontent.

Another reaction by the ruling class to black discontent and rebellion in Philadelphia, as well as other cities across the country, was to install black mayors to contain the rage and frustration. But Wilson Goode—who instructed the cops to get MOVE “by any means necessary” prior to the firebombing of West Philadelphia—is the ultimate proof that the black Democratic mayors were and are the frontmen for the bourgeoisie’s war on black people, as well as on workers and all the oppressed. In the aftermath of the fire, Jesse Jackson spotted in the charred remains of people’s lives a chance to push a little black capitalism. His main concern was that Goode hire black contractors to rebuild the destroyed homes!

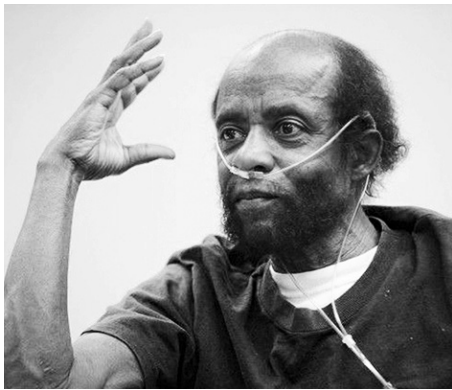
From the 1921 bombing of black Tulsa, Oklahoma, to the 1993 incineration of the Branch Davidian religious sect outside Waco, Texas, the American capitalist rulers have a long history of mass murder of those considered to have stepped out of line. When it came to MOVE, authorities first branded them “terrorists” to justify their slaughter. As we noted shortly after the 1985 massacre: “Our duty to combat the state vendetta against MOVE is part of our unremitting campaign against the government’s targeting of troublesome opponents as ‘terrorists’” (WV No. 381, 14 June 1985). This is all the more the case today, with the bourgeoisie having amassed a vast arsenal of surveillance and police powers under the pretext of the “war on terror.” Ultimately, it will take a workers revolution to put the capitalist state apparatus of violence and murder out of business for good and bring justice to its hired thugs who have committed untold crimes. ■

Class-War Prisoners...

(continued from page 4)

Egyptian cleric convicted for an alleged plot to blow up New York City landmarks in the early 1990s. Stewart is a well-known advocate who defended Black Panthers, radical leftists and others reviled by the capitalist state. She was originally sentenced to 28 months; a resentencing pursued by the Obama administration more than quadrupled her prison time to ten years. As she is 74 years old and suffers from Stage IV breast cancer that has spread to her lungs and back, this may well be a death sentence. Stewart qualifies for immediate compassionate release, but Obama’s Justice Department refuses to make such a motion before the resentencing judge, who has all but stated that he would grant her release!

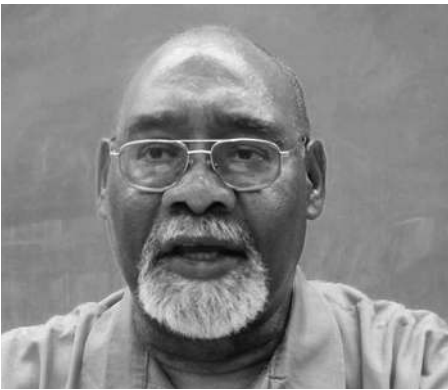
Jaan Laaman and **Thomas Manning** are the two remaining anti-imperialist activists known as the Ohio 7 still in prison, convicted for their roles in a radical group that took credit for bank “expropriations” and bombings of symbols of U.S. imperialism, such as military and corporate offices, in the late 1970s and ’80s. Before their arrests in 1984 and 1985, the Ohio 7 were targets of massive manhunts. The Ohio 7’s politics were



Ryerson/Lincoln Journal Star
Mondo we Langa

once shared by thousands of radicals, but, like the Weathermen before them, the Ohio 7 were spurned by the “respectable” left. From a proletarian standpoint, the actions of these leftist activists against imperialism and racist injustice are not a crime. They should not have served a day in prison.

Ed Poindexter and **Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa** are former Black Panther supporters and leaders of the Omaha, Nebraska, National Committee to Combat Fascism. They are victims of the FBI’s deadly COINTELPRO operation, under which 38 Black Panther Party members were killed and hundreds more imprisoned on frame-up charges. Poindexter and Mondo were railroaded to prison and sentenced to life for a 1970 explosion that



Michael Richardson
Ed Poindexter

killed a cop, and they have now spent more than 40 years behind bars. Nebraska courts have repeatedly denied Poindexter and Mondo new trials despite the fact that a crucial piece of evidence excluded from the original trial, a 911 audio tape long suppressed by the FBI, proved that testimony of the state’s key witness was perjured.

Hugo Pinell, the last of the San Quentin 6 still in prison, has been in solitary isolation for more than four decades. He was a militant anti-racist leader of prison rights organizing along with George Jackson, his comrade and mentor, who was gunned down by prison guards in 1971. Despite numerous letters of support and no disciplinary write-ups for over 28 years, Pinell was again denied parole in

2009. Now in his late 60s, Pinell continues to serve a life sentence at the notorious torture chamber Pelican Bay SHU in California, a focal point for hunger strikes against grotesque inhuman conditions.

Jason Sutherlin, **Cody Lee Sutherlin**, **Dylan Sutherlin**, **John Tucker** and **Alex Stuck** were among some 18 anti-racist militants who, in the Chicago suburb of Tinley Park in May 2012, broke up a gathering of fascists 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, these five were sentenced by a Cook County court to prison terms of three and a half to six years on charges of “armed violence.”

Contribute now! All proceeds from the Holiday Appeals will go to the Class-War Prisoners Stipend Fund. This is not charity but an elementary act of solidarity with those imprisoned for their opposition to racist capitalism and imperialist depredations. Send your contributions to: PDC, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013; (212) 406-4252. ■

Canada's Racist "War on Drugs"

Toronto Cops Terrorize Immigrants, Minorities

The following article originally appeared in Spartacist Canada No. 178 (Fall 2013), newspaper of our comrades of the Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyste.

On June 13, over 800 cops carried out massive pre-dawn raids across Toronto and beyond. Ground zero of this quasi-military operation, dubbed "Project Traveller," was a set of apartment towers on Dixon Road in the Toronto suburb of Etobicoke. Populated in large part by refugees from Somalia, the area is widely known as "Little Mogadishu" after the Somali capital.

Brandishing machine guns, the police

SPARTACIST CANADA

battered down doors as flash-bang grenades shook the crumbling, overcrowded apartments. Residents—children, youth, the elderly—awoke dizzy and disoriented from the blasts, police guns drawn in their faces. Cops roughed up a 100-year-old woman. Another elderly woman was pinned down, handcuffed and ordered to "die" as she pleaded for her medication. By the end of it all, the rampaging cops had made off with 44 people and \$572,000 in cash as well as cellphones and computers, all in the name of a "war on drugs."

"We came to Canada to get peace," a Somali community worker told a June 18 press conference called by the African Canadian Legal Clinic. The crowd heard how a 96-year-old Somali woman victimized in the raid now shouts "The soldiers are coming, they're coming" whenever she hears the door to her family residence open. Others in the heavily Somali crowd compared the cops in military-style uniforms to soldiers. Indeed, the parallels with their homeland were impossible to ignore. In 1993, under the guise of a "humanitarian" United Nations operation, U.S. and UN soldiers ravaged Mogadishu. The Canadian army played a full role in this, and soldiers of the Canadian Airborne, notorious for its violence and racism, tortured and murdered a Somali teenager, Shidane Arone.

It was during this period of civil war and brutal colonial war from the late 1980s to the mid-1990s that most Somali refugees—some 55,000—came to Canada.



ctvnews.ca

Brutal police raid targets Toronto's Somali community, June 13.

Eight thousand miles separate Mogadishu from Toronto, but Project Traveller drove home the message that while the tactics may change—sometimes only barely—the racist character of the Canadian state and its armed enforcers is fundamental.

Canadian capitalism offers a bleak future for immigrant youth. The destruction of manufacturing jobs has depleted the unions and come down hard on workers of minority backgrounds. Somalis in Canada are oppressed not only as blacks. Their Muslim origins place them squarely in the gunsights of the rulers' racist "war on terror," so it comes as no surprise that Somali youth in Toronto face an unemployment rate of 70 percent.

At the community press conference that followed the Dixon Road raid, outpourings against decrepit housing conditions and police violence went hand in hand. One woman said that when she asked her landlord to help repair her door, which the cops had bashed in, he replied, "your son is a criminal." Meanwhile the cops' "Somali Liaison Unit" continued to stalk the tenements. In the tradition of occupying armies they patronizingly handed out candy to children.

The Dixon Road raid revealed the cops as the hating and hated predators of vulnerable minorities. Reports that they punctuated their so-called drug bust with violent sadism and racist epithets surprised only the most naive. "They say they've dismantled the gangs," charged a youth activist named Kabir at a June 20 "community meeting" run by the cops. "I don't know a single gang that beats hundred-year-old women. They have no shame." The crowd then erupted and the presiding sergeant unplugged the microphone, putting an end to this charade of "community consultation."

This cop thus demonstrated in miniature the workings of democracy under the present system, which Marxists recognize to be a dictatorship of the capitalist class. The cops, together with prison guards, the courts and the army, form the core of that dictatorship, otherwise known as the capitalist state. Their job is to defend the interests of the tiny, super-wealthy capitalist class that exploits the millions of people in this country who must sell their labour power to survive.

Hardly a week passes without new reports of cops fabricating evidence,

lying in court, beating a suspect, gunning people down or stealing drugs and money. A few trials of the more egregious police malefactors have grabbed headlines recently, including a couple of the cops who carried out vicious beatings of G20 protesters three years ago. Even in the face of overwhelming evidence, not one has been found guilty of any crime. Far from an aberration, these trials are an effective demonstration of the workings of the bourgeois justice system. The cop in the dock, the judge and the crown prosecutor are not adversaries but partners. It is the essence of bourgeois justice that G20 protest leaders are jailed while the cops who brutalized hundreds of protesters and arrested over 1,100 emerge unscathed.

From Somalia to Haiti and Afghanistan, to the countless outrages here at home, it is abundantly clear that the capitalist state can never be made to serve the interests of oppressed peoples. Thus we of the Trotskyist League oppose dead-end calls for "community control" of the police, which only divert justified anger into renewed illusions of a "reformed" status quo. Against such schemes it is necessary to advance the perspective for *workers revolution to smash the capitalist state*.

Ford's Follies and the "War on Drugs"

In May, two *Toronto Star* reporters revealed that they had seen a video of Toronto mayor Rob Ford smoking crack cocaine. The idea that Ford smoked crack shook up his allies in the "respectable" circles of the lily-white bourgeoisie. The story made headlines around the world and provided no end of fuel for late-night comedy shows. Yet it is Somali immigrants (along with people of Jamaican origin), who are bearing the brunt of the anti-drug hysteria.

Cops reportedly told their victims during the June raid that "we're here because of Rob Ford." Indeed, the *Star* reporters said 320 Dixon Road was where they saw the crack video. CTV News has reported that Toronto police were investigating the existence of a video involving Ford several weeks before news of the scandal flooded the media.

Whatever his private predilections, Ford is a bigoted "law and order" conservative and an unswerving supporter of the cops. In the aftermath of a grisly shooting in a predominantly black Toronto neighbourhood last year, he ranted against gangs, drugs and guns and demanded that people convicted of gun crimes be banished from Toronto under the immigration laws. (This elicited embarrassment from fellow Conservatives including the then federal Immigration Minister Jason Kenney.) Ford has made headlines again and again for disparaging gays, Asians and even the minority youth at the Catholic high school where he once coached football.

As Marxists, we oppose laws against drugs, as well as against all other "crimes

continued on page 9

Soviet Workers...

(continued from page 2)

economy." Unlike in Poland during the rise of Solidarność, the forces of capitalist counterrevolution were *not* able to mobilize the Soviet masses in the name of anti-Communism.

At the same time, the bureaucratic elite (the so-called nomenklatura) was totally discredited by the flagrant corruption and cynicism of the Brezhnev era. Occasional appeals to defend "socialism" made by the more conservative elements of the Gorbachev regime, such as Yegor Ligachev, fell on deaf ears. The Stalinist "patriots," organized for example in the United Front of Toilers (OFT), were able to mobilize only a relatively small number of worker activists.

Atomized and bereft of any anticapitalist leadership, lacking any coherent and consistent socialist class consciousness,

skeptical about the possibility of class struggle in the capitalist countries, the Soviet working class did not rally in resistance against the encroaching capitalist counterrevolution. And, as Trotsky noted in *The Third International After Lenin*: "If an army capitulates to the enemy in a critical situation without a battle, then this capitulation completely takes the place of a 'decisive battle,' in politics as in war..."

The proletariat which made the October Revolution learned from Lenin and Trotsky's Bolsheviks that it was part of an international struggle. It understood that its only prospect for survival lay in the extension of the revolution to more advanced industrial powers, chiefly Germany. The opportunities were manifold, but the revolutionary parties outside Soviet Russia were too weak and politically immature to pursue them. The German Spartakist uprising of 1918-19 and the 1919 Hungarian Commune went down to bloody defeat. The possibility of the Red Army marching to the aid of the German workers in 1920 by unleash-

ing proletarian revolution in Pilsudski's Poland was foiled. Finally, with the defeat of the German October in 1923, the Soviet proletariat succumbed to the demoralizing prospect of a lengthy period of isolation, which allowed the bureaucratic layer headed by Stalin to usurp political power. Thus was the revolution betrayed.

But this betrayal did not go unchallenged. The Left Opposition of Leon Trotsky continued the struggle for the authentic program of Leninism. In its struggle to defend and extend Soviet power, the Left Opposition urged a policy of planned industrialization to revive the enervated proletariat and enable the isolated workers state to hold out against imperialist encirclement. The Trotskyists fought uncompromisingly against the nascent bureaucracy's Great Russian chauvinism. They fought against the treacherous policies emanating from "socialism in one country," in the first instance the subversion of the Chinese Revolution of 1925-27 and the Anglo-Russian trade-union bloc which led to the knifing of the 1926 British General Strike.

This led to the subordination of the German working class to Hitler's jackboot, to the outright suppression of the Spanish revolution in the late 1930s. By selling out revolutionary opportunities at the end of World War II, particularly in Italy, France and Greece, Stalinism enabled capitalism to survive, and thus prepared the way for its own ultimate demise.

With the utter liquidation of the Communist International as an instrument for world revolution, Trotsky organized the founding of the Fourth International in 1938. Today the International Communist League fights for the rebirth of the Fourth International, whose cadre were decimated by Stalinist and Hitlerite terror and which finally succumbed in the early 1950s to an internal revisionist challenge which denied the need for an independent revolutionary leadership. Only as part of the struggle to reforge an authentic world party of socialist revolution can the workers of the former Soviet Union cohere the leadership they need to sweep away the grotesque horrors they now confront. ■

Young Spartacus

City College of New York



Shay Horse/Facebook



Kimberly Stallone

Left: October 24 “Defend the Morales/Shakur Center” rally at CCNY, where two were arrested. Right: Emergency protest against closing of center, October 21.

Reinstate the Morales/Shakur Center! Cops Off Campus!

We reprint below an October 26 leaflet issued by the New York Spartacus Youth Club. The City College of New York (CCNY) is one of 24 public colleges and schools that make up the City University of New York (CUNY). As we go to press, the Guillermo Morales/Assata Shakur Community and Student Center, a room in CCNY’s North Academic Center (NAC), is still shut down with a sign above the door that reads, “Careers and Professional Development Institute.”

The Spartacus Youth Club denounces

the outrageous eviction of the Morales/Shakur Center by the CCNY administration on October 20. As the Center was raided and all of its contents confiscated, campus cops shut down the entire NAC building, arresting a CUNY alumnus. The timing of this raid is no coincidence, coming off weeks of CUNY protests against the reinstatement of the Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) military recruiters and the appointment of war criminal David Petraeus as a visiting professor. At an anti-Petraeus protest on September 17,

cops brutally attacked the crowd and six protesters were arrested, all part of an attempt by the CUNY administration to stifle leftist activism. The sinister eviction of the Morales/Shakur Center represents an attack on the democratic rights of all campus groups to organize. **Reinstate the Morales/Shakur Center! Drop all charges against CUNY protesters! ROTC and Petraeus out of CUNY!**

The Morales/Shakur Center was a space for leftist, minority and other student groups and community organizations to hold meetings and events. Assata Shakur is a former Black Panther who was framed up for the 1973 killing of a New Jersey state trooper. Guillermo Morales was a member of the FALN, a Puerto Rican nationalist group. Shakur is now being hunted by the FBI as part of a racist “anti-terror” vendetta.

The CUNY administration is currently considering a new draconian policy on “expressive activity,” i.e., campus protests. The proposed rules enhance the powers of the administration to crack down on protest and other political activity. Along with this attack on democratic rights, the CUNY Board of Trustees has been on a drive to make the city university more exclusive, making it harder for black, Latino, poor and immigrant students to attend. CCNY, which sits in the middle of Harlem, has seen the enrollment of black students plummet in the last 10 years, from 31.2% in 2001 to 14.4%

in 2010. In 2011 a new round of tuition hikes was pushed through—accompanied by the violent repression of students who protested it. This was just the latest wave in a decades-long campaign to reverse the gains of the 1969 student strike, which won open admissions for high school graduates to CUNY’s community colleges and lowered entrance requirements at the four-year universities. In 1976 tuition was imposed for the first time in 129 years and has gone up steadily. Open admissions has been whittled away over the years, and was completely gutted in 1999. **We fight for free, quality, integrated education with a full stipend! For open admissions! Abolish the student debt!**

The Morales/Shakur Center was won in 1989 as a result of massive student struggle against tuition hikes at CUNY. But under capitalism these gains are always reversible. Universities under capitalism serve the purpose of upholding bourgeois ideology and training the next layer of technicians and managers. We hold no illusions in the administration to act in the interest of students—we say **abolish the administration, for student-teacher-worker control of the university!** In order to remove the universities from the control of the bourgeoisie, you need a workers revolution to sweep away the whole capitalist system. Students, who have no real social power to transform society, must ally with the multiracial working class which can bring production to a halt. To do away with the decaying capitalist system, we need a socialist revolution.

At the recent protests in defense of the Center, some students have expressed the view that the campus cops work for the students since the students pay tuition. The Revolutionary Student Coordinating Committee also peddles illusions that the cops can be pressured into serving students and the oppressed by calling for “any security force to be controlled by the community” (RSCC Platform). In reality the cops carry out the orders of the administration and the capitalist state, not the students. The role of all cops under capitalism is to defend the interests of the bourgeoisie—they cannot be reformed. The brutal enforcement of capitalist rule is their job, whether in the ghettos and barrios, on the picket lines, or on the campuses. **Cops off campus!**

With the mayoral elections approaching, students and workers are being told to place their hopes in the liberal populist de Blasio. The illusion is that this capitalist politician will bring some relief from the racist police brutality, union-busting and attacks on democratic rights that marked Bloomberg’s years. Don’t be fooled! Whether it’s through Wall Street Democrat Obama or more left-talking local politicians like de Blasio, Ydanis Rodriguez or Charles Barron—the Democratic Party is charged with defending the interests of the racist, imperialist capitalist system. And don’t forget it was Democrat Obama’s FBI that increased Assata Shakur’s bounty to \$2 million. **Break with the Democrats!** We need a class-struggle workers party independent of and in opposition to all parties of capitalist rule. If you are interested in a program to get rid of capitalism and imperialism once and for all, check out the Marxist Spartacus Youth Club, youth group of the Spartacist League, and our paper, *Workers Vanguard*. ■

Rescind Suspensions of CCNY Protesters!

We print below an October 28 protest letter by the New York Spartacus Youth Club.

The New York Spartacus Youth Club (SYC) denounces the outrageous suspension of City College of New York (CCNY) students Tafadar Sourov and Khalil Vasquez. On October 28, 2013, the students were approached by campus police, their student identification was revoked, and they were suspended and banned from the campus effective immediately. The suspension of these students is a blatant act of retaliation against those who have protested at CCNY against the eviction of the Morales/Shakur Center by the CCNY administration. The SYC stands in solidarity with Sourov and Vasquez! This is an attack on the democratic rights of all students, faculty and workers on campus. We demand that their suspension be revoked and that they be reinstated and allowed back on the CCNY campus immediately!

* * *

YSp Update: The CCNY administration canceled the November 8 disci-

plinary hearing. Sourov and Vasquez, both activists in the Revolutionary Student Coordinating Committee (RSCC), refused to accept the CCNY administration’s grotesque plea deal to temporarily lift the suspensions, provided the students agree to security monitoring and to end their political activities on campus (“We Will Not Compromise: CUNY Administration’s Backroom Deal Revealed,” RSCC Web posting, 7 November). As an SYC spokesman said in his speech at the November 8 defense rally, attended by dozens of students and faculty, “Drop the suspensions now! And cops off campus! This crackdown on leftist groups was a direct response to the anti-Petraeus and anti-ROTC protests. We also say, ROTC and Petraeus off campus now!”

The hearing has been rescheduled for November 15. Protest statements can be directed to: Juana Reina, Vice President of Student Affairs, Wille Administration Building, Room A 204, 160 Convent Avenue, New York, NY 10031, telephone (212) 650-5426, fax (212) 650-7080, e-mail studentaffairs@ccny.cuny.edu.

Spartacus Youth Club Forum

From Maoism to Trotskyism

NEW YORK CITY

Wednesday, November 20, 7 p.m.

CCNY, NAC, Room 1/211
138th St. and Amsterdam Ave.
Take #1 train to 137th St.

Information: (212) 267-1025 • nysl@tiac.net

Join the Spartacus Youth Clubs!

The Spartacus Youth Clubs intervene into social struggles armed with the revolutionary internationalist program of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky. We work to mobilize youth in struggle as partisans of the working class, championing the liberation of black people, women and all the oppressed. The SYCs fight to win youth to the perspective of building the Leninist vanguard party that will lead the working class in socialist revolution, laying the basis for a world free of capitalist exploitation and imperialist slaughter.

What We Fight For

1 Mobilize students behind the social power of the multiracial working class! Picket lines mean don't cross! For union-run minority job recruitment and training programs! For union hiring halls! Down with union-busting "workfare" schemes! Jobs for all at union wages! Organize the unorganized! Unionize the South! Down with multi-tier wages, which pit younger and older workers against each other! Cops, prison guards, security guards out of the unions! Keep the bosses' government and courts out of the unions!

2 Black oppression is the bedrock of racist American capitalism. Finish the Civil War! For black liberation through socialist revolution! For mass labor/black mobilizations to stop the fascists and race-terrorists! No to gun control! For the right of armed self-defense! No reliance on the capitalist courts or politicians! Fascist terror is not a question of "free speech." Stop the Nazis! Stop the KKK!

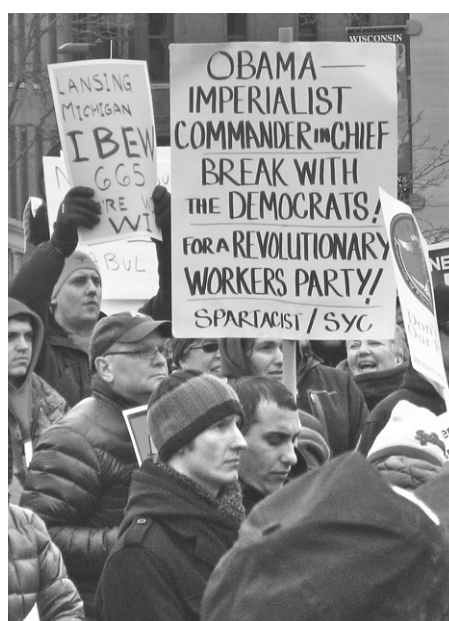
3 For free, quality, integrated public education for all! Nationalize the pri-

vate universities! Down with the racist purge of higher education—defend affirmative action, no to tuition hikes! No to budget cuts! For an end to tracking! For open admissions, no tuition and a state-paid living stipend for all students! Abolish the administration—the universities should be run by those who work and study there! Down with police occupation of public schools! Cops off campus!

4 For women's liberation through socialist revolution! For mass, labor-backed mobilizations to defend abortion clinics! Down with parental consent laws and "squeal rules"! For free abortion on demand! For free, quality 24-hour child-care! For free, quality health care for all! Equal pay for equal work! Down with anti-gay laws! Down with reactionary age of consent laws! Full democratic rights for homosexuals! Government out of the bedroom! Down with the anti-sex witchhunt! Down with all laws against consensual activities, called "crimes without victims," like pornography, gambling, drug use, prostitution and "statutory rape"!

5 Down with racist anti-immigrant laws! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! Organize foreign-born workers into the unions! No deportations! No to racist "English only" laws! Down with anti-Hispanic, anti-Arab, anti-Asian, anti-Semitic and all racist bigotry!

6 Down with the "war on terror," which is a war aimed at immigrants, labor, the left and minorities! Free all the detainees! Abolish the racist death penalty! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Free all class-war prisoners! There is no justice in the capitalist courts! Defend victims of racist cop terror and police frame-up! No illusions in civilian review boards or "community control" of the police! For labor mobilizations against racist cop



Young Spartacus
SYC at rally against union-busting, Madison, Wisconsin, March 2011.

terror! Down with the "war on drugs," a racist war by the ruling class against black and Hispanic youth! The capitalist state—at its core consisting of the cops, courts, prisons—is the executive committee of the ruling class, an instrument of organized violence by the capitalists against the workers and the oppressed. It must be smashed through workers revolution!

7 Defend separation of church and state! Defend science against superstition and mysticism! Keep religion out of the schools! No prayer in the schools! Down with the teaching of creationism! For the teaching of evolution! No government funding for religious, private or "charter" schools!

8 Defeat U.S. imperialism through workers revolution! U.S. and allied

forces out of Iraq, Afghanistan now! Down with the neocolonial occupations! For class struggle against U.S. capitalist rulers at home! No illusions in the UN—a den of imperialist thieves, their victims and their lackeys! All U.S./UN/NATO troops out of the Balkans, Haiti! For the right of independence for Puerto Rico! U.S. troops out of Puerto Rico and the Caribbean! U.S. imperialist butchers: hands off the world! No to the draft! Not one man, not one penny for the imperialist military! Drive ROTC, CIA and police recruiters off the campuses!

9 For international working-class solidarity! Down with the chauvinist poison of protectionism! Workers of the world, unite! For unconditional military defense of the deformed workers states of Cuba, China, North Korea, Vietnam and Laos against capitalist counterrevolution and imperialist attack! For workers political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucrats and establish regimes of workers democracy, based on the power of workers councils, and revolutionary internationalism!

10 Break with the racist, warmongering Democratic and Republican parties of capitalism! No support to any capitalist parties, including Greens! For a revolutionary, multiracial workers party that fights for socialist revolution! Look to the example of the heroic, Bolshevik-led workers of 1917 Russia! For new October Revolutions! For the international rule of the working class!

15 May 2011

The Spartacus Youth Clubs are the youth groups of the revolutionary Marxist Spartacist League/U.S., section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

Toronto...

(continued from page 7)

without victims" like prostitution, pornography and gambling. Of course drug addiction, like alcoholism, can be dangerous—but this is a personal and medical matter, not one for the police.

Much of the police brutality against black youth today is conducted in the name of the "war on drugs." The issue here isn't drug use: whites and blacks alike partake of recreational drugs. The "war on drugs" battle cry is intended to give the cops license to stage raids, make sweeping arrests and otherwise terrorize the population of the city's heavily minority inner suburbs. It is now a standard trope for the ruling class whenever it feels the need to ratchet up state repression or scapegoat racial minorities for ills of its decaying social order. In 2009, a raid even larger than that at Dixon Road was carried out by over 1,000 cops over the whole Greater Toronto area. Over 125 were arrested. Like the "war on terror," the "war on drugs" is not a real war fought between states, but an ideological campaign with no ultimate aim or foreseeable end.

For our part, we could care less what Rob Ford smokes or drinks. His real crimes are against workers and the oppressed. He is a racist anti-gay bigot, a proven liar and a vicious labour-hater. He came into office vowing to get rid of thousands of city workers, contract out union jobs and slash social services. He indeed took on the unions and won the first round in 2012, thanks to a defeatist labour leadership that offered no perspective of struggle. The result was contracts that made unprecedented concessions and eliminated many of the impediments to contracting out and getting rid of unionized city workers. Today, garbage pickup

in half of the city has been privatized.

Even as the Ford scandal roiled the media and his antics became an acute embarrassment to sections of the bourgeoisie, the major Toronto dailies—including the liberal *Toronto Star*—were careful to credit Ford for his crackdown on the unions. Indeed, the variant of right-wing populism Ford pushes is underpinned by hostility to organized labour, dressed up in fraudulent posturing on behalf of a mythical "little guy" taxpayer. Ford has already declared that his 2014 re-election campaign will centre on a continued attack on the city unions. In the face of a quiescent labour movement, this reactionary garbage continues to have traction.

For a Class-Struggle Fight Against Racial Oppression

The social power that can be mobilized on behalf of black youth and all the oppressed is to be found in the multiracial working class. The vast potential power of this class lies in its central role in production where its collective labour in the factories, transportation systems and other industries is exploited by the capitalists for profit. A serious labour counter-offensive would put paid to the supposed

"public outrage" against the unions and it would garner widespread support among the city's beleaguered minority communities which are literally under the gun. A fighting labour movement would actively campaign against racist police terror, and demand **full citizenship rights for all immigrants and jobs for all**.

Combating racial oppression is essential to the unity of the working class. To beat back the bourgeoisie's attacks and triumph over the bankrupt rule of capital, the labour movement must consciously organize the active support of the oppressed: black youth facing police terror, desperate refugees and immigrants. Such a perspective requires a struggle to replace the current pro-capitalist union bureaucrats who have brought defeat after defeat, and forge a new leadership based on class struggle.

The working class is further hamstrung by the allegiance to the social-democratic NDP [New Democratic Party] that is promoted by most of the labour misleaders. Deeply loyal to the capitalists and their state, the New Democrats pander to the racist law-and-order demagoguery of the ruling Conservatives. Under the late Jack Layton, the NDP called to hire thousands

more cops, to "give police more tools to prosecute dangerous offenders" and to "make gang recruiting illegal." Last summer, around the time of Rob Ford's anti-gang rants, Toronto-Danforth NDP MP [Member of Parliament] Craig Scott declared that "street gangs are becoming more and more of a problem in this country." Scott went on to call for "putting more police into communities and creating dedicated youth gang prevention funds and activities." Putting more police into communities has meant nothing other than the hundreds-strong cop raid on the Somali tenements.

The struggle for a fighting labour movement that opposes racist oppression is inseparable from the perspective of breaking the unions from the politics of NDP-style social democracy. The indispensable tool for this struggle is a vanguard party of the working class. The Trotskyist League is committed to building such a revolutionary party, which would fight against all illusions in the racist, capitalist state, aiming to mobilize a class-conscious labour movement to overthrow this barbaric social system and replace it with the socialist rule of the multiracial working class. ■

Spartacus Youth Club Classes

BAY AREA

Tuesday, Nov. 19, 7 p.m.

For Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

San Francisco State University
Cesar Chavez Student Center
Rosa Parks D

Information and readings:
(510) 839-0851
sycbayarea@sbcglobal.net

CHICAGO

Saturday, Nov. 23, 1 p.m.

Lessons of the Paris Commune

222 S. Morgan (Third Floor, Buzz 23)
(Take blue line to UIC-Halsted stop)

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

TORONTO

Wednesday, Nov. 20, 6:30 p.m.

The Capitalist State—Racist Police Terror and War

U of T, Sidney Smith Hall, Room 2104
100 St. George Street

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

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

(continued from page 12)

Bourgeois politicians at candlelight vigils in Rome and Brussels demanded that Italy not be left alone to deal with African immigrants. Sure enough, the EU answered their prayers by releasing money to reinforce the Frontex operation, a pan-European surveillance system whose objective is to reduce the number of immigrants entering Europe and to prevent “cross-border crime.” Established in 2004, Frontex also includes African forces patrolling the territorial waters of Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Morocco, Mauritania and Senegal. The further strengthening of Frontex will mean even more deaths at sea, as routes will become even longer and more perilous.

In 2011 alone, more than 1,500 people died at sea in the aftermath of the so-called “Arab spring” and the murderous NATO bombings of Qaddafi’s Libya. In March of that year, a ship with 72 refugees from Libya was abandoned. It drifted at sea for more than two weeks, even though its position had been communicated to European authorities and NATO vessels and warplanes were monitoring every inch of the Gulf of Sirte and the Sicily Channel. Sixty-three people died of hunger and thirst, leaving only nine survivors to describe their ordeal.

Colonialism and Racism: Bloodlines of “Humanitarian” Imperialism

The refugees who died in Lampedusa mostly came from the Horn of Africa and had set sail from the Libyan coast, an itinerary that crosses most of the countries that were the historical victims of Italian imperialism. Italy had partially succeeded in establishing colonies in East Africa by the end of the 19th century and colonized Libya in 1911 follow-



Rome, October 18: Immigrant workers from outside EU join general strike called by Italian trade-union federations against bosses' austerity.

Today, capitalist politicians like to cover their aims with the rhetoric of “human rights.” But the only right they recognize is *their own* right to exploit and plunder markets and the vast resources in

the status of the “angel of the refugees.” While she has asked that illegal immigration not be treated as a crime, Boldrin has also praised the Italian navy, coast guard and other state agencies for their supposedly “untold efforts to save human lives.” Further, she has called on EU states to strengthen both their “monitoring and rescuing at sea” and efforts to promote “democratization” in the immigrants’ countries of origin. Such proposals, packaged with the usual “humanitarian” verbiage, mean a reinforcing of the same imperialist institutions that for decades have pursued military intervention, racist repression and attempts to turn North African states into EU border guards.

In 2006, Human Rights Watch de-



September 2011: Nigerian man arrested by imperialist-backed Libyan opposition forces. Rebel militias rounded up, tortured and killed black African immigrants.

The Left Ecology Freedom party's Laura Boldrini, speaker of the Italian Chamber of Deputies and former spokeswoman for the United Nations Human Rights Commission, has been elevated to

nounced the Qaddafi government for carrying out arbitrary detentions and torture in prison camps for foreigners, three of which were funded by Italy. The Italian reformist left strongly criticized the Berlusconi government for bilateral agreements with Qaddafi's regime over policing immigration. They forgot to add that Berlusconi was enacting previous agreements that had been made in December 2007 by the second Prodi government, which included RC secretary Paolo Ferrero as a minister.

The capitalist government of Luis Zapatero's Socialist Party in Spain was no better. Overnight in late April 2008 outside Al Hoceima, Morocco, a Spanish naval vessel sank a boat carrying sub-Saharan immigrants, killing at least 29. The Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla in Morocco are surrounded by a double fence of barbed wire nearly 20 feet high, partially paid for by the EU. During the summer of 2005, attempts by hundreds of men to cross the fences were repelled by gunfire from the Guardia Civil and their Moroccan auxiliaries that killed an estimated 13 and wounded 100 people.

Italian prime minister Letta now denounces the new Libyan authorities for not properly policing their shores. To be sure, this is not because the Libyan regime solidarizes with the plight of black

African immigrants. The pro-imperialist puppet government that emerged from the NATO bombing campaign promised to maintain the existing agreements with Italy and the EU over the repression of immigrants from sub-Saharan Africa and their detention in desert prison camps.

Immediately after taking power, Libyan prime minister Mahmoud Jibril declared that he “welcomed and encouraged” his country’s joint coastal patrols with Italy and blamed “illegal immigrants” for “spreading diseases and provoking clashes with Libyan citizens.” In August 2011, “revolutionary” militias from Misurata carried out ethnic cleansing in the town of Tawergha, whose 30,000 villagers, mostly Libyan citizens descended from black slaves, were chased from their homes for allegedly supporting Qaddafi’s government. Many fled toward the desert in central Libya. Thousands ended up in refugee camps near Tripoli, where they were constantly harassed by the militias. Such were the reactionary militias that the fake-Trotskyist Partito di Alternativa Comunista, Italian affiliate of the Morenoite International Workers League-Fourth International, prettified as “proletarian armed committees” and called upon to directly take power.

The Letta government ghoulishly promised to grant Italian citizenship as well as state funerals to those who died in the Lampedusa shipwreck. A funeral ceremony was held in Agrigento, Sicily, in the presence of Italian and Eritrean authorities but without the coffins of the victims and in the absence of the survivors, who were prohibited from attending. Families of the refugees protested the exclusion and the threatening presence of officials from Eritrea, from where many of the refugees had escaped, while local anti-racist activists chased Interior Minister Angelino Alfano with shouts of “Bossi-Fini, murderer’s law.”

Italy has been run for two years by “national unity” governments supported by the capitalist Democratic Party and People of Freedom party, with the leaders of the main trade-union confederations playing along by refusing to wage any class struggle. Financial institutions and the EU masters have charged these governments with slashing welfare and cutting wages and pensions in order to repay loans to Italian and foreign banks. Austerity measures have severely hit the working class, especially the millions of immigrant workers. The racist oppression of immigrants in Italy is symbolized by the Bossi-Fini law. Among its provisions, the law links the issuance of residence permits to work contracts, making immigrant workers vulnerable to all sorts of blackmail by the bosses.

In the wake of the Lampedusa tragedy, sections of the PD and its allies in Left Ecology Freedom have demanded the abolition of the most offending sections of the Bossi-Fini law or even its entire abrogation. PD integration minister Cecilia Kyenge, the first non-white minister in

WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League

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

☐ New ☐ Renewal

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

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

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

Name _____

Address _____

_____ Apt. # _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (_____) _____ E-mail _____

1034

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

[illegible]

Spying...

(continued from page 1)

airport for almost nine hours supposedly to divest him of 58,000 NSA electronic documents. Earlier, the Government Communications Headquarters, the British equivalent of the NSA, had overseen the destruction of a copy of Snowden’s files held at the offices of the *Guardian* newspaper. (Several other copies remain.)

American “Democracy”: Capitalist Class Dictatorship

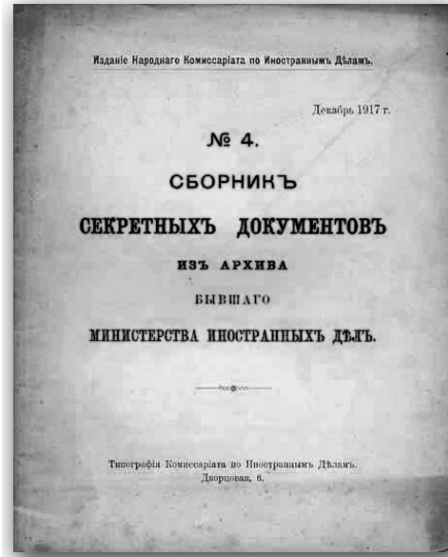
The U.S. capitalist class—in whose interests the spying is carried out—is concerned with the impact that the exposures might have on future dealings with their European counterparts. Most concerned are the giant information processors—Google, Yahoo et al.—who fear that the decline in business of late will only continue, as the bulk of them are known to have readily provided the NSA with access to their data. Google executive Eric Schmidt is attempting to bluff his way out of trouble by feigning outrage against the NSA data burglars.

Many Americans are given to self-exposure on the Net and accustomed to having their personal data looted by Google, Yahoo and the rest on the behalf of advertisers. But the massive scope of snooping has raised the temperature of an American populace increasingly disgusted with a Congress and a president that have done nothing to alleviate the ravages of the Great Recession.

Even as he tries to give the impression that he wants to rein in spying, Obama has been loath to acknowledge any wrongdoing. In fact, his administration has stated that there is no alternative to the bulk collection of data, offering only that the NSA could perhaps destroy the information it has stockpiled after three years instead of the current five—as a sop to those naive enough to believe that the data will ever be destroyed. When it matters to the bourgeoisie, however, Obama seems magically able to adjust the electronic surveillance machine, as witnessed by his recent assurance to Merkel that her cell phone was not currently bugged.

More retreats and apologies may lie ahead as the web of U.S. surveillance is further brought to light. There is some

movement in Congress to modify sections of the Patriot Act, with a few politicians suggesting its repeal. Among the lawmakers expressing some dismay at the extent of snooping is Republican Jim Sensenbrenner, an author of the Patriot Act who now wants to put “reasonable limits” on it. The Freedom Act, the draft legislation that he has sponsored, is supported by a range of right-wing libertarians and civil-rights groups like the ACLU. It would be welcome if such efforts created some speed bumps for the agents of U.S. imperialism. It would be foolish to believe that reforms will ever significantly impede the imperialists’ spying on whomever they want whenever they want. In fact, rival legislation from Democratic senator Dianne Feinstein would simply provide a solid legal footing for across-the-board sur-



Shortly after October Revolution, Trotsky oversaw publication of secret documents of the former Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



Imperial War Museum

veillance, explicitly authorizing the bulk collection of Americans’ phone records. The NSA was founded in 1952 by secret order of Democratic president Harry Truman, mainly to spy on the Soviet Union during the Cold War. It greatly expanded during the late 1960s and early ’70s, as the government targeted radicals, Vietnam antiwar activists and black militants. Recently revealed documents indicate that the NSA viewed its very own Operation Minaret program, under which it spied on everyone from Martin Luther King to Jane Fonda, as “disreputable if not outright

illegal.” This program complemented the FBI’s COINTELPRO, which began as a spying operation on the Communist Party and later unleashed murderous repression against Black Panther militants. After the Watergate scandal in the early 1970s and under the impact of the social struggles of that period, some of this sordid history was made public through the investigation and hearings of the Senate’s 1975-76 Church Committee. Among the measures adopted to curb NSA/CIA spying following the Church hearings was the 1978 Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA). Sponsored by the liberal icon Democratic senator Ted Kennedy, this legislation set up a special secret court to vet requests for “national security” wiretaps. FISA, or some similar oversight body, is invoked in

which Obama in a rare moment of candor referred to as “how intelligence services operate,” is a means to maneuver for influence, markets and cheap labor. When the working class took power in Russia after the 1917 October Revolution, the Bolsheviks who led the revolution published the secret World War I treaties concluded by the prior tsarist and Provisional Government regimes with their imperialist allies, exposing the war as a quest for plunder. With that stroke, the Bolsheviks demonstrated that they abandoned all hypocrisy and lies in addressing the workers of other nations, while continuing to employ all necessary subterfuge and deceit in dealings with the domestic and imperialist forces of counterrevolution.

In 1923-24, a parasitic bureaucracy headed by Stalin usurped political power from the Soviet proletariat (see article on page 2). The bureaucracy’s police apparatus would be used to suppress all opponents of the regime, not only counterrevolutionaries but especially communist oppositionists, first and foremost the Trotskyists, who fought against the Stalinists’ betrayal of the struggle for world socialist revolution. Meanwhile, the Kremlin’s foreign spy service targeted the imperialists as well as, at times, working-class struggle in other countries, such as during the Spanish Civil War.

For their part, the U.S. and other imperialist countries built up armies of spies to serve the drive for capitalist restoration in the USSR. With the destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92, the common enemy of the imperialists was removed. Subsequently, their clandestine operations were directed more to gaining advantage over one another, even as military and economic pressure has been kept on China and the other remaining deformed workers states.

Spying and treachery between states will persist until international proletarian revolution erases the basis for national antagonisms and sets the stage for the withering away of the state. After that, as Karl Marx’s collaborator Friedrich Engels eloquently explained, “State interference in social relations becomes, in one domain after another, superfluous, and then dies out of itself; the government of persons is replaced by the administration of things, and by the conduct of processes of production” (*Anti-Dühring*, 1878).■

the history of the country, has suggested a law to make it easier for immigrants’ children born in Italy to gain citizenship. In response, and for the simple fact that she is a black woman, Kyenge has been subjected to a wave of vile racist attacks by far-right Northern League scum and by outright fascist groups like Forza Nuova that have thrown bananas at her and hung nooses in a town where she was due to speak. Up to now, Italian citizenship has been ruled by “ius sanguinis” (blood right), which grants automatic citizenship to anyone in the U.S., Argentina or elsewhere with a male ancestor who died as an Italian citizen after 1861, when the former kingdom was established. Beneficiaries also include anyone descended from Italians who lived in the territories of the former Yugoslavia that were occupied by fascist Italy. Changes proposed to the immigration laws are only cosmetic. They would maintain the system of detention centers while reducing maximum stays to less than the current 18 months and would make illegal immigration an administrative offense in order to avoid overfilling prisons and courts and to free police for patrolling the streets. Two deputies from the populist Five Star movement introduced an amendment to abolish the crime of illegal immigration, which carried in a commission of the upper chamber of parliament. However, Five Star gurus Beppe Grillo and Gianroberto Casalegno issued a vile statement printed on Grillo’s blog ranting that “the content of this amendment is an invitation to emigrants from Africa and from the Middle East to set sail for Italy.... Lampedusa is close to collapsing

and Italy’s not doing too well. How many clandestines can we welcome here if one in eight people here in Italy does not have the money to eat?” The Lega Trotskista d’Italia, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist), calls for the abolition of the Bossi-Fini law and for full citizenship rights for everyone who lives on Italian soil, with no restrictions whatsoever. We demand: Close the detention centers! No deportations! Calling simply for the abolition of the Bossi-Fini law has nothing to do with citizenship rights. If it were repealed, there would be a de facto reversion to the previous legislation, the Turco-Napolitano law. Enacted in 1998 under the Prodi government with votes from the RC, it provided the basic framework for all subsequent immigration laws: deportations, detention camps, administrative detention and deprivation of citizenship rights. The main difference has always been that popular-front governments couched their racist laws in “humanitarian” garb, while the right revels in the most open and vicious racism. Both bourgeois forces have managed immigration in the interests of Italian capitalism, which needs a cheaper workforce that is easy to blackmail and dispose of in the event of economic downturns. The second Prodi coalition government, which included RC, never even talked about changing the Bossi-Fini law. “Left” bourgeois governments have certainly not shied away from using immigrants as scapegoats for growing misery. In 2007, the Prodi government launched a vicious campaign against Roma (gypsy) and Romanian immigrants in order to send the message that while they were EU cit-

izens, they were not equals under the law or in practice. Labor should take a stand in defense of immigrants and fight to unionize immigrant workers, who are savagely exploited by the *caporali* (overseers) in the fields of Southern Italy and by contractors in the North. This requires a class-struggle leadership of the trade unions to replace the current pro-capitalist union bureaucrats mostly linked to the PD and its reformist

tails, whose aim is to be in the saddle of capitalist government. After a decade of Left Ecology Freedom rule in Puglia, the region remains a center of brutal exploitation of immigrant workers in agribusiness and “alternative energy” projects. To end discrimination and victimization of immigrants requires the proletarian overthrow of the capitalist system of exploitation, to which racist oppression is an integral component.■

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

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

TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA/LIGUE TROTSKYSTE DU CANADA

- Montréal.....CP 83 Succ. Place-d’Armes, Montréal QC H2Y 3E9, (514) 728-7578
trotskyste.montreal@gmail.com
- TorontoBox 7198, Station A, Toronto, ON M5W 1X8, (416) 593-4138
spartcan@on.aibn.com
- Vancouver.....Box 2717, Main P.O., Vancouver, BC V6B 3X2, (604) 687-0353
trotskyist_vancouver@shawcable.com

WORKERS VANGUARD

“Fortress Europe” Means Racist Murder Mass Drowning of Refugees in Mediterranean

The following article was written by our comrades of the Lega Trotskista d'Italia, section of the International Communist League.

On October 3, a boat carrying over 500 refugees, mainly from Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia, caught fire and capsized half a mile from the Italian island of Lampedusa. All told, 366 bodies were eventually recovered and more are still missing. Only 155 people survived. Those who were in the hold, overwhelmingly women and children, could not even try to escape. The body of a young mother was found attached to her newborn baby by the umbilical cord. This was the deadliest tragedy in the Mediterranean Sea since the end of World War II, with a toll exceeding the December 1996 drowning of at least 283 men, women and children, most of them from Pakistan, in the waters off Portopalo, Sicily.

The mass drowning off Lampedusa brought forth a combination of crocodile tears and racist cynicism from Italian capitalist politicians. Democratic Party (PD) prime minister Enrico Letta and Minister of Interior Angelino Alfano of Silvio Berlusconi's right-wing People of Freedom party, joined by European Union (EU) president José Manuel Barroso, went to Lampedusa to kneel before the coffins of the victims. In a staged farce, everybody from the government to the Catholic church to the Left Ecology Freedom parliamentary opposition got together to decry the disaster and swear, in the words of Letta, “Never again another Lampedusa.”

But just eight days later on October 11, a second boat carrying at least 480 Syrian refugees (and reportedly 100 sub-Saharan immigrants locked in the hold) sank 60 miles south of Lampedusa, killing 268 people. The boat had been damaged by gunfire from a Libyan patrol boat, and individuals on board had been desperately phoning Italian authorities for help. These requests were turned down one



Reuters

October 3: Bodies of drowned migrants in Lampedusa harbor after shipwreck of boat destined for Italy.

after another. Told to contact the Maltese navy instead, they were left to die. A helicopter from Malta did not arrive until six hours after the first S.O.S., when the ship had already capsized.

Those who died in Lampedusa were murdered, and the blame lies with the barrage of vicious anti-immigrant laws that have been imposed by Italian governments, whether left-of-center or right-of-center, and the EU. Meanwhile, the survivors are being held in the Center for Identification and Expulsion in Lampedusa, subject to criminal prosecution for “illegal” immigration. Over the last two decades, the southern rim of Europe has experienced a proliferation of racist laws,

barbed-wire fences and detention camps, as well as armed forces deployed to guard the borders of “Fortress Europe.” The number of immigrant detention camps along the southern and eastern borders of the EU went from 324 in 1999 to 473 in 2011, with 13 in Italy. These totals do not include the many unofficial detention centers, from ship cabins to police stations.

The bourgeois press and politicians initially blamed local fishermen for not rescuing the victims of the shipwreck, with some survivors stating that three fishing vessels had turned away from their burning boat. Later, some of the rescuers blamed the local naval authority, the Capitaneria di Porto. Vito Fiorino, who was sleeping on his boat the night of the accident and was the first to hear the desperate cries of the victims, told *Corriere della Sera* (5 October):

“While we were trying with all of our forces to pull on board as many people as we could, the people on the vessel from the Capitaneria were taking pictures and videos.... We were pulling refugees on board in groups of four. When our ship became too crowded and we risked sinking, we asked the Capitaneria to take them on board of their ship so we could go on with the rescue. Instead they told us they could not accept them because of protocol. It is incredible.”

International maritime law compels ships, including military vessels, to respond to emergency calls from nearby ships and to rescue people if possible. In Italy, however, they need to first get authorization from maritime authorities to avoid being prosecuted under the provisions of a 2002 law pushed by Umberto Bossi and Gianfranco Fini, ultra-right

ministers in the Berlusconi government. That law made “illegal” immigration a criminal offense.

Mediterranean: Open-Air Cemetery

In the past, merchant ships were ordered to transport refugees they had rescued to Malta or Libya, countries that are notorious for their mistreatment of immigrants in detention camps. This discouraged merchant vessels from responding to emergency calls. Fishing ships that had rescued immigrants have been seized by naval authorities who investigated the crews, leading to the loss of weeks of work during fishing season. Some crews were even prosecuted and jailed. In 2004, three workers for the refugee charity ship *Cap Anamur* were put on trial for rescuing 37 immigrants and taking them to an Italian harbor. In August 2007, seven Tunisian fishermen who had rescued 44 people from a sinking boat off Lampedusa were detained for 32 days. In September 2011, the Italian government declared Lampedusa harbor to be unsafe as a destination for refugees rescued at sea, compelling rescue operations to be moved to the Sicilian coast more than 100 miles further to the north.

Now the government and the EU are seizing on the deaths in Lampedusa to ramp up the racist policing of the Mediterranean even more. On October 14, the government announced the launch of operation “Mare Nostrum” (the Latin words used in the early 20th century by nationalist revanchists and fascists to describe their dream of an Italian empire around the Mediterranean). The

continued on page 10



Reuters

Desperate immigrants locked up in refugee camp in Lampedusa, Italy, in July.