

In Wake of Fascist-Infested Ukraine Coup

U.S./EU Imperialist Frenzy as Crimea Rejoins Russia

MARCH 18—Crimea today officially rejoined Russia, as Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a reunification treaty with his Crimean counterpart. This came two days after Crimea voted by nearly 97 percent in favor of secession from Ukraine and absorption into Russia, with 83 percent of the electorate reportedly participating in the poll. Having earlier denounced the referendum as “illegitimate,” the Obama administration and its Western allies now refuse to recognize Crimea’s reunification with Russia. Washington has been joined by Germany and other European powers in imposing a new round of sanctions, including against Russian officials.

Meanwhile, within days of Fatherland party leader Arseniy Yatsenyuk being named Ukrainian prime minister, the millionaire banker was in Brussels on March 6 meeting with the secretary general of NATO. In a flagrant provocation against Russia, General Anders Fogh Rasmussen assured Yatsenyuk that NATO “will strengthen our efforts to build the capacity of the Ukrainian military, including with more joint training and exercises.”

Since then, President Barack Obama has sent fighter jets to Poland for joint exercises as well as to Lithuania for NATO patrols over the Baltic states. Following Russian military maneuvers on Ukraine’s eastern border, NATO announced regular flights over Poland and Romania. Washington also sent a navy destroyer to participate in military exercises with warships of NATO members Romania and Bulgaria, across the water from the Russian Black Sea naval base in Crimea. When Obama met with Yatsenyuk on March 12, he used the occasion to warn Russia that it would face “costs” because of its intervention in Crimea.

Tensions have been further whipped up by Washington’s client regime in Kiev, which took power last month in a right-wing coup spearheaded by fascists and supported by the U.S. and European Union (EU) imperialists. Most recently, two were killed Friday in the eastern city of Kharkiv as pro-Russia demonstrators clashed with fascists of the Right Sector, an alliance of paramilitary bands that was on the front lines of the street fighting that powered last month’s coup in Ukraine. The previous day, at least one person, a supporter of the coup, died in a similar clash in the eastern industrial city of Donetsk.

The referendum promises to undo a stupid administrative error by Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev, who in 1954 presented Crimea as a “gift” to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic supposedly to



Reuters

Above: Ukrainian prime minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk and Barack Obama in the Oval Office, March 12. Below: Crowds in Sevastopol, Crimea, celebrate vote to secede from Ukraine and join Russia, March 17.



AP

No to Sanctions Against Russia!

mark the 300th anniversary of unification between Russia and Ukraine. No doubt the Stalinist regime viewed that heavy-handed act, which was contrary to the history as well as the national and linguistic make-up of Crimea, as a symbolic gesture: Crimea remained part of the Soviet Union and real power resided in Moscow. However, with the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state in 1991-92, Crimea’s mainly ethnic Russian population found itself part of a newly independent capitalist Ukraine.

Obama has been pontificating about Russia’s “violation” of international law—a

“law” that never stopped U.S. imperialism from invading Iraq or any other country—while the Republicans have been engaging in considerable rocket rattling. Nonetheless, little enthusiasm is to be found for upping the ante in the Ukraine from the American populace, who are preoccupied by the U.S. rulers’ ongoing assaults on their well-being.

Since his ascension to power in late 1999, Putin has sought to strengthen Russia’s position as a regional power by developing its substantial reserves of fossil fuels, assuring control of supply routes for its gas and oil and refurbishing its military. For its

part, U.S. imperialism has sought to expand its world domination in part by undercutting Russia’s ambitions, including through its sponsorship of pliant regimes in former republics of the USSR such as Georgia and the Baltic states of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania. The interests of the world’s working class stand in opposition to the aspirations and machinations of both of these capitalist powers.

The truth, however, is concrete. It was the U.S. that fueled the fascist mobilizations in Kiev, thereby overturning a negotiated truce promoted by a number of EU countries with the prior Ukrainian government and instead installing a pro-Western regime on Russia’s borders. For its part, the media in the U.S. complied with its bourgeois masters, minimizing the fascist presence. Even when the *New York Times* acknowledged the fascist presence in the new Ukrainian government in a March 12 article, it dismissed the threat, asserting, “Who these men really are and what they stand for, outside the caricatures in the Russian media’s fun-house mirror, are not always clear.” Thus the leader of the fascist Right Sector outfit was allowed to proclaim without challenge in the article that his particular fascists are neither xenophobic nor anti-Jewish.

It hardly required in-depth investigative journalism to reveal the fascist credentials of many of those now in power in Kiev. Most prominent is Svoboda, a virulently anti-Jewish, anti-Russian, anti-Muslim and anti-Communist fascist party. Svoboda was initially named Social-National Party of Ukraine, an obvious reference to Hitler’s Nazi (National Socialist) party; its symbol was based on the Wolf’s Hook (*Wolfsangel*), which was used by the Waffen SS.

Svoboda derives from the Ukrainian nationalists led by Stepan Bandera, who militarily collaborated with the Nazis during World War II and carried out mass murders of Jews, Communists, Soviet soldiers and Poles. In 2011, Svoboda spokesman Yuri Michalchysyn described the Holocaust as “a bright episode in European civilization” (quoted in Per Anders Rudling, “The Return of the Ukrainian Far Right: The Case of VO Svoboda” [2013]). A statement posted on Svoboda’s Web site declared: “We need a Pinochet who will destroy the fifth column, build a ‘Ukraine for Ukrainians,’ and neutralize Yid power” (“Social-Nationalists in the Ukrainian Parliament,” *Russian Politics and Law*, September-October 2013).

continued on page 8



7 25274 181030 7

Women’s Oppression and the Struggle for Liberation...4

Mumia Abu-Jamal Is an Innocent Man

Cops, Congress Ax Nominee Over Mumia's Case

On March 5, the Senate sank Barack Obama's nomination of Debo Adebile as assistant attorney general in charge of the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division. What was supposed to be a done deal ran aground when seven Democrats joined the Republicans in opposing the selection. The kiss of death for Adebile, the current senior counsel to the Senate Judiciary Committee, was his tenuous connection to black political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. Adebile had a leadership role in the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund (LDF), which represented Mumia at the time that his death sentence was overturned in late 2011.

Our concern is not who fills what post under the attorney general, the top cop overseeing the apparatus of racist repression. Rather it is the renewed outpouring of the lies that have condemned Mumia, an innocent man, to three decades on death row and now life in prison. A former Black Panther, MOVE supporter and award-winning journalist, Mumia was framed up for the killing of a Philly cop and railroaded to death row in 1982 on the basis of his radical political views. The

prosecution's case against him rested on phony ballistics, a concocted "confession," police intimidation of witnesses and racist jury rigging. The confession of another man, Arnold Beverly, that he was hired by the mob and cops to assassinate Police Officer Daniel Faulkner, whom Mumia was falsely accused of killing, has never been allowed into state or federal court.

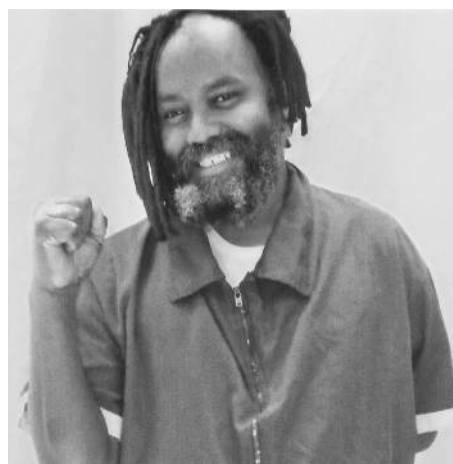
In the article "Drive to Execute Mumia Halted" (WV No. 993, 6 January 2012), we observed: "The state forces that have tried for decades to silence this powerful voice for the oppressed are certainly not going to forget him." Indeed, the campaign against Adebile was spearheaded by the Fraternal Order of Police; Maureen Faulkner, the widow of the Philadelphia cop; and Philadelphia district attorney Seth Williams. Together with Pat Toomey, a Republican Senator from Pennsylvania, the Democrat Williams penned a *Wall Street Journal* op-ed piece (24 February) that not only slandered Mumia as a "cop killer" but condemned anybody challenging the racist bias inherent in the capitalist courts. Other Democrats, such as Senator Christopher Coons of Delaware, piled on to

the smears of Mumia, attributing his vote to the issue of "respecting" law officers.

The Democratic Party machine in Philadelphia, of which Williams is a part, engineered the frame-up of Mumia from the start. Central to this effort was Ed Rendell, who was the local district attorney at the time Mumia was arrested and was later elected mayor and then Pennsylvania's governor. On the national stage, Rendell went from being a prominent operative in Hillary Clinton's failed bid for the 2008 Democratic Party presidential nomination to playing a key role in Obama's electoral victory.

When Mumia was set to be executed in August 1995, protests of tens of thousands internationally helped stay the executioner's hand. By the time Adebile got involved in Mumia's case, those mass mobilizations were a thing of the past. Contrary to the hallucinations of Toomey, Williams and others, Adebile was no activist proclaiming Mumia's innocence and fighting for his freedom. In fact, one response of liberal civil rights groups like the NAACP to the attack on Adebile was to plead Mumia guilty: "The Senate failed to see through a shameful disinformation campaign that intentionally tries to hold Mr. Adebile responsible for a terrible crime committed by a defendant when Mr. Adebile was only 8 years old" (naacp.org, March 5).

As a lawyer, Adebile simply contributed to an LDF appeal citing racial discrimination in Mumia's jury selection and to a brief challenging jury instructions given at the hearing that sentenced Mumia to death. The federal court of appeals ruled twice that the sentencing instructions were unconstitutional, a decision that the Supreme Court under the conservative John Roberts refused to overturn. As Mumia noted in his March 6 broadcast, Adebile came under attack



Freemumia.com

Mumia Abu-Jamal

"because he dared to do what defense lawyers are legally and constitutionally required to do: defend their clients."

With consummate hypocrisy, Obama protested that the defeat of Adebile's nomination "solely based on his legal representation of a defendant runs contrary to a fundamental principle of our system of justice." Quite the opposite, as Obama should know. Leftist attorney Lynne Stewart was convicted of providing "material support to terrorism" in 2005 on the basis of her outspoken defense of a client imprisoned on terrorism charges. At the urging of Obama's Justice Department in 2010, the original sentence for Stewart was quadrupled to ten years. While now standing by Adebile, in 2009 Obama gave the boot to "green jobs" adviser Van Jones when a media campaign unearthed his past advocacy for Mumia.

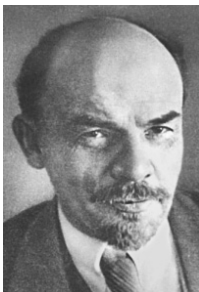
What goes the ox of the forces of racist reaction is that Mumia was and remains a powerful voice for the voiceless. As a 15-year-old spokesman for the Philadelphia Black Panther Party, Mumia exemplified those the FBI's J. Edgar Hoover had in mind when he declared: "The Negro youth and moderate[s] must be made to understand that if they succumb to revolutionary teaching, they will be dead revolutionaries." Mumia survives and continues to speak out from prison hell on behalf of all the oppressed. While some may wring their hands over the defeat of Obama's nominee, those fighting for Mumia's freedom should seize this opportunity to expose the racist vendetta that has kept this innocent man under the shadow of the gallows and behind bars for over 32 years. ■



TROTSKY

Leninism and National Self-Determination

Writing amid World War I, V.I. Lenin argued against the claim of Bolshevik Georgy Pyatakov (Kievsky) that the right of national self-determination did not apply in the imperialist epoch. Lenin insisted that Pyatakov's methodology, carried to its logical conclusion, meant rejection of the struggle to fulfill all immediate political and democratic tasks. Recalling the late 19th- and early 20th-century Russian Economists,



LENIN

who restricted their political activity to economic struggles by the workers, Lenin dubbed this approach "imperialist Economism."

The Marxist solution of the problem of democracy is for the proletariat to *utilize all* democratic institutions and aspirations in its class struggle against the bourgeoisie in order to prepare for its overthrow and assure its own victory. Such utilisation is no easy task. To the Economists, Tolstoyans, etc., it often seems an unpardonable concession to "bourgeois" and opportunist views, just as to Kievsky defence of national self-determination "in the epoch of finance capital" seems an unpardonable concession to bourgeois views. Marxism teaches us that to "fight opportunism" by renouncing utilisation of the democratic institutions created and distorted by the bourgeoisie of the *given*, capitalist, society is to *completely surrender* to opportunism!

The slogan of *civil war* for socialism indicates the quickest way out of the imperialist war and *links* our struggle against the war with our struggle against opportunism.... In our civil war against the bourgeoisie, *we* shall unite and merge the nations *not* by the force of the ruble, *not* by the force of the truncheon, not by violence, but by *voluntary* agreement and solidarity of the working people against the exploiters. For the bourgeoisie the proclamation of equal rights for all nations has become a deception. For us it will be the truth that will facilitate and accelerate the winning over of all nations. Without effectively organised *democratic* relations between nations—and, consequently, without freedom of secession—civil war of the workers and working people generally of all nations against the bourgeoisie is *impossible*.

—V.I. Lenin, "Reply to P. Kievsky (Y. Pyatakov)" (August-September 1916)

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: Conor Kristofersen

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, Elizabeth Johnson, 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 March 18.

No. 1042

21 March 2014

Women and Revolution Forum

Spartacist League/SYC Event



Ida B. Wells A Black Woman's Fight Against Lynch Terror



Donald Duster Collection

NEW YORK CITY

Saturday, April 5, 3 p.m.

322 West 48th Street, First Floor
(Between 8th and 9th Avenues—Take A, C or E to 42nd St.)

For more information: (212) 267-1025 • nysl@tiac.net

WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League

- ☐ \$10/22 issues of *Workers Vanguard* ☐ New ☐ Renewal
(includes English-language *Spartacist* and *Black History and the Class Struggle*)
international rates: \$25/22 issues—Airmail \$10/22 issues—Seamail
- ☐ \$2/6 introductory issues of *Workers Vanguard* (includes English-language *Spartacist*)
- ☐ \$2/4 issues of *Espartaco* (en español) (includes Spanish-language *Spartacist*)
- ☐ I would like to contribute \$_____ to the production of *Workers Vanguard*.

Name _____

Address _____

_____ Apt. # _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (_____) _____ E-mail _____

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

1042

“Socialism” That Democrats Can Support Reformists Salivate Over Sawant’s Seattle Election

Since self-described socialist Kshama Sawant won a seat on Seattle’s City Council last November, her electoral success has been widely promoted as a model for the left. Sawant, a member of Socialist Alternative (SAIt) who narrowly defeated Democratic Party incumbent Richard Conlin, ran on a platform of liberal reform—for a \$15 hour minimum wage, rent control, ending “corporate welfare” and for a tax on millionaires to fund public transportation, education and “living-wage” union jobs. While applauding other “alternative” candidacies, SAIt crows that Sawant’s win paves “a path for independent politics.” And the International Socialist Organization (ISO) chimed in approvingly: “Given the scale of the crisis that working people face, there is a serious need for some optimism that our side can fight back not just on the picket lines and in the streets, but even at the ballot box” (socialistworker.org, 16 December 2013).

SAIt says it is campaigning to build an “independent, alternative party of workers and young people to fight for the interests of the millions, not the millionaires.” For its supporters, Sawant’s campaign is a challenge to the status quo simply because it falls outside the classic two-party framework. But for authentic socialists, independence is a *class* question: the working class and the oppressed masses must be politically organized in opposition to the class dictatorship of the capitalists—bourgeois “democracy” is one form of that capitalist dictatorship. The workers, who form the only class in society with the objective interest and social power to overthrow capitalism, must be won to understand that their interests are counterposed to those of the exploiting class.

The history of the United States is replete with bourgeois “third” parties promising to make capitalism work for the little guy—which effectively served to channel discontent back into the Democratic Party. The “independence” of Sawant & Co. is merely another exercise in pressuring the Democratic Party from the “outside” as practiced by the capitalist Green Party and others. In fact, SAIt consistently supported Ralph Nader between 1996 and 2008, first as the Greens’ candidate and even when he ran “independent” campaigns supported by the likes of Ross Perot’s right-wing Reform Party.

Opportunists pretend that their reformist program is some kind of step forward in the direction of revolutionary change. They claim that “we” all want the same things and merely disagree about how to get there. More than a century ago Rosa Luxemburg explained the question of reform or revolution in her classic work of that name. Luxemburg polemicized against leading German Social Democrat Eduard Bernstein who gave theoretical expression to the renunciation of revolutionary Marxism in favor of “evolutionary socialism,” premised on gradual reform of bourgeois society. Bernstein pronounced that for him the “movement” was everything, and the final goal of socialism was nothing. Luxemburg’s words have lost none of their sting today:

“People who pronounce themselves in favor of the method of legislative reform *in place of and in contradistinction to* the conquest of political power and social revolution, do not really choose a more tranquil, calmer and slower road to the *same* goal, but a *different* goal. Instead of taking a stand for the establishment of a

new society they take a stand for surface modification of the old society.”

The reformist left advances the lie that one can pressure the capitalist state machinery to operate in the interests of the workers and oppressed. The only way to achieve real emancipation for the working and oppressed masses is through the expropriation of the capitalists as a class and the establishment of a workers government.

Giving the Democrats a Facelift

Revolutionary Marxists can use the electoral arena as a tactic to propagandize for socialist politics. Unlike executive offices in the capitalist state such as mayor or president, whose purpose is to administer and enforce capitalist rule, standing for election to legislative offices can provide a vehicle for communists to put forward a revolutionary program. When running candidates or offering critical support to other formations, the aim is to dispel illusions among workers, minorities, immigrants and radicalized youth that any lasting improvement of their condition can be achieved under the capitalist profit system. As a revolutionary organization we could not give any support no matter how critical to Sawant, whose campaign obscured the most elementary class line with its populist rhetoric. In his book on communist principles and tactics, “*Left-Wing Communism—An Infantile Disorder*” (1920), Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin explained: “It is entirely a matter of *knowing how* to apply these tactics in order to *raise*—not lower—the *general* level of proletarian class-consciousness, revolutionary spirit, and ability to fight and win.”

The “lesser evil” Democratic Party is a capitalist party acting on behalf of the profiteers, bailing out the banks, gouging the poor and spying on the population. For decades, the reformists’ “fight the right” rhetoric has served to hoodwink working people and radical youth into believing that such actions are simply excesses, thereby further chaining them to the same party through the ballot box. The

reformist left presents Sawant’s victory as part of a continuum of “progressive” candidates—which tellingly includes Democratic politicians like New York’s new mayor Bill de Blasio, who won votes by promising to end racist stop-and-frisk and claiming sympathy for the “99 percent.”

Enjoying endorsements from several local Democrats and union officials, Sawant’s campaign Web site did not oppose President Obama; it never even mentioned the wars the U.S. is waging overseas much less solidarized with the victims of U.S. imperialism. On the crucial question of racial oppression, so central to the workings of capitalism in this country, Sawant limited her platform to calling for a school curriculum promoting “anti-racism” (along with anti-sexism and gay equality) and calling for a “movement” against police brutality and racial profiling. Sawant calls for an elected civilian review board which is supposed to rein in the police, though experience has shown repeatedly that such bodies are impotent except as a means for letting off a little steam after particularly egregious cases of police violence. As a columnist from the *Seattle Times* (26 October 2013) rightly noted, Sawant’s slogans were “pretty much indistinguishable” from those of Seattle Democrats, who cater to the city’s liberal petty-bourgeois milieu.

Notably, in both Seattle and Minneapolis (where SAIt’s candidate Ty Moore came close to winning on his platform of “People over Profit”) no Republican was on the City Council ballot. SAIt boasted about this tactic, which allowed them to run against Democratic candidates with no danger of letting any Republicans get elected. Soon after her election Sawant was appointed by Democratic mayor Ed Murray to an advisory committee made up of union officials and business executives in order to adjust the minimum wage.

Sawant described her campaign as a way to “reinvigorate” the populist Occupy movement, and Socialist Action raves that Sawant’s candidacy was the Occupy spirit “now finding expression at the ballot



Reformist left’s press hailed electoral victory of Socialist Alternative’s Kshama Sawant as breakthrough for “socialism.” Left: After election, Sawant joined local business leaders on minimum-wage task force, announced by Seattle mayor Ed Murray, December 19.



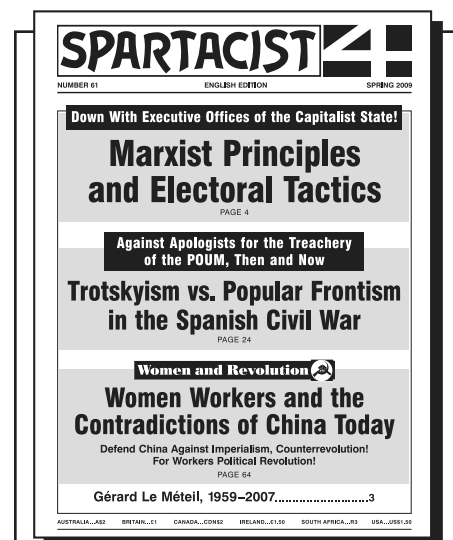
KIROTV



box” (socialistaction.org, 13 February). Not only SAIt but most of the rest of the reformist left enthused over Occupy, whose central conception was that America should reclaim democratic control of the economy from the greedy bankers and corporations by making the existing government represent the “will of the people.” As the 2012 elections approached, Occupy disintegrated as many of its activists predictably occupied...the Democratic Party.

Echoing SAIt’s vision for a crop of new “independent left-wing candidates,” the Freedom Socialist Party intoned: “The time is ripe for anti-capitalist electoral alliances” (socialism.com, December 2013). Meanwhile, Socialist Organizer urged “the labor movement and community organizations to join together to launch independent slates at the local level” (socialistorganizer.org, 6 February). Such coalitions are the way reformist organizations intend to capitalize

continued on page 7



English-language edition
No. 61, Spring 2009

\$1.50 (64 pages)

Spartacist is sent to all WV subscribers.

Make checks payable/mail to:

Spartacist Publishing Co., Box 1377 GPO
New York, NY 10116

Women's Oppression and the Struggle for Liberation

We publish below a *Spartacus Youth Club* class given by comrade Laura Zamora in New York City on February 11.

When I was in high school, I drove around in my used 1986 Toyota Camry with a purple bumper sticker that read: "Feminism is the radical notion that women are people." This now makes me laugh, but at the time it spoke to my moral outrage that women were not on an equal playing field in society. Outrage over the lack of sexual freedom, limited abortion rights, lower wages, and the burden of housework to which women are subject. Disgust over the brutal institutions and cultural reflections of women's oppression, like female genital mutilation, honor killings and the veil. Such a reality desperately demanded a change.

Little did I know then that feminism *did* not and *could* not offer a program for the liberation of women. Feminism aims largely to equalize the position of upper class women within the existing society by means of education and/or legislation. So, one T-shirt I had in high school had the picture of the capitol building and the words: "Send a woman to D.C. for a change." The fact that Nancy Pelosi, Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama have done nothing to advance the interests of women or the oppressed would be a glaring understatement. No bourgeois politicians are allies in the fight for women's rights because their class interests are primary. That includes preserving the main institution of women's oppression, the repressive monogamous family under the system of capitalism. Bourgeois feminism has not, and never had, the goal of fundamentally challenging this class-divided, unequal society. In fact, the first challenge to the sexual division of labor in society (the supposed "innate" differentiation between men's and women's roles) did not come from liberal feminists, but from socialists.

Understanding the oppression of women through the lens of Marxism requires an examination of the material—economic and institutional—way in which society is organized. Marx said, "'Liberation' is an historical and not a mental act, and it is brought about by historical conditions." Society's mores and culture—on questions of marriage, the family, the roles of men, women and children—are not preordained, but must be studied in their man-made historical context. Emancipation means putting an end to the economic system of capitalism. Thus, for Marxists, the liberation of women cannot be separated from the liberation of all the exploited and oppressed. This means the abolition of private property through a series of socialist revolutions. That in turn would lay the basis for an international collectivized economy based on the highest level of technology and science, enabling the replacement of the social functions of the family.

Utopian Egalitarianism and Women's Liberation

Before Marx and Engels came on the scene in the latter half of the 19th century,

A Marxist Analysis



New York, 1988: Spartacist contingent protesting bigots' blockade of abortion clinics.

radicals and dissenters had put forward different critiques of sexual oppression. In the mid 1600s during the English Civil War, there was a group called the Ranters, which came from the working lower classes. You could call them part of a "nonconformist" movement of sexual radicals because they critiqued marriage. They were really a religious sect that rejected the established church and state institutions along with the concept of immorality. They preached free love and advocated having multiple sexual partners. (Not exactly the same type of religious sects we see today, which mostly tout fundamentalist, bigoted filth.) The Ranters' unconventional views on the family led them to be accused of "wife swapping," but in fact these views reflected the practical way dispossessed peasants—who were mobile and had no property to bind them—lived.

When we move on to the 18th century Enlightenment we see how humanism and the desire for a social order founded on reason cultivated a different view of women's role. One of the first books I read in Women's Studies was Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792), considered to be a classic marking the beginning of modern feminist thought. Wollstonecraft was part of a circle of English radical democrats which included William Blake and Tom Paine. Their political lives were dominated by the French Revolution and their ideas reflected the period where there was a great push for political equality, progress and virtue.

They were also limited by that period. Wollstonecraft's writings did nothing to challenge domesticity; men should be virtuous according to the laws of God. The idea was to appeal to men for more

education for middle-class women, so they could be more loving and efficient housewives, like good June Cleavers. Here's a quote which I remember made me think, wow this old-style feminism is messed up! "Would men but generously snap our chains, and be content with rational fellowship instead of slavish obedience, they would find us more observant daughters, more affectionate sisters, more faithful wives, more reasonable mothers—in a word, better citizens."

Before we move on to the 19th century, how many of you have seen the famous 1830 painting of "Liberty Leading the People" by the French Romantic artist Delacroix? It's the one where Liberty is shown as this kind of robust goddess-figure, this woman of the people, striding bare-breasted with the French flag in one hand and a musket in

the other. I remember reading an article in a feminist journal that asked if this painting was sexist or revolutionary. It's outrageous that there were people debating whether this work of art—which commemorates the July 1830 Revolution in France that toppled King Charles X—was "objectifying women" because she was half-naked.

Let's turn back to the Marx quote: "'Liberation' is an historical and not a mental act, and it is brought about by historical conditions." Delacroix's painting is interesting because the ideals of "liberty, equality and fraternity" of the French Revolution were incompatible with the reality of the unequal capitalist system. Though "Liberty" was not a symbol for the emancipation of women, during this time the general struggle for an egalitarian society became more intertwined with the struggle for women's liberation. Let's look at the material reasons for this.

By the 1840s, there was a change in England and France, as women began entering the world of waged work outside of the household. The family was being transformed due to women's increased economic independence. The Utopian socialists came on the scene. You can read more about Charles Fourier, Robert Owen and Saint-Simon in Engels' work, *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*. Unlike Wollstonecraft, the socialist Charles Fourier was intensely hostile to the patriarchal family, which he viewed as sexually oppressive. Fourier put forward the idea of "socialist communities" and the complete reconstruction of society. He was uniquely responsible for making the demand for the liberation of women through the abolition of the nuclear family an integral part of the socialist program which the young Marx and Engels inherited.

Flora Tristan—who is often erroneously called the founder of modern feminism—was really a socialist who fought for women workers and argued that the oppression of women was directly related to the oppression of the working class. She stated: "Almost the entire world is against me, men because I am demanding the emancipation of women,

Eugène Delacroix's 1830 painting "Liberty Leading the People." Liberating values of 18th-century French Revolution influenced push for women's equality.



the propertied classes because I am demanding the emancipation of the wage earners.” Not only that, she advocated an international workers organization over 20 years before the foundation of Marx’s International Workingmen’s Association, the First International.

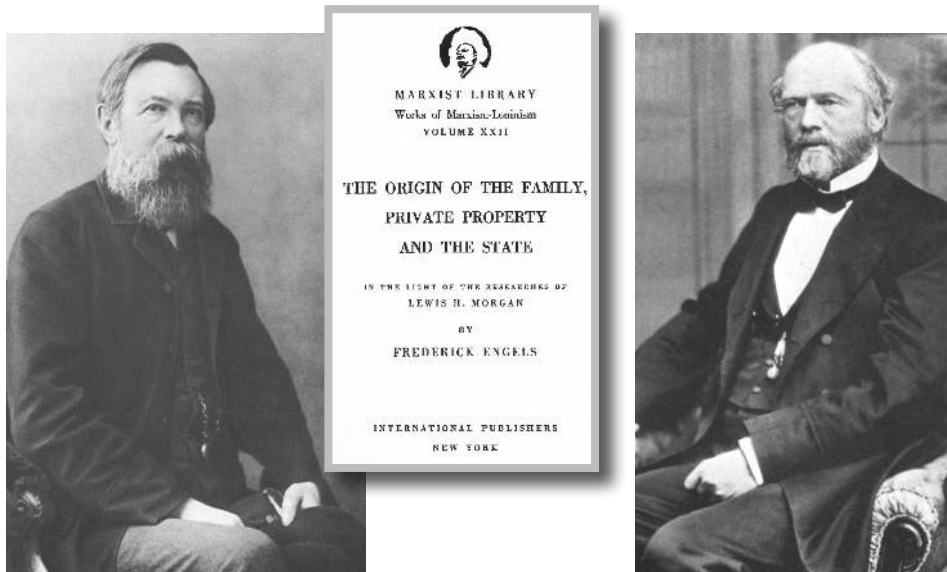
Proletarian Struggle for Women’s Rights

By 1848, Marx and Engels produced the *Communist Manifesto*. This is the classic text where they laid out the differences between the propertied bourgeoisie and the propertyless proletariat; they argued that the way to replace old bourgeois society—with its classes and class antagonisms—is through a proletarian revolution, leading eventually to the “free development of all.” They also argued for the abolition of the family—reduced by the bourgeoisie, as they wrote, “to a mere money relation”—and to put an end to “prostitution both private and public.”

Some 40 years later, Engels wrote *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*. This really provides the *historical* analysis of the class origins of the patriarchal family and women’s oppression. Engels’ work is subtitled “In the Light of the Researches of Lewis H. Morgan.” Morgan was an anthropologist who lived with and studied the Iroquois Indians and his seminal work *Ancient Society* dealt with the stages of primitive man. Most importantly, it represented a breakthrough by proving how the monogamous family emerged with the origin of private property—in other words, the family is a *social* phenomenon. Other leading socialists like Clara Zetkin and August Bebel were also very influenced by Morgan’s groundbreaking research. In case you’re curious, Morgan also influenced Darwin.

Engels describes how early hunter-gatherer society was arranged in clans. Marxists call this period of human society “primitive communism” because classes did not exist and society was generally egalitarian. In this society, all descent and blood relationships were determined through the mother alone, a matriline, also called “mother right” and members were looked after by the group. There was a division of labor between men and women: men did most of the hunting and women did most of the gathering, because women’s activity had to allow for pregnancy, nursing and childcare. But both sexes worked to produce the goods necessary for livelihood so they were *equal*. This explodes the myth that the monogamous family is the only one that has ever existed and that society has always been divided into classes. Engels details the evolution of marriage: how societies had group marriage where all members of one age group were married to each other, which was later replaced by pairing marriage and then ultimately by the patriarchal family.

The critical change in the position of women occurred as a result of the domestication of animals and the development of agriculture. Improved technology and tools made possible the accumulation of a surplus of grain and meat that meant people could live beyond day-to-day survival. Such new wealth led to the development of the first great class division in society, that between master and slave. In ancient society, slaves were generally obtained as a result of war with other tribes. As the men had traditionally owned the hunting implements, it was now they who owned the new implements of labor and thus the surplus product. Women could share in the enjoyment, but they had no part in the ownership. The domestic labor of the woman, which was previously a social service granting her equality, no longer counted. Engels stated: “The overthrow of mother-right was the *world historical defeat of the female sex*. The man took command in the home also; the woman was degraded and reduced to servitude, she became the slave of his lust and a mere instrument for the production of children.”



W.E. Debenham

***The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* by Friedrich Engels (left) drew from anthropological study of Native Americans by Lewis Henry Morgan (right) and laid bare the material roots of women’s oppression.**

Morgan Papers, U. of Rochester

So alongside the cleavage of society into classes, the separate, private family became the economic unit of society. The new economic surplus needed to be secured, and it could be done through inheritance, the guarantee that wealth would be passed down through the father to a select and privileged group. This marks the start of the patriarchal, monogamous family, created with the explicit purpose of insuring the paternity of the children and dictating strict measures to enforce women’s sexual chastity before marriage and fidelity after. Why else should it matter how many people a woman has slept with or who is the father of her children? With the advent of the patriarchal family, monogamy only applies to women. Adultery and prostitution arise as complementary institutions.

In this society now split between freemen and slaves, exploiting rich and exploited poor, weapons became monopolized by bodies of armed men, what is referred to as the state. While appearing to stand above classes, the state in reality is the prime instrument whereby the dominant economic class protects its property rights and class rule. The ancient state was that of the defense of the slave owners against the slaves; the feudal state was for the nobility to repress the peasant serfs; the modern “democratic” capitalist state with its cops, courts, prisons and laws is the instrument of the capitalist class to exploit and repress the working class.

When you think about how capitalism maintains the oppression of women, it’s useful to consider the tripod, the three major props: First, the state (the armed instrument maintaining the rule of the bourgeoisie); second, the family (the means by which private property is passed on in the case of bourgeois families and where the next generation of workers is raised in the case of proletarian families); and third, organized religion—which thrives on ignorance, enforces backwardness and superstition and inculcates obedience to the established order. The family, together with religion, serves to socially regiment us, to instill a “morality” which forbids anything that deviates one inch from married, heterosexual sex for procreation only. Anti-woman and anti-gay bigotry stem from the strong sexual stereotypes that are required by the traditional division of labor in the family. The repression of youth arises because under capitalism children are considered the legal property of their parents.

We call for full democratic rights for gays, including the right of gay marriage and divorce. We call for the decriminalization of prostitution because the act of performing sex for money is not a crime from the standpoint of the working class, either on the part of the prostitute or of the client. Prostitution is something we regard as a “crime without a victim,” like drug use, gambling, pornography, and gay sex—all activities that are either illegal or heavily regulated under capitalist law. In regards to youth, we call for lowering the legal age

of adulthood with free education and a stipend for those who don’t want to stay at home. We are opposed to “squeal rules” that deny minors the right to an abortion without parental consent. We are also opposed to the reactionary age of consent laws that deny minors the right to decide if they want to have sex. The only guideline that ought to exist in sexual relations is that of *effective consent*. If both parties knowingly consent, there is no crime.

Our positions on sex are mainly in the negative, that is, we want the government to keep its nose (and any other part) out of the bedroom. Sexuality is *personal*, not political. The capitalist rulers are the ones who politicize sexuality, victimizing those who defy the norms. We defended Michael Jackson against alleged “child molestation” charges. As we wrote at the time: “who better [for the state to target] than a black man who sounds very feminine, wears makeup, looks whiter than many ‘pedigreed’ whites and openly professes a love for sharing his bed with

gay president—which no doubt got him some votes among the petty-bourgeois gay rights milieu.

You may have noticed the Grammys in January had this mass wedding ceremony and rapper Macklemore performed his gay rights anthem. The context behind gay marriage acceptance is contradictory. Of course anyone ought to have the right to marry. We socialists fight for a society in which no one needs to be forced into a legal straitjacket in order to get medical benefits, visitation rights, custody of children, immigration rights, or any of the many privileges this capitalist society grants to those, and only those, who are in “holy matrimony.” At the same time, the gay marriage campaign is not about people being more open to “free love,” but largely about bourgeois respectability, trying to fit same-sex relationships into a “family values” context. In almost all of Obama’s comments on the matter, you will notice that he highlights gays being in “committed” and “monogamous” relationships and praises their good parenting.

Marriage rights or not, gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgenders will continue to face deadly bigotry in this homophobic society. Insofar as the monogamous family remains the central social institution oppressing women, anti-gay bigotry flows from the need to punish any deviations from this patriarchal structure. The history of monogamous marriage in the U.S. reveals its use as a tool of government control, where those deemed “inferior” were denied marriage rights, including of course, black slaves, Native Americans and polygamous Mormons. Still, why anyone not under social pressure or economic duress would voluntarily enter the bonds of matrimony is somewhat of a mystery. I like quoting the ACT UP activist Jim Eigo who had it right on this question: “Why are current mainstream gay organizations working to strike a bargain with straight society that will make some queers less equal than others?... Marriage has no more

Los Angeles rally in favor of same-sex marriage, 2008. Gay rights movement seeks acceptance for gays within framework of patriotism and “family values.”



pubescent, mostly white, boys?” (see “Stop Vendetta Against Michael Jackson,” WV No. 818, 23 January 2004). We oppose the persecution of anyone who engages in consensual intergenerational sex; uniquely on the left we defend NAMBLA, the North American Man-Boy Love Association, which fights for the rights of youth and opposes age of consent laws.

Marxism vs. Feminism

Our views on special oppression and on sex are radically different from feminists and liberal Democrats as well as those who falsely call themselves socialists or even revolutionaries. The capitalist Democratic Party, despite its pretense to being a defender of gay people, is a staunch promoter of anti-gay “family values” and brutal anti-sex witchhunts. For decades, the Democrats opposed gay marriage. In the last few years, as nearly everyone has jumped onto the gay marriage bandwagon, Obama shifted from staunchly defending DOMA (the Defense of Marriage Act) to now defending same-sex marriage legislation. He was absurdly labeled the first

place in efforts to achieve equality than slavery or the divine right of kings. At this juncture in history, wouldn’t it make more sense for us to try to figure out how to relieve heterosexuals of the outdated shackles of matrimony?”

In class society, the ruling class which owns the means of production also owns the production of ideas, so mostly what you see on the left is a reflection of this moralistic social climate which, in the U.S., has a “Christian values” bent. The feminists are notorious for lining up with some of the most virulent reactionaries, allying with religious fundamentalists calling to regulate pornography and sexual relations, relying on the repressive state to “protect” women. The anti-porn, anti-sex campaign has been adopted by the Maoists of the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), also known as the “Bob Avakian fan cult.” In its “End Pornography” campaign, the RCP claims that pornographic images are the cause of rape, murder and other violent crimes against women. It also says that U.S. culture has recently been “pornified,” as

continued on page 6

Women's Oppression...

(continued from page 5)

shown by—what else?—teen sexting and pole-dancing classes. This is nothing other than the age-old nonsense that “women are victims and can’t possibly enjoy sex”—or porn for that matter. Echoing the Pope, the RCP for years raised the slogan for “stable monogamous relationships between men and women,” and until somewhat recently disallowed gays in their organization.

The reformist left’s illusions in the capitalist Democrats as the so-called “friends of the oppressed” are very acute in the case of abortion. Feminists transformed the fight for abortion rights into a sanitized “pro-choice” movement that is completely reliant on the ballot box and mostly concerned with preserving formal abortion rights for white upper- and middle-class women. Meanwhile, attacks against abortion rights in the U.S. have escalated tremendously in the last two decades. From 2010 to 2013, abortion providers were forced to shut down at the fastest rate since the time of *Roe v. Wade* in 1973. There are fewer than 2,000 physicians who offer abortions, and nearly 90 percent of counties in the U.S. have no abortion provider. The recent film *After Tiller* shows the heroic struggle of four of the last remaining late-term (third trimester) abortion doctors in this country.

The assault on abortion not only takes the form of the reign of terror and murders of doctors by anti-abortion bigots and the bombing of clinics. A slew of Republican-dominated state legislation, like “fetal rights” bills, aimed at chipping away and eventually overturning all abortion rights has arguably been even more effective. For his part, Obama made clear his opposition to mental health exceptions for late-term abortion bans with the statement that a woman’s rationale for an abortion cannot be just because she feels “blue.”

Some popular Democrats like Wendy Davis have opposed new anti-abortion legislation like the law in Texas. But really, the Democratic Party does not pretend to fight for anything beyond preserving *Roe v. Wade*, which legalized abortion but did not make it generally available. The 1977 Hyde Amendment, supported by Democrats, denied federal funds for abortions for poor women. While rich women can always get an abortion, for black, Hispanic, working class poor women—who are more likely to have unwanted pregnancies—it means risking your life.

Why is abortion such an explosive issue in this society? This safe and simple medical procedure provides women control over whether or not to have children; it is viewed as a threat to the institution of the family and raises the question of the equality of women pointblank. What is needed is mass class and social struggle to ensure that poor and working women have unre-



Redaktions-Service-Maecker

Schoolgirls receive industrial training in East German factory.

stricted access to abortion. For the rights to abortion and contraception to mean anything, the services must be free. Democratic rights are always limited and temporary under capitalism and can only be wrested through determined class struggle. Ultimately, only the destruction of capitalism can put an end to anti-woman reaction.

Women and Revolution

Let’s look at the woman question in countries where capitalism has been overturned. After World War II, following the victory of the Red Army over Nazi Germany in 1945, the state machinery and economic power of the German bourgeoisie were smashed in the East and a state was founded based on socialized property forms—in Marxist terms, a workers state. This workers state was deformed from the beginning because political power did not rest with the working class but with a Stalinist bureaucracy. Nonetheless, East German women had the best status in the world, and even feminists have had to admit that. While women in capitalist West Germany were learning how to be good homemakers and mothers, in East Germany women were employed, highly skilled, highly educated. This reflects the fact that the driving force in a collectivized economy is not the generation of profit. Therefore, the workers state was able to generate full employment of both men and women. Under capitalism, where the goal is to make profit, the capitalists found it useful to train women for skilled industry during wartime, only to relegate them once more to the home as the troops returned.

I watched a documentary on YouTube the other day called, “Do Communists Have Better Sex?” which is about the differences regarding sexual education and the situation for women between West and East Germany. Women in East Germany, known as the DDR, had free contraception, accessible abortion and the best maternity benefits. In the film, you see clips showing how East German women would go to the factories, drop off their laundry and their children with—get this—free childcare! This superior social and economic position was reflected in

sexuality. One commentator in the film notes that East German women “ruled in bed” while the church and prudery continued to define the norm for women in the West. In the 1960s on state television in the DDR, masturbation was talked about openly. Compare that to sexual education in the U.S. today, which preaches abstinence, instills fear and guilt and reinforces stereotyping.

That’s not to say that conditions in East Germany were picture perfect. The idea that you can build “socialism in one country” is a Stalinist myth: there is no way to have an egalitarian social order on the basis of material scarcity in an isolated country—or in this case, half a country. The parasitic bureaucracy was hideously politically repressive; moreover it undermined and disorganized the collectivized economy. Women in the DDR were still responsible for a lot of the housework (the “second shift”) and the Stalinists resurrected the family as a norm, called the “socialist family,” a contradiction in terms. Still, the reintroduction of capitalism in 1990 was devastating: it stripped East German women of their economic and social independence, pulling them out of the workforce, bulldozing the health system, dismantling social programs and attacking abortion rights. In a country where women had such high status, capitalist counterrevolution produced widespread immiseration, as it has throughout the ex-Soviet bloc.

I focused on this example because I wanted to drive home another point that was relevant to me personally. To put an end to women’s oppression, you have to see things through the lens of class. When I was in college and started to get frustrated with my Women’s Studies classes because of their non-challenge to the status quo, I desperately wanted to merge my passion for the struggle of all layers of the downtrodden with my passion for women’s rights. I flirted with the idea of pursuing socialist feminism, thinking that these were both for the liberation of women as “two paths of the same struggle.”

But in reality, feminism and Marxism are *counterposed*—they are based on different classes. Feminism is a species of

bourgeois ideology; individuals or groups who try to push “proletarian feminism” are providing a revolutionary cover to a fundamentally liberal program. They either think that after socialist revolution men will still be violent, anti-woman creatures; in other words, all men (not the ruling classes) are the main enemy. Or they think Marxist theory is not sufficient to champion women’s rights and fight against special oppression. I hope I have proven here how, as Marxists, we are inherently women’s liberationists.

Alexandra Kollontai, an early Bolshevik revolutionary, stated in her 1909 work, *The Social Basis of the Woman Question*:

“For what reason, then, should the woman worker seek a union with the bourgeois feminists? Who, in actual fact, would stand to gain in the event of such an alliance? Certainly not the woman worker. She is her own saviour; her future is in her own hands. The working woman guards her class interests and is not deceived by great speeches about the ‘world all women share.’ The working woman must not and does not forget that while the aim of bourgeois women is to secure their own welfare in the framework of a society antagonistic to us, our aim is to build, in the place of the old, outdated world, a bright temple of universal labour, comradesly solidarity and joyful freedom...”

Kollontai wrote this one year after the first celebration of International Women’s Day. Though bourgeois feminists may celebrate the holiday, it is, in fact, a *workers’* holiday. It started in Manhattan on 8 March 1908 when women



Kevin Mulhern

Bolshevik leader Alexandra Kollontai addressing participants at First All-Russian Women Workers Congress, November 1918.

workers marched for an eight-hour day, an end to child labor and for women’s suffrage. On International Women’s Day in Russia, 1917, women textile workers took to the streets of Petrograd and led a strike of over 90,000 workers. Women were demanding bread for their starving families and peace due to the devastating effects of World War I. This strike opened the doors to the victory of the first successful proletarian revolution in history under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party.

Now to conclude on the lessons of history. Prior to the 1917 Russian Revolution, the largely peasant country under the Tsar treated women like beasts of burden; ignorance and illiteracy were the norm and superstition was endemic. When the repressive Tsar was toppled, and the landlords and capitalists swept aside, the working class took state power and ruled in its own interests, expropriating the bourgeoisie as a class. The Bolsheviks put into practice a number of crucial measures moving toward the liberation of women. Women won full political and legal rights, getting voting rights before women in the U.S. Marriage and divorce were made simple and easy matters of civil registration; discrimination against children born out of wedlock and laws against homosexuality were abolished; abortion was legalized; equal pay for equal work was established and

BAY AREA

Thursday, April 17, 7 p.m.
The Struggle for the Fourth International

San Francisco State University
Cesar Chavez Student Center
Rosa Parks D

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

LOS ANGELES

Revolutionary Marxism and the Fight for Black Freedom

Wednesday, April 9, 7 p.m.
UCLA, Ackerman Union, Room 2410

Saturday, April 19, 3 p.m.
3806 Beverly Blvd, Room 215
Information and readings: (213) 380-8239
slsycla@sbcglobal.net

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

CHICAGO

Saturday, April 5, 2 p.m.

The 1917 Russian Revolution: When the Workers Took Power

University of Illinois-Chicago
Addams Hall, Second Floor-Library
830 S. Halsted St.

(Take Blue Line to UIC - Halsted)
Information and readings: (312) 563-0441
chicagosyc@sbcglobal.net

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

NEW YORK CITY

Tuesday, March 25, 7 p.m.
The Russian Revolution of 1917
Part 2: From the Kornilov Coup to the October Revolution

City College of New York
138th St. and Amsterdam Ave.
Room NAC 1/203
(Take #1 train to 137th St.-City College)
Information and readings: (212) 267-1025
nysl@tiac.net

TORONTO

Thursday, March 27, 7 p.m.
Canadian Capitalism and Native Oppression
U of T, Sidney Smith Hall
100 St. George Street, Room 2104
Information and readings: (416) 593-4138
spartcan@on.aibn.com

Sawant...

(continued from page 3)

on what SAlt terms its “historic victory” for socialism.

One example is in heavily unionized, industrial Lorain County, Ohio, where two dozen city councilors organized as the Independent Labor Party—a creation of the county’s Central Labor Council—won the election. The campaign emerged out of disaffection with local Democrats who had carried out a series of attacks on organized labor. *Labor Notes* (4 December 2013) approvingly quoted one Machinist who admonished: “Running independent wasn’t our first choice, but hopefully this can help bring the Democratic leaders to their senses.”

Meanwhile, in early January, the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) created an “Independent Political Organization” with the purpose of supporting “progressive” candidates in the upcoming Illinois elections. According to the ISO, whose supporters are in the CTU leadership, the goal of such a formation is to unite unions with nonprofit, liberal and community organizations to defend public education against recent attacks led by Chicago’s Democratic mayor Rahm Emanuel. The same teachers union—which has long worked with Democratic Party-allied organizations—just endorsed a Democrat for state representative in the 26th District of Illinois.

Socialism: What It Is and What It Is Not

Liberal and ostensibly radical commentators have been abuzz with optimism that there is a fresh opening to socialist ideas. They cite a recent poll that a majority of young people aged 18-29 view socialism in a favorable light. Drowning in student debt, pessimistic about employment and deprived of affordable health care, many young people associate “socialism” with government reforms providing some degree of relief—like free medical care or subsidized higher education.

Sawant promoted a social-democratic model of socialism consistent with such beliefs, a type of “capitalism light” modeled after the European welfare states. She commented in a Salon.com interview (18 November 2013) that a country like Finland has “elements of socialism” due to its funding of public education and strong teachers’ unions. On the contrary, socialism is a system where the bourgeoisie, the owners of industry and of finance capital, has been thrown out of power and the workers have become the new ruling class. The working people control the economy and the state, which is an institution enforcing class domination—presently the domination of the capitalist class, under socialism that of the proletariat. Socialist revolution lays the basis for rationally planned economies based on production for need, not profit, and for qualitative development of the productive forces, opening the road to the elimination of scarcity and to the creation of an egalitarian society.

Of course, the idea of “socialized medicine” such as exists in countries like Can-



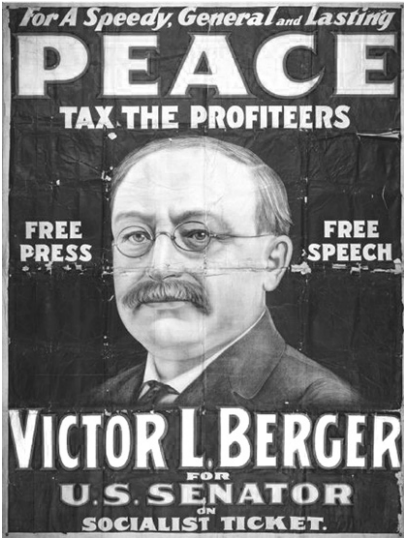
Josh On

December 2005: Todd Chretien (foreground, third from right) launches candidacy on capitalist Green Party ticket outside Democratic Senator Dianne Feinstein’s San Francisco office.

ada is appealing in comparison to being bled by the American health care giants and drug companies. But one need only look at the Scandinavian countries, traditionally governed by social democrats, that are, alas, still run for the purpose of class exploitation for private profit. No less than here the working people suffer in the grip of capitalist economic contraction: unemployment, bosses relentlessly trying to drive down wages and push the worst-paid workers deeper into poverty, anti-immigrant racism and growth of fascistic parties, etc.

“Sewer Socialism”

At the end of the 19th century and early 20th century, the “sewer socialists” sought to give socialism a “respectable” veneer through local electoral campaigns. Represented notoriously by Victor Berger’s Milwaukee section within the right wing of the Socialist Party (SP), these ministers and professionals elected to office promoted a program of municipal reform—everything from aid to schools and playgrounds to equitable taxation to better sewer systems and the suppression of vice. Nearly indistinguishable from those in the bourgeois Progressive movement, their platforms were about cleaning up capitalism and ushering in an “honest” government.



1918 campaign poster for “sewer socialist” Victor Berger.

Of course a century ago, American capitalism was a rising power; at that time it was in the overall best interests of the system for the bourgeoisie to invest more resources in the infrastructure of cities as well as in education and public health measures necessary for a productive working class—and they had the wherewithal to do so.

James P. Cannon was part of the SP’s left wing that fought against the trend of “sewer socialism.” (He later went on to identify with the Russian October Revolution of 1917 and helped to found the American Communist movement and in 1928 the American Trotskyist movement.) In a 1956 article on SP leader Eugene Debs, Cannon motivated the need for a revolutionary party, writing:

“The Socialist Party of Debs’ time has to be judged, not for its failure to lead a revolution, but for its failure to work with that end in view.... Socialism signifies and requires the revolutionary transformation of society; anything less than that is mere bourgeois reform. A socialist party deserves the name only to the extent that it acts as the conscious agency in preparing the workers for the necessary social revolution.”

—Printed in *The First Ten Years of American Communism* (1962)

In an entirely counterposed spirit, the “independent” campaigns of SAlt and Sawant enthusiasts aim not to mobilize the working class in a struggle for socialism, but to influence politicians to push for reforms that in no way threaten capitalism. Under capitalism, even when reforms are won the bosses always look to take them back at the earliest opportunity. The way decent wages for auto workers, longshoremen, truck drivers and others were won in this country was through bitter strike struggles. Not all strikes were won, but when they were, such victories were not based on the false partnership between labor and capital but on mobilizing the workers in hard class struggle involving the use of militant (often “illegal”) tactics such as mass picketing, plant occupations and sympathy strikes. Racial and ethnic divisions were consciously combated and overcome in the course of common class struggle.

The main obstacle preventing independent class mobilizations in the U.S. has

been illusions in the Democrats, pushed centrally by the sellout union leadership. SAlt marches behind the conservative labor tops who throw union money into Democratic politicians’ coffers while lobbying for a “fairer” tax system and a higher minimum wage. While we would be in favor of any law or measure to raise the pathetic minimum wage, hard labor struggles are what can actually force wage increases from employers—which might actually “tax the rich” a little!

Reformists in the Service of Bourgeois “Democracy”

SALT’s program is in accord with its British parent organization, now named the Socialist Party, the leading group within the Committee for a Workers’ International (CWI), that spent over four decades of its existence buried deep within the British Labour Party. From 1983 to 1987, its forebears in the Militant tendency held executive power on the Liverpool City Council. In a September article on SALT’s Web site, Tom Crean boasts how they played the leading role in the establishment of a “socialist majority” on the city council. Crean does not mention how, when the central government of Margaret Thatcher’s Tories cut funding to former industrial centers plagued by unemployment, the Liverpool council dealt with its “budget” problems by handing out 31,000 layoff notices. (And this as the miners strike of 1984-85 was raging in the coal mines of England and Wales—the biggest class battle since the British general strike of 1926.) Such a move was naturally met with outrage by the municipal unions, and the CWI lived to regret this “tactical error” (their words).

The British Labour Party defined itself against the Russian Revolution, adopting its famous “Clause IV” in 1918 as a conscious effort to undercut the appeal of Bolshevism to advanced workers. Clause IV says that the aim of the party is to increasingly nationalize the economy, presenting public ownership *in a capitalist economy* as the way to incrementally achieve “socialism.” Today the British reformist left revolves around defense of the politics of “old” Labourism against the “New Labour” Party, which has spent over a decade jettisoning its historic organizational ties to the unions. For Socialist Alternative and its British cothinkers, capitalist nationalizations and defense of “welfare state” measures against neoliberal austerity are pretty much the maximum program.

The spectacle of “socialists” seeking to administer capitalism on behalf of the bourgeois rulers has a long and sordid history. Today with consciousness at a low ebb, it is all the more important to point to the real road to the emancipation of all the oppressed. With the October Revolution of 1917, the proletariat under Bolshevik leadership overthrew capitalism, providing a model for workers and the oppressed seeking emancipation all over the world. It is the task of revolutionary Marxists to keep alive the lessons of this conquest of proletarian state power while exposing the parliamentary illusions pushed by those claiming to be socialists. ■

women were trained as skilled workers.

The Bolsheviks created the department of the Central Committee for work among women, known as Zhenotdel, and established communal kitchens, laundries and childcare centers, laying the basis for the replacement of the family. The Zhenotdel developed a system of “delegate meetings” of women workers elected by their factory co-workers, designed as a school in politics and liberation. In addition to the journal *Kommunistka*, the Zhenotdel published women’s pages in many national and local party newspapers, encouraging working-class women to become correspondents and reporters.

The Bolsheviks under Lenin and Trotsky knew that the only way forward to raising the material conditions of the masses was by extending the revolution internationally, especially to countries of advanced industrial development. The young workers state faced grim poverty

following the ravages of World War I and a civil war against counterrevolutionary forces which were backed by imperialist armies intent on crushing the revolution. The lack of successful revolutions elsewhere and the ensuing isolation paved the way for the rise of a conservative bureaucracy headed by Stalin, which reversed many of the liberating advances the revolution had gained for women. Nevertheless, the Bolsheviks’ fight for the emancipation of women, despite the later Stalinist degeneration which began in the 1920s, is a testimony to what a world socialized economy could give to the exploited and oppressed worldwide.

We unconditionally militarily defended the Soviet degenerated workers state and the deformed workers states of Eastern Europe against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution precisely because of the gains of their planned economies. At the same time, we called

for proletarian political revolutions to oust the Stalinist bureaucracies, to return to the Leninist program of workers democracy and revolutionary internationalism.

Today, the Bolshevik program for the emancipation of women is carried forward by the International Communist League, of which the Spartacist League is the U.S. section. The full liberation of women and the rest of the oppressed can only come about in a classless society in which the enormous productive social and economic forces are put in the service of humanity, rather than in the pockets of the capitalist class. After socialist revolution, we know that organized religion, the bourgeois family and the state pass into the museums of ancient history. But what will this new society look like? I’ll leave that for another class. But I will leave you with one of my favorite quotes from *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*. Keep in mind that this was

written over 100 years ago, but it encapsulates a key element of what could be desired for the future:

“What we can now conjecture about the way in which sexual relations will be ordered after the impending overthrow of capitalist production is mainly of a negative character, limited for the most part to what will disappear. But what will there be new? That will be answered when a new generation has grown up: a generation of men who never in their lives have known what it is to buy a woman’s surrender with money or any other social instrument of power; a generation of women who have never known what it is to give themselves to a man from any other considerations than real love, or to refuse to give themselves to their lover from fear of the economic consequences. When these people are in the world, they will care precious little what anybody today thinks they ought to do; they will make their own practice and their corresponding public opinion about the practice of each individual—and that will be the end of it.” ■

Crimea...

(continued from page 1)

Today, this cesspool of Nazi skinheads, soccer hooligans and other fascist scum holds a number of positions in the Ukrainian government, including deputy prime minister, prosecutor general and minister of defense. The deputy national security leader is the head of the Right Sector. Now those same fascist bands are to become the core of the country's military as the new regime sets out to rebuild the armed forces "effectively from scratch," mobilizing the fascist shock troops into a militia to be integrated into the Ukrainian armed forces.

Crimea Is Russian

As we made clear in "Ukraine Coup: Spearheaded by Fascists, Backed by U.S./EU Imperialists" (WV No. 1041, 7 March), we support the Russian intervention into Crimea so long as special rights for the overwhelmingly Muslim Tatar minority are implemented. In fact, on March 11 the Crimean Parliament passed a bill granting official language rights and proportional representation in its government to the Tatars, while pledging to provide funds for the repatriation of the Crimean Tatars expelled from the peninsula by Stalin in 1944. However, as we explained in that article, if Russia uses the intervention into Crimea to deepen the oppression of the Tatars it would be unprincipled for Marxists to support it.

It was perfectly reasonable for Crimea's Russian-speaking population, which has chafed under the yoke of Ukrainian rule since the collapse of the Soviet Union, to be deeply alarmed by the coup in Ukraine and the rise of a new, Western-backed regime infested with anti-Russian fascists. Virtually the first act of the Ukrainian parliament was to proscribe the use of Russian as an official language, a proscription that has been subsequently vetoed by the president in deference to the U.S.'s effort to portray the coup as the epitome of "democracy."

The Western imperialists and their media loudly howl about Russian "aggression" in Crimea. But reality has sabotaged the rhetoric. Putin's intervention is essentially defensive, including to protect Russia's Black Sea Fleet based in Sevastopol. The Russian "invasion" is a chimera and the intervention remains popular with the vast majority of the Crimean populace. The buildup to the referendum took place without serious incident. The legions of Western reporters dispatched to Crimea to uncover atrocities against the Tatar and other minorities there have little to show.

Our position on Russian forces in Crimea stems from the basic Leninist principle that the right of self-determination applies to the peoples of *all* nations, including those of great powers like Russia. The intervention of Russian troops into Crimea simply allowed the expression of self-determination for that region. There is no distinct "Crimean nation"; the majority of its population is actually Russian and has long sought—whether under the guise of independence or autonomy—greater ties to Russia, including reincorporation into the state. The referendum that the imperialists have decreed "illegal" merely codified the reality that Crimea is Russian. And even that simple codification would not have taken place if not for the presence of Russian troops. The vitriol of the Western imperialists against the Russian intervention is but a cynical cover for the oppressive politics of their Ukrainian quislings. It is belied by the inability of Crimea's residents to even hold a referendum to express their will to separate from Ukraine until now.

In our last article, we noted that "in 1991, an attempt by local inhabitants to hold a referendum on Crimea's independence was indefinitely banned by the Ukrainian authorities." In fact, another attempt in 1992, which asked whether voters wanted Crimea returned to Russia, was also declared illegal by the Ukrainian government. Threats by Ukraine's Parliament forced the Crimean Parliament to back down that August from its referendum on independence.



Left: Leader of fascist Right Sector, Dmytro Yarosh, addressing rally in Kiev's Maidan (square), February 21. Right: Confederate and white-supremacist Celtic cross flags hanging next to fascist Svoboda banner in Kiev City Hall, December.

Pro-Russian Crimean forces attempted, yet again, to have another referendum in 1994, this time posing three questions focused on greater autonomy within Ukraine. Kiev once again intervened, first downgrading the referendum to a consultative vote and then banning it altogether. The vote went ahead anyway, with overwhelming support for autonomy, including nearly 83 percent of voters backing a provision allowing Crimean residents to hold dual citizenship (Russian as well as Ukrainian). The following year, as conflict between Ukraine and Crimea heated up, several Crimean parliamentary deputies threatened to hold a referendum on reunification with Russia. In response, the Ukrainian parliament annulled Crimea's constitution, abolished its presidency, moved to disarm the presidential guard and began criminal proceedings against Crimea's president at the time, Yuri Meshkov.

The 1996 Ukrainian constitution effectively abolished any possibility for Crimean self-determination, as it required a nationwide referendum to change the borders of Ukraine. There has been much ado in

the Western imperialists, who are aiming to establish a client state on his border. At the same time, in the context of increasing hostilities against ethnic Russians in Ukraine, Russia's *realpolitik* military maneuvers intersect the very real national fears faced by Russians in Crimea."

This is hardly the first time that a bourgeois regime has carried out a democratic reform—including as a response to popular pressure—for its own purposes. Marxists support democratic reforms beneficial to working people and the oppressed—not simply regarding national rights, but also other rights, such as abortion for women, democratic rights for gays, voting rights for black people in the U.S., etc. But we do so from the perspective of proletarian independence, maintaining political opposition to the bourgeois forces that may be forced by events to carry out such acts. To abandon support for such reforms under the guise that these provide a gilding to reactionary capitalist rule would be to abandon the possibility of mobilizing the working class in struggle for socialist revolution.

Thus, in advocating the right of self-



February 2000: Chechen capital Grozny ravaged by Russian army.

the Western media about the absence of a choice for the status quo on the ballot employed in the current referendum. The choices posed were federation with Russia or restoration of the 1992 Crimean constitution, which defined Crimea as an autonomous part of Ukraine. This constitution is portrayed by the Western media as assuring Russian control of Crimea. This is a lie. It merely allowed the residents of Crimea considerable freedom, including some ties with Russia. The difference between the choices on the ballot and the status quo is precisely between having the right to self-determination and having that right proscribed.

Our position on the Russian intervention into Crimea does not entail the slightest political support to Putin's capitalist regime, which itself brutally oppresses national minorities, such as the Chechen population, within the borders of Russia. As we explained last issue, "In intervening into Crimea, Putin is seeking to defend the interests of capitalist Russia against

determination—whether for Russians in Crimea or for the Chechen people, who are victims of Great Russian chauvinism—our aim is to get the national question off the agenda in order to foster unity of the proletariat across national lines. As Marxists, we oppose the poison of nationalism and fight for the class unity of the workers in fighting to overthrow *all* the bloody capitalist regimes of the region.

Running Dogs for Western Imperialism

It is to be expected that the U.S. and European imperialists denounce the Russian intervention and the Crimean referendum. In this, they are joined by reformist leftists who march in lockstep behind their imperialist rulers as they vilify Russia as the greatest evil on earth today, just as these reformists did when the Western imperialists targeted Bosnia and Serbia in the 1990s.

A case in point is a March 4 statement by Peter Taaffe's Committee for a Workers'

International (CWI), whose sister group in the U.S. is Socialist Alternative. In the statement, the CWI graciously concedes that "the Crimea should have the right of self-determination, if it so desires," while warning that "what is happening now will not lead to genuine self-determination; it will only mean that Crimea becomes a Russia protectorate." Ergo, self-determination for the people of Crimea "will not be possible under capitalism, with its poverty, joblessness and exploitation and due to the competing elites playing the 'divide and rule' card. Only a workers' government, replacing rotten capitalism with a society run in the interests of the working masses, can ensure the rights of all nationalities and minorities are protected."

The logic of the CWI's statement is made explicit by a March 2 statement by its sister group in Russia, which declares: "Russian Imperialism—Out of Crimea!" and "No Referendum in Crimea at gunpoint!" Likewise, a statement by the Russian Socialist Movement, associated with the United Secretariat (USec)—supported in the U.S. by Socialist Action—raises the call: "No Intervention by the Armies of Russia or Any Other Countries in the Affairs of Crimea!"

All this is little more than a left-sounding cover for the U.S./EU position that a vote for self-determination in Crimea is invalid because the U.S./EU imperialists say it is invalid. What the CWI eschews is exactly what is proscribed by the Western imperialist powers: the right of the people of the Crimea to vote to affiliate with Russia. For these social democrats, self-determination is valid only when it has the imprimatur of their rulers.

Certainly, these reformists did not fulminate about "gunpoints" during the 1999 U.S./NATO terror war against Serbia, carried out by the Democratic Clinton administration in the name of stopping "ethnic cleansing" in Kosovo. Much of the reformist left internationally beat the drums for "human rights" imperialism on behalf of "poor, little Kosovo," with some even supporting direct imperialist intervention. The CWI raised the call, "Self-determination for Kosova!" even as bombs were falling on Serbia. The USec went even further, calling for military intervention into Kosovo by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe—a military bloc dominated by European powers—or the United Nations.

As Marxists, we have historically defended the right of self-determination of the Kosovo Albanians, including the right to form their own state or to integrate into a greater Albania. But in the buildup to and during the U.S./NATO war, the struggle for Kosovar self-determination had become *subordinated* to the need to stand for the military defense of Serbia against imperialist attack without giving any political support to the revanchist regime in Belgrade. NATO forces supplanted the Serbian army as the effective state power in Kosovo following the 1999 war, and sham "independence" was declared in 2008 as a diplomatic provocation, not least against Russia. To this day, the U.S. maintains Camp Bondsteel in Kosovo as the largest military base built by the U.S. in Europe since the Vietnam War. To

Soviet Power and the Liberation of Ukraine

Following the October 1917 proletarian seizure of power, the fledgling Soviet workers state in Russia sought to advance the revolutionary struggles of the exploited and oppressed across the former tsarist empire and beyond. One such example is given by Mikhail Pavlovich's report on the national and colonial questions at the First Congress of the Peoples of the East, held in September 1920 in Baku, capital of Soviet Azerbaijan. It is published in *To See the Dawn: Baku, 1920—First Congress of the Peoples of the East* (Pathfinder, 1993).

The excerpt of the report printed below focuses on Ukraine, a major arena at the time in the bloody civil war pitting the Red Army against counterrevolutionary forces backed by the imperialist powers. In that country, the class conflict was heavily overlaid with national antagonisms, especially between east and west, posing special tasks for the Bolsheviks. The vast bulk of ethnic Ukrainians were peasants or rural villagers. The peasantry in the west of the country largely toiled under a Polish landed aristocracy, with Jewish merchants serving as middlemen and moneylenders, while in the east the tsars had subjected the population to forced Russification. As a result, rural toilers were saturated with strong anti-Polish and anti-Semitic as well as anti-Russian prejudices. Meanwhile, the core of Bolshevik support in Ukraine was the heavily Russian industrial proletariat and large urban Jewish communities in the east.

Pavlovich contrasts the suffering of the Ukrainian peasantry under the likes of imperialist-backed nationalist leader Simon Petlyura, notorious for his massacre of Jews in the west, to the liberating beacon of Soviet Russia, which championed full and equal rights for all nations within the former tsarist “prison house of peoples.” After the October Revolution, many governments were formed in Ukraine, with Petlyura heading up a series of capitalist “Ukrainian People’s Republics.” The first of these regimes was overthrown with the assistance of the Red Army, bringing to power a Ukrainian Soviet government in January 1918. It lasted until March when German occupying forces swept across the country and installed a puppet government under the reactionary hetman [Cossack military commander] Skoropadsky. Subsequently, in the lead-up to the 1920 Soviet-Polish war, Petlyura made an anti-Soviet bloc with Polish nationalist Jozef Pilsudski, ceding Ukraine’s western territories to Poland.

The future envisioned by Pavlovich, one freed of backwardness and national



University of Toronto



Gosizdat

Top: Red Army soldiers in Kiev, 1919. Bottom: Communist youth detachment, fighting for Soviet power, in Poltava prior to dispatch to Ukraine’s southern front during Civil War, 1920. Placard at right reads: “Crimea Must Be Taken No Matter What.”

oppression, was perverted by the Stalinist bureaucratic degeneration of the Soviet workers state. Having wrested political control from the proletariat in 1923-24, Stalin and his successors dumped the Bolsheviks’ internationalist traditions and whipped up Great Russian chauvinism as an ideological glue for their brittle rule. Stalin’s many crimes included dissolving the Crimean Autonomous Republic and the Chechen and Ingush autonomous regions. The entire Chechen and Ingush populations, along with Crimean Tatars and Volga Germans, were deported to Central Asia during World War II.

Nonetheless, the Soviet Union remained a workers state embodying the historic gains of the October Revolution, namely the planned economy and collectivized property, which made possible an allocation of resources that brought about a rel-

ative equality between the various republics making up the USSR, easing historic national tensions. One need only look at the economic and cultural development and the great strides in education and the advancement of women that occurred in Soviet Central Asia, which prior to 1917 was a precapitalist backwater. The final undoing of the Soviet Union in 1991-92 and the creation of distinct capitalist states unleashed nationalist hatreds and rivalries and sparked bloody communal slaughter, such as between Azerbaijan and Armenia. Putin’s murderous colonial occupation of Chechnya was an expression of the revival of the Great Russian oppressor.

Before his death in 1927, Pavlovich himself played a role in the Bolshevik effort to modernize Soviet Central Asia. A former Menshevik who had joined the Bolshevik Party at the time of the Octo-

ber Revolution, he coined the slogan “To Moscow, not Mecca!” as part of his focus on winning the Muslim world to embrace Soviet power in the struggle against colonial rule. In his Baku report, Pavlovich wrongly refers to tsarist Russia as a “colony.” In fact, Russia fell somewhere halfway between the great imperialist powers and the colonies. Thus, as Trotsky put it in *The History of the Russian Revolution*, Russia paid “for her right to be an ally of advanced countries, to import capital and pay interest on it—that is, essentially, for her right to be a privileged colony of her allies—but at the same time for her right to oppress and rob Turkey, Persia, Galicia, and in general the countries weaker and more backward than herself” (1932).

* * *

This colonial question, the question of the partition of Asia, is the mainspring of the bitter war that the capitalist world has been waging against Soviet Russia since the first day of the October revolution. Russia alarms the countries of the capitalist world as a beacon, a guiding star, summoning all people of courage to the struggle for a new order. It alarms them because of its many millions of inhabitants and its extraordinary wealth in natural endowments and sources of raw material and because it is no longer content to remain, as under the tsars, a semicolony of Anglo-Franco-Belgian capital. Even beyond this, Soviet Russia also inspires fear and dread in world imperialism as a colony that has freed itself from foreign oppression. By its very example it summons the enslaved East to fight for freedom. Its whole internal policy toward the backward nations contributes to the awakening and development in the East of a striving for national self-determination. And not only this, for it also renders real aid to the backward and oppressed peoples living outside the borders of Russia in their struggle against rapacious international capital (*Applause*)....

Who cannot see the difference between our workers’ and peasants’ socialist federation and the brigand capitalist empires? The “free constitution” of Britain holds the 300 million people of India, who have for so long groaned under the British yoke, in harsh slavery, strangling them. Republican France cruelly suppresses the slightest manifestation of desire for freedom and national self-determination in Morocco, in Algeria, in Indochina, in all its colonies. The great transatlantic republic, the United States, still refuses to recognize the independence of Cuba and the Philippines, for whose supposed liber-

continued on page 10

promote the struggle for Kosovo’s independence amid the U.S./NATO onslaught against Serbia would have amounted to support to the imperialists’ predatory aims against that country.

In the case of Crimea today, there is no war to which the national question is subordinated. Contrary to the claims of the Western imperialists, their kept media and leftist hangers-on, the Russian intervention into Crimea is not an act of military aggression into a “foreign country.” But for these reformists, the reality is irrelevant. Simply put, they oppose the Crimean referendum for the same reason they supported Kosovar “independence” under the auspices of Western imperialism: they ape their imperialist masters.

For New October Revolutions!

The reformist left long ago made its peace with imperialism. This found its greatest expression when they lined up

alongside the forces of counterrevolution in the Soviet Union. CWI members literally stood on the barricades of counterrevolution, joining Boris Yeltsin’s capitalist-restorationist forces when he grabbed power in August 1991. For its part, the USec supported every counterrevolutionary and nationalist movement in the USSR, including embracing the fascistic fringe of the Baltic nationalist movements, which sought capitalist restoration in the guise of “self-determination.”

In contrast, we Trotskyists fought for the unconditional military defense of the Soviet workers state against imperialism and counterrevolution. And we fought for this despite and against the misrule of the Stalinist bureaucratic caste that undermined the foundations of the workers state and opened the door to counterrevolution, not least by abandoning the Bolshevik struggle for international socialist revolution and adopting the lie of build-

ing “socialism in one country.” We fought for a working-class political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy and replace it with a regime based on soviet democracy and revolutionary internationalism.

The liberating vision of the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky that led the 1917 October Revolution—which included the right of self-determination for all the peoples of the former tsarist empire—was grotesquely perverted by the Stalinist bureaucracy that consolidated political power beginning in 1923-24. This included the horrendous suffering faced by Crimea’s Tatars at the hands of Stalin, who forcibly deported the population from the region near the end of the Second World War. At the same time, the existence of a socialized economy with central planning provided the material basis to achieve full employment, medical care for all and other gains, which undercut the most virulent forms of bourgeois nationalism and anti-Semitism that are fueled by

the discontents of capitalist society.

The destruction of the Soviet workers state brought untold miseries and horrors to the peoples of the first working-class republic. It has led to a sharp intensification of communalism and a proliferation of national hatreds, pitting working people against one another. Notwithstanding Russia’s occasional abilities to hamper U.S. imperialism’s ambition, gone is the USSR as a counterweight to U.S. imperialism as it rides roughshod over the peoples of the world. Proletarian class consciousness has been thrown back drastically, such that, for example, the working class of the land of the October Revolution no longer identifies socialism as its liberating ideal. The crucial task facing revolutionaries is to forge Bolshevik parties committed to the struggle against imperialism and all manifestations of nationalism, charting a course of independent working-class struggle leading to the fight for new October Revolutions. ■

Soviet Power...

(continued from page 9)

ation the war against Spain was launched in 1898.

At the same time the government and the worker and peasant masses of the Russian Socialist Federated Republic joyfully greet the formation of the autonomous Bashkir Soviet Republic, the autonomous Tatar Socialist Soviet Republic, and so forth, on the borders of the former tsarist empire—where, as in all capitalist countries, every striving for national self-determination was stifled and suppressed.

In all capitalist states without exception, both large and small—in France, Britain, Japan, America, Holland, Belgium, Poland and the rest—we see the use of crude violence against national minorities. Sometimes we see the transformation into nations of slaves and serfs of huge communities of hundreds of millions of people who have fallen under the rule of a more organized, more “civilized” minority, as in the case of the enslaved 300 millions of India, ruled by capitalist Britain, armed to the teeth.

At one pole, in the capitalist countries, there is savage suppression of national minorities—and sometimes of national majorities too, where a national minority holds the reins of government. At the other pole, in the republic of soviets, the most attentive, most fraternal feeling and attitude is shown toward not only more or less substantial national entities but even the very smallest of them.

Under the first Ukrainian People’s Republic it was the Austro-German imperialists and General Skoropadsky who ruled in Ukraine. That was the time when, by agreement with the Germans and Austrians, Petlyura’s Ukraine was obliged to supply Austria and Germany with 75 million poods [1.3 million tons] of grain, 11 million poods [200,000 tons] of cattle on the hoof, and so on.

Under the second Ukrainian People’s Republic, Ukraine was a colony of French capital, in line with the agreement that the mercenary Petlyura signed in Odessa with the French general D’Anselme. By this agreement nearly all Ukraine’s railways and financial and military enterprises were handed over to the French stockbrokers.

The third Ukrainian People’s Republic, promised by the same Petlyura, was merely a screen for the establishment in Ukraine of the hated evil rule of the Polish gentry.

The entire history of Ukraine cries out against this fresh act of betrayal by Petlyura. That history is one of heroic exploits and great defeats of the Ukrainian peasantry, the Ukrainian “cattle” in a struggle many centuries long against the Polish gentry. The whole history of the Poland of the gentry, on the other hand, is but a long series of wars against Ukraine aimed at enslaving it. Ukrainian literature—the immortal works of Shevchenko, Ukrainian folk-poetry—reflect this page of the long-suffering history of the Ukrainian people, whose entire development proceeded through bloody struggle against the Polish lords. All the cossack revolts, the whole struggle of the Zaporozhian Camp, of Bogdan Khmelnytsky, were fundamentally a fight of the Ukrainian peasants against the yoke of the Polish landowners, against the Polonizers, the enemies of the Ukrainian national language and Ukrainian culture.

And Petlyura, condottiere and hired bandit, offered his bloody services to anyone who would agree to pay him well. He wanted to surrender the Ukrainian land, the Ukrainian language, all Ukrainian culture, to the Polish gendarme, to the insolent Polonizers. They closed Belorussian schools, for example, and proclaimed Polish the state language even in the regions where Poles made up only an insignificant percentage of the population. The Polish gentry, the Polish *Kulturträger*,

are already trying to Polonize Belorussia [Belarus], Volhynia, and Podolia, and intend to do the same in all the regions of Ukraine that they manage to conquer.

Tens of hundreds of honest Ukrainians who sincerely desire the national and cultural rebirth of Ukraine, including such pillars of Ukrainian national public opinion as Hrushevsky and Vinnichenko, have become convinced that only Soviet power can now fulfil to the end the role of liberator of Ukraine from all forms of oppression.

On May 27 the Presiding Committee of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee confirmed the decision to establish an autonomous Tatar Socialist Soviet Republic with the city of Kazan as its center. This news evoked a mighty echo throughout the many-millioned Muslim world, in Persia, Afghanistan, Turkey, and India. In the eyes of our Muslim brothers, the workers and peasants of the East, it was a fresh example of the great principles that underlie the national policy of the Russian federated republic. But this is not to the liking of the capitalist governments.

Let two or three decades pass. Let popular education spread in the republic of soviets, including the opening of thousands and thousands of schools, evening courses, academies, etc., including the complete ending of illiteracy in Russia and Ukraine. Alongside the wonderful old monuments of Russian and Ukrainian literature, such as the works of Pushkin, Lermontov, Tolstoy, Gogol, and Shevchenko, we will see great new works appear, composed by brilliant new poets, men of letters, etc., arising from the ranks of the workers and peasants. Tatar, Bashkir, Kirghiz, and other poetry and literature, only now awakening to life, will flourish luxuriantly. All the separate streams, tributaries, rivulets, and great rivers will intermingle in a fantastic and harmonious way, merging and feeding with their living waters one common

international ocean of the poetry and learning of toiling humanity, freed for the first time from national and class oppression. This will shine with such unprecedented, incomparable beauty as neither classical Greece, with all its amazing works of art, nor the civilization of the medieval and capitalist epochs, with all their blazing galaxy of immortal poets, artists, thinkers, and scholars, could give the world.

Yes, all this will be! But before we reach this wished-for future, much blood will flow. Many thousands of fighters for the new order will fall beneath the enemy’s blows upon the battlefields. Many tens and hundreds of thousands of women and children will die from hunger and cold in their homes or beside ruined auls [villages]. All this is inevitable, alas, and it is not of our making. It results from the criminal will of the capitalists, who do not want to give up their profits. But all fighters for a better future have to suffer in this way, and not merely the representatives of the small nations, not only the population of the borderlands. Come and see what is happening in Petrograd, Moscow, Tula, in a great number of our cities. Because of the criminal blockade and the bloody war that was forced upon us, hundreds of thousands of workers in these cities are faint from hunger and cold. Yet they have not lost heart, but march off in their thousands to the front, to lay down their lives for Soviet power (*Applause*). They know, these heroes, that they will not die in vain, for they give their blood for their comrades’ happiness, for a better future for their children and the generations to come.

The war against Soviet Russia is a war against the East.

In the giant struggle we have begun, the peoples of the East will henceforth be our loyal allies. For a war against Soviet Russia is a war against the revolutionary East, and, vice versa, a war against the East is a war against Soviet Russia (*Applause*). ■

Dunn Verdict...

(continued from page 12)

lynchings in the last three years.

Dunn clearly was looking for an opportunity to mete out KKK-style “justice” to black youth who “dissed” him. He murdered Davis and nearly killed three others for crossing a line dating back to slavery, punishable by the lash and later the lynch rope. In so doing, Dunn was following in the footsteps of the greatest perpetrators of violence against the black population—the capitalist state and its killer cops for whom terrorizing black youth is just another day at the office. One witness reported hearing Dunn tell the teens, “You are not going to talk to me like that.” From his jail cell, Dunn wrote his family: “If more people would arm themselves and kill these fucking idiots when they’re threatening you, eventually they may take

the hint and change their behavior.”

Davis’s shooting recalls the racist vigilante killing of 17-year-old Trayvon Martin in February 2012. Dunn was even prosecuted by the same team that let Martin’s killer, George Zimmerman, walk free. As we noted in a leaflet issued after Zimmerman was acquitted last July: “It wasn’t that the prosecution didn’t have a case. The truth is that this wasn’t their field of expertise, which is railroading black people to prison” (WV No. 1028, 9 August 2013).

What the prosecutors are pursuing with a passion is the relentless persecution of Marissa Alexander, a black mother in her 30s. Alexander was sentenced to 20 years for firing a warning shot into a wall when threatened by her husband, who had previously beaten her so badly she had to be hospitalized. An appeals court ordered a new trial. Now prosecutor Angela Corey—who was in charge of both Zimmerman and Dunn’s prosecutions—is seeking to increase Alexander’s sentence from 20 to 60 years!

“Stand Your Ground”: Open Season on Blacks

Florida’s “Stand Your Ground” law, which set the backdrop for the killings of Martin and Davis, provides a license for vigilante murder. Passed in 2005 amid a campaign to “get tough on crime”—code for targeting black people—the Florida law became the model for similar laws in 22 other states, including all of the former Confederacy except Arkansas and Virginia. It supplanted an earlier Florida statute that required a person under attack to try to remove himself from immediate danger before using deadly force in self-defense.

Instead, Stand Your Ground allows for the use of deadly force by anyone who claims a “reasonable belief” that such force is necessary, without any attempt to disengage. And in this country, a young black man playing loud music or wearing a hoodie is enough for someone to claim “reasonable belief.” A 2013 study by the Urban Institute documented that in states with Stand Your Ground laws, shootings of black victims by whites are 281 percent more likely to be



WV Photo

March 2012: New York City protest after killing of Trayvon Martin.

ruled justified than if the victims are white.

Democratic Party liberals and black politicians have attempted to steer outrage over Stand Your Ground into various gun control schemes. Such measures are a means of enforcing a monopoly of violence for the capitalist state, leaving guns in the hands of cops, criminals and racist vigilantes while the rest of the population is defenseless. The result is to make attacks like those on Martin and Davis more likely. Indeed, if Trayvon Martin and Jordan Davis had been armed, they might still be alive today—although they would most likely be in prison.

Founded and maintained on a bedrock of black oppression, the American capitalist system paints targets on the backs of young black men and women. Zimmerman’s acquittal last July was followed by a rapid succession of racist atrocities. On September 14, Jonathan Farrell, a 24-year-old former college football star, was gunned down by a North Carolina cop while seeking assistance after a car wreck. On September 17, an appeals court tossed out the

murder convictions of five New Orleans cops who killed two unarmed black men on Danziger Bridge during Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Following an accident on November 2, 19-year-old Renisha McBride found herself on the porch of a white man in Dearborn, Michigan, who shot her dead.

The vilification of black youth seen every day in the press, on TV and on the Internet provides fertile soil for scum like Dunn. In the lead-up to the last Super Bowl, Seattle Seahawks’ black defensive back Richard Sherman was denounced as a “thug” for being brash and outspoken. A Stanford graduate, Sherman perceptively observed that “thug” is “the accepted way of calling someone the N-word nowadays.” Dunn himself ranted against “thug music,” according to his fiancée.

The omnipresent targeting of black youth through both legal repression and extralegal terror is endemic to American capitalism. In New York City, newly elected mayor Bill de Blasio rode into office vowing to rein in the NYPD’s “stop and frisk” racial profiling program that ensnared hundreds of thousands in its web over the past decade. Although the number of stops has dropped sharply, arrests for so-called crimes such as public drinking and begging in the subways have skyrocketed.

The multiracial working class is the only force with the social power and class interests to get rid of the system of capitalist exploitation in which the mass of the black population is forcibly segregated at the bottom. As our leaflet on Zimmerman’s acquittal stated:

“It took a bloody Civil War, the Second American Revolution, with 200,000 black troops, guns in hand, to smash the chains of black chattel slavery. But the promise of black freedom was soon betrayed by the Northern bourgeoisie, which allied with the Southern propertied classes against the aspirations of the black freedmen. It will take a third American Revolution—a proletarian socialist revolution that breaks the chains of capitalist wage slavery—to finish the Civil War.”

Then, and only then, will there be a measure of justice for Davis, Martin and the countless other victims of racist terror. ■

A Spartacist Pamphlet \$1.50

Black History and the Class Struggle
No. 22

Race and Class in American History
Colonial America, the Civil War and the Rise of U.S. Imperialism

No. 22 \$1.50 (56 pages)

Black History is sent to WV subscribers.

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

UAW...

(continued from page 12)

subsequently a founder of the Ku Klux Klan race-terrorists, an organization that has also served as shock troops for the bourgeoisie in spiking countless unionization drives.

All of this underscores that any attempt to organize the South must tackle head-on the anti-black racism that has long served the capitalists in dividing workers and weakening their struggles. And with the large number of Latino immigrants in the working class, union organizing cannot go forward without a fight against anti-immigrant bigotry. The labor movement must champion the struggle for black rights and demand full citizenship rights for everyone who has made it to the U.S.

Whether or not the UAW had won the vote at Chattanooga, the class collaboration of the union leadership is an obstacle to organizing more broadly. The fundamental starting point for a serious union organizing drive must be the understanding that this capitalist society is divided between two hostile classes whose interests are irreconcilably counterposed: the workers who have to sell their labor power and the capitalists who own the means of production and rake in massive profits by exploiting labor. Sowing illusions in a commonality of interests between the workers and their exploiters, the labor bureaucrats push reliance on the government agencies and political parties of the enemy class, from the NLRB to the Democrats. This strategy has led to one defeat after another for the labor movement.

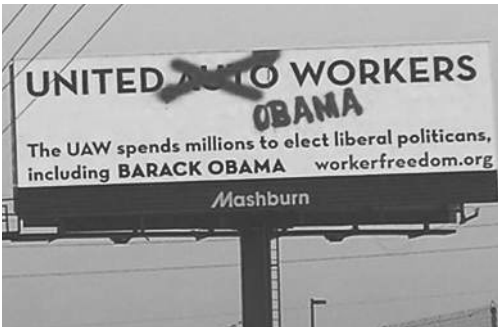
As we wrote in “The Fight to Unionize the ‘Open Shop’ South” (WV No. 720, 1 October 1999):

“The last, feeble attempt by the CIO to organize the South following World War II, grotesquely called ‘Operation Dixie,’ was quickly shipwrecked on the shoals of the Cold War red purges, racism and the bureaucrats’ ties to the Democratic Party.... The union tops’ loyalty to the Democrats made them incapable of waging a fight against the Jim Crow white power structure, which was run by the Dixiecrats and their KKK auxiliaries.”

To transform the unions into bastions of class struggle requires a fight for a new leadership based on the political independence of the working class.

For Class Struggle, Not Class Collaboration

In the Chattanooga organizing drive, the UAW tops thought they could sneak into the South by presenting the union as dedicated to “labor-management cooperation.” The neutrality agreement committed the UAW to “maintaining and where possible enhancing the cost advantages and other competitive advantages” of Volkswagen. Thus, the union bureaucrats agreed in advance to shackle Chattanooga auto workers with the lower wages and substandard



Chactivist

Anti-UAW billboard in Chattanooga.

working conditions that are hallmarks of non-union plants. This was hardly going to inspire confidence in workers that joining the union would better their lot. But it did provide grist for the mill of the anti-union forces around the group “No 2 UAW,” which made an impact on some workers who had signed UAW cards last year but later voted against the union.

The centerpiece of the neutrality agreement was the formation of a class-collaborationist works council modeled on the German *Betriebsräte*. This body, which the German union IG Metall urged the UAW to accept, would exercise jurisdiction over various shopfloor issues, from safety to scheduling of overtime, and oversee at least the first stage of the grievance process. The effect would have been to undercut the union, whose purpose is supposed to be to defend workers against the company. This is a far cry from the UAW in its heyday, when union committeemen faced with shopfloor attacks would stop the assembly line until management relented.

The UAW also explicitly abandoned the many temporary contract workers in Chattanooga by agreeing to exclude them from any future bargaining unit. Organizing these workers, bringing them into the union and demanding full pay and benefits, is crucial to any serious attempt at unionization. Management at other Southern (and also some Northern) factories like the Nissan plant in Smyrna, Tennessee, has been replacing many full-time positions with temporary jobs. Pointing to the impact of the Chattanooga defeat on workers at the Smyrna Nissan plant, a 15 February *Washington Post* article observed: “The UAW lost a vote there in 2001, and while it still has organizers on the ground in Smyrna, workers will look to Chattanooga and wonder why so many thought the union was a bad idea.”

The anti-union forces in Chattanooga blamed the union for the devastated condition of Detroit, the former Motor City. But it was the auto bosses, with the complicity of the pro-capitalist union tops, who turned Detroit—an overwhelmingly black city that was once a UAW stronghold—into a bankrupt industrial wasteland at the cost of tens of thousands of decent-paying union jobs. The standard of living that auto workers in

Detroit and elsewhere were able to enjoy for a couple of decades after World War II—when U.S. imperialism was economically dominant relative to its Japanese and German rivals—was made possible by the fierce class struggles that built the UAW and made it a powerhouse of organized labor. The seminal event was the 1936-37 sit-down strike in Flint, Michigan, a watershed in the class battles that gave rise to the CIO industrial unions. The Flint sit-down was preceded by a courageous strike at the Fisher Body plant in Atlanta, in which workers occupied the plant in November 1936 and maintained impassable picket lines for three months. In 1937, the UAW won national recognition.

Today, the union tops point to the panoply of the capitalists’ anti-union laws to justify diverting workers into futile lobbying of the Democrats instead of waging hard class struggle. But there were anti-union laws in the 1930s, too. Union militants were arrested and physically attacked by cops, National Guard and private strikebreakers. But these were the kind of battles out of which the industrial unions were forged. To revive the labor movement today will take nothing less than a return to the same militant methods that built the unions in the first place.

Break with the Democrats!

The Chattanooga VW plant is one of the newest of the so-called transplants:



Detroit auto sitdown strike of 1937. Industrial trade unions were built through militant class struggle.

foreign-owned auto factories in the U.S., mostly non-union shops in the South. This trend took off after production started at the Marysville, Ohio, Honda factory in 1982 and the Smyrna Nissan plant a year later. Helping spur the growth of the transplants was the “buy American” protectionism of the UAW bureaucracy during the 1970s and 1980s. To avoid trade restrictions, Japanese and later German automakers relocated some production to the U.S. In turn, the UAW officialdom, whose protectionist tirades tied the union to the interests of the American exploiters, was incapable of waging the necessary struggle to unionize the transplants. Instead, Solidarity House agreed to concession after concession at the Big Three (GM, Ford and Chrysler) so that the bosses could “stay competitive” with the foreign-owned factories.

Decades of class collaboration culminated in the UAW leadership’s support to the 2009 bailout of the auto bosses by the Obama administration. The UAW tops accepted plant closures and massive wage and benefit cuts along with a six-year no-strike pledge in the name of saving some jobs. Between 2005 and 2013 foreign automakers opened seven plants, while the Big Three closed 21! From a peak in the 1960s of 1.6 million members, the UAW has been reduced to well under 500,000, and that includes tens of thousands who work in casinos and higher education. A measure of these setbacks is that starting pay at UAW-organized plants is as low as \$15 per hour. And now even Michigan, long a center of union power, has become a “right to work” state.

Current UAW president Bob King played a key role alongside his predecessor Ron Gettelfinger in foisting the bailout on union members. King had hoped to burnish his legacy by organizing at least

one foreign-owned assembly line in the South before retiring in June. UAW officials were already applying the same losing strategy they used in Chattanooga to a Mercedes-Benz plant in Vance, Alabama, where they hoped the parent company Daimler might accept a union if it came with a works council. Daimler now has little reason to play ball with King & Co.

A few years ago, the union officialdom placed great hopes on pressuring the Democrats to pass the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA), which would have provided for union recognition when a majority of employees at a workplace signed union authorization cards. While the union bureaucrats saw the EFCA as another substitute for labor struggle, we supported this measure because it would ease the road to union recognition. Had it been enacted, the UAW would have been recognized at the Chattanooga plant last September. When he was U.S. Senator and the EFCA had no chance of passage, Barack Obama backed the bill. Once in the Oval Office, where he landed in no small part due to the huge financial and organizational support of the labor bureaucracy, Obama and the Democrats let the EFCA die. In this, Obama was simply doing his job as CEO of American capitalism.

The trade-union bureaucracy’s fealty to the Democratic Party, which no less than the openly labor-hating Republicans is a party of capital, is the political corollary of its “partnership” with the corporations.

The working class can follow one of two paths. There is the bureaucracy’s acquiescence to what is possible under capitalism, which has led to disaster. Or there is the revolutionary strategy proposed by us Marxists. In the course of sharp class struggles and through patient education on the nature of capitalist society, the working class will become imbued with the consciousness of its own historic interests as a class fighting for itself and for all the oppressed. Such consciousness requires a political expression. That means breaking labor’s chains to the Democrats and forging a class-struggle workers party, whose purpose is not only to improve the present conditions of the working class but to do away with the entire system of capitalist wage slavery. ■

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

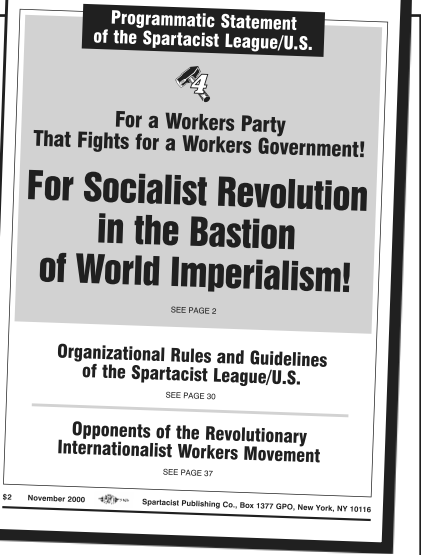
Web site: www.icl-fi.org • **E-mail address:** vanguard@tiac.net

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

- Chicago**.....Box 6441, Main PO, Chicago, IL 60680, (312) 563-0441
chicagospartacist@sbcglobal.net
Public Office: 1st Sat. of every month, 2-5 p.m., and by appointment, 222 S. Morgan (Buzzer 23)
- Los Angeles**.....Box 29574, Los Feliz Sta., Los Angeles, CA 90029, (213) 380-8239
slsycla@sbcglobal.net
Public Office: Sat. 2-5 p.m., 3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215
- New York**.....Box 3381, Church St. Sta., New York, NY 10008, (212) 267-1025
nysl@tiac.net
Public Office: 1st Sat. of every month, 1-4 p.m., and by appointment, 299 Broadway, Suite 318, Manhattan
- Oakland**.....Box 29497, Oakland, CA 94604, (510) 839-0851
slbayarea@fastmail.net
Public Office: Sat. 1-4 p.m., 1904 Franklin (Buzzer #407)

TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA/LIGUE TROTSKYSTE DU CANADA

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

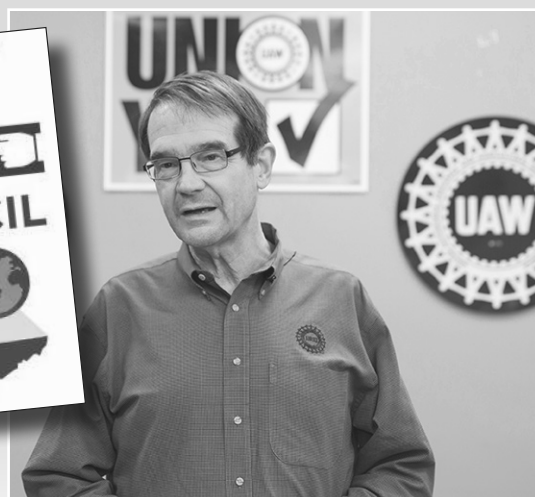


\$2 (40 pages)

Order from: Spartacist Pub. Co.
Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116

WORKERS VANGUARD

UAW Tops' Class Collaboration Paved the Way



Volkswagen Chattanooga CEO (left) and UAW president Bob King (right) after union lost representation vote, February 14. Union campaign promoted "collaboration" with automaker.

Defeat for Labor at Tennessee VW Plant

The United Auto Workers (UAW) narrowly lost a key representation election at the Volkswagen assembly plant in Chattanooga, Tennessee, in February by a vote of 712-626. The stakes were high: if the UAW had won, it would have marked a victory for workers not just in Chattanooga but more broadly, creating a breach for the labor movement in the open shop South. There is no question that the UAW was up against a determined opposition that wanted to keep the plant non-union. But the UAW bureaucrats hamstrung the organizing effort by pledging the union to maintain company profitability, as codified in the "neutrality" agreement that supposedly committed VW to not interfere with the unionization campaign. UAW officials forswore not only "conflict" with the automaker but even the necessary legwork to bolster union support, such as door-to-door and barstool organizing.

Much stock was put in VW's supposed tacit endorsement of the union. Nothing could be further from the truth. By September 2013, a majority of Chattanooga VW workers had signed cards authorizing the UAW to represent them in collec-

tive bargaining. Volkswagen could have accepted the results of the card checks and recognized the union. But the bosses were hardly going to allow the UAW free rein in the plant. Company officials made

to fight for their economic needs against the bosses. Keeping unions out means massively greater profits for the corporations. In Chattanooga, supervisors roamed the plant, spreading the anti-union gospel.

For a Class-Struggle Fight to Organize the "Open Shop" South!

clear that the union would get through the door only if it ceded many of its duties and functions to a German-style works council, a body that would have been under the thumb of management while giving the appearance that workers have a say in running the company.

While UAW president Bob King lauded the planned works council as a marker of the union's partnership with VW, his "partners" were not about to roll out the welcome mat. Even under their current class-collaborationist leaderships, unions are the basic organizations of the workers

Meanwhile, the unionization campaign drew heavy fire from zealous anti-labor forces financed by the likes of the Koch brothers and spearheaded by right-wing hatchet man Grover Norquist and such Republican politicians as Tennessee governor Bill Haslam and U.S. Senator Bob Corker. Threats from state GOP politicians to cut off tax subsidies to VW if the union won the vote are now the subject of a UAW complaint begging the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) to order a new election on the grounds of "outside interference."

The anti-union campaign featured a heavy dose of racist divide-and-rule. Norquist's "Center for Worker Freedom" erected billboards around Chattanooga showing the UAW's name defaced to read "United Obama Workers" and the tagline: "The UAW spends millions to elect liberal politicians [sic], including BARACK OBAMA." Particularly in states of the former Confederacy like Tennessee, such use of the "O" word is unmistakably racist code for the "N" word.

The intertwining of racist reaction and hostility toward unions was made explicit by one Matt Patterson, now executive director of Norquist's center. According to the *Nation* (14 November 2013), Patterson ranted in an op-ed piece last May: "One hundred and fifty years ago an invading Union army was halted at Chattanooga by the Confederate Army of Tennessee.... Today Southeastern Tennessee faces invasion from another union—an actual labor union, the United Auto Workers." One of the Confederate "heroes" of the Chattanooga battle was Nathan Bedford Forrest, a slave trader before the war and

continued on page 11

Florida: The Killing of Jordan Davis The Dunn Verdict and Racist America

On February 15, a Florida jury reaffirmed that black life in America is cheap. Michael Dunn, a white racist thug, had come to trial for firing repeatedly into a car with four black youths inside and killing 17-year-old Jordan Davis. The jury found Dunn guilty of the attempted murder of the three who survived his rampage. But it deadlocked over whether the killing of Davis was murder, as three jurors embraced Dunn's pretense that this coldblooded shooting was self-defense. The message was unmistakable: If Dunn

had killed everyone in the car, he likely would not have been convicted on a single count. His sentencing is now postponed until after his retrial, which is slated to begin in May.

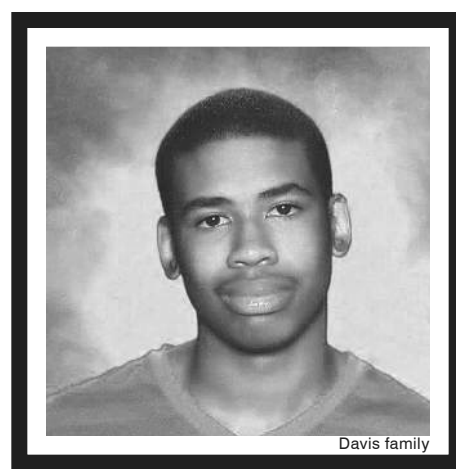
There was no ambiguity about what happened. Davis and his friends were listening to hip-hop in an SUV outside a convenience store in Jacksonville, Florida. Dunn drove up and parked beside them. After his fiancée went to buy chips and wine, Dunn demanded that Davis and his friends turn down the music. When

they refused, Dunn took a 9mm pistol from his glove compartment and fired three shots that hit Davis in the SUV. As Davis's friend Tommie Storns drove the SUV away, Dunn again fired on it. Business accomplished, Dunn went to his hotel room, where he ordered a pizza and chilled with a rum and coke. Jordan Davis's anguished father declared after the trial that killing his son "was not just another day at the office."

Dunn claimed that Davis threatened him and that he fired his pistol only after

seeing Davis brandish a shotgun. No shotgun was found. Dunn's fiancée testified that he never mentioned a weapon being pulled on him. In fact, Dunn's defense was unsupported by any evidence other than his white skin. If the shooter had been black and the car filled with white teens blasting Lynyrd Skynyrd's segregationist anthem "Sweet Home Alabama," the outcome would not have been a hung jury but rather the gallows. Florida has been second only to Texas in carrying out racist legal

continued on page 10



Davis family