

## Same Old Story: Killer Cop Walks Ferguson Righteous Fury



## Cops, National Guard Out!

AP

NOVEMBER 25—The whole world was watching and waiting for the grand jury decision on whether to indict Ferguson cop Darren Wilson for the coldblooded killing of unarmed black youth Michael Brown in broad daylight. The news, which is no news at all in a country where racist cop terror is the law of the land, is that Wilson got away with it. Protesters in Ferguson erupted in fury and frustration, while thousands demonstrated in cities across the U.S.

The capitalist politicians, from Missouri's white law-and-order Democratic Party governor Jay Nixon to America's first black president, decry the "vio-

lence." But the truth is that the whole situation was set up to incite what they now denounce as a riot. More than a week ago, Nixon declared a state of emergency and mobilized the National Guard. While U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder piously lectured on the importance of protest to initiating a "national dialogue" between the cops and the communities they terrorize, his FBI sent out a nationwide APB warning against "extremists" out to attack "law enforcement and critical infrastructure." Emboldened by the racist rulers, the lynch mob murderers of the KKK promised to use "lethal force" against "terrorists masquerading as 'peaceful protesters'."

All these are the real forces of violence in this society. As one Ferguson protester put it last night, "If you got a badge, you can get away with murder." Accounts in the bourgeois media this morning were filled with lurid tales of "looters" running amok in the Missouri town. But as could be seen from the news images, it was the cops who were on the rampage, firing tear gas and "non-lethal" projectiles.

As of this morning, 61 people had been arrested, including some just trying to go about their business. Our team in Ferguson ran into a young black couple who had just been released from a nearby jail; they had been arrested for "trespassing"

at an open gas station and their car was impounded. One of them told the cops: "I guess Darren Wilson is the only person not getting arrested tonight." We demand: National Guard, cops and FBI out of Ferguson! Free the arrested protesters and drop all charges now!

Together with the iron fist of state repression comes the velvet glove of black Democratic Party politicians and preachers mobilized to douse the flames of protest by pushing illusions in federal investigations and appealing for the cops to be reformed to "serve the people." This is like asking the plantation master to make

*continued on page 10*

## De Blasio's Police "Reform"

## NYPD Terror Repackaged

Just before midnight on November 20, Akai Gurley, a black man who had turned 28 years old two days earlier, met his end in a very New York way. As he and a female companion were walking down a staircase in the Pink Houses projects in Brooklyn, Gurley was shot in the chest and killed by an NYPD cop. Mayor Bill de Blasio and Police Commissioner William Bratton lamented the shooting as a "mistake." The confluence of factors leaving Gurley's two-year-old daughter fatherless was no mistake. The couple bypassed the elevators (which are snaillike when they do work) and entered a stairwell that had been without lights for months, where they encountered cops conducting a "vertical patrol." One had his weapon drawn, as is standard practice.

Gurley's killing is but one example of the cop terror that many city residents hoped would be curtailed by the election

of the liberal Democrat de Blasio, who ran as an opponent of stop-and-frisk. Nearly a year into de Blasio's term, the number of stops may be down but arrests for minor offenses continue unabated, with blacks and Latinos overwhelmingly the targets. The reality of the "broken windows" policing strategy embraced by de Blasio was starkly exposed by the cop chokehold killing of Eric Garner in July for the supposed crime of selling loose cigarettes. Despite clear video evidence of the killer cop strangling Garner, a Staten Island grand jury still hasn't decided whether he will even face charges.

City Hall has recently trotted out a new "reform" advertised as putting an end to street arrests for possession of small amounts of marijuana. Such arrests have condemned tens of thousands a year to prison and shipwrecked the lives of many others. Now those found holding less than 25 grams are supposed to be issued a summons to appear in court and pay a fine. The policy directs the cops to abide by a 1977 law under which having a small amount of weed out of sight is a violation—not a crime—while open display or

lighting up is a misdemeanor. In practice, the police have followed the letter of this law by accosting black and Latino youth, demanding (illegally) they empty their pockets, backpacks or purses and then arresting them if a joint appears.

The new directive came three weeks after a study reported that such busts increased slightly compared to the last years of the Bloomberg administration, with 86 percent of those arrested either black or Latino. No surprise here, as the prohibition of marijuana has always been racist to its core. Early laws against marijuana were adopted as a measure against Mexican immigrants in the Southwest. The first U.S. government "drug czar," Harry Anslinger, captured the spirit of the 1937 federal ban with a racist diatribe that pot makes black people "think they're as good as white men."

De Blasio's measure may spare some black youth from getting ensnared in the criminal justice system, an outcome we would welcome. Even so, we recognize that it will not alleviate police terror in the ghettos and barrios, which is endemic to American capitalism, or change the reac-



Facebook

**Akai Gurley, shot dead by NYPD on November 20.**

tionary nature of the drug laws. We call for the *decriminalization of marijuana and all other drugs*.

What is primarily afoot is a cynical City Hall public relations scam, with enforcement as always at the discretion of the racist cops. Even an editorial in the *New York Times* (11 November) admits that the policy "does not reach the fundamental problem of discriminatory policing." Moreover, those who miss summons court dates or are unable to pay the fine can be arrested and held in jail.

We warned from the outset of the "war  
*continued on page 10*



# You Won't See This on Wall Street

# China Slashes Pay...of Managers

Last month, this noteworthy news item appeared in London's *Financial Times*: "The corporate reporting season for China's largest state-owned enterprises, which concluded last month, featured an unusual theme. Despite earning far less than their international counterparts, the men who steer the country's largest companies welcomed recently announced plans to cut their pay" ("China's State Sector Leaders Embrace Pay Cuts of Up to 60 Percent," 12 October). According to Hong Kong's *South China Morning Post* (30 August), the decision to slash management pay was decided at a Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Political Bureau meeting that also decreed an end to state-paid membership in private clubs and other perks. The pay-slashing appears to be tied to Chinese president Xi Jinping's anti-corruption campaign, through which he seeks to remove some of his rivals in the CCP regime and to appease workers whose anger over inequality has fueled strikes and protests.

Even so, the move provides a clear, real-life refutation of the notion pushed by the bulk of the self-professed Marxist

left that China is a capitalist society. For social democrats like the Committee for a Workers' International (CWI), pushing that lie is a way to lure leftist-inclined youth and workers into embracing the imperialist-led drive to smash the Chinese workers state, which is bureaucratically ruled by the CCP. Thus, the CWI group in Hong Kong, Socialist Action, fulminates against "capitalist" China as it bangs the drums for the pro-imperialist "democracy" movement (see "Hong Kong Protests: Spearhead for Capitalist Counterrevolution," WV No. 1054, 17 October). The aim of these protests is to weaken the CCP's hold on Hong Kong—since 1997 a capitalist enclave of the People's Republic of China—and thereby encourage counterrevolutionary forces on the mainland.

Right around the time that the *Financial Times* story appeared, the CWI posted an article on its website that tried to explain away protest leaders' ties to U.S. and British government agencies ("Is the US Promoting a 'Colour Revolution' in Hong Kong?" socialistworld.net, 18 October). In this piece, the CWI declared that the American and Chinese

governments "both represent the interest of billionaires." This would be news to the heads of state-owned companies in China who are now watching a buzzsaw run through their pay packages.

Let us assume that the CWI's adherents realize that Wall Street executives would respond rather differently than Chinese managers did if Washington so much as hinted at trimming the gargantuan pay, stock options and other wealth they accrue for jacking up profits (with a "golden parachute" waiting in the event the bottom falls out). For one thing, they could simply cut the financial lifeline feeding any of their political agents, Democratic or Republican, who showed such temerity. The inverse of this relationship operates in China, a bureaucratically deformed workers state that issued out of the 1949 Revolution. Decades of "market reforms" have created large capitalist firms, including some spawned directly by the bureaucracy. Nevertheless the state-owned enterprises (SOEs) and banks remain the core of China's economy, and their managers answer to the government. As the head of China's giant petroleum and petrochemical company Sinopec put it, perhaps ruefully, "If you want to earn big sums, you should not be an SOE executive."

What the CWI obscures is the *class*

*difference* between capitalist America and the People's Republic of China. To be sure, a layer of capitalists has emerged on the mainland in recent years, but they remain atomized and lack their own political parties, unlike in Hong Kong. There are also plenty of fat cats in the nationalist CCP bureaucracy, a cancer that eats away at the foundations of the workers state. But the bureaucrats' privileges lack the security provided by the property rights enshrined in law in the U.S., Britain, etc. (the only rights to which the "democratic" capitalist rulers are unequivocally committed). Witness the heads that are rolling in the current anti-corruption campaign.

It is the task of the Chinese proletariat to remove the parasitic CCP bureaucracy through political revolution and create a regime of workers democracy and proletarian internationalism. The basis for such a fight must be unconditional defense of the workers state against the class enemy, which requires as well the unmasking of phony "socialists" who seek to tie the combative Chinese working class to the forces of capitalist counterrevolution. The struggle of workers in the U.S. to overthrow the rule of the capitalist exploiters must proceed from defense of gains already won by the international proletariat, not least those of the Chinese Revolution. ■



TROTSKY

### Defense of the Workers States

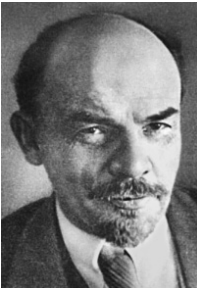
*In the 1937 article excerpted below, Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky explained that despite Stalinist misrule the USSR remained a workers state based on collectivized property. At the same time, he warned that the bureaucratic caste headed by Stalin—which had renounced the struggle for workers revolution internationally in the name of "building socialism in one country" and seeking "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism—threatened to undo the gains won by*

*the October Revolution. Capitalist counterrevolution in 1991-92, a catastrophic defeat for the working class worldwide, proved Trotsky right. Today, the Trotskyist program of unconditional military defense against counterrevolutionary forces and for proletarian political revolution to oust the bureaucracy applies with equal force to China and the other remaining deformed workers states.*

The pressure of imperialism on the Soviet Union has as its aim the alteration of the very nature of Soviet society. The struggle—today peaceful, tomorrow military—concerns the forms of property. In its capacity of a transmitting mechanism in this struggle, the bureaucracy leans now on the proletariat against imperialism, now on imperialism against the proletariat, in order to increase its own power. At the same time it mercilessly exploits its role as distributor of the meager necessities of life in order to safeguard its own well-being and power. By this token the rule of the proletariat assumes an abridged, curbed, distorted character. One can with full justification say that the proletariat, *ruling* in one backward and isolated country, still remains an *oppressed* class. The source of oppression is world imperialism; the mechanism of transmission of the oppression—the bureaucracy. If in the words "a ruling and at the same time an oppressed class" there is a contradiction, then it flows not from the mistakes of thought but from the contradiction in the very situation of the USSR. It is precisely because of this that we reject the theory of socialism in one country.

The recognition of the USSR as a workers' state—not a type but a mutilation of a type—does not at all signify a theoretical and political amnesty for the Soviet bureaucracy. On the contrary, its reactionary character is fully revealed only in the light of the contradiction between its antiproletarian politics and the needs of the workers' state. Only by posing the question in this manner does our exposure of the crimes of the Stalinist clique gain full motive force. The defense of the USSR means not only the supreme struggle against imperialism, but a preparation for the overthrow of the Bonapartist bureaucracy.

—Leon Trotsky, "Not a Workers' and Not a Bourgeois State?" (November 1937)



LENIN

## Letters

### On a False Analogy with Nazism

20 August 2014

Dear WV:

The Spartacist League is unquestionably completely committed to the fight against anti-Semitism and other social evils. But every time I read in WV a Nazi characterization of the Israeli state, I cringe: lebensraum, untermenschen, etc. To refer to these categories in the context of the Zionist state is to implicitly identify Israel and Nazi Germany. Zionism is a simpleminded, reactionary, racist political program born in opposition to socialism, and the Israeli state is itself in all its political guises racist. In fact, both Israel and Nazi Germany are essentially race-based states, more essentially, it seems to me, than other modern capitalist states. But the Zionist state is not a fascist state and there are, needless to say, gross essential differences between the racism and brutality of the Nazi state and the racism and brutality of the Zionist state. The fact that a state is racist no

doubt invites the development of fascist elements and there certainly are fascists in Israel. But there are fascists in every modern capitalist state. And many capitalist states engage in brutal murderous adventures. One particularly close to home comes to mind. In fact, racism and brutality are endemic in capitalism itself.

WV doesn't refer to other states with Nazi terms, only Israel, a nation made up largely of the victims and their offspring of the insane Nazi genocide machine. Thus in the newspaper of the revolutionary party these characterizations are inexplicable. There is, has always been, in my opinion, a disconnect between WV's commitment to accurate political characterizations and these not infrequent comments in WV.

How does WV justify this practice?

A WV reader

#### WV replies:

Our reader raises valid points and we thank him for the letter. ■

### On the NYC Climate March

*The letter below was received after our publication of "Toxic Fumes from Eco-Socialists" (WV No. 1055, 31 October).*

8 November 2014

I guess the very nicely printed subway ads were a tell—I have never seen subway ads for a protest march before. I think it is extremely obvious that anything less than an international proletarian revolution will not be able to touch the issue of global warming. The degree of cooperation

needed on an international scale would be tremendous, and absolutely beyond the reach of competing capitalist countries. What should be a big "duh" for any Marxist is way beyond the ostensible socialists such as the ISO [International Socialist Organization] that foster faith in the bourgeoisie to deal with this—and who pander to the petite bourgeois eco-milieu.

Comradely greetings,  
David

#### CORRECTIONS

In the article "Hong Kong Protests: Spearhead for Capitalist Counterrevolution" (WV No. 1054, 17 October), we mistakenly referred to the journal *New Eastern Outlook* as the *Near Eastern*

*Outlook*. The article "Ireland: Anti-Abortion Hell for Women" in the same issue mistakenly stated that the young woman's hunger strikes took place over three weeks. In fact, it was two weeks.

## WORKERS VANGUARD

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

The closing date for news in this issue is November 25.

No. 1057

28 November 2014



# Partisan Defense Committee

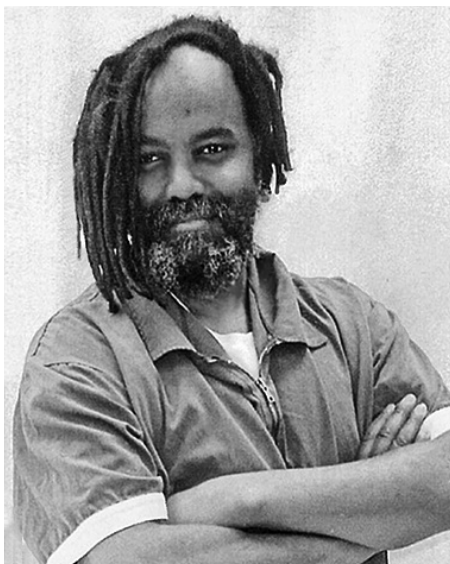
The PDC is a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense organization which champions cases and causes in the interest of the whole of the working people. This purpose is in accordance with the political views of the Spartacist League.

## CLASS-STRUGGLE DEFENSE NOTES

# 29th Annual PDC Holiday Appeal Free the Class-War Prisoners!

For nearly three decades, the Partisan Defense Committee has provided stipends to class-war prisoners—those behind bars for opposing varied expressions of racist capitalist oppression. The PDC is now organizing our annual Holiday Appeal fundraisers on behalf of 16 such prisoners. We send them \$50 monthly stipends and provide holiday gifts for them and their families. The prisoners generally use the funds for basic necessities, from supplementing the inadequate prison diet to buying stamps and writing materials, or to pursue literary, artistic and musical endeavors that help ameliorate the living hell of prison life.

The PDC's stipend program is modeled on a tradition of the early Communist movement, specifically the International Labor Defense (ILD) under its first secretary, James P. Cannon, from 1925-28. The ILD sent monthly contributions to more than 100 people imprisoned for fighting in the interests of the working people and the oppressed. As Cannon observed: "The procession that goes in and out of the prison doors is not a new one.... All through history those who have fought against oppression have constantly been faced with the dungeons of a ruling class" ("The Cause That Passes Through a Prison," *Labor Defender*, September 1926).



Workers World

Mumia Abu-Jamal.

This past year, we added Albert Woodfox as a stipend recipient. Along with other Black Panther Party members known as the Angola Three, Woodfox stood up against the hideous racism at Louisiana's notorious Angola prison. In retaliation, prison authorities have subjected him to more than four decades of solitary confinement.

Others who had received stipends are now outside prison walls. After months of medical neglect and with thousands

demanding her release, Lynne Stewart was finally let out of federal prison last New Year's Eve. Suffering serious complications from breast cancer, Stewart is undergoing special treatment at Memorial Sloan Kettering hospital in New York City. She reports that she is struggling with drug side effects and is having difficulty walking. Other former PDC stipend recipients are the young anti-fascist activists known as the Tinley Park 5, who were released at various times over the last 12 months or so. They had been tossed into prison for heroically dispersing a Chicago-area meeting of fascists in May 2012.

As Cannon said, "The class-conscious worker accords to the class-war prisoners a place of singular honor and esteem." Join us in this vital work of solidarity. The 16 class-war prisoners receiving stipends from the PDC are listed below.

\* \* \*

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

**Leonard Peltier** is an internationally renowned class-war prisoner. Peltier's incarceration for his activism in the American Indian Movement has come to symbolize this country's racist repression of its native peoples, the survivors of centuries of genocidal oppression. Peltier was framed up for the 1975 deaths of two FBI agents marauding in what had become a war zone on the South Dakota

Pine Ridge Reservation. Although the lead government attorney has admitted, "We can't prove who shot those agents," and the courts have acknowledged blatant prosecutorial misconduct, the 70-year-old Peltier is not scheduled to be reconsidered for parole for another ten years! Peltier suffers from multiple serious medical conditions and is incarcerated far from his people and family.

Eight MOVE members—**Chuck Africa, Michael Africa, Debbie Africa, Janet Africa, Janine Africa, Delbert Africa, Eddie Africa** and **Phil Africa**—are in their 37th year of prison. After the 8 August 1978 siege of their Philadelphia home by over 600 heavily armed cops, they were sentenced to 30-100 years having been falsely convicted of killing a police officer who died in the cops' own cross fire. In 1985, eleven of their MOVE family members, including five children, were massacred by Philly cops when a bomb was dropped on their living quarters. After more than three decades of unjust incarceration, these innocent prisoners are routinely turned down at parole hearings. None have been released.

**Albert Woodfox** is the last of the Angola Three still incarcerated. Along with Herman Wallace and Robert King, Woodfox fought the vicious, racist and dehumanizing conditions in Louisiana's Angola prison and courageously organized a Black Panther Party chapter at the prison. Authorities framed up Woodfox and Wallace for the fatal stabbing of a prison guard in 1972 and falsely convicted King of killing a fellow inmate a year later. For over **42 years**, Woodfox has been locked down in Closed Cell Restricted (CCR) blocks, the longest stretch in solitary confinement ever in this country. His conviction has been overturned three times! According to his lawyers, he suffers from hypertension, heart disease, chronic renal insufficiency, diabetes, anxiety and insomnia—conditions no doubt caused and/or exacerbated by decades of vindictive and inhumane treatment.

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## Court Overturns Woodfox Conviction

### Still in Solitary

On November 20, the federal Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals unanimously upheld a 2012 lower court decision to overturn Albert Woodfox's conviction for the 1972 fatal stabbing of a Louisiana prison guard. This ruling is the **fourth** time a court has tossed out his murder conviction; yet Woodfox outrageously still languishes in solitary confinement. Even the American

bourgeoisie's main mouthpiece, the *New York Times*, now calls Woodfox's treatment "barbaric beyond measure."

After they organized a Black Panther Party chapter at Angola prison, Woodfox and fellow inmates Herman Wallace and Robert King, known as the Angola Three, were put in the crosshairs by their jailers. Woodfox and Wallace were framed up for stabbing prison guard Brent Miller. King was falsely convicted of killing a fellow inmate a year later. Wallace died from liver cancer in October 2013, only three days after his release from prison. King was released in 2001.

Woodfox's conviction had all the earmarks of a classic railroad. There was not a shred of physical evidence linking him to the murder and it was later revealed that the key prosecution "eyewitness" was bribed for his testimony at trial. So transparent was the frame-up that Miller's widow, Leontine Rogers, believes Woodfox to be innocent and has joined the call to release him.

In 1992, Woodfox's conviction was first overturned in court. He was retried and convicted again six years later. Over the next 14 years, that conviction was subsequently overturned, reinstated and overturned again, in 2012. The latest court ruling rejects the state's appeal of the 2012 decision. This legal labyrinth vividly illustrates the vindictive campaign to see that Woodfox rots in prison hell. Woodfox should not spend a single additional night in prison but he remains buried alive as the state of Louisiana considers appealing the ruling. **Free Albert Woodfox now!** ■



Carrie Reichardt

Angola Three prisoners **Albert Woodfox** (left) and the late **Herman Wallace**, in 2008.

## 29th Annual PDC Holiday Appeal

# Free the Class-War Prisoners! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!

### NEW YORK CITY

The Holiday Appeal will take place in January. Date, time and place to be announced.

Information: (212) 406-4252

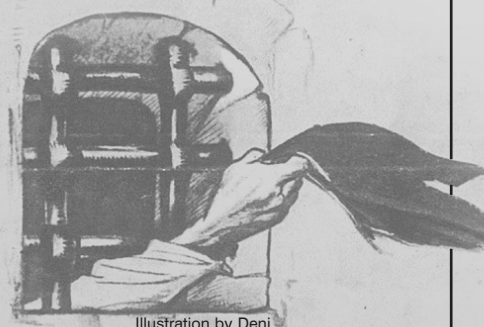


Illustration by Deni

### CHICAGO

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

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

### OAKLAND

**Saturday, January 17  
1 to 4 p.m.**

303 Hudson St., lower level  
(Berkeley Korean United Methodist Church, at College and Manila Avenues)  
Information: (510) 839-0852

## Sponsored by the Partisan Defense Committee

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# Young Spartacus

## Reformism *Ad Absurdum* *The ISO and the SAT Exam*

Last March, the College Board announced that it was going to redesign the SAT, the college-entrance examination originally known as the Scholastic Aptitude Test. Faced with the public relations problem that scores on the three-hour-long exam reflect test takers' race and class, the College Board and Educational Testing Service (ETS)—“nonprofit” companies that rake in millions of dollars managing and designing the exam—have announced changes aimed at making the exam less biased. These include eliminating the penalty for guessing, lessening the emphasis on esoteric vocabulary words, making the essay optional and attempting to align the math section to what is actually taught in high schools.

Cynics have observed that this makeover comes at the same time that the SAT's rival, the ACT (formerly known as American College Testing), has grabbed the lion's share of the market. Others speculate that the change reflects declining knowledge of math and vocabulary among today's elite students. Some liberals accept the College Board's rationale, although they may disagree with this or that change.

Absurdly, the reformist “socialists” of the International Socialist Organization (ISO) published an article bemoaning the new test's focus on “job skills training” as opposed to “critical thinking” or “intellectual curiosity.” As Marxists, our starting point is not to complain about the SAT (or demand it be changed in one way or another) but rather to attack its entire premise: that education is some sort of rare commodity that must be rationed to the select few. Instead of a “fair” way to exclude working-class, black and Latino students from higher education, the Spartacus Youth Clubs call for open admissions with no tuition and a state-paid living stipend for students to make open admissions economically meaningful.

We also call to nationalize the private universities, the most elite of which formed the College Board more than 100 years ago to keep their institutions the preserve of the ruling class. This includes Harvard, whose president, chemist James Conant, wanted a more “objective” way of maintaining the academic standing of Harvard's bastion of class and race privilege during the Great Depression (in between spearheading development of poison gas during the first interimperialist war and atomic weapons in the second). Conant spurred his dean of students, Henry Chauncey, to make the SAT more “scientific” by creating ETS to develop the exam. The goal of the SAT is to create a perfect bell curve, so that those to the left of some cutoff can “scientifically” be excluded from decent higher education.

Entrance exams like the SAT and ACT are necessarily biased because they reflect class society, which in the U.S. is also inherently racist. Even leaving aside the fact that certain types of questions are in themselves biased (such as one infamous analogy about regattas and oarsmen), scions of the wealthy do better on such exams because they have all the privileges that allow them to do so: better high school education, access to technology, books and other educational materials; higher-paid teachers and tutors; access to bourgeois culture. Failing that, their parents can pay for private test-prep lessons that can run to thousands of dollars. If all the questions on the exam were reduced to just one crude measure of familial income—say, “how many bathrooms are in your house”—the bell curve would not change very much. Poor and minority students do not have access to the same advantages of the elite few; they face countless obstacles and pressures brought on by their oppression—from the need to work jobs to support their families to worrying over how to pay for their next meal. Furthermore, the fact that black students on average score worse than their white counterparts of the same wealth and parental education is evidence of a segregated and very unequal educational system.

No amount of test-tweaking can make

this disappear. For the ruling class, the value of the SAT is that it creates the fiction that such differences are based on inherent “psychometric” differences that can be “scientifically” plotted on a bell curve, instead of reflecting social conditions. When on occasion the bell curved the wrong way—for example, when white Southerners originally scored lower than their Northern counterparts—the data was hidden from view to avoid public reaction against the exam.

While Marxists oppose the entire idea of rationing education, some self-styled socialists do not. Thus, ISO's *Socialist Worker* (“Meet the New Test,” 20 March) argued:

“For future SAT takers, these changes will hopefully be an improvement to a test that helps to determine their futures and yet is based on discredited pedagogical theories from the distant past....

“But as a reflection of how our society values education, the new SAT is another step toward the restructuring kindergarten [sic] through college into a 16-year unpaid internship program for Corporate America, which has never placed a high value on critical thinking and intellectual curiosity as workforce skills.”

The implication is that there should be a test, based on sound “pedagogical theories,” that values “critical thinking and intellectual curiosity” as well as more traditional “workforce skills.” The other

implication is that education for the mass of the population under capitalism has ever served America's bourgeois rulers as anything *but* a mechanism for training the next generation of workers. (Of course, the education they provide for the elite is a different matter entirely.)

Rather than advise the College Board on how to better ration education, the Spartacus Youth Clubs fight to win youth to the perspective of socialist revolution. Under the rule of the working class, the economic, natural, cultural and educational resources of society can be placed at the disposal of those who toil, not those who exploit. Only then can there even begin to be an educational system that aims at the full development of the talents and intellects of all.

As our forebears, the Revolutionary Communist Youth, put it in their program:

“We believe in the value of education and professional training as it reflects the development of man's productive capacity. Therefore, our focus of attack is not on grading systems and technical standards in themselves—indeed, the future socialist society will require some means of measuring competence. Rather, our target is the class divisions which are institutionalized though the educational process.”

—*Youth, Class and Party: Basic Documents of the Revolutionary Communist Youth* (1971) ■

## Letter

## On Sports and Class Society

Dear Editor,

“College Sports Plantation” (WV No. 1054, 17 October) argues, “In the U.S., the cult and business of spectator sports has become another ‘opium of the people.’” Racism serves as the rock of the church upon which American capitalism is built. We can also observe how sports in the United States sweats bigotry from every pore under such exploitation. However, hasn't the writer overstretched the boundaries for usage of the term “cult”?

In his 1923 essay “Vodka, the Church, and the Cinema,” Leon Trotsky observed the phenomenon of the cinema by stating, “This amazing spectacular innovation has cut into human life with a successful rapidity never experienced in the past. In the daily life of capitalist towns, the cinema has become just such an integral part of life as the bath, the beer-hall, the church, and other indispensable institutions, commendable and otherwise.” He continued:

“The fact that we have so far, i.e., in nearly six years, not taken possession of the cinema shows how slow and uneducated we are, not to say, frankly, stupid. This weapon, which cries out to be used, is the best instrument for propaganda, technical, educational, and industrial propaganda, propaganda against alcohol, propaganda for sanitation, political propaganda, any kind of propaganda you please, a propaganda which is accessible to everyone, which is attractive, which cuts into the memory and may be made a possible source of revenue.”

Trotsky was certainly aware of the reactionary usage of the cinema as a reactionary tool bent on perpetuating racist divi-



Jeff Scott  
**Clemson wide receiver DeAndre Hopkins baptized after practice; college sports are infused with religiosity, patriotism.**

sions in society and glorifying imperialist militarism. However, he doesn't appear to argue the usage of this tool under capitalism as comparable to religion's role as “opium of the people.” Furthermore, can not all of these examples of how a proletarian dictatorship would harness such an essential innovation as the cinema be applicable to the realm of sports? Certainly the flag-waving nationalism put

on display by athletic events is no more cult-like than the nauseating glorification of bloody American imperialism on the silver screen. What distinguishes the two realms of entertainment?

Otherwise, I found the recent article to be essential, especially in the wake of the frequent racist scandalizing of college and professional athletes constantly taking place in the bourgeois media. Can-

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# Honoring Antoinette Konikow, Pioneer Trotskyist

BOSTON—On November 15, four days before the 145th anniversary of the birth of revolutionary Marxist Antoinette Konikow, supporters of the International Communist League gathered to celebrate her life and fighting spirit at her grave in West Roxbury, Massachusetts. With decades of experience in the international workers movement, Konikow helped found what would become the Communist Party (CP) in the U.S. Later, she was expelled from the CP for supporting Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky’s fight against the degeneration of the Comintern that accompanied the rise in the Soviet Union of the parasitic bureaucracy headed by Stalin. As part of her role in building American Trotskyism, Konikow, a physician, championed women’s rights, notably by promoting birth control in a nation mired in reaction. The graveside tribute below, edited for publication, was followed by some additional comments from those assembled and the singing of the “Internationale.”

\* \* \*

We are here today to honor the life of Antoinette Konikow during the anniversary month of both her birth and the Russian Revolution, which so inspired her and millions around the world. The International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) sees Konikow as both a



WV Photo

**Boston, November 15: Wreath laid by ICL supporters at memorial gathering held at Konikow’s graveside.**

pioneer Trotskyist and a fighter for women’s rights.

Born in tsarist Russia, she joined Plekhanov’s Emancipation of Labor group as a teenage student in Switzerland. She later emigrated to the United States in 1893. For nearly 60 years, with Marxist compass in hand, Konikow stood for the correct program in the major

non argued in 1953 that, “Socialism will undoubtedly bring about a revolutionary transformation of human activity and association in all fields previously conditioned by the division of society into classes—in work, in education, in sports and amusements, in manners and morals, and in incentives and rewards.”

Only a Leninist-Trotskyist party, serving as a bastion of all the oppressed, can make this reality sooner rather than later.

Comradely,  
Corey A.

**YSp replies:**

Thank you for your thoughtful letter. We agree that sports, like cinema, will look very different in a classless society. What we point out in the section of our article from which you quote is that, in the



fight of the socialist movement.

She joined the Socialist Labor Party in 1893, and was expelled in 1897 for her opposition to its bureaucratic practices. Already speaking five languages, she learned Yiddish to become a more effective organizer among immigrant Jewish workers. In 1901, she was a founding member of the Socialist Party of America. During World War I, she toured the U.S., inspired by German Marxist leader Karl Liebknecht’s courageous opposition to social patriotism.

She threw her support to the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution and became a founding member of the American Communist movement in 1919. Against the Stalinist degeneration of the Soviet Union, she was one of the first in the American CP to support Trotsky’s Left Opposition and recruited five other Boston party members to its views.

After James P. Cannon’s faction in the CP was expelled in 1928 for supporting the Left Opposition, Konikow was summoned to appear before the CP’s Political Committee. She wrote a defiant letter to CP secretary Jay Lovestone, stating: “I did work for Trotsky’s ideals and tried to arouse sentiment for the Opposition in our party, and I consider I have the full right to do so according to the party’s stand on inner party democracy. But it is useless to expect your committee to accept this viewpoint, for your leadership would not last long under rules of real democracy in our party. I consider that the party has taken an outrageously wrong standing on the Trotsky situation in Soviet Russia. This stand is a result of the servile submission to the Stalin faction.”

Lovestone in his uniquely nasty manner said after reading Konikow’s letter to the November 2 meeting of the Committee: “It is obvious from her letter that she is the worst kind of a Trotskyite,

hands of the capitalist overlords, sports can be wielded to channel the anger workers feel from the thousand daily abuses they suffer under capitalism into an outlet that poses no threat to the profit system. In addition, sports can be used to foster nationalism, militarism and obedience to authority—from the singing of the national anthem before the game, to the cutaways of imperialist troops watching the event live from the field. We used the term cult in the colloquial sense, just as one might speak of a “cult of personality.” We do not know exactly what form sports will take under socialism. However we can be sure that the racism, exploitation and barbaric indifference to the safety of athletes which is integral to capitalist sports will not exist in a society run in the interest of all humanity.■

biologically as well as politically. The sooner we throw her out the better for the party.” Konikow, a medical doctor and a pioneer of birth control, was unanimously expelled by the Political Committee. Upon her expulsion, she formed the Independent Communist League here in Boston in 1928. That organization later merged with the expelled Cannon faction to found the Communist League of America, which was later to become the Socialist Workers Party.

Konikow was always a stalwart fighter for women’s rights. In 1923, she published the handbook *Voluntary Motherhood*, the first birth control manual by an American physician, written to educate her primarily female immigrant patients. It sold more than 10,000 copies in its first three editions. She was repeatedly hounded by Boston authorities for her work on birth control, and in 1928 she was arrested for exhibiting contraceptives in public. On her own initiative, Konikow traveled to the Soviet Union in 1926 to introduce an inexpensive contraceptive jelly she had developed with John G. Wright, a chemist who was also her son-in-law and comrade and later one of Trotsky’s translators. In 1931, she published *Physicians’ Manual of Birth Control* to address the widespread ignorance in the medical profession itself.

In November 1938, there was a celebration of Konikow’s 50 years as a revolutionary Marxist. She was presented with a signed picture of Trotsky, who

wrote: “We are proud, my dear Antoinette, to have you in our ranks. You are a beautiful example of energy and devotion for our youth. I embrace you with the wish: Long Live Antoinette Konikow. Yours fraternally, Leon Trotsky, Oct. 28, 1938, Coyoacán.”

I will end with two quotes from her speech at that meeting; the words still jump off the page today.

“In 1888, fifty years ago, I joined the Social Democratic Party of Russia. Life was as dark and hopeless as it may seem to many today. I was delighted to hear the words of Plekhanov at the first congress of the Second International: ‘Only the working class will lead the Russian revolution!’ But the working class of Russia was spiritually even further away from us than the workers of the United States today. If anyone had told us at that time that 15 years later a strike of one and a half million workers would almost overthrow Czarism, and that 15 years after that the Russian soldier would turn his gun not only against Czarism but against the Russian bourgeoisie, we would not have believed it. We would have laughed. But it happened—and it will happen again. Only this time it will not take 30 years.”

To the youth in the room that day, she said: “We place in your hands a banner unsoiled. Many times it was dragged into the mud. We lifted it up and lovingly cleansed it to give it to you. Under the red banner of Marx, Lenin, and Trotsky, you will conquer.”

On this day, at her grave, we honor the memory of Antoinette Konikow.■

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# Pakistan: Bloody Origins of the Z.A. Bhutto Regime

We reprint below the first part of an article based on a presentation by Workers Vanguard Editorial Board member Bruce André to a July 2013 meeting in London held by the Spartacist League/Britain, which published the article in Workers Hammer Nos. 227 and 228 (Summer and Autumn 2014).

In late 1968 and early 1969 a great popular uprising shook Pakistan. What began as a student protest against the military dictatorship of General Mohammad Ayub Khan soon spread, as the Bengalis of East Pakistan (today Bangladesh) revolted. The industrial working class demonstrated its power, virtually shutting down the country at

## WORKERS HAMMER

the height of the movement in March 1969. Events showed the potential for the proletariat, drawing behind it the peasantry and the oppressed nationalities, to lead a revolutionary assault on the bourgeois order.

The historic opportunity was squandered, the outbreak of anger futilely channelled into support for a wing of the Army high command, led by General Yahya Khan, which promised elections to a constituent assembly and a democratic constitution. Crucial in bringing the uprising to heel was bourgeois politician Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the father of Benazir Bhutto. The scion of one of the most prominent families of landed aristocrats in Sindh province, Z. A. Bhutto had been one of Ayub Khan's most trusted lieutenants. He had served loyally for some seven years as the regime arrested Communists en masse, murderously repressed nationalist forces in Balochistan [in southwest Pakistan] and, in March 1963, gunned down more than 40 people to crush a general strike in Karachi led by textile mill workers.

Pakistan's 1965 war with India over Kashmir—a reactionary war in which the working class had no side—was a key turning point in Bhutto's career. The Pakistani military's poor showing provoked a bitter backlash against the regime among much of the population. Following the signing of a January 1966 armistice agreement in Tashkent, student demonstrations erupted in cities throughout the country. Despite being a principal architect of the war, Bhutto emerged as a national hero, denouncing the Tashkent accords (which he had helped negotiate) and accusing the regime of having given away at the peace table what the generals claimed they had won on the battlefield. In November 1967, Bhutto launched his Pakistan People's Party (PPP) based on a combination of virulent anti-Indian chauvinism, “socialist” demagoguery and paeans to Islam.

Much of the generation of leftists and working-class leaders carried to the fore in 1968-69 gave open or backhanded support to Bhutto's PPP, a thoroughly bourgeois party, as did a number of established trade-union leaders. Renouncing the struggle for socialist revolution, they built support for this ultra-patriot, and reinforced the continued class rule of the large landowners and the bourgeoisie. Without a Leninist party to wage an irreconcilable struggle against the national-liberal bourgeoisie, the combative proletariat remained politically subordinate to the capitalist class enemy. The essential lesson to be drawn from that experience

## Part One: Hidden History of the 1968-69 Workers Upsurge



Pakistan Times

Workers demonstration in Lahore, capital of West Pakistan. When a general strike on 24 January 1969 shut down the city, the army was deployed and a curfew imposed.

is that the working class must have its own political leadership independent of all the agencies and representatives of capitalist rule.

The national oppression of the Bengalis was of vital importance in 1968-69. The most powerful strikes were centred in West Pakistan, where the country's industry was concentrated. In East Pakistan, separated from the rest of the country by 1,000 miles of hostile Indian territory, the peasant revolt was strongest. There the upsurge was largely directed against the national oppression suffered by the Bengalis at the hands of the Punjabi-dominated Pakistani state. In order for the working class to lead the peasant masses in an assault on the capitalist order, it was necessary for the proletariat to champion the Bengalis' right of national self-determination. Bhutto, in contrast,

was a staunch supporter of the system by which the ruling class in West Pakistan oppressed and exploited the Bengalis in the East.

In the course of this talk, I will be debunking myths presented in two books that purport to provide a Marxist view of this history. The first book is *Pakistan's Other Story: The Revolution of 1968-69* by Lal Khan, published in 2008. He is the leader of the Struggle group, Pakistani section of the late Ted Grant's International Marxist Tendency. Grant's British followers were an organic part of the Labour Party for decades as the Militant tendency. Internationally, these abject reformists have a tradition of liquidation—even into outright capitalist parties. For most of its existence, the Struggle group has been ensconced in the PPP. The many omissions and distortions in Lal Khan's

book serve to gloss over the brutal crimes of Pakistan's capitalist rulers, especially those committed by Z. A. Bhutto.

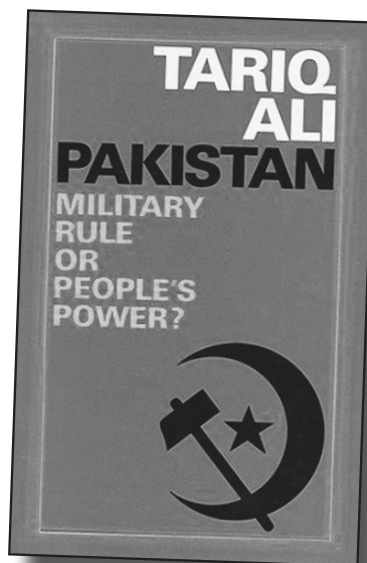
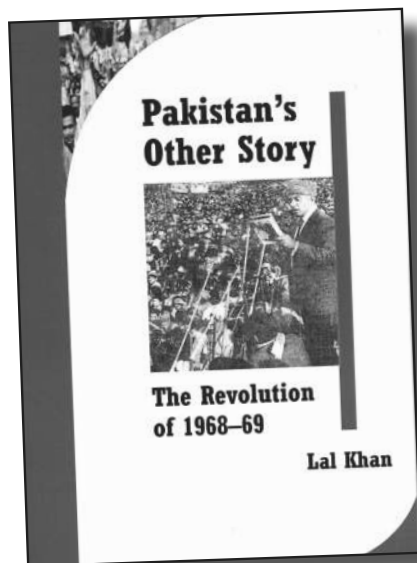
The other book that I will critique is *Pakistan: Military Rule or People's Power?* by Tariq Ali, published in London in 1970. Not only is Tariq Ali's book widely cited by bourgeois academic historians, it has been highly influential in educating Pakistani leftists. It presents a distorted picture, seen through the eyes of a radical of the 1960s generation who touted “red universities” as revolutionary bastions and looked to peasant-based guerrilla warfare as the road to socialism in Third World countries. Nothing in *Pakistan: Military Rule or People's Power?* gives a hint that the working class, which played a decisive role in those events, is *the* force with the social power to overthrow the capitalist order and open the road to socialism. The book's title points to what Ali saw as the alternative to military rule: a struggle for “people's power” in which the working class is just another sector of the people.

At the time, Tariq Ali was a leading cadre of the fake-Trotskyist United Secretariat of the Fourth International (USec). His book is a classic example of Pabloism, a revisionist tendency that rejects the struggle to forge Trotskyist parties and instead acts as a pressure group on social-democratic, Stalinist and non-proletarian forces. Under the leadership of Michel Pablo, this tendency destroyed the Trotskyist Fourth International in the early 1950s.

In *Pakistan: Military Rule or People's Power?*, Tariq Ali argues that: “Although Bhutto deserved support

in his courageous stand against the Ayub dictatorship, it was also necessary that his party programme should be subjected to a severe critique by socialists.” Though revolutionary socialists may defend the likes of Bhutto against state repression, we give no political support to capitalist politicians as a matter of principle. But not only does Tariq Ali give no hint of what a “severe critique” of Bhutto's programme would have looked like, he writes out of the historical record facts that would be key to such a critique. There is no mention of Bhutto's virulent anti-Indian chauvinism. No mention of his close ties to a section of the officer corps. No mention of his opposition to the Bengali national struggle. And not a word about the call for a constituent assembly, a bourgeois parliament, the device by which Bhutto and the officers around Yahya Khan were able to derail the upsurge. Tariq Ali's narrative, which ends with Yahya's coming to power, provides no idea of why Bhutto would rush to embrace the declaration of martial law.

Tariq Ali's political influence among radicalised youth was apparent during his tour of Pakistan in February-March 1969, at the height of the upsurge, when he addressed massive rallies. The programme that Tariq Ali offered—political prostration before Bhutto—comes through in his articles from the time in *Black Dwarf* (which he edited) and in *Intercontinental Press*, published by the USec. Nowhere in those articles is there a serious political criticism of Bhutto. Even as Bhutto was declaring his support for the March 1969 military takeover, Tariq Ali's journal could conjure up nothing more incisive about the PPP than: “It talks about socialism constantly and to its credit but without knowing



Works by pseudo-leftists Lal Khan and Tariq Ali disappear the crimes of Z. A. Bhutto's bourgeois Pakistan People's Party.



what this would entail” (*Black Dwarf*, 18 April 1969).

**British Colonialism and the Origins of Pakistan**

The state of Pakistan is an artificial creation whose boundaries were arbitrarily drawn by the British colonial rulers in the bloody Partition of India. As the Indian masses revolted against colonial oppression with the 1942 Quit India movement, the British overlords stepped up their policy of fomenting communal hatreds. As a result, the oppressed Hindu, Muslim and Sikh masses turned their fury against each other—away from their colonial oppressors, and from the Indian capitalists and landed aristocracy. Partition, which was the culmination of two centuries of divide-and-rule, was carried out under a British Labour government in 1947. It unleashed communal slaughter on an enormous scale and led to one of the largest forced migrations in history. The British rulers withdrew from the subcontinent without the ignominy of defeat at the hands of their colonial slaves—a defeat that would have shaken the rest of the colonial world and Britain itself. They left behind a subcontinent aflame in violence, partitioned into majority-Hindu India and the Muslim confessional state of Pakistan.

The idea that Pakistan represented a form of national self-determination for the Muslims of the Indian subcontinent was—and remains today—an utter fraud. Pakistan is a multinational state in which the mainly Punjabi ruling elite, persisting from British rule, brutally lords it over the Baloch people, the Pashtuns and other oppressed nationalities and ethnicities. This “prison house of peoples” is held together largely through stark repression. The army has ruled throughout Pakistan’s history, either directly or behind a thin cover of parliamentary democracy. It is intimately intertwined with the state bureaucracy in an infernal machine that enforces everything reactionary in Pakistani society, from bonded labour and caste oppression to religious fundamentalism and the all-sided oppression of women.

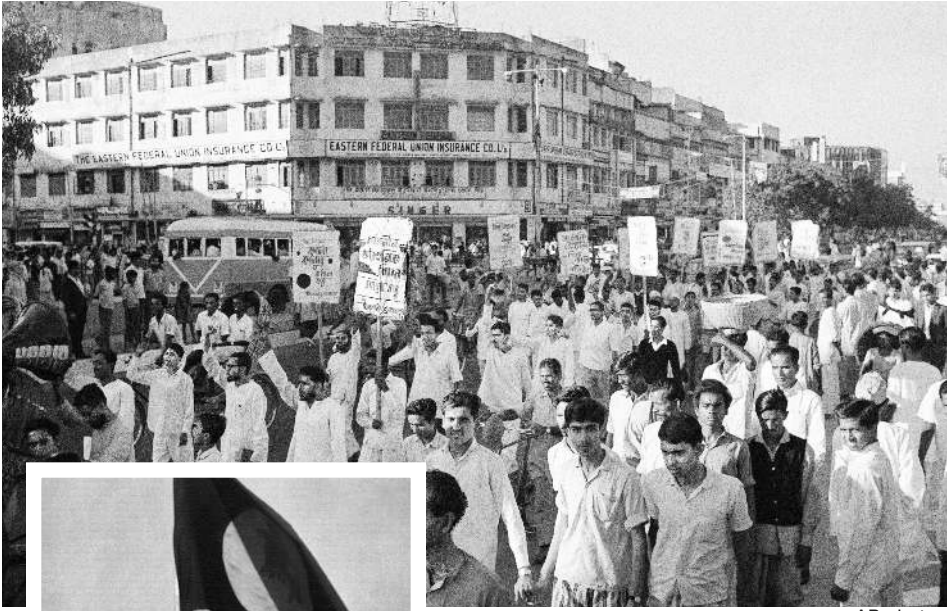
Like the rest of the subcontinent, Pakistan is an extreme example of combined and uneven development. Modern industry and an industrial proletariat have been superimposed on a largely peasant-based society and coexist with frightfully backward social conditions. While the landed aristocracy, textile bosses and upper echelons of the military plunder the country’s wealth, the poverty of the labouring masses can be gauged by the fact that childhood malnutrition is more acute than in much of sub-Saharan Africa.

Trotsky’s perspective of permanent revolution provides the Marxist programme for carrying out the revolutionary transformation of economically backward countries that came to capitalist development in the epoch of imperialism. Central to this programme is the understanding that in such countries, bourgeois-democratic gains such as national emancipation, land to the tiller, legal equality of women and the separation of religion and the state require the overthrow of the capitalist order through socialist revolution in which the proletariat comes forward as the leader of all the oppressed, above all the peasant masses. This was the programme on which the Bolshevik Party, under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky, carried the Russian Revolution of October 1917 to victory.

Just as the Bolsheviks saw the October Revolution as the opening shot of a broader European-wide revolution, communists in the subcontinent need to view revolutions in their countries in an international framework. The struggles for liberation of all the exploited and oppressed of the Indian subcontinent are closely interlinked, requiring the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeoisies in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh and the establishment of a socialist federation of South Asia. Ultimately the capitalist system must be destroyed at its strongest points, the advanced industrial states. The proletarians of the more backward countries

must be linked to their class brothers and sisters in the West through an international of Leninist-Trotskyist parties.

At Partition, Pakistan inherited a mere nine per cent of the industrial establishments of the subcontinent, and control of that industry was concentrated in West Pakistan. Before Bangladeshi independence, the Punjabi-dominated regime exploited East Pakistan as an impoverished semi-colony. All major industries in East Pakistan were in the hands of the families which dominated West Pakistan—the Adamjee and Dawood families were prominent examples. The wealth generated by the peasantry in East Pakistan was appropriated by the capitalists in West Pakistan through the following scheme: agricultural products produced in



**Above: Students in East Pakistan protest repression, Dhaka, 1968. The oppressed Bengalis were prominent in 1968-69 uprising. Left: Bengali nationalist leader Mujibur Rahman in Dhaka, March 1971, prior to Bangladesh’s war of independence.**

leadership. Mujibur Rahman and other League leaders were imprisoned—they would be freed three years later as a result of the mass upsurge. A 7 June 1966 *hartal* (general strike) called to protest their arrests set off an explosion. Strikers, some armed with shotguns, attacked the police station in Narayanganj as well as government buildings in Dhaka, the capital of East Pakistan, and trashed the home of the Parliamentary Secretary. At least ten were gunned down by the police. Clashes continued for months; by the end of 1966 hundreds of Bengalis had been killed by security forces.

That murderous crackdown was launched amid a wave of hostility against the Bengali nationalists, which Bhutto helped to whip up in one last service to the Ayub regime before he was forced out of the government. In March 1966, Bhutto helped get the leadership of Ayub’s Convention Muslim League to vote a motion denouncing the Awami League’s “sinister conspiracy” and calling on the government “to take all necessary steps in order to meet the challenge of this treasonable campaign and preserve and protect the ideology of Islam and the integrity of the Muslim homeland” (*Pakistan Times*, 21 March 1966). What Bhutto meant by “all necessary steps” was perfectly clear in light of the Pakistani rulers’ history of murderous repression against the Bengalis and other oppressed nationalities.

Following Bhutto’s exit from the Ayub government, after he had raised the ire of Washington with anti-American rhetoric, Pakistani Maoists pulled out all the stops to mobilise support for him. The National Student Federation (NSF), in which the Maoists had substantial weight, declared: “Mr Bhutto represents the youth in this country in his vigour, intellect, honesty and devotion.” The key to the Maoists’ unholy alliance with Bhutto was that, as Ayub’s foreign minister after the 1962 border war between India and China, Bhutto had been the public face for a pro-China tilt in Pakistani foreign policy. While the Maoists did the legwork to round up support for him, Bhutto cultivated his ties with the military

command. According to Ayub’s former Air Force commander-in-chief, Bhutto “maintained good personal relations with important Generals throughout his tenure as a minister in Ayub Khan’s cabinet and had done his utmost to retain these links even after his exit from the government” (Mohammed Asghar Khan, *Generals in Politics: Pakistan 1958-1982* [1983]).

During speaking tours in the summer of 1967, Bhutto experimented with a leftist image. After supporting the U.S. war in Vietnam as foreign minister, Bhutto now began to oppose it. For the first time in his life, he started to slip the word “socialism” into his speeches—while always insisting that it was based on the principles of Islam. He discovered that not only did he not gag when he pronounced the word “socialism” but his audiences loved it. As one of Bhutto’s biographers put it: “His move towards socialism was graded very carefully. Only after he was sure of the public response did his demands gradually become more strident” (Salmaan Taseer, *Bhutto: A Political Biography* [1980]).

Anti-India diatribes, including the call for a “thousand year” confrontation over Kashmir, were a stock theme in Bhutto’s speeches. Bhutto called for military training on campuses, arguing that “the masses should be prepared for a people’s war” over Kashmir. In this, he echoed a section of the Pakistani military that had latched onto the notion of “people’s war” as a way of compensating for India’s military superiority. Lal Khan’s Struggle group lauds Bhutto’s call for a “people’s army,” implying that he was for a people’s militia as opposed to a standing army. This is simply a gross falsification. As we will see later, when Bhutto came to power and formed a paramilitary goon squad to brutalise worker militants and political opponents, he claimed it was a “people’s army.”

**Founding of the Pakistan People’s Party**

In November 1967, Bhutto held the founding convention of the PPP. Joining the coterie of landowning aristocrats was a rogues’ gallery of Muslim League has-beens and Maoists, and two *maulvis* (Muslim priests) as guarantors of the party’s Islamic credentials. (During the convention, both *maulvis* took the floor to affirm that socialism is compatible with Islam.) Not surprisingly, given Bhutto’s well-known backing of state repression against the Bengali nationalists, East Pakistan was not represented.

After hearing renderings from the Koran, the assembled luminaries turned their attention to the PPP’s Foundation Documents. They denounced the Awami League’s Six-Point Programme as opening the road to independence for East Pakistan and declared flatly: “Pakistan is one nation and not two.” One document pledged to “maintain the policy of confrontation” over Kashmir. And to make sure that there was no mistaking the party’s commitment to Islam, another announced (in capital letters): “WE PROMISE TO CONTINUE THE JEHAD UNTIL GOD’S EARTH IS LIT UP WITH DIVINE LIGHT.”

We characterised the PPP’s programme in those days as “landlord socialism” (*Workers Vanguard* No. 16, February 1973). One of the PPP’s Foundation Documents affirmed that the party was for “the transformation of Pakistan into a socialist society.” Yet the Declaration of Principles did not call for a single hectare of land redistribution. Most of the Declaration was penned by Jalaludin Abdur Rahim. The military regime’s ambassador to France, Rahim threw in his lot with Bhutto as his diplomatic career was coming to a close. J.A. Rahim was the personification of “landlord socialism.” He led the fight at the founding convention against including any call for land reform in the Declaration of Principles. At the same time, he wrote into that document that the PPP was for “a classless society.” That phrase has been cited *ad nauseam* by the Struggle group as the basis for their

*continued on page 8*

(continued from page 7)

The PPP founding manifesto promised extensive nationalisations of banking and industry, which Bhutto's leftist camp-followers pretended was directed against capitalism. The landowning aristocrats who controlled the PPP saw things differently. The industrial bourgeoisie that had initially developed in Pakistan consisted predominantly of *mohajir* traders—Urdu-speaking émigrés from India. That generated considerable resentment among Pakistan's rural elites, especially in Sindh [province] where the PPP had its strongest base. They were intent on getting a piece of the action for themselves. When it came to power, the PPP did carry out the promised nationalisations. The primary pathway for wealthy Pakistanis to accumulate capital then became access to the PPP and its allies in the state bureaucracy. The country's (former) Sindh president Asif Ali Zardari, one of the richest individuals in Pakistan, can thank Bhutto for initiating the policies that got him where he is.

The Maoists' support for Bhutto was based on the Stalinist dogma of two-stage revolution, in which the first stage is supposed to be a "democratic revolution." This means subordinating the proletariat to a supposedly progressive wing of the bourgeoisie, while postponing the second stage, proletarian revolution, to the indefinite future—that is, never. In the many countries where this has been put into practice, from China in 1925-27 to Iraq in 1958-59 to Indonesia in 1965-66, the result was never bourgeois democracy, much less socialism, but the slaughter of leftists, workers and peasants. As we will see in greater detail later in this talk, the Maoists' political alliance with Bhutto would have disastrous consequences for the working class. Lal Khan and the Struggle group never fail to criticise the conception of "democratic revolution" that underlay the Maoists' support for Bhutto. But the lesson they draw has nothing to do with opposing class collaboration. They simply support Bhutto in the name of socialism.

# **WORKERS VANGUARD**

## **Defend the Tamil People!**

### **Army Bloodbath in Sri Lanka**

Bhutto sought to pressure a section of the military high command to dump Ayub and sponsor democratic reforms. He declared that a military coup “will solve no problems unless it comes with the purpose of restoring the people’s rights.” As we will see, it would be precisely on that pretext that Bhutto would support General Yahya Khan’s seizure of power in March 1969.

Remarkably, given its importance in Pakistan's history, there appears to be no comprehensive history—certainly not in English—of the upheaval of 1968–69. Tariq Ali dealt at length with the student movement in *Pakistan: Military Rule or People's Power?*, while devoting no more than a dozen lines to the explosion of working-class struggle that shook the country in March 1969. Likewise, Lal



Khan's book devotes no more than a couple of pages to that demonstration of proletarian power, and most of that consists of an extended quote from a work by Bhutto's one-time finance minister!

# WORKERS VANGUARD

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## Washington Embraces Chauvinist Modi

### —India—

## Hindu Far-Right Sweeps Elections



The continuing report is that the Hindu Nationalist Party (HNP) is the only party to have won a seat in the provincial assembly. The HNP is a far-right, Hindu nationalist party, and its victory is seen as a triumph for the Hindu right in India. The party's leader, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, is a prominent figure in the Hindu nationalist movement. The HNP's victory is a significant development in the Indian political scene, as it represents the first time a far-right party has won a seat in a provincial assembly. The HNP's victory is also seen as a reflection of the growing influence of Hindu nationalism in India. The HNP's victory is a significant development in the Indian political scene, as it represents the first time a far-right party has won a seat in a provincial assembly. The HNP's victory is also seen as a reflection of the growing influence of Hindu nationalism in India.

The dominant political force in East Pakistan was Mujibur Rahman's Awami League. Rahman and 34 others had been

Bhashani called a *hartal* in Dhaka for 7 December 1968, the day Ayub was scheduled to visit the city. Security forces fired on the strikers, killing two. Bhashani responded by calling a province-wide *hartal* on 19 December, and the Awami League, supported by Bhashani, called another for 14 December. During a province-wide day of mobilisation on 29 December, police gunned down three

Police and army violence swelled protests following the one-day strike. On the night of 23 January, 25,000 protesters marched through the streets of Dhaka carrying flaming torches and calling for the complete independence of East Bengal. The next day, 5,000 protesters stormed the seat of the provincial government. Crowds burned down the offices of two pro-government newspapers. By day's end, half a dozen protesters in Dhaka and other cities in East Pakistan had been gunned down, including a young schoolboy. Cutting across the anti-Bengali racism fostered by the capitalist ruling class, workers and students in West Pakistan joined their counterparts in the East in defying the Ayub regime's murderous repression. However, while the working class continued to wage isolated strikes, it had not yet demonstrated its social power. In the absence of a proletarian axis, the mass upsurge largely took the form of rioting and street fighting with the police. At this point the struggle could not bring down the Ayub regime, to say nothing of overthrowing the capitalist order.

In West Pakistan, the social explosion was most intense in four cities: Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar and Gujranwala, an industrial city in northern Punjab. With factory production in Karachi, the country's industrial centre, down 30 per cent as a result of the upsurge, the regime resorted to a massive show of force. Round-the-clock curfews were imposed and the army took up positions in Dhaka and the cities I just mentioned, threatening to shoot on sight anyone caught defying



“The streets were deserted except for officers and men of the Army and the police.... Apart from essential services, life in the city came to a standstill. No shops were opened, no business conducted, no offices operated and no factory emitted smoke.”

On 15 February, one of the Bengali soldiers accused in the Agartala Conspiracy case was shot dead in prison. That marked a watershed. The army was called out and police viciously attacked protesters, especially in the industrial areas surrounding Dhaka.

The Students Action Committee called a student strike for 17 February to protest police shootings as the army continued to patrol the streets of Dhaka. An angry crowd set fire to the residence of the judge presiding over the Agartala case. The judge reportedly fled for his life by wrapping his Bengali cook's *lungi* (a skirt-like garment) around his waist and passing himself off as a commoner. In Dhaka, a mass procession attacked the houses of a pro-Ayub provincial minister and of the Central Information Minister. The latter had prohibited Pakistan Radio from broadcasting songs by the Bengali poet and Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore. Chittagong, East Pakistan's main port, was paralysed by a lightning strike of more than 2,000 dockworkers. When word arrived in Dhaka that a professor at Rajshahi University, in East Pakistan's northwest region, had been killed by soldiers who bayonet-charged students, workers from the industrial zones joined students and the urban poor in defiance



**Karachi, February 1969: Z.A. Bhutto, founder of the Pakistan People's Party, addresses rally, positioning himself at head of mass opposition to Ayub Khan regime.**

Meanwhile, Ayub was ceding to the demands of the DAC: he lifted the state of emergency in force since the 1965 war, withdrew the Agartala case and released Mujibur Rahman, Bhutto and a number of other political prisoners. Bhutto and Bhashani did not participate in the “negotiations” ploy. Having kept their distance from the DAC since its formation, they had nothing to gain by embracing it now. Yet Lal Khan, intent on “proving” that the PPP responded to mass pressure, manufactures his own alternative reality: “Clearly, the left wing of the Peoples party had been able to convince their party Chairman that the Movement had gone too far and penetrated too deeply to accept any compromise with the regime.”

On 21 February, Ayub announced that he would not stand for re-election as president and evoked the prospect of “direct elections on the basis of adult franchise.” But the time for negotiations had long passed. At a meeting of 100,000 people in Dhaka, student leaders issued an ultimatum to Ayub & Co.: resign by 3 March or “face the consequences.” A number of large landowners and local moneylenders had already perished at the hands of peasants and other toilers in rural areas. Ayub’s Basic Democrats—members of local councils who constituted the lowest tier in government—got the message and resigned en masse. The system of local government in East Pakistan began to collapse like a house of cards.

With the peasant uprising spreading in East Pakistan, the working class in both wings of the country launched a strike movement that by late March would virtually shut down the economy. Especially in the East, workers often used—with overwhelming success—the *gherao* tactic, confining the bosses in their offices

A feature throughout this period was the formation of “labour fronts,” “action committees” and other organisations to co-ordinate workers’ struggles. Some of these were formed by factory-floor leaders; others resulted from splits within the established trade-union leadership. This pointed the way towards broader organisations of the working class, such as workers defence guards and committees to take charge of distribution of food, that would have the potential to become organs of workers rule, as happened in the lead-up to the October 1917 Russian Revolution.

But to put into practice a programme for working-class power would have required sharp political struggle against the “socialists” who were supporting Bhutto’s PPP. Tariq Ali, for example, called for a coalition of all “left” forces around a four-point programme of basic democratic rights, land to the tiller, opposition to U.S. imperialism and abolition of capitalism. Such a coalition could only have helped the PPP demagogues secure support on a platform of empty promises. Incredibly for a self-proclaimed Marxist, Tariq Ali added grist to the mill of Bhutto’s reactionary crusade on the theme that socialism is compatible with Islam. One of his first public acts during his visit to Pakistan was to offer *fatiha* (a Koranic prayer). Addressing a mass rally in Rawalpindi, Tariq Ali kissed the Koran and denounced the “lackeys of imperialists” who were “trying to create doubts about my faith” (*Pakistan Times*, 8 March 1969).

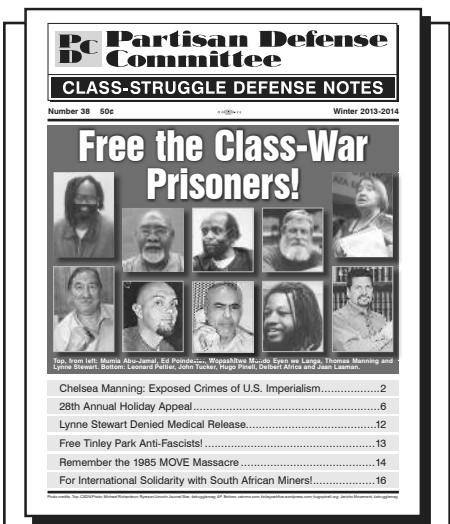
## March 1969: Culmination of the Mass Upsurge

In March in West Pakistan, government employees struck in defiance of laws making such action punishable by a year in prison. On 3 March, doctors and other medical personnel struck for four days.

*continued on page 10*

# Class-War Prisoners...

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



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**Ed Poindexter and Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa** are former Black Panther supporters and leaders of the Omaha, Nebraska, National Committee to Combat Fascism. They are victims of the FBI's deadly COINTELPRO operation, under which 38 Black Panther Party members were killed and hundreds more imprisoned on frame-up charges. Poindexter and Mondo were railroaded to prison and sentenced to life for a 1970 explosion that killed a cop, and they have now spent more than 40 years behind bars. Nebraska courts have repeatedly denied Poindexter and Mondo new trials despite the fact that a crucial piece of evidence excluded from the original trial, a 911 audio tape long suppressed by the FBI, proved that testimony of the state's key witness was perjured.

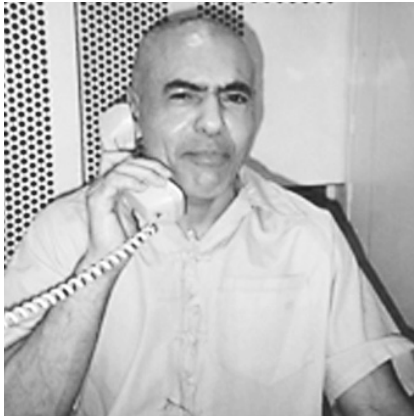
*Send your contributions to: PDC, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013; (212) 406-4252. ■*

# A Visit to Hugo Pinell

On Saturday 6 Sept. I visited with Hugo and had a good 2 hour discussion. He remains in fine health except for continuing shoulder problem that the prison has acknowledged but not tended to. His color has improved as he now gets approx. 10 hours per week in the yard (within a closed cage where he can do chin ups, separate from cages where other isolation prisoners can have their moments in the sun). He continues to receive weekly visits from his Mom, Sister and his Daughter.

He recently has been moved to a new cell (#119) where his TV is not functioning but his family is helping him get the necessary connections so that he can receive cable channels. (It is apparently a digital system that requires the inmate to supply certain connections that they purchase from the Walkenhorst vendor).

Yesterday was also the commemoration in Oakland of the California Prison Hunger Strike and the event was held @ a public park which I was



[hugopinell.org](http://hugopinell.org)

**Hugo Pinell at Pelican Bay prison, 2001.**

able to attend and presented a message of thanks and gratitude from Hugo.

He also had me relay another message that Hugo believes must be stressed. He believes the only demand should be that the solitary housing units “Must Be Closed” because the prison guards union is going to continue to demand that jobs be maintained and he gives as an example the transfer of young inmates to the Pelican Bay SHU from other institutions to fill-up the units left vacant by Hugo and others being placed in the new “transition” confinement. As he pointed out the “reforms” will come through action but the closure of the SHU should be the only demand.

Yours in struggle  
Freedom Now For All Class-War  
Prisoners & A Socialist World!  
C. M.

# NYPD Terror...

(continued from page 1)

on drugs” that it would be a war on black people. In the U.S., blacks are an oppressed race-color caste integrated into the American capitalist economy while overwhelmingly segregated at the bottom of society, the last hired (when there are jobs on offer) and first fired. Historically, black workers have been among the most militant and conscious sectors of the proletariat, and anti-black racism serves to divide the working class and keep it from fighting in its own interests. The disproportionate victimization of the black population is integral to American capitalist rule.

## “Broken Windows” and Mass Incarceration

The “broken windows” policing that de Blasio swears by and Bratton brought to NYC in his first stint as police commissioner in the 1990s is straight from the “lock ’em up and throw away the key” playbook of right-wing ideologues. According to the “broken windows” metaphor, failure to crack down on the most minuscule public nuisances encourages the commission of violent crimes. By these lights, Eric Garner was one such broken window fixed by the NYPD. As it stands, the denizens of NYC housing projects are far less likely to have their own broken windows replaced by the Housing Authority than they are to find themselves visiting young relatives behind bars for such “crimes” as jumping a subway turnstile or trespassing in their own building.

“Broken windows” policing is the brainchild of sociologists James Q. Wilson and George Kelling, first outlined in a 1982 essay in the *Atlantic Monthly*. Wilson, who died in 2012, was a fixture in the

right-wing American Enterprise Institute think tank alongside Charles Murray and Richard Herrnstein, the authors of *The Bell Curve* (1994), a racist pseudo-scientific tract asserting black biological inferiority. Wilson coauthored *Crime and Human Nature* with Herrnstein in 1985 and was considered a mentor by Murray. Wilson promoted the “superpredator” theory, which predicted that an entire generation of black and Latino youth would become inveterate criminals menacing society. This theory gave ideological justification to the “war on drugs,” mandatory minimum sentencing and stop-and-frisk. The crime epidemic never happened; the prison population quadrupled.

That the big-city liberal de Blasio is implementing the policing strategy associated with mass incarceration reflects the fact that the Democratic Party, no less than the Republicans, is a political vehicle for the tiny elite that profits from the exploitation of workers and lords over the oppression of blacks. As we warned prior to his election: “Whatever posture he takes today and whatever palliatives he may dole out, de Blasio as mayor will be charged with managing the finance capital of U.S. imperialism on behalf of the Wall Street plutocrats and real estate barons who run the city” (WV No. 1032, 18 October 2013). And indeed, little has changed since de Blasio took over from the hated billionaire Michael Bloomberg on January 1.

Despite talk of tensions between City Hall and the NYPD, the mayor has resolutely looked after the repressive forces that he commands in the service of capital. When a city council bill outlawing cop choke holds was mooted last week, Bratton condemned it as “part of the continuing effort to bridle the police.” De Blasio backed up his top cop in opposing

the measure, positing “extreme situations” where choke holds might be necessary.

As a matter of course, the NYPD flies into a rage at the slightest hint of a constraint on its prerogatives, including when it comes from de Blasio. Not surprisingly, the Patrolmen’s Benevolent Association (PBA) is in a lather over the new weed policy. The PBA has also railed against the city’s lawsuit settlement with the Central Park Five, black and Latino youth falsely convicted and imprisoned for the 1989 rape of a jogger. The NYPD, like all cops, constantly pushes to have an entirely free hand in pursuing racist “law and order.”

Grotesquely, top city union officials have embraced the racist killer cops as union brothers. The truth is that cops are not workers but the guard dogs of the capitalist order and mortal enemies of labor. The PBA backlash against an August 23 anti-police brutality demo in Staten Island took special aim at union endorsers. When the PBA tried unsuccessfully to block a federal court ruling that limited stop-and-frisk, this cop “union” claimed that the ruling intruded on their collective bargaining rights. When the cops band together, it is to insist on fewer limits on their terrorizing minorities and working people.

The fight for justice for the countless victims of cop terror demands the mobilization of the working class. Despite widespread illusions that the police are answerable to the public, the fact is that the repressive capitalist state apparatus cannot be made to “protect and serve” the interests of the workers and minorities but must be swept away. There will be no end to police terror short of workers revolution. The Spartacist League is dedicated to building the revolutionary party that is necessary to lead the fight for workers rule. ■

# Ferguson...

(continued from page 1)

his overseers treat the slaves with respect. In capitalist America, the job of the cops, courts and prosecutors is to maintain and defend a system rooted in the brutal exploitation of the many by the few—a system built on racial oppression from chattel slavery to wage slavery.

Just as it took the Civil War to smash the Southern slavocracy, it will take a third American Revolution to shatter the power of the capitalist ruling class and the state apparatus that defends it. There is only one force in this society with the social power to do that: the multiracial working class, whose labor produces the wealth that the capitalist rulers claim as theirs. All workers, including white workers, face the same enemy—a ruling class that condemns them to ever more vicious exploitation and wields the knife of racism to maintain its power. That the workers have not been mobilized in their own defense, much less in defense of the ghetto poor, is the responsibility of the trade-union misleaders who have shackled labor’s power to the defense of the interests of the capitalist class enemy.

The Spartacist League/U.S. is dedicated to the fight to forge a new leadership of the working class—a multiracial revolutionary workers party. The cause of black freedom will be a great driving force in the struggle for a socialist America and a great achievement of workers revolution. Only when those who labor rule will the wealth of this country be used for the benefit of those who produced it—not least the descendants of black slaves whose labor was a bedrock on which American capitalism was built. And only then will there be any real justice for the working class, black people and all the oppressed. ■

# Pakistan...

(continued from page 9)

Postmen struck on 4 March. Ten days later, the *Pakistan Times* reported, “the postal strike was causing immense loss to the exporters as the parcels were not being conveyed to their destination and no foreign mail was being delivered, resulting in the cancellation of orders.” On 5 March, 10,000 Karachi port workers brought the country’s main port to a standstill for five days. Telecommunications workers started a cascading series of strikes on 11 March. The regime sent army signal operators to man the telephone exchange in Lahore, but the soldiers couldn’t cope with the volume of calls.

On 6 March, workers closed down the factories and textile mills in the Sindh Industrial Trading Estate in Karachi, the country’s largest industrial zone, for four days. The strike grew explosively when a factory guard shot and killed two workers in a procession of several thousand going from plant to plant bringing workers out on strike. The strike spread to Landhi, the other major industrial area of the city. The deepening sense of solidarity across the workers movement was demonstrated when the college teachers union called for a city-wide strike on 8 March and the city was shut down completely. More than a dozen demonstrations by mill workers and other labourers filled the otherwise empty streets.

With the port of Karachi and the city’s main industrial zone still struck, the Ayub regime prepared for a 10 March Round Table Conference with the opposition parties. Ayub ended up accepting the DAC’s two main demands: direct elections on the basis of adult franchise and a parliamentary form of government. But no promise by Ayub was going to bring the revolt to heel. Bhutto continued to remain outside the negotiations, but he weighed in against the Awami League’s demand for Bengal autonomy. Bhutto declared: “The position of the Central Government under the six-point formula will be that of a widow without a pension” (*Pakistan Times*, 21 March 1969). The “pension” in question was, of course, the fruit of the central gov-

ernment’s oppression of the Bengalis.

Four days after the “accord” between Ayub and the DAC was announced, on 17 March, a massive *hartal* by two and a half million workers in West Pakistan, called by the major trade-union leaders, touched off a new wave of strikes. Docks, railways and public transport were paralysed; all factories and most shops and offices were closed. The Karachi port remained shut for three days, and the striking dockworkers only returned to work after they had won all of their wage demands. For two weeks, strikes continued to sweep the industrial zones around Karachi and other cities. Airline workers, electrical grid workers, hospital staff and nurses, postal workers, government office employees, coal miners, teachers, railway workers and other sectors struck. Workers occupied two large flour mills in Karachi and elected committees to run the plants.

On 20 March, the president of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry called on the government to deploy troops to Karachi’s industrial areas. But the military tops made it clear to Ayub Khan that they would only call out the troops if he abandoned the presidency. Instead of launching the repression that the bosses were demanding, the Ayub regime was reduced to calling on all employers to grant a 20 per cent wage increase! Meanwhile, a joint call by dozens of trade-union leaders in Karachi for a stop to *gheraos* “in the national interest” fell on deaf ears. By 24 March, virtually all the factories of Karachi, comprising some 40 per cent of Pakistan’s industrial capacity, were on strike.

On 25 March, Ayub announced his resignation and handed power to army commander-in-chief Yahya Khan. Declaring that he would “not tolerate disorder,” Yahya Khan imposed martial law and decreed that military tribunals would impose prison sentences of up to ten years for criticising the martial law regime, up to 14 years for going on strike or fostering “dissatisfaction toward the armed forces,” and the death penalty for damaging public property or giving assistance to “rebels or rioters.” At the same time, the new military strongman promised a “smooth transfer of power to the representatives of

the people elected freely and impartially on the basis of adult franchise,” who would then “give the country a workable Constitution.”

The mass movement in both East and West Pakistan came to a sudden halt. There were no protest demonstrations anywhere against the take-over. Students returned to their classes. Most of the mills and factories that had been on strike promptly resumed production. In East Pakistan, government offices reopened. At police stations across the country, people lined up to turn in their firearms. It was reported that in Karachi alone, 16,000 rifles, revolvers and shotguns were surrendered.

Even the bourgeoisie was taken aback that a mass revolt, which had defied repression, should halt so suddenly. The London *Sunday Times* (30 March 1969) observed: “The revolution seemed to be only hours away.... The mere words ‘martial law’ have magically restored the situation without a shot being fired.” The explanation for the sudden turnaround was not magic but politics. From the beginning, the movement’s principal leaders, especially Bhutto and his leftist supporters, had hammered the point that the main aim was elections to a constituent assembly. Now that a wing of the military high command had pushed aside Ayub and was promising to grant that demand, it was broadly felt that the movement had achieved its purpose. Referring to Yahya’s takeover, Bhutto declared that “on the whole it’s a good thing” because “the prospects for a return to democracy seem good” (*Sunday Times*, 30 March 1969). In a 26 June speech, he declared: “This Martial Law repeatedly gives assurances for elections.” He further asserted that when the movement against Ayub Khan started, “I had said there must be a new Constituent Assembly, that only a Constituent Assembly could frame a Constitution for Pakistan” (Z. A. Bhutto, *Awakening the People*, Volume II [1969]).

Lal Khan and Tariq Ali, having written out of their histories Bhutto’s campaign for a constituent assembly, have no explanation for the sudden halt of the mass movement—nor can they come up with any criticism of Bhutto’s arguments in

support of martial law. Lal Khan blames the “left leadership” for the fact that “there was no protest at all, as though the sole objective was to get rid of Ayub Khan!” But he cannot explain why Yahya Khan was seen as an improvement over Ayub. Tariq Ali says the masses “lacked an organization, and this made the army take-over on March 26, 1969, a comparatively easy affair.” Yet when recounting the 18 February massacre of protesters in Dhaka, Tariq Ali insisted: “Once again the workers and the city poor, without any leadership whatsoever, had defied the ruling class and faced the bullets of the bourgeoisie.”

The masses had not lost the extraordinary courage that, even bereft of leadership, they had repeatedly displayed. Rather, the military and the leaders of the opposition parties—especially the PPP, the NAP and their leftist supporters—had succeeded in channelling the mass struggle onto the path of the constituent assembly. As we wrote in *Spartacist* ([English edition] No. 63, Winter 2012-2013), “Fighting for a bourgeois-parliamentary ‘democratic government’ is a trap for the proletariat.” The article explains: “Unlike such demands as national self-determination, women’s equality, land to the tiller, universal suffrage or opposition to the monarchy—any or all of which can be crucial in rallying the masses behind the struggles of the proletariat—*the constituent assembly is not a democratic demand but a call for a new capitalist government.*”

The article also points out: “Given the reactionary character of the bourgeoisie, in the semicolonial world as well as the advanced capitalist states, there can be no revolutionary bourgeois parliament. Thus the call for a constituent assembly runs counter to the perspective of permanent revolution.” As they were being forced out of India by a mass upsurge against colonial rule, the British used the constituent assembly to give “democratic” legitimacy to the bloody partition of the subcontinent, resulting in the first parliaments of independent capitalist India and Pakistan. Likewise, the military regime in Pakistan used the call for a constituent assembly to derail the upsurge of 1968-69.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

# Mexico...

(continued from page 12)

that emerged out of the PRI some 25 years ago. But now its own bloody dagger has been revealed to all. It was under the orders of the (now arrested) PRD mayor of Iguala, José Luis Abarca, that police and the local drug cartel Guerreros Unidos—to which Abarca has family ties—carried out the kidnapping and massacre of the Ayotzinapa *normalistas*. Last year, Abarca was accused of shooting a kidnapped activist in the face. The widely reviled PRD governor of Guerrero, Ángel Aguirre, who recently stepped down amid the outrage over the disappeared students, is reportedly tied to the notorious Beltrán Leyva drug cartel. In 2011, Aguirre unleashed state terror against a protest by Ayotzinapa *normalistas*, leaving two dead.

With the PRD facing the worst crisis in its history, party founder Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas issued an open letter to members lamenting the loss of its “credibility,” “broad militant base” and “moral authority.” The discrediting of the PRD will in all likelihood work to the advantage of Andrés Manuel López Obrador (commonly known as AMLO), who left the party after the last national elections to form the Movement for National Regeneration (Morena). Today, López Obrador is calling for a truth commission and has joined forces with those calling for Peña Nieto’s resignation. AMLO, who began his political career in the PRI, personifies the “left” strain of Mexican bourgeois nationalism. His role is to keep social discontent within the bounds of bourgeois politics, promoting hope in a “regenerated” capitalist Mexico.

Many believe that protest and reform can clean out official corruption and make the government accountable. But the government is only ever going to be accountable to the capitalist class it serves. No matter whether the PRI, PAN, PRD or Morena is in charge, the capitalist state is an instrument for organized violence and brutality dedicated to maintaining the profit system. It cannot be reformed to serve the interests of the exploited and oppressed.

We solidarize with the students and families of the victims of state terror who demand to know the truth about the disappeared *normalistas*. However, we warn that government investigations serve to deflect justified anger while whitewashing the crimes of the capitalist state. Our comrades of the Grupo Espartaquista de México stress the need to mobilize the working class, linking the defense of the victims of state terror with the cause of all the downtrodden. This must be part of a fight to shatter the capitalist order and its repressive machinery and establish a workers and peasants government.

## Normales, Rural Misery and State Repression

The Ayotzinapa students were ambushed while on a caravan to raise money to join October 2 rallies commemorating the 1968 Tlatelolco Massacre of militant student protesters in Mexico City. The calculated, wanton slaughter in Tlatelolco plaza came at the hands of army troops, police and undercover agents, who killed hundreds and locked



Mexico City, October 8: PRD founder Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas (center, with glasses) chased from rally for missing students, as protesters shout “murderer,” “traitor!”

away thousands in prison. The attack was then covered up for years through official denial and a media blackout.

The slaughter at Tlatelolco, along with the infamous 1971 “Corpus Christi” massacre of student protesters, occurred during Mexico’s *guerra sucia* (dirty war), which lasted until the early 1980s. The disappearances, killings and torture of thousands of leftists, militant workers and peasants are not forgotten pages in Mexican history, and many are now drawing analogies between Tlatelolco then and Ayotzinapa now. In the late ’60s, murderous state repression and right-wing violence against student militants, carried out under the rule of the PRI, were aimed at putting down convulsive social struggle. This was unfolding against an international backdrop of the radicalizing Vietnam antiwar movement and a general strike in France in May 1968 that threw that country into a prerevolutionary situation.

One factor in the widespread tumult today over the Ayotzinapa massacre is the bourgeoisie’s decades-long war on free public education. The capitalist rulers strip education to a bare minimum, especially for poor peasants and indigenous people, who are deemed a mere surplus population. But the Mexican masses keenly feel the need for education and have confronted state forces in struggle over this basic right. Last year, government education “reform” aimed primarily at destroying the largest teachers union in Latin America, the SNTE/CNTE, met with considerable mobilizations on the part of teachers and their allies. The bourgeoisie no doubt wants to “teach a lesson” to the *normalistas*, intimidating and vilifying them before they go on to join the ranks of the union.

Rural teachers colleges emerged out of the social reforms that followed the Mexican Revolution, particularly in the 1930s around the populist-nationalist regime of Lázaro Cárdenas. In addition to such progressive acts as expropriating the petroleum industry and carrying out some land distribution, Cárdenas enshrined so-called “socialist” education in the 1934 constitution. These measures were broadly popular among the masses, helping in turn to

seal their support for the ruling party (predecessor to the PRI) as it consolidated the state’s corporatist structure. For the bourgeoisie, these measures had the effect of quelling peasant unrest and furthering the interests of Mexican capitalism, including by training the working class to be more productive wage slaves.

For some time, the rural *normales* have been under siege, starved for funds and regularly targeted by the police. Before 1969, 29 such schools were in operation; only 17 are open today. Painted as “Bolshevik kindergartens” and “seedbeds for guerrillas,” they are condemned for providing education to the poorest of Mexico’s poor. *Normalistas* have a history of political radicalism, and many leftists in the 1970s, like guerrilla leader Lucio Cabañas, began their activism at the teachers colleges. For the dispossessed villagers, becoming a teacher is a step up from a life of peasant toil. Rural teachers also see the dissemination of knowledge and teaching youth to read and write in both indigenous languages and Spanish as a social obligation to their impoverished communities. Although they do not have a direct relationship to the means of production, teachers constitute an important link between the countryside and the urban proletariat.

The indigenous population in Mexico lives in miserable destitution marked by starvation, high rates of illiteracy and the lack of basic services. Twenty years of NAFTA imperialist free trade have devastated the Mexican countryside. U.S.-produced corn and beans, mainstays of the diet of the poor, took over the market. With millions of peasants pushed into the cities, urban poverty skyrocketed, as did the numbers of those emigrating to *el norte*. Unable to compete with U.S. agribusiness, many peasants remaining on the land have had to rely on drug cultivation for their livelihood.

In Guerrero, poppies have become an important cash crop, accounting for 60 percent of the country’s opium cultivation. The region is seen as the epicenter of “lawlessness” in a ruthless collision of abysmal poverty with state militarization under the “war on drugs.” Gruesome torture and shootouts between competing drug cartels and their police adjuncts are commonplace. In a state long known for murderous repression against leftists, indigenous communities and militant teachers, there is an ominous shadow of the *guerra sucia* in the government’s so-called war against narco-violence. In fact, the massive deployment of the military has nothing to do with protecting the population but rather bolsters the capitalist state’s repressive powers against the volatile, impoverished masses.

Since 2006, over 100,000 people have been killed in drug-related violence in the country. While Washington politicians decry the chaos of Mexico’s drug wars, the imperialist economic domination of Mexico imposed the wretched conditions that are the breeding ground for the spiraling violence. In the name of combat-

ing drug trafficking, the U.S. since 2008 has drastically increased military aid to Mexico under the Merida Initiative, a total of \$3 billion to date. Under that initiative, the U.S. Department of Defense pours resources into training the Mexican police and armed forces, who in turn intensify repression of the working class and urban and rural poor.

The *Wall Street Journal* (22 November) has now revealed that U.S. marshals are covertly working directly alongside Mexican marines in drug raids. Mexico’s booming drug trade mainly supplies the U.S. market, particularly the demand for heroin and marijuana. We call for the *decriminalization of drugs*, which by taking the superprofits out of the drug trade would reduce the crime associated with it. Down with the Merida Initiative and all U.S. military aid to Mexico!

## For Workers Revolution on Both Sides of the Border!

The killing of the Ayotzinapa students was the last straw for the multitudes fed up with poverty, austerity and repression. But the hunger for jobs, housing, education and a decent life cannot be satisfied under capitalism. The ICL bases itself on Trotsky’s theory of permanent revolution for countries of belated development like Mexico: to eradicate the poverty of the countryside, emancipate the country from the yoke of imperialism and resolve other burning social problems, it is necessary to overthrow capitalist rule. This is the historic task of the powerful and combative industrial working class, standing at the head of the poor peasantry and all the oppressed.

The liberation of the working class and the oppressed in Mexico is thoroughly bound up with that of workers in the U.S. A proletarian revolution in Mexico could not survive without its extension to the north. Conversely, a proletarian revolution in the U.S. would draw heavily on the millions of immigrants from Mexico and elsewhere who make up a key component of the multiracial working class. It is incumbent on labor in the imperialist behemoth to champion full citizenship rights for all immigrants as part of advancing the unity in struggle of the working class on both sides of the border.

As the ICL’s Mexican section, the GEM stresses that the major political obstacle to overcome is the illusion that Mexicans of all social classes share a common interest. This fundamental tenet of nationalism serves to tie the working class and the poor to the capitalist order. To wage a revolutionary struggle against the bourgeoisie and its political parties, the Mexican proletariat requires a Trotskyist vanguard party. Such a party would also attract militants, including student radicals, looking for a way out. The needs of the bulk of the population can only be met through a socialist revolution that expropriates the bourgeoisie and establishes a collectivized, planned economy. And only then can we avenge the martyrs of Tlatelolco, Ayotzinapa and beyond. ■

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Brutal ataque policiaco perredista en Guerrero  
La clase obrera debe defender a los normalistas de Ayotzinapa



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# WORKERS VANGUARD

## Mexico Erupts Over Massacre of Rural Students



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Abduction and massacre of Ayotzinapa teachers-in-training touched off anti-government protests across Mexico. Left: Massive rally in Mexico City's main square, November 20. Above: Entry of National Palace set ablaze, November 9.

The September 26 kidnapping and disappearance of 43 young *normalistas* (teachers-in-training) from a rural college in Ayotzinapa, Guerrero, has unleashed fury and a wave of protests across Mexico. In one of the largest demonstrations in years, on the November 20 anniversary of the start of the 1910-20 Mexican Revolution, tens of thousands marched in Mexico City calling for justice and demanding the resignation of PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party) president Enrique Peña Nieto.

The uncovering of multiple mass graves last month was a sign that the missing *normalistas*, who attended a school with a long tradition of leftist activism, were likely butchered. The 43 were part of a larger group of *normalistas* attacked by municipal police and armed thugs in Iguala, Guerrero, in an ambush that left six people dead. Shortly afterward, one student was found with his eyes gouged out and skin peeled from his face. After several weeks of ducking the issue, the government announced that three detained gang hit men allegedly confessed to killing and incinerating the 43 students, tossing the remains into a river.

The slayings in Guerrero—one of Mexico's poorest states, with a large indigenous population—have captured the world's attention and touched a nerve across a wide swath of the Mexican population. People from different social strata and political perspectives have come out in protest, from sections of the well-off petty bourgeoisie to rural students and teachers, from workers to machete-brandishing peasants. The most popular slogans include: "We are all Ayotzinapa," "We want them back alive" and "It was the state!"

Last week's rallies followed two months of social upheaval over the disappearances, with demonstrators across the country blocking highways and airports, shutting down universities and torching government buildings and political party headquarters. Fretting over the current turmoil, an editorial in *La Jornada* (17 November) asserted that "the stability and social peace of the country are in a state

### Unions Must Mobilize Against State Repression!

of precariousness without precedent in decades."

At one of the November 20 protests, riot police attacked hundreds of students trying to block access to the Mexico City airport. Youth fought back with rocks and Molotov cocktails. Many were beaten and 16 were arrested. At the main Zócalo square, where an effigy of the president was set ablaze, hundreds of riot police tear-gassed and assaulted protesters and arrested at least 15 others. Eleven of those arrested have been slammed with outrageous charges, including attempted murder. Free them all! Drop all charges!

Peña Nieto and his ruling gang have threatened more state repression while the Mexican bourgeoisie's media mouthpieces rant against "violent anarchists." At the protests, many have echoed this violence-baiting by denouncing *encapuchados*

(activists wearing hoods or face masks). Others have shown petty-bourgeois disdain for working-class and poor youth by referring to them with the racist epithet *nacos*.

The Mexican capitalist rulers are long-time practitioners of the art of aristocratic contempt for the urban and rural masses. Attorney General Murillo Karam's attempt to cut short questions about the disappearance of the students with his now notorious comment, "Ya me cansé" (I've had enough), gave protesters a rallying cry. People have had enough of not only narco-violence and state repression but also the desperate economic situation, cutbacks to basic services and attacks on students and the labor movement alike. Adding insult to injury is the extravagant wealth flaunted by corrupt government officials. Now the president and his wife are embroiled in a scandal involving a massive high-speed

rail contract and a multimillion-dollar mansion.

It is in the direct interest of the urban industrial proletariat to throw its social weight behind the protests. The attacks on the *normalistas* come on top of an ongoing capitalist offensive against the organized working class, including the destruction of the

SME electrical workers union in 2009 and the on-and-off push to dismantle the oil workers union, still the most powerful in the country. The working class, uniquely positioned as the producers of society's wealth, can withdraw its labor and cut off the flow of profits, paralyzing the entire economy. It is that power that needs to be mobilized in the struggle against bloody state repression.

#### Capitalist Brutality and the Bourgeois Parties

The savagery of the Guerrero massacre graphically highlights the deep interpenetration of bourgeois politicians and the police with the drug cartels. The slogan "*Que se vayan todos!*" (Throw them all out!) captures the massive distrust of the three leading capitalist parties in Mexico: the ruling PRI, which previously lorded it over the country for seven decades, the clerical reactionaries of the PAN (National Action Party) and the left-talking bourgeois-nationalist PRD (Party of the Democratic Revolution).

The PRI's Peña Nieto was elected two years ago after 12 years of neoliberal austerity under the right-wing PAN. Ever since, he has tried to make the country more attractive to U.S. capital, winning laurels from the U.S. media for "saving Mexico." His administration pushed through the "Pact for Mexico"—with support from the PAN and initially the PRD—which aims to smash the unions and ram through privatizations (see "Pact for Mexico: War on Workers, Poor," WV No. 1019, 8 March 2013).

For years, discontent with the PRI's repressive and corrupt rule was co-opted by the PRD, a populist opposition party

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AFP

October 6: Relatives of student victims gather in Ayotzinapa teachers college, which has a history of left political activism.