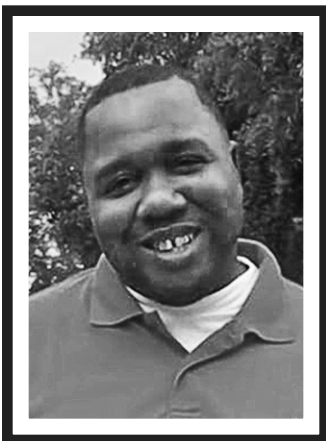


Black People Under Siege



Facebook



Castile Family

Baton Rouge, July 8: Protest against cop killing of Alton Sterling (top right). Bottom right: Philando Castile, killed by police in Minnesota on July 6.

We print below a July 13 Spartacist League statement joining the cry of outrage against the police killings of Alton Sterling and Philando Castile. The outpouring of anger was quickly subdued following the fatal shooting of five cops in Dallas and three more in Baton Rouge by black military veterans. Having been trained to serve in U.S. imperialism’s dirty wars against dark-skinned peoples abroad, they witnessed the relentless war at home against black people and snapped. Both are now themselves dead, casualties in this war.

While America’s capitalist rulers—from the Obama White House to the festival of racist reaction that was the Republican National Convention—saluted the “heroism” of their police thugs, a new video went viral showing yet another black man being shot by a cop, this time in Miami. Charles Kinsey, a behavioral therapist, was trying to assist an autistic patient when the cops arrived. Kinsey was lying on the sidewalk with his hands up when three shots were fired at him, one hitting him in the leg. When he asked

Mobilize Labor’s Power Against Racist Cop Terror!

why he had been shot, the cop reportedly said, “I don’t know.” In fact, shooting black people is a reflexive response by the police. Their job is to “serve and protect” the ruling class that lords it over this society rooted in black oppression and the exploitation of the working class, whose labor is the lifeblood of the capitalist profit system.

* * *

Some 36 hours after the release of a horrific video showing Baton Rouge cops executing Alton Sterling, pumping his body with bullets as he was pinned to the ground, millions watched as Philando Castile bled to death in his car from repeated gunshots by a Minneapolis

suburban cop. While Castile moaned in agony, his girlfriend Diamond Reynolds, in the car with her four-year-old daughter, courageously live-streamed as a rabid cop outside the open car window kept his gun to Castile’s head while screaming at Reynolds to keep her hands on the dashboard. She was later ordered out of the car, forced to her knees, handcuffed and taken away with her daughter as if they were a couple of runaway slaves.

Protests exploded around the country under the call “black lives matter.” But the bitter truth is that for America’s racist rulers black lives don’t matter. They secured their golden riches on the lashed backs of black slaves and today wield anti-black racism to divide and conquer their wage

slaves. Tens of thousands have repeatedly taken to the streets demanding that the killer cops be forced to clean up their act. But for all the federal investigations and promises of police reform nothing has changed or will. The reason is simple. The cops are the everyday domestic armed thugs of a system rooted in the brutal capitalist exploitation of labor and the forcible segregation of the majority of the black population at the bottom of this society.

In Dallas on July 7, 25-year-old Army vet Micah Xavier Johnson was driven into a homicidal rage, aiming his rifle fire at the white cops taking part in policing a protest against the killings of Sterling and Castile. When it ended, five cops were dead and seven wounded. In the parking garage where Johnson had been cornered, the police dispatched a bomb-carrying robot to blow him to pieces. Just as drones are deployed by the Obama administration against the dark-skinned peoples of the world, Johnson’s life was ended by a military weapon of

continued on page 3

Freedom Now for Chelsea Manning!

Chelsea Manning, the former Army intelligence analyst convicted for exposing evidence of U.S. imperialism’s monstrous war crimes in Iraq and Afghanistan, has now entered her seventh year in military custody. Having leaked a vast cache of military and state secrets to WikiLeaks—a valuable service to humanity—Manning was sentenced in 2013 to 35 years for violating the Espionage Act. The courageous 28-year-old

Manning has already endured the most severe punishment ever inflicted on any whistle-blower. The Obama administration’s ruthless, punitive war against truth-tellers like Manning, Edward Snowden and Julian Assange is aimed at silencing any and all who dare expose or oppose the U.S. government’s atrocities and mass surveillance.

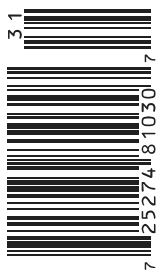
Locked away in the military prison at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, Manning attempted suicide on July 5. Displaying gross contempt, the U.S. Army released her confidential medical information to the media before notifying her lawyers.

After being hospitalized, Manning was cut off from her legal team and family members for more than 36 hours. She tweeted subsequently that she was “glad to be alive,” but remains under close observation. Subjected to ongoing psychological torment and physical torture since her arrest in 2010, Manning has been driven to the brink of suicide more than once. She has spent long periods in solitary confinement. Before her conviction, she spent nine months in maximum isolation in the Marine Corps brig at Quantico, Virginia, where she was subjected to daily strip searches and forced

nudity. Manning recently described the “no touch” torture there (*Guardian*, 2 May): “For 17 hours a day...I was not allowed to lay down. I was not allowed to lean my back against the cell wall. I was not allowed to exercise.”

In May, Manning’s lawyers completed an extensive 200-page appeal brief, challenging her conviction as “grossly unfair and unprecedented.” A separate *amicus* brief filed by the American Civil Liberties Union argues that Manning’s prosecution was unconstitutional, citing the contrast with former Army general

continued on page 4



Bourgeois Hypocrisy over Police Sex Scandal

Oakland

In June, the infamous racist killers of the Oakland Police Department went through three police chiefs in just over a week. The cause was not the shooting of yet another unarmed black man, but rather the exposure of several current and former Oakland cops for having sex with a teenage sex worker.

At a press conference following the resignation of the third police chief, Mayor Libby Schaaf, a Democrat, indignantly fumed, “as the mayor of Oakland, I am here to run a police department not a frat house.” Schaaf, who ran as the pro-cop, law-and-order candidate in the last mayoral election, expressed no such moral outrage when she thought she was only running a gang of murderous racist thugs.

The Oakland PD is so notorious that, due to a court order demanding police reform, the department has been under

the supervision of a federal judge for the past 13 years. This order stemmed from a lawsuit filed by victims of a gang of Oakland cops known as the Riders, who rampaged through West Oakland beating, robbing and planting drugs and guns on young black men, but it hasn’t stayed the hand of the cops. In June last year, an Oakland cop shot and killed an unconscious black man, Demouria Hogg, who was locked in his car at the side of a road, allegedly because he had a gun! In the following five months, four more black men lost their lives at the hands of the Oakland police.

Today, bourgeois politicians and media are wringing their hands over the supposed duplicity of these defenders of the “moral order.” In particular, they complain that some of the cops had sex with the young woman when she was only 17 years old, often referring to her as a child. Yet, this “child” understands better than most that a sex worker in bed with cops is far less likely to be arrested by them. The criminalization of prostitution leaves sex

workers extremely vulnerable. It is a fact of life that sex workers are, on a regular basis, driven to exchange sexual favors for a temporary stay-out-of-jail card.

It is not just a question of cops extorting sex, but of coercing prostitutes to testify in frame-ups. The star witness in the trial of former Black Panther Mumia Abu-Jamal, who was sentenced to death on false charges of killing a Philadelphia cop, was a prostitute. She was the only purported eyewitness claiming to have seen Mumia with a gun, while others testified that she wasn’t even on the scene. Later, other prostitutes came forward to testify that cops had tried to coerce them into the same lying story. Mumia has now been behind bars for over three decades, most of them on death row. Free Mumia now!

In an article titled “Police Crimes Too Big To Hide” (socialistworker.org, 21 June), the International Socialist Organization (ISO) writes: “Oakland police have gotten away with killing a number of people, most of them Black, in the last few years,

but a straw has finally broken at least their leadership’s back. That doesn’t guarantee real change, but it provides an opportunity.” In particular, the ISO points to the possibility of establishing “an elected civilian police commission.” In fact, Oakland has had a Citizens’ Police Review Board since 1980! That hasn’t made a dime’s worth of difference. Schaaf, who has already put the OPD under supposed “civilian control,” is simply doing the usual damage control.

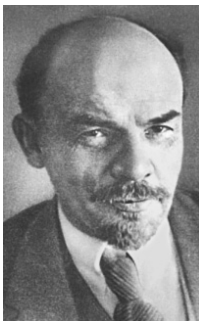
Liberals and others push for tougher laws against prostitution in order to “protect” sex workers. For all the feigned moral outrage of the bourgeoisie, the truth is that all such laws will only further empower the police thugs to brutalize sex workers and use them for their own purposes. We fight for the decriminalization of prostitution and all other “crimes without victims” like drug use and pornography. For us, the guiding principle for sexual relations is that of *effective consent*, meaning mutual agreement and understanding as opposed to coercion. ■



TROTSKY

U.S. “Democracy” and the Capitalist State

As racist police terror continues to spark outrage, liberals and many leftists, including Black Lives Matter activists, remain wedded to the illusion that the cops, who are the armed thugs of the capitalist state, can be reformed to act in the interests of the oppressed. As elaborated in the 1938 founding principles of the then-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party, the “democratic” American state is an instrument for enforcing exploitation and repression by the ruling class.



LENIN

In any society, the real power is held by those who own and control the means whereby that society lives, the instruments of production, distribution, and communication. In capitalist society, such ownership and control is held and exercised by the big bourgeoisie, by the bankers and industrialists. Through its hold on the major natural resources, the factories, mines, banks, railroads, ships, airplanes, telegraph, radio, and press, the big bourgeoisie effectively dominates capitalist society, runs society in such a manner as to secure and maintain its own interest and privilege, and upholds the system of the exploitation of the great majority. The state or government, far from representing the general interests of society as a whole, is in the last analysis simply the political instrument through which the owning class exercises and maintains its power, enforces the property relations which guarantee its privileges, and suppresses the working class. In these essential functions all of the organs and institutions of the state power cooperate—the bureaucracy, the courts, police, prisons, and the armed forces. The particular political forms of capitalist society (monarchy, democracy, military dictatorship, fascism) in no way affect the basic social dictatorship of the controlling minority, and are only the different means through which that dictatorship expresses itself. The belief that in such a country as the United States we live in a free, democratic society, in which fundamental economic change can be effected by persuasion, by education, by legal and purely parliamentary methods, is an illusion. In the United States, as in all capitalist nations, we live, in actuality, under a capitalist dictatorship; and the possibilities for purely legal and constitutional change are therefore limited to those which fall within the framework of capitalist property and social relations, which later are severely curtailed by the circumstances of the decline of capitalism and in the long run, if the capitalist dictatorship continues, involve fascism for the United States as elsewhere. Genuine freedom can be realized only in a society based upon the economic and social equality of all individuals composing it, and such equality can be achieved only when the basic means of production, distribution, and communication are owned and controlled, not by any special class or group, but by society as a whole.

—Socialist Workers Party, *Declaration of Principles* (1938)

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WORKERS VANGUARD

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No. 1093

29 July 2016

Nice, France: On the Criminal Attack

The following is a translation of a July 15 statement issued by the Ligue Trotskyste de France, section of the International Communist League. On July 20, the French parliament voted to extend for a further six months the state of emergency, which had been instituted in the aftermath of the 13 November 2015 terrorist attacks in Paris.

The Ligue Trotskyste condemns the horrific killing of 84 people, including children, in Nice yesterday; more than 200 people were wounded. We do not know what the killer's motives were or if his act was simply the work of a psychopath not driven by ideology. However, the government was quick to seize the opportunity to rekindle the "war on terror," declaring that the way this crime was carried out was reminiscent of attacks by the Islamic State. [President François] Hollande is extending the state of emergency for three more months. He activated the reserve forces of the cops and military police—more than 10,000 additional cops—and he will probably beef up the widespread police surveillance measures already decided upon.

To get these racist terror measures—primarily targeting Muslims—passed, the government goes on ad nauseam about

national unity of workers and bosses behind the capitalist government; this in the face of significant working-class mobilizations against the Valls-El Khomri anti-union law in recent months [see WV No. 1087, 8 April 2016]. During these mobilizations, we have continually stressed the need to oppose the racist government measures that pit non-Muslims and Muslims against each other in the name of "secularism" and the "war on terror." Such divisions in the working class, aided by the complicit silence of the reformists and union bureaucrats, pave the way for attacking the entire labor movement, regardless of religion or skin color.

The state of emergency and other police-state measures are ultimately aimed at the working class. In recent months, we have seen how these measures supposedly directed against *jihād* have in fact been used to target labor mobilizations. For the first time since the Algerian War [for independence, 1954-62], the government even considered banning mass union demonstrations. ***Down with the state of emergency! Down with Vigipirate and Sentinelle!*** [racist police/army "anti-terror" operations] ***Down with police anti-terrorist laws!***

Also in the name of the "war on terror,"

François Hollande had already announced that France would step up its military intervention in Iraq, where over 300 special forces are already stationed. Meanwhile, in Syria, France has openly set up a military base in Kobani, in the Kurdish sector, for the first time since 1946 (when French colonialism was driven out of Syria). We demand the immediate withdrawal from these countries of all French and U.S. forces, as well as all the other imperialist and regional powers involved. Syria and Iraq have been devastated for years by a bloody civil war ***fueled at every step by the imperialists.*** In these countries, attacks killing over 100 civilians are routinely carried out by Islamic State and other reactionary forces. ***French troops out of the Near East, Mali and Libya! Down with the "war on terror"!***

The imperialists are the biggest and deadliest terrorists on this planet. Even without counting the millions killed in colonial wars (Algeria, Madagascar, Indochina...), or the thousands of refugees drowned each year in the Mediterranean, it is the unspeakable crimes and machinations of the imperialists—in the Near East and Africa in particular—that drive some youth into the arms of Islamic reaction. Thus, as we stated in the wake

of the November 13 attacks, any blow against the imperialist forces in the Near East and their auxiliaries on the ground (including the Kurdish militias integrated into the imperialist military apparatus in Kobani) serves the interests of the international working class, even if these blows come from forces as repugnant as the Islamic State, to which we give no political support and whose horrific crimes we condemn.

The attack in Nice and the government's bellicose response give a measure of the decay of this capitalist society. By subjecting young and not-so-young people from the former colonies of French imperialism to chronic unemployment and relentless racist discrimination in all aspects of social life, capitalism produces monsters like the one who struck yesterday in Nice. It is necessary to build a revolutionary workers party in order to overthrow this capitalist system through a socialist revolution, which will sweep away the capitalist state apparatus and replace it with a workers state. Such a revolution will expropriate the capitalists and build a new social order that will guarantee well-being and justice for all and put an end once and for all to this decaying system. ■

Cop Terror...

(continued from page 1)

war. No judge, no jury, just blown away.

Protesters have continued to mobilize against cop terror, braving heavy police repression and the arrest of hundreds. At the same time, there is a very real, and understandable, sense of fear that the police will exact vengeance for the cops who were killed. With their fingers on the trigger, heads of various police associations have ranted against Black Lives Matter and others as "terrorists." Donald Trump is promoting himself as the candidate who will enforce racist "law and order," further emboldening the fascists who have rallied behind his campaign. For her part, Hillary Clinton supported her husband's racist laws that ended welfare and further built the U.S. as "incarceration nation." Now she hypocritically intones that it is time "to start listening" to black people.

Obama cut short his trip to Europe, where he went to enforce the economic and military interests of U.S. imperialism, to go to Dallas and preach "reconciliation" between black people and the cops who routinely humiliate, brutalize and kill them. Preachers, liberals and even some self-declared socialists join hands in prayer for all the lives lost, from Sterling and Castile to the Dallas cops, grotesquely equating the police with their victims.

No amount of praying can change the truth: more than 150 years after the end of the Civil War, black people are still being hunted. As Diamond Reynolds put it in explaining her harrowing live-stream: "I did it so that the world knows that these police are not here to protect and serve us. They are here to assassinate us. They are here to kill us. Because we are black."

The infamous 1857 Dred Scott decision that black people "had no rights which the white man was bound to respect" may have been reversed in the



WV Photo

Spartacists at Black Lives Matter protest in New York City, July 9.

legal code, but the reality lives on. The author of that ruling, Supreme Court Justice Roger B. Taney, noted with horror that if blacks were granted citizenship they would have the right "to keep and carry arms wherever they went."

That Alton Sterling and Philando Castile were apparently carrying was enough for the cops to gun them down, no questions asked. Neither drew a weapon. The cops claim that Sterling had a gun in his pocket and Castile told the cop that he had a registered firearm. As Castile's mother poignantly said: "He had a permit to carry. But with all of that, trying to do the right thing and live accordingly, abide the law, he was killed by the law."

Originally, citizenship rights were granted only to white, male property owners. The more they were expanded to others, the less they actually meant. Nowhere is that clearer than the rights of black people to bear arms. Gun control laws in this country have largely been aimed not at controlling guns but rather at the working class, and especially at the ability of black people to defend themselves against racist terror. They serve to keep guns only in the hands of the cops, criminals and fascist killers. As Ida B. Wells, the courageous black woman who fought against the lynching of black people by the KKK, said in 1892: "A Winchester rifle should have a place of honor in every black home, and it should be used for that protection which the law refuses to give."

While Obama cynically preaches "peace," *there has been a continuing class war in*

this country against labor, black people, immigrants, the poor and all those relegated to the bottom of this society. The bosses are winning because the labor misleaders have kept the power of labor under lock and key, sacrificing it to the interests of the exploiters. Philando Castile was a member of the Teamsters, one of the biggest and potentially most powerful unions in the U.S. All that the leaders of his union local could offer was a statement urging its members to keep the Castile family in their "thoughts and prayers." As if it were solace, the bureaucrats noted that the cop who killed Castile was not a union member, unlike other cops the Teamsters have organized in Minnesota! It would be hard to find a starker example of the treachery of the labor lieutenants of the capitalist class enemy than their embrace of the racist, strikebreaking enemies of labor, black people and the oppressed as "union brothers." ***Cops out of the unions!***

Is it any wonder that increasing numbers of people, including some black workers, think that the only way they can have any economic impact is in the despairing call to boycott white-owned businesses? However, the capacity to have a real impact rests with the multiracial working class, which has the social and economic power to choke off the bosses' profits by shutting down production and distribution through strike action.

A massive show of force based on the mobilization of labor against cop terror would strike some genuine "fear of god" into the police and their capitalist masters.

And it would drive home the point that the interests of the working class—white and black, immigrant and native-born—are inseparably linked to the defense of the ghettos and the fight for black freedom. But that means the workers must be mobilized independently of, and in opposition to, all the political parties and agencies of capitalist class rule.

It took a bloody Civil War, the Second American Revolution, with 200,000 black troops, arms in hand, to smash the chains of black chattel slavery. But in pursuit of their class interests, the Northern capitalists betrayed the promise of black freedom, making peace with the former slavocracy to defend the "property rights" of the capitalist rulers against the liberated slaves and against rebellious workers in the North. Nothing short of a third American revolution—a proletarian socialist revolution that breaks the chains of capitalist wage slavery—will end racist cop terror.

The key to unlocking the social power of the working class is the fight for a class-struggle leadership of labor forged in opposition to the capitalist state. What's needed is to turn the righteous anger against the rampaging cops into a struggle against the social order they defend, a struggle to make the working class the rulers of a new society. The Spartacist League, U.S. section of the International Communist League, is dedicated to the fight to build a revolutionary workers party committed to the fight for a workers government. Such a party will lead all the exploited and oppressed in taking the wealth of this country out of the hands of the greedy and corrupt capitalist rulers. When the power of the ruling class and its state apparatus has been shattered, this wealth will be dedicated to the benefit of those who produced it—not least the descendants of the black slaves whose labor was a cornerstone on which American capitalism was built. ■

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Black History and the Class Struggle No. 25

To announce the publication of a new issue of Black History and the Class Struggle (No. 25, July 2016), we reprint below the pamphlet's introduction.

As the capitalists and the kept media hype their electoral circus, the killings of black people by the racist cops continue to stir widespread anger. None of the candidates of the ruling-class parties much wants to deal with this issue...except for Donald Trump's campaign going out of its way to insult and assault black protesters, the better to appeal to unashamedly racist voters. With the primaries concluded, black leaders and liberal media pundits will now focus on how to "stop Trump" by backing Hillary Clinton, another class enemy of working people and minorities. As the articles in this pamphlet explain, this is a losing game that perpetuates racist cop terror and the oppression of black people, which is rooted in the capitalist system.

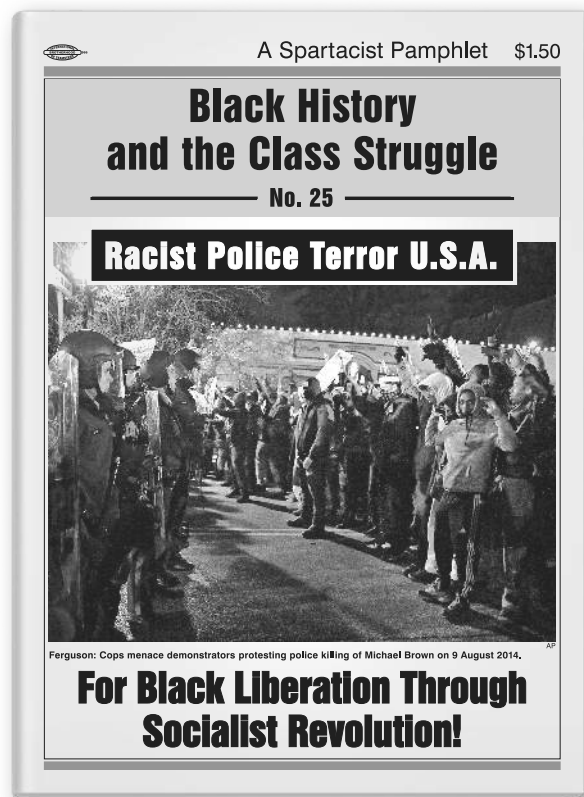
Many activists have become aware that no amount of demonstrating has made black lives matter to the police or the government that employs them. It is the job of capitalism's cops to enforce racist "law and order," a job that includes brutalizing and intimidating all those seen as threatening the stability of the system of exploitation. Police executions on the streets are not new, although better technology now exists for documenting such racist atrocities. It is also nothing new that what passes for black leadership in this country is working overtime to push the idea that one or another wing of the capitalist state can be pressured to curb the cops in their exercise of racist repression.

One of the atrocities covered in this pamphlet is the Charleston massacre of black churchgoers in South Carolina on 17 June 2015. These victims were not killed by cops but by an apparently lone fascist. When videos surfaced of the fascist killer, Dylann Roof, draped in the Confederate flag, many bourgeois politicians were prompted to urge the removal of slavery monuments. The Charleston slaughter showed the sick symbiosis between a supposedly aberrant individual and the official anti-black violence of the capitalist state. This connection was also shown by the 2013 acquittal of the racist vigilante who killed Trayvon Martin in Florida, with the prosecution's collusion in painting the slain teen as a criminal.

When it comes to the Confederate flag, we are well aware that symbols have importance: when people can be symbolically slapped in the face every day by statues and street names, it encourages contempt and violent attacks. We have campaigned against official displays of the Dixie flag but it must be noted that in the wake of the Charleston massacre such talk was cheap and underlined that the posturing politicians have nothing to offer. When it comes to the realities of black oppression, the real role of the black Democratic Party politicians is exemplified by their direct responsibility (along with other Democrats like Bill Clinton) for the anti-drug crusade that created the now much decried phenomenon of mass incarceration.

The second section of this pamphlet looks at the historical context behind today's events. The two-part article "Class-Struggle Road to Black Freedom" lays out a broad Marxist understanding of the central role of the black liberation struggle in U.S. history. The article also examines some ideologies fashionable in the 1960s, a heyday of black radicalism, as well as addressing current forms of false ideology that are an obstacle to mobilizing the working class and oppressed in a struggle against the capitalist system. Special attention is paid to the debate over "white skin privilege." While the political climate

Just Out!



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today is a far cry from that of the 1960s, that bankrupt theory originating in the old New Left has been reborn.

The major historical study included in the pamphlet is "Defeat of Reconstruction and the Betrayal of Black Freedom," an educational published in *Workers Vanguard* in two parts. The period of Reconstruction after the Northern victory in the Civil War was an exciting time of comparative racial democracy in the South. Protected by the presence of an actually rather small number of federal troops, a politically conscious population of freed slaves, including Union army veterans, actively debated Reconstruction policies and voted in elections. This development of bourgeois democracy was betrayed by the Northern capitalist ruling class.

The bourgeoisie's class interests lay in re-establishing control of Southern black labor for the plantations (whose owners included Northern banks). Reconstruction was betrayed, as a war to the death against black people exercising their political rights was waged by the KKK and other race-terrorists. The end of Reconstruction marked the end of any historically progressive role as far as the U.S. bourgeoisie is concerned. The task of black liberation today is intertwined with socialist revolution to emancipate all the working people and oppressed from capitalist class rule.

Other historical periods are taken up more briefly. "Leninism vs. Debs's Socialist Party" discusses the role of the black question in the U.S. Socialist and Communist movements in the early 20th century. Even the most decent of the early Socialists such as Eugene Debs failed

to grasp the centrality of racial oppression in U.S. society and the connection between anti-black racism and every other kind of social backwardness and reaction. It required the intervention of the Communist International to convince the early American Communists of the need for special forms of work and organization to win black workers and intellectuals to the Communist movement.

The two film reviews introduce the civil rights movement of the 1950s-1960s, whose dominant leaders looked to the federal government and the capitalist Democratic Party to dismantle segregation in the South. "*Selma*" discusses this conservative wing exemplified by Martin Luther King. While the FBI's J. Edgar Hoover considered King a dangerous agitator and a Communist, more far-sighted politicians including President Lyndon Johnson understood that King was the alternative to militant currents that were gaining importance within a movement that had mobilized millions of youth and working people, North and South. The authorities also used direct means to spike the growth of black radicalism, from legal frame-ups to outright state murder. "*The Black Panthers*" discusses the more militant wing of the black struggle of the 1960s. In the South, official segregation, which had become an embarrassment, could be defeated by the civil rights movement led by Democrats and preachers. But when that movement came north it proved powerless to address the poverty of the inner cities and the many faces of inequality: de facto segregation in housing and schools, unemployment, racist cop terror—conditions little changed today.

Somewhat ironically, the greatest boost to the idea that electing more minorities to office could ameliorate the situation of the inner cities came when a number of black Democratic Party mayors were elected in major cities to quell the unrest unleashed by King's assassination. Half a century later, black mayors and police chiefs preside over the same urban decay and cop repression formerly supervised by their white counterparts. Similarly, the appointment of more minorities not to mention women to the Supreme Court did nothing to improve this capitalist institution which has approved the continuing attacks on voting rights, presided over the dismantling of affirmative action and steadily chipped away at reproductive rights for women. And the urbane Wall Street Democrat Barack Obama presides over the wars and exactions of U.S. imperialism around the world as well as the impoverishment of working people in racist America.

To weld the just anger of the black masses together with the power of the working class in a fight to destroy capitalism will require the intervention of a revolutionary party. In the fight for workers revolution, such a party will defeat the divide-and-rule schemes of the rulers by winning the working masses to understand their own real and long-term interests rather than fighting among themselves for crumbs from the masters' table. What is needed is not more equality of misery. Certainly white youth are less likely than black teens to be murdered by policemen but this hardly makes them "privileged": in fact compared even to their own parents, what capitalism has on offer for working-class youth of all races is nothing but insecure jobs at lower wages, with longer hours and worse conditions, capped off by the prospect of an underfunded retirement. In its own interests the multiracial working class must do away with capitalism, opening the prospect of a world socialist society without poverty, racism or war. ■



Reuters
Defenders of Chelsea Manning at San Francisco gay pride parade, June 2015.

Manning...

(continued from page 1)

and CIA director David Petraeus, who handed over reams of classified information to his biographer, who was also his lover. The war criminal Petraeus barely received a slap on the wrist: two years probation and a fine.

Through a Freedom of Information Act request, Manning recently acquired documents on the government's "Insider Threat" program, which monitors internal communications of military personnel and civilian contractors. The program uses Manning—who is transgender and was known as Bradley in the Army—as a case study to suggest that those with "gender dysphoria" may be prone to aiding the enemy!

In prison, Manning is targeted by the imperialist rulers for her outspoken activism on government surveillance, prison conditions and transgender rights. In August 2015, shortly after starting her regular column in the *Guardian* and posting

to Twitter, Manning was punished for possessing so-called contraband, i.e., "unapproved" reading material including the Caitlyn Jenner issue of *Vanity Fair* and literature relating to transgender identity. While ultimately spared indefinite solitary confinement, Manning was restricted for weeks from outside access and library use. Despite such measures, she has continued to speak out.

A couple of weeks after her suicide attempt, Manning wrote a commentary titled, "Moving On: Reflecting on My Identity," where she made a plea: "I want to be seen and understood as the woman that I actually am—with all of my flaws and eccentricities—perhaps at the expense of what people expect me to be." For years, Manning has been suing the government to be allowed to live as a woman while she is transitioning. Though her lawyers successfully won her access to hormone treatment, she is still in an all-male facility. As with other transgender prisoners who are usually placed in prisons against their declared gender identity, the risk of

violence and sexual assault is heightened.

It is urgently necessary to continue the fight to free Chelsea Manning, whose resistance is an inspiration to those who refuse to sit on their hands and keep quiet. As we wrote in "Truth-Teller on Trial: Free Bradley Manning," (WV No. 1026, 14 June 2013): "Lifting the veil on the U.S. war machine was a gutsy act of conscience that objectively helps the victims and opponents of the imperialist system. But the workings of this society will not change by making more information publicly available." This system is based on the exploitation of labor for private profit, buttressed by systematic racial segregation and sexual oppression that divides the working people. The capitalist class maintains its rule through the force and violence of special bodies of armed men—the police, military and prisons. It will take a series of workers revolutions around the world to overturn the capitalist order—to which imperialist war and state repression are integral—and replace it with an egalitarian socialist society. ■

Remembering Hiroshima, Nagasaki

U.S. Imperialist Mass Murder

Seventy-one years ago this August, some 200,000 residents of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan were incinerated when U.S. warplanes dropped atomic bombs in the closing weeks of World War II. Many thousands who survived the nuclear holocaust suffered hideous burns and deformities compounded by sheer terror. This monstrous crime—carried out in the name of fighting for “democracy”—epitomizes the savagery of the capitalist-imperialist world order. Hearing the news of the 6 August 1945 attack on Hiroshima, which was followed by the destruction of Nagasaki three days later, U.S. president Harry Truman exulted: “This is the greatest thing in history!” and gloated that “we are now prepared to obliterate more rapidly and completely.” The visit of Barack Obama to Hiroshima in May of this year was the first by a sitting U.S. president.

Our forebears of the then-revolutionary Socialist Workers Party (SWP) immediately condemned the bombings as part of their opposition to the U.S. and all capitalist powers in the inter-imperialist war. This position was coupled with the SWP's unconditional military defense of the Soviet Union, a degenerated workers state. While the Stalinist U.S. Communist Party grotesquely *hailed* the A-bomb attacks as part of its craven support to the “democratic” imperialists, SWP leader James P. Cannon, who had been hauled off to prison along with 17 other party leaders and Minneapolis Teamsters officials for their principled opposition to the war, declared in a speech in New York City:

“What a commentary on the real nature of capitalism in its decadent phase is this, that the scientific conquest of the marvelous secret of atomic energy, which might rationally be used to lighten the burdens of all mankind, is employed first for the wholesale destruction of half a million people.”

—“The Bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki,” 22 August 1945, printed in *The Struggle for Socialism in the “American Century”* (Pathfinder Press, 1977)

Cannon ended the talk with a call to build a Leninist workers party that would fight to “answer the imperialist program of war on the peoples of the world, with revolution at home and peace with the peoples of the world.”

The A-bombs created a special kind of hell. But so did the U.S. firebombing of Tokyo a few months before, which took at least 100,000 lives. For its part, Japanese imperialism had demonstrated



Hiroshima devastated by atomic bomb.

its own barbarity by the 1937 Nanjing Massacre of hundreds of thousands of Chinese by Japanese troops. In Europe, the Nazi regime carried out industrial genocide against Jews, gays, Gypsies and others. Meanwhile, the U.S. and Britain slaughtered hundreds of thousands of German working people by firebombing Dresden, Hamburg and other cities.

U.S. atrocities against the Japanese population were prepared with the kind of virulently racist propaganda that the Nazis used to ostracize Jews and other so-called *untermenschen* on their way to annihilating them, and which the Japanese rulers spewed against Chinese, Koreans and others they subjugated. The U.S. capitalist press continually depicted the Japanese as “sneak attackers,” hurling venom against “yellow monkeys” or, in the snootier words of the *New York Times*, against “a beast which sometimes stands erect.” This poison delivered the message: *anything* could be done to this enemy. And it was long lasting. In 1995, the Smithsonian Institution canceled a planned exhibition on Hiroshima featuring the *Enola Gay*—the B-29 that dropped the first A-bomb—after a furious reaction from jingoists and militarists objecting to photographs showing the horrors suffered by Japanese civilians.

Official duplicity was the order of the day when on May 27 Barack Obama visited Hiroshima's memorial to the victims of the A-bomb. Obama had made clear that he would not bother with an apology

for the slaughter carried out by his Democratic Party predecessor, which would have been an empty gesture in any case. Instead, he displayed the lying, hypocritical cant that has been a hallmark of his time in office. Obama haughtily declared that countries like the U.S. with nuclear stockpiles “must have the courage to escape the logic of fear and pursue a world without them.” Just a few months earlier, he had rolled out a plan to modernize the U.S. nuclear arsenal over the next three decades, to the tune of \$1 trillion!

Obama's Hiroshima visit was part of a big lie. His amen corner in the U.S. media regurgitated the line that the A-bombs were what forced Japan's surrender in the war. In fact, Japan was already on the verge of defeat when Truman learned of the successful atomic bomb test at Alamogordo, New Mexico. At the time, he was in Potsdam, Germany, for talks with Britain's Winston Churchill and Soviet leader J.V. Stalin over the post-war division of Europe following Germany's military defeat. The Red Army had smashed Hitler's forces, at the cost of 27 million Soviet lives. With Soviet troops occupying half of Europe and poised to enter the war against Japan, the A-bombs were above all a message to Moscow of the lengths to which the American rulers would go to assert world domination.

Dwight D. Eisenhower, the supreme commander of Allied forces in West Europe during the war and later U.S. president, noted in a 1963 interview that the Japanese were ready to surrender and “it wasn’t necessary to hit them with that awful thing.” Washington knew from decoded cables that many in the Japanese government were looking for a peace settlement, but the U.S. insisted on unconditional surrender, thereby ensuring that Japan would not give in until the bombs were dropped. As we emphasized in “Behind U.S. Imperialism’s Nuclear Holocaust” (WV No. 628, 8 September 1995), “*The A-bombing of Japan was in fact the first act of the emerging Cold War aimed at destroying the Soviet degenerated workers state.*”

Washington's purpose was further made clear by its ongoing attempt, soon to be successful, to develop a thermonuclear (hydrogen) bomb to gain another leg up on the Soviets, who the U.S. feared were about to build their own A-bomb. Moscow countered by developing a substantial nuclear arsenal, reaching rough parity with the U.S. in the 1970s. For decades, the Soviet arsenal helped stay the hand of U.S. imperialism. But follow-

ing the capitalist counterrevolution that destroyed the USSR in 1991-92, the arrogant American rulers saw no obstacle to world domination, setting the stage for a series of wars and occupations from the Balkans to Afghanistan and Iraq.

Excluding the Soviet Union, World War II, like WWI, was fought between imperialist powers for resources, markets and spheres of exploitation. China was the special prize of the Pacific War. But the U.S. was denied that part of the spoils of its victory over Japan by the 1949 Chinese Revolution, which created a workers state that, despite bureaucratic deformation, remains the chief target of imperialist designs in Asia. Indeed, the main purpose of Obama's trip to Southeast and East Asia in May was to firm up U.S. allies and quislings as they tighten a military ring around China.

In Hiroshima, Obama pitched the strategic U.S.-Japanese alliance, which centrally targets China and also the North Korean deformed workers. Another piece of Washington's Asian press fell into place in July when the North Korean government agreed to host the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) system. Ostensibly a response to North Korea's testing of new ballistic missiles, THAAD's radar array can cover a broad swath of China, potentially degrading China's land-based nuclear deterrent.

U.S. and Japanese workers must stand against China and North Korea in their efforts to develop nuclear weapons and delivery systems that provide a measure of defense against imperialist blackmail and attack. Defense of the remaining oppressed workers states is inseparable from the struggle to sweep away the capitalist system, with its insatiable thirst for profit and its inherent drive toward war. Opposing the U.S.-Japanese imperialist alliance, we join with our comrades in the Spartacist Group Japan, who wrote in marking the 50th anniversary of the atomic bomb attacks: "Nanjing, Hiroshima and Nagasaki were chilling examples of the slaughter and devastation that will be repeated in a coming world war if the imperialist bourgeoisie is not overthrown by proletarian socialist revolution" ("Hiroshima, Nagasaki: U.S. War Crimes," WV No. 627, 25 August 1995). ■



Hiroshima, May 27: Protest against visit of Barack Obama and Japanese prime minister Shinzo Abe to memorial for victims of atomic bomb.

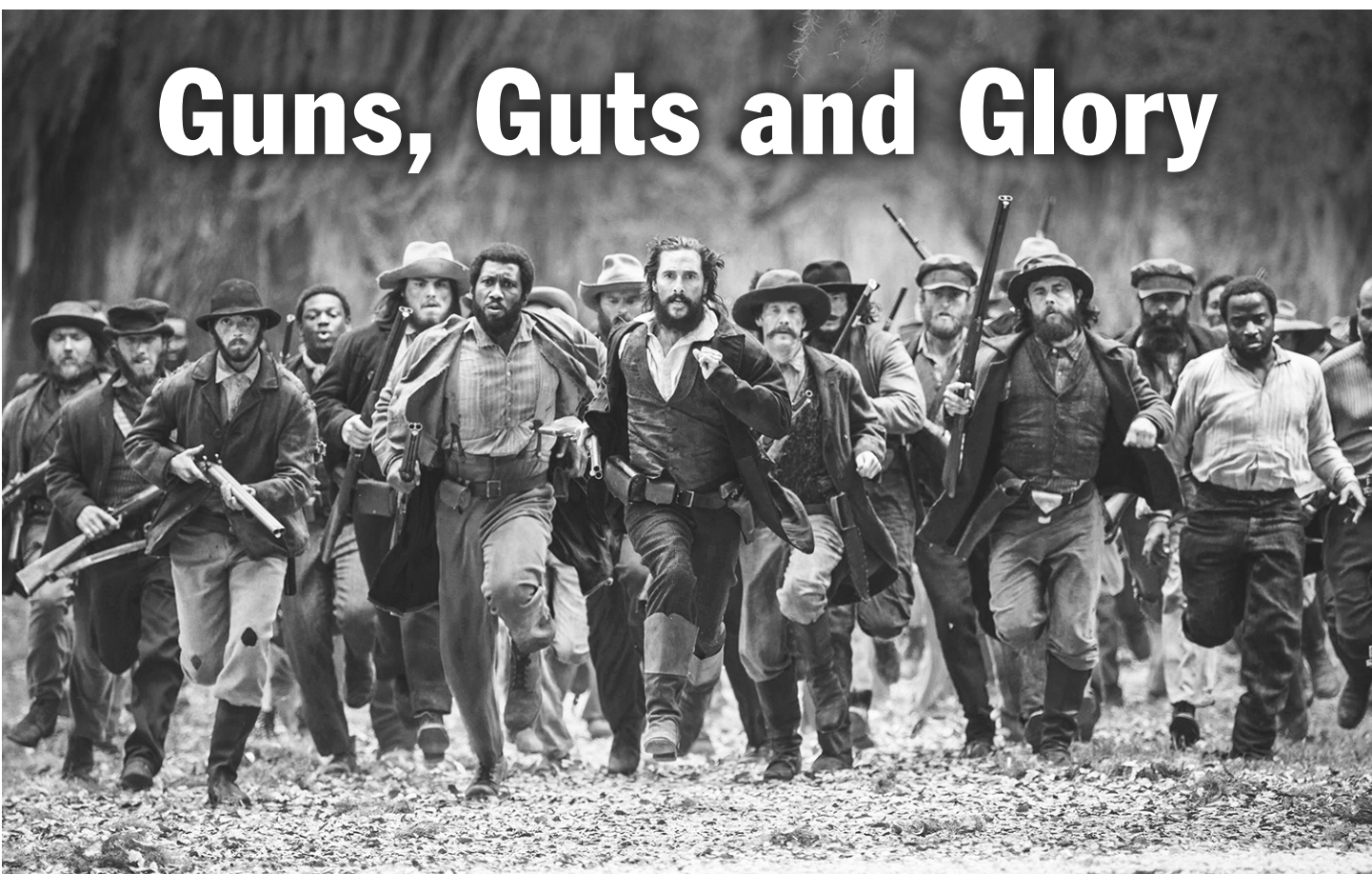
Free State of Jones, starring Matthew McConaughey, is a historically accurate and inspiring account of a racially integrated rebellion in the Deep South against the Confederacy during the Civil War. Based on a true story, the movie illuminates one of the pages that had, until recent decades, been redacted from American history. It is the first movie that provides a truthful—albeit too brief—account of the period of Reconstruction following the Civil War.

The Civil War and Reconstruction constituted the Second American Revolution. The war was a conflict between two social systems: Northern industrial capitalism and Southern slavery. The Union Army, which included 200,000 black troops who helped turn the tide of war, crushed the slave system. During Radical Reconstruction, black and white radicals of the Republican Party, protected by Union soldiers, sought to fulfill the promise of racial equality in the South. However, the victorious Northern bourgeoisie, in pursuit of its class interests, betrayed Reconstruction by making common cause with the vanquished Southern landholders. The defeat of Reconstruction has left a lasting imprint on American society: the black population was consolidated as an oppressed race-color caste, the majority of which is forcibly segregated at the bottom of society.

The movie tells the remarkable story of Newton Knight, an antislavery, pro-Union white farmer in Jones County, Mississippi. During the Civil War, Knight deserted the Confederate Army and led an integrated militia of escaped slaves and other white deserters that fought fierce battles against the Confederacy. They eventually raised the Union flag in Confederate president Jefferson Davis’s home state, and declared Jones County and the surrounding area a free state.

As the movie unfolds, it tracks the evolution of Knight’s consciousness—from a disillusioned Confederate soldier to a defender of poor farmers, to a skilled and resourceful guerrilla war leader, to a militant defender of black rights during Reconstruction. To avoid conscription, Knight reluctantly enlisted in the Confederate Army, and chose to serve as a battlefield orderly attending to wounded soldiers rather than fire his rifle at Union troops. When the Confederate Congress passed the “Twenty Negro Law,” which exempted planters who owned 20 or more slaves from military service, Knight and his friend Jasper Collins were infuriated. The film shows Collins declaring that this law “makes it a rich man’s war and a poor man’s fight,” as he threw down his weapon and left the Confederate Army for good. Newton soon followed Collins out of the Southern military, turning his back to the Confederacy and his guns against it.

Knight returned to a home ravaged by the Confederacy’s hated “tax-in-kind” seizures that left small farmers and their families destitute and near starvation. Appalled by these conditions, Knight decided to intercede on behalf of his neighbors, arming and training them to confront Confederate soldiers. In one



Murray Close/STX Productions
Movie scene depicts band of Confederate deserters and runaway slaves storming Mississippi plantation.

Free State of Jones: A Movie Review

By Salah Shami

scene, a mother and her young daughters, all armed under Knight’s leadership, successfully barred tax agents from pillaging their farm.

For those efforts, Knight was pursued by the authorities and their bloodhounds, and he found refuge among a group of runaway slaves living deep in the swamps of Piney Woods. He was led to them by Rachel (portrayed by Gugu Mbatha-Raw), a domestic slave who provided the group with food and information on Confederate moves. She eventually became Knight’s lover, and later they lived together as husband and wife. Soon Knight was joined by other deserters, among them Jasper Collins.

As its ranks swelled, the band of deserters and runaway slaves organized themselves into a guerrilla force, elected Knight their captain and vowed to do what they could to aid the Union. They ambushed Southern troops, destroyed railroads, burned bridges and raided plantations and food warehouses. In one powerful scene, armed men and women, black and white, avenge the execution of their comrades at the hands of Confederate officials by using the funeral as a cover to launch a surprise attack on Confederate soldiers. The film powerfully shows the

important role that arms have long played in the struggle for black rights—and the rights of all the oppressed.

In the spring of 1864, the Knight militia chased the Confederate forces out of Jones County and raised the federal flag over the county courthouse in Ellisville. The film shows Knight enunciating a series of principles in declaring the Free State of Jones, including: “Every man is a man—If you walk on two legs, you’re a man” and “No man ought to stay poor so another man can get rich.”

By 1876, Knight had retreated to his farm on the Jasper County border. He and Rachel had five children together. Knight also fathered nine children with his first (white) wife, Serena, and the two families lived on the same farm. He deeded Rachel 160 acres of land to secure her independence. Newton Knight died in 1922 at the age of 84. Defying segregation laws, he instructed that he should be buried next to Rachel. His gravestone, with an emblem of his beloved shotgun, reads: “He Lived For Others.”

The Myth of “White Skin Privilege”

Free State of Jones has generated a fair amount of criticism, notably from some liberal black commentators who have screeched against its portrayal of Knight as a “white savior.” In a June 27 article, *New York Times* columnist Charles Blow claimed that the movie “centers on the ally instead of the enslaved.” Blow willfully distorts the fact that it was the runaway slaves who saved Knight, not the other way around. They sheltered him, tended to his wounds and taught him how to survive in the swamps.

Blow claims that the film “purges” slavery “of too much of its barbarism.” Yet much of the power of the film is precisely that it portrays slaves not just as tortured victims of a barbaric system—though that reality is omnipresent—but also as members of an organized force in rebellion against their oppressors. New-

ton Knight was not a fiction. He was a historical figure, and the movie accurately tells his story based on historical research, particularly Victoria Bynum’s *The Free State of Jones: Mississippi’s Longest Civil War* (2001).

In fact, the film punctures many of the myths that have long been promoted to bury the true history of the Civil War and Reconstruction. Under the racist ideology of the “lost cause,” the South supposedly fought for home and independence, while the North fought for the Union—with slavery all but written out of the account. Reconstruction was deemed the worst period in U.S. history, born of a vindictive North that forced military rule on the South and imposed “Negro domination.”

As Gary Ross, the director of *Free State of Jones*, points out on the film’s website, popular depictions of Reconstruction are captured by movies like *Birth of a Nation* (1915), “a racist film that misleads, rewrites, and obscures the truth about Reconstruction.” Similarly, *Gone with the Wind* (1939) mourns the destruction of the “Southern way of life” in the wake of the war. In reality, the “lost cause” of the Civil War was



Courier & Ives

The first black members of Congress, elected during Radical Reconstruction.



Herman Welborn Collection
Newton Knight, heroic fighter for black rights.

slavery, as Confederate leaders openly proclaimed at the time.

Yet today, Knight’s race rankles in an age in which “white skin privilege,” the lie that all white people benefit from black oppression, has become common currency on college campuses and in liberal milieus. This idea denies that class divisions exist within the white population and that racial oppression serves to deepen the exploitation of *all* workers. The horrific conditions of life—rotten schools and dilapidated housing, widespread unemployment and low-wage jobs, no health care—that blacks and immigrant workers have long endured are now increasingly faced by the working class as a whole. The mythology of “white skin privilege” is born of despair that rejects integrated class and social struggle to beat back the attacks of the capitalist rulers, or, at best, cannot even conceive of it.

In a hostile review in *The Atlantic* (28 June), Vann Newkirk wrote: “The film’s ideas about race and its main character Knight are textbook examples of how not to have conversations about white privilege, ‘allyship,’ and black struggle.” Newkirk charges that the film sidesteps “the racial politics of a mixed-race insurgency in the South” and portrays the escaped slaves as being “impossibly trusting” of Knight. In fact, the film does not shy away from depicting the race prejudice of some of the militia’s white members—and of Knight’s struggle with them, notwithstanding the liberal lie that racial divisions are fixed and unalterable. Whether consciously or not, the film reflects the vitally important reality that united struggle by the oppressed tends to break down racial, ethnic and other divisions.

**Reconstruction:
A Promise Betrayed**

While overwhelmingly accurate, *Free State of Jones* does have at least one serious inaccuracy. After raising the Union flag in Ellisville, the film shows Knight sending one of his men to Union general William T. Sherman to appeal for aid, but only getting 100 rifles. Feeling abandoned, Knight then addresses his supporters, telling them, “we’re kinda our own country,” and issues the decree establishing the Free State of Jones. Actually, there is evidence that Sherman forwarded the support request up the chain of command and that there were several attempts by Union commanders to send aid, including 400 rifles, but they were captured by Confederate forces. As Knight himself explained in a 1921 interview, “The Federals sent a company to recruit us. That company was waylaid by some Confederates near Rocky Creek. It surrendered.”

The movie also gives short shrift to the period of Reconstruction, though it contains scenes, some of them unique in Hollywood cinematography, that powerfully evoke the post-Civil War reality in the South. We see a plantation owner cynically pronouncing an oath of allegiance to the Union and then getting back his land. The scene refers to the period of Presidential Reconstruction immediately after the Civil War. That period began when Vice President Andrew Johnson, a virulent racist, assumed the presidency following the assassination of Lincoln in April 1865. Later that year, the 13th Amendment was ratified, abolishing slavery. However, Johnson carried out a policy of conciliation toward the South, amnestying leaders of the defeated Confederacy and returning them to power.

Meanwhile, many Southern states enacted Black Codes that all but re-enslaved blacks. They included forced labor contracts, which specified that black “servants” who quit their jobs would be arrested and returned to their “masters,” and vagrancy laws under which blacks could be arrested and “hired out” to white employers if they couldn’t prove they had a job. Another source of labor for white employers was provided by “apprenticeship” laws whereby black children could be forcibly assigned to employers.

Knight continued his fight during Reconstruction. In 1872 he was appointed



Union Army smashed slavery in Civil War. Etching depicts General William T. Sherman on 1864 march to the sea and former slaves fleeing to freedom.

deputy U.S. marshal for the Southern District, and in 1875 he became a colonel of the First Regiment Infantry of Jasper County, an otherwise all-black regiment. He was also assigned to rescue black children held by planters as virtual slaves. One scene shows Knight paying a plantation owner in order to free a black child who had been kidnapped and consigned to “apprenticeship.” In reality, the freeing of “apprentices” was often more forceful than depicted in the film.

In 1866, Congress passed the 14th Amendment, which defined citizenship for the first time in U.S. history and granted it to the former slaves. By the following year, Congress had taken control of Reconstruction, overriding Johnson’s repeated vetoes and even impeaching him (though falling short of removing him from office by one vote). Radical Republicans in Congress carried out what became known as Radical Reconstruction—or “Military Reconstruction,” as it is termed in the movie. That brief, tumultuous and extraordinary period was the most democratic and racially egalitarian in American history. The Reconstruction Acts of 1867 and ’68 placed the Southern states under military rule and imposed manhood suffrage without regard to race. The right of all male citizens to vote regardless of “race, color, or previous condition of servitude” was formalized nationally in 1870 with passage of the 15th Amendment.

The former slaves voted enthusiastically at rates as high as 90 percent, sending 14 representatives to the House and two to the Senate (both from Mississippi). P.B.S. Pinchback, a black man, briefly served as governor of Louisiana. Nearly 700 black men sat in various state legislatures, and hundreds of others served in local posts, including as judges. For the first time, a public education system for black people as well as impoverished whites was established in the South, although the schools were largely segregated by race. Union Leagues organized the vote and self-defense against racist terror. They offered education in citizenship and protection in numbers.

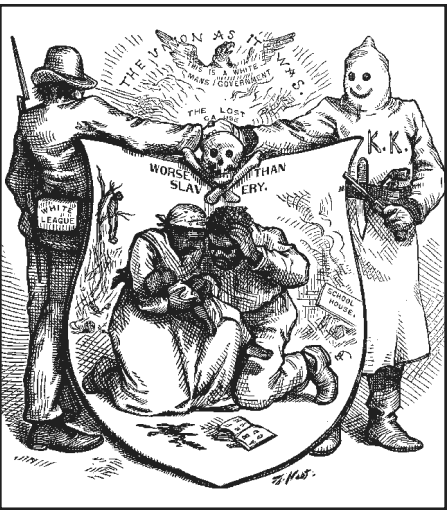
What made these achievements possible were the federal troops, many of them black, stationed in the South to suppress resistance by the former slavocracy, which was organized in the Democratic Party and its Ku Klux Klan and other terrorist auxiliaries. But while Radical Reconstruction provided unprecedented political rights for the former slaves, it did not address the fundamental question of land. Radical Republican Congressman Thaddeus Stevens fought to break up the landed estates of the former slavocracy, and to redistribute the land to the freedmen and to landless whites, underlining that this would cement a political alliance between blacks and poor whites.

But the American bourgeoisie was not interested in a thoroughgoing social reconstruction of the South. Whatever their views on political rights for black people, the vast majority of Republicans adamantly opposed land confiscation. The bourgeoisie’s aim was not to create a class of independent black yeomen farm-

ers but to get the black agricultural workforce back to toiling for the landowners.

The refusal to distribute land to the freedmen drove many back onto the plantations as sharecroppers and tenant farmers, where they were tied to the land through contracts and loans and forced into permanent debt peonage. The movie evokes that reality with a scene of former slaves toiling on a plantation under conditions of gang labor, not far removed from slavery.

As calls for “reconciliation” with the former Confederacy grew louder, the Northern bourgeoisie began a gradual retreat from Reconstruction. Laws disenfranchising former Confederate leaders were repealed. Quickly, the states fell under Democratic Party control. Scenes in *Free State* show KKK nightriders sowing terror and burning down a black church. Another scene shows a march of a mostly black Union League contingent on election day to cast their votes. The armed contingent forces local officials to accept their Republican ballots, which are then not included in the vote tally.



As Northern capitalists betrayed Reconstruction, racist reaction (depicted in 1874 cartoon) was given free hand against black freedmen.

The unstated background to that scene was the “Mississippi Plan,” an open campaign of terror by the Democratic Party and its murderous auxiliaries that effectively destroyed the Republican Party in the South.

The fate of Reconstruction was finally sealed in the Compromise of 1877. In exchange for Republican Rutherford Hayes getting the presidency, the few hundred federal troops remaining in the South were pulled out. Some of those troops were dispatched to wage war on Native Americans. Others were sent to repress the Great Rail Strike of 1877, the first nationwide strike in the country. While the Compromise of 1877 was the culmination of a process of treachery by the bourgeoisie, it did represent a decisive statement by the federal government that it would no longer intervene on behalf of black people in the South.

The post-Reconstruction period, cynically called “Redemption” by racists, was marked by a political counterrevolution aimed at black people and enforced

by race terror. Black people continued to tenaciously and courageously fight for their rights. But, abandoned by the capitalist rulers, they could not stem the reversal of their hard-won rights. Within one to two decades, Southern states expanded the convict lease system and instituted rigid Jim Crow segregation, enforced through lynch law and given legal sanction with the 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* Supreme Court decision. (See “Defeat of Reconstruction and the Betrayal of Black Freedom,” WV Nos. 1039 and 1040, 7 and 21 February 2014).

For Multiracial Class Struggle

The story of Newton Knight’s militia puts the lie to the claims of a unified Southern white populace and loyal slaves resisting the “invading Yankees.” The farmers of Jones County were not alone in their opposition to the Confederacy. While most Southern whites supported slavery, only a quarter or so were slave owners. Many white farmers, forced to fight for a system in which they had no stake, turned against the Confederacy, especially in opposition to the seizure of their crops and livestock to support the war. Fully one-eighth of all Confederate troops deserted during the course of the war.

Counties in western Virginia seceded in 1861 from the Confederacy and joined the Union in 1863 as a separate state, West Virginia. In East Tennessee, Unionists declared the state’s secession null and void, and some 31,000 white Tennesseans joined the Union Army. The First Alabama Cavalry, a thousand-strong regiment, was the headquarters escort during Sherman’s march to the sea. They were among the more than 100,000 white Southerners who served in the Union Army. Meanwhile, with every Union advance, countless slaves escaped the plantations, depriving the Confederacy of its labor force.

The Civil War was the last great, progressive act of American capitalism, when, for a short time, the interests of the bourgeoisie coincided with those of black people in the fight against slavery. To further the consolidation of industrial capitalism, the North was compelled to destroy the system of chattel slavery, which had become an obstacle to capitalist expansion. Slavery was smashed, but its legacy of racial oppression lives on as the bedrock of American capitalism.

The legacy of slavery is invoked in scenes threaded throughout *Free State of Jones* that fast-forward to the 1948 trial and conviction of Knight and Rachel’s great-grandson, Davis Knight. He was accused of “miscegenation,” the racists’ term for interracial marriage and sex. Two years before his trial, Davis had married a white woman. Based on the “one drop of black blood” rule, “anti-miscegenation” laws were enacted throughout Southern states during the Jim Crow era. They remained on the books until 1967 when, at the height of the civil rights movement, the Supreme Court invalidated them in the landmark *Loving v. Virginia* decision.

Karl Marx spoke the great truth about America when he wrote, “Labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the black it is branded.” The central enduring feature of American capitalism is the structural oppression of the black population. Obscuring the fundamental class division between the capitalists who own the means of production and the working class who must sell their labor power to survive, racism and white supremacy have served to bind white workers to their capitalist exploiters based on the illusion of a commonality of interest based on skin color.

But black or white, native-born or immigrant—the whole of the working class has a common interest in combating black oppression and sweeping away the capitalist order. The key is to bring that understanding to the proletariat. The road to black liberation lies in the struggle to forge a revolutionary workers party that will lead the multiracial working class in the fight for socialist revolution, a third American revolution in which black workers are slated to play a leading role. ■

We print below a translation of an article published by our comrades of the *Lega Trotskista d'Italia* in their newspaper *Spartaco* (No. 79, April 2016).

At the end of November 2015, the Vatican tribunal brought journalists Emiliano Fittipaldi and Gianluigi Nuzzi to trial. They are, respectively, authors of *Avarizia* and *Via Crucis* [the latter is published in English as *Merchants in the Temple*]. These two books revealed the Holy See's wealth and scandals, including by publishing secret documents and investigations into the Vatican bank (IOR) and the financial dealings of bishops and cardinals. The journalists' presumed sources were also put on trial: Lucio Vallejo Balda, a Spanish prelate and ex-secretary to the commission (COSEA) that conducted an inquiry into the Vatican's finances, and his collaborators, Francesca Immacolata Chaouqui and Nicola Maio. [On July 7, the Vatican court sentenced Vallejo Balda to 18 months of prison and gave Chaouqui a suspended sentence of ten months. The court found Nicola Maio not guilty and ruled that it had no jurisdiction over Fittipaldi and Nuzzi.]

Via Crucis and *Avarizia* detail the finances of the Vatican, whose institutions manage its own and others' assets totaling approximately 9-10 billion euros



[\$10-11 billion]. The financial shenanigans they document include fraud, the high-flying lifestyles of cardinals, extensive international investments, the huge moneymaking business of church hospitals, the Vatican bank's schemes and intrigues, and the real value of the Pope's finances. The *London Review of Books* (18 February) aptly described what the two books reveal:

"The anecdotes are endless: the monsignor who appropriates a room from the adjacent apartment of a poorer priest simply by knocking down the party wall while the other man is in hospital; the diplomat priest who takes advantage of the diplomatic bag to carry mafia money across the Swiss border; the organisation Propaganda Fide, instituted to evangelise the world, that spends relatively little on this mission while owning almost a thousand valuable properties in and around Rome, many of them rented way below market price to friends and favourites.

"It is striking how many Catholic organisations seem to do a whole range of lucrative things they were never set up to do, while still enjoying tax exemption as religious institutions. When priests in Salerno were granted €2.3 million of public money to build an orphanage in a depressed urban area, they built a luxury hotel instead. Found guilty of appropriating funds under false pretences in 2012, the archbishop of Salerno avoided punishment when the crime lapsed under the statute of limitations before his appeal could be heard."

The greed and corruption of the Roman Curia has been common knowledge since the days of Dante and Luther, when the Vatican earned its name the "Whore of Babylon." The 1970s and 1980s were marked by interminable scandals over the

Pope's Inquisition Targets Journalists



Reuters

Journalists Gianluigi Nuzzi and Emiliano Fittipaldi leaving the Vatican at the end of their trial, July 7. Right: Jorge Mario Bergoglio (aka Pope Francis).



ZUMA

The Vatican: Cancer of Italy

Vatican's connections to the P2 Masonic Lodge, South American military regimes, crooked bankers like Michele Sindona and Roberto Calvi, and organized crime. Thus, nobody will be surprised by what *Avarizia* and *Via Crucis* bring to light. Nevertheless, it is always good to see that from time to time someone reminds people of the real face behind the Vatican's hypocritical mask.

The Vatican tribunal did not question the veracity of the writers' assertions. Rather, the journalists have been accused of "divulging confidential information," which the Vatican considers a "crime against the fatherland," punishable by four to eight years in jail. Nuzzi described the first hearing as "a medieval procedure—crazy, absurd, Kafkaesque." The accused were not charged with any specific facts to be proven; they were not shown the procedural documentation until just a few hours before the hearing;

and they were not allowed to use their own lawyers but were instead forced to choose attorneys officially registered with the Vatican court.

One might think the clock had turned back to 1864, when Pope Pius IX (known as "Pope Pig" by Romans at the time, but beatified by the Vatican in 2000) issued his Encyclical against communism, socialism, civil marriage, freedom of religion, the right to public schools, and decreed that it was "insanity" to believe that "liberty of conscience and worship is each man's personal right, which ought to be legally proclaimed and asserted in every rightly constituted society; and that a right resides in the citizens to an absolute liberty, which should be restrained by no authority whether ecclesiastical or civil, whereby they may be able openly and publicly to manifest and declare any of their ideas whatever, either by word of mouth, by the press, or in any other way" ("Condemning Current Errors," 8 December 1864).

But it is 2016. The instigator of the trial is Jorge Mario Bergoglio (alias Pope Francis), monarch of the Vatican state with full legislative, executive and judicial powers. The aim is to silence the Vatican whistle-blowers as well as the journalists who published their testimonies.

We demand: Drop all charges against Nuzzi, Fittipaldi and their sources! We oppose the fact that the Catholic church arrogates the right to bring anyone to trial, especially journalists who shed light on the Vatican's shady business.

Abolish the Concordat! Rescind the Lateran Treaty!

The Italian government endorsed the Vatican's trial of the journalists, declaring through its mouthpiece, Interior Minister Angelino Alfano: "The Vatican has its own judicial system—one must never forget that in this kind of situation, the rules of international rights prevail." What international rights? The Lateran

Treaty of 1929, introduced under Mussolini's fascist regime, granted the Catholic church sovereignty over a 44 hectare [109 acre] enclave in central Rome. This maneuver gave the church rights of extraterritoriality, countless privileges inside public Italian institutions, Catholic indoctrination in public schools and hefty funding masked as "international" prerogatives. But the fact that the Roman Catholic church can claim the right to arrest its employees and try journalists is one more example of the reactionary interpenetration of the Catholic church and the Italian capitalist state.

As for the judicial order of the Vatican, it is nothing but garbage left over from the Middle Ages. The Vatican still has a "Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith," which, as the Vatican website says, "Founded in 1542 by Pope Paul III...was originally called the Sacred Congregation of the Universal Inquisition as its duty was to defend the Church from heresy." For centuries, the Inquisition was the means by which "heretics," Jews, Muslims, etc., were condemned to horrific torture, jail and death. To cite another example: the President of the Court of Vatican City, who sent Nuzzi and Fittipaldi to trial, is none other than Count Giuseppe Dalla Torre del Tempio di Sanguinetto, Lieutenant-General and Knight of the Grand Cross of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, founded in 1099 by Goffredo di Buglione during the First Crusade...yet this "court" is legally recognized by the Italian Republic "founded in the Resistance." Amen.

At issue is not simply defending freedom of the press from clerical meddling, but fighting for the abolition of all privileges that the Italian state grants the Catholic church.

Marxism is a materialist and atheist worldview and hostile to all religions. All churches, whatever they may be, are instruments of bourgeois reaction to defend exploitation and to drug the work-



Mary Evans

Cardinal Pietro Gasparri and fascist dictator Benito Mussolini sign Lateran Treaty in Rome, February 1929.

ing class. We uphold the ideals of freedom expounded by the Enlightenment. We Marxists fight for the democratic principle of equality of citizens—which demands that religious beliefs be viewed as a private matter. If someone wants to worship Jesus Christ, Mohammed, Satan, or Otelma the Wizard [an Italian TV personality], they should be able to do so without government interference, but also without any state support. We do not want religion of any kind to determine public policies or be imposed in schools. This is the meaning of the *separation of church and state*.

We oppose every form of persecution and oppression of all non-Catholic citizens—whether atheists or followers of other religions—particularly the one-and-a-half million Muslim immigrants and citizens who are regularly the victims of racist attacks and discrimination. For this reason, from France to Italy, we oppose government attempts to ban the Islamic headscarf or *hijab* in schools and public buildings. We are also opposed to laws, like those that were approved in Lombardy and are now also proposed in Veneto, to obstruct the building of mosques and other places of worship for religious minorities. (All this in a country where there is a Catholic church on every corner and where nobody bats an eye at the fact that ninety thousand nuns walk the streets in veils of their religious order.)

Pope Francis Poses Pure as the Driven Snow

Bergoglio’s ascension to the papacy was carried out to great fanfare in the media, pushed by a big chunk of the reformist and liberal left, to present him as a “progressive” reformer of the Catholic church for supposedly opening his arms to the poor, immigrants, women and homosexuals. *The Advocate* (an LGBT journal in the U.S.) named him its “Person of the Year” for 2013. Meanwhile in Italy, Nichi Vendola, head of the Left Ecology and Freedom Party, wrote ecstatically on Facebook: “If political life had one-millionth of Bergoglio’s capacity to listen and breathe, then it really could transform itself and the lives of those who suffer.” But has anything changed about the role of the Catholic church as a bulwark of reaction under capitalism?

In 2013, France was rocked by mass reactionary demonstrations against gay marriage, organized by Catholic forces. On January 30 of this year, Catholic bigots staged a huge “Family Day” event in Rome to try to block the parliament from introducing a law recognizing gay civil unions. The despicable role of the Catholic church was also demonstrated recently in Brazil, where the spreading Zika virus epidemic has led to a dramatic increase in newborn babies affected by microcephaly. In a country where millions of people live in abject poverty with no access to health care and where abortion is illegal except in instances involving rape, incest, encephalitis or endangerment of the mother’s life, the Zika virus has spurred demands for therapeutic abortions as an emergency measure. In response, the Catholic church in Brazil ranted against abortion and contraception and cynically preached “abstinence.”

Paradoxically, both *Avarizia* and *Via Crucis* are part of Francis of Buenos Aires’s supposed campaign of reform against corruption in the church. Fittipaldi describes the struggle underway inside the “Vatican jungle” of “discredited and voracious Italian cardinals” gathered around Cardinal Bertone vs. Bergoglio’s supporters for control of the Vatican’s two financial institutions: IOR (the Vatican bank) and APSA (Administration of the Patrimony of the Apostolic See). This conflict reflects the tensions between the Italian ecclesiastical hierarchy, which has historically controlled the Vatican, and the Catholic church internationally, particularly in South America and Africa, where the majority of practicing Catholics are now found. To strengthen his hand, Bergoglio has resuscitated the timeworn church rhetoric that “blessed are the poor,” which resonates



Buenos Aires, 1982: Argentinian dictator General Leopoldo Galtieri with Pope John Paul II.

in the underdeveloped world, and he has launched a campaign against “corruption” in the Vatican establishment. There are several reasons for the Vatican’s new posture. On the one hand, it is an attempt to stem hemorrhaging from the church in Latin America, where tens of millions of followers (some 30 percent in Honduras and Nicaragua and 15 percent in Brazil), mainly from among the poor, have deserted Catholicism for Pentecostal or evangelical churches over the past 20 years. On the other hand, in this historical period, in which a handful of capitalist exploiters are amassing inconceivable wealth while billions live in desperate destitution, the Catholic church is trying to regain approval ratings by offering a pinch of charity and large quantities of religious opium.

As we wrote when Bergoglio first visited Cuba:

“The current Pope, the first from Latin America, has sought to carve out a progressive image through his homilies on behalf of the poor and oppressed. But, fawning statements by the PCC bureaucrats to the contrary, the face behind Francis’ mask is deeply reactionary. In his youth, Jorge Bergoglio was a member of Argentina’s right-wing, clericalist Iron Guard. He was part of the Catholic hierarchy there in the 1970s and early ’80s, when the church shored up the military junta of General Jorge Videla. The generals’ bloodsoaked regime, which was backed to the hilt by U.S. imperialism, killed or ‘disappeared’ at least 30,000 workers and leftists. A bishop or a cardinal was present at every public event or national holiday to bless the dictators.”

—“Castro Regime Welcomes Reactionary Vatican,”
WV No. 1077, 30 October 2015

In the same period, the Vatican spearheaded the imperialists’ Cold War anti-Communist offensive against the Soviet Union. Selecting as Pope Karol Wojtyla [also known as John Paul II] in 1978 was a clear sign of the church’s eagerness to be in the front line of the efforts to restore capitalism in the Soviet degenerated workers state and across East Europe. The Vatican was especially instrumental in funneling enormous amounts of money to Solidarność, the Polish company “union” also financed by the CIA.

Argentina was one of the last stops on the infamous “Ratline”—the system by which the Vatican and the Red Cross, in cahoots with the Allied Occupation Forces, rescued thousands of Nazi and fascist war criminals at the end of World War II and recycled them for the fight against communism. To name just a few of the individuals who were taken to safety in Argentina via passage through Italian convents in Tirol and the Port of Genoa: Adolf Eichmann, the infamous “architect” of the Holocaust; Josef Mengele; Erich Priebke, the butcher of the Ardeatine caves massacre; and Ante Pavelic, the bloodthirsty “Duce” of the Croatian Ustasha.

The Vatican: Cancer of Italy

The existence of the Vatican, to borrow the words of revolutionary democrat Giuseppe Garibaldi, is “the cancer of Italy.” It is a medieval relic that transformed itself into a bastion of the capitalist system. The Catholic church has historically played the role of world center of social and political reaction. The struggle of the emerging bourgeois classes to forge modern nation states and political democracy was above all a struggle against the Catholic church, which was the economic and ideological center of feudalism. This was doubly true in Italy, where the church had its own state and where, to borrow another phrase by Garibaldi, “the first order of business in Italy is to shake the Vatican’s rotten catafalque, smash it to pieces and get rid of it” (Letter to Melari, 14 March 1870).

However, unlike the 1789 French Revolution, the Italian bourgeois revolution was neither radical nor democratic. By the mid 19th century, the Italian bourgeoisie was a latecomer and too weak to place itself at the head of an agrarian revolution. Like other capitalist classes in Europe following the 1848 insurrections, it feared uprisings by the proletariat or peasantry so much that it preferred to ally itself with the remnants of the aristocracy in order to hold back or suppress any movements by the peasantry or by the proletariat in the cities. The result

was a non-democratic bourgeois revolution from above, devoid of the radical, democratic and popular qualities of the Great French Revolution. If on the one hand, the unification of Italy laid the basis for the development of a modern capitalist economy, clearing aside certain obsolete feudal structures and tiny absolutist states, on the other hand, it granted power to the House of Savoy monarchy. The latter was in alliance with southern Italian landowners and granted limited suffrage to a tiny stratum of the propertied elite, which comprised less than 2 percent of the population (and women were excluded). Although it eliminated papal power in secular matters and annulled many of the feudal privileges enjoyed by the clergy, the Italian state allowed the church to maintain a vital foothold—just one year after Piedmontese troops took Rome in 1870, the House of Savoy [the Italian monarchy] introduced the Law of Guarantees, conceding a small city-state with rights of extraterritoriality to the Pope in the Vatican.

While the church initially boycotted the new Italian state, it gradually abandoned this stance when it became clear to both the Vatican and the Italian capitalists that they had to unite in common cause against the rising tide of proletarian and peasant struggles that rocked Italy multiple times in the early 20th century. This process culminated in the marriage between the Catholic church and the Italian state, which was officially celebrated on 11 February 1929, when the Vatican and Benito Mussolini’s fascist regime signed the Lateran Treaty, formally ending the conflict between the Vatican and the Kingdom of Italy. What cemented the alliance between the church and fascism was the need to unite forces against the working class. Workers had taken power in Russia in 1917, led by the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky, and their example inspired a revolutionary wave throughout Europe, including Italy’s *biennio rosso* of 1919-20.

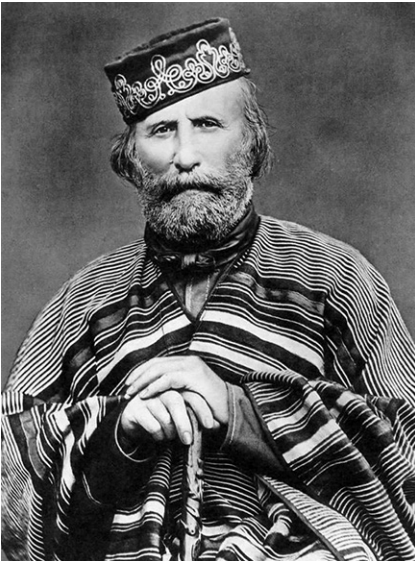
The Lateran Treaty sanctioned the formation of the Vatican as a real, independent state in the center of Rome and granted the Catholic church various extraterritorial rights. The Concordat made Catholicism the official and exclusive state religion, imposed Catholic religion as the foundation of public education, and granted legal authority to religious marriages. Furthermore, the Vatican was showered with gold through the payment of hefty “reparations” for the 1870 “conquest” of Rome and through the state’s commitment to pay the salaries of priests. In exchange, the clergy enthusiastically supported fascism in all its repressive actions, imposition of racial laws, and in its imperialist adventures, from the invasion of Ethiopia to the Spanish Civil War.

By the end of WWII, the bourgeois order was discredited in the eyes of the working class and vast sections of the population. Likewise, the Catholic church was discredited for its collaboration with fascism and capital. Both were saved thanks only to the treacherous role played by the leaders of the Italian Communist Party (PCI).

continued on page 10



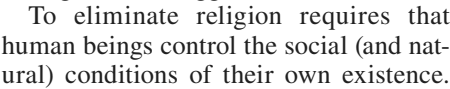
Breach of Porta Pia depicts the 1870 final battle of the unification of Italy, a non-democratic bourgeois revolution led by Giuseppe Garibaldi (right).



(continued from page 9)

In 1984, the Concordat was formally revised and cloaked with a little verbiage such as the statement that Catholicism “is not the only religion” of the Italian state. But the substance of the Lateran Treaty remained. Indeed, some of the church’s privileges were reinforced: for example, religion is now taught in public schools starting in kindergarten. State funding of the church was multiplied and the “Eight per Thousand” tax law was introduced, enabling priests to pocket about a billion euros per year. And funding for the church doesn’t stop there. According to meticulous research by the Union of Rationalist Atheists and Agnostics (UAAR), if all tax exemptions are taken into account, the Catholic church receives an estimated nearly 6.5 billion euros each year from the state, including the state-funded wages paid to religion teachers selected by bishops, state financing of private

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As for the reformist left, it has always spread the myth that no matter how horrendous, corrupt and servile the church today is to the powers that be, workers must be guided by the true spirit of Christianity—"the social doctrine of the Church." In a recent example, during a public debate organized last November by Rifondazione Comunista secretary Ferrero and featuring the Bishop of Asti, Ferrero repeated for the umpteenth time that "Catholic social doctrine, with its insistence on the need to redistribute wealth, to limit profits, represents something positive and is a strong

"In order to win over a new generation to the struggle for socialism, based on a materialist conception of society, socialists must ceaselessly combat religion and other forms of idealism which look toward the supernatural, explaining that freedom from oppression lies in this world, not another." ■

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Turkey...

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and schools have been a particular target, with 15,000 teachers and staff tossed out of their jobs. More than 20 TV and radio stations have been shut down and news websites blocked. The repression has now spread to the labor movement, with 19 trade unions shut down. As Erdogan put it, for his regime, the failed coup was “a gift from God.”

On the night of the coup, Erdogan, from an undisclosed location, called on his supporters, including through the mosques, to mobilize in the streets. They did, called out by fundamentalist imams throughout the cities. Erdogan and his Justice and Development Party (AKP) will doubtless use the botched coup to accelerate the ongoing Islamization of Turkey, which will target any proponent of secularism and especially women, the left and minorities. There are reports of women in Western dress being attacked on the streets, and at least one religious group, the Ismailaga movement, has issued a decree ordering women to stay home. According to the *Jacobin* website (18 July), Islamist thugs, sometimes with the support of the police, attacked leftist Kurdish and Alevi (a religious minority) neighborhoods in Istanbul, Ankara and Antakya the night after the coup.

Erdogan’s repressive measures have not stopped a slice of the pseudo-socialist left from hailing his victory over the coup plotters as a wonder of “democracy.” On July 18, the U.S. International Socialist Organization reprinted an article on its website that rejoiced that the Islamist Erdogan was “saved...by the Turkish masses” and praised “the heroic fight put up by ordinary people to defend what remains of democracy in Turkey.” Two days earlier, the British Socialist Workers Party (SWP), which has supporters in Turkey, had issued a similar statement, fawning over “the way in which the plotters were beaten, by popular mobilisation” and claiming that this “could open the way to a more democratic Turkey.” The SWP urged on Erdogan’s purges: “The first task is to make sure the coup has been broken and that anti-democratic elements are

purged from the armed forces.” And the regime’s next task was to shut down the trade unions!

The Turkish masses are being strangled by decaying capitalism, with over a century of imperialist subjugation serving to arrest social progress. Turkey is a land of glaring disparities. A sizable industrial proletariat exists in a society still subject to precapitalist forms of exploitation, especially in the countryside. Behind Istanbul’s pubs and cafés, patronized by unveiled women mixing with men, stands a vast country locked in deep poverty and centuries-old backwardness.



Istanbul, July 16: Soldiers involved in failed coup against Erdogan government surrender on Bosphorus Bridge.

These contradictions, which are rooted in the capitalist order, could not and cannot be resolved by the secular nationalism embodied in the doctrines of Kemal Atatürk. The bankruptcy of Kemalism led to the ascendancy of the Islamists.

The only path to social transformation is for Turkey’s large and multinational industrial proletariat, standing at the head of all the oppressed, to sweep away capitalist rule. For this to come about, the work-

ing class requires the consciousness and discipline that can be provided only by a Marxist party modeled on the Bolshevik Party of V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky, which led the multinational proletariat of Russia to power in October 1917.

Such a party, forged through the fusion of advanced workers and revolutionary intellectuals, would fight to break the working class from religious reaction and all forms of nationalism. It would imbue the proletariat of Turkey with the understanding that its own liberation demands championing the just national struggle of the Kurdish masses, whose oppression

Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan.

When the coup first broke out and its success was still uncertain, the U.S. imperialists hedged their bets, with Secretary of State John Kerry simply calling for stability. It was only when it became clear that the coup would fail that the U.S. came out in support of the “democratically elected government of Turkey.” Though relations are today strained, Turkey has for decades served as a key partner of U.S. imperialism, particularly as a member of NATO. After World War II, the U.S.-Turkey alliance targeted the Soviet Union. Since the counter-revolutionary destruction of the USSR in 1991-92, the U.S. has looked to Turkey, often vaunted as a “stable” and “moderate” Sunni Muslim regime, as a regional gendarme, most recently relying on the Incirlik air base to carry out bombing raids against ISIS in Syria. At the same time, Turkey is a regional power with its own interests, which do not always coincide with Washington’s.

It is vital for workers in the U.S. to oppose their own imperialist rulers. The same capitalist ruling class that wreaks death and destruction abroad gorges itself on profits while the workers it exploits have their jobs axed and their health and pension benefits torn up. America’s racist rulers unleash their cops to kill black youth on the streets, incarcerate nearly one-quarter of the world’s prison population and round up desperate immigrants for deportation. *U.S. out of the Near East! Down with U.S. imperialism!*

The many peoples of the Near East will never know peace, prosperity or justice until capitalist rule is overthrown. The proletariat in power would reorganize society on the basis of collectivized property and fight to extend the revolution internationally, especially to the U.S., Germany and other imperialist centers. In breaking the chains of exploitation that enslave it, the proletariat will simultaneously open the door to the liberation of all—peasants, women, youth, national and ethnic minorities—who are oppressed under capitalism. Only then will there be a full and equal place for the myriad peoples of the region—Sunnis, Shias and Christians as well as the Kurdish, Palestinian and Israeli Jewish nations. ■

Olympics...

(continued from page 12)

chauvinism, racism and class contempt that has permeated the Olympics. The baron, who adamantly opposed admitting German athletes to the games, declared “the modern athlete honors his country, his race, and his flag.” Shortly before the outbreak of World War I, he advised, “People will learn a great lesson from the athlete: hatred without battle is not worthy of man, and insult without blows is utterly unbecoming.”

Britain and France attended the 1936 Olympics in Berlin as part of their policy of “appeasement” toward Nazi Germany. It was there that black track star Jesse Owens smashed Hitler’s parade of the “Aryan master race” with his record-setting four gold medals. Owens’s final medal, as part of the 4x100-meter relay squad, was made possible by a last-minute decision by U.S. Olympic Committee (USOC) head Avery Brundage to remove Jewish sprinters Marty Glickman and Sam Stoller from the race, in order to spare Hitler the sight of Jews on the medal stand.

After the games, Brundage enthused, “We can learn much from Germany. We, too, if we wish to preserve our institutions, must stamp out communism. We, too, must take steps to arrest the decline of patriotism.” For his heroic efforts, Owens was greeted with a reception at New York’s Waldorf Astoria Hotel, but was forced to enter through a freight elevator. Despite being exhausted after his Olympic performance, Owens was ordered to compete in a number of exhibitions, one of which he refused, leading to his suspension by the Amateur Ath-

letic Union and blacklisting from amateur sports for life.

The Olympic celebration of national chauvinism has at times been punctured by protests against national and racial oppression. In 1906, long jumper Peter O’Connor, an ardent Irish nationalist, chafed at being forced to compete under the British flag. During the medal ceremony, when the Union Jack was hoisted in honor of his silver-medal performance, O’Connor shimmied up the flagpole and unfurled a large green flag bearing a golden harp and the words *Erin Go Bragh* (Ireland Forever). At the 1968 Mexico Olympics, with Brundage at the head of the IOC, gold and bronze medalists Tommie Smith and John Carlos were banished from the U.S. team and given 48 hours to get out of Mexico after they raised the clenched-fist “black power” salute during the medal ceremony in protest against racist discrimination and poverty.

The hysteria over performance enhancers began as a response to the international successes of athletes from the Soviet Union and the East European bureaucraticly deformed workers states in the 1970s and ’80s. Particularly, with the Soviet Union’s first Olympic appearance in 1952, the Olympics were reduced to a symbolic test of superiority between “Soviet Socialist man” and the “rugged individualism” of the capitalist world. It was considered a minor national trauma when the U.S. won fewer medals than the USSR in 1956. This competition intensified with the renewed Cold War inaugurated in the late 1970s under Democrat Jimmy Carter. Following the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan against the murderous U.S.-backed *mujahedin*—the precursors of the Taliban, Al Qaeda and ISIS—Carter ordered the U.S. boycott of

the 1980 Moscow Olympics, with the aim of whipping up an anti-Soviet frenzy.

The Soviet Union, a degenerated workers state, was destroyed through capitalist counterrevolution in 1991-92. However, the U.S. attitude toward Russia today resembles something from the days of the 1950s Cold War era, with the vilification of Russia a theme constantly reiterated by U.S. media and politicians. But the U.S.

imperialists’ hostility to Russia is no longer about overthrowing the collectivized property relations that were established by the 1917 October Revolution. Rather, it is an expression of Washington’s determination to keep Russia, a regional capitalist power with imperial ambitions, out of the club of imperialist powers. To isolate Russia, the U.S. has once again made the Olympics a pawn in its game. ■

ICL Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program

The Declaration of Principles of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) is a concrete expression of our purpose: to build national sections of a democratic-centralist International which can lead the struggle for worldwide socialist revolution. This important document, which was adopted at the Third International Conference of the ICL in early 1998, was published in the four language editions of *Spartacist* and additionally in eleven other languages.

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11

Turkey's Failed Coup: Both Sides Bad For Workers

JULY 23—On July 15, sections of the blood-soaked Turkish military launched a failed attempt to oust the government of Islamist autocrat Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Theories abound as to who was behind the coup. Erdogan claims that his erstwhile Islamist ally, Fethullah Gulen, living in Pennsylvania, orchestrated it. Gulen denies any involvement and claims that the coup was Erdogan's doing in a bid to consolidate power. Others say that it was a plot by the imperialists. Although Erdogan quickly declared that order was re-established, 14 Turkish naval ships went missing as did the commander of the Turkish navy. We don't know who the coup plotters were, but

Down With the State of Emergency!

one thing is clear: the only position in the interest of workers was to oppose both the Erdogan regime and the coup.

Memories are still sharp of the repression rained down on trade unions, the left, Kurds and others after the bloody 1980 military coup. Some 650,000 people were rounded up; 14,000 had their

citizenship revoked; 30,000 fled the country; hundreds were killed. The military junta banned the Kurdish language and carried out a war of terror against the Kurdish people. In the urban centers, the labor movement was strangled and the left decimated.

Today, it is the Erdogan regime (which

has recently been butchering the Kurds) that is intensifying repression, using the coup attempt to quash opposition—real or perceived—and further consolidate power. Shortly after the coup attempt, Erdogan began raising the prospect of re-introducing the death penalty. On July 20, he declared a three-month state of emergency, giving his government and police forces sweeping powers, including a new measure extending the time people can be held without charge from four to 30 days. More than 100 generals and 6,000 military personnel have been arrested. Tens of thousands of public officials, including judges, have been sacked. Universities

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Let the Russians Play!

Olympics 2016

On July 21, the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) upheld the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) ban on Russia's track and field team from the Rio de Janeiro Olympics, which begin on August 5. Russia's exclusion is based on a report by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), which accuses the Russian government, security services and sporting authorities of colluding to hide widespread doping. Three days later, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Executive Board held back from imposing a blanket ban of all Russian athletes. Instead, the IOC left the door slightly ajar for individual athletes to appeal through the governing bodies of the various sports, while reserving to itself the final decision on who would be allowed to compete. Explicitly presumed guilty, the athletes must "rebut the applicability of collective responsibility." Absence of positive drug tests won't assure them a place in Rio, but any Russian athlete who has been previously sanctioned for doping will be automatically barred. Hypocritically, U.S. athletes who have previously served doping bans will be allowed to compete.

Olympic pole vault champion Yelena Isinbayeva accurately calls the persecution of the Russian team a "political hit job." There is little doubt that the strings of the IOC puppet are being pulled by the U.S. imperialists to further their efforts to isolate Vladimir Putin's Russia. In recent years, Washington has been building up NATO forces on Russia's borders and in February 2014 backed a fascist-spearheaded, anti-Russian coup in Ukraine.

In response to calls by the U.S. and Canadian anti-doping agencies to ban Russia, Pat Hickey, president of the Olympic Council of Ireland and IOC executive board member, demanded to know "what mandate they have to lead



Russia's Vira Rebryk competing at 2015 World Championships in Beijing.

an international call for a ban of another nation in the Olympic family." Whether or not WADA's allegations are true, we say: Let the Russians play! Just as we oppose the war on drugs that has filled America's prisons with overwhelmingly black and Latino youth, we are opposed to the ban on what are deemed performance-enhancing drugs (PEDs) in sports. Whether an individual uses drugs—for fun or perceived enhancement of athletic ability—is a personal choice. Down with the war on drugs! Down with the ban on performance-enhancing drugs!

The IAAF, track and field's governing body, claimed the Russians' punishment would create a "level playing field" and uphold "the credibility and integrity of competition." Pitting U.S. athletes backed by vast corporate support against those from impoverished countries where much of the population can barely afford food underscores that talk of a "level playing field" is code for keeping the

poor and oppressed in their place.

The witchhunt against PEDs contradicts the Olympic motto "Faster, Higher, Stronger." A rational society would embrace the potentialities of improving human athletic performance, including through performance-enhancing drugs, while at the same time conducting an objective scientific study of the potential benefits and medical dangers. Dropping the ban on PEDs would also allow users to come out of the shadows and take the drugs under medical supervision. But capitalist society is not rational.

Who are these moral wardens of international sport? Nearly half of the current 90 IOC members—nine of them princes, princesses or sheiks—were chosen by former IOC president Juan Antonio Samaranch, who had been a longtime supporter of Spain's bloody military dictator Francisco Franco, under whom he served as minister of sports. Current IOC president Thomas Bach was himself accused of

cheating during the 1976 Olympic fencing competition.

In the quest to "purify" the Olympics, half a billion dollars is spent on 300,000 doping tests annually. A cabal of junior J. Edgar Hoovers in lab coats analyze urine samples, seeking not merely to see if the athletes have used a prohibited substance, but to ban those substances that turn up more frequently than others on the presumption they must be "performance enhancers." Among those currently forbidden are dozens of legal medications and dietary supplements, as well as other medications: beta blockers for heart ailments, bronchodilators for asthma and the cold remedy pseudoephedrine (Sudafed). Even caffeine, which was banned for 20 years until 2004, when the WADA prigs deemed it too hard to police, is now again being considered for prohibition.

Olympic Festivals of Chauvinism

The IOC peddles the myth that "The goal of the Olympic Movement is to contribute to building a peaceful and better world." British novelist George Orwell had a more sober view, "I am always amazed when I hear people saying that sport creates goodwill between the nations," adding that "international sporting contests lead to orgies of hatred" ("The Sporting Spirit," 1945).

International athletic competition, which is organized along nation-state lines and largely government financed, necessarily expresses chauvinist ideology and has always been subordinated to diplomatic maneuvering. The Olympics have a particularly sordid history as an arena for national antagonism. They arose out of the sports associations that flourished after the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. Governments encouraged these associations in order to stimulate national pride and instill martial values.

The French founder of the Olympics, Baron Pierre de Coubertin, embodied the

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