

For a United Independent Kurdistan!

Turkey: Erdogan's Counter coup



Reuters

Barely one month after emerging victorious from the July 15 botched coup, Turkey's autocratic president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, ordered his military to enter Syria. On August 24, after two days of artillery shelling, a small contingent of troops and tanks, acting in support of the Turkish-backed "Free Syrian Army," moved toward the Syrian border town of Jarabulus. The town was held by the Islamic State (ISIS), which abandoned it in the face of the Turkish-led assault.

Operation Euphrates Shield is ostensibly aimed against ISIS, and the U.S. carried out air strikes in support of the Turkish incursion. Its central purpose, however, is to dislodge from the area U.S.-allied Kurdish fighters of the People's Protection Committees (YPG), the military wing of the Democratic Union Party (PYD). Upon entering Syria, Turkey carried out several air strikes and artillery bombardments of PYD/YPG positions. The PYD/YPG is the Syrian affiliate of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) based in Turkey. For the past year, Turkish forces have been engaged in a bloody offensive against the PKK in Turkey, where Kurdish oppression is a key prop of Turkish nationalism and capitalist rule.

Amid the all-sided chaos and blood-letting of the Syrian civil war, the PYD/YPG has been able to carve out what are in effect two non-contiguous semi-autonomous regions in the northeast and northwest of Syria. In recent months, the YPG has been trying to link these two regions, including by displacing Arabs and Turkmen. Turkey rejects any expression of independence in Rojava, the Kurdish name for Syrian Kurdistan, and has inserted itself between these two Kurdish enclaves to ensure that they do not become contiguous.

For its part, the U.S. agrees with Turkey that the Kurdish-held regions remain non-contiguous, even as it continues to support the PYD/YPG, which has been U.S. imperialism's most reliable ally in its war against ISIS. When Vice President Joe Biden was in Ankara on August 24, he issued a strongly worded demand to the YPG to retreat to the east of the Euphrates River, even threatening to

Supporters of Turkish president Erdogan atop tank during failed coup, Ankara, July 16.

withhold U.S. military aid if they did not follow orders. This threat underscores what has always been U.S. policy: opposition to Kurdish independence.

Biden's visit was meant to repair U.S./Turkish relations, which were strained before the coup and have become more

Base in exchange for the U.S. giving the Ankara regime the green light to launch air strikes against the PKK in northern Iraq. Since then, ISIS has claimed responsibility for a series of suicide attacks in Turkey. With the U.S. and Russia negotiating over the Syrian civil war, the Erdo-

we do have a side is against the U.S. and other imperialist powers. Thus, while we abhor and reject everything that the ISIS cutthroats stand for, we stand for the military defense of ISIS against the U.S. and its proxies, including the YPG. Every blow struck against U.S. imperialism coincides with the interest of the working and oppressed masses of the world. At the same time, while our main opposition is to the imperialists, we also oppose the other capitalist powers involved in Syria, such as Turkey, Russia and Iran, and demand that they get out.

Erdogan Lashes Back

At home, Erdogan aptly called the failed coup a "gift from God" and used it to further consolidate power. The wave of repression he has launched is not only aimed at those the government claims were behind the coup—namely, Erdogan's erstwhile Islamist ally, Fethullah Gulen, and his followers—but also at silencing any critics. Such is the scale of arrests that the government has released nearly 34,000 low-level convicts to make room in the prisons for those detained in the aftermath of the failed coup. As we warned in "Turkey's Failed Coup: Both Sides Bad for Workers" (WV No. 1093, 29 July): "We don't know who the coup plotters were, but one thing is clear: the only position in the interest of workers was to oppose both the Erdogan regime and the coup."

For the first time since the 1980 military coup, a nationwide state of emergency has been imposed, meaning that Erdogan can circumvent parliament to impose new laws and restrictions. The government is openly threatening to reintroduce the death penalty. Tens of thousands have been dismissed from the military and judiciary. Thousands more have been thrown out of their jobs in schools and universities. More than 130 media outlets have been closed and over 150 journalists

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Turkish Forces Enter the Fray in Syria

sour afterward. Much of this strain has to do with the anti-ISIS alliance between the U.S. and the PYD/YPG. Washington has called the clashes between Turkey and the Kurdish nationalists "unacceptable." Referring to the Turkish shelling of YPG forces, one senior U.S. official emphasized that the U.S. "was not involved in these activities, they were not coordinated with U.S. forces, and we do not support them." The U.S. is continuing the balancing act of having an ally and a proxy—Turkey and the PYD/YPG—that are sworn enemies of one another, further increasing tensions with Ankara.

Turkey is a member of NATO and a historic ally of the U.S. that provided a key base of operations against the Soviet Union during the Cold War. Since the collapse of the USSR in 1991-92, the U.S. has looked to Turkey, often promoted as a "stable" and "moderate" Sunni Muslim regime, as a local gendarme. At the same time, Turkey is a regional power with its own interests, which do not always coincide with Washington's.

Ankara wants to see Syrian president Bashar al-Assad, of the Alawite minority, replaced by a Sunni-based regime that would serve as a platform for projecting Turkish power in the region. After the start of the Syrian civil war, even as it claimed to oppose ISIS, Turkey opened its borders to the flow of jihadists into Syria and provided funds and military hardware. However, in July 2015, Turkey gave the U.S. permission to launch operations against ISIS from its Incirlik Air

gan regime wants to ensure that it has influence over the outcome, including by militarily entering the fray in Syria.

Prior to the coup attempt, Erdogan had moved to stabilize his position in the region, most importantly by initiating rapprochement with Russia. Turkish/Russian relations were severely damaged after Turkey downed a Russian fighter jet over northern Syria late last year. Notably, the first capital Erdogan visited after the coup was Moscow, where he reportedly was assured by Russian president Vladimir Putin that Russia would not fire on Turkish forces if they entered Syria. While Turkey and Russia have divergent interests in Syria, with the latter militarily backing the Assad regime, they, as well as the U.S., agree on maintaining the "territorial integrity" of Syria—i.e., no independent Rojava.

The Syrian civil war is reactionary and communalist on all sides, and as Marxists we have no side in it, including in the skirmishes between Washington's Turkish allies and its Kurdish tools. Where

SPARTACIST SOUTH AFRICA

Against Black Nationalist Slanders of Marx and Engels

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Imprisoned for Spying for Cuba

Free Ana Belén Montes!

For almost 15 years, Ana Belén Montes has languished in a U.S. prison for her active solidarity with the Cuban Revolution. Having been the Pentagon’s number one expert on Cuba since the mid ’80s, Montes pleaded guilty in 2002 to “conspiracy to commit espionage” for the Cuban government. Alleged to have turned over reams of American military and intelligence secrets to the Cuban authorities, including the identities of Washington’s undercover spies, Montes was deemed “one of the most damaging spies” by the U.S. imperialist rulers and gone after with a vengeance. Montes never benefited one penny for passing on classified information. She expressed her motivation during a 2015 interview: “What matters to me is that the Cuban Revolution exists.” It is

in the interests of the working class and the oppressed in the U.S. and around the world to demand: *Freedom now for Ana Belén Montes!*

Born in 1957 to Puerto Rican parents on a U.S. military base in West Germany, Montes was raised and educated in the U.S. During her graduate studies at Johns Hopkins University in the 1980s, Montes became increasingly repulsed by the bloody anti-communist policies of the U.S. in Latin America. Initially landing a job as a clerk typist at the Department of Justice, Montes rose through the ranks to become a senior analyst at the Pentagon’s intelligence arm, the Defense Intelligence Agency, specializing in Latin American and Cuban affairs.

Two weeks after the September 11

attacks in 2001, the FBI arrested Montes and charged her with espionage. She was sentenced to 25 years behind bars. At her sentencing, Montes called U.S. policy towards Cuba “cruel and unfair,” stating: “I felt morally obligated to help the island defend itself from our efforts to impose our values and our political system on it.”

For decades, U.S. imperialism has waged a war against the deformed workers state of Cuba, which emerged with the overthrow of capitalist rule in 1960-61. Among the imperialists’ bloody adventures: the 1961 Playa Girón (Bay of Pigs) invasion; the 1976 bombing of a fully loaded Cubana airliner that killed 73 people (Luis Posada Carriles, the terrorist responsible for that atrocity is still living in Miami); and numerous assassination attempts on Fidel Castro. The U.S. notoriously provides support and money to counterrevolutionaries on the island and, while trade and other commercial relations have increased, maintains its embargo intended to deprive the population of basic goods.

Despite the political rule of a bureaucratic nationalist caste under the Castros (Fidel and now Raúl), the enormous gains for working people made possible by Cuba’s collectivized economy—including the renowned health care and educational systems—exist to this day. Yet such gains remain in the crosshairs of the imperialists as they seek to reconquer Cuba for capitalist exploitation.

In 2015, as part of restoring diplomatic ties, President Obama and President Castro negotiated a spy swap. Obama released the remaining members of the Cuban Five—courageous men who attempted to prevent terrorist acts against Cuba by infiltrating and monitoring counterrevolutionary exile groups in Florida—and Raúl Castro released two American spies, including Rolando Sarraff Trujillo, a former CIA operative. Trujillo had provided information leading to the conviction of the Cuban Five and Montes as well as former State Department official Walter



latinamericanstudies.org

Kendall Myers who, along with his wife Gwendolyn, was sentenced to prison for transmitting defense information to Cuba in 2010. (See “Free Walter and Gwendolyn Myers! Free the Cuban Five!” WV No. 963, 27 August 2010.)

Montes is now incarcerated at the Texas Federal Medical Center (FMC) at Carswell Prison. Known as “the hospital of horrors,” the FMC is notorious for violence and rape inflicted on female inmates. Isolated from all the other prisoners in the mental ward, Montes is barred from receiving phone calls and her correspondence is severely restricted. Montes stated, “I live in conditions of extreme psychological pressure. I don’t even have the most minimal contact with the world, except for the one I imagine ideally.” But she refuses to be broken: “I will resist until the end even if it’s difficult.”

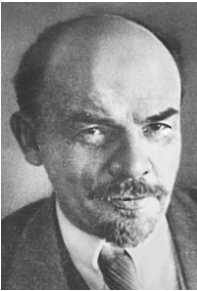
Our defense of heroic individuals like Montes and Walter and Gwendolyn Myers is part of our defense of the Cuban Revolution. Isolated and impoverished, the Cuban deformed workers state cannot forever resist the strong economic and military pressures exerted by the U.S. and the imperialist world market. Genuine defense of the Cuban Revolution against imperialism demands a revolutionary internationalist perspective, with its survival ultimately dependent on socialist revolution internationally, especially in the U.S. Such a perspective must be tied to the fight for a proletarian political revolution to oust the Castroite bureaucracy, which excludes the working class from political power and promotes the fallacy of building “socialism” in a single country. ■



TROTSKY

On Revolutionary Continuity

This month marks fifty years since the Spartacist League was founded at its first National Conference in September 1966. The founding cadres of our tendency had fought within the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) to uphold the understanding of the need for a Leninist vanguard party to lead the proletariat in socialist revolution. In 1963-64, they were bureaucratically expelled for opposing the SWP’s deepening capitulation to non-working-class political forces,



LENIN

from Fidel Castro in Cuba to the misleaders of the black struggle in America, particularly black nationalists.

Since our founding, our determined efforts to find international cothinkers enabled us to extend internationally and forge the international Spartacist tendency, which became the International Communist League in 1989. While we recognize the challenge of today’s post-Soviet period, when consciousness has been thrown back and class struggle is generally at a low ebb, our task remains the same: to defend and extend the revolutionary program of Lenin and Trotsky. We commemorate this anniversary with pride, tempered by sober recognition of the immensity of our task.

We reprint below an observation on the fight for revolutionary continuity by James P. Cannon, who was a central leader of the American Communist Party and subsequently became the principal leader of the then-Trotskyist SWP. When the SWP went over to revisionism, our founding cadre continued the fight for Trotskyism.

On the basis of a long historical experience, it can be written down as a law that revolutionary cadres, who revolt against their social environment and organize parties to lead a revolution, can—if the revolution is too long delayed—themselves degenerate under the continuing influences and pressures of this same environment.

This was the case with the pre-war German Social Democracy whose original leaders had been the immediate disciples of Marx. The same thing occurred in the Communist Party of Russia, whose leaders had been taught by Lenin. It happened again—with a big push and pull from the Russians—in the Communist Party of the United States, whose leaders lacked the benefit of systematic theoretical instruction and who had, in addition, to work in the most unfavorable social environment in the richest and most conservative country in the world.

But the same historical experience also shows that there are exceptions to this law too. The exceptions are the Marxists who remain Marxists, the revolutionists who remain faithful to the banner. The basic ideas of Marxism, upon which alone a revolutionary party can be constructed, are continuous in their application and have been for a hundred years. The ideas of Marxism, which create revolutionary parties, are stronger than the parties they create, and never fail to survive their downfall. They never fail to find representatives in the old organizations to lead the work of reconstruction.

These are the continuators of the tradition, the defenders of the orthodox doctrine. The task of the uncorrupted revolutionists, obliged by circumstances to start the work of organizational reconstruction, has never been to proclaim a new revelation—there has been no lack of such Messiahs, and they have all been lost in the shuffle—but to reinstate the old program and bring it up to date.

—James P. Cannon, *The First Ten Years of American Communism* (1962)

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New Legal Papers Filed Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!

In a significant development in the decades-long battle for his freedom, on August 7 attorneys for Mumia Abu-Jamal filed a new petition under Pennsylvania's Post Conviction Relief Act (PCRA). Mumia's application seeks to overturn the denial of his three prior PCRA claims by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. If successful, he would be granted a new hearing before that court to argue for reversal of his 1982 frame-up conviction for the killing of Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner.

America's foremost class-war prisoner, Mumia has been in the crosshairs of the capitalist state since his days as a teenage Black Panther Party spokesman in the 1960s. That enmity toward him grew in the 1970s when, as an award-winning journalist known as the "voice of the voiceless," Mumia exposed the racist Philly police vendetta against MOVE, the largely black back-to-nature group he came to support. The crusade against Mumia exemplifies the determination of the capitalist state to silence through terror those fighting the black oppression that is part of the bedrock of American capitalism.

In December 2011, the state abandoned its relentless efforts to carry out Mumia's legal lynching, only to consign him to the "slow death" of life imprisonment without parole. Today, as Mumia faces a life-threatening hepatitis C infection, the prison authorities are intent on expediting the completion of that sentence by refusing to give him adequate medical care. Even after 34 years in prison, and now fighting his debilitating illness, Mumia continues to be a prolific voice against brutal racist police violence and U.S. imperialism.

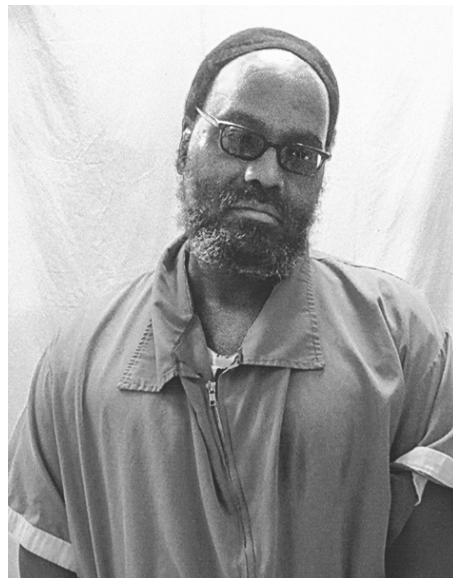
Mumia's fight to exonerate himself was given a breath of life by the recent U.S. Supreme Court decision, *Williams v. Pennsylvania*. In that case the court declared it to be a violation of due process for an appellate court judge to fail to recuse himself from deciding an appeal from a trial in which he had been significantly involved in "a critical decision" during the case. The offending jurist in the case of Terrance Williams, Ronald Castille, was also a senior Assistant District Attorney during Mumia's 1982 trial and *the* D.A. throughout his direct appeals in the Pennsylvania courts. Castille's elevation to the state's Supreme Court gave him the license of black robes to sanctify, through Mumia's PCRA applications during which he refused to recuse himself,

the grotesque violations of Mumia's rights that he perpetrated as prosecutor.

Mumia's trial and conviction were a textbook frame-up: racist jury-rigging; concealment of evidence; phony ballistics and other manufactured "evidence;" a "confession" concocted by cops and prosecutors; and massive police intimidation of witnesses. Mumia's trial was overseen by "hanging judge" Albert Sabo, who was overheard saying he would help the prosecution "fry the n---r." Mumia was denied the right to represent himself and was repeatedly ejected from the courtroom.

Castille's pretext for rejecting Mumia's recusal motions was the threadbare claim that irrespective of his prominence in the D.A.'s office at trial, and his signing off on all the legal documents countering

Mumia's appeals as D.A., he was merely an accidental tourist with no particular familiarity with the details of Mumia's case. This is ludicrous. Convicting Mumia, procuring the death penalty and upholding it on appeal were top priorities of the D.A.'s office for three decades, as it worked hand in hand with the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP). A more honest appreciation of Castille's role was offered in 2007 by Michael Smerconish, a Philadelphia journalist who has dedicated himself to seeing Mumia executed for Faulkner's killing: "Danny Faulkner has had a good friend in the D.A.'s office. As a matter of fact he's had three: Ed Rendell, Ron Castille and Lynne Abraham." Mumia's petition is seeking discovery to reveal the level of Castille's responsibility during the trial, including his



CSDN

"participation in meetings amongst senior members of the office during which the Abu-Jamal case was discussed."

Mumia's petition notes that as D.A., "Castille was undoubtedly familiar with the sentiments of the FOP, and notably, he received the FOP's Lodge #5 Man of the Year award in 1986." In 1992, he unsuccessfully sought appointment as Philadelphia's police commissioner and was elected the following year to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court.

Terry Williams may be the beneficiary of a dollop of "justice" the high court occasionally metes out to throw a thin veil over the racist injustice that afflicts millions of black lives. But another set of rules applies to Mumia. Court after court has refused to consider the mountain of evidence of his innocence, including the sworn confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Mumia, shot and killed Faulkner. The proof of Mumia's innocence exposes his frame-up as not just some aberration of a rogue cop or a bad judge, but the result of the workings of a whole "justice" system whose real purpose is the repression of workers, minorities and the poor on behalf of the capitalist rulers.

The latest judicial slap in Mumia's face is the denial of his struggle to obtain crucial hepatitis C medication. On August 31, eight months after oral argument in Mumia's lawsuit to obtain the medication, federal judge Robert Mariani rejected his claim on the pretext that the lawsuit wrongly named as defendants the prison warden and the prison system's medical chief. According to Mariani, the suit should have been directed against the members of the state's hepatitis committee—a secretive body which Mumia's attorneys had no way of knowing even existed at the time the suit was initiated!

Though Mumia's condition has waxed and waned after his hospitalizations last year (see "Court Blocks Medical Treatment—Free Him Now!" WV No. 1075,

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Oh Baltimore Blues

By Mumia Abu-Jamal

The following commentary was transcribed from a prisonradio.org recording dated August 12.

The brilliant and beautiful Nina Simone in her classic lament, "Baltimore," sings of a city by the sea, but one that she longs to flee from, because of its hardness and its meanness.

In her unforgettable refrain, she mixes her love of the city with longing to go elsewhere, singing:

"Oh Baltimore, ain't it hard just to leave, just to live."

Simone's deep, rich contralto flew to mind when I heard of the government's report of the city's roguish police department; one seemingly bent on making the lives of black Baltimoreans as miserable as possible.

According to the report released by the Department of Justice, local cops routinely violated the constitutional rights of blacks and also used excessive force against them, largely with impunity. According to a high-ranking DOJ official, cops not only stopped and frisked thousands of people in an unconstitutional manner; they beat people, they punished demonstrators engaged in First Amendment actions, they falsely arrested people, and most

shockingly they stripped people naked in the street in blatant violation of the Fourth Amendment governing search and seizure. And they did all of these things in Baltimore's low-income and black communities, and they did this for years, for decades.

"Oh Baltimore, ain't it hard just to leave, just to live."

Baltimore is more than a Southern city; it's a majority black city, with 64 percent African-American inhabitants. It has a black mayor, black D.A., and until recently a black police chief.

What difference did it make to tens of thousands of black Baltimoreans?

It didn't mean a damn thing. Nothing.

Black politicians buried their heads in the sand while the people they claim to represent were subjected to a sustained campaign of harassment, humiliation, violence and terror.

Only the fires that burned Baltimore after the police murder of Freddie Gray brought light to a situation of mass unconstitutional behavior by the BPD.

And you better know, it ain't just Baltimore.

From imprisoned nation, this is Mumia Abu-Jamal.

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Ontario's 1912 Ban on French Education

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Left: November 1917 protest in Belle Rivière, Ontario, against provincial government ban on teaching French in schools. Right: Anti-French, anti-Catholic Orange Order parade, Toronto, circa 1919.

The following article is reprinted from Spartacist Canada No. 189 (Summer 2016), newspaper of our comrades of the Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyste, Canadian section of the International Communist League.

SPARTACIST CANADA

Barely a month goes by without one or another government official issuing a hypocritical apology for past transgressions by the Canadian capitalist rulers. In one of the more recent, Ontario's Liberal premier Kathleen Wynne stood before the Legislature in February to apologize for the banning of teaching in French in provincial schools more than a century ago.

Regulation 17, enacted in 1912, effectively outlawed French-language education in all Ontario schools beyond the first two grades. At the time, francophones made up about 10 percent of Ontario's population, and a much higher proportion in the north and parts of the east and southwest. This blatantly discriminatory legislation produced a defiant backlash: francophone teachers ignored the ban and led students out of classrooms, while mothers blocked entrances to schools and confronted police who tried to impose the regulation. In Quebec, outrage over Regulation 17 contributed to the revolts against conscription during World War I, which were brutally repressed by the police and military.

The Ontario government's edict exemplified the Anglo chauvinism of the Canadian ruling class, which suppressed the

national rights of overwhelmingly francophone Quebec and the linguistic rights of French speakers elsewhere. In 1837-38, Quebec's bourgeois-democratic *Patriote* rebellion was drowned in blood by British troops. Following Confederation in 1867, the battles of the largely francophone Métis people [of mixed Native-European descent] for language and property rights in Manitoba and later Saskatchewan led to the Northwest Rebellion of 1885. The subsequent hanging of Métis leader Louis Riel by the Tory government of John A. Macdonald led to mass protests in the streets of Montreal. To this day, francophones in Ontario—who number over 600,000—and elsewhere in nominally bilingual Canada keep having to fight for French-language education, hospital services and other basic rights.

This is the backdrop to the Ontario government's apology, which naturally included no promise of compensation. The purpose of such apologies for crimes of a supposedly distant past—whether to francophones, Native people, Japanese and Chinese Canadians or Sikhs—is to maintain the deceitful fiction that modern capitalist Canada is a beacon of fairness, freedom and equality for all. The ruling class uses its cant about a progressive, multicultural and bilingual Canada to keep the national and language questions at bay in a country where more than 20 percent of the population primarily speaks French and where immigrant languages now also abound. The historic treatment of francophones has become something of a template for dealing with minorities arriving from all over the world: ugly

chauvinism is papered over with soothing words, alongside the co-opting of “cultural” elites including religious leaders and corrupt politicians of all hues.

The Battle for French Schools in Ontario

The provincial Conservative government of James Whitney passed Regulation 17 in July 1912 following an official inquiry into the state of Ontario's bilingual schools. Protests and school walkouts began that same year. The *Globe* (25 November 1912) reported that “about 1,000 young French-Canadians” rallied against Regulation 17 the previous day in Ottawa, which was then about 25 percent francophone. The reporter summarized: “It was asserted that the new regulations, particularly No. 17, were contrary to every right, natural and constitutional, possessed by French-Canadians under the [1867] British North America Act, and that their purpose was to Anglicize the children who attended the bilingual schools.”

During the 1914 provincial election campaign, a rally for a Conservative candidate ended abruptly when he was hit by a rotten egg thrown by a protester against Regulation 17. Two years later, mothers formed a chain around Ottawa's École Guigues to stop police from evicting two teachers who refused to comply with the regulation. Pulling out their long hairpins for self-protection, they managed to keep the cops out. In 1917, Catholic French Canadian parishioners near Windsor revolted when the police tried to enforce the installation of a priest deemed an opponent of bilingual education. Nine were arrested and ten injured, including two women in their 70s. The next year, protesters in Montreal and Quebec City confronted police and the military in anti-conscription demonstrations. Four protesters were killed in Quebec City. These angry rallies showed that Quebec's francophone population had no desire to fight and die in a war for British imperialism and its Canadian lapdogs.

To complement police repression, government officials responded to the protests against Regulation 17 with patronizing contempt. Declaring that “French-speaking citizens...are noted for their obedience to duly constituted authority,” Premier Whitney added: “those who are exciting prejudices and misrepresenting the situation are counselling the minority to defy the whole authority of the Province of Ontario” (*Globe*, 9 October 1912).

Part of the basis for this condescending claptrap was the role of the Catholic

church, to which nearly the entire French Canadian population belonged. The priests and bishops had long enforced acceptance of francophones' inferior status under British and English Canadian rule, imposing obedience to authority through fear of excommunication and damnation. But defense of the French language was one of the key pillars that justified the church's political existence, and French-speaking priests could not defend Regulation 17 without discrediting themselves. So a civil war of sorts erupted in the Ontario Catholic church between its French-speaking leadership and the English-speaking Irish wing. Faced with the raw bigotry of the Protestant Orange Order, which held great sway in the province, the Irish priests largely supported Regulation 17, fearing that all Catholic schools—English as well as French—might be targeted for suppression amid the debate over bilingual education. These debates were argued all the way to the Vatican, where Pope Benedict XV sagely declined to take a side.

Increasingly unenforceable and a nagging source of national and linguistic tensions, Regulation 17 stopped being formally applied in 1927. However it was not rescinded until 1944, and French schools were not officially recognized in Ontario until 1968 while access to them only became a legal right in the 1980s. The battle for francophone rights in Ontario flared up again in the 1990s when the Conservative government of Mike Harris tried to shut down the only French-language teaching hospital in Ontario, Ottawa's Hôpital Montfort. This led to huge protests, which eventually saved it from closure.

Today, Ontario maintains two school systems, a public and a separate, publicly funded Catholic system. Many French-language schools are tied to the latter and are often older and ill-maintained. As Marxists who advocate the complete separation of church and state, we call for a single, secular public school system with bilingual and where necessary multilingual education. Francophones and other minorities, wherever numbers warrant, should have the same level of access to quality education in the language of their choice as the English-speaking majority.

In Quebec, the hold of the Catholic church was finally broken through the Quiet Revolution of the 1960s and '70s, which saw the emergence of a distinct French-speaking capitalist class. The emergent Québécois bourgeoisie soon began its own drive to assimilate non-francophone minorities, especially immigrants, through

Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyste Forums

Un témoignage

France : Contestations de masse contre la loi antisyndicale
A bas la « guerre contre le terrorisme » et les mesures racistes d'Etat policier !

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Vendredi 16 septembre à 18h30

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Eyewitness Report

France: Mass Protests Against Anti-Union Law
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Predictive Policing Is Racist Garbage

Seeking to dress up the racist repressive apparatus of the capitalist state in modern guise, courts and police departments around the nation have been turning to “predictive policing” tools which claim to foretell mathematically who is likely to commit crime in the future. This marriage of all-American racism with Silicon Valley hype about “machine learning” is straight out of a dystopian science fiction story, recalling *Minority Report*’s department of “Precrime.”

The leading edge of this has been in sentencing of convicted criminals. Whether under mandatory sentencing guidelines or in the hands of individual judges, sentencing in capitalist law has always maintained and reflected the overall structure of racist American society—victimizing the working class, the poor and minorities in the service of enforcing capitalist “law and order.” Now, so-called risk-assessment tools and methodologies have been adopted by an increasing number of states from Utah to Wisconsin and Florida. These tools, often developed by private companies and contracted to state agencies, “score” those dragged before the courts on their supposed likelihood to commit future crimes, and are taken into account in sentencing and parole decisions.

We do not live in a science fiction novel, and machines do not “think”

smarter or differently than the people who have commissioned and built them. The algorithms and formulas deployed—considering factors ranging from gender to supposed “beliefs favorable towards crime” (termed “antisocial cognition”) to education level and employment history—are no less race- and class-biased than the rotten court system that they are built to serve. This pretense to “evidence-based” sentencing in fact amounts to a sort of prejudice-laundering that takes the gross racism of capitalist society and packages it up in “impartial” form by attributing it to a machine rather than those who built the machine.

Though using modern technology, these tools which claim to predict people’s innate criminal tendencies and future acts recall the phrenological pseudoscience of the 19th century. While the racist mad scientists of that era claimed to be able to assess people by the size and shape of their skulls, the idea of calculating people’s criminality by their employment history and upbringing, or their “antisocial cognition” is no less grotesque. In taking into account factors directly related to wealth, class and social position, these algorithms make concrete the visceral contempt of America’s racist rulers for those whom they dominate and exploit.

Ironically, by encoding the moral cal-

culus of the ruling class in mathematical formulas, these tools illustrate how racist the American state is, to the very core. For example, a recent investigation by *ProPublica* (“Machine Bias: There’s software used across the country to predict future criminals. And it’s biased against blacks.” 23 May) obtained the risk scores of thousands of arrestees in Broward County, Florida (produced by a system developed by the private company Northpointe). Their conclusion: “Only 20 percent of the people predicted to commit violent crimes actually went on to do so.” However, Northpointe’s tool was very good at predicting race. Black defendants were wrongly flagged as future criminals at almost twice the rate of white defendants.

Even when controlling for age, gender and criminal history, *ProPublica* found that “Black defendants were still 77 percent more likely to be pegged as at higher risk of committing a future violent crime and 45 percent more likely to be predicted to commit a future crime of any kind.” For example, the study contrasted the cases of two petty theft arrests. A 41-year-old white man with two prior convictions for armed robbery was given a score of 3 (a low risk of reoffending) but was later convicted of grand theft. On the other hand, an 18-year-old black woman was given a score of 8 (a high risk), despite having

only four juvenile misdemeanors; she has not since reoffended.

These tools are not only being deployed by courts, but, increasingly, by police departments seeking to predict future criminals to monitor. For example, the Chicago Police Department (revealed last year by the *Guardian* to be operating a “domestic equivalent of a CIA black site” at its Homan Square building) boasts of its “Strategic Subject List” which it claims predicts those likely to be involved in gun violence. Cathy O’Neil, author of the new book *Weapons of Math Destruction: How Big Data Increases Inequality and Threatens Democracy*, highlighted on her blog (mathbabe.org) a recent study from the *Journal of Experimental Criminology*. The study, “Predictions Put into Practice,” determined that the list had no impact on homicide levels. Being on the list made no difference in people’s chance of being shot, but *did* mean that they were more likely to be surveilled by the police and arrested. O’Neil summarized the study’s conclusions: “From now on, I’ll refer to Chicago’s ‘Heat List’ as a way for the police to predict their own future harassment and arrest practices.”

Fundamentally, the racist, brutal nature of the American justice system is not a product of “bias,” individual or systemic. The capitalist state exists to defend the rule of the bourgeoisie against the working class and the oppressed. In America, it is inextricable from the racial oppression and segregation of black people, rooted in the history of slavery, which is used to divide the working class and undermine prospects of integrated proletarian struggle. It will take a socialist revolution to sweep the capitalists out of power, dismantle and break up their racist system of cops and courts, and put in place a society where genuine equality is possible. ■

restrictive language legislation. Just as we oppose anti-French discrimination in English Canada, we also oppose the restrictive provisions of Quebec’s French-language charter, Law 101, notably in the field of education. At the same time, we recognize that the primary root cause of the linguistic and ethnic divisions within Quebec is the Canadian rulers’ longstanding anti-Quebec chauvinism and hostility toward French language rights.

At around the same time as the battles for French schools in English-dominated Canada, V.I. Lenin, the future leader of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, was tackling the interlinked questions of national and language rights in the multinational tsarist empire, which was dominated by Great Russian chauvinism. In concluding a polemic against Russian liberals who advocated that Russian be made the “official” language, he stated:

“That is why Russian Marxists say that there must be *no* compulsory official language, that the population must be provided with schools where teaching will be carried on in all the local languages, that a fundamental law must be introduced in the constitution declaring invalid all privileges of any one nation and all violations of the rights of national minorities.”

—“Is a Compulsory Official Language Needed?” (January 1914)

For Lenin, advocacy of the democratic right of all nations to self-determination, i.e., the right to separate, together with opposition to privileges for any nationality or language, was crucial to combating divisions among the workers and uniting them in the fight for socialist revolution.

Canadian Nationalism Rooted in Anti-French Chauvinism

After the Conquest of New France in 1760-63, the British crown was dead set on wiping out any remnants of the French colonies in North America. Between 1755 and 1763, the British deported about 10,000 Acadians from Nova Scotia, with thousands dying on the journey. In Quebec, the British sought to eradicate French education while trying to swamp the French population through immigration from Britain, though the high francophone birthrate proved to be an insuperable obstacle.

A small number of francophone mis-



Louis Riel surrounded by members of his Provisional Government of the Métis Nation, Winnipeg, 1870.

sionaries and *coureurs des bois* fur traders had arrived in Ontario as early as the 17th century. Later, Quebec’s high birthrate and the scarcity of arable land pushed the French-speaking population further afield in the 1800s and early 1900s. Attempts to colonize new areas within Quebec had limited success, as most of the province essentially sits on hard rock. Many workers seeking jobs ended up in the U.S., northern Ontario and further west. French Canadian nationalists like Henri Bourassa argued that sparsely populated Western Canada should be open to both English and French colonists, but the Anglo rulers begged to differ.

Canada had received quasi-independence from Britain in 1867 under the stewardship of arch-reactionary Tory prime minister Macdonald, a member of the Orange Order. Macdonald’s crushing of the Northwest Rebellion and hanging of Louis Riel ensured that this region would be controlled by the English. (Manitoba had been majority francophone, largely of Métis heritage, when it entered Confederation in 1870.)

The ideology that drove Canada’s ruling elite was epitomized by the phrase “One Language, One Flag, One Country,” associated with D’Alton McCarthy, a Tory

MP and Orange Order leader from central Ontario. The importance that the capitalist rulers placed on stopping the spread of French language rights was captured in an early history of the Métis struggle written by Charles P. Mulvaney, a military officer who himself participated in the suppression of the Northwest Rebellion. Mulvaney criticized Macdonald for his intransigence towards the Métis’ desire for the right to own their own farms, but when it came to the demand for language rights, he declared:

“The other demands were purely political, and were introduced by Riel himself in order to found an exclusively French Province in the North-West. To grant this would have been to repeat the lamentable error by which England at the Conquest perpetuated the French language, law, and religion, and established an island of mediaevalism and of alien race in the midst of the spread of English Canadian civilization.”

—*The History of the North-West Rebellion of 1885* (1885)

Elsewhere in the country, “English only” bigotry targeted Chinese and other immigrants, especially in B.C. [British Columbia]. And of course Native people suffered for generations under the residential school system, which aimed at destroying their identity and making them

“Canadian,” including by wiping out their languages.

For Working-Class Unity Against Capitalism!

While the francophone minority suffered the blows of chauvinist policies, they were not simply victims. In the course of the 20th century, many Franco-Ontarians became a key component of the labour movement, notably in the mines of northern Ontario. The Communist Party-led Mine Mill union in the Sudbury area, one of the world’s main nickel-mining centres, had thousands of French Canadian members. In her book, *Voices from French Ontario* (1982), Sheila McLeod Arnopoulos described how “by the 1950s Mine-Mill local 598, with its 15,000 members, was bigger than most northern Ontario towns and more influential than any other institution in Sudbury—including the Roman Catholic church.” In the words of a francophone Mine-Mill unionist quoted by Arnopoulos: “The church had a rival. The priests didn’t like it, and they decided to find a way to run it out of town.”

The Catholic hierarchy allied with the bosses and right-wing union leaders to drive out Mine Mill in one of the key battles in the anti-Communist purges that sapped the fighting strength of the Canadian labour movement from the late 1940s

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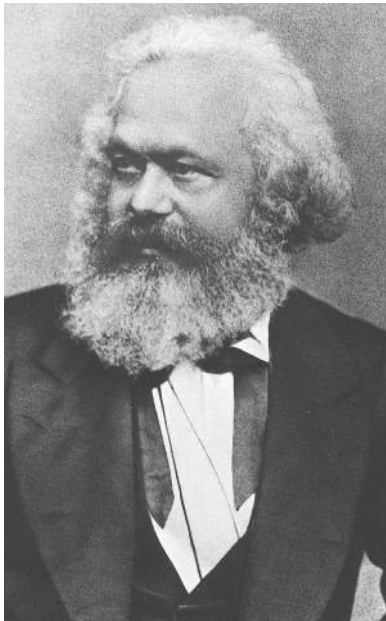
Against Black Nationalist Slanders of Marx and Engels

We reprint the following article, with one minor factual correction, from Spartacist South Africa No. 13 (Spring 2015), newspaper of the South African section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

SPARTACIST SOUTH AFRICA

Recently we have increasingly been hearing the charge that Marx and Engels were indifferent to the suffering and subjugation meted out by the European colonialists and that the founders of scientific socialism harboured racist views. This slanderous lie—long peddled by the Black Consciousness Movement, Pan-Africanists and other nationalists—is particularly common on university campuses. For instance, during our sub-drive campaign amidst the “Rhodes Must Fall” protests [against monuments to colonial pigs like Cecil Rhodes], we frequently argued with students who dismissed the ideas of Marx and Engels as inappropriate for the African context simply because they were European (white). This is the logic of so-called “intersectionality”—a view promoted by feminists, black nationalists and reformist leftists, among others—according to which if you haven’t personally experienced a particular form of oppression you can’t fight it. Such an approach denies the possibility of mobilising the proletariat to champion the cause of all the exploited and oppressed.

One proponent of this narrow national-



John Mayall



W. Hall

Karl Marx (left) and Friedrich Engels.

War, which they saw as one of the century’s major battles, a social overturn and a harbinger of socialist revolutions to come. As Marx later wrote, in Volume I of *Capital*, “every independent movement of the workers was paralyzed so long as slavery disfigured a part of the Republic. Labour cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the black it is branded.”

As for their attitude toward the bloody crimes of the European colonialists, you just have to read Marx and Engels’ writings on the suppression of the anti-British

article, Engels wrote: “The fact is, there is no army in Europe or America with so much brutality as the British. Plundering, violence, massacre...are a time-honored privilege, a vested right of the British soldier.” Does that sound like indifference to colonial subjugation?!

While Marx and Engels always condemned the monumental crimes committed by the colonial powers against the peoples of Asia, Africa and the Americas, they also initially held the view that colonial penetration of such backward regions would be a vehicle for promoting their economic and social modernisation. For example, in 1853 Marx wrote, “England has to fulfill a double mission in India: one destructive, the other regenerating.” This view turned out to be incorrect. History would subsequently show that even though the advanced capitalist countries introduced certain elements of modern industrial technology into their colonies and semicolonies, the overall effect was to arrest the social and economic development of those areas.

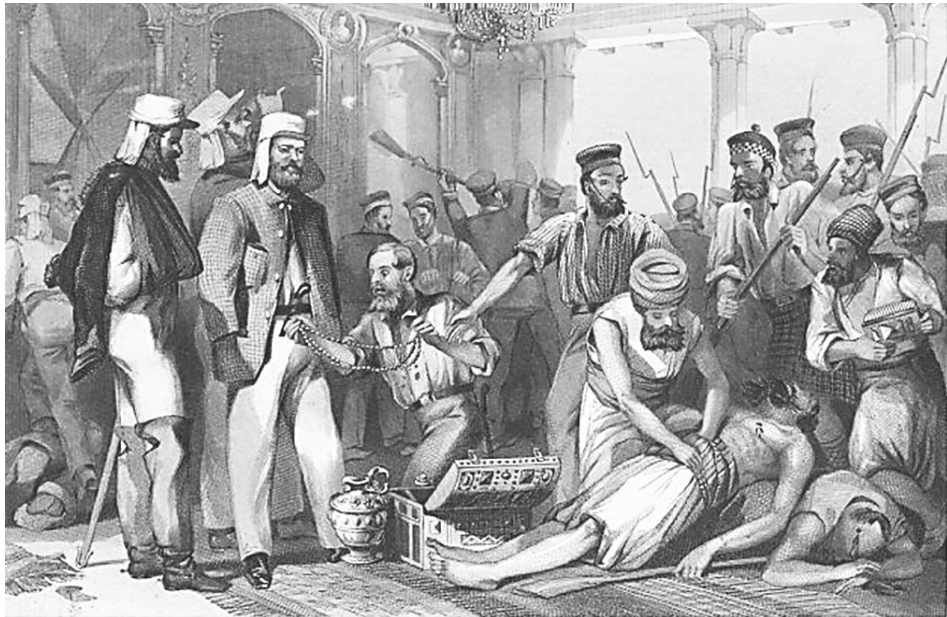
Scientific socialism is based not on received wisdom but on observation and analyses of social reality as it develops. Marx and Engels learned from their observations, and would go on to develop a very different attitude toward colonialism. Particularly important in prompting the change in their views on the oppression of weak, backward states by stronger, more advanced ones was the major role that Britain’s hold on Ireland played in retarding the political consciousness of the English proletariat. By the 1870s, they began to advocate independence for Ireland. An indication of their later views on the colonial question is given by a letter that Engels wrote to Karl Kautsky in September 1882. In it, Engels points to the corrupting influence of stolen colonial booty on the proletariat of the

advanced capitalist countries, and advocates independence for the colonies.

The most powerful refutation of the nationalists’ slanders of Marx and Engels is seen, however, not in their own writings and political activity, but in the revolutionary-internationalist legacy carried forward by later Marxists. Above all, by the Bolsheviks under the leadership of V. I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky, who led the working class to victory in the 1917 October Revolution. By ripping power out of the hands of the capitalist-imperialists, the October Revolution blazed the way not only for the proletariat of the West, but also the oppressed masses of the colonial world. After taking power, the Bolsheviks put an end to Russia’s involvement in the imperialist mass slaughter of World War I, and made public the secret treaties and deals that the various European powers had made to carve up the world among themselves. For example, in 1918 they published the Sykes-Picot treaty outlining the division of the Near East between the British and French imperialists.

These anti-imperialist acts were a concrete expression of the understanding that revolutionary Marxists must champion the national liberation of peoples subjugated by the advanced capitalist (imperialist) powers, as a necessary part of the struggle to overthrow the imperialist rulers through proletarian revolution from within. This understanding was hammered home by Lenin and other leaders of the early Communist International (Comintern), founded in 1919. For example, the “Twenty-One Conditions” adopted at the Comintern’s Second Congress in 1920 demanded that the Communist parties in the imperialist countries support “every liberation movement in the colonies not only in words but in deeds,” and carry out “systematic propaganda among their own country’s troops against any oppression of colonial peoples.” The “Theses on the National and Colonial Questions” adopted at the same Congress asserted the importance of “establishing the closest possible alliance between the West-European communist proletariat and the revolutionary peasant movement in the East, in the colonies, and in the backward countries generally.”

Compare this to the activities of the ANC and other African nationalists of the time, who were busy sending endless deputations to the British monarch and parliament, begging for this or that reform and all the while reassuring them of the loyalty of “his majesty’s subjects” in Africa. For example, the resolutions of the Second Pan-Africanist Congress, held in 1921 in London, demanded not the dismantling of the colonialist structures, but merely that “natives of Africa must have the right to participate in the [colonial] government as fast as their development permits.” These nationalist movements were



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Engraving shows British soldiers looting in Lucknow, India, 1858.

ist anti-Marxist slander is Jackie Shandu, a nationalist demagogue who is head of Policy, Research and Political Education for the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) in KwaZulu-Natal. In an opinion piece filled with distortions, inaccuracies and outright lies, Shandu asserts: “In Marx, therefore, we are still dealing with a white supremacist that believed and stated that the only way forward for all of humanity is through Western intervention, paternalism and leadership” (“Battle for the soul of the Economic Freedom Fighters: Class first or race first?”, *Daily Maverick*, 18 December 2014).

What a load of crap! It truly beggars belief to claim that Marx was a “white supremacist.” During the bloody Civil War of 1861-65 that smashed slavery in the United States, Marx and Engels not only fully supported the abolitionist cause, but also actively fought to mobilise the British working class in support of a Northern victory. This effort contributed to preventing the British bourgeoisie from intervening on the side of the Southern Confederacy (the slave owners). Marx and Engels wrote extensively about the Civil

Sepoy rebellion in India to see that they were anything but cheerleaders for colonial “paternalism.” For example, in May 1858, Engels wrote an article denouncing the atrocities in Lucknow, where the British army took the city, pillaged it, and then stole the land of the people they had just conquered and massacred. In that

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not "revolutionary," or even bourgeois-democratic, but rather advocated that the educated and "civilised" African elite be given an opportunity to work out with the imperialist powers a peaceful and ever-so-gradual transition from colonialism to neo-colonialism. While these would-be exploiters sometimes tried to mobilise popular support among the African toilers, their programme and class standpoint were always fundamentally hostile to the interests of the working people.

One just has to recall the saga of Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, an idol of Pan-Africanism and “African socialism.” When the Trade Union Congress of Ghana prepared to call a 1950 General Strike in support of Nkrumah’s slogan, “Self-Government NOW,” he vacillated and tried to postpone the strike because he didn’t want to disrupt the negotiations with the colonial authorities then under way. When self-government was finally granted, in 1957, it was a “tidy” transition presided over by the colonial authorities, with the explicit blessing of the Duchess of Kent (acting as Queen Elizabeth’s official representative). After Nkrumah became Prime Minister of Ghana, the British imperialists continued to get their cut, while the bourgeois-nationalist government carried out a vicious anti-labour policy. In 1961, Nkrumah left his vacation in the Soviet Union early to participate in the crushing of the 1961 General Strike.

The same goes for the would-be heirs of Nkrumah, like Jackie Shandu and the EFF. Notwithstanding their rhetoric about “Marxism-Leninism” (which they combine with the Third World nationalism of Fanon), these self-declared “revolutionaries” seek to maintain capitalism and merely renegotiate the terms of imperialist subordination with “white monopoly capital” (with a bigger share of profits going to them and their cronies). For instance, prior to the 2014 elections Julius Malema, commander-in-chief of the EFF, invited investors to Alexandra township to assure them that their investments won’t be touched when they get into government. Slandering Marx and attacking Marxism is just the ideological expression of their class hostility to the proletariat.

Shandu and the EFF's anti-Marxist, anti-working-class politics are combined with vicious nationalist demagoguery in the service of the very same racist divide-and-rule that was promoted by the British imperialists and the apartheid rulers. Another one of Shandu's recent opinion pieces ("A volatile case of Afrikan vs. Indian in KwaZulu-Natal," 7 April 2015, *Daily Maverick*) peddles anti-Indian poison under the guise of championing the rights of black workers exploited by Indian bosses. In fact, the real aims of Shandu and

the EFF have nothing to do with fighting the exploitation of workers at the hands of their bosses and everything to do with increasing the access of small-time black capitalists to tenders and markets at the expense of their Indian competitors. The same thing that animates outfits like the Mazibuye African Forum (which includes members of the EFF and the ANC, as well as the National Freedom Party, a split from Inkatha)—a black business forum that spews poisonous anti-Indian racism and organises anti-Indian mobilisations in support of the demand that Indians be excluded from access to BEE [Black Economic Empowerment] deals.

Among other distortions/lies peddled by the “economic freedom fighter” Shandu, is the claim that the Communist Party of



Britain's Queen Elizabeth II dancing with Ghana's President Kwame Nkrumah, 1961.

South Africa (CPSA, the forerunner of the SACP) was “founded...under the slogan ‘White Workers of the World Unite’” and that the Communists “never ‘problematised’ race and racism in the South African context.” Though founded by white immigrant communists, the CPSA was not racist, as Shandu claims. Among its pioneering central leaders were people like David Ivon Jones and Sidney Percival Bunting, who were intransigent fighters against black oppression that fought to recruit black communists. Both Bunting and Jones had earlier split from the right-wing South African Labour Party (SALP) to form the International Socialist League (ISL). They split in opposition to both the racism of the SALP tops and their support for the imperialist First World War.

Since the events of a century ago, the national divide between Quebec and English Canada has deepened to the point where it has poisoned prospects for united class struggle against the capitalists. The Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyiste advocates Quebec independence, recognizing that this would create better conditions for the workers to see that “their” capitalists are class enemies, not allies, and thereby clear the way for struggle against the bosses in each nation. At the same time, we recognize that in the event of Quebec independence, the Canadian ruling class would seek to roll back democratic gains won by French speakers outside Quebec. Moreover, today’s Quebec bourgeois nationalists, who seek to become the exploiters of their “own” working class, are utterly indifferent to the plight of francophones outside Quebec—who are themselves, for misguided though understandable reasons, generally hostile to the idea of an independent Quebec.

In the event of Quebec independence, Marxists would continue to fight for the defense and extension of language rights for linguistic minorities, including immigrants and indigenous people, in both English Canada and Quebec. As an elementary democratic measure, predominantly francophone regions that are

At the First Congress of the ISL in 1916, Bunting moved that the new party “affirm that the emancipation of the working class requires the abolition of all forms of native indenture, compound and passport systems; and the lifting of the native worker to the political and industrial status of the white” (quoted in Allison Drew, *Between Empire and Revolution: A Life of Sidney Bunting, 1873-1936*). In 1919, Bunting condemned the white trade unions for their racist indifference to black workers, writing in *The International*: “It is humiliating to have to keep on emphasising that the essence of the Labour movement is Solidarity, without which it cannot win. The outstanding characteristic of the capitalist system in South Africa being its Native labour, the outstanding movement of the country must clearly be the movement of its Native labourers” (quoted in Edward Roux, *S.P. Bunting: A Political Biography*).

The ISL founded the CPSA in 1920 when it resolved to affiliate with the (Third) Communist International. Although people like Jones and Bunting fought for the party to turn its face towards the black working masses, other leaders of the early CPSA preferred an orientation toward the white trade union movement and were loath to combat the racism of this movement. In 1922, during the reactionary Rand Revolt strike, the Communist Party capitulated to the racist demands of white miners for preserving the colour bar in the mines. It was during this strike that the racist slogan of "Workers of the World Fight and Unite for a White S.A." was raised (though *not* by the CPSA) amidst pogroms against blacks and Indians carried out by Afrikaner Commandos. While he was critical of the strike, Bunting didn't raise his criticisms publicly during the strike. He rationalised their stance on the colour bar by maintaining that the party should struggle for improved working conditions for blacks.

In 1928, during the Sixth Congress of the Comintern, the Communist Party adopted the “Native Republic” slogan at the urging of the Comintern leadership. Although this slogan correctly pointed to the centrality of the task of black emancipation in South Africa, it saw the “Native Republic” as a *capitalist* republic, which was to be achieved as the first, bourgeois-democratic, “stage” of the South African revolution. Only later (at some unspecified time) was this supposed to be followed by a second, socialist, “stage.” Thus, the slogan basically took the fight for proletarian revolution off the agenda and instead cleared the way for the Communist Party to bury itself in the ANC (for more, see “South Africa—Early Years of the Communist Party”, reprinted in WV Nos. 991 and 992, 25 November and 9 December 2011).

The fact that nationalist demagogues like Shandu and Co. are today able to retail their alternative versions of nationalism as some kind of solution for the continued oppression of the black majority, is in no small part thanks to the continued betrayals of the SACP (and COSATU) reformist misleaders in pursuit of the Stalinist “two-stage” programme (called the “National Democratic Revolution” in South Africa). The “first stage” came in 1994 with the ascension of the ANC-led Tripartite Alliance to power and the establishment of a neo-apartheid system. As has been repeatedly demonstrated by a long history of Stalinist betrayals of proletarian revolution—from the 1927 Shanghai massacre to the decimation of the millions-strong communist movement of Indonesia in 1965—the “second stage” is not the socialist revolution but the bloody massacre of the workers by their erstwhile nationalist “allies,” like in the Marikana massacre of 2012.

Shandu, the EFF, and various other nationalists in the Black Consciousness and Pan-Africanist traditions, may today denounce the Marikana massacre and the ANC, but the reality is that the programmes they pursue are fundamentally no different from that of the ANC. Witness the ease with which the ANC has co-opted a good chunk of the AZAPO and PAC leaderships since 1994. In contrast, we Trotskyists never gave any support to the ANC-led Alliance, and told the truth in 1994, writing: “A vote for the ANC—including its Communist Party members and affiliated trade-union leaders of COSATU—is a vote to perpetuate the racist oppression and superexploitation of the black, coloured (mixed-race) and Indian toilers in a different political form.” We have a programme that points the way to the national liberation of the black majority and all of the non-white toilers through smashing neo-apartheid capitalism, establishing a black-centred workers government, and fighting like hell for the international extension of the revolution to the advanced capitalist countries. We fight for the political independence of the proletariat from *all* bourgeois parties—whether the ANC or EFF, PAC or AZAPO, or any other.

This programme is an application of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution to the specific conditions of South African capitalism, with its combined and uneven development and heavy overlap of racial oppression with class oppression. It represents a continuation of genuine Marxism. For this reason, we fight to politically smash the nationalist slanders of Marx and Engels, and to arm all those who want to get rid of racist capitalist exploitation with the political and theoretical weapons they left us. ■

Canada...

(continued from page 5)

to the early '60s. In response, many francophone workers broke with the church. While the northern Ontario mining industry has since been devastated by closures and mass layoffs, workers of francophone origin remain a strong component of the working class in many parts of the country.

In recent decades, overt “English only” bigotry has largely been sidelined, at least at official government levels. But the ethos of “Canadian unity,” with Anglo chauvinism as a necessary corollary, remains at the heart of capitalist Canada. Confronted with the powerful class and other social struggles that shook Quebec in the 1960s and ’70s, the federal government combined cosmetic reform with the fist of repression. Thus, Liberal prime minister Pierre Trudeau, who had introduced official bilingualism, sent the army to occupy Quebec and orchestrate the jailing of hundreds of left-wing and nationalist militants in October 1970. And through two referendums on Quebec independence in 1980 and 1995, Liberal-led federal governments resorted to threats, lies and dirty tricks in order to maintain a “united” Canada.

geographically adjacent to Quebec (e.g., largely Acadian parts of New Brunswick) should have the right to decide whether to join an independent Quebec or remain within Canada.

Our perspective is the forging of a Marxist vanguard party that would act, in Lenin's words, as a "tribune of the peo-

[illegible]

Turkey...

(continued from page 1)

have been rounded up. At least 19 unions, reportedly allied with Gulen, have been banned. Meanwhile, Erdogan has escalated his attacks against leaders and members of parliament of the pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP); several have been arrested and two parliamentarians face charges of engaging in "terrorist propaganda."

The coup attempt has also given Erdogan's ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) the opening to accelerate its Islamist agenda. Erdogan's fundamentalist supporters, who were called out the night of the coup through the many mosque minarets that dot Turkey's landscape, continue to patrol the streets of Istanbul, Ankara and other cities. Women in Western dress report constant harassment and assaults, and neighborhoods of the Kurdish and Alevi minorities have been attacked. On August 8, the body of Hande Kader, a 23-year-old transgender activist, was found in Istanbul; she had been raped and mutilated before her corpse was set on fire. Protesters in Istanbul have denounced Kader's murder, which is part of a spate of attacks on gay and transgender people.

Since coming to power in 2002 as "moderate Islamists," the AKP has been pushing a program of Islamization. This thrust was captured by Erdogan's statement during his time as mayor of Istanbul in the 1990s: "Our only goal is an Islamic state." Turkey today has nearly 90,000 mosques, one for every 900 citizens, with more imams (prayer leaders) than doctors or teachers. During his first term as prime minister, Erdogan unsuccessfully tried to criminalize adultery. He lectured that women should have at least three children and frequently denounced gay rights. His government has enforced restrictions on the sale and advertisement of alcohol, giving fuel to fundamentalist gangs, whose attacks on bars and other establishments selling alcohol have become far more frequent in recent years.

Key to Erdogan's consolidation of power has been his effort to purge the military and other state institutions—efforts that have been extraordinarily successful. Since the founding of the Turkish republic in 1923, the military has always presented itself as the defender of secularism. It carried out coups in 1960, 1971 and 1980 that were followed by bloody repression against the labor movement, leftists, Kurds and others. In 1997, the military mobilized in the streets and forced the government of the AKP's precursor to resign. Especially beginning in 2008, then prime minister Erdogan began a steady purge of secularist officers from the military, who he understood were a threat to his authority. As we noted in "Turkey: Mass Protests Shake Islamist Regime" (WV No. 1027, 12 July 2013): "In Turkey the army is now subordinated to the Islamists."

Prime Minister Erdogan and his AKP also carried out purges in the police and



Above: Vice President Biden shakes hands with Erdogan during visit to Ankara, August 24. Right: U.S. airmen prepare laser-guided bombs at Incirlik Air Base in Turkey.

judiciary. It was in the context of these purges that supporters of Gulen, who was at the time allied with Erdogan, and his *Hizmet* (Service) movement gained positions of power in these institutions as well as in the military. But in 2013, with the secularist forces effectively neutered, the AKP and *Hizmet* had a falling out. When Gulen supporters pursued a number of high-profile corruption arrests against people allied with Erdogan, the prime minister moved against *Hizmet*, carrying out a series of purges that have vastly accelerated in the wake of the failed coup. The regime is now demanding that Washington extradite Gulen, who has been living in the U.S. since 1999; the U.S. has yet to offer an official response.

For its part, the Obama administration has hypocritically lectured the Erdogan regime to respect "democratic principles" in its response to the coup. But what really concerns Washington is that the massive purges of the army will weaken U.S. influence over the Turkish military, NATO's second largest army. As noted by an nbcnews.com article (16 August):

"Those terminated in the past month include a cadre of pro-American, pro-NATO officers whom experts refer to as 'Atlanticists.' They were instrumental in urging Erdogan to host American fighter jets and drones at Incirlik Air Base for use against ISIS targets in northern Iraq and Syria."

"With those officers now out of favor, Washington could find itself losing influence in the wake of Erdogan's purge."

When General Joseph Votel, the commander of U.S. forces in the Near East, complained that many of the Turkish officers the U.S. deals with were being purged, he drew a sharp rebuke from Ankara. Some Turkish officials accused the U.S. of being behind the coup, which, needless to say, the U.S. denies. Erdogan responded to Votel: "Know your place."

Turkey Needs a Leninist Workers Party

Erdogan has a real base of support—among the bourgeoisie in the Anatolian heartland, with the rural masses and in the urban slums. At the same time, Turkish society remains deeply polarized. Massive protests shook the country in 2013, with some three and a half million people participating. They were trig-



U.S. Air Force

gered by brutal police assaults on demonstrators protesting plans for a building project in Gezi Park near the historic Taksim Square in central Istanbul. The protests reflected the deep resentment of younger elements in the better-educated urban middle classes toward the Islamist regime. Some workers in Turkey's politically divided trade-union movement participated, as did members of the oppressed Kurdish national minority. In the end, the government was able to crush the protest movement through ruthless repression and by playing on pervasive anti-Kurdish sentiment.

Turkey is one of the few countries in the Near East that has a significant industrial proletariat. However, less than 10 percent of the workforce is unionized, reflecting the massive defeat inflicted on the workers movement by the 1980 military coup

exploitation and widespread oppression.

It is vital for the proletariat to come forward to lead all the exploited and oppressed in the struggle to overthrow capitalist rule. Key to this perspective is the forging of a Leninist workers party that would fight to break the working class from religious reaction, Turkish chauvinism and all forms of nationalism. Such a party would lead the struggle for women's liberation through proletarian revolution and for Kurdish self-determination, without which the fight for working-class power in Turkey is scarcely conceivable.

Down With Turkey's War Against the Kurdish People!

Whether secular or religious, the ruling elite of Turkey is united in suppressing Kurdish national aspirations. Since last August, several Kurdish cities and



Reuters

Istanbul, May 2013: Riot police attack anti-government protesters at Gezi Park.

and three subsequent decades of heavy repression. For example, the leftist Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions (DISK) was banned until 1992.

In recent years, however, attacks on the working class have not gone unanswered. In May 2015, over 20,000 auto workers in Bursa, Ankara and other cities launched a series of wildcat strikes for higher pay against an agreement reached between Türk Metal, the dominant union in the auto sector, and the bosses. In addition to demanding a wage increase, striking workers demanded the right to join the union of their choice, reflecting accumulated anger at the bureaucratic leadership of Türk Metal. By the end of the strike wave, several thousand workers had left Türk Metal to join DISK's metal workers union.

In response to the coup, DISK issued a July 22 statement rightly denouncing the state of emergency, noting that such acts are "synonymous with extrajudicial murders, massacres, disappearances in custody and torture" and warning: "It is also clear that workers' rights are severely threatened by the state of emergency." However, the DISK statement claims, "The solution is democratization." The government's assault on democratic rights must be combated. But it must be understood that capitalist democracy—always frail and brittle in Turkey—is a cover for the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, whose rule is necessarily based on

towns in southeastern Turkey have been reduced to rubble by Turkish tanks and heavy artillery. In a matter of months, hundreds of civilians have been killed and more than 350,000 people have been displaced as the regime let loose its dogs of war against the PKK. Erdogan has ominously vowed to attack Turkish Kurdistan until it is "completely cleansed" of PKK "terrorists."

One of the worst-hit Kurdish centers is Cizre, a city of over 100,000 in Sirnak Province. From December 14 to March 2, the city was placed under curfew and sealed off. By the time the siege was lifted, up to 160 civilians had been killed. In perhaps the worst atrocity of the war to date, Turkish security forces killed 130 unarmed civilians and injured combatants trapped in three basements. This is but the latest chapter in an onslaught that has taken the lives of tens of thousands of Kurds since 1984. It is vital for the international proletariat to stand for the military defense of the PKK against Turkey and to demand the withdrawal of all Turkish forces from Kurdistan.

The immediate backdrop to the current assault on Turkish Kurdistan was the humiliating defeat suffered by the AKP in the June 2015 elections. Not only did the AKP fail to achieve a parliamentary majority, but the pro-Kurdish HDP got more than 13 percent of the vote, over-



AFP

Turkish army approaches Syrian town of Jarabulus, August 25.

coming the 10 percent hurdle to enter parliament. The HDP is a petty-bourgeois nationalist party whose progressive veneer has helped it draw the support of a substantial number of secular Turkish liberals and leftists. Even more humiliating for Erdogan was that despite its support for women’s and gay rights, the HDP won away a considerable part of the AKP’s socially conservative Kurdish base, which was angered at Erdogan’s refusal in 2014 to allow passage to Kurdish fighters on their way to Kobani, a Kurdish town in Syria then besieged by ISIS.

The regime responded to the June 2015 vote by calling new elections for November. It fully scrapped the 2013 cease-fire with the PKK, which was already falling apart due to PYD/YPG military successes in Syria, and massively escalated its anti-Kurdish offensive to whip up a frenzy of Turkish chauvinism. This escalation included a series of violent attacks against the HDP and its supporters, including bombings blamed on ISIS. In July a suicide bomb targeting a gathering of mostly Kurdish activists in the border town of Suruc killed more than 30 people and injured over 100 more. In September mobs attacked and set fire to HDP offices and businesses belonging to Kurds all over the country. The violence culminated in two suicide bombings in October in Ankara at a peace rally organized by several leftist groups, labor unions and the HDP, killing at least 128 people.

The gambit worked. The AKP got its parliamentary majority in November, most notably by drawing votes from the Nationalist Action Party—to which the fascistic Gray Wolves are connected—beating it at its own game of strident Turkish nationalism.

The Kurdish people constitute the largest nation in the Near East without a state. Numbering between 25 and 35 million, their homeland is the mountainous region straddling the borders of Turkey, Syria, Iraq and Iran. Half of them live in Turkey, where Kurdish oppression is a glue that binds the Turkish masses, including substantial sections of the proletariat, to Turkey’s bloody rulers.

If the proletariat of Turkey is to ever liberate itself from capitalist exploitation, it must oppose anti-Kurdish chauvinism and take up the struggle for Kurdish self-determination. We aim to win the Turkish working class to the fight for a united independent Kurdistan as part of the fight for a socialist republic of united Kurdistan in a socialist federation of the Near East. Championing Kurdish self-determination would undercut U.S. imperialism’s capacity to manipulate the Kurds’ grievances in order to further dominate the region, while also cutting against the sordid maneuvers of the Kurdish nationalists themselves.



March 2: Aftermath of Turkish government attack on Kurdish city of Cizre, southeast Turkey.

Only by fighting all manifestations of Turkish chauvinism and national oppression, can the Turkish proletariat open the road for joint struggle with Kurdish workers against their common capitalist exploiters and oppressors.

We also support Kurdish independence from individual capitalist states (e.g., the right of Kurds in Turkey to secede). However, in Iraq and Syria, the Kurdish

gems that inevitably inflame communal, national and religious tensions and serve to reinforce the oppression of the Kurdish masses” (“Down With U.S. War Against ISIS!” WV No. 1055, 31 October 2014). Now, in the wake of Turkey’s incursion into Syria, many Kurds justifiably fear that their imperialist patrons will betray them, again. As the *New York Times* (1 September) noted: “Drawing on history, Kurds



Striking autoworkers at Tofas/Fiat plant in Bursa, May 2015.

nationalists have currently subordinated the just fight for self-determination to their alliance with U.S. imperialism. This is a crime for which the long-oppressed Kurdish people will pay the price.

Shortly after the Kurdish leaders joined the imperialist war against ISIS, we warned: “By selling their souls to the imperialists as well as to various regional bourgeois regimes, Kurdish leaders help perpetuate the divide-and-rule strata-

see themselves as the playthings of world powers, used in proxy fights when it serves someone’s interest and then discarded.”

PKK Petty-Bourgeois Nationalism: Dead End

While standing for the military defense of the PKK in Turkey, we strongly oppose its petty-bourgeois nationalist program, which is an obstacle to the liberation of the Kurdish masses. Arising in response to the all-sided oppression of the Kurds, the PKK was formally founded in 1978. Led by Abdullah Öcalan (nicknamed Apo, or “uncle”), the PKK claimed to be “Marxist-Leninist,” reflecting Öcalan’s urbanized roots as a student in Ankara at a time when the doctrines of Mao Zedong and Che Guevara were popular among radicalized youth. Despite its rhetoric, the PKK never had anything to do with Marxism.

Rejecting the struggle for a revolutionary Leninist party based on the Turkish and Kurdish proletariat, Öcalan, like many Turkish and Kurdish leftists of the late 1960s and early ’70s, embraced the guerrilla road. He and his supporters retreated to the countryside, turning away from the combative workers of Istanbul, Ankara, Sivas and Adana.

To be sure, the petty-bourgeois nationalist PKK has for over three decades waged a heroic military struggle against the Turkish army, winning mass support among the Kurdish people in Turkish Kurdistan, the urban centers of western Turkey and the diaspora in West Europe and elsewhere. Nevertheless, the PKK uses guerrilla war simply to fight its way to the bargaining table, where it hopes to pressure the Turkish bourgeoisie to grant concessions. In 2013, with a cease-fire agreement between the Erdogan regime and the PKK in effect, the Peace and

Democracy Party, a predecessor of the HDP, was slow in joining the Gezi Park protests, fearing that doing so would upset the Turkish government. In effect, these Kurdish nationalists were promoting illusions that the Erdogan regime could be beneficial to the cause of the Kurdish people.

Especially since the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union, the PKK has increasingly tailored its politics to the reactionary climate of the post-Soviet world, replacing even its formal call for independence with the demand for one or another kind of “autonomy.” But regional autonomy under capitalism means that decisive power remains in the hands of the national state. As the current anti-PKK offensive underscores, even if such an agreement is reached, it will be the Turkish state and its army that determine what rights Kurds do and do not get. This will never lead to Kurdish national liberation.

As they seek concessions from the Turkish state, the Kurdish nationalists also call on the “democratic” Western imperialists to pressure Turkey. An article in the July issue of the English-language *Le Monde Diplomatique* by Selahattin Demirtas, co-leader of the HDP, powerfully conveys the brutal attacks of Erdogan and the AKP against the Kurdish people and oppositionists in Turkey. But the core of the article is a call on the European Union (EU) and its institutions to come to the aid of the Kurds:

“Europe, worried about the refugee crisis, looks the other way while Turkey tramples human rights and democratic values. The US is mainly concerned with the war against ISIS. Both issues are certainly significant. But it is hard to understand why Europe and the wider world overlook the situation of the Kurds in Turkey, which is directly related. It is even harder to understand their silence over the severe violations of fundamental human rights committed by Erdoğan and the AKP, who use those fleeing the war in Syria as a tool of blackmail.”

Contrary to the illusions of the Kurdish nationalists, the U.S. and EU imperialists are enemies of the oppressed, including the Kurds. Along with the U.S., Germany, the central power in the EU, has long trained and supplied Turkish military death squads deployed in Kurdistan. Both the EU and U.S. have joined Turkey in labeling the PKK “terrorist” and banned it, and the CIA played a key role in Turkey’s capture of Öcalan in 1999. We demand freedom for Öcalan and oppose the bans on the PKK. More fundamentally, the EU is a consortium of capitalist powers whose purpose is the increasing subjugation of the working class throughout Europe and the domination of the weaker EU countries by the imperialist overlords, especially Germany. The ICL has always opposed the EU.

Promoting illusions in the Kurdish nationalists, to varying degrees, are reformist groups like Peter Taaffe’s Committee for a Workers’ International (CWI) and the British-based Workers Power group. Both groups supported voting for the HDP. A 20 November 2015 article reprinted on the CWI’s website by its Turkish affiliate upheld voting for the HDP and called on the DISK and other union federations as well as left groups, “jointly with the HDP,” to “organise a central conference on the joint initiative” to build a “democracy bloc.” Workers Power’s League for the Fifth International headlined a 7 June 2015 article, “Turkey: Vote HDP on June 7—Then Build a Revolutionary Party.” Unlike the CWI, Workers Power rightly notes that “the HDP is not a working class party but a petty bourgeois organisation”—only to call for a vote for them anyway.

We defend the HDP and its leaders from the assaults of the Turkish state, and we demand that all charges against them be dropped. But to call for a vote to the HDP is to subordinate the proletariat of Turkey to a petty-bourgeois party whose program is by definition hostile to the historic interests of the working class. Long promoted by reformists of all stripes, the call on the working class to

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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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support “progressive” and “democratic” non-proletarian formations has historically been one of the biggest obstacles preventing the working class from acquiring socialist consciousness. It has served to deprive the proletariat of its political independence from its class enemy.

Notably, even as they call to vote for the HDP, the CWI does not defend the PKK against Turkish forces. This is a reflection of the fact that the CWI lends its support to those whom the “democratic” imperialists support. Thus, in one article after another they fawn over the PYD/YPG in Syria, which is allied with U.S. imperialism. But in a 1 March article on the Turkish state’s anti-Kurdish offensive, the CWI condemns the PKK’s “individual armed actions” as “counterproductive” without so much as hinting that the international proletariat has a side in Turkey.

Kurdish militants confronted with the PKK’s dead-end guerrillaism and its reactionary politics must grapple with the fundamental difference between the PKK’s petty-bourgeois strategy and the Marxist perspective of proletarian revolution. The Kurds are not simply the victims of their national oppression and the betrayals of their leaders. There is a sizable Kurdish working class with a history of militant struggle. For the most part the Kurdish proletariat is outside Kurdistan, in such industrial centers as Istanbul and the mining regions of the Black Sea and southern Turkey; it also exists in West Europe, particularly Germany. It is in the urban centers, among the industrial proletariat, that the power exists to lead the Kurdish people to freedom.

For Permanent Revolution!

While the U.S. is the largest military supporter of Turkey, the Turkish capitalists are economically dependent on German imperialism, exporting more to that country than anywhere else. But relations with Germany have also become strained. A deal reached last year between Turkey, which has more than two million Syrian refugees, and the EU to limit the flow of migrants to Europe is under threat of unraveling. On July 31, a German court banned Erdogan from addressing by satellite an “anti-coup” rally held in Cologne. Then on August 16, German public broadcaster ARD reported that a confidential German government document accused Turkey of being “the central hub for Islamist groups in the Middle East.” The Turkish regime responded by denouncing the “twisted mentality” of the document.

After coming to power, Erdogan heavily pushed the virtues of the EU, portraying membership as the road to economic prosperity. But with the bigoted European rulers stalling on granting EU



Hanover, Germany, March 19: Pro-Kurdish protesters carrying flag showing portrait of Abdullah Öcalan, jailed leader of PKK.

membership to Turkey, a large and overwhelmingly Muslim country, Erdogan started looking elsewhere. His regime has put particular stress on what a former foreign minister called the “strategic depth” doctrine or “neo-Ottomanism”—increasing Turkish clout in former territories of the Ottoman Empire as well as regions where Turkic languages are spoken. From 2002 to 2010, trade with the Arab world increased fivefold. Parallel to this vision of resurgent Ottomanism, the would-be sultan, Erdogan, has sought to concentrate more power in the hands of the presidency, a post he has held since 2014.

Notwithstanding its regional clout, Turkey is a country of belated capitalist development that teems with massive social and political contradictions. While industrial employment accounted for some 25 percent of the Turkish workforce in 2010 and the service sectors accounted for more than 50 percent, some 25 percent—including landless peasants and sharecroppers—still worked in the agricultural sector. The Turkish economy is heavily dependent on foreign capital. Laws implemented in 2001 allow the World Bank, World Trade Organization and EU to dictate agricultural policy, while mandating the elimination of state support for agriculture and accelerating the privatization of state-owned agricultural enterprises. Turkey’s agriculture has been further subordinated to imperialist agribusiness.

The Turkish republic that emerged in 1923 under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk inherited an economically backward country without concentrated modern industry. To build the national capitalist state, the Kemalist movement used Turkish nationalism as a tool, including by ruthlessly suppressing national minorities such as the Kurdish and Armenian peoples. At the same time, acting as the vanguard of the nascent Turkish bourgeoisie, the Kemalists embarked on

a program of reforms designed to develop Turkey into a modern capitalist nation-state. They proclaimed the country a secular republic and abolished the caliphate (office of Islamic ruler). Islam ceased to be the state religion. Religious symbols—the veil in schools and public institutions, and the fez everywhere—were banned. The Latin alphabet was introduced and the Western calendar was adopted.

Atatürk saw himself as a modernizer who could, with a few strokes of his pen, drag the country from the medieval age into the 20th century. But grafted onto a backward society, 80 percent of which was rural and dominated by feudal relations, his reforms could not resolve basic democratic questions. There were no attempts at land reform or expropriation of Turkish landlords. Genuine separation of mosque and state never existed. Instead, the religious hierarchy was brought under the control of the state through the Directorate of Religious Affairs.

Kemalism represents the apex of what could be accomplished under capitalism in the Near East. Atatürk’s reforms did introduce a genuine strain of secularism in the urban centers that would be difficult to find elsewhere in the region. Urbanized petty-bourgeois women certainly benefited. But, amid the material scarcity of the country, the lives of the overwhelming majority of women—in the countryside and in the cities’ slums—changed little. The headscarf ban, instead of being a liberating measure, deepened the exclusion of many women from schools, government service and public life. The gulf between the secular, educated middle classes and the illiterate masses, between city and countryside, widened.

It was precisely the failure of Kemalism to address the poverty and dispossession of the Turkish masses that led to the growth of political Islam. Contrary to the claims of the military to be the defenders of secularism, the Kemalist generals repeatedly encouraged the growth of the Islamists as a counterweight to leftists. In 1982, the military junta imposed Sunni religious classes in primary and secondary schools, to the outrage of secularists and the Alevis, the largest religious minority who make up 10 to 15 percent of Turkey’s population. An unorthodox

offshoot of Shia Islam, they are relatively secular as they reject many Islamic practices, including the separation of men and women in prayer and taboos on alcohol. Considered heretics by Sunni traditionalists, they have been historically persecuted since the early days of the Ottoman Empire.

Turkey presents a powerful argument for Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky’s theory of permanent revolution, which found living confirmation in the 1917 Russian October Revolution. Trotsky’s theory provides the program for resolving the fundamental questions posed by countries of belated capitalist development. In such countries, the weak national bourgeoisie, dependent on its imperialist masters and fearing its “own” proletariat, cannot resolve democratic questions like the separation of religion and the state, agrarian revolution and freedom from imperialist subjugation. As Trotsky wrote in *The Permanent Revolution* (1930):

“The complete and genuine solution of their tasks of achieving *democracy and national emancipation* is conceivable only through the dictatorship of the proletariat as the leader of the subjugated nation, above all of its peasant masses.”

What is vital is the forging of a binational, Turkish-Kurdish revolutionary workers party that would also draw in the oppressed ethnic and religious minorities of Turkey. Such a party, part of a reformed Trotskyist Fourth International, would lead the proletariat, at the head of all the oppressed, in the struggle for its own rule. In power, the working class would expropriate the bourgeoisie and the holdings of its imperialist masters, establishing a collectivized, planned economy where production is based on social need rather than profit. But short of its international extension, especially to the advanced capitalist countries, the development of such a social revolution will be arrested and ultimately reversed.

The struggle for proletarian power in Turkey, and more broadly in the Near East, must be linked to the fight for workers rule in the imperialist centers. Kurdish and Turkish workers are a strategic component of the industrial working class in Europe, especially in Germany, where they are a key part of the trade unions. These workers can serve as a living bridge linking the fight for socialist revolution in the Near East to working-class struggle in the advanced capitalist countries of West Europe. As we wrote in “Turkey: Women and the Permanent Revolution” (WV No. 916, 6 June 2008):

“In the Near East, the struggle against imperialism and its neocolonial surrogate regimes cannot be resolved within the confines of a single country. Justice for the Palestinian people, national emancipation for the Kurds and other ethnic and religious minorities, freedom for women from the veil and Islamic law require sweeping away the capitalist regimes from Iran to Egypt to the shores of the Bosphorus and establishing a socialist federation of the Near East. The struggle for proletarian power in the Near East must be linked to the fight for workers rule in the advanced capitalist countries, and it demands the forging of internationalist workers parties to win the working masses of the region to the communism of Lenin and Trotsky and fight intransigently for working-class power.”■

Mumia...

(continued from page 3)

2 October 2015), there is no doubt that this setback will greatly jeopardize his life. Coating this bitter pill, Mariani confirmed that Pennsylvania’s hepatitis C protocol for inmates—in which treatment is offered for only a few dozen of the more than 6,000 infected—fails to meet constitutional standards. Mariani’s decision affirmed that Pennsylvania’s “treatment protocol... prolongs the suffering of those who have been diagnosed with chronic hepatitis C” allowing “the progression of the disease to accelerate so that it presents a greater threat” of liver disease, cancer and death.

Just days before his suit was denied, it was reported that Mumia is again experiencing itching all over his body—a symp-

tom of the disease. In lieu of getting drugs for hepatitis C, Mumia’s skin condition is treated with a variety of topical medications, often with harmful side effects. He is also suffering from diarrhea—believed to be linked to contamination of the prison’s water supply.

The Partisan Defense Committee, a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League, has long fought for Mumia’s freedom. We urge union militants, fighters for black freedom and student activists to demand freedom now for Mumia Abu-Jamal. We urge our readers to donate to his legal defense. Contributions can be sent to the Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal, c/o the National Lawyers Guild Foundation, 132 Nassau St., Room 922, New York, NY 10038, earmarked “Mumia legal expenses.”■

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Kaepernick...

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played during the medal ceremony. Former Cleveland Browns legend Jim Brown and NBA great Kareem Abdul-Jabbar have also taken a stand with the 49er quarterback as they did with Muhammad Ali when he refused to be drafted into U.S. imperialism’s dirty war against Vietnamese workers and peasants.

Ali, who was stripped of his boxing title and livelihood, sharply linked U.S. imperialist war abroad to racial oppression at home:

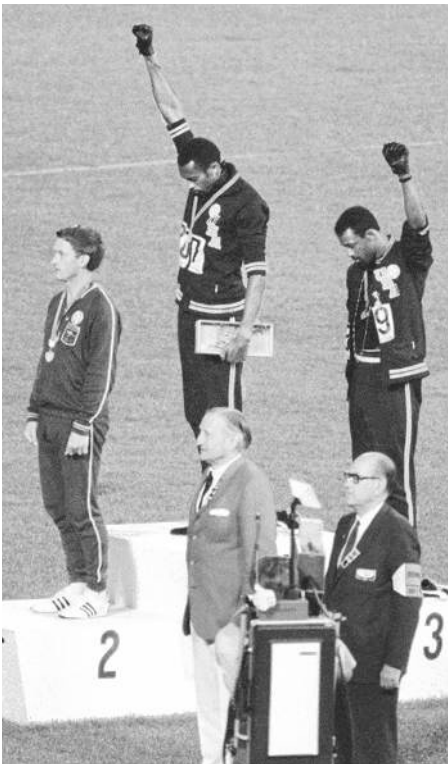
“My conscience won’t let me go shoot my brother, or some darker people, or some poor, hungry people in the mud for big, powerful America. And shoot them for what? They never called me n----r, they never lynched me, they didn’t put no dogs on me, they didn’t rob me of my nationality, rape and kill my mother and father.”

On September 1 in San Diego, Kaepernick again refused to stand for the national anthem, and this time was joined by teammate Eric Reid. But rather than remaining seated, they got down on one knee as “a way to show more respect for the men and women that fight for this country.” But the murderous repression of black people in the U.S. is more than matched by U.S. imperialism’s bloody wars overseas, from the A-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, to the millions of Vietnamese who were killed in the war against “godless Communism,” to the more recent wars, occupations and drone strikes against the peoples of the Near East.

As former Army Ranger Rory Fanning who did two tours in Afghanistan and is now part of #VeteransForKaepernick said in an interview with *Jacobin* (31 August):

“I have a difficult time standing for the national anthem. I entered the military fully expecting to be fighting for the cause of freedom and democracy, and trusting that I would be making the world safer after 9/11....

“The numbers alone show that the world is far more dangerous after fifteen years of endless American-led war. Since 9/11 we’ve also killed a million people, the



Bettmann
Gold and bronze medal-winning sprinters Tommie Smith and John Carlos give “black power” salute at 1968 Olympics in Mexico City.

vast majority civilians. We are killing brown people with impunity overseas, just like we are killing people of color with impunity here at home.”

Fanning served in the same unit as former NFL player Pat Tillman. Killed in 2004, Tillman was cynically made the poster boy for the warmongering George W. Bush administration, which promoted him as a heroic model of American patriotism who died at the hands of the “enemy.” In fact, Tillman, whose experience in Afghanistan led him to oppose the subsequent invasion of Iraq in 2003, was killed by “friendly fire.”

The U.S. is one of the only countries in the world where the national anthem is regularly played at domestic sports events, for the purpose of disappearing the class and racial divisions of society behind the

myth of national unity and rallying the population behind American imperialism’s wars. That union members are also expected to stand for the national anthem or pledge of allegiance at their meetings is a savage indictment of the labor misleaders who have shackled the workers to the aims and interests of their capitalist exploiters. Gains won in hard-fought labor battles of the past have been sacrificed on the altar of patriotism, which is also wielded to pit workers against their class brothers and sisters abroad in the name of defending “American jobs.”

From the time of slavery, American capitalism has been rooted in the forcible subjugation of the black population at the bottom of society. “The Star Spangled Banner” was written by a Maryland slave owner, Francis Scott Key, who reviled blacks as “a distinct and inferior race of people, which all experience proves to be the greatest evil that afflicts a community.” Written during the War of 1812, its little known third stanza, which includes the line “no refuge could save the hireling and slave from the terror of flight or the gloom of the grave,” is a celebration of the killing of slaves who, promised their freedom, fought on the side of the British. Key was part of an inbred social caste of slave-owners and defenders of slavery. His sister married Roger Taney, the Supreme Court chief justice who authored the infamous 1857 *Dred Scott* ruling which declared that black people “had no rights which the white man was bound to respect.” The author of the national anthem would have been an opponent of the present U.S. Constitution as amended after slavery was smashed in the Civil War.

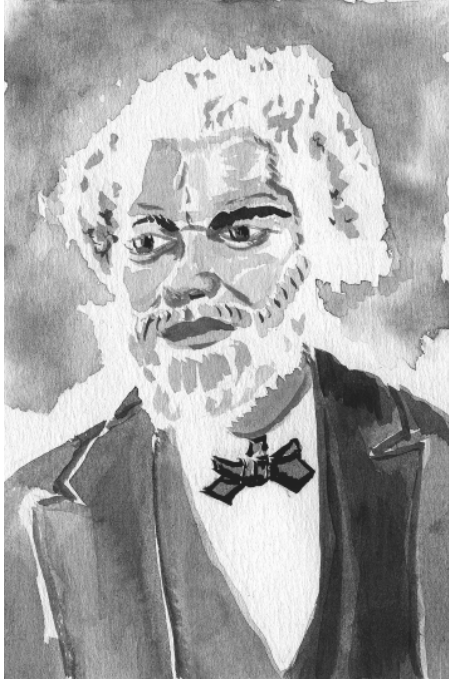
Frederick Douglass, a former slave and abolitionist leader, stripped bare the hypocrisy of America’s pretensions to freedom and democracy:

“What, to the American slave, is your 4th of July? I answer; a day that reveals to him, more than all other days in the year, the gross injustice and cruelty to which he is the constant victim. To him, your celebration is a sham; your boasted liberty, an unholy license; your national greatness,

swelling vanity; your sounds of rejoicing are empty and heartless; your denunciation of tyrants, brass fronted impudence; your shouts of liberty and equality, hollow mockery; your prayers and hymns, your sermons and thanksgivings, with all your religious parade and solemnity, are, to Him, mere bombast, fraud, deception, impiety, and hypocrisy—a thin veil to cover up crimes which would disgrace a nation of savages.”

—“The Meaning of July Fourth for the Negro” (July 1852)

It took a bloody Civil War, the Second American Revolution, to shatter the chains of chattel slavery. It will take a third American revolution—a proletarian



Frederick Douglass depicted in watercolor by Mumia Abu-Jamal.

socialist revolution—to break the chains of wage slavery and open the road to black freedom. The anthem of this fight will be the words of the “Internationale”: “No more tradition’s chains shall bind us; Arise, ye slaves no more in thrall! The earth shall rise on new foundations; We have been naught, we shall be all!” ■

Haiti...

(continued from page 12)

long-awaited acknowledgment, a U.S. federal appeals court blocked a class-action lawsuit filed years ago on behalf of thousands of Haitian cholera victims. By affirming the UN’s immunity from being sued, the decision allows the UN to avoid having to pay \$40 billion or more in damages to the families of those whose lives were destroyed by the disease. Defending the UN’s immunity were none other than lawyers from the U.S. Justice Department.

The UN is a den of imperialist thieves and their victims, which Washington routinely uses as a “humanitarian” front for its adventures and occupations abroad. In a 2008 diplomatic cable released by WikiLeaks, former U.S. ambassador to Haiti Janet Sanderson called MINUSTAH “an indispensable tool in realizing core USG [U.S. government] policy interests,” namely, suppressing “resurgent populist and anti-market economy political forces.” It was to reinforce this bloody UN occupation force, as well as to prevent an exodus of poor Haitian migrants to the U.S., that Barack Obama sent 20,000 troops to the island in 2010.

Overseeing the White House’s response to the earthquake was Obama’s secretary of state at the time, Hillary Clinton. Under the guise of a “relief effort,” the incursion was designed to perpetuate U.S. imperialist domination over the region. Meanwhile, an interim recovery commission headed by Bill Clinton, then UN special envoy to Haiti, is notorious for having squandered millions of dollars of aid money, leaving Haiti in a shambles. Foreign investors benefited handsomely from the building of luxury hotels, while construction of housing projects for displaced residents was shoddy or simply abandoned.

The Clintons’ long history in Haiti, including via the Clinton Foundation, has earned them the justified wrath of Haitians.

Several protests of Haitian expatriates at both the Clinton Foundation and Hillary’s headquarters in New York City—not to mention during this summer’s Democratic Convention—have accused the couple of defrauding the country to the benefit of wealthy donors and the Clintons’ cronies. Haitians remember when, as president in 1994, Bill Clinton deployed thousands of Marines to Haiti to quell growing turmoil. The popular Aristide—who had been ousted in a coup in 1991—was restored on the condition that he agree to a drastic austerity program, privatization of state-owned industry, massive layoffs in the public sector and the virtual abolition of import tariffs. Clinton’s trade policies, which he later flippantly called a “mistake,” devastated Haiti’s rice production and caused its economy to collapse.

Popular hostility to the U.S. and to UN occupying forces on the island has been ever-present in the last several years, no doubt deepened by the UN’s whitewashing of its role in the cholera epidemic. While outbreaks of cholera were prevalent in the 1800s before the invention of modern sanitation systems, the presence of the infectious disease today is yet another marker of the criminality and irrationality of the capitalist order. Cholera is one of the prime examples of diseases of the poor, preventable with basic public health measures like controlling sewage and purifying water. Moreover, even in advanced cases, the infection can be treated in over 99 percent of patients with timely medical attention and simple, cheap rehydration solution—a mixture of sugar, salts and water. But in the hideous backwardness of urban slums and remote villages of the Third World, safe water, waste disposal and medical care are largely out of reach.

A century ago, in a preface to his work *Imperialism: the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1916), Russian revolutionary leader V.I. Lenin described imperialism as “a world system of colonial oppression and of the financial strangulation of the

overwhelming majority of the population of the world by a handful of ‘advanced’ countries.” There is no clearer picture of this than in the poorest country of the Western Hemisphere, where two centuries of looting by the U.S. and France, not to mention repeated American invasions to install and prop up brutal tinpot dictatorships, have left the populace with a crumbling infrastructure and utterly exposed to the ravages of disease.

Haitian workers in the U.S., Canada and elsewhere can serve as a vital bridge linking the struggle for national and social

emancipation in Haiti and the rest of the Caribbean with the fight for socialist revolution in the North American imperialist heartland. A workers revolution in the U.S. would extend massive aid programs to rebuild the countries in the Caribbean, Latin America, Africa and elsewhere that the imperialists have plundered and destroyed. Only through overturning the capitalist system and establishing a planned, collectivized economy on a world scale will the basis be laid for dealing with hunger and sickness through overcoming material scarcity. ■



Spartacist League Forums

**Break with the Democrats and Republicans!
Capitalist Green Party No Alternative!**

**Elections 2016: Racist Bigots
and Imperialist War Hawks**

**We Need a Multiracial Workers Party
to Fight for Socialist Revolution!**

NEW YORK CITY

Saturday, September 24, 3 p.m.
322 West 48th Street, First Floor
(Between 8th and 9th Avenues—
Take A, C or E to 42nd Street)
Information: (212) 267-1025 nysl@tiac.net

LOS ANGELES

Saturday, October 15, 3 p.m.
Metropolitan Community Church
4607 Prospect Ave.
(One block east of Vermont,
near the Vermont/Sunset Red Line
Metro Station)
For information: (213) 380-8239
slsycla@sbcglobal.net

CHICAGO

Saturday, October 8, 2 p.m.
Quaker House
5615 S. Woodlawn Ave.
For information: (312) 563-0441
chicagospartacist@sbcglobal.net

BAY AREA

Sunday, October 16, 2 p.m.
Oakland Public Library—
Main Branch, 125 14th Street
Bradley C. Walters Community Room (downstairs)
(between Oak and Madison,
8 minute walk from Lake Merritt BART)
For information: (510) 839-0851
slbayarea@fastmail.net

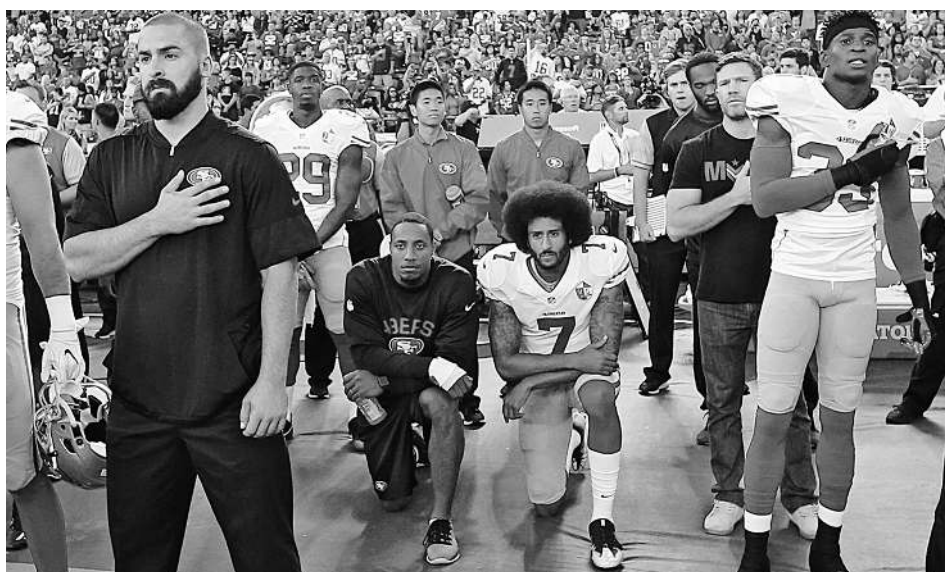
WORKERS VANGUARD

Don't Kneel for Racist U.S. Imperialism!

Salute Colin Kaepernick's Protest Against Cop Terror!

At the August 26 preseason game against the Green Bay Packers, San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick refused to stand for the national anthem. As he defiantly said, "I am not going to stand up to show pride in a flag for a country that oppresses black people and people of color.... There are bodies in the streets and people getting paid leave and getting away with murder." A racist, red-white-and-blue backlash was immediate on social media and the bourgeois press. On the other side, there has been an outpouring of support for Kaepernick whose 49ers jersey is now a best seller. Other athletes have expressed solidarity with Kaepernick. Seattle Seahawks cornerback Jeremy Lane stayed on the bench when "The Star Spangled Banner" was played before a September 1 game against the Oakland Raiders. Two days later, soccer player Megan Rapinoe refused to stand during the playing of the anthem before her Seattle Reign played the Chicago Red Stars.

The National Football League is a multimillion-dollar business, its players almost 70 percent black. Its owners and executives, who are almost 100 percent white, don't like anyone stirring up trou-



San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick (No. 7) and teammate Eric Reid refuse to stand during national anthem, September 1.

ble on their sports plantation. Anonymous NFL executives denounced Kaepernick as a "traitor," with one comparing him to a former NFL player who hired a hit man to murder his pregnant girlfriend! The White House press spokesman weighed in call-

ing Kaepernick's remarks "objectionable," while echoing the hypocritical liberal refrain that his supposed freedom to do so is embodied in the blood-drenched flag of American imperialism. President Obama himself later intoned that, while "tough" for

cops and the military to stomach, Kaepernick's protest is "how democracy works."

The Santa Clara cops who police the 49ers' stadium warned that Kaepernick's actions have "threatened our harmonious working relationship" with the team. This was echoed by the president of the San Francisco Police Officers Association who threatened, "we will not stand by while he attacks police officers in this country." As the body count of black people gunned down on the streets by the cops daily mounts, the police are particularly incensed when "uppity" black athletes, musicians and other prominent figures protest these racist atrocities.

There is a long roster of black athletes who have been vilified by the capitalist masters for defying the rituals of the so-called "land of the free." Among them are those who are now rallying behind Kaepernick. These include Tommie Smith and John Carlos, gold and bronze winners in the 1968 Olympics who were banished from the U.S. team and given 48 hours to get out of Mexico after raising their fists in the "black power" salute while "The Star Spangled Banner" was

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Haiti

UN Admits Causing Cholera Epidemic

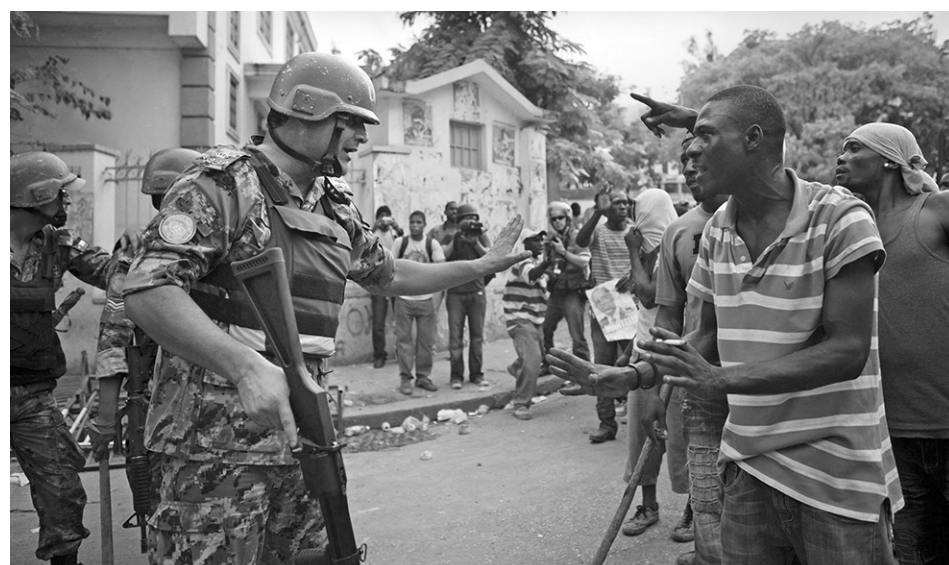
UN Troops Out!

Last month the United Nations finally acknowledged what scientists, journalists and Haitians themselves have known from the beginning: the ongoing cholera epidemic was caused by UN troops. Since the disease first appeared in Haiti six years ago following a catastrophic earthquake, it has killed over 10,000 Haitians and infected hundreds of thousands of others. Threatening unspeakable human costs, the infection rate continues to climb. Not included in the UN's halfhearted admission was the extent of evasion, destruction of evidence and outright lies used by Haiti's UN overlords to cover up the fact that they spread the scourge.

The UN occupation force in Haiti was initially put in place by the U.S. and other imperialist forces in 2004 following the coup they orchestrated against the bour-

geois populist Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Known as the MINUSTAH "stabilization mission," the role of these troops has always been to put down social protest and enforce repression against the beleaguered and impoverished Haitian masses. UN forces have repeatedly terrorized the vast Cité Soleil slum in Port-au-Prince, including in December 2006 when they massacred scores of residents who were demanding the return of Aristide and the withdrawal of foreign military forces. During the mass hunger riots in 2008, UN troops fired on crowds protesting rising food prices, killing several. We demand: *All UN troops out now!*

After the 2010 earthquake, MINUSTAH was bolstered by troops from Nepal, a country where cholera was rampant. The so-called "peacekeeping" troops, who



UN soldiers clash with protesters in Haitian capital, December 2010.

Reuters

were not medically screened, allowed untreated sewage from their camp to flow into a fresh water source, infecting locals en masse. UN officials then obstructed any investigation, prohibiting examination of UN soldiers and sanitation at the camp while falsely claiming that sealed septic tanks were emptied by a contractor. Various accounts from journalists of sewage spills and overflowing latrines going directly into a river used for drinking, bathing and washing were routinely dismissed as spurious. For their part, the World Health Organization and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention abetted the UN's cover-up, claiming that pinpointing the source of the outbreak was "not productive."

So what caused the UN's apparent about-face? In April, an internal UN

report—commissioned back in 2010—substantiating the unsanitary conditions at the base was leaked to the media. This leak was followed by an August 8 report by a longtime UN advisor stating categorically that the epidemic "would not have broken out" if not for the UN's role. Soon after, the deputy spokesman for Secretary General Ban Ki-moon issued a tepid confession in an email to the *New York Times* regarding the UN's "involvement" in the cholera outbreak, promising a "new set of UN actions" to address the issue. Fat chance. Despite previous promises, the UN has implemented no major water or sanitation projects on the island since the epidemic began.

As though to underscore the cynicism of the whole affair, just a day after the

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