

## Imperialist Hysteria After Nuclear Test

# Defend North Korea!

On September 9, North Korea conducted an underground nuclear test with an explosive yield of approximately 15 to 20 kilotons. Nuclear testing was initiated by North Korea in 2006. However, this was the second such test this year

with a yield about twice the magnitude of any of the previous four documented detonations. During the past year North Korea has conducted several missile tests that have demonstrated its capacity to fire a submarine-launched ballistic

missile as well as a solid-fuel, two-stage medium-range missile, covering north-east Asia, including Japan. Nuclear scientist Siegfried Hecker pointed to the importance of these events: "At a minimum, the current state of the North's

nuclear arsenal is an effective deterrent to potential hostile external intervention" (38north.org, 12 September).

This achievement deserves the acclaim of the world's working and oppressed  
*continued on page 4*

# Standoff at Standing Rock

## Defend Native American Protesters!



Stromme/Bismarck Tribune

Police repression at Dakota Access Pipeline construction site, August 11.

The ongoing protest encampment on the Standing Rock Sioux reservation in North Dakota has been described as the largest gathering of Native American tribes since the 1876 Battle of the Little Bighorn, where Colonel George Armstrong Custer met his deserved end. Thousands of people, including from 280 tribes, have gathered to protest the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL). The protests have also drawn activists, environmentalists and bourgeois politicians looking for a photo op.

Protesters have faced racist arrogance and brutality from the capitalist state and goons for the pipeline company, Energy Transfer Partners. On September 3, security guards attacked protesters with dogs and pepper spray; six demonstrators were bitten by dogs. The state has hit seven protesters with reckless endangerment charges for having attached themselves to pipeline construction equipment; they face up to five years in prison. Over 60 other people have been charged with misdemeanors (including *Democracy Now!* journalist Amy Goodman, charged with trespassing for reporting on the September 3 attack on protesters).

On September 8, North Dakota governor Jack Dalrymple activated the National Guard to back up the state troopers by

## Marxism vs. Environmentalism

manning roadblocks, with 100 more guardsmen on standby. One protester, who had driven to Standing Rock from California with his wife after they saw the brutality on September 3, described

to WV one of the ominous roadblocks. There were 10-15 National Guardsmen with a large military truck and "the highway was blocked with several concrete road barriers forming a narrow s-shaped

path" where cars were waved through at a crawl after being forced to a complete stop. He said it looked as if "they were expecting civil war or something." **Drop all the charges against the Standing Rock protesters! National Guard out!**

The pipeline, to carry oil from the Bakken shale formation to Illinois where it would link up with other pipelines, is to pass under a dammed section of the Missouri River known as Lake Oahe half a mile upstream of the Standing Rock reservation. On September 9, just minutes after a federal district court judge refused to grant an injunction requested by the Standing Rock Sioux to halt construction on the pipeline, the federal government moved to defuse the situation. It announced that the Army Corps of Engineers would hold off on issuing permits to dig on federal land bordering or under Lake Oahe. On September 16, a three-judge U.S. Court of Appeals panel granted a temporary administrative injunction halting work on the pipeline for 20 miles either side of Lake Oahe. On the same day, the Corps of Engineers granted the tribes a permit to allow demonstrations on federal lands managed by the agency.

Environmentalists and the Standing Rock Sioux are opposed to the pipeline altogether. As Marxists, we neither oppose nor support the DAPL. Many have raised concerns about potential contamination of the area's water supply, though it does not appear that this pipeline is any less safe than others of modern design. In

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WV Photo

Native American youth at September 9 rally in Bismarck, North Dakota.



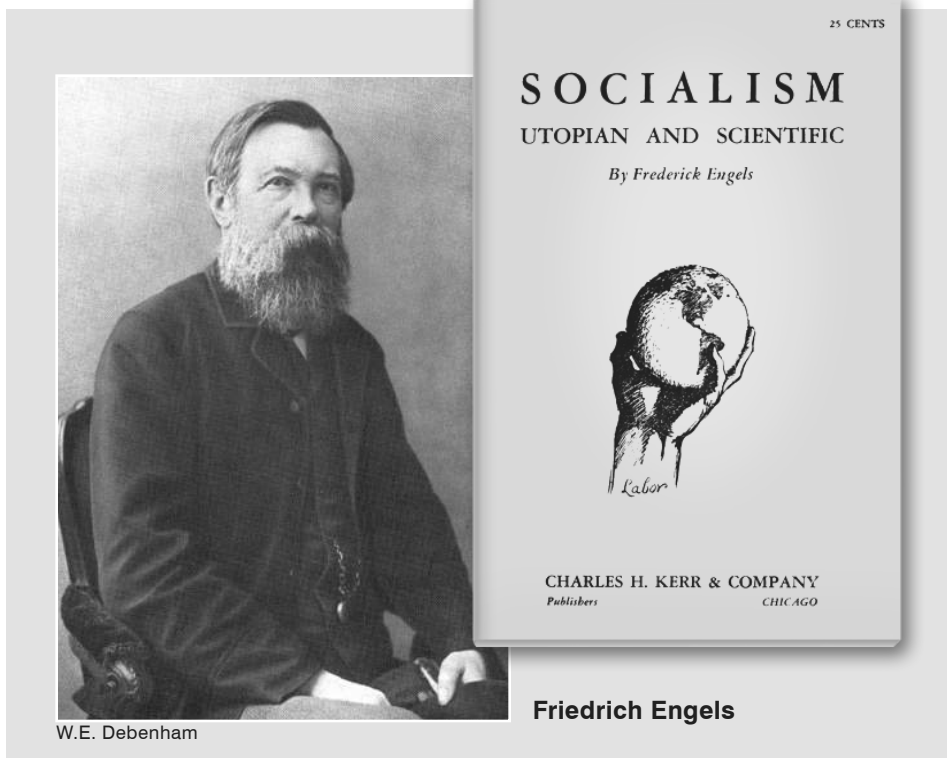
# “From the Kingdom of Necessity to the Kingdom of Freedom”

We publish below excerpts from Friedrich Engels' 1880 work *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*. In explaining scientific socialism, Engels makes clear that only through the conquest of power by the working class and the expropriation of the capitalist class can the benefits of science, technology and education be available to all, laying the material basis for the full liberation of humanity. The excerpts below are taken from the *Marx and Engels Selected Works* (Progress Publishers, 1976).

The materialist conception of history starts from the proposition that the production of the means to support human life and, next to production, the exchange of things produced, is the basis of all social structure; that in every society that has appeared in history, the manner in which wealth is distributed and society divided into classes or orders is dependent upon what is produced, how it is produced, and how the products are exchanged. From this point of view the final causes of all social changes and political revolutions are to be sought, not in men's brains, not in men's better insight into eternal truth and justice, but in changes in the modes of production and exchange. They are to be sought not in the *philosophy*, but in the *economics* of each particular epoch. The growing perception that existing social institutions are unreasonable and unjust, that reason has become unreason and right wrong, is only proof that in the modes of production and exchange changes have silently taken place with which the social order, adapted to earlier economic conditions, is no longer in keeping. From this it also follows that the means of getting rid of the incongruities that have been brought to light must also be present, in a more or less developed condition, within the changed modes of production themselves. These means are not to be invented by deduction from fundamental principles, but are to be discovered in the stubborn facts of the existing system of production.

What is, then, the position of modern socialism in this connection?

The present structure of society—this is now pretty generally conceded—is the creation of the ruling class of today, of the bourgeoisie. The mode of production peculiar to the bourgeoisie, known, since Marx, as the capitalist mode of production, was incompatible with the feudal system, with the privileges it conferred upon individuals, entire social ranks and local corporations, as well as with the hereditary ties of subordination which constituted the framework of its social organisation. The bourgeoisie broke up the feudal system



and built upon its ruins the capitalist order of society, the kingdom of free competition, of personal liberty, of the equality, before the law, of all commodity owners, of all the rest of the capitalist blessings. Thenceforward the capitalist mode of production could develop in freedom. Since steam, machinery, and the making of machines by machinery transformed the older manufacture into modern industry, the productive forces evolved under the guidance of the bourgeoisie developed with a rapidity and in degree unheard of before. But just as the older manufacture, in its time, and handicraft, becoming more developed under its influence, had come into collision with the feudal trammels of the guilds, so now modern industry, in its more complete development, comes into collision with the bounds within which the capitalistic mode of production holds it confined. The new productive forces have already outgrown the capitalistic mode of using them. And this conflict between productive forces and modes of production is not a conflict engendered in the mind of man, like that between original sin and divine justice. It exists, in fact, objectively, outside us, independently of the will and actions even of the men that have brought it on. Modern socialism is nothing but the reflex, in thought, of this conflict in fact; its ideal reflection in the minds, first, of the class directly suffering under it, the working class...

The perfecting of machinery is making human labour superfluous. If the introduction and increase of machinery means

the displacement of millions of manual by a few machine-workers, improvement in machinery means the displacement of more and more of the machine-workers themselves. It means, in the last instance, the production of a number of available wage-workers in excess of the average needs of capital, the formation of a complete industrial reserve army, as I called it in 1845, available at the times when industry is working at high pressure, to be cast out upon the street when the inevitable crash comes, a constant dead weight upon the limbs of the working class in its struggle for existence with capital, a regu-

lator for the keeping of wages down to the low level that suits the interests of capital. Thus it comes about, to quote Marx, that machinery becomes the most powerful weapon in the war of capital against the working class; that the instruments of labour constantly tear the means of subsistence out of the hands of the labourer; that the very product of the worker is turned into an instrument for his subjugation. Thus it comes about that the economising of the instruments of labour becomes at the same time, from the outset, the most reckless waste of labour power, and robbery based upon the normal conditions under which labour functions; that machinery, the most powerful instrument for shortening labour time, becomes the most unfailing means for placing every moment of the labourer's time and that of his family at the disposal of the capitalist for the purpose of expanding the value of his capital. Thus it comes about that the overwork of some becomes the preliminary condition for the idleness of others, and that modern industry, which hunts after new consumers over the whole world, forces the consumption of the masses at home down to a starvation minimum, and in doing thus destroys its own home market. “The law that always equilibrates the relative surplus population, or industrial reserve army, to the extent and energy of accumulation, this law rivets the labourer to capital more firmly than the wedges of Vulcan did Prometheus to the rock. It establishes an accumulation of misery, corresponding with accumulation of capital. Accumulation of wealth at one pole is, therefore, at the same time, accumulation of misery, agony of toil, slavery, ignorance, brutality,

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# Hunger Strike Ends

# Free Chelsea Manning!

Just two months after being driven to a suicide attempt, imprisoned transgender whistle-blower Chelsea Manning went on hunger strike to protest ongoing abuse and denial of health care in the military prison at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Manning—who was sentenced in 2013 for disclosing military and state secrets to WikiLeaks—refused all food and beverage and demanded “minimum standards of dignity, respect, and humanity,” including the ability to undergo gender reassignment surgery. Her drastic plea ended after five days on September 13 when the army relented and agreed to allow her to proceed with the surgery. Manning’s hunger strike was emblem-

atic of the dire anguish she has had to endure during her six-year battle with military jailers. Her appeals for help have been, in her words, “ignored, delayed, mocked.” While the former military analyst was granted an official name change in 2014 (from Bradley) and hormone therapy in 2015, she has been in a relentless legal battle to receive the recommended medical treatment for gender transitioning. Being forced to maintain short hair and being held in an all male unit—which exposes her to greater risk of anti-trans harassment and assault—are examples of what Manning refers to as “high tech bullying” on the part of prison and military officials. Grotesquely, Manning is still facing

charges for surviving her suicide attempt in July, after which she was threatened with the torture of indefinite solitary confinement. She could also be hit with administrative charges related to her suicide attempt. As Chase Strangio, one of her lawyers, remarked: “She’s essentially being punished by the government for trying to die, after so many times being punished for trying to live.” Manning may become the first U.S. transgender inmate to undergo gender reassignment surgery. But the struggle continues for the freedom of this courageous individual facing a vindictive 35-year sentence for espionage. Manning, alongside whistle-blowers Edward

Snowden and Julian Assange, carried out a heroic service by exposing a degree of the secrecy and crimes of U.S. imperialism. As an appeal to pardon Snowden gains publicity with the release of Oliver Stone’s new biopic, Manning’s case merits a widespread, coordinated campaign for her release. *Free Chelsea Manning now! Hands off Julian Assange and Edward Snowden!* In an interview last month with Amnesty International, Manning stated: “A government can arrest you. It can imprison you. It can put out information about you that won’t get questioned by the public—everyone will just assume that what they are saying is true. Sometimes, a government can even kill you—with or without the benefit of a trial.... It is very terrifying to face the government alone.” Manning helped open the eyes of many to the systematic violence and lies of America’s rulers. Marxists seek to impart the understanding that only when the system of capitalism is destroyed through workers revolution internationally will the savagery and depravity that today plague humanity be ended. ■

# Down With Burkini Ban!

## France

PARIS—Even the beaches have become a battleground for the frenzied anti-Arab racism of the French bourgeoisie. The rulers’ scapegoating of Muslim immigrants and their children for the ills of capitalist society was further fueled in July by the criminal attack in Nice by an alleged supporter of Islamic terrorism, which killed 86 people (see statement by the Ligue Trotskyste de France reprinted in WV No. 1093, 29 July). This summer, a number of French coastal cities and resorts have decreed a local ban on the burkini, a swimsuit covering the body except the face and feet and mostly used by Muslim women (but also by Orthodox Jewish women and others).

It started in the town of Cannes on the French Riviera, where on July 28 the local mayor from the rightist Republican Party decreed a ban on swimsuits violating “the principle of secularism.” A similar ban on the burkini was decreed at Villeneuve-Loubet near Nice airport on August 5. A week later, a nasty brawl took place in Sisco (Siscu), a small town in Corsica, between families of North African origin and other local residents, apparently over the use of a tiny beach. Three days later, Sisco’s Socialist Party (SP) mayor decreed a ban on the burkini—although no burkinis had been sighted by anybody on the contested beach.

Throughout France, swarms of local cops descended on beaches to levy fines and force women to remove their clothes or go home. While most of the mayors banning the burkini are on the right fringe of French bourgeois politics, some are members of the ruling SP. SP prime minister Manuel Valls has enthusiastically championed the racist, exclusionist, anti-woman bans. The government had already banned the headscarf in public schools and fought to extend this discrimination into the private sector (see WV No. 1025, 31 May 2013). Now Valls has come out for expelling veiled women students from universities.

Earlier this month, the prime minister published a column denouncing the *New York Times* for printing accounts by some Muslim women of their oppression in “secular” France, calling the *Times*’s description of France “intolerable.” (To be sure, it is the height of hypocrisy for the *Times*—which loyally serves the imperialist bourgeoisie of the U.S., world capital of racism and anti-Muslim bigotry—to lec-

ture the French or anyone else about tolerance.) Valls denied that France is forcing Muslim women “to leave their country to study, find work, make a career,” but this is exactly the pressure that observant Muslim women are facing. What’s next—are we going to see racist signs reading, “No dogs or Muslims allowed?”

On August 26 the State Council, France’s highest administrative court, decreed the Villeneuve-Loubet ban illegal; it stated that the mayor had exceeded his police powers, striking “a serious and manifestly illegal blow” against fundamental rights. The State Council’s decree led local administrative courts to lift similar bans on the burkini. But on September 6 the Sisco ban was upheld with the claim that the burkini represents a risk to public order. On September 12, the administrative court in Nice upheld the ban for two towns, based on complaints by some local residents. In other words, when there is a local anti-Muslim mobilization, Muslims are blamed. In fact, the racists and cops take their cue from the government at its highest levels.

A London *Guardian* (24 August) article by the designer of the burkini, Aheda Zanetti, an Australian Muslim woman, described the idea behind the garment: “It was about integration and acceptance and being equal and about not being judged.” About the anti-Muslim backlash in France, she comments: “They are demanding women get off the beach and back into their kitchens.”

The headscarf is a symbol and a tool of women’s oppression, which is why we have always opposed it. But the anti-burkini decrees are an incitement to



Nice, August 23: French police imposing burkini ban force woman to strip.

pogroms against Muslims as part of the “war on terror,” whose underlying purpose is to militarize society and repress the population. The measures unleashed first against an isolated minority population have in their sights the working class as well as the oppressed. This was starkly demonstrated during the recent workers mobilizations against the anti-union El Khomri law (see WV No. 1087, 8 April), which were subjected to relentless police assaults, mass arrests and prosecutions and the “anti-terrorism” state of emergency. The current furor stigmatizing Muslim women is a gift to the government, not

least by shifting attention away from the recent class struggles and instead highlighting ethnic divisions, in the tried and true spirit of divide-and-rule.

As Marxists, we fight against all discrimination and state persecution of minorities. We opposed the 2004 ban on the headscarf in French schools and the 2009 ban on wearing the *burqa* (head-to-toe veil) in the streets. Now an amendment inserted into the El Khomri law provides legal means to facilitate firing women wearing the headscarf from their jobs. Today Lutte Ouvrière and other fake-socialist organizations denounce the burkini bans. But in 2003, supporters of these groups spearheaded the expulsion of two schoolgirls in a Paris suburb for wearing the headscarf—of course in the name of “secularism” and women’s rights.

It is grotesque to pretend that the French capitalist state wants to emancipate women from religious backwardness. In fact, these racist measures only deepen the social segregation and isolation of Muslim women. The principle of secularism, as it arose during the French Revolution, came out of the fight to rip the emerging bourgeois society from the stranglehold of the Catholic church. But in France today, it is simply a code word for anti-Muslim bigotry. The Valls government is intruding on the personal rights of Muslims—while of course opposing any encroachment on the privileges of the Catholic church. *Down with the anti-Muslim crusade! Cops out of the mosques! Dress code police, get off the beaches!* ■

**LE BOLCHEVIK**  
LIGUE TROTSKYSTE DE FRANCE  
N° 217 - Septembre 2016  
B.R.B. €  
**UE : ennemie des travailleurs et des immigrés**  
**Brexit : un camouflet pour les banquiers et patrons d'Europe !**  
Nous republions ici-dessous un tract daté de 24 juin de la S.B.R. section britannique de la L.C.T.  
« ... »  
Le Spartacist League/Britain, formé de son histoire de combat révolutionnaire, révolutionnaire et internationaliste à l'Union européenne (U.E.) dénoncée par l'impérialisme, salue la vote décisif en faveur de la sortie de la Grande-Bretagne. C'est une défaite contre la City de Londres pour les patrons et les banquiers d'Europe dans leur effort de déstabiliser le gouvernement britannique. C'est une victoire pour le mouvement ouvrier britannique. Le vote de la sortie de la Grande-Bretagne est une victoire pour le mouvement ouvrier britannique et des travailleurs non-occidentaux.  
**Gauche française et Brexit : Soutien critique à l'UE ou chauvinisme populiste « de gauche »**  
La position des marxistes en faveur du Brexit découle directement de l'analyse que nous faisons de la nature de l'Union européenne (U.E.). Si nous sommes opposés au projet de la sortie de la Grande-Bretagne, nous sommes également opposés à l'Union européenne (U.E.) dénoncée par l'impérialisme, salue la vote décisif en faveur de la sortie de la Grande-Bretagne. C'est une défaite contre la City de Londres pour les patrons et les banquiers d'Europe dans leur effort de déstabiliser le gouvernement britannique. C'est une victoire pour le mouvement ouvrier britannique. Le vote de la sortie de la Grande-Bretagne est une victoire pour le mouvement ouvrier britannique et des travailleurs non-occidentaux.  
**Pour l'unité des travailleurs européens par-delà les frontières !**

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North Korea...

(continued from page 1)

masses. It enhances the defense of the social revolution that survived U.S. imperialism's efforts to drown it in blood during the 1950-53 Korean War. General Douglas MacArthur and others in U.S. ruling circles were intent on using the peninsula as a launching pad from which to overturn the 1949 Chinese Revolution. Simultaneously, North Korea's development of nuclear weapons and effective delivery systems serves to impede the U.S.'s current campaign—coilyly dubbed the “Pivot to Asia”—to encircle and eventually throttle the People's Republic of China, by far the most powerful of the deformed workers states that have survived in the aftermath of the 1991-92 counterrevolution in the Soviet Union. It is vital for the international proletariat to stand for the unconditional military defense of the North Korean and Chinese deformed workers states.

The U.S. has repeatedly denounced North Korea's nuclear tests. Provocatively, in the aftermath of the September 9 detonation, two U.S. bombers, accompanied by Japanese and South Korean fighter jets, flew at low altitude only 48 miles from the North Korean border. Admiral Harry Harris, the head of U.S. Pacific Command, described this operation as a response to “North Korea's provocative and destabilizing actions.” Adopting the role of stooge for the U.S. imperialists, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon—a one-time South Korean deputy ambassador to the U.S.—fulminated over the North's “provocative actions.” He demanded additional UN sanctions against the Kim Jong Un regime, on top of the harsh measures adopted in March after the first of this year's nuclear tests. Meanwhile, a South Korean military source threatened to reduce North Korea's capital, Pyongyang, to ashes should the North show any signs of using its nuclear arms. The backbone for this bellicosity is provided by the more than 28,000 American troops currently stationed in South Korea.

It is the U.S. that, from the time of the Korean War, has been responsible for an unending series of provocations and savageries. During that war, carried out under the auspices of the UN, the U.S. utilized oceans of napalm to incinerate the population, with a resultant slaughter of over three million Koreans. It was due to the heroic struggle of Korea's workers and peasants and the intervention of the Chinese People's Liberation Army that the imperialists did not succeed in overturning the social revolution in the North. The war ended in an armistice, sealing



U.S. Marine Corps

U.S. and South Korean marines in joint training exercises, July 12.

Korea's division along class lines at the 38th parallel. Subsequently, Washington went on to prop up a number of dictatorial regimes in the South that ruled through sheer terror, while the U.S. forces permanently stationed there were often used to quell popular unrest and to suppress labor actions.

Since the fall of the USSR, China's reward for its longstanding cooperation with the U.S. to isolate and weaken the Soviet Union has been to increasingly find itself placed in the crosshairs of the American imperialists. The U.S. has usually avoided using the direct threat of military action against China, often invoking the specter of attacks launched by North Korea to justify its military operations in the region. Thus, it was North Korea, not China, that was dubbed part of the “axis of evil.” In spite of China's ardent wooing of the reactionary Park Geun-hye regime in the South, her government has agreed to the installation of the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (Thaad) missile shield by the U.S. as a defense against the North. This has exercised China, which rightly perceives the system to be a threat to its missiles. In 2009 Thaad was installed in Hawaii supposedly to prevent a North Korean intercontinental ballistic missile attack. At that time the North had no such capacity, but China did. Our demand for all U.S. forces and bases out of South Korea is both a defense of North Korea and the Chinese Revolution.

Both the Republican and Democratic candidates for the presidency are running primarily on their purported virtues as the leader most qualified to smash America's enemies abroad. Although ISIS is the main target of their fulminations, the ultimate target for U.S. imperialism is the Chinese deformed workers state.

In the past four years, the number of soldiers and civilian army workers in Asia has increased from 70,000 to more than 100,000. In response to China's just and legitimate claim to the Spratly Islands, the U.S. has been conducting aggressive naval operations in the South China Sea, which the Japanese navy will soon join.

Our defense of the deformed workers states does not entail political support for the ruling bureaucracies, which in North Korea is deeply nationalist, weirdly nepotistic and brutally repressive. Committed to “socialism” only in its half of the Korean Peninsula, the Kim regime disdains the struggle for socialist revolution in the South and calls for “peaceful reunification” of Korea, a setup for capitalist reunification.

We fight for workers political revolution in the deformed workers states in order to sweep away bureaucratic misrule and open the road to the further expansion of proletarian revolution. The parasitic bureaucracies understand that their privileges would not survive proletarian political revolutions, and thus to secure their well-being, they offer their services to the imperialists as they pursue the chimera of “peaceful coexistence” with the world capitalist order. The imperialists, for their part, are willing to deal in the short run while never abandoning their hostility to the survival of proletarian power anywhere on the planet.

For its part, the various manifestations of the Kim dynasty in North Korea have episodically displayed a willingness to



Xinhua

July 13: Protesters rally in front of defense ministry in Seoul against deployment of U.S. Terminal High Altitude Area Defense missile system.

The U.S. is also seeking to bolster joint military training exercises with Australia to address “challenges” in the region.

When North Korea conducted a nuclear test in January, the Chinese Stalinist regime criminally assisted the U.S., even helping to draft the sanctions that the UN imposed in March. Since then, the U.S. has been frustrated by Chinese unwillingness to implement the sanctions, as it now seeks more sanctions, as yet unspecified. Absent China's implementation, the sanctions have had little impact, as 90 percent of North Korea's trade is with China. Today, China views North Korea's nuclear tests as a buffer against the hostile intents of the U.S. But as demonstrated by its support for the March sanctions, this appreciation could change in a second. At this time, China is unwilling to entertain the collapse of the North Korean regime, which would plunge the peninsula into chaos. It has also been planning to deepen military cooperation with Russia (the other major obstacle to U.S. imperialism's overwhelming military dominance), including a joint naval drill to be hosted by China later this year.

It is unfortunately true that North Korea's success in developing its nuclear capability is in no way sufficient to the task of defending the social revolution that was solidified in the context of the Korean War. North Korea and China as well as Cuba, Vietnam and Laos are deformed workers states: societies based on the expropriation of their respective capitalist class rulers and where that rule was replaced by working-class property forms—i.e., the nationalization of production and a state monopoly on all foreign trade. At the same time, these countries are governed by parasitic bureaucratic castes whose rule is based on the political expropriation of the working class.

abandon their efforts to obtain deterrent capacity in exchange for economic assistance from the American imperialists. Although North Korea has recovered somewhat from the economic disaster that befell it in the aftermath of the destruction of the Soviet Union, its economy remains precarious and will certainly suffer from the extensive damage it sustained late last month as a result of Typhoon Lionrock. It now plans to launch international appeals for donations, causing many bourgeois pundits to indicate that such assistance will not be forthcoming given their bad behavior, i.e., daring to conduct a nuclear test.

We fight for the revolutionary reunification of Korea: proletarian socialist revolution in the South in conjunction with working-class political revolution in the North. A struggle for the revolutionary reunification of Korea would ignite other struggles for proletarian power throughout the region. Today the South Korean economy is in the tank, with unprecedented levels of youth unemployment, and there is evident popular resentment against the planned introduction by the U.S. of the Thaad missile shield. The objective conditions to ignite the struggle for a revolutionary reunification have long existed.

Defense of North Korea, China and the other remaining deformed workers states is integral to the fight for socialist revolution in the advanced capitalist countries, including Japan, the imperialist powerhouse of Asia, and the U.S., the planet's most dominant power. The International Communist League is dedicated to forging the proletarian vanguard parties that, as sections of a reformed Fourth International, can lead the working class in sweeping away the capitalist-imperialist order and building a world socialist society of material abundance. ■



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# Canadian Imperialism and Afghan Torture Cells

We reprint the following article from Spartacist Canada No. 190 (Fall 2016), newspaper of our comrades of the Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyste.

**SPARTACIST** CANADA

During the first five years of Stephen Harper's Tory government, from 2006 to 2011, Canada provided most of the forces engaged in NATO's counterinsurgency warfare in the Kandahar province of Afghanistan. This was the Canadian junior imperialists' central contribution to the U.S./NATO invasion and occupation of Afghanistan, begun in 2001. From early on, there were allegations of grisly torture meted out to Afghans captured by Canadian troops and then turned over to Afghan government security forces. These victims are in addition to the tens of thousands of civilians slaughtered and injured as "collateral damage" in U.S./NATO bombing raids.

The Harper government steadfastly maintained that no credible evidence existed concerning torture of detainees. But by 2007, reports concerning such atrocities had been issued by the United Nations Secretary General, the U.S. State Department and Canada's own Foreign Affairs department. The State Department's 2005 report noted extrajudicial killings and torture including "pulling out fingernails and toenails, burning with hot oil, sexual humiliation and sodomy." A follow-on 2009 report cited "beatings, use of a scorching bar, flogging by cable, battering by rod, electric shock, deprivation of sleep, food and water, abusive language, sexual humiliation and rape" (Omar Sabry, "Torture of Afghan Detainees," Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, September 2015).

Most recently, *La Presse* (15 June) printed a letter by some military police officers who wrote anonymously complaining that they were ordered by the Canadian military brass to take part in late-night terror raids used to coerce terrified detainees to confess or give information. These police scum are no doubt worried that they, like the handful of low-level flunkies who bore the punishment for the torture of prisoners at the infamous U.S.-run Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq, will be nailed for the Canadian military's crimes in Afghanistan. So now, to protect the "honour" of their blood-spattered



Kandahar, May 2006: Detainees captured by Canadian soldiers and later turned over to Afghan National Police.

uniforms, these anonymous military cops blow the whistle.

## Nothing to See Here...

It is inconceivable that the Harper government never heard of the Kandahar crimes. Similar gruesome stories were detailed in confidential documents from Canadian diplomatic staff in Kandahar. One such diplomat, Richard Colvin, testified before parliament that "we detained, and handed over for severe torture, a lot of innocent people" (*Globe and Mail*, 19 November 2009). Colvin was immediately crucified by the Harper cabinet and Tory MPs [Members of Parliament]. To forestall further parliamentary inquiries, Harper asked the governor-general to dismiss (prorogue) parliament on 30 December 2009, thereby terminating all extant legislative business.

During this period, the Liberal opposition made a great noise, demanding an inquiry into the Afghan tortures. Now, as direct administrators of the bourgeois state, they want the whole issue to disappear since any further investigation will embarrass the Canadian ruling class and not least the Liberals themselves. Liberal defense minister Harjit Sajjan flatly rejected a petition for such an investigation, claiming that Afghan prisoners were "treated humanely." As reported by CBC News, Sajjan's written reply stated: "The government of Canada does not believe an independent judicial commis-

sion of inquiry is necessary" (17 June).

The Afghan war began as the *Liberals'* war: it was Liberal prime minister Jean Chrétien who in 2001 first sent Canadian troops to Afghanistan; it was Paul Martin's Liberal government that signed the 2005 agreement with Afghan security leaders concerning the turnover of prisoners captured by Canadian troops. Rather more important today is the fact that Sajjan himself was an officer in the Canadian forces and served three combat tours of duty in Afghanistan. In 2006, far from simply a grunt on the ground, Sajjan was a central player in Kandahar:

"Sajjan was tasked as the intelligence liaison with notorious governor Asadullah Khalid and Ahmed Wali Karzai, the controversial head of the provincial council.

"Khalid, who later became the head of Afghan intelligence, had a reputation for ruthlessness and was accused of assassinations, torture and drug-dealing. Karzai, the half-brother of the former president who was later murdered by a bodyguard, was accused of having a hand in the drug trade."

—Canadian Press, 5 November 2015

As journalist Matthew Behrens wrote of Sajjan, "it seems implausible that he was not familiar with the torture rampant throughout the Afghan detention system" (*Now*, 11 November 2015). Canada had a legal responsibility for any detainee it held, no matter to what authority the prisoner was later transferred, so under international law, Sajjan, his superiors and members of the Harper government could be prosecuted for war crimes.

But this will never happen. Such atrocities as occurred in Afghanistan (and many far bloodier) are not aberrations but an integral part of the workings of the system of imperialism. A small number of highly developed capitalist powers (e.g., the U.S., Britain, Germany, Japan), together with a few lesser jackal powers (e.g., Canada, Australia), dominate the world market and subjugate the masses of Asia, Africa and Latin America, generally through pliant local rulers. These semicolonial countries must borrow from the IMF, World Bank and other loan sharks to pay for even food and basic necessities. Meanwhile their natural resources are pillaged and their economies bled, with the profits going back to the bloated imperialist financiers. The ultimate enforcers of this system are the armies, navies and air forces of the major imperialist powers. Agencies such as the United Nations—a den of imperialist thieves, their victims and their lackeys—are used to prettify the imperi-

alists' wars and occupations. Indeed, the UN gave its approval to the 2001 launch of the devastating U.S./NATO war in Afghanistan, a war that continues to this day.

Our starting point is proletarian class opposition to the capitalist rulers and to the imperialist system as a whole. We opposed the invasion of Afghanistan by U.S., Canadian and other troops and stood for its military defense against imperialist attack without giving a shred of political support to the reactionary Taliban cutthroats. Insofar as such forces aim their blows against the imperialist occupiers, we call for their military defense while according them no political support. From the outset, we have called for class struggle at home against the capitalist rulers.

## We Said "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!"

The present period, wherein the imperialists, especially the U.S., are wreaking death and destruction around the globe, is the outcome of the demise of the Soviet Union, the world's first workers state, in 1991-92. The Soviet Union provided a crucial counterweight to U.S. imperialism, often giving breathing room to countries of the neocolonial world.

As we wrote in "Torture and the 'War on Terror'" (SC No. 153, Summer 2007):

"The disastrous plight of the masses of Afghanistan today, and particularly that of Afghan women, is a direct consequence of the Soviet Union's military withdrawal from that country in 1989 and the subsequent triumph of fundamentalist religious cutthroats backed by U.S. imperialism. When the Soviet Red Army entered Afghanistan at the request of a modernizing nationalist regime a decade earlier, we declared 'Hail Red Army! Extend social gains of the October Revolution to Afghan peoples!'"

"Sending the army into Afghanistan to clean out a reactionary insurgency against the government's progressive reforms—like providing education to girls and reducing the bride price to a nominal sum—opened a road to social liberation for the Afghan people. It underlined our Trotskyist understanding that the Soviet Union was a workers state, product of the October 1917 proletarian socialist revolution, despite its subsequent degeneration under a nationalist, Stalinist bureaucracy. We called for unconditional military defense of the Soviet Union against imperialism and internal counterrevolution, and for a proletarian political revolution to oust these treacherous Stalinist bureaucrats."

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Maj. Gen. (ret) David Fraser

In 2006, Harjit Sajjan (top row, second from left), now Canada's defense minister, was army intelligence liaison to murderous Kandahar governor Asadullah Khalid.

**SPARTACIST** CANADA

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## British Trotskyists Say:

# For Jeremy Corbyn's Right to Run the Labour Party! Out with the Blairite Plotters!



Workers Hammer photos

London rally in support of Jeremy Corbyn (left), August 15.

The British Labour Party is holding leadership elections with the results to be announced September 24. Current party leader Jeremy Corbyn, a left-winger popular with the party's working-class base, is being challenged by Owen Smith, who is supported by right-wing forces in the party around former prime minister Tony Blair. As Labour leader from 1994 to 2007, Blair sought to transform Labour into an outright capitalist party akin to the U.S. Democratic Party. The article below is reprinted from Workers Hammer No. 236, Autumn 2016, newspaper of the Spartacist League/Britain, section of the International Communist League.

### WORKERS HAMMER

SEPTEMBER 10—The day after the shock vote on 23 June for Britain to leave the European Union (EU), the majority of the Parliamentary Labour Party [Labour Party Members of Parliament], consisting of Tony Blair's disciples along with their "soft left" toadies, seized the moment to scream, yet again, for the head of Jeremy Corbyn as party leader. After choreographing a series of rapid-fire resignations from the shadow cabinet, the Blairites forced through a vote of no confidence by Labour MPs in Corbyn, which they carried by a vote of 172 to 40. The howls for Corbyn's resignation were echoed across the board by the capitalist media and endorsed in Parliament by outgoing Tory prime minister David Cameron.

But to the plotters' dismay, Corbyn refused to resign. As he said, to do so would have been a betrayal of the members who elected him party leader. The upshot of the failed coup was a leadership election, in which the Blairites tried unsuccessfully to keep Corbyn off the ballot. The National Executive Committee (NEC) then rigged the rules in an effort to deprive 130,000 members who had joined since 12 January of their right to vote.

From the moment Corbyn was elected party leader a year ago, the ruling establishment and its media, not least the lib-

eral Guardian and the BBC, joined with the Blairite cabal in using every dirty trick they could come up with to isolate, discredit and remove Corbyn. The then head of the armed forces, General Sir Nicholas Houghton, appeared on television to declare Corbyn unfit to ever be prime minister because he calls for unilateral nuclear disarmament. The Corbyn camp was accused of harbouring anti-Jewish bigots, male chauvinists and violent radicals, among other slanders.

In the lead-up to the EU referendum, Corbyn was chastised for not waging an aggressive enough campaign for a remain vote, and especially for refusing to appear on platforms alongside Cameron and other pro-EU Tory leaders. Then came the actual vote for Brexit, which drove the Blairites into a frenzy. Here were the "unwashed masses" voting in defiance of the "sound advice" from their betters, the same masses who might one day elect the supposedly "unelectable" Corbyn as prime minister.

The groundswell of support for Corbyn—who supports trade union rights and has the audacity to talk of socialism—that began last summer gave voice to the aspirations of those who have been repeatedly kicked in the teeth over the years. The same dissatisfaction at the base of society also fuelled the vote against the EU and it shows no sign of dissipating. Notwithstanding Corbyn's wrong-headed support for the EU, a recent YouGov poll indicates that he retains the support of 63 per cent of Labour voters in the north of England, which voted heavily in favour of leave (*Independent*, 31 August).

Hundreds of thousands of working-class people flocked to support Corbyn's campaign for leader last year, many of them former Labour members and others who paid £3 to sign up as registered supporters so they could vote for him. Labour's membership doubled in the months after his election, and well over 100,000 more joined the party in the weeks following the attempted Blairite coup. In order to prevent a repeat of last summer's outcome, the NEC has not only

tried to disenfranchise a huge segment of the party membership but also raised the £3 to £25 and restricted registration to a single 48-hour period. Even so, a whopping 180,000 people registered to vote in the upcoming ballot. Corbyn looks set to win the contest handsomely, yet again.

The Blairites' candidate is Owen Smith. The other nominee, Angela Eagle, was forced to step down, deemed to be too tainted for having voted in favour of the Iraq war in 2003 and for the bombing of Syria last year. Smith postures as the candidate of the "soft left," which means "Blairism lite"—i.e., Labour MPs who share many of the anti-working-class policies of Labour under Blair, but who soft-soap them to fool voters among whom Blair is reviled. Smith is a nonentity who was unknown even to the bulk of his South Wales electorate in a recent survey. He refused to vote against Tory

welfare cuts and was for years a highly paid lobbyist for the pharmaceutical giant Pfizer. It is indeed symbolic that the Blairite puppet is associated with Pfizer, one of the many capitalist vultures that make enormous profits out of the National Health Service. The NHS is about the last remaining gain of the post-1945 Labour government, and has undergone piecemeal privatisation under both Labour and Tory governments. It is in the interest of the whole of the working class that Owen Smith is resoundingly defeated in the upcoming leadership election. *Jeremy Corbyn must be allowed to run the Labour Party, in his own way.*

### Imperialist Warmongers

Smith's attempts to "out-Corbyn" Corbyn are laughable: when Corbyn promised that under his leadership, a Labour government would build a million new homes, Smith pledged to build a million and a half. But there is a clear class difference between the two contestants. On the EU, Corbyn pledges to honour the vote for a British exit; Smith is committed to keeping Britain in the EU despite the vote and has even called for another referendum to reverse the verdict. There is a clear difference, too, on the question of renewing the nuclear-armed Trident missile submarine system, a symbol of Britain's commitment to the "special relationship" with Washington. When new Tory prime minister Theresa May forced a vote in Parliament, Corbyn voted against the renewal of Trident—in the face of an overwhelming majority of Tory and Labour MPs, including Smith.

Later, when he was asked in a public debate how he would respond to "military aggression by Vladimir Putin towards a Nato member," Corbyn replied "I don't wish to go to war." In contrast, Smith affirmed: "We would have to come to the aid of a fellow member of Nato" (*Guardian*, 18 August). Corbyn's lack of commitment to Trident and to NATO underlines why he is deemed unfit to be prime minister by the British ruling establishment and its senior partners in Washington.

We do not share Corbyn's utopian unilateralist agenda. As Marxists, we seek to imbue workers and opponents of imperialist war with the understanding that imperialist militarism can be brought to an end only through the revolutionary seizure of power by the working class and the expropriation of the bourgeoisie under a government based on workers councils. To that end it is necessary to decisively defeat the warmongering Blairite hawks in the upcoming leadership election.

Blair and his followers repudiated Labour's traditional lip service to "socialism," as a prelude to openly and eagerly

*continued on page 8*

## Letter

### Again on Jeremy Corbyn

Boston, MA  
6 July 2016

Dear WV:

I cannot understand WV's enthusiasm for Jeremy Corbyn. The fact that he was elected head of the Labour Party by the membership is good news as it indicates the membership is rejecting the Blairites and their forthright class-collaborationism. But your enthusiasm for Corbyn the politician, though you do criticize him in a kind of respectful way, is a puzzle. Is he not just another "democratic socialist", anti-revolutionary, reformist and representative of a political species with over a century of monstrous crimes against the working class?

Corbyn is a danger to working people. Like Sanders, he functions to demonstrate to working people that there is a capitalist

welfare state solution to the oppression of labor. Can he be anything but a stumbling block to the revolutionary mobilization of the working class?

Jan S.

**WV replies:** As explained in the article "Let Jeremy Corbyn Run the Labour Party" (see above), the current leadership contest in the British Labour Party poses the class line. We stand with Corbyn and his pro-socialist supporters against the open lackeys of finance capital represented by Tony Blair and his ilk.

Unlike Corbyn, Bernie Sanders is no kind of "democratic socialist" but a capitalist politician. His campaign to be the Democratic Party's presidential candidate corralled disaffected youth and workers back into the party of the class enemy. ■

# Britain Out of the EU Now!

## Yuppie Howl of Rage Over Brexit

The following article is reprinted from Workers Hammer No. 236 (Autumn 2016), newspaper of the Spartacist League/Britain.

The 23 June vote for Britain to leave the European Union (EU) sent tremors around the world, buffeting the financial markets and plunging the pound to its lowest value in three decades. Coming after the crises over the strangulation of Greece and the mass influx of refugees last year, the Brexit vote dealt the most severe blow to date to the EU, further destabilising what is already a highly unstable imperialist consortium and fanning anti-EU sentiment throughout Europe. Not surprisingly, the Blairite right wing of the Labour Party joined with pro-EU Tories in campaigning for a remain vote and now seek to overturn the ballot. Shamefully, Jeremy Corbyn also campaigned for a vote in favour of the EU, thus trampling on the interests of the many working people who look to him for a lead. To his credit, unlike the Blairite challenger for the party leadership, Owen Smith, and his backers, Corbyn has said that the Brexit vote must be respected. We say: **Down with the EU! No reversal—Britain out now!**

Through the mechanism of the EU, the dominant German—along with the British and French—imperialists combine to attack the living standards of all European workers, from Greece to Germany, while riding roughshod over the weaker



London, September 3: Demonstrators against Brexit vote results raise flag of EU imperialist cartel.

capitalist countries of southern and eastern Europe. The bankers of Frankfurt, Paris and London have imposed crippling austerity on the people of Greece, bringing that country to its knees. We Marxists oppose the EU *on principle*, as we do the single currency, the euro, which has been the instrument for the subjugation and immiseration of the Greek working peo-

ple. In a 24 June statement of the Spartacist League Central Committee welcoming the vote against the EU [printed in WV No. 1092, 1 July], we declared:

“This is a stunning defeat for the City of London, for the bosses and bankers of Europe as a whole as well as for Wall Street and the U.S. imperialist government. The vote to leave is an expression of hostility from the downtrodden and

dispossessed not only to the EU but to the smug British ruling establishment, whose devastation of social services and industry has plunged whole sections of the proletariat into penury.”

The vote for Brexit was particularly strong among the working class and poor, most notably in the formerly industrial regions of northern England, Wales and the Midlands. As one woman in the impoverished neighbourhood of Collyhurst in Manchester told journalist John Harris (himself an ardent supporter of remain), “If you’ve got money, you vote in” and “If you haven’t got money, you vote out” (*Guardian*, 24 June). A recent study by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation found that 58 per cent of voters living in households earning less than £20,000 a year voted for Brexit, while only 35 per cent of those from families earning over £60,000 did. Among the unemployed, 59 per cent voted to leave. The report’s author, Professor Matthew Goodwin, concludes: “This research reveals how the referendum was not simply about our relationship with the European Union but also shed light on the deep divides that exist in our society” (*Guardian*, 31 August).

At the same time, the vote to leave provoked an outcry among disappointed pro-EU liberals, particularly in London. Venting their frustration, they heaped contempt especially on the workers and poor in the economically devastated regions who voted overwhelmingly to leave. The petty-bourgeois supporters of the EU see in the European bosses’ club an opportunity to more freely partake of continental culture or to launch trendy start-ups; union-busting austerity and immigrant concentration camps are for them largely an occasion to express remorse over “the state of things.” Left-liberal journalist John Pilger captured

*continued on page 8*

## Internationalist Group Panders to Brexit Backlash

The following article originally appeared in Workers Hammer No. 236 (Autumn 2016).

While numerous British reformist groups called, however feebly, for a vote against the imperialist EU, that is more than can be said for a small U.S. outfit called the Internationalist Group (IG). Having maintained strict radio silence on the question throughout the lead-up to the British referendum, the IG leapt into the liberal backlash against the vote, firing off a series of articles, including one solely devoted to denouncing the Spartacist League, British section of the International Communist League, for our support for Brexit. The IG’s line is of a piece with a slew of other abstentionist groupings, including the longtime Labour entryists of the International Marxist Tendency. To a man, these groups claim that support for Brexit was racist, pointing to UKIP and others who oppose the EU on the basis of anti-immigrant chauvinism. While the IG’s articles display considerable ignorance about British reality, ignorance is hardly an excuse for refusal to oppose the imperialist EU.

In an online article, the IG tells us: “Revolutionary Marxists are irreconcilable opponents of the European Union” while dismissing the referendum as a “chauvinist circus” (“The ‘Brexit’ Trap: British Left Caught Between ‘Leave’ and ‘Remain’ in European Union,” internationalist.org, August 2016). Revolutionary Marxists—i.e., the ICL—are indeed irreconcilable *and consistent* opponents of the EU. As for the IG, while claiming it would “never advocate voting for” the EU, when the question is posed concretely its position is to never vote against it. On both occasions where the question of the EU was put to a vote in the recent period—the vote against an EU austerity

package in Greece last year and the British referendum—the IG abstained.

The IG reduces the issue of opposition to the EU to a series of (bogus) tactical considerations, claiming that “when a referendum about EU membership is posed by competing bourgeois forces, the political content of the referendum is a key factor.” It is utter hogwash to claim that there is no need for the workers to take a side because the referendum is “posed by competing bourgeois forces.” Under capitalist rule when is it ever *not* the case that a question in a referendum is posed by the bourgeoisie? The “content” of the EU referendums was unambiguous: yes or no to EU austerity in Greece, remain or leave in Britain. As we noted in our post-referendum statement [see “Brexit: Defeat for Bankers and Bosses!” WV No. 1092, 1 July], after denouncing UKIP for whipping up blatant anti-immigrant racism:

“Those who voted for Brexit did so for a variety of reasons. But only the wilfully blind in the workers movement will see the vote for Brexit as simply a boost for UKIP and the Tory right wing.”

By the IG’s logic, the ICL should have abstained on the 1994 imposition of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), as opposition to NAFTA in the U.S. was dominated by anti-Mexican chauvinism and rabid protectionism. But we oppose NAFTA on an internationalist basis, describing it as a “free trade rape of Mexico.” It is a feature of referendums that you can’t distinguish your no vote from those in opposition for quite different, and often quite reactionary, reasons. But the result matters to the working class, which from its own, independent class perspective must oppose the EU.

Falsely claiming that our only answer to the EU “is to withdraw,” the IG thunders: “What about calling instead, as the [IG’s] League for the Fourth International

did, to *bring down the whole structure of capitalist/imperialist Europe through sharp class struggle leading to continent-wide socialist revolution?*” (“ICL: The Main Enemy Is in Brussels”). Of course, we fight for socialist revolution to overthrow capitalist rule in Europe—and around the globe. However, what was posed by the referendum was not “continent-wide socialist revolution,” but a vote against the EU. It is sheer sophistry to *counterpose* support for blows that weaken imperialism to the fight for socialist revolution to overthrow it. Like our Marxist forebears, we understand that the proletariat’s capacity for revolutionary struggle and its consciousness as a class for itself does not spring full-blown from the head of Zeus but is built up in the course of partial victories and the lessons drawn from such by its Marxist vanguard.

We observed in our post-referendum statement: “A year ago, the same outrage and discontent at the base of society that propelled the vote to leave the EU also fuelled the election of Jeremy Corbyn to the leadership of the Labour Party, opening the possibility of reforging Labour’s historic links to its working-class base and thus reversing two decades of Blairite schemes to turn Labour into an outright capitalist party.” But the IG refuses to side with Corbyn against the Blairites, hiding behind the (unremarkable) fact that Corbyn is a reformist. The defeat of the Blairites, leaving Corbyn in charge of a reformist workers party based on the trade unions, would be a big advance for the working class. But to the IG, it is a matter of indifference whether or not the British proletariat succeeds in taking a step towards class independence from the open parties of capital.

The IG’s founders defected from the Trotskyist programme of the ICL out of

demoralisation following capitalist counterrevolution in East Germany and the Soviet Union, so as to chase unhindered after all manner of Stalinist has-beens, Latin American nationalists and trade union opportunists. Today, they claim: “When the EEC [European Economic Community] was the economic adjunct of the NATO imperialist alliance against the Soviet Union...that is one thing. But in the context of inter-imperialist rivalries British imperialism outside the imperialist EU is no less an evil” (“ICL: The Main Enemy Is in Brussels”). How insightful! The question is not whether British imperialism will become “less an evil” when it is outside the EU but whether the confidence and consciousness of the workers—in Britain and throughout Europe—will be heightened by the weakening of the blood-sucking EU.

Our defence of the Soviet Union was a critical, though not the sole, factor in our opposition to the EU’s predecessors. What we wrote in 1973, hailing the rejection of the Common Market in a referendum in Norway, is as valid today as it was then:

“Thus unity under capitalism is not only a myth, which will be shattered in the first serious economic downturn, but must necessarily be directed against the working class, as each national capitalist class attempts to become ‘competitive’ through a policy of ‘rationalisation.’ This requires rigid wage freezes, massive devaluations, strike-breaking, the liquidation of whole industries, large-scale unemployment and inflation....

“Only unity on a socialist basis, accomplished by proletarian revolution and the expropriation of the giant monopolies, can institute rational worldwide economic development without exploitation. A socialist united states of Europe can only be created on the basis of the most vigorous struggle against the capitalist Common Market and all it stands for.”

—“Labor and the Common Market,” *Workers Vanguard* No. 15, January 1973 ■





media empire as well as to the World Bank and the U.S. Council on Foreign Relations. Portland, in turn, is a subsidiary of Omnicom, a multi-million dollar international firm, based in New York. The *Canary* revelations lift the lid on the workings of parliamentary democracy that are normally kept out of sight. The machinations described could have come out of an Edward Wilson spy novel set in the era of the U.S. imperialist-led Cold War against the Soviet Union. In those days the “American connection” to the Labour Party right wing was maintained by figures like Denis Healey through *Encounter* magazine and other conduits for CIA funding.

The Blairites’ connections to the U.S. imperialists are primarily to the Democratic Party. David Miliband moved to the U.S. after losing the 2010 Labour leadership contest to his brother. Miliband is a personal friend of Hillary Clinton, the U.S. presidential hopeful who now has the backing of some of the country’s most notorious hawks and warmongers, both Republican and Democrat. Miliband heads the International Rescue Committee in New York, a “charitable” organisation on whose board sit many heads of big corporations. According to the *Canary*, they include one Alan Batkin, director of the aforementioned Omnicom Group.

Scottish Labour leader Kezia Dugdale spent two weeks in the U.S. in July on a U.S. government-funded “leadership” course, after which she attended the Democratic National Convention. Dugdale worked closely with former Glasgow MP Jim Murphy, one of a number of Labour politicians listed as members on the website of the Henry Jackson Society, a London-based outpost of American imperialism’s right-wing neoconservatives. The society is named after a prominent Democratic Party politician who was widely known as “the Senator from Boeing” for his close ties to the giant arms manufacturer and served as a key architect of the anti-Soviet Cold War.

It was no surprise, then, that Dugdale denounced Corbyn in August and

declared her backing for Smith, as did newly-elected London mayor, Sadiq Khan. Unlike Corbyn, Khan did join Cameron in the Tory campaign for a remain vote in the EU referendum. Khan’s election campaign was supported by many grassroots Corbyn supporters, who believed that any Labour victory is good because it proves that Labour under Corbyn is electable. We nailed Khan with a placard at our literature table at London’s Mayday march which read: “No vote to Blairite stooge Sadiq Khan!”

Reds Under the Bed?

As was the case last year, the major trade unions, with the exception of the GMB, are backing Corbyn, notwithstanding some discomfort with his left-wing rhetoric and particularly his opposition to Trident. To his credit, Unite union leader Len McCluskey took a hard stand behind Corbyn against the right-wing coup plotters and brought the *Canary* revelations into the limelight. But McCluskey has done nothing to mobilise his membership in class struggle against government attacks. Above all, the pro-capitalist trade union tops seek to maintain a voice in Parliament, in order to lull the workers with parliamentary illusions and divert them from the road of the class struggle. That is the reason Labour was originally founded by the union bureaucracy over a century ago. The union bureaucrats know that the Blairites will not give them the time of day, much less the chance to ply their class collaboration as “advisors” to a Labour government, a timeworn means for diverting and sabotaging working-class struggle.

Now a purge of the left is underway in the Labour Party, targeting Corbyn supporters among the thousands who joined (or re-joined) recently. Last month, Tom Watson, the party’s right-wing deputy leader, famed for his manoeuvring and backstabbing, alleged that hard-left “Trotsky entryists” are “twisting the arms” of young members of the Labour Party. Corbyn dismissed Watson’s claim

as nonsense, saying “I just ask Tom to do the maths—300,000 people have joined the Labour party. At no stage in anyone’s most vivid imagination are there 300,000 sectarian extremists at large in the country who have suddenly descended on the Labour party” (*Observer*, 14 August). Watson also mentions the Alliance for Workers Liberty (AWL). If anything, the AWL’s refusal to oppose the occupation of Iraq or the 2011 imperialist bombing of Libya ought to earn them a place in the Blairite camp. The left’s “crime” in Watson’s eyes has nothing to do with Trotskyism, but simply that they support re-selection of MPs. We oppose these witch hunts of the left, as we did in the 1980s. Neil Kinnock’s purge of the Militant tendency, which was also aimed at the Bennites, and Kinnock’s vicious hostility to the striking miners in 1984-85, paved the way for Blair’s project of transforming the Labour Party.

The bogeyman of “Trotskyite entryism” harks back to the Militant tendency, which claimed to be Trotskyist, but was in fact an organic part of Labour’s house-trained left. Their brief spell running Liverpool Council in the 1980s confirmed that these reformists are committed to administering the capitalist state. Tom Watson’s (dodgy) dossier also refers to the Socialist Party, which emerged in the 1990s as a split from Militant. The Socialist Party is organisationally separate from the Labour Party, but politically belongs firmly within the Labourite tradition. Its programme for “socialism” is modelled on the Clement Attlee Labour government of 1945, committed to nationalisation of industry through legislation in Parliament. As opposed to such parliamentary reformism, an elementary starting point for revolutionaries is the understanding that the working class cannot simply take over the capitalist state and wield it for its own purposes. The state is the executive committee of the capitalist ruling class and must be shattered in the course of revolutionary struggle, resulting in a new state power of the working class.

Uniquely among the British left, the Spartacist League/Britain—section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)—does strive to become the nucleus of a revolutionary party of the proletariat, modelled on the Bolshevik party of Lenin and Trotsky that led the October Revolution to victory. We have consistently taken a side with Corbyn against the Blairites, while at the same time making clear where our revolutionary internationalist programme is counterposed to his “parliamentary socialism.” Corbyn’s hopes of improving the conditions of the working class through parliamentary legislation and Keynesian economic tinkering are futile. In order to create a society for the benefit of workers, minorities, women and youth, it is necessary first of all to *break the power of the bourgeoisie*.

Corbyn’s opposition to imperialist militarism and war is based on the illusion that the British imperialists would simply opt out of the alliance with the U.S. and adopt a more “rational” foreign policy. British imperialism is subordinate to the U.S. militarily, and the City of London, the citadel of British capitalism, is a junior partner of Wall Street. Corbyn’s proposed reforms, such as for increased spending on public housing, the NHS and education, as well as his opposition to privatisation, are supportable.

However, to simply begin to address such issues as jobs for all, free quality healthcare and education requires mobilising the trade unions as fighting organisations of the working class, under a new, class-struggle leadership. To regenerate the former industrial areas and to lay the basis for a decent living standard for all requires the overthrow of capitalist rule. Socialist revolution will expropriate the bourgeoisie and lay the basis for an internationally planned, socialised economy. A successful workers revolution in Britain will put an end to Westminster-based capitalist rule and pave the way for a voluntary federation of workers republics within a Socialist United States of Europe. ■

Canada...

(continued from page 5)

Today we uphold that same program with regard to Cuba, Vietnam, Laos, North Korea and China, which we Trotskyists understand are bureaucratically deformed workers states. Capitalist property relations were overthrown in these countries but they are ruled by nationalist bureaucracies patterned after the Stalinist regime which usurped political power in the Soviet Union beginning in 1923-24. These social revolutions were tremendous victories for the workers and peasants who were thereby able to throw off the yoke of the imperialist subjugators and their local puppets.

By far the largest of these countries is China, where the 1949 Revolution laid the basis for unheard-of advances in industry, living standards and health care and immense gains for women. The counter-revolutionary destruction of the Chinese workers state is the central target of the U.S. and other imperialists, including Canada. But defense of China’s revolutionary gains is decidedly not what you will hear from the so-called left in this country. These reformist groups (such as the International Socialists) dismiss China simply as a totalitarian dictatorship, against which “democracy”—that is, the class rule of capital under a parliamentary facade—must be defended. Obscenely, in the 1980s, the vast majority of the left in Canada and internationally howled with the imperialist wolves, siding with the woman-hating Islamic fundamentalists against the Soviets in Afghanistan.

Liberal/NDP Apologias for Imperialist Barbarism

During the 1980s, the NDP [social-democratic New Democratic Party] was front and centre in the anti-Communist crusade against the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. Fast forward to 2001 and the New Democrats were again standing



Spartacist contingent in October 2001 antiwar protest in San Francisco.

shoulder to shoulder with the imperialists. They backed the bloody U.S./NATO Afghan occupation until 2006 and voted for every one of the Liberals’ massive hikes to the military budget.

For three years of Tory rule, from 2008-2011, Michael Ignatieff was leader of the Liberal official opposition. An early supporter of the U.S. invasion of Iraq, Ignatieff’s long academic pedigree includes a stint at Harvard’s Kennedy School, premier think tank for U.S. imperialism’s favorite dictators. His record should dispel any idea that the Liberals are more humane than the often gratuitously cruel Harper Tories.

On 28 April 2004, as the horrific Abu Ghraib torture images hit the news, Ignatieff waxed eloquent to PBS’s Charlie Rose about “The hot iron to someone’s flesh. You can’t get the truth from persistent, non-physical, non-coercive interrogation.” But, per Ignatieff, it’s all to be “under strict presidential control.” Later

he penned treatises on the moral ethos of “democratic” governments using torture to prevent terrorism, adroitly arguing both sides of the question. In 2006 he concluded:

“It is in the nature of democracy itself that fellow citizens will define their identity in ways that privilege security over liberty and thus reluctantly endorse tor-

ture in their name. If we are against torture, we are committed to arguing with our fellow citizens, not treating those who defend torture as moral monsters.”

—“If Torture Works...,” *Prospect*, April 2006

In other words, let the thugs get out the thumbscrews—and we enlightened bourgeois thinkers can debate it over a drink at the Faculty Club!

Today the Liberals seek to refurbish Canadian imperialism’s “kinder, gentler” image. Justin Trudeau wants more Canadian “peacekeeping” (i.e., military adventures) and is vying for a two-year seat on the UN Security Council. To that end, defense minister Sajjan aims to inject Canadian military forces into Africa, complaining about “absolute atrocities” committed there. This shameless hypocrisy should outrage, above all, the people of Somalia, where fascist-infested Canadian Airborne troops were caught torturing a young Somali prisoner, Shidane Arone, in 1993. The bottom line is that wherever Canadian troops go, they serve not humanity’s poor and desperate, but the profit-gouging Canadian and U.S. ruling classes. The barbaric imperialist order must be swept away by proletarian socialist revolution, the only road for the liberation of humanity and indeed for its continued existence. ■

Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyste Forums

Eyewitness Report

France: Mass Protests Against Anti-Union Law Down With the “War on Terror” and Racist Police-State Measures!

TORONTO

Saturday, September 24, 6:30 p.m.  
OISE, Room 3311  
252 Bloor Street West  
(St. George subway)  
For information: (416) 593-4138  
spartcan@on.aibn.com

VANCOUVER

Saturday, October 1, 2 p.m.  
Roundhouse Community Centre,  
Music Room, 181 Roundhouse Mews  
(Corner of Davie & Pacific)  
For information: (604) 687-0353  
trotskyist\_vancouver@shawcable.com

Standoff...

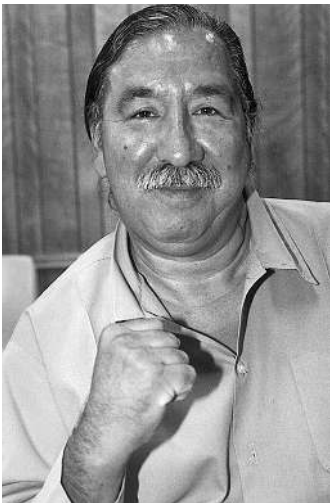
(continued from page 1)

fact, oil pipelines, in addition to serving a socially useful function of transporting fuel, are safer overall than shipping fuel by rail or road.

We do not counsel the capitalist ruling class on the most effective way to run its economy. Thus, our position on the DAPL, which is essentially the same as our attitude toward the Keystone XL pipeline and toward fracking in general, reflects a norm for matters relating to bourgeois energy policy. But it is not universal. In the case of the Northern Gateway pipeline in western Canada, our comrades of the Trotskyist League of Canada rightly oppose the project because it brazenly flouts the land rights of the Native peoples who are the predominant population in the remote regions that the pipeline would traverse. That is not the case with the DAPL.

Bill McKibben, environmentalist and founder of the anti-fossil-fuel campaign 350.org, wrote an article in the *New Yorker* (6 September) falsely asserting that the pipeline is to be built “across land that was taken from the tribe in 1958.” This statement has been picked up by numerous other media outlets to draw an explicit link between tribal land rights and the pipeline. Indians in the region lost 160,000 acres

Right: Leonard Peltier, American Indian Movement (AIM) leader and class-war prisoner. Far right: Feds lay siege to Wounded Knee, South Dakota, as part of drive to crush AIM, 1973.



AP

there can be no return to days before the arrival of the colonial settlers. That life was extinguished in a series of unspeakably brutal crimes against the indigenous population, but it was in fact extinguished and displaced by a capitalist economy.

Capitalism and Native American Oppression

In cases where socially useful developments like railroads, hydroelectric projects and oil pipelines run up against treaty agreements or land rights, we would fight for the Native peoples to receive generous compensation for any deprivation of land or

to 80 percent of American Indians do not live on reservations. Overall, poverty and unemployment for Native Americans are much higher than the national rates and are comparable to those of black people.

On reservations, the conditions are even more grim. In recent years, the poverty rate at Standing Rock was over 40 percent and the rate for people over 16 who were unemployed was more than 60 percent. In 2014, the Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice reported that, as a proportion of their population, Native Americans were killed by police between 1999 and 2011 at a higher rate than any other racial group.

The Standing Rock reservation was originally part of the Great Sioux Reservation established under the 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie. That treaty gave the Sioux people (who had earlier been forced out of Minnesota) nearly all of South Dakota west of the Missouri River. However, the government soon broke that treaty, as it did with most treaties.

The Black Hills were taken from the Sioux in 1877 after gold was discovered there, and more land was stolen in 1889 when six separate reservations (including Standing Rock) were carved out of the Great Sioux Reservation. Resistance to this land theft was met with vicious repression and massacres. The Sioux were the victims of two of the most infamous, the 1863 Whitestone Hill massacre and that at Wounded Knee in 1890. In each of these incidents, U.S. troops slaughtered hundreds of Indian men, women and children.

In more recent times, government suppression of Indian resistance is typified by the case of Leonard Peltier, who has spent over 40 years in prison for a crime the Feds know he did not commit. Peltier was a leader of the American Indian Movement (AIM), which fought the enforced poverty of Native Americans and the continued theft of their lands. In June 1975, a massive assault involving 250 FBI and Bureau of Indian Affairs agents, SWAT cops and vigilantes was launched against the Pine Ridge Reservation. Two FBI agents were killed and Peltier was framed up and convicted of their killing. It was a textbook case from the FBI’s

notorious Counter-Intelligence Program (COINTELPRO) of surveillance, disruption, frame-up and murder.

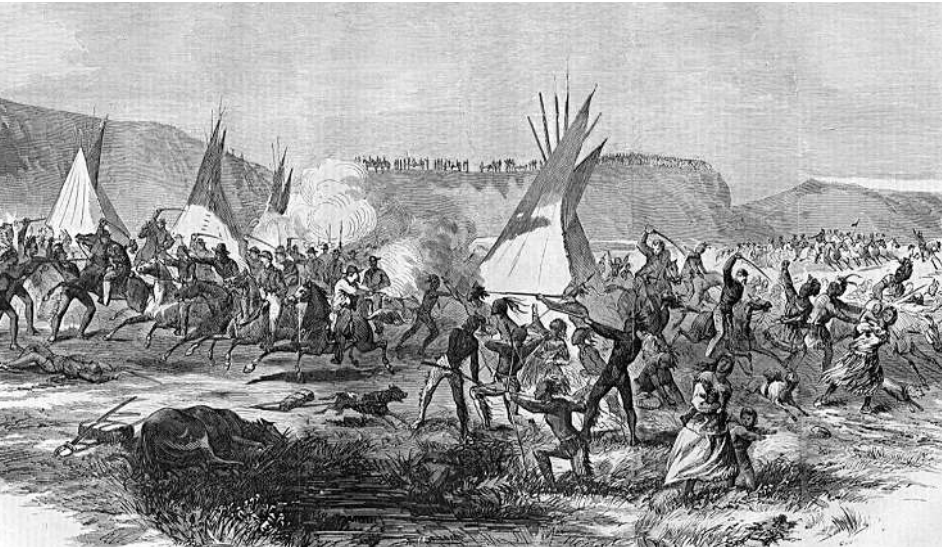
In his four decades behind bars, Peltier has been subjected to supermax hell, punitive prison moves, long stretches in solitary and brutal beatings. He has been eligible for parole since 1986, but his applications have been denied at every turn. Now 72 years old and in extremely poor health, Peltier is asking for clemency from President Obama in order to, as he poignantly said in a September 16 solidarity statement with the Standing Rock protesters, “permit me to live my final years on the Turtle Mountain Reservation.” (More information about Peltier and his case can be found on his defense committee website [whoisleonardpeltier.info](http://whoisleonardpeltier.info).) *Free Leonard Peltier now!*

For Socialism, not Reactionary Green Utopias

So long as the productive wealth of society remains in the hands of the capitalist class, technological progress and economic development serve to amass profits at the expense of workers and the oppressed. It will take a socialist revolution to uproot the system of capitalist exploitation for profit. Only then, through the inauguration of a collectivized, centrally planned economy, will the techniques of modern science harness vast productive wealth in the service of human need.

Such a perspective is counterposed to petty-bourgeois environmentalists like McKibben and the small-time capitalist Green Party. All variants of environmentalism are an expression of bourgeois ideology. The fundamental problem is not fossil fuels but the capitalist order and its drive for profit. Unable to look beyond the capitalist framework, environmentalists can only promote liberal, idealist and even reactionary schemes at the expense of industrial and economic growth.

Many environmentalists see a superficial affinity between their reactionary “back to nature” utopias and the interests of Native peoples. Today, opposition to various pipeline proposals often places American Indians and environmentalists



Harper's Weekly

1863 sketch “Battle of White Stone Hill” depicts U.S. Army massacre at Sioux camp in Dakota territory.

of land in 1958 when the Oahe Dam was built, against Indian opposition, flooding the area along the Missouri River, including the best farmland. These Indians suffered a grave injustice in that land grab. But, in fact, the DAPL goes north of land seized in 1958 and does not cross it.

Many Indian protesters have argued that the pipeline infringes on what they consider to be sacred, ancestral land. Before European colonization the only occupants of what is now America were Indians. Of course one understands the resentment toward that displacement. But

disruption of activity, based on completely consensual agreement. Only a workers government can guarantee these conditions.

The labor of black chattel slaves and the acquisition of land through the near-extirmination of Native Americans were at the heart of the consolidation of American capitalism. Throughout the 19th century, the U.S. government subjected Native peoples to land theft and genocide. The survivors were herded onto reservations, where poverty was rife and employment opportunities almost nonexistent. Many look for a better life off the reservations; today close

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

Website: [www.icl-fi.org](http://www.icl-fi.org) • Email address: [vanguard@tiac.net](mailto:vanguard@tiac.net)

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

- Chicago.....Box 6441, Main PO, Chicago, IL 60680, (312) 563-0441  
[chicagospartacist@sbcglobal.net](mailto:chicagospartacist@sbcglobal.net)  
Public Office: 1st Sat. of every month, 2-5 p.m., and by appointment, 222 S. Morgan (Buzzer 23)
- Los Angeles .....Box 29574, Los Feliz Sta., Los Angeles, CA 90029, (213) 380-8239  
[slsycla@sbcglobal.net](mailto:slsycla@sbcglobal.net)  
Public Office: Sat. 12-3 p.m., 3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215
- New York .....Box 3381, Church St. Sta., New York, NY 10008, (212) 267-1025  
[nysl@tiac.net](mailto:nysl@tiac.net)  
Public Office: 1st Sat. of every month, 1-4 p.m., and by appointment, 299 Broadway, Suite 1618, Manhattan
- Oakland.....Box 29497, Oakland, CA 94604, (510) 839-0851  
[slbayarea@fastmail.net](mailto:slbayarea@fastmail.net)  
Public Office: Sat. 1-4 p.m., 1904 Franklin (Buzzer #407)

TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA/LIGUE TROTSKYSTE DU CANADA

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

Death Penalty...

(continued from page 12)

“The Justice That Works Act,” calls for replacing the death penalty with life in prison without parole. A *CounterPunch* (29 August) article “Death to the Death Penalty in California” by Marjorie Cohn, a law professor and a former president of the National Lawyers Guild, argues that Prop. 62 would guarantee “that the worst criminals would never be released,” require “convicted murderers to work and pay restitution” to their victims and “save taxpayers \$150 million per year.”

Such is the cruel calculus of death at the hands of the capitalist state, weighing the costs of legal murder against the expense of relegating prisoners to a living death on what class-war political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal so aptly calls “life row.” Nonetheless, as principled opponents of the death penalty, we welcome any measure against state-sanctioned murder. We say: vote “yes” on Prop. 62, “no” on Prop. 66!

As we wrote in calling for a vote for a similar proposition on the California ballot in 2012 (WV No. 1009, 28 September 2012):

“As revolutionary Marxists, we do not seek to advise the bourgeoisie on the more ‘humane’ or ‘just’ administration of its increasingly decrepit and depraved rule. Whether it is the death penalty, life in prison without parole or imprisonment in general, we oppose the entire machinery of violence that is the capitalist state.”

As Marxists, we understand that ending the death penalty will not fundamentally change the violently racist and oppressive nature of capitalist class rule. It will not free the innocent, like Mumia, languishing in America’s dungeons or spare the victims of racist police executions on the streets. Nor will it alter the slower death of the growing ranks of the poor, jobless and homeless, or the agony of the sick lacking proper medical care. Our purpose is to fight to forge the nucleus of the revolutionary workers party that will lead the proletariat in overthrowing this system through socialist revolution. When those who labor rule, the death penalty will be abolished for good and the capitalists’ prisons smashed as the initial steps in the emancipation of all the exploited and oppressed. ■

conjuncturally on the same side, with both opposing any pipeline development.

Such opposition runs directly against Native interests, serving to deepen the isolation and poverty of the Indian population. Indian rights to control their resources must include the right to seek their development. In fact, many tribes have benefited from resource extraction, in particular during the shale boom. The Southern Utes in Colorado; the Mandan, Hidatsa and Sahnish Nation in North Dakota and the Navajo are among those who have earned considerable amounts of money in recent years from oil and gas production. As the head of a Native-owned oil corporation put it, “Shut down oil and gas, and you would be turning out the lights in our villages.” Of course, under the capitalist system, the oil revenues have benefited tribal elites far more than the rest of the populations on the reservations.

Some reformist socialist groups pander to the environmentalist movement, while giving it a thin Marxist veneer. A prominent example is the International Socialist Organization (ISO), which is calling for people to vote for the Green Party’s Jill Stein for president. A September 15 statement on socialistworker.org declares: “The International Socialist Organization stands in solidarity with the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, in support of their right to self-determination and sovereignty, and against the continued extraction of fossil fuels.” To just stop accessing fossil fuels would be catastrophic for society, which is dependent on electricity, transport and other features of a modern economy. As we noted in “Capitalism and Global Warming” (WV Nos. 965 and 966, 24 September and 8 October 2010):

“The capitalist magnates and their governments are not about to just write off their historic investments in fossil fuels. Neither would a workers government. While a planned, collectivized economy would carry out scientific research to develop safer, more efficient sources of energy, it may well have to run for some

time on coal and hydrocarbons (oil and natural gas).”

Marxists are not indifferent to the environmental impact of technological progress, but our concern is tempered by our dedication to the eradication of scarcity and human misery. The victorious proletarian revolution will utilize science and technology to provide the material basis for massively improving the standard of living for all of humanity. Only in the context of an international socialist economy that relegates hunger and poverty to the past can a rational plan be hammered out to minimize the human toll of climate change.

**For a Revolutionary Workers Party!**

We seek to build a Leninist workers party that will act as a tribune of the people, one that combats every instance of oppression, including that of Native Americans. We look to mobilize the social power of the proletariat in defense of all the oppressed, as part of making the class conscious of its historic task to overthrow the entire capitalist system. The working

class is shackled by a pro-capitalist leadership that, rather than pursuing a class-struggle fight for the interests of workers and the oppressed, pushes the lie that workers share common interests with their capitalist exploiters.

Grotesquely, the leaders of construction unions involved in the DAPL project have condemned the protesters. The presidents of the Operating Engineers, Teamsters, Laborers and Pipefitters unions wrote a letter to Governor Dalrymple on August 22 claiming that the Indian protest “threatens the safety of our union brothers and sisters” and calling on the governor to “utilize the authority of your office” to “stand up to the demonstrators.” According to the *Bismarck Tribune* (7 September), Operating Engineers business manager Glen Johnson even said the governor might have to call out the National Guard.

The role of the National Guard is to maintain racist law and order, and that includes the many times it has been used against striking workers, from the 1934 Minneapolis Teamsters strike to the 1982 meatpackers strike in Dakota City, Nebraska. The guardsmen who gunned

down anti-war protesters at Kent State in 1970 had been sent directly from strike-breaking duty against Cleveland Teamsters. It is an indictment of the labor traitors who currently sit atop the trade unions that they disappear the bloody class line that divides workers from the capitalists and their state power.

Instead they subordinate the workers’ interests to the profitability of the companies. A class-struggle union leadership would insist on full pay for the workers every day, whether construction is carried out or not. Workers shouldn’t suffer if the pipeline is delayed—the company should! Such a leadership would also fight for union-run preferential hiring programs to provide union jobs and skills training for Indians from the reservation and to integrate them into the proletariat. It would fight for union control of safety standards and practices in construction and maintenance in order to combat the bosses’ cost-cutting schemes, which are often the cause of pipe leaks and other industrial accidents.

It is only through forging the unity of workers and all the oppressed that attacks by the capitalists can be beaten back. A political struggle must be waged within the workers movement by class-conscious leaders contesting the whole panoply of wretched class-collaboration, nationalism, protectionism and racism exemplified by the labor bureaucracy.

What is needed is a revolutionary workers party to lead the proletariat, standing at the head of all the oppressed, in the struggle to overturn capitalist class rule and establish a workers government. Such a government would immediately spend the money to provide a decent life for those who have suffered most under capitalism, not least Native Americans and black people. It would ensure the social emancipation of American Indians, promoting their voluntary integration on the basis of full equality while providing the fullest possible regional autonomy for those who desire it. ■

**Archives...**

(continued from page 2)

mental degradation, at the opposite pole, i.e., on the side of the class that produces *its own product in the form of capital.*” (Marx’s *Capital*, p. 671)....

The modern state, no matter what its form, is essentially a capitalist machine, the state of the capitalists, the ideal personification of the total national capital. The more it proceeds to the taking over of productive forces, the more does it actually become the national capitalist, the more citizens does it exploit. The workers remain wage-workers—proletarians. The capitalist relation is not done away with. It is rather brought to a head. But, brought to a head, it topples over. State ownership of the productive forces is not the solution of the conflict, but concealed within it are the technical conditions that form the elements of that solution.

This solution can only consist in the practical recognition of the social nature of the modern forces of production, and therefore in the harmonising of the modes of production, appropriation, and exchange with the socialised character of the means of production. And this can only come about by society openly and directly taking possession of the productive forces which have outgrown all control except that of society as a whole. The social character of the means of production and of the products today reacts against the producers, periodically disrupts all production and exchange, acts only like a law of Nature working blindly, forcibly, destructively. But with the taking over by society of the productive forces, the social character of the means of production and of the products will be utilised by the producers with a perfect understanding of its nature, and instead of being a source of disturbance and periodical collapse, will become the most powerful lever of production itself....

Since the historical appearance of the capitalist mode of production, the appro-

priation by society of all the means of production has often been dreamed of, more or less vaguely, by individuals, as well as by sects, as the ideal of the future. But it could become possible, could become a historical necessity, only when the actual conditions for its realisation were there. Like every other social advance, it becomes practicable, not by men understanding that the existence of classes is in contradiction to justice, equality, etc., not by the mere willingness to abolish these classes, but by virtue of certain new economic conditions. The separation of society into an exploiting and an exploited class, a ruling and an oppressed class, was the necessary consequence of the deficient and restricted development of production in former times....

Division into classes has a certain historical justification, it has this only for a given period, only under given social conditions. It was based upon the insufficiency of production. It will be swept away by the complete development of modern productive forces. And, in fact, the abolition of classes in society presupposes a degree of historical evolution at which the existence, not simply of this or that particular ruling class, but of any ruling class at all, and, therefore, the existence of class distinction itself has become an obsolete anachronism. It presupposes, therefore, the development of production carried out to a degree at which appropriation of the means of production and of the products, and, with this, of political domination, of the monopoly of culture, and of intellectual leadership by a particular class of society, has become not only superfluous but economically, politically, intellectually, a hindrance to development.

This point is now reached. Their political and intellectual bankruptcy is scarcely any longer a secret to the bourgeoisie themselves. Their economic bankruptcy recurs regularly every ten years. In every crisis, society is suffocated beneath the weight of its own productive forces and products, which it cannot use, and stands helpless, face to face with the absurd contradiction

that the producers have nothing to consume, because consumers are wanting. The expansive force of the means of production bursts the bonds that the capitalist mode of production had imposed upon them. Their deliverance from these bonds is the one precondition for an unbroken, constantly accelerated development of the productive forces, and therewith for a practically unlimited increase of production itself. Nor is this all. The socialised appropriation of the means of production does away, not only with the present artificial restrictions upon production, but also with the positive waste and devastation of productive forces and products that are at the present time the inevitable concomitants of production, and that reach their height in the crises. Further, it sets free for the community at large a mass of means of production and of products, by doing away with the senseless extravagance of the ruling classes of today and their political representatives. The possibility of securing for every member of society, by means of socialised production, an existence not only fully sufficient materially, and becoming day by day more full, but an existence guaranteeing to all the free development and exercise of their physical and mental faculties—this possibility is now for the first time here, but *it is here.*

With the seizing of the means of production by society, production of commodities is done away with, and, simultaneously, the mastery of the product over the producer. Anarchy in social production is replaced by systematic, definite organisation. The struggle for individual existence disappears. Then for the first time man, in a certain sense, is finally marked off from the rest of the animal kingdom, and emerges from mere animal conditions of existence into really human ones. The whole sphere of the conditions of life which environ man, and which have hitherto ruled man, now comes under the dominion and control of man, who for the first time becomes the real, conscious lord of Nature, because he has now become master of his own social

organisation. The laws of his own social action, hitherto standing face to face with man as laws of Nature foreign to, and dominating him, will then be used with full understanding, and so mastered by him. Man’s own social organisation, hitherto confronting him as a necessity imposed by Nature and history, now becomes the result of his own free action. The extraneous objective forces that have hitherto governed history pass under the control of man himself. Only from that time will man himself, more and more consciously, make his own history—only from that time will the social causes set in movement by him have, in the main and in a constantly growing measure, the results intended by him. It is the ascent of man from the kingdom of necessity to the kingdom of freedom....

To accomplish this act of universal emancipation is the historical mission of the modern proletariat. To thoroughly comprehend the historical conditions and thus the very nature of this act, to impart to the now oppressed proletarian class a full knowledge of the conditions and of the meaning of the momentous act it is called upon to accomplish, this is the task of the theoretical expression of the proletarian movement, scientific socialism. ■

**Spartacus Youth Club**  
**Class Series**

**LOS ANGELES**

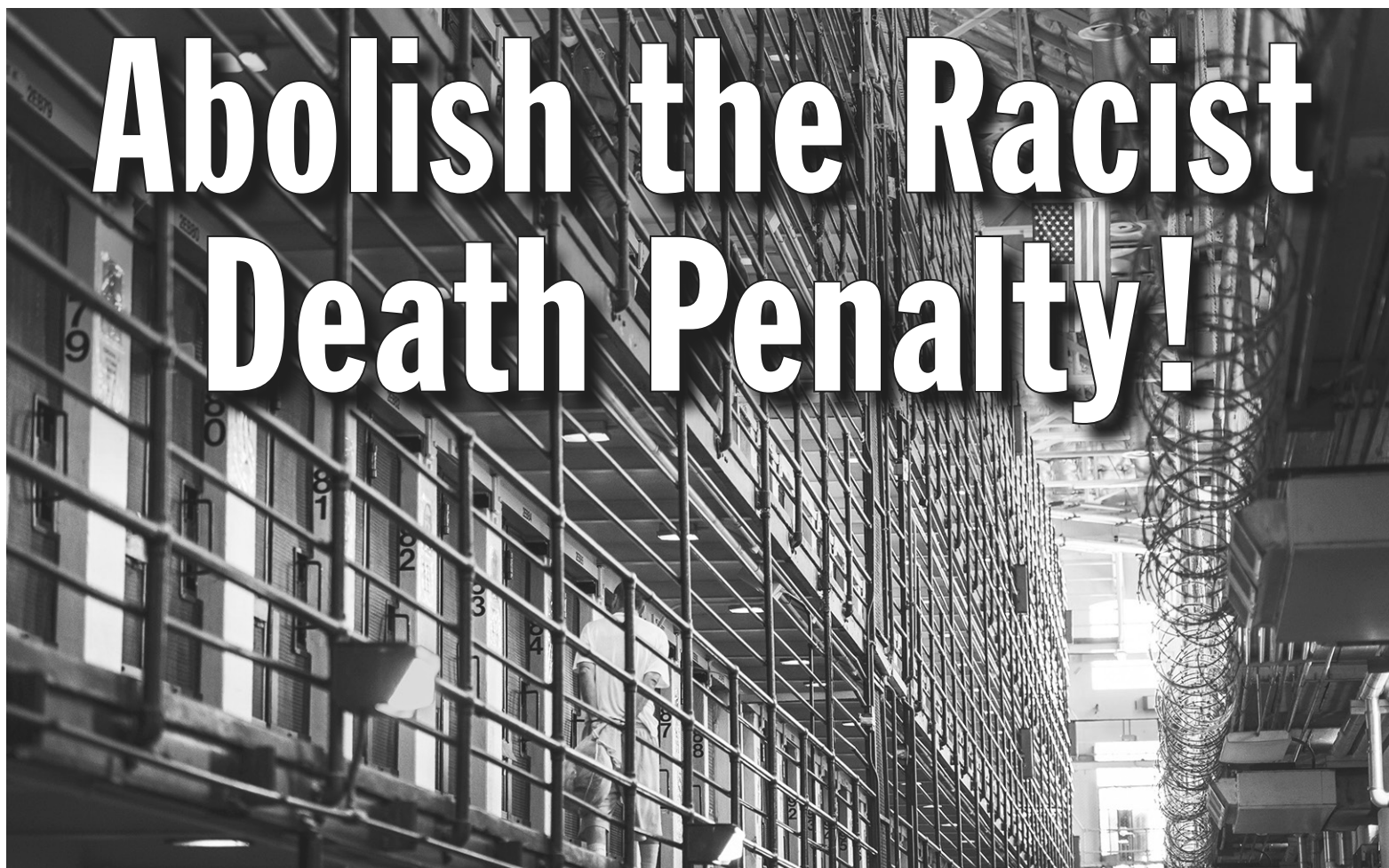
**Thursday, October 6, 6 p.m.**  
**Meet the Marxists!**  
**An Introduction to**  
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# WORKERS VANGUARD

## California Propositions: Yes on 62, No on 66!



Bloomberg

San Quentin State Prison, where over 700 prisoners languish on death row.

Last year, the United States ranked fifth in the world in the number of people executed at the hands of the state, coming in just behind Saudi Arabia. While the medieval rulers of that country behead the accused in a public square, America's capitalist rulers prefer the more "humane" method of lethal injection, perpetrated out of public view in prison death chambers. Last year, the Supreme Court rejected a suit brought by three death row inmates in Oklahoma against the state's use of a drug that is the chemical equivalent of being burned alive. Arguing that the inmates had failed to come up with an "available and preferable" means of being put to death, the Court's majority decision written by Justice Samuel Alito concluded:

"While most humans wish to die a painless death, many do not have that good fortune. Holding that the Eighth Amendment demands the elimination of essentially all risk of pain would effectively outlaw the death penalty altogether."

Indeed, the purpose of the death penalty is to inflict cruel and unusual punishment as a statement of the ultimate authority of the state and its monopoly on the means of violence. A barbaric legacy of medieval torture, its endurance in the United States is rooted in the origins of American capitalism, which was built on the hideously brutalized labor of black chattel slaves.

The profits that were wrung out of the slave trade and plantation labor were maintained through terror and murder. After the defeat of the Southern slavocracy in the Civil War and the dismantling of Radical Reconstruction by the Northern bourgeoisie, Jim Crow segregation was enforced by lynch mobs. By the 1930s, such extralegal murder was increasingly supplanted by state-sanctioned executions. Black men and women accounted for over two-thirds of those put to death between 1930 and 1967, when amid the mass struggles of the civil rights movement a de facto moratorium on capital punishment was temporarily imposed. Today, more than 40 percent of those on death row are black.

As Marxists, we oppose the death pen-

alty on principle—for the guilty as well as the innocent. We do not accord the state the right to determine who lives and who dies. Our opposition to capital punishment extends as well to China, North Korea and the other bureaucratically deformed

most militant fighters, into their ranks. And it will be out of future hard-fought working-class battles that the vital instrument for getting rid of this decaying system of exploitation, racial oppression and state-sanctioned murder will be forged: a



Getty

Los Angeles, July 14: Franky Carillo, exonerated of murder after 20 years behind bars, speaks at rally in support of Proposition 62, which would replace the death penalty with life without parole.

workers states, where execution is a prop for the rule of the parasitic bureaucracies.

In the U.S., the death penalty, while rooted in anti-black racism, is upheld as the ultimate punishment for anyone deemed as a threat to the capitalist social order. Working-class fighters who have been killed at the hands of the state include: the Haymarket anarchists, abolitionists and labor organizers who fought for the eight-hour day, hanged in 1877; IWW organizer Joe Hill, shot by a firing squad in 1915; anarchist workers Sacco and Vanzetti, sent to the electric chair in 1927.

Hundreds of other labor militants have died at the hands of strikebreaking cops and scabs. But it was out of such struggles that the industrial unions in this country were forged in the 1930s, bringing black workers, who were among the

multiracial revolutionary workers party to lead the fight for a socialist America.

### The Death Penalty Debate

America's imperialist rulers are accustomed to killing on massive scales—from the A-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, to the killing fields of Vietnam, to today's wars, occupations and drone strikes against the peoples of the Near East. At home, the rulers' racist cops have a kill rate that is greater by orders of magnitude than that of any other advanced capitalist country, with one study putting it at 70 times that of the combined total of seven European countries. The U.S. also holds a commanding global lead in the numbers of people behind bars, claiming 22 percent of the world's prison population.

Exposure of cases of innocent men and

women sentenced to death, and in some cases executed, has stoked growing antipathy toward capital punishment. The number of executions is down considerably, especially compared to the late 1990s. But for much of the bourgeoisie the main concern is not the justice system's proclivity to frame up and kill innocent people nor the unspeakable torture inflicted by the drug cocktails used to carry out executions. Instead, what concerns a wing of the bourgeoisie, Democrats and Republicans alike, is that it is spending too much money on prisons and that the death penalty is similarly too expensive. On the other side are those who believe that only the most monstrous measures of repression can keep the working class, black people and the poor sufficiently cowed in the face of increasing destitution. This debate is reflected in various state referendums that will be voted on as part of the November elections.

In Nebraska, where a Republican-dominated legislature voted to repeal the death penalty in 2015 arguing that "taxpayers have not gotten the bang for their buck," there will be a state referendum on maintaining capital punishment. In Oklahoma, a resolution calling to amend the state's constitution to enshrine the death penalty, deny that it is "cruel and unusual" punishment and allow for any method of execution, will be on the ballot. In California, which leads the nation in the number of people on death row, there will be two propositions representing both sides in the death penalty debate.

Proposition 66, which is endorsed by a cabal of state prosecutors, cops and prison guards, calls for speeding up executions. To get around the legal challenges to lethal injections, it would make the state's cocktail of death secret. It would also cut back the appeals process for death row inmates—rights that were already curtailed by Bill Clinton's gutting of *habeas corpus* in the 1990s—while forcing lawyers, however inexperienced, to take their cases.

In opposition, Proposition 62 known as

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