

Fascist Murder in Manhattan

Remember Timothy Caughman

On March 20, white-supremacist James Jackson stabbed 66-year-old Timothy Caughman in the chest and back with a 26-inch sword. Caughman was able to stumble into a police station but died of his wounds at Bellevue Hospital. Jackson had come to New York City from Baltimore three days earlier with the express intent of killing black men, and

chose the city to get maximum media coverage. When he turned himself in a day after the killing, he boasted of being a member of a white-supremacist group. The authorities are protecting the fascists by refusing to release the name of the group or any information about it.

Caughman was collecting recyclables a few blocks from Times Square when

he was murdered. A longtime resident of the area with many friends, he loved Motown music, collected autographs and had been a coordinator of a basketball youth league. Caughman himself had noted the recent rise of fascist groups and posted a link to an article about it on his Twitter account following the November

continued on page 7



Twitter

U.S. Slaughter in Near East

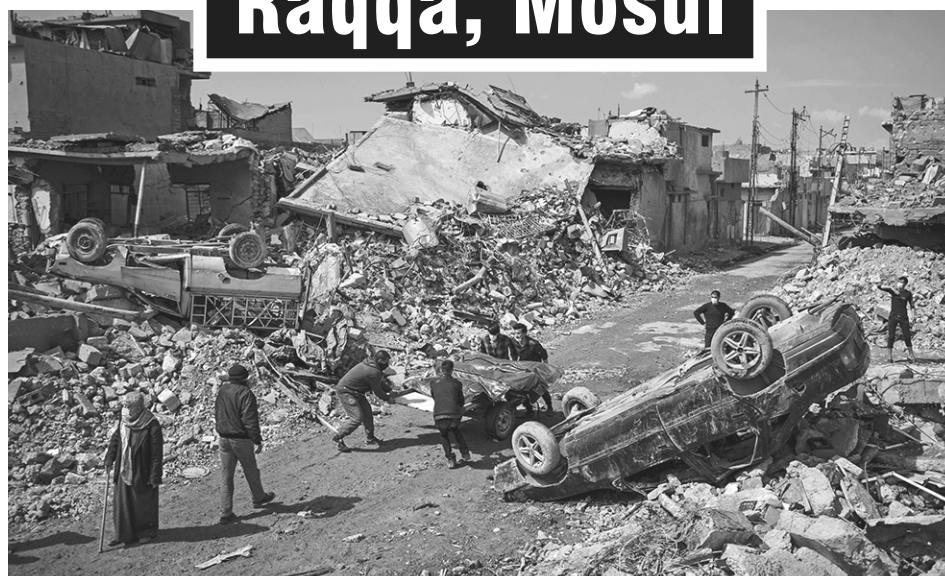
The long list of U.S. imperialist war crimes in Iraq and Syria is growing by the day. On March 17, a U.S. airstrike in the Iraqi city of Mosul killed over 100 men, women and children taking shelter in the basement of a house. That week, some 240 civilians were killed by the U.S. in that neighborhood as part of the battle by the imperialists and Iraqi government forces to drive out the Islamic State (ISIS) from the city. An estimated 400,000 civilians are trapped in the war zone in the densely populated areas of western Mosul, having been set up for wanton slaughter after the Iraqi government directed them not to flee.

In Syria, a U.S. drone fired missiles and dropped a 500-pound bomb on a religious gathering at a mosque in a town near Aleppo on March 16, massacring more than 45 people. Less than a week later, a U.S. airstrike killed at least 33 people who had taken shelter in a school near the Syrian city of Raqqa. In March alone, the coalition of U.S. and other imperialist forces together with local proxies butchered over 1,400 civilians in Syria and Iraq. At the same time, in Yemen the U.S. stepped up its military strikes against alleged al Qaeda targets and increased military aid to the Sunni theocratic monarchy of Saudi Arabia, which is waging a reactionary war against Houthi-led forces. Last month, the U.S. launched more airstrikes in Yemen than in all of last year. *Down with U.S. imperialism! All U.S. troops out of the Near East now!*

Apologists for the capitalist Democratic Party claim that the Trump administration has lifted Obama-era restrictions supposedly aimed at minimizing civilian casualties. In fact, the recent carnage is a direct continuation of Obama's murderous wars, and the rules of engagement had already been loosened on his watch. Since August 2014, the U.S. coalition has carried out over 19,000 airstrikes in Iraq and Syria with more than 72,000 bombs and missiles. Working people should have no illusions that the Democrats are any less a party of racist U.S. imperialism than the Republicans. The only way out



Raqqa, Mosul



Reuters (above); AP

Top: School for the deaf and mute in Raqqa destroyed by U.S.-led airstrikes, November 2014. Bottom: Western Mosul neighborhood where U.S. bombardment killed at least 240 civilians in March 2017.

of the perpetual cycle of imperialist wars, occupations and bloodletting is the fight to end the capitalist system through workers' revolution.

In its campaign against ISIS in Iraq, the U.S. has enlisted the forces of the Shia-dominated Iraqi government together with Shia militias and Kurdish *pesh merga* fighters. Imperialist machinations have sharply intensified the conflict between

Shia and Sunni Muslims. The war against the Sunni-based ISIS has served as a pretext for Shia forces to ethnically cleanse majority Sunni cities in Iraq, with Kirkuk province alone receiving some 500,000 displaced Sunni Arabs. The heavily Sunni Arab population of Mosul faces a similar fate. In Syria, Kurdish forces that took over ISIS-controlled villages carried out a campaign of collective punishment and

communist expulsions of Arabs and Turkmen. ISIS, of course, is infamous for its own communist slaughter and expulsion of Shias, Kurds, Yazidis, Christians and others.

As Marxists, we have no side in the intercommunal conflict in Iraq nor in Syria's squalid civil war between the dictatorial regime of Bashar al-Assad and various Islamist-dominated rebels. But we do have a side *against* the U.S. imperialists—the main enemy not only of the Syrian and Iraqi peoples but of working and oppressed masses around the world.

The gruesome crimes of ISIS pale in comparison to those of the world's biggest terrorists—the U.S. imperialists, who are responsible for the slaughter of tens of millions. We are implacable opponents of everything the ISIS cutthroats stand for. But we recognize that when they inflict blows against the U.S. occupiers and their proxies—the Iraqi army, Shia militias and Kurdish armed forces in Iraq and Syria—such acts coincide with the interests of the international working class, including in the U.S. At the same time, we do not imbue these repugnant forces with “anti-imperialist” credentials. While our main opposition is to the U.S. and other imperialists, we also oppose the capitalist regional powers (Russia, Iran, Turkey) that have become involved in the conflict and demand that they, too, get out.

The Assault on Raqqa

As in Mosul, in Raqqa some 300,000 people are trapped; U.S. coalition forces have dropped leaflets threatening residents with airstrikes if they flee the city by crossing the Euphrates River. Coalition airstrikes hit the northern neighborhoods of Raqqa almost daily. In early March, the U.S. deployed hundreds of troops to Syria, joining the several hundred Special Operations forces who have been there for months. The U.S. also recently deployed a High Mobility Artillery Rocket System trained on Raqqa. In addition to the 6,000 troops currently stationed in Iraq and Syria, backed by thousands of private military contractors (i.e., mercenaries), the U.S. is sending 2,500 troops to a staging base in Kuwait from which they can join the assaults on the ISIS strongholds of Mosul and Raqqa.

Raqqa is a historic city. It served as the capital of the Abbasid dynasty during the

continued on page 6





CPSU CC Archive; RSFSR Artist (inset)

1926 gathering of Zhenotdel activists in Dagestan in the Caucasus. Inset: 1920 poster depicting social and political gains reads: “What the October Revolution Gave to Women Workers and Peasants.”

The Russian Revolution and the Emancipation of Women

We reprint below the second part of an article that originally appeared in the Women and Revolution pages of Spartacist (English-language edition) No. 59, Spring 2006. Part One appeared in WV No. 1108 (24 March). Since the publication of the article in 2006, we have conducted further research on Bolshevik work among women that led us to correct our previous understanding that there had been a direct line between the work of the Second and Third Internationals. See footnote below.

PART TWO

Russian society was permeated with the grossest anti-woman bigotry. In 1917 peasants barely 50 years out of serfdom made up some 85 percent of the population. They lived under a village system with a rigid patriarchal hierarchy, without even a rudimentary modern infrastructure, lacking centralized sewage, electricity or paved roads. Ignorance and illiteracy were the norm and superstition was endemic. The ancient institutions of the household (*dvor*) and the communal village determined land ownership and livelihood and enforced the degradation of women. This extreme oppression was the inevitable corollary of the low productivity of Russian agriculture, which used centuries-old techniques. Peasant women were drudges; for example, a *batrachka* was a laborer hired for a season as a “wife” and then thrown out upon pregnancy. One peasant woman described

her life: “In the countryside they look at a woman like a work horse. You work all your life for your husband and his entire family, endure beatings and every kind of humiliation, but it doesn’t matter, you have nowhere to go—you are bound in marriage” (quoted in *ibid.* [Wendy Goldman, *Women, the State and Revolution: Soviet Family Policy and Social Life, 1917-1936*]).

However, by 1914 women made up one-third of Russia’s small but powerful industrial labor force. The Bolshevik program addressed their felt needs through such demands as equal pay for equal work, paid maternity leave and childcare facilities at factories, the lack of which had a severe impact on infant mortality. As many as two-thirds of the babies of women factory workers died in their first year. The party made efforts to defend working women from abuse and wife-beating, and opposed all instances of discrimination and oppression wherever they appeared, acting as the tribune of the people according to the Leninist concept put forward in *What Is To Be Done?* (1902). This included taking up a fight after the February Revolution within the trade unions against a proposal to address unemployment by first laying off married women whose husbands were working. Such a policy was applied in the Putilov munitions works and the Vyborg iron works, among other enterprises, and was opposed by the Bolsheviks as a threat to the political unity of the proletariat. Hundreds of women were members of the Bolshevik Party before the revolution, and they participated in all aspects of party

work, both legal and underground, serving as officers in local party committees, couriers, agitators and writers.

Confined to the home and family, many women are isolated from social and political interaction and thus can be a reservoir of backward consciousness. But as Clara Zetkin said at the 1921 Congress of the Communist International, “Either the revolution will have the masses of women, or the counterrevolution will have them” (*Protokoll des III. Weltkongresses der Kommunistischen Internationale* [Minutes of the Third World Congress of the Communist International]) (our translation). Before World War I the Social Democrats in Germany pioneered in building a women’s “transitional organization”—a special body, linked to the party through its most conscious cadre, that took up the fight for women’s rights and other key political questions, conducted education, and published a newspaper. The Russian Bolsheviks stood on the shoulders of their German comrades, most importantly carrying party work among women into the factories. Building transitional organizations, founding the newspaper *Rabotnitsa* (The Woman Worker), and, after the October Revolution, the Zhenotdel [Bolshevik Party department that addressed women’s needs], the Bolsheviks successfully mobilized masses of women in the working class as well as the peasantry whom the party could not have otherwise reached.*

Rabotnitsa called mass meetings and demonstrations in Petrograd in opposition to the war and to rising prices, the two main issues galvanizing working women. The First All-City Conference of Petrograd Working Women, called by *Rabotnitsa* for October 1917, adjourned early so that the delegates could join the insurrection; it later reconvened. Among its achievements were resolutions for a standardized workday of eight hours and for banning labor for children under the age of 16. One of the aims of the conference was to mobilize non-party working

women for the uprising and to win them to the goals that the Soviet government planned to pursue after the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The revolutionary beginnings in Russia took hold in no small measure due to the political awakening of the toiling women of the city and village to this historic mission. Even the most bitter political opponents of the October Revolution, such as the Russian Menshevik “socialist” proponents of a return to capitalist rule, grudgingly recognized the Bolsheviks’ success. The Menshevik leader Yuri Martov wrote to his comrade Pavel Axelrod, demonstrating as well his own contempt for the proletarian masses:

“It would be hard for you to imagine how in the recent past (just before my departure) there was a strong, genuine Bolshevik *fanaticism*, with an adoration of Lenin and Trotsky and a hysterical hatred of us, among a significant mass of Moscow women workers, in both the factories and workshops. This is to a notable degree explained by the fact that the Russian woman proletariat, due to its illiteracy and helplessness, in its mass could only have been drawn into ‘politics’ by means of the state mechanism (endless educational courses and ‘cultural’-agitational institutions, official celebrations and demonstrations, and—last not least [original in English]—by means of material privileges). Thus the words that one runs across in letters from women workers to *Pravda*, such as, ‘only after the October overthrow did we women workers see the sun,’ are not empty phrases.”

—“Letter to P. B. Axelrod, 5 April 1921,” Yu. O. Martov, *Letters 1916-1922* (Benson, Vermont: Chalidze Publications, 1990) (our translation)

The Early Soviet Government and the 1918 Family Code

The revolution released a burst of optimism and expectations for a society built on socialist principles. Discussions raged among young people on sexual relations, child rearing and the nature of the family in the transition to socialism. Creative

continued on page 4

WORKERS VANGUARD



Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League of the U.S.

DIRECTOR OF PARTY PUBLICATIONS: Liz Gordon

EDITOR: John Blake

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Susan Fuller

EDITORIAL BOARD: Elizabeth Johnson (managing editor), François Donau (production manager), Blandine Hauser (letters editor), Bruce André, Ray Bishop, Bonnie Brodie, Jon Brule, Ed Clarkson, Paul Cone, Michael Davisson, George Foster, Walter Jennings, Michael Joyce, Jane Kerrigan, James Robertson, Joseph Seymour, Alan Wilde, Laura Zamora

The Spartacist League is the U.S. section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

Workers Vanguard (ISSN 0276-0746) published biweekly, except skipping three alternate issues in June, July and August (beginning with omitting the second issue in June) and skipping the last issue in December, by the Spartacist Publishing Co., 299 Broadway, Suite 1618, New York, NY 10007. Telephone: (212) 732-7862 (Editorial), (212) 732-7861 (Business). Address all correspondence to: Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116. Email address: vanguard@tiac.net. Domestic subscriptions: \$10.00/22 issues. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Workers Vanguard*, Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116.

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

The closing date for news in this issue is April 4.

No. 1109

7 April 2017

* While the German Social Democracy’s work on the woman question was an important first step in the development of the model of communist work among women, it was marred by the overall opportunist framework of the party leadership. In fact, the idea of a special apparatus to conduct such work was pioneered by the Bolsheviks in their endeavor to draw the masses of toiling women to the side of the vanguard party. In the parties of the Third International, this apparatus was to be built as an integral part of all principal party bodies—from the women’s department of the central committee to the leading bodies of local committees. For more information, see “Clara Zetkin and the Struggle for the Third International” (*Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 64, Summer 2014).

IG Big Liars Smear ICL on Immigration

The modern technique of the Big Lie was developed by Nazi propaganda chief Joseph Goebbels and given currency on the left by Joseph Stalin. The point of the lie is not so much that it is believed, but that it is repeated often enough to be accepted as an excuse for a witchhunt and worse. In that vein, and not for the first time, the Internationalist Group (IG) is smearing the International Communist League as anti-immigrant racists. Thus, last August the *Internationalist* ran two articles—“Strange Encounters with the ICL” and “Italy: The Refugee Crisis and Capitalist Barbarism”—charging that the ICL is “lining up with the most retrograde elements of the bourgeoisie, including fascists and racists” and is “taking on the role of border guards of the EU [European Union] *and within the EU*” (emphasis in original).

The charge of racism, like the charge of cop (and the IG slanders us with both), is the dirtiest mud that can be slung on the left. To remain silent is taken as evidence of guilt. But to respond implies that the charges are widespread and perhaps even justified. To give a modern-day equivalent, it would be kind of like responding to Donald Trump’s tweets. A skillful practitioner of the Big Lie, Trump was tutored by Roy Cohn, the legal ghoul of Joseph McCarthy’s anti-Communist witchhunt who hounded the heroic Rosenbergs to their deaths in the electric chair in 1953. The IG’s latest smear, titled “Spartacist League vs. Refugees” (internationalist.org, 27 February), could be summarized in the tweet “ICL calls for full citizenship rights for all immigrants. Fake News!”

Denouncing us for “capitulation to the racist Trump,” the IG takes aim at the front-page article of *Workers Vanguard* No. 1105 (10 February) headlined, “Trump Escalates Obama’s War on Immigrants.” Pointing to our demands for “Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!” and “Down with the anti-Muslim ban!” the IG argues that these are merely an elaborate cover for our “*chauvinist line of opposing calls for asylum for those fleeing the depredation wrought by U.S. and European imperialism*” (emphasis in original). In fact, the IG’s lies against us are a not-very-elaborate cover for their own capitulation to “fight the right” liberalism—that is, the idea that the U.S. imperialist rulers (particularly as represented by the Democratic Party) and their counterparts in the European Union can be pressured to provide freedom and economic well-being for the peoples of the world.

The depredations wrought by the imperialist powers, with the U.S. leading the pack, encompass the globe. With their systematic looting of wide swaths of the planet

and their devastating wars, or proxy wars, the advanced capitalist countries impose inhuman conditions on the vast majority of mankind. The United Nations estimates that there are now some 60 million people worldwide displaced by war and persecution, the highest number since World War II. Many millions more migrate to escape the grinding poverty inflicted by capitalist imperialism.

As communists, we do not look to the good graces of the very authors of this devastation to provide refuge for their victims. Our purpose is to forge internation-

The IG focuses on the desperate plight of Syrian refugees because this has become a cause célèbre among liberals and others trying to promote further “humanitarian” intervention by the U.S. and other imperialist powers into the civil war wracking that country. Few such tears are shed for the countless refugees from the barbaric war in Yemen being waged by the theocratic monarchy of Saudi Arabia, backed by the U.S., that has killed thousands. One cannot find a single article on the IG website on that war and the plight of the refugees it has produced.



WV Photo

Oakland: Spartacists join ILWU longshore union march against racist cop terror, May Day 2015.

alist revolutionary workers parties that can lead the world proletariat in the struggle to smash this system of brutal exploitation, racial and colonial/neocolonial oppression and war. The IG walks the other side of the street.

Touching Faith in “Humanitarian” Imperialism

The photo accompanying the “Spartacist League vs. Refugees” article shows the IG’s placards at a protest against Trump’s anti-Muslim ban at JFK airport on January 28. The only difference between their slogans and those we raised in the article they denounce as “chauvinist” is a sign demanding “Let Syrian Refugees In.” Besides Syrians, there are millions more fleeing U.S. wars and occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq and the imperialist devastation of Libya, to name but a few, as well as others trying to escape horrific civil wars in South Sudan, Congo and elsewhere.

The IG lyingly proclaims that we “oppose calls for asylum for Syrian refugees.” No. What we oppose, and have always opposed, is the delusion that the imperialists are going to open their doors to all those seeking refuge. Contrary to the IG, this stance is not counterposed in the least to our history of fighting, for example, for asylum for refugees fleeing state-sponsored reactionary terror in their homelands—from Pinochet’s Chilean junta in the 1970s to the murderous death squads in Central America in the 1980s to the Sri Lankan government-orchestrated Sinhala pogroms against Tamils. More recently, we demanded that desperate Haitian refugees who had the door slammed in their faces by the Obama administration be let in (see *WV* No. 1099, 4 November 2016).

There is no universal “right to asylum,” as the IG would have it, under capitalist imperialism. The refugee policies of the bourgeoisie are determined by their political interests. That is why, for example, Miami became a haven for *gusanos* who fled the Cuban Revolution, and defeated counterrevolutionaries from Vietnam were welcomed with open arms. Our demands for asylum have always been determined by the *class interests* of the working class.

Our aim is to build the unity, solidarity and fighting capacity of the working class both at home and internationally. That means a fight to mobilize the social power of labor in defense of those who have made it here, by championing the call for full citizenship rights for all immigrants and opposing all deportations and anti-immigrant roundups. Against the racist, chauvinist poison whipped up by the bourgeoisie to divide and conquer its wage slaves and echoed in the protectionist “save American jobs” cries of the trade-union bureaucracy, we say that the unions

must bring foreign-born workers into their ranks with full rights and protections.

If one is to believe the IG, this is all a ruse to provide cover for our purported anti-immigrant “chauvinism.” They write, “When the Spartacist League stood for revolutionary Trotskyism, its statements that all those here should have the rights of citizens, no matter how they got here, underlined that this meant *all* immigrants.” Now, the IG sputters, “When *WV* mouths the call for full citizenship rights for all immigrants, it pointedly restricts it to those who have ‘made it to this country.’” The observant (or not-so-observant) reader might notice that there is *no difference* between calling for full citizenship rights for “all those here” and for all those who “made it to this country.” The IG’s position amounts to calling for full citizenship rights in the U.S. or the EU for anyone who wants it, wherever they may live.

The idea that all should be able to go wherever they desire might strike some as really radical, a veritable heaven on earth. But on the real planet Earth, it has no small measure of reactionary consequences. The development of modern imperialism was based on the greater capitalist powers forcing weaker and economically backward countries to open their borders to colonial plunder and the flow of finance capital.

Although the IG denies it, their position is but a species of the “open the borders” call raised by many on the reformist left from Europe to the U.S. As we wrote more than 40 years ago in “The Leninist Policy Toward Immigration/Emigration” (*WV* No. 36, 18 January 1974), this demand is “tantamount to advocating the abolition of nation states under capitalism.” Together with private ownership of the means of production, the nation-state is the very foundation of the capitalist order. Why not call for the abolition of the border police? How about the military and the cops as well? After all, policing borders is just as vital to the very existence of capitalism as the racist, strikebreaking cops and the armed forces that rampage the world in defense of the interests of the U.S. and other imperialist rulers. For that matter, why bother with the fight for socialist revolution?

The EU Fraud of “Free Movement of People”

The notion of “open borders” has particular currency among liberals and reformists in Europe, where the fraud of “free movement of people” is a key ideological underpinning for maintaining the European Union. A reactionary bloc between European imperialist powers, with the German bourgeoisie in the driver’s seat, the EU from its inception has been a vehicle for increasing the exploitation of workers throughout Europe and the domination of weaker EU countries, like Greece, by the imperialist overlords. Contrary to liberal illusions that all who set foot in an EU country have the right to travel wherever they want under the terms of the Schengen Agreement, the overriding concern of the EU has always been the free movement of *capital* among member states. Within that framework, the movement of people is manipulated to facilitate the exploitation of low-wage labor according to the needs of capital.

The Schengen Agreement has never prevented the deportation of “undesirable people” like the Roma, many of whom are citizens of EU states. Nor has it stopped the proliferation of barbed-wire fences,

continued on page 5

Letter

Sawant’s Fake Sanctuary

21 February 2017

Dear WV,

On the local Seattle hipster front, we have ever so rev... rev... revolutionary Kshama Sawant and Socialist Alternative. Her idea of a revolutionary approach to problems like homelessness...is to run pipes for water to the homeless encampments... not confiscate empty condos and apartments! Her idea of revolutionary is to implement Broadband on a local municipal level—not confiscate the telecommunication companies!! And best yet...

she has called on the local Seattle Police Department to *defend* illegal immigrants from I.C.E. arrests and deportations!!!

It’s one thing to be ill informed and blind to the role of the police forces in history but it is literally *delusional* to think the *S.P.D.* is going to fight to protect aliens from the I.C.E. officers of the Feds! With a moronic position like that she is giving Donald Trump a run for his money on who’s more out of touch with reality!

Red Greetings,
Lawrence of Seattle

Russian Revolution...

(continued from page 2)

energy gripped cultural fields as well, where priorities and tasks changed to reflect the widely held view that the family would soon wither away (see “Planning for Collective Living in the Early Soviet Union: Architecture as a Tool of Social Transformation,” W&R No. 11, Spring 1976).

Soviet legislation at that time gave to women in Russia a level of equality and freedom that has yet to be attained by the most economically advanced “democratic” capitalist countries today. But there was a problem, succinctly addressed by A.T. Stelmakhovich, chairman of the Moscow provincial courts: “The liberation of women...without an economic base guaranteeing every worker full material independence, is a myth” (quoted in Goldman, *Women, the State and Revolution*).

Just over a month after the revolution, two decrees established civil marriage and allowed for divorce at the request of either partner, accomplishing far more than the pre-revolutionary Ministry of Justice, progressive journalists, feminists and the Duma had ever even attempted. Divorces soared in the following period. A complete Code on Marriage, the Family and Guardianship, ratified in October 1918 by the state governing body, the Central Executive Committee (CEC), swept away centuries of patriarchal and ecclesiastical power, and established a new doctrine based on individual rights and the equality of the sexes.

The Bolsheviks also abolished all laws against homosexual acts and other consensual sexual activity. The Bolshevik position was explained in a pamphlet by Grigorii Bakis, director of the Moscow Institute of Social Hygiene, *The Sexual Revolution in Russia* (1923):

“Soviet legislation bases itself on the following principle:

“It declares the absolute non-interference of the state and society into sexual matters, so long as nobody is injured, and no one’s interests are encroached upon.”

—quoted in John Lauritsen and David Thorstad, *The Early Homosexual Rights Movement (1864-1935)* (New York: Times Change Press, 1974)

To draft the new Family Code a committee was established in August 1918, headed by A. G. Goikhbarg, a former Menshevik law professor. Jurists described the Code as “not socialist legislation, but legislation of the transitional time,” just as the Soviet state itself, as the dictatorship of the proletariat, was a preparatory regime transitional from capitalism to socialism (quoted in Goldman, *op. cit.*).

The Bolsheviks anticipated the ability to “eliminate the need for certain registrations, for example, marriage registration, for the family will soon be replaced by a more reasonable, more rational differentiation based on separate individuals,” as Goikhbarg said, rather too optimistically. He added, “Proletarian power constructs its codes and all of its laws dialectically, so that every day of their existence undermines the need for their existence.” When “the fetters of husband and wife” have become “obsolete,” the family will wither away, replaced by revolutionary social relations based on women’s equality. Not until then, in the words of Soviet sociologist S. Ia. Volfson, would the duration of marriage “be defined exclusively by the mutual inclination of the spouses” (quoted in *ibid.*). Divorce would be accomplished by the locking of a door, as Soviet architect L. Sabsovich envisaged it.

The new marriage and divorce laws were very popular. However, given women’s traditional responsibilities for children and their greater difficulties in finding and maintaining employment, for them divorce often proved more problematic than for men. For this reason the alimony provision was established for the disabled poor of both sexes, necessary due to the inability of the state at that time to guarantee jobs for all. The 1918 Code



Hulton-Deutsch

Women being instructed for their jobs as railway workers, 1923. Entry of women into workforce opened road to liberation.

eliminated the distinction between “legitimate” and “illegitimate” children, using instead the carefully considered wording “children of parents who are not in a registered marriage.” Thus, women could claim child support from men to whom they were not married.

The Code also established the right of all children to parental support until age 18 and the right of each spouse to his or her own property. In implementing the Code’s measures, judges were biased in favor of women and children, on the grounds that establishing support for the child took priority over protecting the financial interests of the male defendant. In one case, a judge split child support three ways, because the mother had been sleeping with three different men.

During the debate on the draft, Goikhbarg had to defend it against critics who wanted to abolish marriage altogether. For example, N. A. Roslavets, a Ukrainian woman delegate, recommended that the

knowing that it is not a socialist measure, because socialist legislation will hardly exist. Only limited norms will remain” (quoted in *ibid.*).

Uneven and Combined Development

The October Revolution put power in the hands of a working class that was numerically small in a country that was relatively backward. The Bolsheviks thus faced problems that Marx and Engels, who had projected that the proletarian revolution would occur first in more industrialized countries, could not have anticipated. It was envisioned by the Bolsheviks that the Russian Revolution would inspire workers in the economically advanced European countries to overthrow their bourgeoisies, and these new revolutions would in turn come to the aid of the Russian proletariat. These workers states would not usher in socialist societies but would be transitional regimes that would lay the founda-



Marxists Internet Archive

Left: Besprizorniki during Civil War. Heroic efforts were undertaken by Soviet state to address massive problem of child homelessness, which had been considerably alleviated by the time of 1927 photo (right) showing besprizorniki marching with Young Pioneers on May Day.

CEC reject the marriage section of the Code, arguing that it would represent a step away “from the freedom of marriage relations as one of the conditions of individual freedom.” “I cannot understand why this Code establishes compulsory monogamy,” she said; she also opposed the (very limited) alimony provision as “nothing other than a payment for love” (quoted in *ibid.*).

Goikhbarg later recounted, “They screamed at us: ‘Registration of marriage, formal marriage, what kind of socialism is this?’” His main argument was that civil marriage registration was crucial to the struggle against the medieval grip of the Russian Orthodox church. Without civil marriage, the population would resort to religious ceremonies and the church would flourish. He characterized Roslavets’ criticisms as “radical in words” but “reactionary in deed.” Goikhbarg pointed out that alimony was limited to the disabled poor, and that it was impossible to abolish everything at once. He argued, “We must accept this [code]

tions for socialism based on an internationally planned economy in which there would be no more class distinctions and the state itself would wither away.

The seizure of power in Russia followed three years of world war, which had disrupted the food supply, causing widespread hunger in the cities. By the end of the Civil War, the country lay in ruins. The transport system collapsed, and oil and coal no longer reached the urban areas. Homeless and starving children, the *besprizorniki*, roamed the countryside and cities in gangs. In the brutal Russian winter, the writer Viktor Shklovsky wrote that, because of the lack of fuel, “People who lived in housing with central heating died in droves. They froze to death—whole apartments of them” (quoted in *ibid.*).

The collapse of the productive forces surpassed anything of the kind that history had ever seen. The country and its government were at the very edge of the abyss. Although the Bolsheviks won the Civil War, Russia’s national income had dropped to only one-third and industrial

output to less than one-fifth of the prewar levels. By 1921 Moscow had lost half its population; Petrograd, two-thirds. Then the country was hit with two straight years of drought, and a sandstorm and locust invasion that brought famine to the southern and western regions. In those areas, 90 to 95 percent of the children under three years old died; surviving children were abandoned as one or both parents died, leaving them starving and homeless. There were incidents of cannibalism.

The toll on all layers of society was terrible. Of the Bolshevik women cadre in [Barbara Evans] Clements’ study [*Bolshevik Women*], 13 percent died between 1917 and 1921, most of infectious disease. Among them were Inessa Armand, head of the Zhenotdel, and [Konkordiia] Samoilova, both of whom died of cholera. Samoilova contracted the disease as a party activist on the Volga River. Horrified by the conditions on the delta, she spent her last days rousing the local party committee to take action.

As Marx put it, “Right can never be higher than the economic structure of society and its cultural level which this determines” (“Critique of the Gotha Program,” 1875). The Bolsheviks knew that, given centuries of oppression and the devastation of the country, even the most democratic laws could not protect the most vulnerable, the working-class and especially peasant women, who continued to suffer misery and degradation. Until the family was fully replaced by communal living and childcare, laws addressing the actual social conditions were a necessary part of the political struggle for a new society.

The Protection of Motherhood

Immediately after the revolution the government launched a drive to provide social and cultural facilities and communal services for women workers and to draw them into training and educational programs. The 1918 Labor Code provided a paid 30-minute break at least every three hours to feed a baby. For their protection, pregnant women and nursing mothers were banned from night work



Boris Ignatovich

and overtime. This entailed a constant struggle with some state managers, who viewed these measures as an extra financial burden.

The crowning legislative achievement for women workers was the 1918 maternity insurance program designed and pushed by Alexandra Kollontai, the first People’s Commissar for Social Welfare and head of the Zhenotdel from 1920 to 1922. The law provided for a fully paid maternity leave of eight weeks, nursing breaks and factory rest facilities, free pre- and post-natal care, and cash allowances. It was administered through a Commission for the Protection of Mothers and Infants—attached to the Health Commissariat—and headed by a Bolshevik doctor, Vera Lebedeva. With its networks of maternity clinics, consultation offices, feeding stations, nurseries, and mother and infant homes, this program was perhaps the single most popular innovation of the Soviet regime among Russian women.

In the 1920s and 1930s women were commonly allowed a few days’ release

from paid labor in the form of menstrual leave. In the history of protection of women workers, the USSR was probably unique in this. Specialists also conducted research on the effects of heavy labor on women. One scholar wrote, “The maintenance of the health of workers appears to have been a central concern in the research into labour protection in this period” (Melanie Ilic, *Women Workers in the Soviet Interwar Economy: From “Protection” to “Equality”* [New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1999]). Strenuous labor could lead to disruption or delay of menstrual cycles among peasant women especially. The resolution of this problem—machine technology that limits to the greatest possible extent the stress and potential danger of industrial and agricultural labor for all workers, men and women—was beyond the capability of the Soviet economy at that time.

Abortion: Free and on Demand

In 1920 the Soviet government issued a decree overturning criminal penalties for abortion—the first government in the world to do so:

“As long as the remnants of the past and the difficult economic conditions of the present compel some women to undergo an abortion, the People’s Commissariat of Health and Social Welfare and the People’s Commissariat of Justice regard the use of penal measures as inappropriate and therefore, to preserve women’s health and protect the race against ignorant or self-seeking profiteers, it is resolved:
“I. Free abortion, interrupting pregnancy by artificial means, shall be performed in state hospitals, where women



Alexandr Staritsin Archive
Women workers elected as *delegatki*, Moscow, May 1924. Delegate meetings served as schools of politics and liberation.

are assured maximum safety in the operation.”
—“Decree of the People’s Commissariat of Health and Social Welfare and the People’s Commissariat of Justice in Soviet Russia,” translated from *Die Kommunistische Fraueninternationale* (Communist Women’s International, April 1921), in *W&R* No. 34, Spring 1988

In carrying out this decree, again inadequate resources clashed with the huge demand, and because of the shortage of anesthetic, abortions, horribly enough, were generally performed without it. The law required that all abortions be performed by a doctor in a hospital, but the country lacked adequate facilities. Work-

ing women received first priority. In the countryside, many women had no access to state facilities. As a result, unsafe abortions continued to be performed, especially by midwives, and thousands were treated in the hospitals for the effects of these dangerous procedures.
Doctors and public health officials argued that there was an urgent need for quality contraception, which in backward Russia was generally unavailable. In the mid 1920s, the Commission for the Protection of Mothers and Infants officially proclaimed that birth control information should be dispensed in all consultation offices and gynecological stations. The shortage of contraception was in part due

to the lack of access to raw materials like rubber—a direct result of the imperialist blockade against Soviet Russia.
While acknowledging that the Soviet Union was the first country in the world to grant women legal, free abortion, Goldman claims that the Bolsheviks never recognized abortion as a woman’s right, but only as a public health necessity. Certainly the reference elsewhere in the decree to abortion as “this evil” sounds strange to 21st-century ears, accustomed to hearing such language only from religious bigots. However, abortion was much more dangerous in the 1920s, before the development of antibiotics and in a country where basic hygiene remained a serious problem. The Bolsheviks were concerned about improving the protection of mothers and children, which they viewed as the responsibility of the proletarian state and a central purpose of the replacement of the family with communal methods.
Goldman’s claim is undermined by Trotsky’s statement that, on the contrary, abortion is one of woman’s “most important civil, political and cultural rights.” He blasted the vile Stalinist bureaucracy for its 1936 criminalization of abortion, which showed “the philosophy of a priest endowed also with the powers of a gendarme”:
“These gentlemen have, it seems, completely forgotten that socialism was to remove the cause which impels woman to abortion, and not force her into the ‘joys of motherhood’ with the help of a foul police interference in what is to every woman the most intimate sphere of life.”
—*The Revolution Betrayed*
[TO BE CONTINUED]

IG Big Liars...
(continued from page 3)

walls and detention camps, or the deployment of armed forces to police European state borders. Horrifying scenes of desperate refugees drowning in the Mediterranean make a searing mockery of the “free movement of people.” But this remains the central argument of those dedicated to preserving the EU capitalist consortium, with the IG joining the chorus. The IG’s genuflection to the EU is seen in its refusal to support Brexit in last year’s referendum and to call for a “no” vote on EU-dictated austerity in a referendum in Greece the year before.

In “Italy: The Refugee Crisis and Capitalist Barbarism,” the IG takes up the cudgels for the Partito Comunista dei Lavoratori (PCL) against a polemic in *Spartaco*, newspaper of our Italian section. The PCL called for “a dignified welcoming plan for migrants, starting with refugees, on a European level. For freedom of travel for immigrants within Europe. Cancellation of the anti-immigrant laws in every country and on a European level.” In response, our Italian comrades argued that such demands feed “the illusion that the imperialist EU can be forced to act on the basis of humanitarian principles.” Weighing in on the side of the PCL, the IG argues:

“The idea that imperialist Europe is going to give a ‘dignified welcome’ to refugees is certainly a reformist illusion. But claiming that calls for freedom of movement of immigrants within Europe and for abolition of anti-immigrant laws amount to prettifying imperialism is another matter altogether. Before saying goodbye to revolutionary Trotskyism... the ICL *always* opposed *all* racist, anti-immigrant laws, while explaining that there can be no equitable immigration policy under capitalism.”
We still do. It’s the IG who said farewell to revolutionary Trotskyism when their founding leaders defected from our organization two decades ago.
We oppose all racist, nationally discriminatory immigration laws, regulations, quotas, etc. At the same time, we understand that there can be no “progressive” immigration policy under capitalism. Nor is it our business to propose policy alternatives for the class enemy or to suggest that the imperialist rulers will be moved to provide refuge for all those seeking it.
We explained in our 1974 article, when IG *líder máximo* Jan Norden was man-

aging editor of *WV* (going on to become editor for 20-plus years):
“What communists have to say to the impoverished masses of the backward countries is that the answer to their desperate social conditions does not lie in an individual ticket to the U.S. or Western Europe, but rather in an internationalist socialist revolution which is the necessary precondition to the economic reorganization of human society through freeing the productive forces from the fetter of private ownership.”
It will take a series of workers revolutions and the establishment of an international planned economy to lay the basis for eliminating material scarcity through a vast increase in the productive forces. This alone can provide a decent life for those now living in the teeming slums and rural villages of the Third World and redress the carnage wrought by the imperialist mass murderers. Only then will there be a world without borders.

Sanctuary Centrists

Closer to home, the IG is peddling its wares to anti-Trump “fight the right” liberals and reformists. Railing against our exposure of its support to the “sanctuary cities” scam, the IG fulminates in its most recent diatribe that the SL “*doesn’t give a damn whether it is easier or harder for the I.C.E. to deport immigrants*” (emphasis in original). On the contrary, we welcome any measure that might impede the immigration cops. But we warn that the “sanctuary cities” notion, which the IG promotes, is a ruse by Democratic Party mayors to present themselves and their killer cops as the “friends” of immigrants. As we wrote in the article the IG finds so offensive: “It is downright delusional to believe that local agents of the capitalist state will establish oases of refuge for immigrants. The cops who gun down black and minority youth with impunity will not protect immigrants from the Feds.” This statement is based on the elementary Marxist understanding of the capitalist state and the armed bodies of men at its core, which is no different on the municipal level than it is federally—unless one subscribes to the myth of municipal “socialism” (otherwise known as “sewer socialism”).
You don’t even have to be a Marxist to see “The False Promise of Sanctuary Cities,” as an article in *Slate* (17 February) was headlined. The article pointed out:
“It’s not just tough-on-crime Republicans that preside over a criminal justice system that today serves as the front door for a massive deportation pipeline. Every day,



NurPhoto
Refugees land on Sicilian coast in March 2017. More than 60 million people worldwide have been displaced by war and persecution, the highest number since World War II.

police and prosecutors in Democratic Party-controlled cities fuel mass incarceration by arresting and charging people for low-level nonviolent offenses.... For undocumented immigrants, an arrest can trigger detention and deportation by ICE. And that’s true even if a self-described sanctuary city refuses to detain someone upon federal request.”
Indeed, insofar as some local police forces have objected to serving as adjuncts to I.C.E., it is because this detracts from what they consider more important priorities, like the racist “wars” on crime, drugs and gangs, which particularly target black and Latino youth.
The IG’s purpose, which has been the case since they defected from our organization, is to cater to the sensibilities of various Third World nationalists and sundry reformists and radical liberals. Some years back, IG members screamed that our comrades were “anti-Latino” chauvinists. The purported proof of this slander was our article “South Chicago: Snapshots of Latino and Black Life” (*WV* No. 786, 6 September 2002), which was devoted to combating anti-black racism among Latino immigrants and anti-immigrant bigotry among black workers.
According to the IG, it is “chauvinist” to acknowledge the reality that anti-black racism is inculcated among immigrants by the U.S. capitalist rulers. On the other hand, the IG had no objection to our observation of anti-immigrant sentiment among black people, many of whom resent the fact that the lighter one’s skin color, the more potential opportunities there are for economic advancement. Despite hav-

ing won citizenship rights following the defeat of the slavocracy in the Civil War, black people in the mass remain forcibly segregated at the bottom of this society.
In a January article titled “The Myth of a ‘White Working Class,’” the IG manages to write not one word about how the race-color caste oppression of black people is the bedrock of American capitalism. On the contrary, the IG simply disappears the racial divide in the working class, a fundamental underpinning of capitalist exploitation and oppression in this country. Burying the centrality of the fight for black freedom to the socialist liberation of the working class as a whole, the article even neglects to mention the need for labor to champion the defense of immigrants. Here is a true measure of the IG’s bombast about organizing “active working-class resistance” against the escalating war on immigrants and refugees.
The purpose of a Leninist vanguard party is to arm the working class with revolutionary consciousness. Key to this task is the understanding that the cause of liberation of all the oppressed is inseparable from the struggle for workers’ emancipation from wage slavery. Having thrown in the towel on any such perspective two decades ago, the IG resorts to slinging slanders of ICL “racism.” This is no mere polemical excess: its purpose is to incite and justify violence against us. But we don’t intend to be got by these apologists for petty-bourgeois liberalism. Although our forces are currently small, our party and our program are vital to the fight for proletarian socialist victory. ■

Near East...

(continued from page 1)

reign of Caliph Harun al-Rashid (786-809 A.D.), who ruled over an empire that stretched from northwest Africa to Persia. He was best known for establishing the legendary Baghdad library Bayt al-Hikma (House of Wisdom). Under al-Rashid’s rule the city enjoyed a high degree of urban development, where palaces, mosques and a water management system were constructed. His time was marked by the flourishing of Islamic arts, culture, science and music. Harun al-Rashid is also remembered for his love of wine and his lavish lifestyle, which inspired many of the salacious tales in *The Arabian Nights*. Today Raqqa is the self-proclaimed capital of the abhorrent ISIS and faces massive destruction in the multisided conflict in Syria, with every major power involved in the war competing for its capture.

Assad’s forces, supported by Russia, are positioned on the outskirts of Raqqa. Turkey is backing the Syrian Islamist opponents of Assad, the Free Syrian Army, to take the city. To Turkey’s chagrin, the U.S. is relying on the Kurdish-dominated Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) in its assault on ISIS positions near Raqqa. The SDF is dominated by the Kurdish People’s Protection Committees (YPG) and includes smaller non-Kurdish forces. The YPG is the military wing of the Syrian-based Kurdish Democratic Union Party (PYD), which is allied to the petty-bourgeois nationalist Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) in Turkey.

The Turkish government, along with the U.S., considers the PKK a “terrorist”

organization and escalated its campaign to crush the organization in 2015, when Turkish forces launched a furious assault on Kurdish cities in southeastern Turkey. In August 2016, the Turkish military moved into Syria—ostensibly to fight ISIS—in order to prevent PYD/YPG fighters from linking the two semiautonomous Kurdish regions in northeast and northwest Syria, which border the Kurdish regions of Turkey. The U.S. imperialists, committed enemies of Kurdish independence, agree with Turkey that Kurdish-held regions should remain noncontiguous, even as they continue to use the PYD/YPG as their ground troops in Syria.

The Fight for Kurdish Self-Determination

The Kurdish people, whose homeland is the mountainous area straddling the borders of Turkey, Syria, Iraq and Iran, have long suffered murderous national oppression at the hands of the capitalist regimes in these countries as well as the imperialist rulers. Through years of struggle, the Kurds have clearly demonstrated their desire for independence. We of the International Communist League call for a united, independent Kurdistan. We also support Kurdish independence from individual capitalist states—e.g., the right of Kurds in Turkey to secede. However, in Iraq and Syria, the Kurdish nationalist leaders have subordinated the just fight for self-determination to their alliance with U.S. imperialism. In so doing, they help perpetuate the divide-and-rule stratagems that inevitably inflame communal, national and religious tensions and serve to reinforce the oppression of the Kurdish masses.

In Turkey, where Kurds form a sizable component of the proletariat, it is vital



AFP

Convoy of U.S. armored vehicles near Syrian city of Manbij, March 2017.

for the working class to fight against Kurdish oppression, which is a key prop of Turkish nationalism and capitalist rule. If the proletariat of Turkey is ever to liberate itself from capitalist exploitation, it must take up the struggle for Kurdish self-determination. Essential to this perspective is the forging of a binational Turkish-Kurdish revolutionary workers party committed to the struggle for working-class rule.

Indeed, it is in the interest of the working classes of the Near East to champion the fight for Kurdish self-determination. In taking up this struggle, the proletariat of the region would strike a blow for its own emancipation from its capitalist exploiters and would undercut U.S. imperialism’s capacity to manipulate the Kurds’ grievances in order to further dominate the Near East. It would also go a long way toward breaking Kurdish militants from the nationalist politics of reliance on imperialist and regional bourgeois patrons, which invariably lead to disaster for the Kurdish people, and winning them to a revolutionary proletarian internationalist program. We seek to build Marxist workers parties throughout the region that fight for the establishment of a socialist federation of the Near East that would include a socialist republic of united Kurdistan.

Defeat U.S. Imperialism Through Workers Revolution!

The U.S. working class must be won to the understanding that its enemy is its “own” ruling class and that it needs to oppose imperialist aggression abroad.

The same ruling class that is raining death and destruction on the neocolonial masses is also waging war on the livelihoods of working people and the oppressed at home. What is desperately needed is class struggle against the capitalist rulers, both to defend the interests of workers at home and to hinder the ambitions of U.S. imperialism abroad. The Spartacist League aims to win the most conscious layers of the working class to the understanding that what is necessary to put an end to exploitation, racial oppression and endless imperialist slaughter is the overturn of the U.S. capitalist order through socialist revolution.

That means tapping into the fundamental discontent and conflicts in American capitalist society: the anger of the oppressed black and minority populations who face mass incarceration and are gunned down by the police on America’s streets; the glaring disparity in wealth between the many at the bottom and the few at the top; the fear of joblessness, homelessness, loss of health insurance and pensions that plagues tens of millions of American workers. To harness this anger into a struggle against the capitalist system, it is necessary to forge a revolutionary multiracial workers party—section of a reformed Trotskyist Fourth International. Built in opposition to all capitalist parties, such a party would lead the struggle for working-class rule in the belly of the imperialist beast. Only victorious workers revolutions on an international scale can end imperialist slaughter and ethnic bloodletting and open the road to eliminating material scarcity and building an egalitarian socialist society. ■



Prickett/NY Times

Mosul residents line up for aid distribution, March 15.

Deportation...

(continued from page 8)

The workers and their supporters held a demonstration in protest, and I.C.E. has since postponed the day of reckoning to April 21. *Defend the Tom Cat workers!*

Mobilizing the unions in defense of immigrants is of vital importance to all working people. The same forces taking aim at immigrants also have their sights set on black people and the entire multiracial working class. Working-class unity,

embodied in labor actions, can be a crucial force to push back the vicious, racist anti-immigrant campaign. What is needed is a class-struggle fight against deportations and a drive to organize immigrant workers into the unions with full rights and protection. A fighting labor movement would inscribe on its banner the calls: *No deportations! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!*

Trump’s ascent to the White House included playing the tried-and-true card of scapegoating immigrants. His racist rants and anti-immigrant raids are

intended to both inculcate fear and poison the working class with the lie that foreign-born workers are stealing their jobs. But it was his predecessor, Barack Obama, who ensured that the deportation machine became more efficient and robust. Obama deported more than 2.5 million people, instituted programs to expedite deportations and allocated an annual budget of \$18 billion to immigration enforcement, a 300 percent increase over the Bush years. The Homeland Security audit of the Tom Cat workers was initiated by the Obama administration. Even *The Nation* (27 June 2016), an ardent apologist for Obama, noted that he left behind “the most sophisticated and well-funded human-expulsion machine in the history of the country.”

The fight for immigrant rights will only go forward if it is in direct opposition to illusions in the Democratic Party. During the presidential campaign, Hector Figueroa, president of Local 32BJ SEIU and a member of the Democratic National Committee, advised that the Democrats “need to reconnect with working Americans, with the working families of this country.” In fact, the capitalist Democratic Party is the class enemy of working people and the oppressed. The Democrats are the other party of capitalism—the other party of war, exploitation and racist oppression.

If the unions are to be instruments of struggle, including in defense of immigrants and the oppressed, they must break the shackles chaining them to the capi-

talist parties. Our aim as Marxists is to advance the solidarity and consciousness of the entire working class—black, white, Latino; native-born and immigrant—through building a revolutionary internationalist workers party in opposition to both the Republicans and Democrats. Such a party is the necessary instrument to lead the working class in the fight for its own rule. ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League

☐ \$10/22 issues of *Workers Vanguard* (includes English-language *Spartacist* and *Black History and the Class Struggle*) international rates: \$25/22 issues—Airmail \$10/22 issues—Seamail

☐ New ☐ Renewal

☐ \$2/6 introductory issues of *Workers Vanguard* (includes English-language *Spartacist*)

☐ \$2/4 issues of *Espartaco* (en español) (includes Spanish-language *Spartacist*)

☐ I would like to contribute \$_____ to the production of *Workers Vanguard*.

Name _____

Address _____

Apt. # _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (_____) _____ Email _____

1109

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

A Spartacist Pamphlet

1934 Strikes

Class-Struggle Leadership Made a Key Difference

Then and Now

Minneapolis, May 1934: At the Battle of Dupuyes Run, thousands of strikers and supporters roiled cops and strikebreaking special deputies.

AUSTRALIA...-A1 BRITAIN...-75 CANADA...-C061 EUROPE...-A1 SOUTH AFRICA...-R2 USA...-L051

\$1 (24 pages)

Order from: Spartacist Pub. Co.

Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116

Ireland: Victory to Bus Workers Strike!

The following leaflet was issued by our comrades of the Spartacist League/Britain on April 4.

Since 24 March, 2,600 workers at Bus Éireann, Ireland's national bus service, have been on strike to stop a brutal company attack on their livelihoods. Bus Éireann is seeking to better compete with low-wage, non-union private bus companies by taking it out of the hide of the workers—unilaterally imposing casualisation and redundancies [layoffs] and cutting wages and benefits by an estimated 8,000 euros annually per driver! The strikers, primarily organised in the National Bus and Rail Union (NBRU) and SIPTU (Services, Industrial, Professional and Technical Union), have shown their strength and militancy, halting the

coaches [buses] that ply the arteries between Ireland's cities and towns and the North and provide local transport in rural areas. In an impressive show of solidarity and in defiance of the government's anti-union laws, transport workers in Irish Rail and Dublin Bus have refused to cross Bus Éireann picket lines. On 31 March they shut down much of the country's rail network as well as transport in Dublin in wildcat strikes.

The state-owned CIÉ group, which owns Irish Rail and Dublin Bus as well as Bus Éireann, is suing the NBRU for millions of euros in compensation for "unlawful picketing" over the wildcat strikes. The capitalists' anti-union laws ban secondary pickets in order to cripple and isolate union struggles. Joint union

action to defend the NBRU and tear up the anti-union laws would strike a powerful blow in the interest of the working class as a whole. But the general secretary of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, Patricia King, has no such perspective. Instead, in a 2 April RTÉ radio interview, King complained that the secondary strikes delayed any third party intervention by the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC) or the Labour Court. The WRC and Labour Court exist to enforce anti-union laws and prevent class struggle. In Ireland like in Britain, the unions need a leadership that puts all its confidence in the fighting power of the working class, and no faith in these agencies of the bosses' government!

The European Union, that bankers'

and bosses' club, is justly hated by many Bus Éireann workers. The pay cuts imposed on Bus Éireann workers in 2009 and again in 2013 were part of the Irish government's plan to fulfil EU austerity directives. The privatisation of transport, carried out under the EU banner of freedom for capital, represents a drive to squeeze profits out of the workers in this industry. By striking a blow against EU austerity, the Irish workers are fighting in the interests of working people all across Europe. **Down with the EU! For a workers Europe!** It is in the direct interest of British workers, who are faced with the same union-busting attacks from the capitalist exploiters in this country, to support the Bus Éireann workers' struggle. **Victory to the Bus Éireann strike!**

Fascist Murder...

(continued from page 1)

elections. The fascist killer struck Caughman down in cold blood to send a message of terror to all black people. Many black and minority New Yorkers have expressed the fear: *it could have been me*.

Donald Trump's campaign emboldened the fascists, who have become even more brazen since his victory—though he himself is not one. He came to power through the regular mechanisms of American bourgeois democracy, not the mobilization of fascist gangs. In the first three months of this year, there have been 35 attacks on mosques. Jewish cemeteries have been desecrated. In December, Giants football player Nikita Whitlock's New Jersey home was trashed and KKK threats were scrawled on its walls. In February in Manhattan, fascists brutally attacked two graduate students outside a Lower East Side bar after seeing that one of them had an anti-fascist sticker on his phone.

Boasting of his hatred of black men, Jackson said he was motivated especially by hatred of interracial couples. He told a *Daily News* reporter that he wants America to be like the 1950s again. This is the era Trump evokes with his slogan "Make America Great Again": the era of official segregation in the South, before black people had won formal civil rights, when Communists had to keep their heads down, women stayed home with the kids and everyone knew "their place."

Governor Andrew Cuomo called Caughman's murder "an attack on all New York-



Pacific Press

Memorial rally for Timothy Caughman in Union Square, March 24.

ers," while Mayor Bill de Blasio said it was an assault on "our diversity." Who are they kidding? **Timothy Caughman was murdered for being a black man in racist capitalist America.** De Blasio's talk of "diversity" was intended to mask the reality that New York is a race- and class-divided city in a society based on exploitation and inequality. Timothy Caughman lived in a single-room-occupancy hotel; de Blasio's best buddies are the real estate developers who destroy working-class neighborhoods to build high-rises for the rich, while the mayor makes speeches about "affordable housing." It was his racist cops who choked Eric Garner to death and gunned down Akai Gurley in the stairwell of an

apartment building.

Like the fascist Dylann Roof, who murdered nine black worshippers at Emanuel AME Church in Charleston two years ago, Jackson is being treated in the media as a lone deranged individual. In fact, racist murder is the program of the fascists. A military veteran of the U.S. imperialist war in Afghanistan, Jackson bragged that his military training helped him plan to kill black men.

Fascists are paramilitary action gangs whose purpose is the destruction of the workers movement and racial genocide. In the U.S., that means they have black people, above all, in their sights. Homegrown American fascism, the KKK, was born out of the defeat of the slaveowning Southern ruling class in the Civil War. The fascists represent a deadly threat to the rights and lives of black people, immigrants, gays and all those they target. They must be crushed in the egg by mobilizing the power of the multiracial working class to smash them.

Fascists like Dylann Roof and James Jackson are auxiliaries to the far more powerful murder apparatus of the capitalist state—the cops, prisons and the military. It is the cops who are the main source of racist violence against New York City's black and Latino communities. Remember Eric Garner, Deborah Danner, Ramarley Graham, Akai Gurley! When the cops gun down black men and women, they are doing their job, which is to defend this racist system against the working class and those seen as sources of unrest.

A workers movement worthy of the name would organize forceful actions of solidarity with the black population against police brutality and fascist atrocities. But the labor "leadership" in this country is committed to the capitalist order, which itself breeds the fascists, and has hitched its wagon to the Democratic Party, no less

the class enemy of working people and the oppressed than the Republicans. To mobilize the unions and oppressed in opposition to the fascists is elementary self-defense, but it requires a political struggle against the Democrats. When the Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee have been involved in mobilizing anti-fascist actions in the past, we have always had to go up against the Democratic Party, which preaches that the fascists should be ignored and that the forces of racist state repression will "protect" us.

There have already been many demonstrations of hostility to Trump and his racist agenda. But the Democratic Party is clearly the animating force behind this "resistance." When demonstrators say that Trump "is not my president," we say that for us neither was Obama, the Depoer-in-Chief, nor, for that matter, Bill Clinton, the father of black mass incarceration. Opposing all representatives of the capitalist class, we seek to build a revolutionary multiracial workers party that fights for a workers government.

It took a bloody Civil War, the Second American Revolution, to smash the chains of black chattel slavery. Two hundred thousand black troops, guns in hand, played a decisive role in crushing the Confederacy. But the promise of black freedom was betrayed by the Northern bourgeoisie, which allied with the Southern propertied classes against the aspirations of the black freedmen. It will take a third American Revolution—a proletarian socialist revolution that breaks the chains of capitalist wage slavery—to finish the Civil War. The only path to black liberation is through uprooting the basis of black oppression—the whole capitalist system of exploitation and racial oppression. **For black liberation through socialist revolution!** ■

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

Website: www.icl-fi.org • Email address: vanguard@tiac.net

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

Chicago.....Box 6441, Main PO, Chicago, IL 60680
chicagospartacist@sbcglobal.net
Public Office: by appointment, call (312) 563-0441

Los Angeles.....Box 29574, Los Feliz Sta., Los Angeles, CA 90029
slsycla@sbcglobal.net
Public Office: by appointment, call (213) 380-8239

New York.....Box 3381, Church St. Sta., New York, NY 10008
nysl@tiac.net
Public Office: by appointment, call (212) 267-1025

Oakland.....Box 29497, Oakland, CA 94604
slbayarea@fastmail.net
Public Office: by appointment, call (510) 839-0851

TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA/LIGUE TROTSKYSTE DU CANADA

Montréal.....CP 83 Succ. Place-d'Armes, Montréal, QC H2Y 3E9, (514) 728-7578
trotksyste.montreal@gmail.com

Toronto.....Box 7198, Station A, Toronto, ON M5W 1X8, (416) 593-4138
spartcan@on.aibn.com

Vancouver.....Box 2717, Main P.O., Vancouver, BC V6B 3X2, (604) 687-0353
trotksyist_vancouver@shawcable.com

A Spartacist Pamphlet \$1.50

Black History and the Class Struggle

No. 25

Racist Police Terror U.S.A.



Ferguson: Cops menace demonstrators protesting police killing of Michael Brown on 9 August 2014.

For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

No. 25, July 2016
\$1.50 (64 pages)

Black History is sent to WV subscribers.

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

NYC: Union Defends Worker Against Deportation

Trump's ever-expanding deportation threats continue to sow terror among immigrants, including those who follow the orders of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (I.C.E.). Juan Vivares, an electrician living in the Bronx who has been in the U.S. since 2011 after he fled paramilitary violence in Colombia, was instructed to attend a "check-in" appointment with I.C.E. on March 21. His wife, Yahaira Burgos, a U.S. citizen, accompanied him to what was supposed to be a routine update on Burgos's permanent residency petition for her undocumented husband. Instead, Vivares was arrested and taken to a deportation center in Louisiana.

Burgos, a member of Local 32BJ SEIU, appealed to the union for help. Local 32BJ, a multiracial union that organizes service workers, including office cleaners and doormen, made sure that Vivares would not be just another nameless, faceless deportee. The union held a small protest outside I.C.E.'s Manhattan offices the afternoon of Vivares's arrest and issued a call for his freedom and right to remain in the U.S., which garnered significant attention in the press. Last week, Vivares was granted a stay of removal and his case is now pending further review. Such union solidarity provides a small taste of what the labor movement must do to mobilize in defense of immi-



Steven Wishnia/LaborPress

grant rights. **Stop the deportation of Juan Vivares!**

The persecution of Vivares comes amid an anti-immigrant blitzkrieg ordered by the Trump administration, which has notched hundreds of arrests from coast to coast in highly publicized, armed I.C.E. raids. In what many immigration attorneys describe as a new, Kafkaesque nightmare, immigrants are now being detained as they show up for scheduled meetings with

immigration officials: fathers and mothers who are applying for Green Cards, others who are trying to regularize their status by attending the "check-in" meetings. If you show up, you risk arrest and deportation; if you don't, you risk becoming a fugitive. According to the *New York Times* (21 March), Vivares had considered defying the "check-in" order, but decided against it, saying: "I would feel like an animal if I stay here and hide."



Family Photo

Left: Local 32BJ SEIU protest opposes deportation of Juan Vivares, March 26. Above: Juan with his wife, Yahaira Burgos, and their son.

Most immigrants lack union organizations that could mobilize in their defense. Take, for example, the case of 31 workers of the Tom Cat Bakery in Long Island City. Having worked there for over a decade, the immigrant workers were told by the company last month that Homeland Security gave them ten days to show proof of legal immigration status or else they would be fired without compensation.

continued on page 6

Mumia to Start Hep C Treatment, Finally

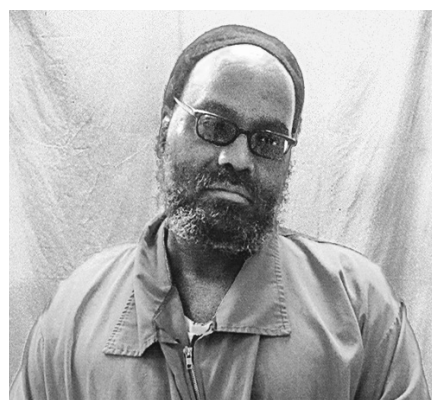
After a two-year battle, class-war prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal is scheduled to begin lifesaving treatment for hepatitis C. On March 27, the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit denied a motion by the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections (DOC) to block a January 3 order that the DOC begin administering antiviral drugs to Mumia. That order had declared that the prison authorities' "protocol" of withholding treatment from all but those with advanced cases of liver damage was unconstitutional. On March 31, the DOC announced that Mumia would begin treatment the following week.

Mumia is an innocent man who is the victim of a decades-long vendetta by the capitalist state that began in the 1960s when he was a teenage spokesman for the Black Panther Party in Philadelphia. Mumia went on to become an award-winning journalist, known as "the voice of the voiceless" for his searing commentaries on the crimes of the racist American ruling class. He was also a prominent supporter of the largely black, back-to-nature MOVE organization, which was also on the receiving end of a murderous, racist campaign by the capitalist state. Framed up for the 1981 killing of a Philadelphia policeman, Mumia was sentenced to death explicitly for his political views. In 2011, the state abandoned its efforts to legally lynch him, but Mumia remains locked up on the "slow death row" of life without parole.

Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!

Prison officials have made clear that providing the medication does not mean they accept the appeals court decision. Rather, due to their denial of treatment, Mumia's liver damage is now so severe that he qualifies under the DOC's own protocol. Recent medical tests revealed that Mumia has clear signs of cirrhosis of the liver caused by hepatitis. As Mumia bitterly noted: "My first reaction was really shock, anger, disbelief. If I had been treated in 2015, if I had been treated in 2012 when they say they first diagnosed it, I wouldn't be this far advanced." There is good reason to believe that the antiviral treatment will reverse the cirrhosis and return Mumia to health, although he will be more susceptible to liver cancer. However, the DOC may use the slightest improvement in his condition to declare that he no longer qualifies under their inhumane criteria and pull the plug on his treatment.

The DOC has also filed a motion to dismiss Mumia's lawsuit demanding antiviral drugs, claiming that, since he will now be receiving treatment, his case is moot. Prison authorities fear that Mumia's case could set a precedent and that they will have to provide the medications to all those afflicted with hepatitis C behind bars—where the disease is endemic.



CSDN

In a March 31 commentary on prisonradio.org ("The Illusion of Correctional Medicine"), Mumia pointed to his racist jailers' harsh economic calculus: "The DOC said it will cost them \$600 million. It may only cost me my life." The ghouls who lord it over the largely black and Latino prison population prefer that their victims just rot and die, with a bit of torture thrown in for good measure. The prisons are a central component of the capitalist state, which exists to protect the rule and interests of the bourgeoisie against the working class and the oppressed. Only a proletarian socialist revolution that sweeps away the capitalist order can get rid of the bourgeois rulers' bar-

baric institutions and torture chambers.

Unlike the anonymous millions suffering in America's dungeons, Mumia is relatively well known. After he nearly fell into a diabetic coma two years ago, which could have led to his death, thousands signed petitions demanding he receive treatment from the doctors of his choice. Protests outside Philadelphia City Hall helped to throw a spotlight on the nightmare of "medical care" in prison. While advocating the pursuit of all possible legal avenues in Mumia's case, we place no faith in the capitalist courts and the bourgeoisie's injustice system. Rather, we look to the power of the multiracial workers movement, which has every interest in fighting for Mumia's freedom and must be mobilized independently of the forces of the capitalist state and its political representatives.

In response to Mumia's medical crisis and the life-and-death struggle for curative treatment, the Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal has issued an urgent fundraising appeal to cover legal expenses. The Partisan Defense Committee, a class-struggle legal and social defense organization whose purpose is in accordance with the political views of the Spartacist League, has made a donation to this fund and encourages others to do likewise. Checks should be made payable to National Lawyers Guild with "For Mumia Abu-Jamal's Defense" on the memo line. Mail your check to Johanna Fernandez, 158-18 Riverside Drive W., Apt. 6C-50, New York, NY 10032.