

**For Black Liberation Through
Socialist Revolution!**

**Confederate Monuments:
Tear 'Em All Down!**



Reuters



AP

**Left: Da Truth Brass Band celebrates as construction crew removes monument of Confederate general Beauregard in New Orleans, May 17.
Right: Robert E. Lee statue being removed, May 19.**

To the jubilant cheers of hundreds, with trumpets blaring, the statue of slaveholder and Confederate general Robert E. Lee was plucked from its pedestal in New Orleans on May 19. For 133 years, the statue obscenely towered over the heart of this majority-black city. It was the last of four monuments that the New Orleans city council voted to remove following

the coldblooded massacre in 2015 of nine black people in Charleston's Emanuel AME Church by Dylann Roof, a white-supremacist who had posed with Confederate flags and other racist paraphernalia in photos. In recent weeks, New Orleans also brought down statues of Jefferson Davis, the president of the Confederacy, P.G.T. Beauregard, a Confederate general, and a

monument to the Battle of Liberty Place. The latter monument was erected in 1891 to glorify members of the White League who died fighting federal troops in the battle. The racists were defeated after they attempted to overthrow the Republican Reconstruction government in New Orleans in 1874. Until 1993, the plaque at the monument's base commem-

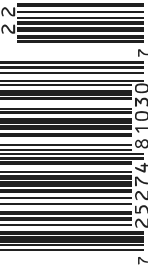
orated the victory of "white supremacy in the South." In 1873 the White League, in one of the bloodiest massacres in the Reconstruction era, murdered an estimated 280 black people in the Louisiana town of Colfax. In 1951, the state placed a highway marker celebrating that massacre. To this day, it still stands.

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**ILWU Work Stoppage
Protests Lynch Rope Provocation**

Oakland

Finally! A powerful, integrated trade union flexed its muscle against the growing threats of white-supremacists and fascist gangs who think they are riding high in Trump's America. On May 25, members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 10 walked off their jobs when a hangman's noose, the symbol of racist terror in America, was found at the SSA terminal in the Port of Oakland. This is



the second time in just over two weeks a noose has been found at the terminal, a calculated and deadly threat against the union, particularly the black members, who make up a majority of the Bay Area local. Longshoremen told WV that the Local 10 leadership had put out a protest statement alerting the membership to the first noose only days before the second one was discovered. Earlier, in November, on the heels of Trump's election victory, racist graffiti targeting black people was found scrawled on a yard crane at the SSA terminal. This time, the union took action, shutting down the terminal for half a day. The noose is a grisly hallmark of more than 400 years of racist reaction, invoking the lynch mobs that brutally murdered thousands of black people

and the terror of the KKK nightriders. As ILWU Local 10 secretary-treasurer Derrick Muhammad told the press: "Our workforce is more than 70 percent African American. Considering the history that black people have in America, this kind of thing is not good.... When you have 80,000-pound boxes and fast-moving equipment, you want to feel safe in that environment. Then when you must worry about racism and hatred, that just adds to the discomfort." Sneering at the threat posed, an arbitrator ruled that the noose did not "qualify as a legitimate health-and-safety issue," and the longshoremen were ordered back to work. Stopping such work actions is the whole purpose of "neutral" arbitrators, whose job is to enforce class peace on behalf of the

employers. Now, the Port of Oakland claims that SSA is launching an investigation and "taking steps to prevent a reoccurrence." There should be no illusion that the SSA bosses, who are notorious for slave-driving speedup and dangerous equipment, have even the least bit of concern for the "health and safety" of longshore workers. Moreover, the racial and ethnic hostilities that feed fascist terror are fostered by the employers, the better to divide and conquer the workers. The union must rely on its own strength, centered on its main weapon: the power to cut off the bosses' profits through stopping work and other actions that are based on the collective strength and solidarity of the membership.

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Donkeys in Sheep's Clothing

DSA: Democratic Party "Socialists"

The Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) reflects two truths in its name—Democrats and America. As to the “socialist” claim, therein lies the lie. When “political revolution” reveries were dashed after Bernie Sanders pledged allegiance to the hated, neoconservative Clinton, who was in turn defeated by the loathsome Trump, the DSA recruited former Sandernistas angry over stark economic inequality. Boasting thousands of new members and heralded as a “leader in the national resistance against Trump’s administration” by *Rolling Stone* (8 February), the DSA has stepped in to resuscitate the battered Democratic Party.

It doesn’t take much to recognize that the brazenly corporate Wall Street Democrats are not “accountable” to the little guy. But the self-proclaimed “democratic socialist” Sanders serves the interests of the same ruling class. Witness his support for U.S. imperialist wars and military adventures abroad, not to mention for the infamous 1994 “anti-crime” mass incarceration bill and his disregard for Black Lives Matter. After Sanders was kicked to the curb by the Democratic Party, the DSA called to support Hillary in contested states and to “vote your conscience” in “safe” states. In effect, this meant prominent DSAers like Cornel West could endorse Jill Stein of the small-time capitalist Green Party—which itself functions as a way station for disgruntled liberals on their way back to the Democratic Party fold.

Nothing new here. For decades, the DSA

and its social-democratic forebears have rallied behind the “lesser evil” capitalist Democrats in the name of the “left wing of the possible.” Today, the DSA promotes “fight the right” candidates, including running its own members for local offices



like city council, to defeat both Republicans and establishment Democrats. Nonetheless, even the DSA’s alleged left wing, which claims to reject the longstanding policy of “realignment” with liberal Democrats, cautions *against* “an immediate and total break from voting for or supporting

any Democratic candidate” (dsausa.org, 29 October 2016). Millions of people desperate for decent jobs and affordable housing, education, and health care are not offered a pretense of relief by the Democrats. But the DSA does their donkeywork to contain



Der Spiegel (left); Panorama
German Social Democratic leader Gustav Noske reviewing troops, 1919, shortly after Marxist leaders Rosa Luxemburg (above) and Karl Liebknecht were murdered by Freikorps at behest of Social Democrats.

social discontent and refurbish their image in time for the next elections.

Buyer beware: socialists cannot transform the Democrats, but the Democrats *will* co-opt self-proclaimed socialists. The precondition for any successful revolutionary struggle is the complete political independence of the working class from all parties of the capitalist class enemy. The working class creates the wealth of society and has the objective interest and social power to overthrow the capitalist order. It can liberate itself and all the oppressed only through socialist revolution.

Eager to become more palatable to millennial activists, DSAers launched the journal *Jacobin*, which includes a broad spectrum of other leftist and reformist contributors. DSA vice-chair Bhaskar Sunkara, founder and editor of *Jacobin*, claims that *Jacobin* offers a “Marxist analysis,” while denouncing leftist “crazies” and making clear that he’d “rather engage with the mass mainstream of U.S. liberalism” (*Boston Review*, 18 December 2012). Indeed, Sunkara has been praised by MSNBC Democratic Party media hack Chris Hayes for his “amazing magazine.” Looking to cash in, fake socialists like the International Socialist Organization and Socialist Alternative are backers of *Jacobin*’s social-democratic project.

Behind his left-academic smokescreen, Sunkara provides old garbage in new pails. He argues that the “resistance movement” must also be directed against “the failed leadership” that allowed Trump to get elected, i.e., he seeks to replace “unpopular Democratic Party leaders” with those a little less so (theguardian.com, 31 January). Hostile to genuine socialism, *Jacobin*’s perspective does not extend beyond the so-called Scandinavian model of a supposedly gentler bourgeois rule. Such a strategy poses no threat to the capitalist profit system.

Across West Europe, many of the social programs known as the “welfare state” were granted by the capitalist ruling classes in the aftermath of World War II to head off powerful workers movements and as a response to the existence of the Soviet Union which, despite its Stalinist degeneration, represented an alternative to capitalist exploitation and misery. Since the Soviet Union’s destruction in 1991–92, the capitalist rulers have upped their drive to eliminate the social and economic gains won in prior struggles. Several of the social-democratic parties in power have helped carry out massive austerity, union-busting and anti-immigrant attacks, a far cry from cushy working-class paradises.

A resurgent popularity for social democracy among idealistic young activists in the U.S. must be understood against the backdrop of capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union and East Europe, a momentous defeat for working people and the oppressed worldwide. Among left-leaning youth, subjected to two-plus decades of “death of communism” propaganda, Marxism is widely perceived to have been a failed experiment. It is a measure of the extreme rightward shift in society, marked by limited and isolated social struggle, that the DSA, a group so committed to upholding imperialist “democracy” and the Democratic Party, can appear as socialist.

From the Graveyard of the Second International

A “stinking corpse”—that’s how revolutionary Marxist Rosa Luxemburg described the reformist social democrats of the Second (Socialist) International, to which the DSA is still affiliated. The Second International’s decisive moment of betrayal was World War I, when its dominant parties each supported the war efforts of their “own” imperialist bourgeoisies. Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin denounced this betrayal and called for a break with the social chauvinists. The split between the revolutionaries and opportunists laid the ground for the first successful proletarian seizure of power, the 1917 Bolshevik-led October Revolution in Russia, which the social democrats opposed. The line between social democracy and Leninism is drawn in blood: in January 1919, amid proletarian upheaval in Germany, Luxemburg and fellow Spartacist Karl Liebknecht were assassinated



dsausa.org

DSA lauds Bernie Sanders during Democratic Party primary.

by reactionary military forces at the behest of the social democrats.

Enemies of workers revolution, the social democrats have always actively promoted counterrevolution in countries where capitalist rule was overthrown—such as the Soviet Union or Cuba today. Genuine Marxists—i.e., Trotskyists—stand for the unconditional military defense of these workers states, while fighting for political revolution to oust the Stalinist misrulers and replace them with governments based on revolutionary internationalism and workers democracy.

In the 1960s and ’70s, a period of heightened class and social struggle, hatred for the U.S. government and the Democratic Party was elementary for any self-identified radical. It was distinctly *in opposition* to this radicalization that the predecessors of the DSA cohered. Organized in the Socialist Party (SP), the social democrats during the Cold War acted as loyal servants of the U.S. government and made careers out of anti-Communist crusading around the world. One of these “State Department socialists” was the late Michael Harrington, who left the SP when it split up in 1973 and went on to found the DSA.

While in the SP, Harrington worked tirelessly to keep the civil rights movement within the confines of bourgeois reformism and the Democratic Party. Among Harrington’s claims to fame was braintrusting John F. Kennedy’s, and later Lyndon B. Johnson’s, bogus “war on poverty” with his 1962 bestselling book *The Other America*.

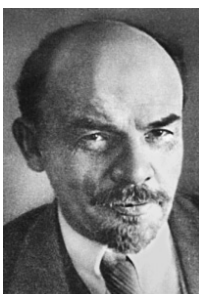
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TROTSKY

Karl Marx on Irish Self-Determination

Writing when all of Ireland was under British rule, Karl Marx underlined that the fight for Irish independence could deal a heavy blow to the British capitalist order. Based on the understanding that the Irish struggle could act as a motor force to unlocking proletarian struggle in England, Marx stressed that the English proletariat must champion the cause of Irish self-determination as part of fighting for its own interests.



LENIN

All industrial and commercial centres in England now have a working class *divided* into two *hostile* camps, English proletarians and Irish proletarians. The ordinary English worker hates the Irish worker as a competitor who forces down the standard of life. In relation to the Irish worker, he feels himself to be a member of the *ruling nation* and, therefore, makes himself a tool of his aristocrats and capitalists *against Ireland*, thus strengthening their domination *over himself*....

England, as the metropolis of capital, as the power that has hitherto ruled the world market, is for the present the most important country for the workers’ revolution and, in addition, the *only* country where the material conditions for this revolution have developed to a certain state of maturity. Thus, to hasten the social revolution in England is the most important object of the International Working Men’s Association. The sole means of doing so is to make Ireland independent. It is, therefore, the task of the “International” to bring the conflict between England and Ireland to the forefront everywhere, and to side with Ireland publicly everywhere. The special task of the Central Council in London is to awaken the consciousness of the English working class that, *for them, the national emancipation of Ireland* is not a question of abstract justice or humanitarian sentiment, but *the first condition of their own social emancipation*.

—Karl Marx, “Letter to Sigfrid Meyer and August Vogt” (April 1870)

WORKERS VANGUARD



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Workers Hammer
Spartacist sign at London rally for Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn denounces his support for EU, June 2016.

The following two statements were issued as a leaflet by the Spartacist League/Britain, section of the International Communist League, on May 27.

* * *

After years of attacks from successive Blairite [right-wing Labour] and Tory governments, Jeremy Corbyn’s promises to defend the unions; to increase spending for public housing, the NHS [National Health Service] and education; and to renationalise rail, water and the Royal Mail raised the hopes of working people and the oppressed across Britain and provided a welcome challenge to the Blairites. Corbyn’s support has been bolstered by the Tories’ vicious plans to increase the squeeze on working people—including Theresa May’s “dementia tax” scheme to force families to sell the homes of deceased relatives to pay for their home healthcare. But last year, Corbyn sided with the City of London and betrayed his working-class base by campaigning to remain in the EU [European Union]. Now Corbyn is continuing this betrayal by campaigning for Britain to remain in the European single market. The central issue in the 8 June general election is Brexit—and Labour’s position on the EU is contrary to the interests of the working class.

The EU is a reactionary capitalist bloc, originating as the economic adjunct to NATO in the anti-Soviet Cold War. From its inception, the EU has been a weapon to increase the exploitation of workers across Europe. The European imperialist powers—centrally Germany, Britain and France—have used the EU and the German-controlled euro as a means to plunder dependent European countries such as Ireland, Portugal and, most starkly, Greece. The single market which Corbyn embraces lies at the very heart of the capitalist EU project of privatisation and austerity.

Corbyn’s betrayal on the EU pushed workers towards the racist UKIP and the Tories. Now the Labour Party is playing into the resulting chauvinist frenzy, pledging to ban immigrants from recourse to public funds. Immigrants, including many from Eastern Europe, as well as black and Asian minorities constitute a key part of the British working class, often confined to the hardest, dirtiest and lowest-paid jobs. The capitalists use threats of deportation and attacks on the rights of immigrants and minorities to drive down wages and working conditions for the working class as a whole. The workers movement must champion defence of

British Trotskyists Say: No Vote to the Labour Party!

Down With the EU!

these oppressed layers of society, including organising immigrant workers into the unions. **No deportations! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!**

In Scotland, a historic Labour stronghold, Labour is on life support after campaigning together with the Tories against Scottish independence in 2014. As party leader, Corbyn has upheld Labour’s long tradition of loyalty to the reactionary “United Kingdom,” opposing another referendum on Scottish independence and pushing Scottish workers into the arms of the bourgeois SNP [Scottish National Party]. Likewise, Corbyn’s remain campaign meant that Labour failed to provide a working-class pole for the nearly 40 per cent of Scots who voted leave. Advancing the fighting unity of the working class requires upholding the basic democratic right of the Scottish people to determine whether to stay in Britain or to form an independent state, including by holding a new referendum whenever they see fit.

Corbyn’s 2015 leadership campaign and his resounding re-election one year later posed the possibility of driving the Blairites, who have been seeking to transform Labour into an outright capitalist party, out of the Labour Party. Despite the bankruptcy of Corbyn’s parliamentary reformist programme, this would have constituted a step towards the political independence of the working class from its capitalist exploiters. However, in the general election, voting for Labour will not exacerbate the divisions in the Labour Party or advance the consciousness of the working class. Corbyn has blocked with the Blairites and has betrayed the interests of working people on the decisive questions of the EU and Scotland.

In attempting (vainly) to conciliate the Blairites and prove to the British bourgeois establishment that he is “fit” to lead British imperialism, Corbyn has produced an election manifesto packed so full of concessions that it was cheered as “a cornucopia of delights” by Blairite *Guardian* columnist Polly Toynbee. Despite Corbyn having been a longtime opponent of NATO and a past chair of the Stop the War Coalition, his manifesto now embraces NATO and Trident [nuclear missile system]. The manifesto criticises Tory cuts in military spending and calls for more cops, prison guards and border guards, attacking the Tories from the right for supposedly weakening the capitalist state’s apparatus of repression. Moreover, any moves to actually implement the manifesto’s promised nationalisations would run right up against the privatisation diktats of the EU and its single market, which Labour supports!

Corbyn’s capitulation has not dampened the enthusiasm of the reformist left for electing a Labour government. The Communist Party of Britain (CPB), the Socialist Party (SP) and the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) all called for a leave vote in the EU referendum last year, but for these opportunists, Cor-

byn’s betrayal on the EU is no obstacle to tailing Labour. The CPB, for the first time since 1920, is not running candidates. Likewise, Dave Nellist, perennial parliamentary candidate for the SP and the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition, is not standing; instead, he is working “to send Jeremy to No. 10” [Downing Street, the Prime Minister’s residence]. For its part the SWP has emblazoned “Back Corbyn—Vote Labour” across the masthead of *Socialist Worker*. (The SWP’s other masthead slogan—“Vote left in Scotland”—leaves the door open for support to outright bourgeois parties like the SNP and the Greens.)

These reformist outfits are all promoting the illusion that electing a Labour government could meet the needs of working people. In reality, the parliamentary system provides a democratic facade for the class dictatorship of the capitalists, who own the means of production and make their profits from the exploitation of labour. To put the productive wealth of society at the service of workers and those minorities, women and youth impoverished by capitalism requires **breaking the power of the bourgeoisie**. It requires proletarian revolution to sweep away the state’s repressive apparatus and establish a workers government.

The bourgeoisie has been able to get away with decades of attacks on the work-



DPA
Corbyn speaking in London in opposition to Brexit, day before 2016 referendum.

ing class because the trade union misleaders have diverted and sold out class struggles. Corbyn supporter and notorious sell-out Len McCluskey [general secretary of Unite union] has been particularly outspoken in pushing illusions in the ballot box in order to divert workers away from fighting in their own interests. History shows that improvements in the lives of working people and the oppressed are won through hard-fought class and other social struggle, not by relying on Parliament. The task of rebuilding the fighting strength of the workers movement is tied to forging a new, class-struggle leadership of the unions as part of the struggle to build a revolutionary workers party.

The Spartacist League/Britain seeks to combat illusions in Labourite reformism in order to win the most conscious workers, minorities and youth to build a multiethnic workers party devoted to rooting out the system of capitalist exploitation. The model for such a party was provided by Lenin’s Bolsheviks, who led the multinational working class of Russia to power 100 years ago. Following in their footsteps, we are devoted to the expropriation of the bourgeoisie around the world, to lay the basis for an egalitarian society of abundance based on an international, planned economy. **For a voluntary federation of workers republics in the British Isles! For a Socialist United States of Europe! ■**

On Manchester Bombing

The hideous 22 May suicide-bombing in Manchester that killed 22 people and injured dozens more targeted innocent concert-goers including teenage girls and children. The bomb appears to have been detonated by an Islamist youth of Libyan descent. This points once again to the poisonous fruits of British and U.S. mass murder in Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya and Syria, where horrors like the Manchester bombing are a daily occurrence. In indiscriminately butchering children, the perpetrator of this atrocity has displayed the same mentality as the imperialists: they identify the working class and the whole population with the policies of the ruling-class oppressors.

The day after the bombing, Prime Minister Theresa May activated “Operation Temperer,” a plan for deploying up to 5,000 troops on the streets of Britain to augment the police. This deadly force will in the first instance target the Muslim population, who time and again bear the brunt of the state’s “anti-terror operations.” Jeremy Corbyn is under attack for criticising British intervention in the Near East. Yet he joins the “anti-terror” chorus in demanding more cops on the streets. Ominously, Home Secretary Amber Rudd announced an intended “uplift” in the witch-hunting

Prevent programme, which directs public sector workers such as teachers to spy on Muslims to spot “radicalisation.” Under Labour and Tories alike, the purpose of the British rulers’ “war on terror” has been to massively augment the state’s machinery for repression, aimed ultimately at the working class.

As always, the capitalists’ media flunkies are on the job, whipping up racism against Muslims. Hours after the Manchester bombing, a mosque in Oldham was subjected to an arson attack. The Manchester bombing was a heinous crime, but the fact remains that the biggest terrorists on earth are the imperialists. British, French and U.S. bombing in 2011 led to the ouster and assassination of Muammar el-Qaddafi, leaving Libya a chaotic hellhole and paving the way for ISIS to strengthen its forces in that country. The imperialists support Islamic fundamentalists when it suits their purposes, most notably in the counterrevolutionary war against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, but also more recently in Syria, Libya and elsewhere in the Near East. **Down with the anti-Muslim “war on terror”! Down with “Operation Temperer”! British, U.S. and all imperialist forces out of the Near East!**

NOTICE

**Workers Vanguard skips
alternate issues in
June, July and August.
Our next issue
will be dated June 30.**

(continued from page 2)

During the U.S.'s losing war in Vietnam, Harrington and his cohorts appealed to the right wing of the antiwar movement, which saw the war as not in America's best interests. Meanwhile, a growing layer of youth despised U.S. imperialism and wanted a victory to the heroic struggle of the Vietnamese workers and peasants. While Harrington echoed the campaign on behalf of counterrevolutionary imperialism, stating, "I am anti-communist on principle—because I am pro-freedom," the Spartacist League raised the call: "All Indochina Must Go Communist!"

In 1976, Harrington campaigned for vicious union-buster Jimmy “ethnic purity” Carter, whose human rights campaign was aimed at boosting U.S. imperialism’s credentials in a renewed Cold War drive. The DSA stood side by side with the imperialists who, posturing as champions of “democracy,” funneled arms and money to right-wing military dictatorships and reactionary regimes around the world.

Acting as loyal advisers to U.S. imperialism is in the DSA's DNA. When the DSA criticizes U.S. bellicosity, its purpose is to paint the warmongers with "humanitarian" colors. In an April 8 statement condemning

the recent bombing of Syria, the DSA joins the imperialist hue and cry against Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad. The DSA calls on Washington to “join the international community” in condemning Assad for his alleged use of chemical weapons. They go on to urge the United Nations to send weapons inspectors to Syria! The UN and its inspectors have always acted as agents for the imperialists, as in Iraq when they provided a pretext for the 2003 U.S. invasion.

DSA: The Right Wing of the Impossible

The DSA's website declares, "At the root of our socialism is a profound commitment to democracy, as means and end." When the term democracy is raised, Marxists always ask: for what class? There is no such thing as "pure" democracy. Capitalism is a class society ruled over by a narrow layer of exploiters. As Lenin wrote in 1918: "Bourgeois democracy, although a great historical advance in comparison with medievalism, always remains, and under capitalism is bound to remain, restricted, truncated, false and hypocritical, a paradise for the rich and a snare and deception for the exploited, for the poor."

The democratic facade is designed to obscure the fact that the capitalist state, with its cops, courts, prisons and military, is an instrument for organized violence

against the working class and oppressed at home and for military onslaught against the peoples of the world abroad. For the DSA, touting “democracy” is simply an appeal to liberal, anti-communist public opinion.

For some activists, the DSA/*Jacobin* is a social milieu for causes like combating racism, anti-immigrant chauvinism, and bigotry against women and gays. To the extent that the DSA has any use for the oppressed, it's to offer them up as voting cattle. Like the bulk of the reformist left, the DSA acted as cheerleaders for Obama in 2008 and 2012, pushing the lie that his election would bring some relief to the masses. But having a black overseer of the capitalist plantation didn't change the reality of black oppression, which is endemic to American capitalist rule.

The DSA also offers up its supporters as aspiring recruits to the pro-capitalist, sell-out labor bureaucracy, which ties workers to the class enemy through the Democrats. Labor officialdom, assisted by the fake-socialist hangers-on, has long rejected the class-struggle methods that built the unions. In the 1940s and '50s, the social democrats helped spearhead the McCarthyite red purges in the unions, driving out communist militants and setting the stage for decades of defeat. No wonder most young activists don't recognize the working class as the agency for social change.

(continued from page 8)

French-speaking Québécois by the privileged Anglo ruling-class oppressors. The binational Ligue trotskyste/Trotskyist League calls for Quebec independence, aiming to then forge two revolutionary workers parties in the two separate states of Quebec and English Canada.

* * *

Some 175,000 construction workers in Quebec are preparing to strike on May 24. The rapacious and corrupt employers' organizations are demanding that the workers sacrifice stable work schedules. They are fiercely opposed to the legitimate demands of the Alliance syndicale for better wages, pensions and group insurance benefits. Since the bosses are not obliged to pay any wage increases retroactively, they are deliberately dragging out the negotiations [the contract expired on April 30] in order to pocket even more profits. The struggle of the construction unions is a struggle for all Quebec workers, all of whom are faced with anti-union attacks, austerity and lack of job security. *The entire workers movement must stand with the construction workers!*

After the PQ [bourgeois-nationalist Parti Québécois] government broke the 2013 strike, the bosses are now even more determined to make the work of unionized workers more “flexible.” For example, under the pretext of not “inconveniencing” their commercial clients, they are seeking to impose brutal working hours,

which would force some workers to start as early as five in the morning or to work until late in the evening. They are also insisting that workers work Saturdays, without any overtime pay! The workers are being asked to work longer for less money, all so that the bosses can pocket even more profits, and this in an industry that already rakes in billions. The labor movement as a whole has been subjected to attacks on working conditions, wages and social benefits for years. Enough! It's high time to turn the tide!

Far from being a “neutral arbiter,” the capitalist state—the courts, prisons and cops—is a tool of oppression in the service of the bosses. All the successive governments in Quebec—be they Liberal or PQ (as well as the Union nationale, in the past)—are committed above all to maintaining capitalist exploitation of the workers. For this purpose, they have at their disposal their laws, their injunctions and their billy clubs. (The same applies to the federal government, which also forcibly maintains Quebec in a “united Canada.”) Thus the government of Couillard has already declared that “it would not sit idly by without acting,” implying that it was already preparing back-to-work legislation. But workers must not be intimidated—the labor movement has the power to throw the law back in the government’s face.

In order to make gains, the labor movement must fight independently, according to its own class interests. Recall the spontaneous general strike of 1972, which gave a foretaste of the tremendous potential in the hands of the Québécois working class. The workers' hard-won gains weren't acquired through "good faith negotiations" but through hard class struggles against the attacks of the capitalists and their governments.

The construction unions are demanding to be covered by the "anti-scab" provisions of the Quebec Labor Code. But the best way to stop strikebreakers in their tracks is through solid and united mass picket lines. Under the guise of "regulating" workers' struggles, the capitalist government is simply seeking to make them ineffective and ultimately to break them. Relying on the bosses' laws to protect the workers is a recipe for defeat. The real weapon of the organized labor movement is its social power.

In order to reinforce the picket lines, it is necessary to seek the support of the broader workers movement. For example, the Teamsters union wrote in a letter of support to the unionists that it would be “at your side throughout the negotiations and during the strike, if it becomes necessary.” By turning words into deeds, the unity of the labor movement can create a



Workers protest during Quebec general strike, 1972.

powerful bulwark against the capitalists' attacks. *For picket lines that no one dares to cross!*

Union members are particularly incensed at the threat of being forced to work Saturdays or at ridiculous hours. A life outside work is a hard-won gain for the working class, which used to toil for ten to twelve hours a day, six or seven days a week. Today, with automation and mass unemployment, workers should demand a shorter workweek with no loss in pay, by dividing the available work among everyone. In order for both male and female workers with families to take advantage of their free time, it is also necessary to fight for free, 24-hour childcare. If the capitalist system isn't able to meet these demands, then let it perish!

For Workers' Control of Production!

The bosses and their spokesmen are trying to create collective hysteria over the recent floods by setting the flood victims against the workers. The bourgeoisie, along with its bloodsucking insurance companies, its governments and its callous city administrations, which allow infrastructure such as sewers and levees to rot, now seek to blame those who do the real work: the workers.

The Alliance syndicale is encouraging strikers to volunteer to help the flood victims—so much for the bosses' lies. In fact, the flood crisis shows the extent to which capitalism has long been unable to meet the real needs of the population. While the big bosses of the construction com-

One of the biggest labor defeats was the 1981 PATCO air traffic controllers strike. When President Reagan fired the workforce of 12,000, we called on labor to shut down the airports. But “Wimpy” Winpisinger, president of the IAM machinists union, which organized the ground crews and mechanics, refused to call solidarity strike action. Winpisinger was a self-declared “socialist” and leader of the DSA. As we wrote at the time, “Betrayal is the only name for this backstabbing!” (“Unchain Labor!” WV No. 288, 11 September 1981).

The course charted by the reformist left today, that is, a progression of baby steps of reform through building “movements” that will supposedly pressure the capitalist state into enacting a decent social order, has never worked anywhere, at any time. Socialism requires the abolition of wage slavery and private property through workers revolution. Only then can we lay the basis for rationally planned economies based on production for need, not profit, and for qualitative development of the productive forces, opening the road to the elimination of scarcity and to the creation of an egalitarian society. Exposing the fake-socialist pretensions of organizations like the DSA is crucial to removing the obstacles to workers and young radicals seeking a revolutionary alternative to this system of exploitation, poverty, racism and war. ■

panies, of industry, of the mines, banks, etc., make billions, for the vast majority of the population it's exploitation and "do it yourself." The unions should in fact take charge of organizing the entire relief effort for the flood victims—and in the process kick out the imperialist Canadian military [currently deployed for flood relief]. In order to build a better society that can meet the needs of the entire population, and to rebuild the housing destroyed by the floods, as well as the city slums, it is necessary to *control production*.

The construction sector is the deadliest in Quebec: 80 deaths in 2016 alone! At present it's up to individual workers to report potentially dangerous situations in the workplace and to push for the right to refuse to work. The unions themselves must be able to shut down work at any dangerous construction site. ***For union control of health and safety at work!***

By running the organization of work, the working class will be able to distribute the resources and manpower needed to repair, rebuild and create. But this requires a direct confrontation with the decaying capitalist class and its "sacred" property rights. These parasites no longer have anything to contribute to society other than outright theft of the wealth produced by the working class, which the bosses channel into their bank accounts, their luxury properties or their "*Touch*" [the motor yacht formerly owned by a big construction boss].... The rotten capitalist system leads to anarchy in production, repeated crises, mass unemployment and endless wars around the world. What is necessary is an internationally planned collective economy, where everyone will work for the benefit of society, and everyone will have plenty of free time for leisure, education and the pursuit of a better life.

The Quebec construction workers have tremendous social power, which is precisely why the bosses are terrified of this strike. To channel this social power toward a revolutionary transformation of society, it is necessary to build a workers party independent of the bourgeois parties—Liberals, CAQ [right-wing Coalition Avenir Québec], PQ and even [the petty-bourgeois populist] Québec solidaire, which basically only seeks to itself administer the capitalist state one day. Such a workers party will be a *tribune of the people*, that is to say, a party that fights against all manifestations of capitalist oppression targeting ethnic minorities, women, youth and others. *For a workers republic of Quebec!*

A victory for the construction workers is in the interest of all working people and would point the way toward the kind of class struggle that's necessary to win. ***Victory to the construction workers!*** ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

Chicago Teachers Under the Gun, Again Democrats, Bureaucrats and the ISO

The following leaflet was issued by the Chicago Spartacist League on April 26.

Last October, the 26,000-strong membership of the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) was sold out by the union bureaucracy, which called off a widely anticipated strike and rammed through a concessionary contract. Since that defeat, Democratic mayor Rahm Emanuel has only been emboldened, launching a barrage of attacks on the union and schools: imposing four unpaid furlough days on union members; threatening to shorten the school year to save money; preparing to eliminate the jobs of hundreds of unionized school clerks; and warning of school closings and more layoffs. The CTU tops' sellout has left the union ranks angry, frustrated and demoralized. The Caucus of Rank and File Educators (CORE) of President Karen Lewis and Vice President Jesse Sharkey did all they could to avoid a

party of the bosses. Preaching reliance on bourgeois politicians, trade-union tops disarm their members by falsely portraying the capitalist rulers and the working class as sharing common interests. For example, speaking for the CTU leadership last spring, Jesse Sharkey openly pushed class collaboration calling for "public pressure" so that "CPS [Chicago Public Schools] and CTU can come together with some joint solutions down at the capital." Then last fall, the CTU tops scuttled the strike, which served to avoid an embarrassing walkout in this Democratic Party stronghold just weeks before the presidential election. What is needed is a class-struggle leadership dedicated to the principle of complete political independence of the working class from the bosses, their parties and political representatives.

The class betrayal of backing the cap-

for his campaign in the streets and bragging about hugging him. In response to members' criticism, "SS," writing for the ISO's leading body, *blamed the teachers union membership*. Alibiing the ISO-supported trade-union bureaucrats, "SS" complained that: "CTU members voted for these endorsements. In this situation, revolutionaries in union leadership face an inherent contradiction: standing in principle *BOTH* for the democratic decisions of the rank and file membership *AND* in opposition to the Democratic Party" (emphasis in original; from Pre-convention bulletin #5, 18 January 2015).

A more disingenuous response can hardly be found. "SS" would have ISO members believe that it was pressure from the rank and file that forced the CORE leadership to back Democrats like Mike Madigan, Pat Quinn, or "Chuy" Garcia. The truth is that the union leadership, supported by the ISO, pushed these endorsements on the CTU members. While a few ISO members felt betrayed by such open pimping for the Democrats, Sharkey's embrace of Garcia was not an aberration but the logical conclusion of organizing and joining a pro-Democratic Party union caucus.

In September 2012, the CTU waged a solid nine-day strike and beat back some of the most onerous concessions demanded by Rahm Emanuel and CPS (see "Chicago Teachers: Solid Strike, But Key Issues Unresolved," WV No. 1013, 23 November 2012). This was a necessary, defensive strike, forced on a leadership that refused to go out until after the August 2012 Democratic Party convention was over. The CTU House of Delegates defeated an initial attempt by the Lewis/Sharkey leadership to end the strike. The final settlement days later still left key issues unresolved to the disadvantage of union members. The ISO hailed the 2012 strike as an outstanding example of "class-struggle unionism." By those lights, every trade-union official who is compelled to call a strike when caught between an outraged membership and intransigent bosses is transformed into a paragon of "class-struggle unionism."

The 2012 strike was broadly popular in Chicago, especially among other public unions and with the black and Latino populations that the city's public schools serve. A teachers' strike this time around would have been a chance to achieve a better contract and to defend against the ongoing onslaught. It certainly would have galvanized the Chicago labor movement where eight thousand heavily black and Latino Amalgamated Transit Union mem-

bers have been working without a contract since January 2016. Struggle by city labor could also spark social struggle against the hellish conditions of ghetto and barrio life in "Segregation City," where there is racist cop terror, high unemployment, and continual cuts in education, transportation, and healthcare.

The Democrats, who have run Chicago for 80 years, work to ensure class peace, i.e., no strikes, while they attack the working class and oppressed. In this, they count on the cooperation of the trade-union bureau-



@garcia4chicago

March 2015: Democratic politician Jesus "Chuy" Garcia with CTU vice president Jesse Sharkey, long supported by the ISO.

crats, who in turn have their loyal servants in reformist waterboys like the ISO. In contrast, we say: The working class needs to rely on its own strength, not on the bosses' courts nor arbitrators nor capitalist legislators. *Break with the Democrats!* Decades-long political subservience to the Democrats has gutted the power of the unions. What is needed is a class-struggle labor leadership—one based on complete independence from the bosses and their political operatives. The money and resources exist to provide quality, integrated education for all, but to seize that wealth requires breaking the bourgeoisie's hold on power. To that end, a workers party must be forged to lead the struggle to overturn this decaying capitalist order through socialist revolution. That is the purpose of the Spartacist League. A necessary part of our struggle is to unmask reformists like the ISO who drag the name of socialism through the mud by aiding, abetting and lawyering for the pro-capitalist union bureaucracy and by their support to bourgeois politicians. ■



WV Photo

Over 10,000 rally during one-day teachers strike, 1 April 2016. Chicago teachers were joined by transit workers, nurses and SEIU members.

walkout despite the fact that union members twice voted by 95 percent or more to authorize a strike. But responsibility also lies with the reformist International Socialist Organization (ISO) that for years has been among the most active cheerleaders of Lewis and Sharkey, with its supporters playing a central role in CORE.

When CORE won the CTU elections in 2010, its leadership promised more democracy and social-justice unionism. But no less than the rest of the AFL-CIO bureaucracy, the leaders of CORE push the same dead-end politics of support to the class enemy through the capitalist Democratic Party. For seven years, CORE has endorsed hundreds of Democrats and funneled millions of dollars to their campaigns. Instead of class struggle, the strategy of Lewis, Sharkey and CORE is to seek capitalist politicians as allies to pass "progressive" legislation like impotent "tax the rich" schemes and to get a few more crumbs for public education from the budget.

While often posturing as "friends of labor" against the overtly racist and anti-union Republicans, the Democrats are a

istal Democrats was the price of admission to CORE, a price the ISO and its supporters were all too happy to pay. For the reformist "socialists" of the ISO, the question of supporting bourgeois candidates and parties has always been a question of tactics as opposed to one of principle. The ISO has promoted the small-time capitalist Green Party in its many incarnations, from Ralph Nader in 2000 to Jill Stein in 2016. After Obama's election in 2008, the ISO organized a party celebrating his victory.

In ISO bulletins of late 2014 (posted online), one member protested the "de facto ISO endorsement (at least in Southern California) of Tom Torlakson, the Democratic Party candidate for Superintendent of California," noting that "our leading teacher comrades in LA phone banked for and publicly supported Torlakson." The ISOer also noted that a leading, high-profile supporter had endorsed a Democratic candidate for mayor in Chicago, i.e., Jesus "Chuy" Garcia. In fact it was Sharkey himself, who has been a long-time contributor to the ISO's *Socialist Worker* newspaper, who led the charge for Garcia, stumping

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Confederate Monuments...

(continued from page 1)

Monuments to the Confederate slave-owners who were defeated in the Civil War, as well as the flag of Dixie, are a vile celebration of black chattel slavery and Jim Crow. They represent a racist affront to black people and serve as rallying points for resurgent racist terror. The fascist “former” Klansman, David Duke, and groups like the KKK have held rallies over the years at the Battle of Liberty Place monument. The racist backlash against the dismantling of the Confederate monuments has brought out a rabble of fascists and defenders of the “Old South,” some brandishing firearms at rallies. It is a statement of the lethal threat represented by these forces that the first of the New Orleans monuments had to be taken down in the dead of night by masked workers in bulletproof vests protected by police snipers. Across the South, racists have rallied to defend their revolting “heritage.” On May 24, the Alabama governor signed into law a bill protecting Confederate monuments.

In Mississippi, state lawmaker Karl Oliver called for the lynching of those removing Confederate monuments. This is no idle threat at a time when racist vigilantes are carrying out deadly attacks aimed at terrorizing black people and other minorities. On May 20, Richard Collins III, a 23-year-old black student, was killed on the University of Maryland campus by a man belonging to an “alt-right” Facebook group. A week before, “alt-right” fascist Richard Spencer led a group of dozens carrying torches and chanting Nazi slogans to protest plans to remove a statue of Robert E. Lee in Charlottesville, Virginia.

Throughout the country, the race-terrorists have been emboldened by the unabashed racism and anti-immigrant vitriol emanating from the Trump White House. The fascist threat must be crushed through mass, integrated, disciplined mobilizations based on the social power of the multiracial working class.

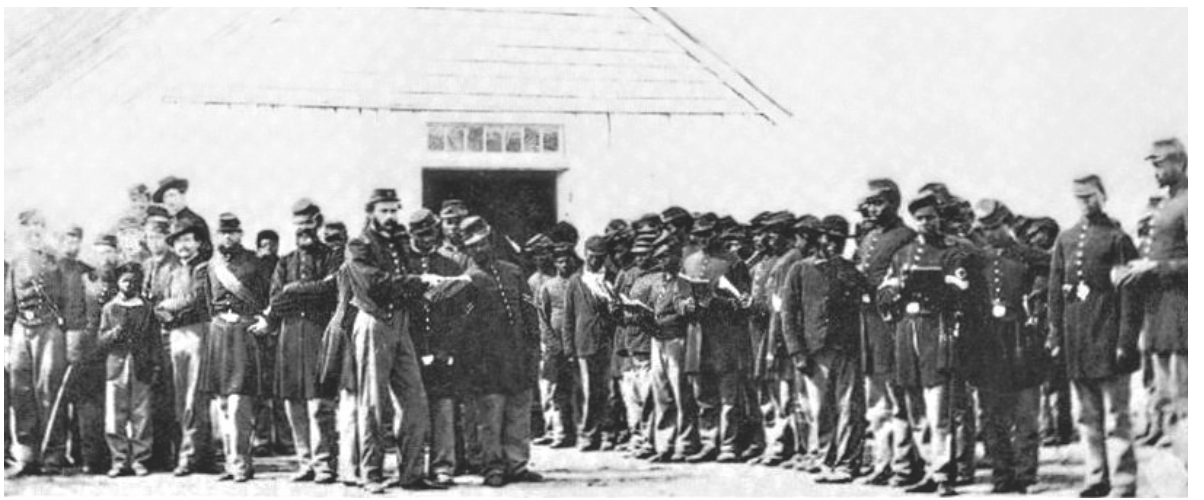
New Orleans and Racism U.S.A.

For many years, activists in New Orleans have been fighting to take down Confederate monuments. Democratic Party mayor Mitch Landrieu now proclaims himself a crusader against the Confederacy and its legacy. In fact, he presides over a city that is a racist hell. His cops mete out wanton brutality against black people. Louisiana has the highest rate of incarceration among all U.S. states, and New Orleans the highest rate within Louisiana—90 percent of the city’s prisoners are black. Landrieu has built a massive new adult prison complex costing more than \$145 million.

Since 2005, the city has succeeded in keeping out black people evacuated during Hurricane Katrina—less than a third of

Members of Louisiana Native Guard, one of the first black units in Union Army, at school set up for soldiers and freedmen, 1863.

National Archives



black residents has returned. A man-made disaster and racist atrocity, Katrina was seized on by the city’s rulers to destroy public education, raze public housing and shut down Charity Hospital, one of the oldest public hospitals in the U.S. In 2015, *Bloomberg* declared it the country’s most unequal city—the median household income of black people is less than half that of whites, and 45 percent of black children live in poverty.

The continued legacy of slavery is embodied not only in Confederate monuments and flags, but also in the racist reality faced by black people in the South *and* North and overseen by the Democrats as well as the Republicans: segregation, poverty, decrepit schools and housing, miserable health care, rampant police terror and mass incarceration. Black people are a race-color caste and are, in their majority, forcibly segregated at the bottom of society.

From the time of slavery to the present day, black oppression has been the bedrock of the American capitalist order. Black liberation requires a socialist revolution in which the multiracial working class sweeps away the system of capitalist exploitation, ripping the wealth its labor creates out of the hands of the capitalists. Only then will it be possible to provide jobs for all, free, high-quality housing, health care and education, and to ensure the full integration of black people into an egalitarian socialist society. All working people, whether white, Latino or Asian, must understand that they cannot be liberated from wage slavery and capitalist oppression if they don’t take up the struggle for black liberation.

The Civil War Smashed Slavery

It’s no accident that Trump’s notoriously racist attorney general, Jefferson Beauregard Sessions III, was named after two Confederate leaders memorialized across the South. A racist to the core, Beauregard once predicted, “Seventy-five years hence, the traveler in this country will look in vain for traces of either an Indian, a negro, or a buffalo.” He was the general who ordered the bombardment of Fort Sumter, the first shots that opened the Civil War, and personally oversaw the design of the Confederate flag.

The American Civil War was the last great bourgeois-democratic revolution. The Northern bourgeoisie was compelled to abolish black chattel slavery and destroy the old Southern plantation agricultural system. Union victory in the war paved the way for Radical Reconstruction, the most democratic and egalitarian period in American history. Public education was set up in the South. Black people voted at rates as high as 90 percent, and well over 1,000 black men held public office during Reconstruction in racially integrated local and state governments. Among them was P.B.S. Pinchback, who briefly served as governor of Louisiana in the early 1870s.

The 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments were passed following the war, abolishing slavery, declaring that anyone born in the U.S. was a citizen (except for Native Americans) and that the right to vote could not be denied on “account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.” Under the protection provided by the Reconstruction Acts and the forces of the occupying Union Army, former slaves carried through the social revolution and the destruction of the old planter class.

But the promise of black freedom was betrayed when the Northern capitalists formed an alliance with the remnants of the slavocracy. These capitalists looked at the devastated South and saw an opportunity not for building a radical democracy but for profitably exploiting Southern resources—centrally land—and the freedmen. In the Compromise of 1877, the few hundred federal troops remaining in the South were withdrawn to their barracks.

The post-Reconstruction period, cynically called “Redemption” by racists, was marked by a political counterrevolution enforced by race-terror. Over the next 20 years, the system of sharecropping, poll taxes, chain gangs, the convict lease system and lynch law became entrenched.



Library of Congress

P.B.S. Pinchback, who briefly served as governor of Louisiana during Radical Reconstruction in early 1870s. He was first black governor of any U.S. state.

Beginning in the late 19th century, laws institutionalizing rigid Jim Crow segregation and police-state terror dominated the South until the civil rights movement of the 1950s and ’60s.

Finish the Civil War!

A unique place in the antebellum South, New Orleans lies close to the juncture of the Mississippi river and the Gulf of Mexico, connecting the city to both the inland domestic trade and the Atlantic world. It was by far the most cosmopolitan city in the South, though conservative whites also had a strong presence. Its population was a mix of Acadians, Irish, a large German community, Northern transplants as well as a sizable black community, some ten thousand of whom had been free prior to the Civil War—the largest free black population in the South, if not the country. Many of the city’s “free people of color” were educated, light-skinned descendants of French settlers or wealthy mixed-race immigrants from Haiti. A large number were skilled craftsmen—bricklayers, cigar makers, carpenters and shoemakers. Though free, their rights were circumscribed.

On 1 May 1862, the Union Army captured New Orleans. One of the first black regiments to fight for the Union was the First Louisiana Native Guard, established in the city in 1862. Many members came from the city’s population of “free people of color,” a fact related to their already having had, uniquely, their own militia. Many held the view that their fate was indissolubly linked to that of the slaves,

and supported the Union in the Civil War. As one black New Orleans paper put it at the time: “This war has broken the chains of the slave, and it is written in the heavens that from this war shall grow the seeds of the political enfranchisement of the oppressed race.”

As early as 1864, before the Civil War ended, blacks in New Orleans agitated for suffrage. They petitioned President Lincoln and even held a mock election in 1865, in which 20,000 freedmen voted, and forwarded the result to Congress. They took their demands to the state constitutional convention of 1867-68, which produced the most radical constitution the country had yet seen: it enfranchised all adult men, required all officeholders to take an oath supporting racial equality and mandated integration in public accommodations, transportation and schools. As Robert Isabelle, a black state representative, demanded in 1870: “I want the children of the State educated together. I want to see them play together; to be amalgamated.” New Orleans public schools during Reconstruction underwent substantial racial desegregation over a period of six and a half years, an experience shared by no other Southern community until after the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court ruling.

That a small number of the racist monuments in New Orleans have come down is a welcome act of public sanitation, even though the thousands of Confederate monuments that still litter New Orleans and the rest of the country should *all* be torn down. In 1984, Spartacist League and Labor Black League supporter Richard Bradley, clad in the uniform of a Union Army soldier, scaled a 50-foot flagpole at the San Francisco Civic Center and ripped down the Confederate flag of slavery that had flown over the city for too many years. At ground level, what was left of the flag was burned by a member of International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 6. This exemplary action points to the kind of mobilization that the multiracial trade unions should organize to tear down these symbols of race hatred.

The labor movement has been flat on its back for many years under a misleadership that is committed to capitalism and has shackled the unions to the Democratic Party. What is desperately needed is a fighting labor movement that mobilizes to defend not only its own members but also black people, immigrants and all the oppressed. It is vital to build a new, class-struggle leadership in the unions based on the understanding that the interests of working people and the bosses are counterposed. As we wrote in “New Orleans: Still Racist Hell!” (WV No. 1074, 18 September 2015):

“Despite the destruction of industrial jobs and erosion of union strength, black workers continue to be integrated into strategic sectors of the proletariat, including manufacturing, much of which is now located in the South, and longshore in New Orleans and elsewhere. Won to a revolutionary program, black workers will be the living link fusing the anger of the dispossessed masses with the social power of the multiracial proletariat under the leadership of a Leninist vanguard party.”

It is our goal to forge such a party, in which revolutionary black workers, as both the most oppressed and the most conscious section of the proletariat, are slated to play an exceptional role in the struggle for socialist revolution. ■

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America's Forgotten Slave Insurrection

The monuments and statues we would build are those that honor fighters for liberation, not least the men and women who fought to destroy the slavocracy: the abolitionists; the Civil War soldiers, including 200,000 black troops, who crushed the Confederacy; those who rose up against the slave order. Among the latter are the hundreds who fought for their freedom in the January 1811 uprising in Louisiana—the largest, though largely unknown, slave insurrection in U.S. history.

From 8 to 10 January, 1811, an army of 500 slaves spread terror against the slave-owners on the German Coast of Louisiana. They killed two slave masters, burned plantations and marched toward New Orleans armed with axes, sugarcane knives and a few guns. Chanting “Freedom or Death,” they aimed to establish a black republic. The suppression of this insurrection was instrumental in consolidating Louisiana’s French planters into the U.S., including recent émigrés from France’s former colony of Saint-Domingue. It extended the reach and power of the slavocracy, which would finally be shattered by the Civil War.

The foundation for the 1811 uprising was the slave revolt in Saint-Domingue (Haiti), which began in 1791 and ended with the withdrawal of French troops in 1803 and the establishment of a black republic on 1 January 1804. The Haitian Revolution both inspired the insurrectionists, among them transplants from Saint-Domingue, and haunted the slave masters who feared its replication on North American soil.

In turn, the Haitian Revolution was inspired by the French Revolution. Under the banner “liberty, equality, fraternity” the masses rose up beginning in 1789, destroying the entrenched aristocratic and feudal order. In 1792, the French Republic was proclaimed, followed shortly by the execution of King Louis XVI in January 1793. However, France’s new bourgeois rulers brutally fought to maintain slavery in Haiti, which at the time of the 1791 uprising accounted for 60 percent of France’s export trade. In the face of continuing black revolt, and with England threatening to attack France’s most lucra-



Illustration titled, “On to Orleans’: The Negro Insurrection,” depicts 1811 slave uprising.

tive colony, the radical Jacobin regime in Paris, which came to power in 1793, abolished slavery in Saint-Domingue in 1794. Five years later, Napoleon Bonaparte took power in a coup, reinstated slavery and in January 1802 dispatched an armada and 20,000 French troops to reconquer the colony—only to be driven out the following year.

With the loss of his Saint-Domingue cash cow, Napoleon saw little use for his other major New World colony, the Louisiana Territory. In 1803, he sold it for a song to the U.S., an acquisition that nearly doubled U.S. territory. By 1810, slaves made up more than 75 percent of the total population of the region—a greater proportion than any other slave society in North America. The brutal conditions they faced working Louisiana’s sugarcane fields were matched by the huge profits their labor generated.

The architect of the 1811 rebellion was Charles Deslondes, whose position as a trusted slave driver on the plantation of Manuel Andry enabled him to move through the sugar fields without suspicion. Deslondes spread word through small

cells scattered up and down the coast. On the night of January 8, the uprising began with an incursion on the mansion of Deslondes’ master. After wounding Andry and killing his son Gilbert, the group armed themselves with muskets and ammunition from the basement. They then started a two-day march down River Road toward New Orleans, which was 40 miles away. Groups of slaves joined them as they passed other plantations. Later, maroons (escaped slaves) left the security of their wooded retreats to fight alongside the rebel army. Terrified white residents either fled to New Orleans or hid out in the backwoods near their plantations.

Fearing that the city’s majority black population (including many free blacks) would join the rebellion, Louisiana governor William Claiborne ordered New Orleans sealed and a 6 p.m. curfew for black people. General Wade Hampton, a South Carolina slaveowner, mobilized two companies of volunteer militia, 30 regular troops and a detachment of 40 seamen who halted the slaves’ advance 15 miles from the city. A second militia of 80 planters formed by Andry unwittingly flanked

the slave army on the morning of January 10. Though outnumbering their pursuers, the slaves were outgunned. After quickly running out of ammunition, they were brutally routed. Sixty-six fighters were killed and many others captured. Shortly after, the planter militias, supported by the U.S. military, captured Deslondes, chopped off his hands, broke his thighs, shot him dead and then roasted his body on a pile of straw.

Over the next few weeks, more than 100 slaves were executed. Their heads were put on poles and their dismembered corpses were publicly displayed as a warning to others. The federal troops called in to suppress the uprising and secure New Orleans were drawn from those defending the bogus Republic of West Florida that U.S. settlers seized from Spain in 1810, foreshadowing the grab of Texas from Mexico two decades later. Extending from Baton Rouge on the southwest to Natchez on the northwest and Mobile on the east, this “republic” gave the U.S. control over the Mississippi River and eliminated a haven for escaped slaves and native tribes, while securing commerce on the river.

Louisiana’s French planters, who had been contemptuous of the Anglo government in D.C. and indifferent to West Florida’s annexation, now became advocates of a strong U.S. military presence. One year after the uprising, Louisiana was admitted as a slave state, as other regions of the Louisiana Territory were later—Missouri (1821) and Arkansas (1836). The Mississippi Territory, which had been ceded by Spain in 1797, was divided into Mississippi and Alabama; they were admitted as slave states in 1817 and 1819. Between 1820 and 1860, the population of the Deep South slave states of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama grew over 600 percent to almost 2.5 million. New Orleans became America’s second-largest port—and largest slave market. This confluence of events, of which the suppression of the Louisiana rebellion played no small part, consolidated the bulk of what would become the Confederacy.

We hail Charles Deslondes and his comrades. We seek to honor their memory by finishing the Civil War through a working-class socialist revolution. ■

ILWU...

(continued from page 1)

Fascist terror is a clear and present danger. Only one day after the ILWU work stoppage, a Portland fascist screaming racist and anti-Muslim abuse at two women murdered two men, Ricky John Best and Taliesin Myrddin Namkai Meche, who had heroically come to the women’s defense. This follows the racist killing of a 23-year-old black college student in Maryland on May 20. A couple of months earlier in New York City, a 66-year-old black man, Timothy Caughman, was stabbed to death by a white-supremacist wielding a 26-inch sword. Among the nine churchgoers massacred by fascist Dylann Roof in Charleston, South Carolina, in 2015 were relatives of ILA longshore workers.

The need for mass, integrated mobilizations based on the power of the multi-racial working class to smash the fascists is urgently posed. We salute the ILWU members whose work stoppage gave a small example of that power in action. In carrying out their work stoppage, ILWU members were acting not only in their own defense but also in defense of all port workers. The action was also in the interests of the port truck drivers, many of whom are immigrants. To go forward, the workers must understand that their strength lies in fighting independently of the employers and all the agencies and political parties that represent the bosses’ interests.

The lynch rope is meant to invoke the

KKK race-terrorists, who served as the shock troops in robbing black people of the promise of freedom in the aftermath of the Civil War. They went on to become the enforcers of Jim Crow segregation in the South, aiming their fire against any who opposed it, including union organizers. Klan terror helped preserve the states of the former Confederacy as an open shop, low-wage haven for American capitalism. This system is now taking over the North, thanks in no small part to the trade-union misleaders who have refused to mobilize labor’s power, instead promoting the election of the capitalist Democratic Party as the answer.

Now, emboldened by the “Make America Great Again” racism of the Trump administration, a new breed of fascists is mobilizing in the streets. Wearing suits and ties and talking of defending “Western Civilization,” the fascists are currently taking aim at left-wing activists and immigrants. But their purpose is the same as that of their Klan forebears—to terrorize the multiracial working class and keep black people “in their place.” With labor struggle at an all-time low, the American ruling class currently has no need to unleash their fascist thugs to destroy the workers movement. But they hold them in reserve. It is in the vital interest of the entire working class to mobilize to crush the fascists in the egg. In the course of such battles, the workers will be armed with the consciousness of their power as a class. That power must be mobilized to smash the shackles of racist U.S. capitalism in the struggle for a socialist America. ■

Puerto Rico...

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As we wrote in “FALN Bombs Symbols of Colonial Rule,” (WV No. 83, 31 October 1975):

“We uncompromisingly support Puerto Rican independence and liberty for the nationalist prisoners. In this context we defend the FALN against the bourgeois state....

“While we understand the legitimate rage of those who daily feel the boot of U.S. imperialism upon their necks we cannot defend the FALN in those instances when frustration leads to acts of indiscriminate terrorism.”

The Spartacist League stands in opposition to the strategy of groups like the FALN of individual terrorist acts. As Marxists we want to mobilize the power of the working class against colonial oppression and capitalist rule.

Denouncing this year’s Puerto Rican Day Parade, the New York Police Department’s “Hispanic Society” as well as Police Commissioner James O’Neill announced that they would be boycotting the event. *Good!* We welcome the fact that these cops won’t march. The cops’ daily routine is to terrorize black people, Latinos and others, as part of defending this racist capitalist system. Democratic mayor Bill de Blasio has announced that he will march at the parade. This is but a cynical maneuver to lure the Latino vote for his re-election bid later this year. De Blasio is the boss of the racist NYPD, and his job is to manage NYC on behalf of Wall Street.

In Puerto Rico, the imperialist lackey

governor, Ricardo Rosselló, has joined the witchhunt against the parade, including by calling on sponsors to pull out. The issue of Puerto Rico is much broader than a parade. The U.S. imperialist oppressors want to crush any sentiment against the status of the country as a colonial possession. Today, the people of Puerto Rico are suffering one of the worst economic crises in their history—a direct consequence of U.S. colonial domination. Among those fighting against austerity are the students who have been on strike at the University of Puerto Rico for two months. It is a good thing that NYC’s Transport Workers Union Local 100 will have a contingent in this year’s parade. The U.S. working class must side with the workers and oppressed of Puerto Rico and demand: *Cancel the debt!*

As forthright opponents of national oppression and U.S. imperialism, we favor Puerto Rican independence. Puerto Ricans hate their second-class status as residents of a U.S. commonwealth, but their feelings about independence are mixed. On the one hand, people on the island have a very strong sense of nationhood; on the other, many are fearful of losing the ability to live and work in the U.S. and of sinking to the level of poverty of their Caribbean neighbors. We oppose any attempts to forcibly impose independence against the will of the population. Thus in the U.S., we emphasize the *right* of independence. In Puerto Rico, we emphasize the fight for socialist revolution and the creation of a workers republic. Our perspective is to build Leninist parties in the U.S. and in Puerto Rico whose goal is to establish workers rule. ■

Salute Independence Fighter Oscar López Rivera

Colonialist Backlash Against Puerto Rican Day Parade

This year's Puerto Rican Day Parade in New York City will honor Oscar López Rivera, a courageous independence fighter who was imprisoned by the U.S. for nearly 36 years for opposing the colonial subjugation of his homeland. After organizers announced that the June 11 parade would recognize López Rivera as a National Freedom Hero, Coca Cola, Goya, JetBlue, Univision, Corona and other corporations pulled out as sponsors of the event, which each year

brings two million celebrators to Fifth Avenue. For their part, the *Daily News* and *New York Post* tabloids are whipping up a hysterical campaign against the parade, including labeling the Puerto Rican *independentista* a "terrorist." In fact, the real terrorists are the U.S. imperialists, who have enslaved the island and mobilized, including through the CIA and FBI, to crush pro-independence militants, many of whom have been thrown into prison dungeons.

López Rivera is a hero for many Puerto Ricans, reflecting the keenly felt national oppression of the Puerto Rican people, including those in the U.S. In 1981, he was framed up for his political views and convicted of "seditious conspiracy," for which he was sentenced to 55 years. After decades in prison, including 12 years in solitary confinement, his sentence was commuted in January.

The U.S. government targeted López Rivera because of his ties to the Puerto

Rican nationalist group Fuerzas Armadas de Liberación Nacional (FALN, Armed Forces of National Liberation), which carried out armed struggle for Puerto Rican independence and the freedom of imprisoned independence fighters. In the 1970s and early '80s, the FALN claimed responsibility for bombings of symbols of colonial rule, such as military and government sites, as well as banks and corporate buildings. We defended the FALN against state repression; it is justified for an oppressed people to fight for their liberation, including through the use of force against the imperialist state power oppressing them. At the same time, we condemn indiscriminate attacks like the 1975 bombing of the Fraunces Tavern in Manhattan, which killed four people and injured dozens.

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Down With Anti-Labor "Back to Work" Law!

Quebec: Construction Workers Show Their Strength

QUEBEC CITY, May 30—Construction workers in Quebec, who have been on a general strike since May 24, were ordered back to work this morning by the provincial government of Liberal Party premier Philippe Couillard. The law, which was passed by the National Assembly (Quebec's parliament), dictates that the workers end their strike on May 31.

RÉPUBLIQUE OUVRIÈRE

The construction sector is responsible for 6.5 percent of Quebec's gross domestic product. While largely blacked out in English-speaking North America, the strike had the construction bosses and the capitalist media of Quebec howling with rage. The Conseil du patronat (Employers Council) denounced the strike prior to its launch as a "threat" that would "take all Québécois people hostage," and warned of "the grave consequences that a work stoppage could have on the whole of Québécois society, its economy, its functioning and its security."

On May 29, as the National Assembly was debating the back-to-work legislation in Quebec City, over 5,000 construction workers mobilized from throughout the province and surrounded the legislative building. Many workers denounced the "dictatorship" of the government, but still had illusions in the police as fellow workers. However, the role of the cops as the repressive force of the bosses and their government was shown by the line of riot police protecting the entrance for sitting members of the National Assembly.

Our comrades of the Ligue trotskyste/Trotskyist League distributed thousands of their May 23 French-language leaflet, translated and printed below, calling for "Victory to the Construction Workers!"



Rally for striking construction workers, Montreal, May 25. Main sign reads, "We Build Quebec!"

at this and other rallies as well as on the picket lines. Some two dozen subscriptions to their upcoming newspaper *République ouvrière* (Workers Republic) were bought by workers.

The government estimates that the strike cost the economy more than C\$45 million per day. One of the reasons it was so effective is the fact that the Quebec construction industry is organized along the *closed shop* model. Any worker hired on a construction site—whether it's residential, industrial, commercial or road construction—must belong to a union. The unions are divided among a few federations representing many smaller craft unions united in the Alliance syndicale. That they waged a powerful united strike

points to the need for industrial unionism—i.e., one union for the whole industry, the most effective method of organization to defend *all* workers.

During the strike, the construction bosses and the capitalist media were furious over roving pickets that reportedly shut down construction sites where work was still going on. In fact, historically, mobile pickets have been an important class-struggle method to stop scab labor and are essential to rendering strikes more effective.

In Quebec, the construction unions are heavily regulated by the government. For instance, the government oversees union affiliation votes and even issues union cards. The strikebreaking legislation is

another extension of this regulation. At the May 29 rally, union leaders told angry workers that the way to fight the anti-strike law was to appeal to the bosses' courts. But state interference in the labor movement—by the government or the courts—is a noose around the workers' struggles. Government out of all union business!

Quebec has a long tradition of militant workers struggle. The leaflet below refers to the May 1972 semi-insurrectionary general strike, where the powerful Quebec industrial working class took control of entire towns. Quebec's labor militancy has long been fueled by the struggle against the national oppression of the

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