

## Labor, Minorities, Women Under Attack

# Capitalist Injustice and the Supreme Court



AP



Reuters

Nationwide demonstrations against reactionary Supreme Court. Left: Seattle protest in defense of abortion rights, July 10. Right: Washington, D.C., protest following Court decision to uphold anti-Muslim ban, June 26.

A series of reactionary Supreme Court rulings last month, followed by Donald Trump's nomination of ultraconservative Brett Kavanaugh to a newly vacant court seat, has struck fear into huge swaths of the population. And for good reason. Kavanaugh's confirmation would give the Supreme Court a solid right-wing majority lasting perhaps a generation. This would strengthen the hand of the capitalist rulers in their drive to crush the already attenuated rights of the working class and oppressed. Having targeted the unions, blacks, immigrants and other minorities, the forces of capitalist reaction have their guns set on eliminating women's right to abortion.

In late June, the Supreme Court declared war on public workers unions, the largest remaining concentration of organized labor, when it ruled against the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees in the *Janus* case. The decision eliminates the agency shop in the public sector, under which all employees have to pay union member dues or "agency fees" if they choose not to join the union since they benefit from the union bargaining on their behalf. As we noted in "Janus Case: Assault on Labor" (WV No. 1133, 4 May), the intention is to bankrupt, e.g., destroy, the unions by bleeding them of members, posing a direct threat to all of labor, including private-sector unions. Even before *Janus* came down, a court case was initiated in Washington State demanding that a large state union "disgorge and refund" fees that nonmembers had already paid. This would be larceny with legal sanction.

The *Janus* ruling will particularly hit hard against black workers, who are heavily represented in the public sector. In yet another blow to black people, the Supreme Court upheld Ohio's system for purging voters from the rolls. This was a continuation of the attack on voting rights for black people and the poor; in 2013, the

## Break with the Democrats! For a Class-Struggle Workers Party!

Court had already effectively gutted the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

This year's round of reactionary legal decrees began with an early June decision supporting a Colorado baker who, citing religious beliefs, refused to make a wedding cake for a gay couple. It was no more about a cake than the sit-ins at Woolworth's lunch counters in the early 1960s were about coffee. While couched in narrow legal terms, the ruling gives a green light to use a theological justification to trample on the rights of gays, transgender people and any other *persona non grata*.

The Court then approved Trump's permanent ban on citizens of seven, largely Muslim, countries from entering the U.S. Like the roundups and detentions at the Mexican border, Trump's ban plays to his white-supremacist base, including border guards and other law-and-order forces, whipping them up for further acts of racist violence.

Then came the nomination of Kavanaugh, whose credentials include upholding state voter suppression laws, opposing affirmative action and abortion rights, and repeatedly ruling in favor of employers in workplace discrimination cases. Like Neil Gorsuch, Trump's earlier Court appointee, Kavanaugh was promoted by the reactionary Federalist Society. Formed in 1982 by law students whose central goal was to limit, obstruct and overturn enforcement of the Civil Rights and Voting Rights acts, the society counted among its mentors Yale law professor Robert Bork, an outright racist who once wrote that a law insisting that restaurants serve black people would be a "principle of unsurpassed ugliness." It is no accident that the Chris-

tian fundamentalists who are mobilizing against abortion had their origins as a political force 50 years ago in the crusade to maintain racial segregation.

The promotion of the Catholic reactionary Kavanaugh has energized "right to life" bigots who see their best opening in nearly 50 years to undo the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision. If *Roe* is overturned and abortion thrown back to state legislatures, it would be catastrophic, resurrecting the days of back-alley abortions and making the already growing number of do-it-yourself abortions the norm. Minority, poor and working-class women, millions of whom are already denied access to this

simple medical procedure through myriad state restrictions and lack of funds, would especially suffer.

Against the ghoulish Republicans, whose slogan to "make America great again" conjures up an earlier time of U.S. supremacy when black people and women supposedly knew "their place," the Democrats see an opportunity to build their anti-Trump "resistance" so they can win the midterm elections and eventually take back the White House. No less than the GOP, the Democratic Party represents the same capitalist system, which is driven by the brutal exploitation of the working class and based on the vicious oppression of black people, who are segregated in the mass at the bottom of society.

It was the Democrats' own attacks on the unions, immigrants and others that paved the way for the current Republican offensive. What is desperately needed is militant class struggle to strike a blow against the endless ruling-class onslaught. Key to this perspective is the fight to break the allegiance of the labor movement to Democratic Party "lesser-evils."

### Behind the Black Robes

Labor leaders, feminists and the liberal press claim that the way to fight is through the ballot box: elect more Democrats, who will in turn appoint more friendly judges. But under capitalism, regardless of which political wing of the bourgeoisie holds power, the judiciary is an arm of the bourgeois state machine, whose purpose is to defend capitalist class rule against the exploited and oppressed. Along with the courts, the core of the capitalist state apparatus includes the police, prisons and the military.

On July 9, the same day as Kavanaugh's nomination, the *New York Times* published an editorial bemoaning how the "Constitution is about to be hijacked by a small group of conservative radicals well funded by ideological and corporate interests." Demonstrating bipartisan civility, it simultaneously published an op-ed piece titled, "A Liberal's Case for Brett Kavanaugh," which praised the president

*continued on page 6*



Getty

July 9: Senator Elizabeth Warren at Supreme Court protest on day of nomination of right-wing Catholic judge Brett Kavanaugh.



# Britain

# Abolish the Monarchy!

## Harry Foregoes Swastika at Royal Wedding

The following article is reprinted from Workers Hammer No. 242 (Summer 2018), newspaper of our comrades of the Spartacist League/Britain.

### WORKERS HAMMER

The phrase “bread and circuses”—coined by the Roman satirist Juvenal—describes the means by which an exploiting class seeks to divert the plebs from

thoughts of rebellion. While Britain’s capitalist rulers don’t bother much with the bread, royal births and weddings are milked for all they’re worth. In the latest royal circus, Prince Harry, whose most memorable previous exploit was to dress in Nazi regalia for a “natives and colonials” party, was married to mixed-race American actress Meghan Markle. Up to 1,200 hand-picked “commoners” were allowed within the perimeter of Windsor Castle to join in the celebrations, although

they were expected to bring their own food and drink.

The admittance of a black woman into the House of Windsor (now she’s got her visa sorted and been baptised in the Church of England) is absurdly presented by a fawning bourgeois media as the recasting of the feudal freak show that is the monarchy to be less “gammon” [white conservative] and more “woke.” One *Guardian* article (20 May) described the wedding as a “rousing celebration of blackness”; a black gospel choir sang and the black Episcopalian bishop Michael Curry began his sermon with a quote from Martin Luther King Jr. and talked about the misery of slavery.

The British monarchy knows a thing or two about slavery—its empire was built in part on the trade in African men, women and children. Royal “tradition” is inextricably tied to the blood-soaked history of British colonial subjugation of countless millions of mainly dark-skinned people, a past that is still embodied in the British Commonwealth, with the monarch at its head. As the day of the wedding



Reuters

A picture is worth a thousand words, January 2005.

approached, images of the burnt-out shell of Grenfell Tower [housing project where fire killed 72 poor and immigrant residents in 2017] and the racist abuse of the “Windrush generation” of Commonwealth citizens [post-WWII immigrants from the Caribbean] offered stark reminders that capitalist Britain remains a racist hellhole.

For Prince Harry, posing as a Nazi was not merely “insensitive” youthful high jinks, as the media would have it. It is no accident that the authoritarianism of the jack-booted Nazi regime exerts an attraction on the monarchy. In 2015, the *Sun* made public a Windsor family home movie from the 1930s which showed the Queen’s mother, Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon, teaching the seven-year-old Elizabeth how to salute like a Nazi. Also seen giving the stiff-armed salute was the future Edward VIII, the Queen’s uncle, who was notorious for his Nazi sympathies and friendship with Adolf Hitler.

Thus does the House of Windsor (formerly House of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, before the anti-German sentiment whipped up during World War I mandated a name change) express in unvarnished fashion the haughty contempt of the British imperialist ruling class for working-class people and the rulers’ feelings of racial superiority over their former colonial slaves. The royal family remains the embodiment of the reactionary “United Kingdom,” which incorporates the Orange statelet in Northern Ireland and rests on English domination over the Scottish and Welsh nations. The monarchy’s linchpin role in the United Kingdom is captured by the fact that Harry was not only made Duke of Sussex but was also given newly minted Scottish and Northern Irish titles: Earl of Dumbarton and Baron Kilkeel.

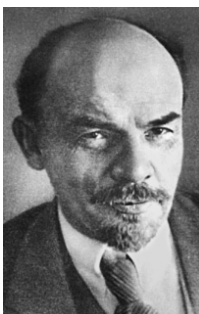
The role of the monarchy at the pinnacle of British imperialism is far from simply ornamental. The monarchy is a potential rallying point for reaction in times of social crisis, when the bourgeoisie feels



TROTSKY

### On Internment of Japanese Americans

Amid widespread outrage over the incarceration of immigrants in detention centers, the Democrats cynically pretend that such barbarity is unique to the racist Trump administration. During World War II, some 120,000 people of Japanese descent, the vast majority U.S. citizens, were savagely uprooted and thrown into concentration camps in a calculated atrocity ordered by the Democratic administration of liberal icon Franklin Roosevelt.



LENIN

The Stalinist Communist Party expelled all of their Japanese American members in a grotesque example of their support to the “democratic” imperialists in the war. The then-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party, facing persecution themselves for opposing U.S. imperialist war aims, were among the very few—including the Quakers—who courageously campaigned against the repression of Japanese Americans. We print below an excerpt from an article they wrote shortly after the roundups began.

A minority problem as acute as any in Europe is being created by the forced removal of Japanese-Americans from the Pacific Coast.

In a move unprecedented in U.S. history, American citizens are being taken from their homes and transported to hastily constructed concentration camps....

Evacuations are being enforced by army officials acting under a presidential decree empowering them to bar from certain areas any person they consider undesirable. The army command has power to declare any district a restricted area and to order the removal of any residents. No reason need be given for the evacuation, and American citizenship is no protection.

So far the measure has been applied only to Japanese-Americans and to enemy aliens: but militant workers, liberals or “uncooperative” citizens could be ousted similarly.

After Pearl Harbor, the press whipped up an hysterical picture of a West Coast invasion aided by Japanese-American residents. The administration had to make a decisive move to show West Coast residents it was alert to their danger. The FBI rounded up all suspected enemy agents in the first few days of the war, but this was not demonstrative enough to give the effect of energetic preparedness the administration was seeking to offset Pearl Harbor.

Considerable pressure for the ousting of Japanese-Americans came, however, from California Chambers of Commerce, the Bank of America, and the reactionary Associated Farmers. These groups see in the Japanese-American farmer not a military menace, but an obstacle to their complete domination of California agriculture. Taking advantage of the situation to demand their ousting in the name of “national defense,” California bankers hope to seize control of the truck gardening fields vacated by the Japanese-Americans....

And so the story of the Japanese-American evacuations stands today—a repressive measure, based purely on racial discrimination and motivated chiefly by the desire of Big Business for additional profits, which is presented as a necessary part of the “war for democracy.”

—“Behind the West Coast Evacuations: Bankers Profit from Driving Japanese-American Citizens into Concentration Camps,” *Militant* (30 May 1942)



V. Deni and M. Cheremnykh

1920 Soviet poster shows Lenin sweeping the world clean of kings, capitalists and priests.

## Letter

## Fourth of July: Not for Me

5 July 2018

Dear WV,

This year’s Fourth of July festivities in Chicago were rudely interrupted by a long and intense downpour of rain. The crowd that had come out to watch the fireworks was multi-racial, but a large percentage of the celebrants were white suburban families. I wondered if the cold shower had woken any of them up to the day-to-day horrors of life in black America, where dilapidated housing, lead-infused water, lack of access to adequate nutrition or a quality public education, police brutality and mass incarceration are mundane, inescapable realities. Probably not.

Anyone celebrating America’s birthday ought to take with them the whole package: a nation whose military murders innocent people all over the world, whose

government would rather imprison black and Latino youth than fund schools, and whose elected officials unapologetically push their relentless campaign of racist, anti-immigrant xenophobia. I see no cause for rejoice.

I did not partake in the festivities, but I could hear the fireworks from inside my apartment. The explosions sounded like echoes from the first, bourgeois American Revolution, echoes which resounded in the American Civil War to smash the slave system. I know that those echoes will return a third time to finish what the Civil War started, to overthrow racist American capitalism and sweep the brutal oppression and exploitation of this rotten system into the dustbin of history. *That* will be something to celebrate.

Yours,  
R.S.

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# Killed on the Docks

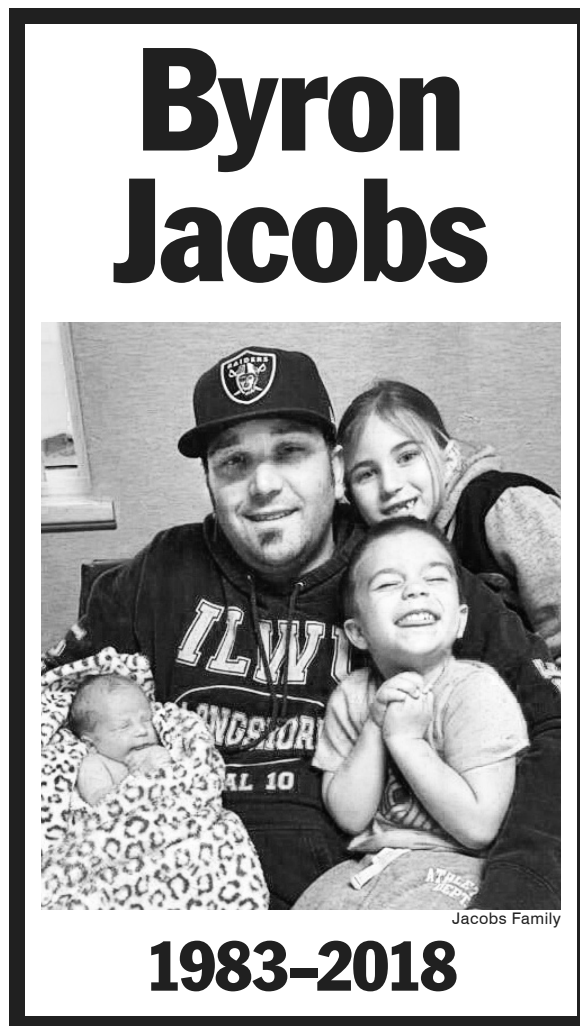
## Salute to Fallen ILWU Militant

On June 28, 34-year-old longshore worker Byron Jacobs was killed on the docks in Longview, Washington, when a mooring line being used to move a ship down the pier snapped, recoiled and hit Byron at a speed of over 450 miles per hour. The chief mate of the ship, 41-year-old Pingshan Li, who was struck by the other end of the line, died a few hours later. A fifth-generation longshoreman, Byron was secretary-treasurer of International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 21 when he stood on the union's front lines during its 2011-12 battle against the all-out union-busting offensive by the Export Grain Terminal (EGT) bosses in Longview. WV labor correspondent Gene Herson noted in a July 3 letter of condolence to Local 21 (printed below) that the courage and determination of Byron and other unionists, fighting with a militancy not seen in this country in decades, was an inspiration for all of labor.

At a July 6 memorial meeting, a WV representative joined hundreds of ILWU members and other unionists alongside the Jacobs family and friends to commemorate Byron's life. His stepfather proudly recalled Byron leading the charge to defend ILWU International president Robert McEllrath, who was being dragged away by the cops who had brutally attacked a 300-strong picket line that blocked a train loaded with grain headed for the EGT terminal on 7 September 2011. Many others recalled Byron's courageous defense of members of Local 21's women's auxiliary against the cops a few weeks later.

Despite facing multiple felony charges for his heroic actions, Byron never retreated from the fight. But the ILWU International leadership did. In the end, as military forces were mobilized by the Obama administration to escort the first shipment of scab grain out of the EGT terminal, an agreement between the union and company was signed. The contract set a trend for other Pacific Northwest grain bosses in their war against the ILWU. Sacrificing workers' safety, these agreements allowed for dangerous 12-hour work shifts and undermined previous provisions allowing the union to "stand by" (stop work) when safety was threatened.

In a letter to the *Longview Daily News* (7 July) following the deaths of Byron Jacobs and Pingshan Li, one retired ship pilot wrote: "I don't know the specifics what went wrong here, but in my years as a ship pilot, I learned how quickly Longview's swirling, weaving river current can introduce sudden and extreme line stress.... I advocated hiring a pilot and tug for less than ideal conditions. However, I think cost-conscious ship's captains still make the call." In a recent phone call, Dan Coffman, former president of Local 21, noted that: "In the early days, we used to use a lot of tug assists and they've gotten away from that." He went on, "It was all



about dollars and cents and so they quit using the tugs."

Byron's wife Megan has filed a \$16 million lawsuit against the ship's owner and the company operating it. Although no amount of money could ever compensate for Byron's life and his family's devastation, the ILWU should make sure that she gets every penny.

For the shipping companies and terminal operators, workplace injuries and death are simply collateral damage in their pursuit of higher profits. A genuine tribute to the life of Byron Jacobs would be for the union to fight to build union safety committees with the authority to shut down unsafe work on the spot, and to set the terms for practices that would preserve the life and limbs of longshore and all maritime workers. Byron proudly traced his fighting spirit back to his Lumbee Indian kin who drove the Klan out of their North Carolina county in 1958. He embodied many of

the qualities necessary to forge a union leadership that will mobilize labor's power in defense of the interests of the working class, as well as all of the oppressed.

\* \* \*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I am writing to express my deepest condolences and those of my comrades to the members of ILWU Local 21 as well as the family and other friends of Byron Jacobs. His tragic and horrific death is a body blow to all fighters for labor's cause against the cutthroat employers.

I met Byron during Local 21's battle against EGT's union-busting assault during which I traveled to Longview several times as a labor reporter for *Workers Vanguard*. He was not only a true union stalwart but someone who had a thoughtful and keen appreciation of the plight of others. In many ways, this was exemplified when Byron courageously came to the defense of Ladies Auxiliary members who were under police attack during the ILWU's September 21, 2011 protest against a train bound for the EGT terminal. It was such militancy and determination which inspired many other trade unionists in the region and around the country.

My comrade Tony who got to know Byron recalls his amusement that rather than being made to serve jail time, the court sentenced him to an "anger management" class. Anyone who knew Byron knew him as a kind, gentle and big-hearted man. It was exactly those qualities that made him such a determined fighter against the real injustices perpetrated by the bosses with the backing of the police, courts and government of this country.

As a former member of the National Maritime Union for 20 years whose arm was pulverized in the process of shifting a ship, I know the deadly dangers longshoremen and other maritime workers face. More often than not this is at the hands of companies trying to save money by cutting corners on safety. Thus the deep sadness that I felt on learning of Byron's death was also tempered by anger at those who would sacrifice the lives of working people in the service of their bottom line.

Myself and other comrades who met Byron send our deepest sympathies to all of you. It is a devastating loss. The best salute to his life will be to continue the fight for labor's cause and that of all the downtrodden victimized by this brutal society.

In sympathy and solidarity,

Gene Herson

Labor correspondent for *Workers Vanguard*

\* \* \*

Donations for the Jacobs family can be sent to: Lower Columbia Longshoremen Federal Credit Union, Attn: Byron Jacobs Family Fund, 629 14th Avenue, Longview, Washington 98632.

its rule threatened. It is not to Parliament but to the Queen that the armed forces swear allegiance. In his 1925 work *Where Is Britain Going?* Leon Trotsky, co-leader with VI Lenin of the Russian Revolution, noted that Labour MPs [Members of Parliament] of the day voted in Parliament to give funds to the Prince of Wales for an overseas tour. Trotsky sharply observed: "How can they assault bourgeois property if they dare not refuse pocket money to the Prince of Wales?"

This is the tradition upheld by Jeremy Corbyn. While he is constantly goaded by the Tories and the Blairites in his own party for being insufficiently obsequious to the monarchy, Corbyn was nonetheless among those offering his congratulations to "Harry and Meghan." As he prepares for office in the hallowed halls of Westminster, Corbyn's lifelong republicanism has gone the same way as his longstand-

ing opposition to the European Union. In an interview with the *New Statesman* (30 July 2015), Corbyn was asked "Would you abolish the monarchy?" His response was: "Listen, I am at heart, as you very well know, a republican. But it's not the fight I'm going to fight: it's not the fight I'm interested in."

We Marxist revolutionaries take inspiration from an altogether different tradition. Oliver Cromwell and the 17th century bourgeois revolutionaries overthrew the feudal order and chopped off the head of Charles I. A workers revolution would have as its first task sweeping away all the feudal crap of the past. Our model is the Bolshevik Party which led the workers and peasants of the Russian tsarist empire in sweeping away the capitalist and landlord exploiters, in the process extinguishing Tsar Nicholas II's Romanov dynasty—relatives of Prince Philip.

When asked to describe the political philosophy of the Queen Mother, one royal secretary quoted the words of the hymn "All things bright and beautiful": "The rich man in his castle, the poor man at his gate—God made them high and lowly and order'd their estate" (*Guardian*, 15 September 2009). The continued existence of feudal relics such as the monarchy, the House of Lords and the

established churches is indeed an assertion that social privilege, vast inequality and rigid social hierarchy are simply the

"natural" order. These institutions are an affront to the working class and to elementary democratic principles.■

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### NOTICE

**Workers Vanguard skips  
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# **The Racist Killing of Colten Boushie**

# **Capitalist Canada: Hellhole**

# **for Indigenous Peoples**

*The following article is reprinted from Workers Tribune No. 1 (Summer/Fall 2018), the new English-language publication of the Trotskyist League in Quebec and Canada, section of the International Communist League.*

# WORKERS TRIBUNE

On February 9, Gerald Stanley, a Saskatchewan farmer, was acquitted of second-degree murder charges by an all-white jury for the cold-blooded killing of Colten Boushie, a 22-year-old Cree man. On 9 August 2016, after a day at the lake, Boushie and his four friends got a flat tire on their way home and drove onto Stanley's farm seeking help. Stanley, aided by his son, chased the group away with gunfire and then shot Colten in the back of the head at close range. This was a racist atrocity that polarized the country for almost two years. After the not guilty verdict, thousands across Canada protested in angry response. Meanwhile, there was an eruption of racist reaction and a wave of support for Boushie's killer.

This case lays bare the lie of Canada as a progressive, multicultural haven. Cree activist Erica Violet Lee captured this lie in her description of the courtroom during Stanley's trial: "We looked up at the front of the court room and you could see everyone in charge of our fate was white." She continued:

“And above it all, there is a picture of the Queen looking over the court room. We realized this is not a system set up for us: this is not a system set up to keep us safe.”

Indeed, this is the *bourgeois* justice system and for Indigenous peoples in racist capitalist Canada there is no justice. Rather, the courts, judges and prosecutors, together with the cops and prison guards, are at the core of the capitalist state. The state is an apparatus of violence whose purpose is to defend the class rule and property of the capitalist rulers against the working class and oppressed.

Canada was built on the dispossession of the pre-existing aboriginal inhabitants and the forcible subjugation of the Québécois nation. It is in the interest of the working class to take up the fight against Indigenous oppression and racist reaction.



Canadian Press

## February 13 vigil commemorates Colten Boushie following acquittal of his killer.

The historic task of the working class is to sweep away the capitalist system and forge an egalitarian socialist society where production is based on human needs and not profit. The trial and acquittal of Stanley provide a case study in how the machinery of the Canadian capitalist state works to oppress Indigenous peoples.

During his trial, Stanley claimed that his gun “just went off.” His lawyer argued that it was a “freak accident,” a rare “hang fire” malfunction which caused the gun to fire long after he had pulled the trigger, a defense that gun experts thoroughly refuted. As for the crown [prosecuting] attorney, he might as well have been on Stanley’s legal team. As a former chief of the Red Pheasant First Nation put it, “We had to encourage the crown prosecutor to prosecute and not help the defense.”

Gerald Stanley got away with killing Colten Boushie, while Boushie's friends and family were treated like criminals. His grieving mother was abused and their home on the Red Pheasant First Nation was invaded and searched by an army of cops, guns drawn. The police detained Boushie's friends, smearing them as potential thieves. One, a young woman, was held for 19 hours without food or sleep. The SUV Boushie was killed in was left unprotected by cops as heavy rain washed away blood, footprints and other evidence. Boushie's dead body was left face down in the gravel on Stanley's farm for over 24 hours.

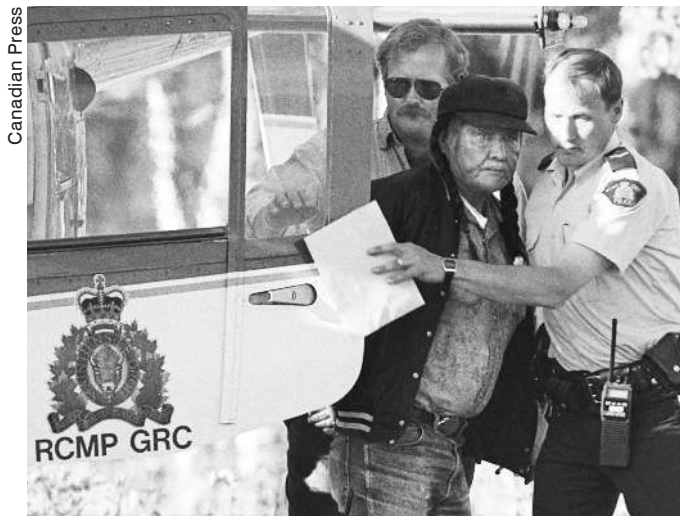
Colten Boushie was killed for being an Indigenous man on a white man's property. In the vicious backlash that erupted after the murder, local politician Ben Kautz declared that Stanley's "only mistake was leaving three witnesses." White farmers began setting up armed vigilante "community patrols" on the pretext that they are besieged by "rural crime," racist code for Indigenous peoples.

This is the reality in capitalist Canada, where Indigenous lives mean nothing to the ruling class. From coast to coast, Indigenous peoples suffer massive disproportionate incarceration. In Saskatchewan, they are 16 percent of the population, but 81 percent of those sentenced to provincial jails. Women are especially subjected to police violence. A 2016 Human Rights Watch investigation uncovered dozens of cases of assaults, degrading strip searches, sexual abuse and harass-

ment of Indigenous women by Saskatchewan cops.

## Bourgeois Hypocrisy and Indigenous Oppression

Liberal prime minister Justin Trudeau and his justice minister Jody Wilson-Raybould responded to the Stanley verdict with empty promises to “do better.” Since coming to power in 2015, Trudeau has sought to rebrand Canada as a “progressive” player on the world stage, including by posing as a champion of Indigenous rights. In fact, Trudeau is the enforcer of capitalist rule. The Liberal Party has



Canadian Press

**1995: William Jones  
"Wolverine" Ignace,  
leader of indigenous  
protests at Gustafsen  
Lake, detained  
by federal police  
during massive  
paramilitary assault.**

been the main party of the bourgeoisie in Canada for more than 100 years. Alternating with the Conservatives, they have overseen the theft of Indigenous lands along with ceaseless state brutality and repression.

Soon after the verdict, the Trudeau government went into damage-control mode, launching a “review” of the RCMP’s [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] actions following Boushie’s murder (the RCMP had already cleared itself of all wrongdoing). This is merely one more whitewash. For years, Royal Commissions and inquiries have documented the state’s violence against Indigenous peoples, the theft of their lands and children, the staggering suicide rates among young people who see no future for themselves.

The latest is the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls inquiry, created by the Liberals in 2016 in response to a decade of protest over the fates of the

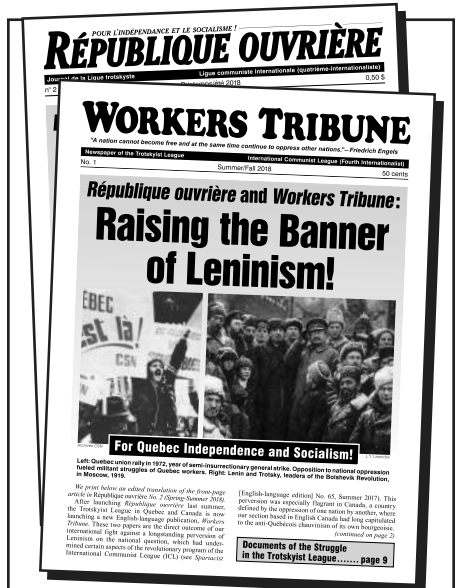
Indigenous women—as many as 4,000—who have been murdered or gone missing since 1980. Yet this inquiry, like all the other ones, will change nothing because it will not touch the material conditions of Indigenous life. The ruling class will not provide even the most basic needs for Indigenous peoples: quality education, health and housing programs, clean water and electricity. Rather, they conduct inquiries in order to quell outrage and regain public trust while deflecting attention away from the real workings of this capitalist system.

## NDP: Social-Democratic Tool of Capitalist Rule

Federal NDP [New Democratic Party] leader Jagmeet Singh decried the Stanley verdict as an example of the injustice and systemic racism that plagues Indigenous peoples across Canada. But for Singh and the NDP the problem is that without the *appearance* of justice, people will lose confidence in the system. The NDP is a bourgeois workers party, linked to the trade unions but with a bourgeois program. Their central goal is to administer the capitalist state. By offering up this or that cosmetic reform they serve the interests of the ruling class, deflecting labour and other social struggles into safe parliamentary channels.

In Alberta and B.C. [British Columbia], where the NDP currently rules, the jails are as full of Indigenous peoples as ever, and the grinding poverty and police violence is unchanged. And when the interests of the capitalist class call for the sledgehammer, the NDP in power has not been found wanting, using the power of the state to break strikes and attack minorities. In B.C. in 1995, for example, the NDP government mounted one of the largest military/police operations in Canadian history against Indigenous protesters at Gustafsen Lake. As part of the struggle to forge a revolutionary workers party, it is a strategic task to break workers from the politics of the Anglo-chauvinist NDP and its social-democratic doctrines which claim that the capitalists and workers share a common interest.

As revolutionary Marxists, we seek to expose illusions in bourgeois democracy and place the struggle for democratic rights within the framework of a class-struggle perspective for proletarian power. Pro-NDP “socialist” groups like



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# Chicago Protests

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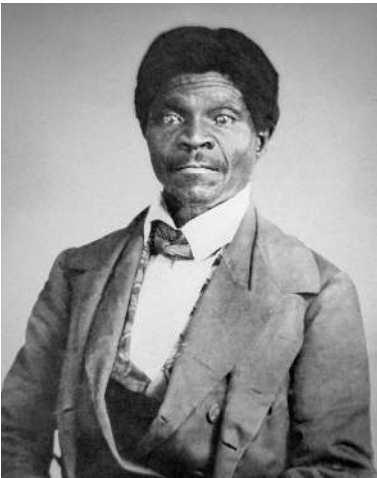
# Supreme Court...

(continued from page 1)

for his “classiest move” and hailed the nominee as a judge “who prioritizes the Constitution’s original meaning.” Yes, and that original meaning included slavery.

At its inception, when the U.S. was marked by “free labor” capitalism in the North and chattel slavery in the South, the Supreme Court was designed as part of a system of “checks and balances” to insulate government from the unpredictable masses. As Alexander Hamilton put it in the *Federalist Papers*, its purpose is to be “an essential safeguard against the effects of occasional ill humors in the society.” The Supreme Court, with its august judges appointed for life, has not a little in common with Britain’s aristocratic, unelected House of Lords (though given the current Court’s Christian zealotry, the Iranian ayatollahs’ Guardian Council may be a more apt analogy).

Four years before the outbreak of the Civil War, the Supreme Court declared in the 1857 Dred Scott decision that a black man “had no rights which the white man was bound to respect.” In 1896, the Court sanctified “separate but equal” segregation as the law of the land, a hallmark in the crushing of black rights that had been gained through the smashing of slavery but rolled back with the defeat of Radical



**Dred Scott. In 1857, racist Supreme Court ruled black people “had no rights which the white man was bound to respect.”**

Reconstruction. During World War II, the Supreme Court approved the racist internment of some 120,000 Japanese Americans, ordered by the Democratic Party administration of liberal icon Franklin Delano Roosevelt and implemented by California attorney general Earl Warren.

A prominent Republican politician, Warren was later appointed to the Supreme Court by Republican president Eisenhower. Liberals who push reliance on the courts as a motor for social progress hark back to that same Earl Warren, the Chief Justice defining the “golden years” of the Supreme Court from 1953 to 1969. Starting with the 1954 *Brown v. Board*



Library of Congress

**After signing declaration of war against Japan in December 1941, Roosevelt ordered internment of Japanese Americans.**



National Archives

*of Education* ruling against segregated education and over the next two decades, a series of Supreme Court rulings gave some meaning to the protections that most Americans are taught are in the Constitution, like upholding due process rights.

These reforms were not handed down by generous or fair-minded judges. Such rulings, including the 1973 *Roe* decision, came in the context of convulsive social struggles, starting with the marches against Jim Crow and culminating in the huge protests against the Vietnam War. Racist segregation and the repressive social climate had also become a liability for the U.S. rulers as they postured as the great defender of “democracy” in the Cold War against the Soviet Union.

Aided by the liberals and other misleaders that tethered such struggle to the Democratic Party, the capitalist rulers worked to contain, co-opt and eventually destroy the mass civil rights movement and the burgeoning radicalization centered on opposition to the Vietnam War. And they succeeded. With minimal personnel changes, the Supreme Court immediately started to erode the gains of the preceding 20 years, signaled by the restoration of the death penalty in 1976. The devastation of lives and the shredding of civil liberties over the past few decades, including a massive bipartisan increase of government surveillance, were carried out not only by Reagan and Bush I and II, but also by Democrats Carter, Clinton and Obama.

## Don’t Bow to the Democrats—For Class Struggle!

As Trump announced his new justice pick, Democratic Senators Elizabeth Warren and Cory Booker, along with their “democratic-socialist” adjunct Bernie Sanders, headed a rally on the Supreme Court steps amid signs reading “Stop Kavanaugh” and “Protect Our Courts.” Democrats are being called on to “pack the courts,” i.e., increase the number of justices to offset Trump’s appointments—once the Democrats regain the presidency. A June 28 article posted on jacobinmag.com, a project of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), titled, “In Defense of Court-Packing,” claimed that “lasting progressive change” lies through such

schemes to gain control of the Court, as their hero FDR once threatened to do.

For its part, the reformist International Socialist Organization (ISO) puts forward a variant of how to tinker with the capitalist state, writing in the article, “Without Struggle, There Is No Roe,” that Kavanaugh “could be rejected if the Democrats are forced to put up a real fight” (socialistworker.org, 20 July). The underlying premise of both the ISO and the DSA is that the capitalist state is a neutral body that can be swayed, and that bourgeois democracy can be made to represent the interests of the exploited and oppressed. But as Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin wrote in a polemic against the granddaddy of the ISO and DSA, German Social Democrat Karl Kautsky: “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 Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, 1918).

The strategy of the ISO is to call on the Democrats to resist. Given that the Democratic Party leadership today is about as appealing as a cold sore, the reformist lackeys try to refurbish the Democrats’ credentials by promoting pseudo-socialists in the party. The recent victory of the DSA’s Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez in the New York Congressional primary election has been celebrated as an opening for the left, with ISO leaders openly calling to work with such Democrats to “deepen the confidence of our side and strengthen the fighting capacity of the working class” (socialistworker.org, 23 July). In fact, they are acting to keep the working class chained to its class enemy, to the very capitalist party that has targeted immigrants as terrorists and criminals, ripped up democratic rights and beefed up the machinery of state repression, and unleashed U.S. military might against oppressed peoples from the Near East to Africa and beyond.

Even over abortion, Democratic administrations have acquiesced and colluded in the decades-long Republican-led drive to end women’s basic right to terminate an unwanted pregnancy. In 1980, the Supreme Court affirmed the Hyde Amendment—signed into law by Jimmy Carter—that denied Medicaid funds for abortion. In the 1990s, Bill Clinton, while axing welfare for mothers, presided over

a barrage of additional abortion restrictions. In 2010, Obama ensured that federal funds from the Affordable Care Act would not be used for abortions.

Meanwhile, the bureaucrats who run the trade unions have refused to wage even defensive class battles, instead pushing reliance on the government, its courts and supposed “friends of labor” Democrats. Their central argument for opposing *Janus* is that they needed a dues base in order to keep a lid on class struggle. American Federation of Teachers president Randi Weingarten put it baldly in an *amicus* brief to the Supreme Court, warning that an anti-union decision would disrupt “labor peace.” It is that program of class collaboration that has helped decimate the unions throughout decades of anti-labor and racist attacks.

In “Marxism and Reformism” (1913), Lenin noted how the capitalists “grant reforms with one hand and with the other always take them back, reduce them to nought, use them to enslave the workers, to divide them into separate groups and perpetuate wage-slavery.” While the reformists “restrict the aims and activities of the working class to the winning of reforms,” the goal of revolutionary socialists is to use reforms to broaden the class struggle. Lenin explained, “The more independent the working-class movement, the deeper and broader its aims, and the freer it is from reformist narrowness the easier it is for the workers to retain and utilise improvements.”

There are urgent needs in this country: for decent, high-wage jobs and quality, integrated housing and schools for all; for free abortion on demand as part of socialized health care; for full citizenship rights for all immigrants. It is in the vital interest of the multiracial working class to mobilize through hard class struggle, in defense of itself and all the oppressed. It is through intervention into such struggles that the Spartacist League seeks to forge a multiracial revolutionary workers party. Modeled on the Bolsheviks, such a party would serve as a “tribune of the people,” fighting all manifestations of oppression as part of the fight for workers revolution. With the proletariat in power, justice will be in the hands of workers councils committed to rebuilding this society on a socialist basis, and the bourgeoisie’s supremely reactionary Supreme Court will be a relic of a barbaric past, like the medieval rack and the slaveowner’s lash. ■

# Fascist Attack...

(continued from page 8)

against the fascists. The state is not “neutral” between the fascists and the workers movement. The police, along with the army, the courts and the prisons are the core of the capitalist state—the repressive apparatus that defends the property and the interests of the capitalists against the working class and oppressed. The job of the police includes breaking workers strikes, brutalising black and Asian people and spying on leftists and trade unionists.

Reliance on the cops for protection against the fascists is suicidal, but that is precisely the programme of Unite Against Fascism (UAF) and Stand Up To Racism (SUTR). The 14 July counter-protest jointly organised by the UAF and SUTR ultimately relied on police to defend the 3,000 anti-fascist demonstrators against much bigger forces of fascists and other reactionaries.

The British capitalist rulers today do not need to resort to fascism to crush the workers movement. However, the capitalist rulers hold the fascist shock troops in reserve so that they can be unleashed against the working people in times of social upheaval. The fascists today are small, but the workers movement must understand it is precisely when they are weak that the fascists must be crushed.

At bottom, the union misleaders and the reformist left push illusions that the way to combat fascism is by electing a Corbyn-led Labour [Party] government. In contrast, the Spartacist League’s perspective of mobilising union power to stop the fascists also aims to imbue the working class with consciousness of its social power and revolutionary potential. This is a step towards building a revolutionary party, a champion of all the oppressed, which can lead the working class to overturn the depraved capitalist system which is itself the source of fascist barbarism. ■

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The COSCO workers' struggle has struck a chord throughout the key maritime sector in Greece. A successful outcome to this fight could be a major boost to the Greek working class, which has been bent but not broken by a decade of ferocious capitalist austerity. It could also inspire workers elsewhere in Europe facing attacks on their own jobs and living standards. *Victory to the COSCO workers!*

Dock workers at COSCO are indeed largely hired through agencies on starvation-wage “flexible” contracts that do not guarantee stable employment or basic work rights. Workers complain about the lack of proper training and the climate of intimidation that reigns at the port, with “nightclub-style bouncers” employed to enforce discipline. It is essential for the unions to fight to drive out the subcontracting parasites and for the immediate hiring of *all* workers on a full-time, permanent basis with decent wages and conditions. ***For union control of hiring! For union control over safety!***

The EU is the vehicle with which the capitalist powers in Europe—with German imperialism in the driver's seat—seek to plow through the wages and conditions of workers, including in the stronger economies such as Germany itself. Maritime workers in Europe have had to fight such attacks as the union-busting EU “Port Packages.” In January 2006, a solid strike against Port Package 2 that shut down the port of Hamburg, Germany, was followed by strikes elsewhere in Europe. Last year, dock workers in Spain struck against the imposition of EU regulations for “free enterprise,” i.e., free of unions. The EU consortium has devastated weaker countries in Europe like Greece, Spain and Portugal, while also serving as a trade bloc against the rival U.S. and Japanese imperialists. *Greece out*

## China Is Not Capitalist

In their just struggle, the Piraeus dockworkers are up against COSCO, a Chinese state-owned enterprise. COSCO is not a capitalist employer but part of the collectivized economy of the People's Republic of China, a deformed workers state where political power is in the hands of



Anadolu

Trotskyists support workers fighting for union rights and decent wages and benefits at COSCO. At the same time, we fight efforts by those who undermine the need to defend the Chinese deformed workers state against imperialism. Like many in the workers movement, the KKE, a reformist Stalinist party, argues that China “is an integral part of the international imperialist system” (*Communist Review* No. 6, 2010). The KKE argues that “China, particularly from the 1980’s and onwards, has linked its economy with the international capitalist market. This is a fact which is not denied by the Chinese leadership, but is indeed extolled by it.” Just because China engages in world trade

The establishment of the Chinese workers state was a historic gain for the working class internationally. However, unlike the state that issued from the 1917 October Revolution in Russia, led by the Bolsheviks of V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky, the workers state in China was deformed from the outset by the rule of a nationalist bureaucracy fundamentally similar to

The imperialists who “lost China” in 1949 are committed to getting it back for

The suffering of the Greek working people shows the brutal workings of the capitalist system, in which production is organized not to satisfy life's necessities for the masses—decent employment, housing, pensions, medical care, etc.—but to produce profits for the tiny number of super-rich capitalist exploiters. The basic needs of the population can be achieved only by the working class taking the productive wealth of society into its own hands. The working class and its allies among the oppressed need to fight for a government that will act in their interests and be subordinated to them. Such a government cannot be achieved in a parliamentary framework but only through a proletarian revolution that sweeps away the capitalist state. The Trotskyist Group of Greece, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist), is dedicated to forging the revolutionary workers party that can lead the workers in this task. ■

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# WORKERS VANGUARD

Greece

## Victory to COSCO Port Workers!



The following article was written by our comrades of the Trotskyist Group of Greece.

ATHENS, July 23—At the end of May and beginning of June, hundreds of workers employed by the Chinese state-owned shipping giant COSCO at the Port of Piraeus carried out significant labor action against the horrible conditions prevailing at the container terminals. On May 30, workers throughout Greece had downed tools in a one-day national strike against the latest raft of austerity measures demanded by the European Union (EU) and imposed by the Syriza-ANEL government. Among them were the COSCO dock workers, led by their union ENEDEP, who defied management threats to have them arrested if they joined the strike. They stayed out for



Greek port workers strike shuts down Piers II and III at the Port of Piraeus in early June.

two more days, pressing their demands for stable, full-time work, increased manning levels, collective bargaining and health and safety measures, as well as a hike in their abysmally low wages. The highly

dangerous work conditions at the port have led to many injuries and claimed the life of a worker last year.

A strike rally outside COSCO was joined by thousands of other workers, including



O Bolsevikos

dock workers from another union who struck for two days. Those workers, organized by the Dockworkers' Union-Port of Piraeus, have seen their own wages gutted and are also fighting for collective bargaining rights. The rally was supported by seamen's unions and the Labor Center of Piraeus, which is dominated by PAME, a trade-union body associated with the Communist Party (KKE). Joint pickets were successful in completely shutting down COSCO for the first time in its almost nine years of operation at Piraeus, beating back efforts by management to break the strike with scabs (including Golden Dawn fascists) and through the courts.

A mass general union assembly suspended the strike on June 1, but COSCO *continued on page 7*

## London: Fascist Attack on Union Leader

We reprint below a July 21 leaflet issued by our comrades of the Spartacist League/Britain.

On 14 July, following a rally of some 6,000 supporters of jailed fascist English Defence League (EDL) founder Tommy Robinson, a gang of fascist thugs launched a vicious assault on members of the RMT [National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers] union as they sat drinking in a Westminster pub. Assistant general secretary of the union Steve Hedley and his partner Bridget Power were hospitalised after Robinson's supporters hurled glasses and metal chairs at them. Several other RMT members were injured in the attack. Hedley had earlier spoken at a counter-protest against Robinson. True to form, the police detained both Hedley and Power for having the temerity to defend themselves. After her release from hospital with bruised ribs, Power was held in police custody for several hours.

The same day as the attack on the RMT, the fascists surrounded a London bus, terrorising the driver—a Muslim woman wearing a hijab. In June, 15,000 Robinson supporters, some giving Nazi salutes, marched through London before attacking anti-racist counter-protesters. A march in Leeds, also in June, was followed some days later by the firebombing of a mosque and a Sikh gurdwara [temple]. These attacks underline that fascism is not a system of bad ideas which can be defeated through exposure, or argued away. Fascists differ from right-wing ideologues such as UKIP [UK Independence Party] in that they are paramilitary gangs whose purpose is racist terror and ultimately the destruction of the workers movement.

That fascist scum feel bold enough to assault a prominent leader of one of the country's most powerful unions is an ominous development. The RMT organises tens of thousands, including large

numbers of black and Asian workers. This represents considerable social power that the fascists should fear.

While trade unions have endorsed the recent anti-fascist counter-protests, their mobilisation has been limited to small numbers of workers behind union banners. The organisers of these protests see the unions as just one more constituency alongside "faith groups" and leftists. What's needed is not bringing out trade union members as atomised individuals, but mobilising disciplined contingents of unionised workers. Standing at the head of the oppressed, the workers movement uniquely has the numbers, organisation and power *to sweep the fascists off the streets.*

It is the decaying capitalist order that creates the conditions in which the fascists thrive and the fight against fascism is therefore inseparable from the fight to overthrow the capitalist system. Mobilising the unions to defend workers and the



Unity News

Steve Hedley, a leader of RMT union, after brutal attack by fascist thugs.

oppressed requires a political fight against the trade union bureaucracy, which is wedded to capitalism and to class collaboration and has not waged an effective fight to defend union members against austerity, much less defend minorities.

The police persecution of Hedley and Power illustrates the folly of looking to the forces of the capitalist state to act *continued on page 6*

## For Union/Minority Action to Stop the Fascists!