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Down With Neocolonial Exploitation and Plunder!

Australian/UN Imperialist Troops/Cops Out of East Timor and Solomons Now!

We reprint below a Spartacist leaflet which was reissued on 15 June.

JUNE 4—Acting as neocolonial overlords Australian imperialism has once again dispatched troops to occupy East Timor. Seizing on escalating communalist violence in early May, the Australian government positioned two navy ships within view of the capital. Then, after pressuring East Timorese leaders to accept “assistance,” they rushed in some 1,300 troops along with armoured personnel carriers, tanks and Black Hawk helicopters to impose imperialist “law and order.” They are joined by smaller troop and police contingents from Malaysia, Portugal and New Zealand. As with the 1999 Australian-led UN occupation, the Australian military presence in Dili today has nothing to do with protecting the East Timorese people and everything to do with defending the interests of Australian imperialism and its allies.

Using the “war on terror” as a pretext, jackal Australian imperialism spends up to \$60 million a day on the military to ramp up its capacity to support their U.S. big brother’s bloody interventions across the globe, including in Iraq and Afghanistan, while pursuing their own predatory interests in the region. Backed as usual by “strong” and “unqualified support” from Labor leader Kim Beazley, Australian prime minister John Howard has not ruled out taking complete control of most facets of East Timor’s government administration while disarming the population, just as they have done in the Solomon Islands. Currently some 550 Australian troops and police occupy the capital, Honiara. Meanwhile Australia’s ongoing brutal and deeply racist neocolonial domination of



Adrees Latif/Reuters

Imperialist “law and order.” Australian occupation forces in East Timor (left) terrorise civilians and (right) hold back desperate masses awaiting food distribution.



AP

Papua New Guinea robs its natural resources while leaving the population impoverished and downtrodden. **U.S./Australia out of Iraq and Afghanistan now! Australian, all UN/imperialist and allied troops/cops get out of East Timor, the Solomon Islands now!**

In the wake of 350 years of Portuguese rule, more than two decades of Australian-backed Indonesian occupation and more than six years of “independence” under UN/imperialist bayonets, East Timor is one of the poorest countries in Asia with massive unemployment, illiteracy, lack

of potable water and low life expectancy. During the Australian-led UN occupation, the Australian military attacked desperate job seekers, terrorised women and tortured suspected pro-Indonesian “militiamen.” On 4 December 2002, UN/Australian-backed East Timorese police fired on unarmed high school students protesting cop violence. Eighteen protesters were shot and up to five killed. The impoverished East Timorese masses are seething with discontent. Enforced squalor has inflamed communal tensions between the *loromonu* people in the west and the *lorosae* in the east of East Timor. Using “divide and rule” tactics the imperialists seize on such tensions to maintain their domination.

In March, the prime minister, Mari Alkatiri, sacked some 600 soldiers after they protested alleged poor conditions and discrimination against those from the west. Divisions within the East Timorese military and political leadership were further inflamed when pro-government police opened fire on a demonstration by the sacked troops and youth on 28 April, killing at least five and wounding many others. Following a split in the army and police, the situation descended into communalist violence, leaving 27 dead with up to 100,000 Dili residents fleeing their homes as arson attacks escalated and

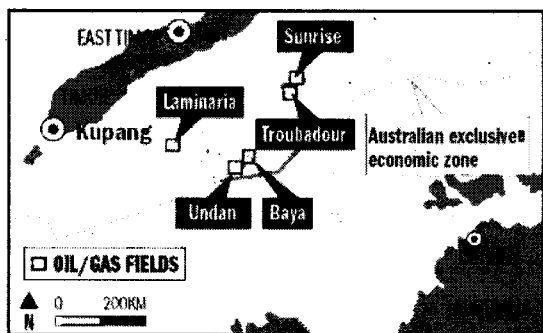
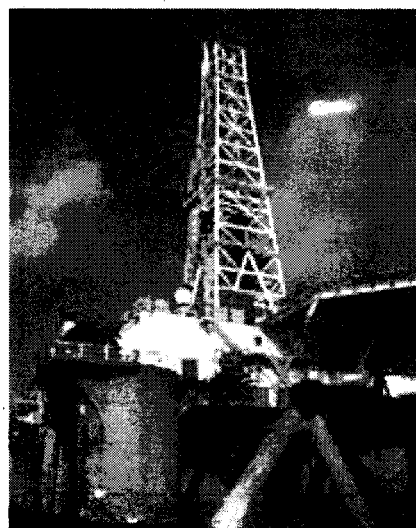
rumours circulated about further violence and an impending clash between the army and police.

Imperialist Machinations Over East Timor Oil, Gas

After receiving U.S. backing to once again occupy East Timor, with racist arrogance Howard declared, “The country has not been well governed and I do hope the sobering experience for those in elected positions of having to call in help from outside will induce the appropriate behaviour inside the country” (*Weekend Australian*, 27-28 May). Backed by their military might, what the U.S./Australian imperialists clearly seek to “induce” is “regime change” that results in a government that better kowtows to their interests. Indicative of imperialist machinations is the Australian military’s sympathetic stance towards the leader of the “rebel” soldiers, Australian-trained Major Alfredo Reinado.

In the imperialists’ sights is Alkatiri, a long-time Fretilin leader whose leadership was re-endorsed at a recent party conference, a rebuff to demands, including by Reinado, that he resign as prime minister. Alkatiri, a bourgeois nationalist and no friend of the oppressed, has nonetheless been an irritant to powerful

continued on page 5



Age map

Australian military occupation enforces continued imperialist theft of East Timor’s fabulously rich oil and gas reserves.

skyscans

Down With State Terror Against Aborigines in Central Australia!

1 June

Dear Comrades,

I wanted to write a note following a visit to see friends in Alice Springs. There is a moral panic about violence and sexual abuse in Aboriginal communities, being used as a means of increasing the power of the state to interfere in Aboriginal people's lives. At the same time as troops are once again invading East Timor, we suffered calls for the military to occupy Aboriginal communities, for the homelands themselves to be smashed, for increased policing and for widespread prohibition of alcohol (including the use of passes to buy alcohol, a system already in place in part of the Northern Territory). The latter reminds one of the tragic death of the brilliant, internationally fêted Aranda artist Albert Namatjira. He died soon after being jailed for buying alcohol for family in 1959.

The degradation and terror of Aboriginal people continues. Namatjira's talented 15-year-old great-granddaughter was beaten and raped, almost certainly ignored as she lay dying on an Alice suburban street one morning in April this year. The violence endured by Aboriginal women in particular is extreme by any measure. Domestic violence is intensified by the fact that calling the police for help means calling upon a hated and hating enemy. Assaults and deaths of Aboriginal men at police hands are rightly perceived as a real danger. Indigenous women are stuck between a rock and a hard place. State killings and the unwarranted removal of children continue to create festering wounds of grief and terror.

There is probably social pathology in any group of human beings, but whatever problems we may have inherently are hugely magnified by capitalist oppression. People who are deprived and burdened by just about every social index (mortality, morbidity, education, housing, access to clean water and electricity) will express their distress, often by turning against each other. One of the basic tenets of capitalist ideology, after all, is that your survival or success in the world is due to your own superior (or inferior) moral qualities in competition with other people. Aboriginal people get a big serve of this crap.

There should be no doubt that the major perpetrator of violence against Indigenous people is the capitalist state itself. The emotional and physical (including sexual) abuse of Aboriginal children ripped apart from their families to be indoctrinated by churchmen and other poisonous ideologues and used as stockyard and domestic labour is well documented. When anthropologists visited a cattle station in the late 1950s they found Aboriginal children infected with

venereal disease by station managers.

More recently, as documented in *ASp*, in Alice Springs in 1983 mainly white, mainly middle-class women peace protestors at Pine Gap U.S. military spy base were jailed, some savagely beaten, in the Alice Springs lock-up one night. Local Aboriginal women, who had incidentally been incredulous that the feminist protestors had come to such a dangerous place without men, thanked them for the first night in living memory that an Aboriginal woman had not been raped in the lock-up. I was there then. I remember getting on the phone to a Spartacist friend as soon as I got out of jail, saying "I'm understanding what you say about the state now."

The capitalist state claims and enforces a monopoly on violence. It consists of armed bodies of people, in the form of the police and the armed forces, which along with courts and jails enforce the outrageously unjust status quo. Then there is the government, executive committee of the ruling class. Through the capitalist media, racist legislation and in a thousand other ways the capitalist state is the source of racism, which serves to divide working people from each other, facilitating the bosses' continued rule.

In Alice Springs the rule of the bosses has been naked and brutal. In "Genocide in Australia," historian Colin Tatz notes:

"There was a massive population loss in central Australia—particularly in the region of what is now Alice Springs—between 1860 and 1895. Kimber speculates that 20 per cent may have died from influenza, typhoid and other introduced diseases. But some 1750, or 40 per cent, of the Aboriginal population, were (mostly) shot in what was euphemistically called 'dispersal'."

The most recent documented officially sanctioned killing spree by police against Aboriginal people, the 1928 Coniston massacre, was in the central Northern Territory. Eyewitnesses, some still living, tell of terrified black people hunted like vermin.

Tatz goes on to describe the role of the state in Aboriginal peoples' lives. In the Northern Territory until 1964 the state's legal "protection" included:

"...the need for permits to leave reserves and the Territory, prohibition on alcohol, prohibition on inter-racial sex, prohibition on inter-racial marriage unless with official permission, inability to vote or to receive social service benefits ... statutory Aboriginal rates of pay (well below the famous basic wage...), exclusion from industrial awards, and so on."

Tatz described imprisonment in Queensland in 1963 for crimes only an Aborigine could commit, like "being cheeky," "playing cards," "arranging to receive a male person during the night," "being untidy at the recreation hall" and "calling the hygiene officer a 'big-eyed bastard'"

("Genocide in Australia," *AIATSIS Research Discussion Paper No. 8, 1999*).

Back in New South Wales, in an interview in a Wollongong newspaper a veteran trade-union leader, 84-year-old Fred Moore, spoke of the courage of Aboriginal women he fought alongside in the 60s.

"There were all sorts of laws for Aboriginal people.... They were the most courageous women you could see in a lifetime. They had been through everything—been through the stolen generation, roped off in picture shows, they would have to send a white person in to try out clothes, they couldn't go into a milk bar, they were not to come into contact with food, not allowed upfront in a doctor's surgery. They were just second class citizens."

—*Illawarra Mercury*, 3 June

Racist exclusion from services is still a major problem for Indigenous people. In Alice Springs, built on a tourist industry marketing Aboriginal cultures, very few places employ Aboriginal workers. Indeed it was the vindictive mass sacking of Aboriginal workers in the pastoral industry after they finally won equal pay in the 60s (with support of the Waterside Workers and Builders Labourers federations) which provided the impetus for the Homelands movement, as I understand it. People decided to return to country to claim and look after their land, but were also withdrawing from a society where they had no dignified role. Some of the communities thus created really do serve as havens from police and daily racist insult, in spite of their material poverty. I've visited one in Arnhem Land where children were strong in their culture and language, healthy except for widespread iron deficiency. It was explained to me that the community could no longer hunt the plentiful meat in the area because the community gun had been confiscated by the state,



Delsey Tamiano

Aboriginal people protest state harassment of the homeless in Darwin, 2003. Proletarian defence of Aboriginal people will be key to the fight by the multiracial working class to overturn this racist capitalist system.

so the children no longer got enough meat. The Homelands (or Outstations, as they are sometimes called), represent a real, if contradictory, gain for Aboriginal people who should not be forced to live there, but should be well provided for there if they choose to do so. Clean water and electricity, good housing, well-paid schoolteachers and medical care are all urgently needed in many places. Good jobs and the prospect of a future for the children are fundamental to beginning to recover from the damage of dispossession and trauma.

The integrated, organised working class is the only force with the power, the will and the interest to fight for Indigenous peoples' rights. But the working class will only consistently champion the fight (and not be co-opted into appeals to the state via the Labor Party) when it has an internationalist, revolutionary leadership such as the Spartacist League is struggling to build. Ultimately, and urgently, socialist revolution is the only way that the Aboriginal peoples and the cultures they embody will survive and flourish. But then you could say that about all human-ity and human cultures, couldn't you?

Workers to Power!

Nel

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Israel Out of the Occupied Territories!

Imperialists, Zionists Starve Palestinians



Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert rapturously received by U.S. Congress, 24 May. Desperate poverty in Gaza intensifies as imperialists, Zionists strangle economy. EPA photos

The following article is reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* (No. 872, 9 June), newspaper of the *Spartacist League/ U.S.*, section of the *International Communist League*.

Since the Islamic fundamentalist Hamas took office in March, a U.S.-led international imperialist boycott has been starving the Palestinians for the “crime” of exercising the “democracy” that George Bush trumpets he is bringing to the Near East. In response to Hamas’ electoral victory in January, the Israeli government has cut off the monthly transfer of some \$55 million in taxes and other fees it collects on behalf of the Palestinian Authority. For their part, the United States imperialists have suspended the transfer of millions of dollars in annual aid to the already impoverished Palestinians. Also suspending aid are the European Union (EU) imperialists, whose posture as “peacemakers” in the Near East has been replaced by a drive to punish the Palestinians for electing Hamas. Meanwhile, the Arab bourgeois regimes, supposed “friends” of the Palestinians, have abandoned the Palestinian masses to starvation—even the paltry \$70 million promised by the obscenely wealthy oil sheikdoms of Saudi Arabia and Qatar has yet to find its way to the Occupied Territories.

As Israeli journalist Amira Hass put it in *Ha’aretz* (21 April): “Every day another country announces that it is canceling the economic aid that over the past five years has become the Palestinian nation’s oxygen.” Although “humanitarian” aid has recently been allowed, the infrastructure to administer it is in collapse. The United Nations predicts that 70 percent of Palestinians will be jobless by the end of the year, and one UN representative warned, “Many families are being forced to reduce their number of meals to just one a day.” Already, more than half of Palestinian children suffer from malnutrition.

“I don’t know how we’re going to cope.... Before, we were in crisis management, now we are in disaster management,” reports the director of Shifa, Gaza’s largest hospital. Patients have already perished for lack of medicine. There are dwindling anesthetics for surgery, and cancer patients are sent home to die. A massive public health crisis, including the spectre of cholera, looms as garbage piles up and sewage systems collapse. Even before the January elections, the Karni crossing—the main checkpoint for transporting all commercial goods and medicines into Gaza

from Israel and for exporting goods out of Gaza—had been (and still is) closed more than half the time.

The all-sided pounding of the Palestinians in the wake of Hamas’ electoral victory must be put in the broader context of imperialist machinations in the region. As it maintains its occupation of Iraq, the U.S. threatens Iran with sanctions and attack if it proceeds with its nuclear program, while annually giving Israel, armed with over 200 nuclear weapons, billions in military and financial aid. Israel has announced it will participate fully for the first time in NATO naval exercises in the Black Sea, “as part of preparations for a possible showdown with Iran,” as Reuters (29 May) put it. **Defend the Palestinian people! Israeli troops, settlers out of all the Occupied Territories! Down with U.S. aid to Israel! U.S. out of Iraq—hands off Iran! Down with the U.S./ EU/Israeli starvation embargo against the Palestinians!**

With Hamas in office, the war against the Palestinians has now been made synonymous with the “war on terror.” The day before recently elected Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert addressed a joint session of Congress, receiving no less than 16 standing ovations, the U.S. House overwhelmingly passed the “Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act of 2006,” which called for an international boycott of the Palestinians. Olmert earned his spurs in 1996 when, as the Likud mayor of Jerusalem, he oversaw the massacre of at least 62 Palestinians and the wounding of hundreds more who were demonstrating against the opening of an ancient tunnel under a wall of the Al Aksa mosque in the heart of Arab East Jerusalem (see “Zionist Bloodbath,” *WV* No. 653, 11 October 1996).

Indeed, as Olmert spoke of “peace” before Congress on May 24, Israeli troops invaded downtown Ramallah, the seat of the Palestinian Authority, in broad daylight, killing four and injuring some 70 people. On May 30, the Israeli military killed four more Palestinians in its first deep military incursion into Gaza since last summer’s exit. Israel’s “disengagement” from Gaza has in fact allowed the Zionist rulers to more effectively tighten their grip around this congested bit of land and the 1.3 million Palestinians trapped in it.

The election of Hamas is bad news for women, Christians and secular Palestinians. It is also a gift to Israel’s rulers, who have used it to pursue their policies without the pretense of “negotiations.” Upon his election, Olmert declared that Israel’s

permanent borders would be unilaterally set by 2010. Kadima, which Olmert currently leads, was founded by now comatose ex-prime minister Ariel Sharon—the man responsible for the slaughter of some 2,000 Palestinians in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in Lebanon in 1982—working in collaboration with longtime Labor Party leader Shimon Peres. Kadima adopted the line of Labor Zionism that it was necessary to carve up the Occupied Territories (as opposed to annexing them entirely) in order to ensure that Israel maintain a Jewish majority. Today, Kadima is in coalition with the thoroughly bourgeois Labor Party, whose head, Amir Peretz, is the Minister of Defense. An example of the racist and exclusivist nature of the Zionist state can be seen in the Israeli High Court decision in May upholding a law that denies Palestinians from the Occupied Territories who are married to Israeli citizens the right to live in Israel with their spouses.

Hamas’ victory has also been used by the Zionist rulers to further their strategy of divide and rule—of fomenting (if not directly provoking) warfare among Palestinian factions. The turf warfare between Fatah and Hamas supporters is exacerbated by the quest for sinecures in the Palestinian Authority’s multitudinous security services—overwhelmingly dominated by Fatah supporters—which were set up by the 1993 Oslo “peace” accords for the purpose of policing the ghettoized Palestinians for Israel. In the 1980s, Israel promoted Hamas as a counterweight to the secular Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) (see “U.S./Israel Tighten Screws on Palestinians,” *WV* No. 864, 17 February). Now, Israel has announced that it will allow a shipment of arms to the personal guard of Palestinian Authority president Mahmoud Abbas, supposedly to protect him against threats by Hamas supporters.

The ostensible reason for the starvation embargo against the Palestinians is that Hamas refuses to recognize the state of Israel or renounce suicide bombings. The first is a bogus pretext given that Hamas has no means to do anything about Israel’s existence and has in fact repeatedly sought negotiations with Israel since the elections. But now, as part of the pressure on Hamas, Palestinian Authority president Mahmoud Abbas is cynically planning a referendum in the Occupied Territories because of Hamas’ refusal to accept a document that essentially endorsed the PLO’s “mini-state” program—i.e., a two-state “solution,” with a Palestinian statelet

in the West Bank and Gaza.

As for suicide bombings, indiscriminate terror against Israeli civilians is a crime from the standpoint of the proletariat. However, the terrorism of Hamas and others pales in comparison to the daily state terror perpetrated by the most militarily powerful regime in the region against a largely defenseless people. Israel has made the slaughter of Palestinians, including children, a regular occurrence.

The situation of the Palestinian masses is desperate. The fundamental basis of the Palestinian/Israeli conflict is that two interpenetrated peoples lay claim to the same piece of land. Under capitalism, the exercise of self-determination by one will necessarily be at the expense of the other. The key to the national liberation of the Palestinians lies in the overthrow of capitalist rule in Israel through Arab-Hebrew workers revolution and throughout the region. Only in this way can the right of return for the millions of Palestinian refugees throughout the Near East be exercised. Any other “solution” will only deepen and intensify the Palestinians’ oppression.

When the PLO nationalists became isolated after the 1991-92 collapse of the Soviet Union, which had provided the PLO with financial and political aid, they accepted the Oslo accords, which did not “offer even the most deformed expression of self-determination,” as we wrote in “Israel-PLO Deal for Palestinian Ghetto” (*WV* No. 583, 10 September 1993). We warned: “By its act, the PLO has invited fundamentalist reactionaries like Hamas to pose as the only fighters against the Zionist occupation. Petty-bourgeois Arab nationalism has been shown to be the bankrupt and impotent dead end that it always was.”

Under Oslo, the number of settlers mushroomed to nearly half a million, and the Zionists continued creating “facts on the ground,” building the apartheid wall in the West Bank, an electric fence around Gaza and hundreds of military checkpoints. The growth of reactionary, anti-woman and anti-Semitic outfits like Hamas has also been one of the bitter fruits of Oslo and the PLO’s political bankruptcy.

Most significantly, under Oslo, the Palestinians became marginalized from Israel’s economy as the Israeli capitalists increasingly resorted to the use of migrant labor from Asia and elsewhere to replace the Palestinians. This has meant even greater poverty for the Palestinians, while making it easier for the Zionists to intensify the isolation of the Occupied Territories. With the growth of unemployment, hunger and destitution, many Palestinians face the prospect of starving or leaving—i.e., “ethnic cleansing” by attrition.

The fight for proletarian rule in the Near East requires a struggle to break the Hebrew proletariat from the grip of Zionist chauvinism and win them to the defense of the Palestinian people—an enormous task that will likely first require the victory of socialist revolution in one or another of the surrounding countries. Nonetheless, Israeli society is divided along class and national lines—including over one million horribly oppressed Palestinian Arab “citizens” of the state. There are also occasional but real expressions of sympathy with the plight of the Palestinians—such as the June 3 demonstration of some 2,000 Jews and Arabs in Tel Aviv against the occupation and the economic embargo. In turn, the Palestinians must also be broken from petty-bourgeois nationalism and Islamic fundamentalism. What is essential is the forging of Leninist-Trotskyist parties throughout the Near East to lead the struggle for the national and social liberation for all the peoples of the region through the establishment of a socialist federation of the Near East. ■

Scrap the Sex Offenders Register!

Britain: Anti-Sex Witchhunt in Schools

The following article is reprinted from Workers Hammer No. 194 (Spring 2006), published by the Spartacist League/Britain, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

WORKERS HAMMER

It is a sign of the reactionary times in Blair's Britain that Education Secretary Ruth Kelly was almost hounded out of her job in January for being "soft" on so-called "sex offenders." A member of the sinister, ultra-right-wing Catholic sect Opus Dei, Kelly is currently preparing Blair's latest attack on secondary education. Yet even she was placed on the defensive by a hysterical media frenzy about "sex offenders" in schools, one of many such moral crusades that have been detonated by the Blair government's 1997 Sex Offenders Act. Passed just weeks after coming to power, this act (re-enacted as the Sexual Offences Act in 2003) required those branded as "sex offenders" to register with the police. This register is a witch hunter's charter.

The issue of "sex offenders" is a political football that has been used repeatedly to ignite often violent public campaigns against those who end up on the register, which currently contains roughly 24,000 names. The term "sex offender" grotesquely and wilfully equates heinous acts such as the brutal murder of Soham schoolgirls Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman with harmless activities like teenage sex, or looking at pornographic images. People's names can be placed on the Sex Offenders Register even if they've never had sex with anyone!

The latest witch hunt was started by the "liberal" *Observer* running a scare-mongering piece that "sex offenders" had been cleared to teach in certain schools, igniting hysteria that might make one think child-rapists and murderers were lurking in the classrooms. The pretext was that, until now, not everyone on the Sex Offenders Register was automatically banned from teaching or working with children. Such a ban was restricted to those on List 99, the government's official blacklist, which numbered 4,200. A tiny number of those on the register had been permitted by the education department to teach. This "loophole" was seized upon for a muck-raking media vendetta in which the "respectable" BBC, *Guardian* and *Independent* joined the rabidly right-wing *Daily Mail*, particularly targeting two people who had been cleared to work as teachers. What "sex crimes" had these two people committed? William Gibson, a former maths teacher, had been placed on the register for a consensual, long-term relationship that began in 1980 when his girlfriend was a 15-year-old pupil, with whom he went on to have three children during a 19-year marriage! Paul Reeve, a popular Norfolk PE teacher, received a "caution" three years ago because his credit card details were found on a U.S. pornography website!

Reeve was forced out of teaching and became the victim of a police dragnet code-named "Operation Atlas," a trawl through a list of "paedophile suspects" by Norfolk police. The list came from the National Crime Squad, a unit specialising in searching for people using porn websites, known as "Operation Ore." This

trawl was launched in 2002 when the American FBI provided British police with the credit card details of 6,500 people in Britain who accessed an American website called Landslide, resulting in an invasion of privacy by the state on a mass scale. Hundreds of computers have been seized and a staggering 3,500 people arrested, including Who guitarist Pete Townshend. Some have been convicted and jailed; even those who are merely "cautioned" are automatically placed on the Sex Offenders Register. Not surprisingly, Operation Ore has contributed to a vast increase in the number of people cautioned for possessing child porn images. In the last decade there has been an increase of 2,692 per cent in cautions for this! (*Guardian Unlimited*, 16 January).

We vehemently oppose such police surveillance which is an outrageous intrusion by the state into people's private lives. We call for an end to all laws against "crimes without victims" such as prostitution, drug use and pornography; we oppose the existence of a legal "age of consent," which gives the capitalist state the right to

other than heterosexual monogamy to be 'deviant.' We oppose the persecution of those who engage in consensual intergenerational sex, we oppose the reactionary 'age of consent' laws and we have a long record of defending against persecution organisations such as the North American Man/Boy Love Association (NAMBLA) and the British Paedophile Information Exchange, whose leaders were jailed in 1984 for advocating the right of youth under the 'age of consent' to have sex with adults."

—Workers Hammer No. 174, Autumn 2000

We also oppose the criminalisation of those who look at child pornography which, like all pornography, is simply images and words designed for pleasure. This was the subject of *Capturing the Friedmans*, a documentary depicting the true story of how two innocent individuals were framed up, jailed and had their lives destroyed by false accusations of raping dozens of children, simply because the father had received images of child pornography through the post!

Ruth Kelly has proposed new measures that will ban anyone convicted or cautioned of any so-called "child sex



Reuters
Former British Education Secretary Ruth Kelly has fueled virulent anti-sex campaign.

reactionary moral crusade that made front-page news for days on end. In April 1998 the SWP denounced paedophilia as a "sick product of a sick society," while at other times doing some liberal hand-wringing over "innocent" people being caught in the web. But today the SWP's alliance with the mosques in [the electoral coalition] Respect precludes even that. According to *Weekly Worker*, Salma Yaqoob, a prominent leader of Respect,



Tom Piston
Seventeenth-century witchhunts, such as depicted in graphic (left), are recalled by modern-day "sex offender" hysteria in Britain (above).

determine at what age youth can engage in consensual sexual activity. And we utterly reject the practice whereby looking at porn is equated with violent crimes such as rape, sexual assault and even murder. **Down with the "age of consent" laws!**

State Out of the Bedroom!

For us the guiding principle for sexual relations is that of *effective consent*, meaning mutual agreement and understanding, as opposed to coercion. We believe that as long as those who take part agree to do so at the time, no one, least of all the state, has the right to tell them they can't do it. Determining what effective consent is can be difficult, and particularly in sexual relationships between youth and older adults such as teachers, there will always be grey areas. As we wrote in an article titled "Labour's Witch Hunt Against 'Sex Offenders' Unleashes Vigilante Terror," published during a media-generated frenzy over "paedophilia" in 2000 that resulted in lynch mobs on the streets:

"'Paedophilia' simply means sexual desire towards children. To equate this with child murder and rape is grotesque and partakes of the same reactionary bourgeois bigotry which declares all sex

offence" or "serious offence against adults" from ever working in schools. Ominous noises are now being made about "sex offenders" lurking in the NHS [National Health Service] as well!

Dozens of teachers have been hounded out of their jobs and even jailed for nothing other than consensual sexual encounters with teenagers. This was the subject of the November 2005 Channel 4 documentary *Sleeping with Teacher*. Among others it featured Scottish music teacher John Forrester, whose partner was a student when the relationship began and both were shown as a happy couple expecting a baby; Lucy Hayward, who was jailed for two years and placed on the Sex Offender's Register for a fling with a 15-year-old pupil (who seduced her) who wasn't even attending the school where she taught at the time. There was *no* suggestion that these relationships were anything other than consensual.

Criminally, the National Union of Teachers has endorsed Ruth Kelly's new measures, saying they are "fully in line with the NUT's approach." The reformist left—the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), Workers Power and the Socialist Party—have refused to utter a word against this

actually welcomed the government's crackdown on "sex offenders" as a "positive move" on the BBC's *Question Time* (quoted in *Weekly Worker*, 26 January 2006). The bottom line for reformists (and bourgeois liberals alike) is that they look to the capitalist state—the butchers of Iraq and Afghanistan—as protectors of children.

Marxists oppose these puritanical witch hunts by the state, which are the latter-day version of Christian fundamentalist crusades against "sin," but are today dressed in "secular" and even "liberal" and "human rights" garb. A case in point is Labour's proposals to crack down on prostitution which is being marketed as "protecting women from exploitation." The purpose of these morality drives is to regiment the population and to bolster the repressive powers of the state. The state is not a neutral arbiter, but the instrument for the suppression of the exploited by the exploiters. As such it plays a key role in enforcing the oppression of women (and youth) alongside organised religion and the patriarchal family, which remains the central instrument for the subjugation of women under capitalism. The family is critical for the ruling class to pass on its

AUSTRALASIAN SPARTACIST

East Timor...

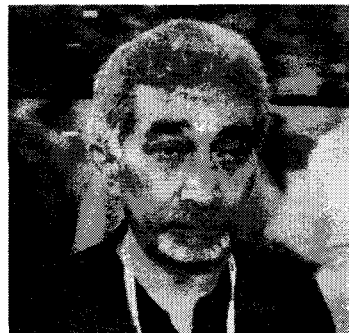
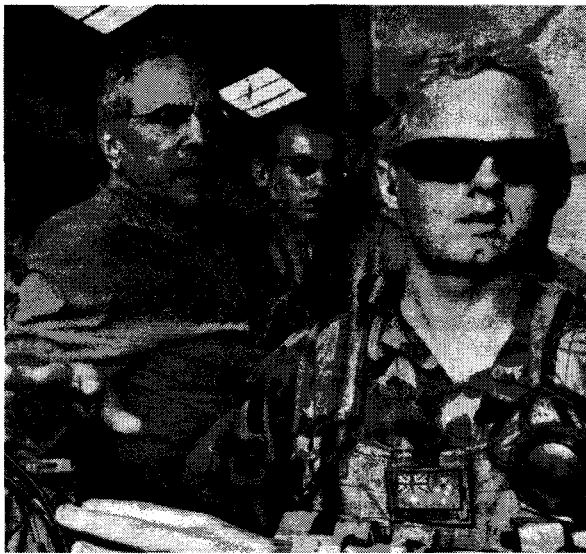
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reactionary forces since becoming prime minister. A Muslim in this predominantly Catholic country, Alkatiri offended the Catholic Church by attempting to make religious education in schools optional. His refusal to accept loans from the blood-sucking World Bank, attempt to declare a national day of mourning following Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's death, and bringing in Cuban doctors has put him offside with the U.S. and Australian governments.

But what has also raised the ire of Washington and Canberra was Alkatiri's ultimately unsuccessful attempts to get an equitable deal for East Timor from the rich oil and gas reserves in the Timor Sea, and his preparedness to look to other powers including Portugal and, more significantly, China. While relentless bullying by the Australian government culminated in a "deal" in April 2005 that resulted in East Timor ceding its rightful claim to fabulously resource-rich territories in the Timor Sea for up to 60 years, Alkatiri's reported stubbornness in negotiations infuriated the rapacious Australian imperialists. They were further rankled by his appeals to the European Union for assistance and rumours that he was going to award a major gas project to the Chinese oil and gas company, PetroChina.

Defend the Chinese Deformed Workers State!

The current occupation of East Timor serves to shore up U.S./Australian military control in the region. The so-called "arc of instability" stretching from Fiji through to Aceh has long been a region of great power rivalries in which at least since the end of WWII Australia has often claimed a special "responsibility." Following the tsunami catastrophe in late 2004, the U.S., Japan and Australia rushed large military detachments to Aceh near the entrance to the strategic Strait of Malacca through which much Japanese and Chinese trade passes. The recent successes of the Chinese deformed workers state in obtaining resources and providing aid in the Asia-Pacific region have



Brendan Esposito

Out-of-favour East Timorese prime minister, bourgeois nationalist Mari Alkatiri (above). Slavishly pro-U.S./Australia government minister, Jose Ramos Horta (far left).

Lindsay Muller

alarmed Washington, Tokyo and Canberra. Encouraged by the U.S., a resurgent Japanese imperialism has become increasingly provocative and bellicose towards China.

While Australian business leaders do not want to jeopardise trade with China, the jackal Australian imperialists share the U.S.' strategic aim of capitalist counter-revolution in China and a return to the untrammelled imperialist exploitation that existed prior to the 1949 Revolution. The current Australian military interventions in the Solomons and East Timor follow recent visits to Australia by U.S. secretary of state Condoleezza Rice and Japanese foreign minister Taro Aso. These visits culminated in a ministerial level Trilateral Strategic Dialogue between Australia, the U.S. and Japan and follow last year's reactionary U.S./Japan security agreement, which transparently targeted the North Korean and Chinese bureaucratically deformed workers states. **Down with the U.S./Australia counterrevolutionary alliance! For the unconditional military defence of the Chinese, North Korean, Vietnamese and Cuban deformed workers states against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution! For proletarian political revolutions against the Stalinist misleaders whose bureaucratic mismanagement and appeasement of imperialism pave the way for capitalist restoration!**

As a second-rate imperialist power, the

Australian rulers are anxious to aggressively assert themselves in their "own backyard." In securing and expanding regional areas of exploitation, the bloody Australian rulers help to prop up venal anti-working-class regimes that will do their bidding. The recent diplomatic joust between Australia and Indonesia over Australia's granting of temporary protection visas to 42 West Papuan asylum seekers in no way undermined the military ties that have been reformed between the U.S./Australia and the Indonesian military. These ties include Australian military training of the Indonesian Kopassus killers who have spent decades terrorising and murdering West Papuan independence fighters in order to enforce the imperialist rape of their land by the likes of the gigantic U.S.-owned Freeport-McMoRan gold and copper mine. Today while Australian companies such as Woodside Petroleum siphon off East Timor's oil and gas,

Leighton Holdings, BHP-Billiton and other imperialist companies reap huge profits throughout Indonesia.

In recent massive protests across the country that pushed back draconian anti-worker laws, the Indonesian working masses demonstrated their power to take up social struggle. Ending imperialist subjugation in neocolonial countries such as Indonesia requires forging a Trotskyist party to mobilise the working class and rural toilers in victorious socialist revolution against their own national bourgeoisie. If such revolutions are not to be militarily or economically strangled they must be extended internationally, above all to the imperialist centres. **Down with the reactionary Australia/Indonesian military alliance! Racist Australian imperialist military/cops out of Indonesia, Philippines now! Asylum now for all refugees! Indonesian military get out of West Papua! U.S./Australia keep your bloody hands off!**

Workers Must Oppose Racist Australian Imperialism

The reactionary period ushered in by the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92 has been marked by escalating militarism abroad and increasing repression at home including racist terror against refugees and other minorities and a savage union-busting agenda. The bourgeoisie is particularly escalating its material and ideological offensive against Aboriginal people, viciously blaming them for their own oppression. In the face of social pathologies caused by grinding capitalist oppression, the capitalist media, echoed by kept mouthpieces like ALP president Warren

continued on page 6



Craig Abraham

February 2003: Visit by prime minister Howard sparked protest against Australian imperialist looting of oil resources.

property to "legitimate" heirs and to instil obedience to bourgeois codes of morality.

For Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

In capitalist society, one of the main functions of the family is to impose on the working class the burden of rearing the next generation. In Britain today the shift from an industrial to a service economy has drawn unprecedented numbers of women out of the home and into the workforce, where they are often concentrated in the lowest-paid part-time jobs. The dramatic increase in the number of one-parent households has been met with reactionary crusades against "absent" fathers and "lack of role models." This reflects the fact that the nuclear family is expected to play a conservatising role in the upbringing of children. Today the working people, particularly women, face the choice of paying for expensive child-care or staying at home to look after the children and thus living in dire poverty. Either way, working-class parents and children face a climate of constant fear, that every minute of the day "the kids are in danger"—of rape, sexual assault, drug addiction and much more.

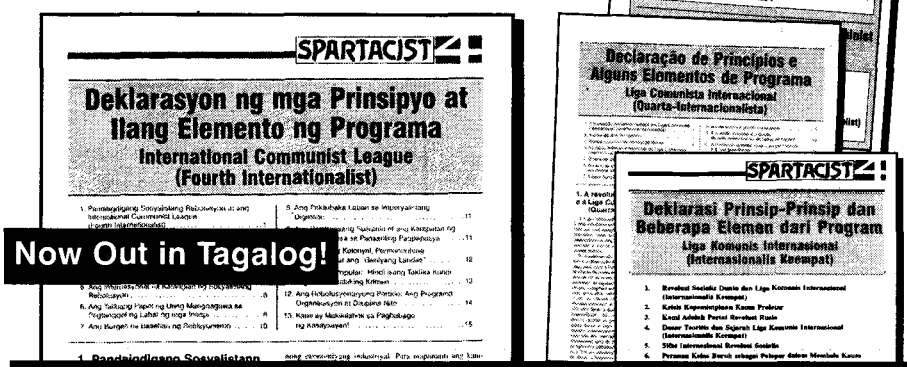
The supposed mortal threat to all children has been a central theme of repeated moral crusades of the past decades: the truly bizarre tales of "Satanic ritual abuse" in the 1980s and early 1990s that originated with evangelical Christians in

the U.S. and were swallowed by social work departments here; the 1990s scare-mongering over children's homes being "infiltrated" by "organised groups of paedophiles," which led to frame-ups and prosecutions of hundreds of care workers. These puritanical crusades are also the thin end of a wedge stigmatising all those whose sexual behaviour differs from the presumed "norm" of one man on top of one woman for life. Human sexuality is complex. No amount of state repression or surveillance will change the fact that children do, in fact, develop sexual attractions towards other children and adults, including their teachers.

We seek to win workers, youth and the oppressed to the perspective of building a revolutionary workers party that will fight against all aspects of oppression and state terror, as part of the fight to mobilise the working class to overthrow the capitalist system and to establish societies where the workers own and control the means of production. The family cannot be abolished. Under socialism, it will be replaced by communal childcare and housework; birth control, abortions and quality health care will be free and available to all and youth will be able to live independently of their parents. Only then will relations between people in all spheres, including sex, be genuinely free and equal, devoid of any economic or social constraints, and in the words of Frederick Engels, there will be "no other motive left except mutual inclination." ■

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East Timor...

(continued from page 5)

Mundine, demand increased state intervention in Indigenous communities. When one considers the more than 200 years of racist state terror in which the Aboriginal people were nearly exterminated, their lands and children stolen from them, this is obscene and serves only to legitimise the ongoing racist cop terror and systematic discrimination and poverty suffered by Aborigines.

The road to liberation for the Aboriginal people and all the oppressed lies in the struggle to mobilise the working class *against* the bosses and their state. What is necessary is a struggle within the workers movement to fuse class-struggle opposition to union busting with the fight against racist terror and imperialist marauding abroad. The chief obstacle to this is the pro-capitalist ALP and Laborite trade-union tops who push reactionary bourgeois ideology into the workers movement. This is illustrated by the furore surrounding horribly oppressed overseas "guest workers." While some unions, under pressure from their multiracial working-class base, have on occasion fought on behalf of these overseas workers, there has been much xenophobia from the Laborite tops. In his budget reply speech ALP leader Kim Beazley ranted against foreign workers. And ACTU president Sharan Burrow, while noting that "guest workers" are exploited and that the government has used such programs to drive down wages and conditions, has railed "If there are jobs available they should first go to Australians" (ACTU website, 24 February). Such poisonous nationalism serves only to pit workers against their overseas class brothers and sisters while fostering racist divisions at home. Workers must unite against the exploiters rather than be played off against each other. Fighting for union defence of the oppressed, and against Laborite nationalism, would undercut the bosses' divide-and-rule schemes and bring into the unions new sources of fighting strength providing a bridge to class unity with workers of the region. **Full union rights and conditions for all workers! No deportations! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants and "guest workers"!**

The pro-capitalist union misleaders demobilise working-class struggles by pushing nationalist divisions, reliance on the courts and the dead end of ALP parliamentarism. The ALP is a *bourgeois workers party*; while based on the trade unions, it is thoroughly bourgeois in its program and leadership. Workers need a proletarian internationalist revolutionary party. Such a party, fighting as a tribune of all the people, will be built through splitting the working-class base of the ALP from the pro-capitalist leadership.

Reformist and Centrist Left: Waterboys for "Democratic" Imperialism

It is an elementary principle for Marxists to uncompromisingly oppose the imperialist depredations of their own ruling class. Not so for the reformist and centrist left in this country, who bear their share of responsibility for opening the way to the current imperialist occupation of East Timor. In September 1999, virtually the entire left—including the Democratic Socialist Perspective (DSP), the International Socialist Organisation (ISO), Socialist Alternative (SAlt), the Socialist Party (SP) and Workers Power (WP)—cheered on the anti-Indonesia actions led by the Laborite trade-union bureaucrats which were *explicitly* designed to speed up Australian military intervention. They enthusiastically marched in demonstrations behind the ALP parliamentary and union misleaders screaming for Australian "peacekeepers" to "save" East Timor. Leading the social-chauvinist



Sydney, September 1999: Socialist Alternative prominent at "Peacekeepers In" rally (right), called to support union bans designed to get troops into East Timor. Spartacist League (left) stood opposed to Australian imperialist intervention.



charge were the DSP who built the marches, openly demanding "Send Australian/UN Troops NOW!"

As the reality of colonial occupation became obvious, most of these groups scrambled to cover their treacherous role. Socialist Alternative, who posture against Australian imperialism, recently took "most of the left" to task for having "cheered on Australian troops as they set off to 'liberate' East Timor." In fact at the time SAlt participated in the "troops in" rallies carrying placards screaming "East Timor—blood on Howard's hands, Support union bans on Indonesia" and demanded "bigger and more militant demonstrations in the streets" (*Socialist Alternative*, September 1999). Likewise, the Socialist Party (SP) claim to have been "Almost alone of the left" in "opposing the Australian intervention in 1999." In October 1999 SP (then known as Militant Socialist Organisation) hailed the chauvinist rallies and trade-union actions as the "magnificent response of the Australian people" claiming "If it wasn't for the pressure of the Australian people, Canberra and 'our' armed forces would be once again putting the 'national interest' (i.e. protecting the interests of Australian bosses in Indonesia) before the massacres of the people of East Timor" (*Militant*, October 1999).

The Laborite left's support to "human rights" imperialism over East Timor was preceded by their championing of capitalist "democracy" against the former Soviet

degenerated workers state. Along with the ALP, the ISO (from which SAlt later emerged), SP, DSP and WP all hailed Boris Yeltsin's U.S.-backed counter-coup in August 1991. This was a pivotal event of the 1991-92 capitalist counterrevolution, which plunged the former Soviet peoples backwards into bloody national fratricide and destitution. From despicably backing the Laborite union tops' support for imperialism in 1999, most of these reformist groups moved seamlessly into various cross-class anti-war coalitions with the 2003 imperialist bombardment and subsequent occupation of Iraq. Far from opposing Australian militarism, these coalitions demand that the Australian imperialist government "Bring the Troops Home!" In pushing such demands the reformist left fall into line behind their bourgeois Greens coalition partners and the ALP who push for a more concentrated and aggressive role for the Australian military in the Asia-Pacific region. In this they particularly target North Korea, behind which lies their strategic prize, the Chinese deformed workers state.

The reformist and centrist left share a touching faith in the capitalist state, peddling the lie that the capitalist rulers can be pressured to act on behalf of the oppressed. The role of the capitalist state—the police, courts, prisons and military—is to uphold the rule of the capitalist class over the working class and oppressed. In imperialist countries this apparatus serves to defend the plunder of natural resources

and exploitation of labour in the neocolonial world. Every action of this state, from police attacks on leftist demonstrators to foreign "aid" to military expeditions abroad, is for one purpose only—to enforce the interests of the fabulously rich capitalist exploiters at home and abroad.

Against the social-chauvinist left who lined up behind the White Australia capitalist rulers in 1999, the Spartacist League exposed the lie that military intervention could bring independence and "freedom" for the East Timorese. Standing on the socialist principle of *not one person, not one cent* for the imperialist military, we campaigned in word and deed against Australian imperialist intervention, demanding as we do today that Australia, the U.S., the UN and all their camp followers get out of East Timor and stay out! As we concluded in our 3 December 1999 statement:

"In this country solidarity with the Indonesian and East Timorese masses means above all the struggle to overthrow the Australian ruling class through workers revolution. The complete social and national liberation of the East Timorese and myriad other oppressed peoples of the region requires the smashing of imperialism and the construction of a socialist Asia, from Indonesia to Korea, from Australia to Japan. It is to this task that the International Communist League is dedicated...."

—"Australian/UN Imperialist Troops Out of East Timor!" reprinted in *Australasian Spartacist* No.170, Autumn 2000

For a workers republic of Australia, part of a socialist Asia! ■

Social Chauvinists and Shameless Opportunists

That the social-chauvinist leadership of the Democratic Socialist Perspective (DSP) refuses to oppose the Australian government's latest military occupation in East Timor is no surprise. Whatever "condemnation" they were able to muster over the Australian government's "gunboat diplomacy" off the coast of East Timor in May predictably evaporated with Australian troop deployment. Braying that the imperialist intervention "was at the invitation of the Timor-Leste government and appears to have the support of the full political spectrum in the country," National Secretary Peter Boyle has baldly stated "The DSP is not campaigning for 'troops out' demand at this stage" (Green Left discussion post, 15 June).

Meanwhile the opportunist Socialist Alternative (SAlt) trumpet in the June issue of their newspaper, "Once more it's a disgrace that anyone who calls themselves left-wing or anti-war supports the Australian military going in to

East Timor." In an article in the same issue entitled "The 'left' cheer squad for Australian imperialism," they claim that in 1999 "Socialist Alternative argued against sending troops." These charlatans dredge up a single quote from a June 1999 article, three months before the intervention, where they wrote that an occupation by UN forces would result in East Timor being "turned into an Australian neo-colony." SAlt know full well that they are yet again involved in a shabby cover-up of the insidious role they played in 1999.

As we note in the accompanying article, not only did SAlt join the "troops in" marches in 1999 but they embraced and promoted the chauvinist union bans against Indonesia, which in SAlt's own words were "aimed at encouraging the Australian Government to send in troops" (*Socialist Alternative*, October 1999)! Indeed, they even wanted these bans to be extended by the imperialists. Thus in

their special September 1999 issue they advised "If the US, Japan and Australia had immediately announced stiff economic sanctions, the atrocities could well have been brought to a halt before the devastation was so complete."

Since the Australian military occupation of East Timor commenced in September 1999, the self-declared "anti-imperialists" of Socialist Alternative, when challenged, have not been able to cite *one* example where they have demanded in print that the Australian imperialist troops get out. Now nearly seven years later, in their June issue, SAlt finally squeak, "Australian troops out of East Timor."

In contrast to our reformist and centrist opponents, we of the Spartacist League have consistently opposed the Australian imperialist military. Just as in 1999, today we forthrightly demand that Australian imperialist troops get out of East Timor! This implacable opposition to Australian imperialism flows from our revolutionary purpose of building an internationalist, proletarian party that can lead the working class to sweep away the racist Australian capitalist rulers through workers revolution.

Defend Chinese Deformed Workers State! For Workers Political Revolution!

The following article is reprinted from Workers Vanguard (No. 869, 28 April), newspaper of the Spartacist League/ U.S., section of the International Communist League.

In the recent period, differences within the Chinese state bureaucracy over the direction of economic policy have become highly visible. A number of Stalinist bureaucrats and ideologues worry that the layoffs and other dislocations produced by Beijing's "market reforms," which opened the door to investment by Western and Japanese imperialists and the overseas Chinese bourgeoisie, are laying the basis for an uncontrollable social explosion.

According to Chinese government statistics, there were 87,000 "mass incidents" of unrest last year—an average of some 240 per day—against corruption, social inequality, loss of benefits, seizure of peasants' land by officials without equitable compensation. The privatization of many state-owned factories has resulted in millions being laid off. The unrest has led to debate at a number of meetings and forums sponsored by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) between leading elements of the bureaucracy who want the economic "opening up" to continue unabated, self-styled "neo-Marxists" who want more state intervention to check the ravages of "market reforms," and Maoist "conservatives" who seek a return to a bureaucratically planned economy. A dispute over proposed legislation to protect private property rights at last month's meeting of the legislative body, the National People's Congress, resulted in the shelving of the draft law.

The situation in China highlights the Trotskyist understanding of that country as a deformed workers state, in which a privileged, parasitic bureaucracy sits atop the collectivized property forms created by the 1949 Revolution. Guided by a desire to protect its privileges, the bureaucracy defends state property only to the extent that it fears the proletariat. As Marxists, we see a collectivized economy with centralized economic planning based on workers democracy as essential for the development of the productive forces. Marxists seek to liberate the creative powers of humanity, which have been shackled by the capitalist system and earlier forms of class-divided society. This conception of a communist future presupposes a global economic order

"Left Forum" Debate on "Market Socialism"

based on the appropriation of the productive resources of the advanced capitalist countries through international proletarian revolution.

As our 1988 pamphlet "Market Socialism" in Eastern Europe explains:

"There is an inherent tendency for Stalinist regimes to abandon central planning in favor of an economic setup with the following major elements: output and prices determined through atomized competition between enterprises; investment, managerial salaries and workers' wages geared to enterprise profitability; unprofitable enterprises are shut down, resulting in unemployment; price subsidies are eliminated, resulting in a higher rate of inflation; the role of petty

Enfu, executive director of the Institute of Marxism at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, who declared: "If you accept Marxist economic ideas, you will agree that the government should have some control over the market economy" (Knight Ridder, 22 February).

Cheng was a featured speaker at a session of the "Left Forum" in New York City on March 12 titled "Marxist Views of China's Contemporary Development." Identifying himself as a "neo-Marxist," Cheng declared that in China "the proportion of private ownership is too high" and that "it is impossible to realize harmony in a privatized capitalist society."



China Labour Bulletin
Over 6,000 workers, mostly women, at Tianwang Textile Factory in China's Shaanxi Province struck for almost seven weeks in 2004 against Hong Kong capitalists who took over their plant.

capitalist entrepreneurs is expanded, especially in the service sector; increased commercial and financial ties to Western and Japanese capitalism, including joint ventures, are encouraged. These measures do not amount to creeping capitalism, as many Western bourgeois commentators and not a few confused leftists contend. But they do strengthen the internal forces for capitalist counterrevolution."

The basic weakness of central planning in China, as under Mao Zedong, was that it was based on bureaucratic commands and arbitrariness, rather than soviet democracy (workers councils). The result, as Leon Trotsky wrote in *The Revolution Betrayed* (1937) concerning the Soviet Union under Stalin, is that "Soviet products are as though branded with the gray label of indifference. Under a nationalized economy, quality demands a democracy of producers and consumers, freedom of criticism and initiative—conditions incompatible with a totalitarian regime of fear, lies and flattery."

Many of the dissident bureaucrats and intellectuals—at least those now being granted a public hearing by the CCP regime—have a modest reform program whose ultimate aim is to preserve the rule of the Stalinist bureaucracy. They call simply for increased government regulation and intervention—not even necessarily a return to state planning. Representative of this trend is Cheng

"What is necessary is a political revolution to establish workers democracy and, in so doing, strengthen the workers state. Also, another key problem of the economy is that it is built on the anti-Marxist dogma of 'socialism in one country.' The problem of scarcity in China—for that matter, in the entire world—can only be resolved through international socialist revolution."

A regime of workers and peasants councils would re-establish a centrally planned economy and with it a state monopoly of foreign trade. At the same time, it would seek to take advantage of the international division of labor by promoting a high level of exports and imports and would renegotiate economic agreements with U.S. and other capitalists in the workers' favor.

A corollary of "socialism in one country" is the bureaucracy's vain quest for "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism, a policy that has undermined the defense of the workers states, not least through the betrayal of proletarian revolutions internationally. Chinese president Hu Jintao's glad-handing last week in Washington with George W. Bush served as a reminder of Beijing's embrace of the "war on terror," which is directed against workers, the oppressed and anyone perceived by the U.S. imperialists to stand in their way. Washington has a two-pronged strategy for preparing capitalist counterrevolution in China, combining economic penetration with military pressure. The U.S. and Japan have strengthened their military agreements, including one to defend Taiwan and "counter the Chinese military threat." Bush's encouragement to India's nuclear program aims to further tighten the military noose around China.

It is the historical role of the Chinese working class to build a Leninist-Trotskyist party to lead the struggle for proletarian political revolution. As our comrades of the Spartacist Group of Japan wrote in "Why China Is Not Capitalist—Defend, Extend the Gains of the 1949 Revolution!" (WV No. 850, 10 June 2005):

"The Chinese workers and peasants have waged many struggles in the past ten years, but they are atomized and without a leadership whose perspective is to overthrow the political rule of the bureaucrats and place power in the hands of the workers, soldiers and peasants soviets. In addition to coordinating and leading the spontaneous and localized workers struggles, an international Trotskyist party would link the fight against the corrupt bureaucracy in China with that of the North Korean and Vietnamese workers against their Stalinist rulers. Such a party would work in concert with their comrades in Japan fighting for a workers revolution, and together with the class struggles of the militant Philippine and South Korean workers against their capitalist rulers."

The fate of the Chinese proletariat—and the fate of working people and the oppressed throughout the world—will be decided in the struggle for international socialist revolution, not least in the belly of the U.S. imperialist beast. ■

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Free Mumia!...

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death sentence but upheld every aspect of his frame-up conviction. In a short time, even as soon as six months, the court could decide what is next for Mumia: death, life in prison or more legal proceedings.

A prize-winning journalist, a Black Panther Party spokesman in his youth, a supporter of the MOVE organization and a defiant opponent of racist state terror, Mumia was railroaded to death row in 1982 by Philadelphia's notorious cop and court frame-up machine on false charges of killing Police Officer Daniel Faulkner. The frame-up of Mumia Abu-Jamal has come to symbolize what the racist death penalty is all about. A legacy of chattel slavery, capital punishment in the U.S. is the lynch rope made legal.

Mumia is an innocent man. But innocence means nothing to the forces of "law and order," represented by both the Democratic and Republican parties, who want to see Mumia dead because they see in him the spectre of black revolution, a voice of defiant opposition to the racist oppression of black people that is a cornerstone of American capitalism. The state's quarter-century-long determination to carry out his foul murder is a warning to all who challenge vicious cop repression in the ghettos and barrios, to workers who stand up for their rights on the picket lines, to those who protest U.S. imperialist depredations in Iraq, Afghanistan and around the world.

Mumia is up against the vast resources of the capitalist state and its mouthpieces in the bourgeois press who howl for his blood. Court after court has barred the confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Mumia, shot Faulkner, as well as the mountains of additional evidence of Mumia's innocence. With the execution last December of Stanley Tookie Williams, over substantial popular opposition, the bloody rulers sent a signal that they want Mumia next. California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger made this clear when, in denying clemency for Williams, he cited the fact that his book *Life in Prison* was dedicated to—among others—Mumia Abu-Jamal. To give an idea of what Mumia is up against: many of the Third Circuit judges testified for the reactionary Samuel Alito during his January Supreme Court confirmation hearings. Among the members of the Third Circuit is Marjorie Rendell, wife of Democratic Pennsylvania governor Ed Rendell, who was the Philadelphia D.A. during Mumia's frame-up trial and has spent his political life dedicated to seeing Mumia executed.

It was protests of millions worldwide, crucially involving trade unionists, that won a stay of execution for Mumia in August 1995. At the time, and over the next few years, Mumia's name was a household word. Articles about Mumia and his own written commentaries were a regular feature of the U.S. black press. Mumia's face was emblazoned on the



13 May 2000: Revolutionary Contingent at San Francisco rally opposed reliance on racist capitalist courts and politicians to free Mumia.

T-shirts of student activists and ghetto youth; his name became a symbol in hip-hop for racist frame-up and also rolled off the lips of many union activists. Not today. A movement of millions was demobilized. This can be seen in the dwindling attendance at annual demonstrations on Mumia's April 24 birthday. Time is running short. Mass protest must be rekindled now—nationally and internationally.

Mumia's freedom will not be won through reliance on the rigged "justice" system or on capitalist politicians, whether Democratic, Republican or Green. The power that can turn the tide is the power of millions—working people, anti-racist youth, death penalty abolitionists—united in struggle to demand the freedom of this innocent man. Crucial to this perspective is the mobilization of the labor movement, which gave a taste of its social power in New York City last December when striking transit workers crippled the financial center of U.S. capitalism.

Lessons must be drawn as to how Mumia's supporters were demobilized. The answer lies in the political program advanced by a host of liberal and reformist organizations that centered their protest actions around the call for a "new trial" for Mumia. That call represented a program of reliance on the racist capitalist courts which at every level have declared, as in the infamous Dred Scott case, that Mumia has no rights they are bound to respect.

Reformists' Faith in the Capitalist State

The call for freedom for victims of the capitalist frame-up system has historically been a staple of the workers movement: Free Sacco and Vanzetti, Free the Scottsboro Boys, Free Huey Newton, Free Angela Davis. The demand for their freedom expressed the belief that their imprisonment for even an hour was an

outrage. Since 1995, the call to free Mumia has been explicitly rejected as the basis for major mobilizations by the reformists of the Workers World Party (WWP), Socialist Action (SA) and the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), among others.

At a January 1999 "Emergency Leadership Summit Meeting," representatives of SA, Solidarity, WWP, the RCP's Refuse & Resist, International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal and others adopted a strategy and slogans for the April 24 "Millions for Mumia" demonstrations and beyond. Following a debate, the "free Mumia" slogan and opposition to the death penalty were rejected in favor of calling for a new trial. Solidarity's Steve Bloom approvingly wrote in *Against the Current* (March/April 1999): "Everyone who spoke from the podium sounded a similar theme: We must build a broader and more inclusive movement, one which reaches out to the American mainstream."

For the reformists, the "mainstream" included those who were agnostic on Mumia's innocence. At bottom, the "new trial" slogan was an appeal to bourgeois liberal forces who see Mumia's case not as the frame-up of an innocent man but as an isolated "miscarriage of justice," an aberration that threatens to stain the reputation of American "democracy."

To those liberal forces, Mumia is just another of the anonymous 3,300 men and women on death row, who should be provided all the trappings of "due process" before being sentenced to execution or life behind bars. Behind the attempts to limit the struggle for Mumia to a call for a new trial is a *political program* premised on reliance on the capitalist state—a program directly counterposed to a mobilization of working-class power for his freedom. The capitalist state and its courts are not neutral institutions but organs of repression against the working class and the oppressed. The reformists' approach dissipated the force of millions around the world who identified the fight for Mumia's freedom with the struggle against state terror and the fight against their own exploitation and oppression. Since taking up Mumia's case in 1987, the Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee have advocated pursuing all possible legal proceedings in Mumia's case. But we place all our faith in the power of the masses and no faith whatsoever in the justice of the courts. We realize that the courts will only respond if the pressure of the mass movement, particularly that of the labor movement, is brought to bear.

Although some opportunist "socialists" now raise freedom for Mumia in conjunction with calls for a "new trial," their politics remain in the framework of reliance

on the bourgeois state. The Labor Action Committee to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal, initiated by supporters of the International Bolshevik Tendency, organized a 2000 "Labor Conference for Mumia" that resolved to appeal to Clinton's Justice Department to investigate Mumia's case. The conference also resolved to lobby delegates to the Democratic National Convention to pass a motion calling for a new trial. Currently, WWP's International Action Center (IAC) Web site posts a petition to Pennsylvania's governor pleading that he direct the state attorney general to take over the case from the Philadelphia district attorney's office and "confess error" in the court.

Because the Beverly confession makes clear that Mumia's case consists of a conscious, racist, political frame-up of an innocent man, the response by bourgeois liberals and their reformist tails to this evidence has ranged from outright hostility to indifference. In 2001, Mumia's former co-counsel Dan Williams published a lying book titled *Executing Justice* that derided the Beverly confession as "insane," dismissing any suggestion that the cops knowingly framed up Mumia. Dave Lindorff—a regular contributor to the radical/liberal *CounterPunch* who is often cited as an expert on Mumia's case—was an early and loud voice trashing the Beverly confession. In an afterword to his book *Killing Time* (2003), Lindorff asks himself whether Mumia actually shot Faulkner and answers "maybe." This didn't stop the International Socialist Organization from lauding Lindorff's book for "exposing the flaws in Mumia's case" (*Socialist Worker*,



U.S. Workers World Party's International Action Center calls for "new trial," sowing illusions in capitalist "justice" system that is intent on executing Mumia.

16 December 2005). Over the past two years, *Workers World* has barely mentioned the Beverly confession, while Socialist Action has totally disappeared it.

The Court of Appeals ruled in December that Mumia could raise three issues on his appeal—the racially biased jury selection in his 1982 trial, the D.A.'s prejudicial summary argument that Mumia would have "appeal after appeal," and the grossly biased post-conviction state hearings before Judge Albert Sabo in the 1990s. These challenges should be heard in court. But every aspect of Mumia's case shows how much the capitalist rulers want him dead. Thus the harsh reality is that the Court of Appeals—like every other court in this case—has refused to hear the countless other violations of Mumia's rights or even consider the Beverly confession.

In a recent interview with the French Communist Party's newspaper, *L'Humanité* (25 April), Mumia said of the current appeal: "I have very little hope in a

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As Mumia Abu-Jamal's case has entered a legal "fast track" and his life is again in grave danger, the Partisan Defense Committee has initiated a new campaign to free Mumia that is winning important support in the U.S. and internationally. Several prominent authors attending a May 22-28 international PEN conference in Berlin, including Nobel prizewinner Nadine Gordimer, signed a statement issued by the PDC demanding "Free Mumia Abu-Jamal now! Abolish the racist death penalty!" In Mexico, Subcomandante Marcos of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) signed the statement, giving his return address as "mountains of southeast Mexico." Uruguayan writer Eduardo Galeano has also added his signature.

Gordimer, a staunch opponent of South Africa's former racist apartheid regime, wrote one of her most famous books, *Burger's Daughter* (1979), in the aftermath of the 1976 Soweto uprising, during which black students and other protesters were slaughtered. Many of her books were banned in South Africa during that period. Others who signed the PDC statement at the PEN conference included Jiří Gruša—president of PEN international, an organization that defends writers against persecution—poet Chenjerai Hove of Zimbabwe and Israeli peace activist Uri Avnery of Gush Shalom.

The U.S. capitalist state, its cops and courts have wanted Mumia dead for decades. And today, Mumia's foes are also stepping up their efforts. We have previously reported that the Paris suburb of Saint-Denis named a street in honor of Mumia on April 29 (see "Mumia Honored in France," WV No. 870, 12 May). In response, the Philadelphia and national Fraternal Order of Police launched a counterattack, sparking renewed tirades against Mumia and his supporters by bourgeois politicians and the Philadelphia

Campaign Update

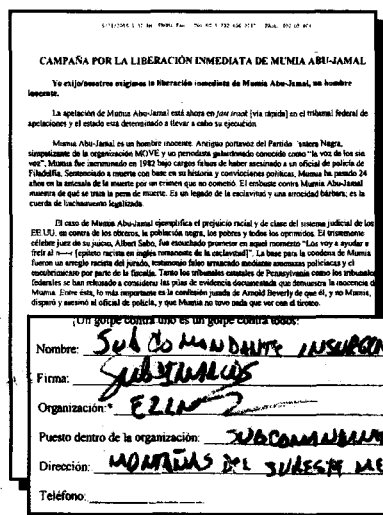
media. A resolution introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives (H. Con. Res. 407) and sponsored by several Pennsylvania Congressmen, both Democrats and Republicans, demands that the French government take action against Saint-Denis unless it changes the street name.

This sinister blowback points to the urgency of redoubling efforts to fight for Mumia. While favoring all possible legal proceedings on Mumia's behalf, the PDC launched its current campaign based on the understanding that it is only through

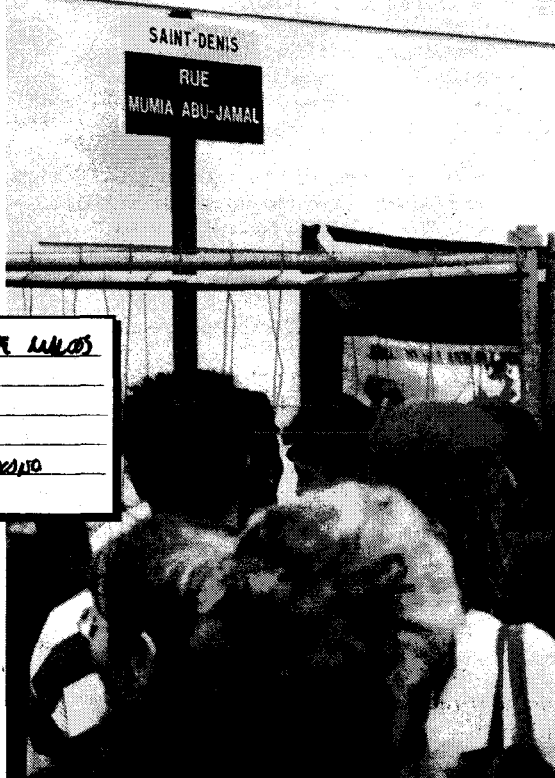
mobilizing the social power of the working class in mass protest that Mumia's freedom can be won. Crucially important is winning active support for this campaign in the labor movement, in the U.S. and around the world.

Adding to numerous unions and trade union officials that have joined the fight for Mumia, the New York chapter of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU) recently signed the PDC statement. At the CBTU's May 24-29 international convention in Orlando, Florida,

Le Bolchévik



Street named in honour of Mumia Abu-Jamal in Saint-Denis, outside Paris, 29 April. Inset: Endorsement of campaign to free Mumia received from Zapatista leader Subcomandante Marcos, from the "mountains of southeast Mexico."



PDC representatives addressed several meetings, and over 60 labor officials and activists endorsed the statement. Among them were UAW members from the Detroit area, AFSCME officials from across the U.S., International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) representatives from southeastern ports and members of the Ontario Federation of Labor in Canada.

Additional signatories include Ken Riley, president of ILA Local 1422 in Charleston, South Carolina; Chris Silvera, Secretary Treasurer of Teamsters Local 808 in New York; and Mary Selvie, Chairman of the Chicago area UAW Region 4 Women's Committee. Internationally, labor activists from Germany, Australia, Sweden and Bangladesh have signed the PDC statement. The National Council of Trade Unions in South Africa has issued its own statement in defense of Mumia. In Britain, the Southwark Branch of the UNISON public service union and Mike Gallagher, secretary of the Poplar Branch of the University and College Lecturers' Union at Tower Hamlets College, London, have also issued statements.

Also last month, PDC representatives brought Mumia's case to a Labor Notes Conference in Detroit and to the International Longshore and Warehouse Union convention in Vancouver, Canada. The PDC also gave a presentation on Mumia's case to an event commemorating the 40th anniversary of the Black Panther Party in New York City. Focusing on urgently needed financial support for Mumia's defense efforts, a fundraiser on Manhattan's Lower East Side sponsored by the New York Labor Black League, which is fraternally associated with the Spartacist League, raised over \$400. Meanwhile, campaign supporters in Chicago are building for a major June 15 jazz benefit. **Join the campaign! Free Mumia!** ■

favorable decision from the Federal Court which has agreed to look at three points of the petition submitted to appeal by my lawyers." The reformists have a very different appreciation. The IAC hailed the December ruling as a "resounding federal court victory." Refuse & Resist posted an article by Lindorff headlined, "A Stunning Win for Mumia Abu-Jamal." Not to be outdone, Socialist Action's Jeff Mackler declared, "There are several possible outcomes. The worst—but least expected—scenario would be one in which Sabo's unconstitutional sentencing instructions are upheld, and Mumia faces execution" (*Socialist Action*, December 2005). This touching faith in the court process was the last statement on Mumia's case to have appeared in *Socialist Action*.

For Class-Struggle Defence!

In describing a late stage in the court proceedings that led to the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti in 1927, James P. Cannon, founder of the International Labor Defense, wrote:

"The latest move should be suspected as another maneuver of the same sort, designed to give the outward appearance of still more scrupulous 'fairness' in the process by which the two labor fighters are to be burned alive.

"Remember, also, that powerful influences of the exploiting class are being brought to bear for the carrying out of the death sentence, and that the final issue, just because it is an issue of the class struggle, and not merely an isolated instance of the miscarriage of their so-called 'justice,' will depend upon the power and might of the class forces set into motion on each side.

"The great task, therefore, in the few fateful days remaining, up to the last minute of the last hour, is to put all energy, courage and militancy into the organization of mass demonstrations and protest strikes. All brakes upon this movement must be regarded as the greatest danger. All illusions which paralyze the move-

ment must be overcome. All agents of the bosses who try to sabotage and discredit the protest and strike movement must be given their proper name."

The road to victory in Mumia's case begins with the understanding that the class enemy is determined to carry out his execution. The multiracial working class has every interest in fighting against that outcome, which would further bolster the machinery of capitalist state violence whose ultimate target is the working class.

If labor's power is to be brought to bear on behalf of Mumia, it must be mobilized independent of the very forces of the capitalist state that framed up this innocent

man. Based on the only significant integration in racist America, the trade unions have the social power and potential to become battalions in the struggle against exploitation and racist oppression. If undertaken with a mobilization of the union movement, the fight to free Mumia would be a first giant step in that direction. Integrated unions representing millions of workers have gone on record in support of Mumia. That these millions have not been mobilized *in action* to combat this racist frame-up is the responsibility of the pro-capitalist labor misleaders, who fear calling their members into action to defend

their economic interests, much less in defense of blacks, immigrants and others cast off to starve in the streets or locked away in prison hellholes.

The fight to free Mumia and all class-war prisoners is an integral part of our struggle to forge a Leninist vanguard party to lead the working class in socialist revolution. Such a party must act as the champion of all the exploited and oppressed, recognizing that the liberation of labor from the chains of capitalist exploitation is inextricably linked to the fight for black freedom. **Free Mumia now! Abolish the racist death penalty!** ■

Join the Campaign!

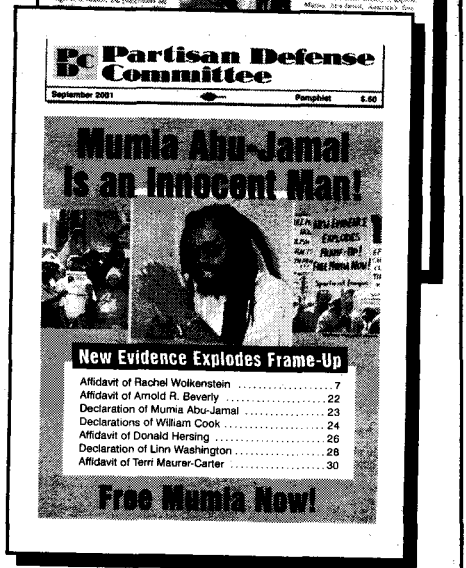
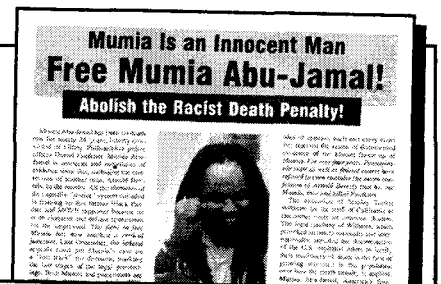
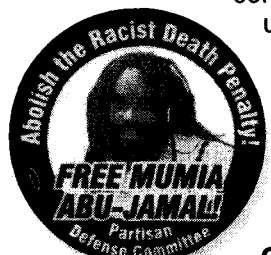
Funds are urgently needed for legal defence!

Make a contribution today, payable to Partisan Defence Committee, write "Mumia legal defence" on the back of the cheque and mail to the address below. Every cent of such contributions is transmitted to Mumia's legal defence team via Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal in New York.

Organise protest! Pass motions in your unions, campus, community and religious organisations demanding Mumia's freedom. Get your union or organisation to make a contribution and join rallies and protests for Mumia. Publicise Mumia's case in your union or organisation's newsletter.

Spread the word! Contact the PDC for copies of our pamphlet, *Mumia Abu-Jamal Is an Innocent Man!* This 32-page pamphlet arms activists in the struggle for Mumia's freedom with the explosive evidence which completely destroys the more than two-decades-long frame-up of this eloquent fighter for black freedom. It is available for 50 cents. Get the PDC badge: "Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!"—\$1 each. Order the PDC video, *From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal*—\$10 for DVD. Bundles of the 4-page brochure, *Mumia Is an Innocent Man: Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!*—\$2 for 25 copies.

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Iran...

(continued from page 12)

to the Democratic Party, that Iran has to be "dealt with." If anything, the Democrats have been more belligerent over Iran, with a common criticism of Bush being that the occupation of Iraq has been a distraction from dealing more forcibly with Iran, as well as with the North Korean deformed workers state.

As the bipartisan threats demonstrate, the greatest menace to the workers and oppressed of the world is the U.S. imperialist rulers—who have not only acquired the means to destroy the world several times over, but who have actually carried out nuclear holocaust, incinerating some 200,000 Japanese people in the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. The Iranian regime says that its nuclear energy program does not include plans to develop the bomb. The fact of the matter is that in the context of threats by the nuclear-armed imperialists, Iran clearly *needs* nukes to defend itself and deter a U.S. attack. In today's world, possession of nuclear arms has become the only real measure of national sovereignty. As a Pentagon "war on terror" adviser quoted by Hersh observed, "The Iranians realize that only by *becoming* a nuclear state can they defend themselves against the U.S." Recall that in 2003—notwithstanding the Bush administration's lies that Saddam Hussein had amassed "weapons of mass destruction"—it was precisely Iraq's obvious vulnerability, after more than a decade of U.S.-dictated United Nations sanctions and disarmament programs had stripped it of the means to defend itself, that paved the way for the second Persian Gulf War and Iraq occupation.

With its military currently overstretched, the U.S. cannot launch an all-out invasion and occupation of Iran without reinstating the draft, an option seen by most bourgeois politicians as likely political suicide. This underlines that the threats of military strikes against Iran, including a nuclear attack, are very real as they do not require the mass mobilization of troops.

With the exception of the U.S., all other members of the United Nations Security Council today formally oppose military action against Iran. At the same time, they have all ordered Iran, which announced on April 11 that it had succeeded in enriching uranium, to stop its atomic activities, hinting that the country will be subject to sanctions if it does not obey. The UN is historically little more than a fig leaf for the dominant imperialist power.

In "U.S. Hands Off Iran!" (WV No. 863, 3 February) we urged:

"In the event of military attack against Iran by U.S. imperialism or by Israel, or by any other force operating on behalf of the imperialists, we Marxists declare: *The international proletariat must stand for the military defense of Iran against imperialist attack.* At the same time, we



Tarakan/Polaris

June 2005: Iranian women demonstrate equality in front of Tehran University.

give not one iota of political support to the reactionary Tehran regime. Our defense of capitalist Iran is conditional: In military conflicts between an imperialist power and a dependent semicolonial country, our policy is revolutionary defensism. We defend the oppressed country against the oppressor country and promote class struggle in the imperialist centers, as well as in the oppressed country. Every victory for the imperialists in their military adventures encourages more predatory wars; every setback serves to assist the struggles of working people and the oppressed."

In the lead-up to the U.S. invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, we called for the military defense of both countries against attack without giving any political support to the reactionary Taliban or the bloody capitalist regime of Saddam Hussein. Today, we call for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. and allied troops from Afghanistan, Iraq and Central Asia.

We fight for class struggle against the U.S. capitalist rulers at home. The same ruling class that is butchering the people of Iraq, that is threatening Iran, is also carrying out a war against the working people of the U.S.—shredding democratic rights through the reactionary "war on terror," gutting pensions and health care, crushing unions. It is the same ruling class that abandoned the black and poor of the Gulf Coast to Hurricane Katrina. Its interests and the interests of the working people of the U.S. are polar opposites. Our perspective for class struggle demands a political fight against the pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy, which chains the U.S. proletariat to its class enemy, most often through the capitalist Democratic Party, under the rubric of the "national interest."

The "national interest" is the class interest of the bourgeoisie. We fought for the military defense of Iraq and Afghanistan—and would stand for the military defense of Iran against U.S. attack—not least because these positions express the vital interests of the multiracial U.S. proletariat. We fight to build a multiracial revolutionary workers party in the U.S. to lead the American proletariat

in struggle for socialist revolution and the establishment of working-class rule.

The International Communist League's struggle is to forge workers parties throughout the world to fight for international socialist revolution, including in backward countries such as Iran. While the bulk of the left internationally cheered on the victory of the mullahs against the CIA-backed Shah in Iran in 1979 as "anti-imperialist," we said, "Down with the Shah! No to the mullahs! Workers to power!"

Iran is ruled by a reactionary mullah regime that has enslaved women under the veil, slaughtered thousands of leftists

totally destroying the sites, little choice but to consider the use of tactical nuclear weapons." Iran today has at least nine different nuclear facilities, mainly underground, including the main centrifuge plant at Natanz, nearly 200 miles south of Tehran. The military proposed this winter to use a "bunker-buster" tactical nuclear weapon like the B61-11 against such sites. Hersh quoted one former senior intelligence official:

"Every other option, in the view of the nuclear weaponeers, would leave a gap. 'Decisive' is the key word of the Air Force's planning. It's a tough decision. But we made it in Japan.... Nuclear planners go through extensive training and learn the technical details of damage and fallout—we're talking about mushroom clouds, radiation, mass casualties, and contamination over years. This is not an underground nuclear test, where all you see is the earth raised a little bit."

The U.S. stockpile of some 10,000 nuclear warheads reportedly includes about 50 such B61-11 nuclear weapons, known as earth-penetrating weapons or EPWs. A May 2005 report on EPWs, by Lisbeth Gronlund, David Wright and Robert Nelson of the Union of Concerned Scientists, gave the following as a possible scenario, using a 1.2 megaton thermonuclear warhead (which dwarfs what was dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki): "According to a simulation using software developed for the Pentagon, if one of these weapons were used against the underground nuclear facility



Occupation troops in house-to-house search in Tal Afar, Iraq. U.S./British/Australian invasion and occupation has devastated the country.

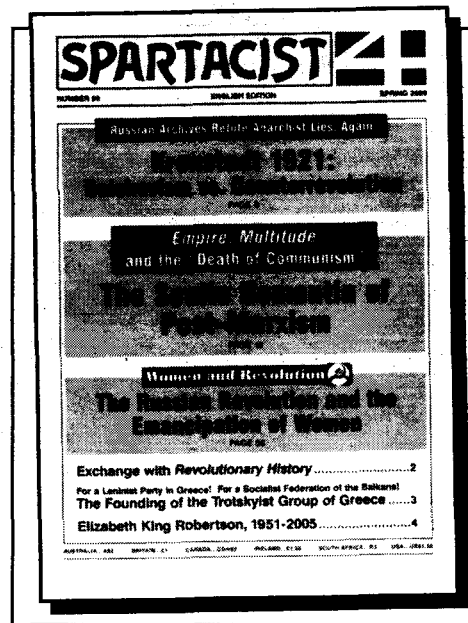
and trade unionists and intensified repression against Kurds and other minorities. A recent bus workers strike in Tehran, one of an increasing number of strikes in the country, has been met by fierce government repression, including the jailing of strikers and their leaders. It is the task of the working class in Iran, leading all the oppressed behind it, to overthrow the Persian-chauvinist Islamic regime. Key to this perspective is the forging of a Marxist workers party. The fight to forge Marxist workers parties in the Near East is essential to break the proletariat of the region from fundamentalism and all forms of nationalism in the struggle for a socialist federation of the Near East. This is the Trotskyist perspective of permanent revolution, which vitally includes the fight to extend working-class rule to the imperialist centers, not least through the struggle for socialist revolution in the U.S.

Down With U.S. Nuclear Blackmail!

Hersh's article details that the Bush administration's quest for "regime change" in Iran is at least partly predicated on a growing acceptance within the Pentagon of using tactical nuclear weapons to achieve its aims. As Hersh puts it, "The lack of reliable intelligence leaves military planners, given the goal of

in Esfahan, Iran, 3 million people would be killed by radiation within 2 weeks of the explosion, and 35 million people in Afghanistan, Pakistan and India would be exposed to increased levels of cancer-causing radiation."

But it's not only Iran that the Dr. Strangelove military planners view as a feasible potential nuclear target. The Bush administration's January 2002 Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) ordered the Pentagon to draft plans for the use of nuclear weapons against at least seven countries—Iraq, Iran, North Korea, China, Libya, Syria and Russia (which was later struck from the list)—because "all have long-standing hostility towards the United States and its security partners. All sponsor or harbor terrorists, and have active WMD [weapons of mass destruction] and



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missile programs." The supposed existence of Iraqi WMDs, of course, has since been proven a lie.

The NPR also called to develop improved "bunker-busting mini-nukes," as they were termed in the *Los Angeles Times* (9 March 2002) article that first revealed the NPR. In fact, following the 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, calls were made to use tactical nuclear weapons in Afghanistan for the demented purpose of destroying, not even deep underground bunkers, but the caves said to be harboring Al Qaeda operatives.

U.S. imperialist musings over nuclear weapons as a feasible military option have escalated since September 11, which can partly be attributed to the especially defanged nature of the Bush administration. As one House member commented to Hersh, "The most worrisome thing is that this guy has a messianic vision." Or as *New York Times* (19 April) columnist Thomas Friedman put it, faced with a choice of nuclear-armed Iran or an attack carried out by Bush & Co., "I'd rather live with a nuclear Iran." As war-crazed as the Bush administration is, sporadic calls by the U.S. ruling class to use its massive nuclear arsenal have occurred as long as these weapons have existed. Among the more recent calls, in 1996 during the Clinton administration, consideration was given to carrying out a tactical nuclear attack on a Libyan chemical weapons facility at Tarhuna.

Defend China!

The U.S. historically amassed its lethal stockpile of nuclear arms—and dropped the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945—for the primary purpose of threatening and ultimately destroying the Soviet Union. The USSR, the world's first workers state, was born through the only successful workers revolution, led by Lenin and Trotsky's Bolshevik Party in October 1917. Although political counterrevolution led by Stalin in 1923-24 resulted in the Soviet Union's bureaucratic degeneration, the USSR's existence served to deny a sixth of the globe to capitalist exploitation and acted as an obstacle to the imperialist ambitions of the U.S. and other powers. The Soviets' development of nuclear weapons and delivery systems in parity with the U.S. stayed the hand of U.S. imperialism. Democrats and Republicans were united in pursuing the Cold War drive against the Soviet Union and gloated over the supposed "death of communism" signaled by capitalist counterrevolution there in 1991-92.

To the end, we called for the unconditional military defense of the Soviet degenerated workers state against imperialism and capitalist counterrevolution, and recognized that its collapse was a world-historic defeat for the international proletariat and oppressed. We stand for the unconditional military defense of the remaining deformed workers states—China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba. China was cited in the 2002 NPR as "a country that could be involved in an immediate or potential [nuclear] contingency." The report speculated that this could result from a military conflict such as over the status of capitalist Taiwan, while another possible scenario for using nukes would be against North Korea in response to an attack on South Korea.

Indeed, the U.S. saber rattling against Iran poses a threat to the Chinese deformed workers state, U.S. imperialism's strategic target in the post-Soviet world. China gets 14 percent of the oil for its growing economy from Iran, and in late 2004 signed a \$70 billion deal with Iran for oil and natural gas for some 30 years. It is vital that China oppose the imperialist drive to disarm Iran. However, the Beijing Stalinists' policy of

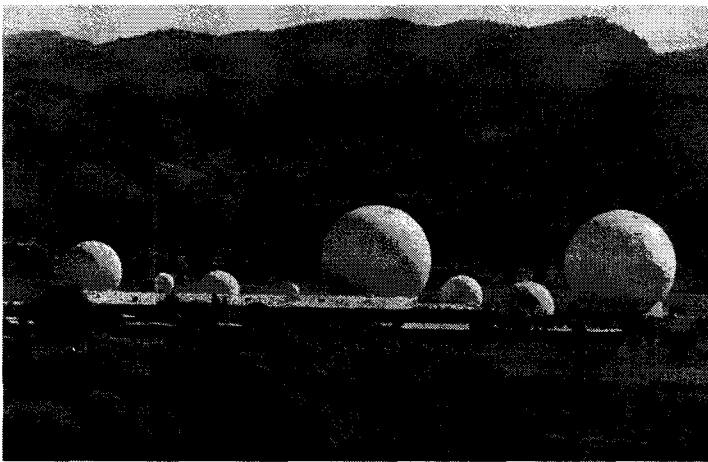
"peaceful coexistence" with imperialism undermines China's own defense. While verbally opposing UN sanctions against Iran, Beijing has collaborated with the imperialists on Iran and recently condemned the Iranian government for successfully enriching uranium. As part of our defense of the Chinese workers state, we fight for workers political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy and replace it with a regime based on workers democracy and revolutionary internationalism.

Proliferation of U.S. Bases

The London *Independent* (2 April) quoted Professor Zoltan Grossman stating: "After every US military intervention since 1990 the Pentagon has left behind clusters of new bases in areas where it never before had a foothold. The new string of bases stretch from Kosovo and

As well as targeting North Korean and Chinese deformed workers states, Pine Gap U.S. spy base in Central Australia will be used to pinpoint targets in any future nuclear strike on Iran.

Centralian Advocate



adjacent Balkan states, to Iraq and other Persian Gulf states, into Afghanistan and other central Asian states...The only two obstacles to a geographically contiguous US sphere of influence are Iran and Syria."

Even as the Bush administration insists that the U.S. occupation of Iraq will end some day, upon the establishment of what the U.S. deems a viable government there, it has been pouring money into military bases that are widely recognized, if not officially, to be permanent. The U.S. has set up 110 forward operating bases in Iraq, of which only 34 have reportedly been turned over to the puppet government there. According to the *Independent*, occupation forces are spending millions to establish at least six "enduring" bases, at least four of which would continue to be operated by the U.S. indefinitely.

Former Marine Anthony Zinni, head of the U.S. Central Command in the late 1990s, is among those who oppose the building of permanent bases in Iraq, arguing that they further damage the image of the U.S. abroad. He is also one of the half dozen retired generals—war criminals all, half of them with years' experience in leading the Iraq occupation—who are now loudly calling for Donald Rumsfeld's resignation. The military doesn't generally protest when it sees its war is going well. The context for the generals' rebellion is the fact that Iraq, which was supposed to be a showpiece for American "democracy" in the region, has instead become an inferno. What the generals want is a more effective military.

Polls show that popular opposition to the occupation of Iraq is at an all-time high. That, combined with innumerable domestic scandals and embarrassing leaks, has led to an all-time low in the polls for the Bush administration, which has presumably contributed to the reshuffling of posts in the White House, including the departure of White House spokesman Scott McClellan and the reassignment of Karl Rove.

Break with the Democrats! For a Revolutionary Workers Party!

With the Bush administration in serious political trouble, the organizers of the

antiwar protests are working to set the stage for a Democratic Party victory in this year's Congressional elections and the 2008 presidential election by pushing the Democrats to "really" oppose the occupation of Iraq. That will be the message delivered at the April 29 New York City antiwar protest initiated by United for Peace and Justice. The call for the demonstration declares: "Our message to the White House and to Congress is clear: Either stand with us or stand aside! We are coming together to march, to vote, to speak out and to turn our country around!"

The April 29 demonstration is being built by several pseudo-socialist organizations, such as Workers World Party (WWP) and the International Socialist Organization (ISO). WWP, which initiated the International ANSWER coalition

and currently leads the Troops Out Now Coalition, wrote in an editorial that antiwar activists must "make the message 'Stop War on Iran!' an inescapable element in this [April 29] and every major demonstration from now on" (*Workers World*, 13 April). The reality is, however, that Workers World has from the beginning of the antiwar protests sought to appeal to Democratic Party liberals, who, if anything, have been even more hawkish on Iran than the Bush administration. A 13 April *Workers World* article complains that "to this day the Democratic Party leadership won't take a clear anti-war stand."

The dividing line separating us from the reformist leftists like Workers World and the ISO is political program. As Marxists, we understand that war, racist oppression and exploitation are inherent to the capitalist system, a system that cannot be reformed to serve the interests of working people and the oppressed.

Only socialist revolution, by ripping power from the hands of the capitalists and placing it in the hands of the working class, can end imperialist war.

The reformists, however, spread the illusion that capitalism can be reformed—that we can have an end to imperialist war, racism and exploitation under the present social order. Thus, a common slogan raised by WWP and the ISO is, "Money for jobs and education, not for war," as though the problem were one of reordering the priorities of the capitalists. The bourgeoisie's top priority is to maintain and defend its capitalist system of exploitation, which necessarily entails the waging of wars—against both neocolonial countries and their imperialist rivals (as took place in World Wars I and II).

To the reformists, the capitalist system is their system. Very revealing is the slogan commonly promoted by the various antiwar coalitions, "Bring the Troops Home." This slogan is meant to evoke sympathy for the U.S. armed forces and serves to clean up the tarnished image of U.S. imperialism. Even more explicitly, the call for the April 29 demonstration declares, "End the war in Iraq—Bring all our troops home now!" Meanwhile, a "model resolution" for labor unions on the Web site of "U.S. Labor Against the War," an outfit largely made up of left-talking union bureaucrats that has endorsed the April 29 demonstration, is titled: "Support Our Troops & Veterans—End the War and Bring Them Home Now!" These are not "our" troops! U.S. troops in Iraq are the enforcers of a vicious occupation that by some estimates has cost the lives of 100,000 Iraqis. The photo of Lynndie England, dog leash in hand abusing a naked Iraqi prisoner, is a graphic reminder of the routine brutality meted out by imperialism's military enforcers.

The U.S. working class uniquely has the social power to bring down the U.S. imperialist beast. The key to unlocking this power is breaking the class collaborationism pushed by the labor tops and their fake-socialist backers. It is necessary to break the chains forged by the labor tops that bind the proletariat to the capitalist Democratic Party. If there is to be an end to imperialist war, racist oppression and poverty, the multiracial working class must be won, through Marxist education and its own experience in struggle, to the fight for a revolutionary workers party to defeat U.S. imperialism through socialist revolution. ■

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For a Class-Struggle Fight to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!

We reprint below articles from *Workers Vanguard* (No. 872, 9 June), fortnightly newspaper of the Spartacist League/U.S., on the international campaign to free U.S. death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. In Australia, the Spartacist League, Spartacus Youth Clubs and Partisan Defence Committee are fighting to mobilise anti-racist and anti-death penalty activists within the trade unions, on campuses and beyond, to take up the fight for Mumia's freedom. Already Kevin Bracken, state secretary of the powerful Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) has signed a statement on behalf of the Victorian branch of the MUA demanding, "Free Mumia Abu-Jamal now! Abolish the racist death penalty!" Other union officials who have individually signed statements for Mumia's freedom include Martin Neal, a delegate of the Meatworkers Union (AMIEU) in Victoria, E. John Williams, Melbourne shop steward of the Manufacturing Workers Union (AMWU Metals Division) and Roy

Marsters, Industrial Officer of the Transport Workers Union (TWU) in NSW. The prisoners' rights group Justice Action has also demanded Mumia's freedom and in a 9 June statement Brisbane Aboriginal leader Sam Watson declared: "Mumia must be allowed to walk free. He is a warrior for his people and his voice is one that must never be silenced."

On 3 June in Melbourne and 9 June in Sydney, PDC forums featuring the powerful documentary video *From Death Row, This is Mumia Abu-Jamal* focused attention on the struggle ahead in this country. From the incarceration of refugees and many citizens in immigrant concentration camps, to the bogus "war on terror" which particularly targets Middle Eastern, South Asian and other Asian people, racist state terror is a cutting edge of capitalist rule in Australia. The grim list of Aboriginal deaths at the hands of cops and prison screws grows longer every year. John Pat, Eddie Murray, David Gundy, Colleen

Richman, TJ Hickey and Mulrunji Doomadgee are just some of the hundreds of victims of relentless state-sanctioned killings perpetrated under both Liberal and Labor governments alike.

As we stated in our leaflet advertising the video showings:

"The fight to free Mumia Abu-Jamal and to abolish the racist U.S. death penalty is an *international* struggle. It was only in 1985 that the last legal vestiges of the death penalty were removed federally by the parliament and the High Court in this country. The abolition of the state's legal 'right' to capital punishment is a gain that must be defended down the line. In 1967 Ronald Ryan was the last victim of official hanging in a case that mobilised massive opposition to his execution, including militant protests by waterside workers in Victoria."

Raising our voices here to free Mumia Abu-Jamal includes a fight against domestic state terror and the profit-gouging bosses' racist divide-and-rule schemes, and also against any attempts by the capi-



Saul/Philadelphia Inquirer

talist rulers to reimpose barbaric capital punishment and bolster their machinery of repression which ultimately targets the working class. Join the campaign! Take up the fight to *free Mumia now!*

The fight to free Mumia Abu-Jamal has reached a critical juncture. Last December, the U.S. Third Circuit Court of Appeals put Mumia's case on a "fast track" for decision. Both Mumia and the prosecutors are appealing decisions made in 2001 by U.S. District Court judge William Yohn, who overturned Mumia's

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U.S./Australia Hands Off Iran! Out of Iraq Now!

Imperialists Threaten Iran

The following article in opposition to imperialist threats against Iran is reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* (No. 869, 28 April), newspaper of the Spartacist League/U.S., section of the International Communist League. Unsurprisingly, the Australian imperialist government has fully backed its U.S. big brother against Iran. For their part, ALP leaders, while muttering about the need for diplomacy, declare that Iran should not be allowed to have nuclear weapons and must comply with decisions of the UN Security Council.

This targeting of Iran's nuclear program is rich coming from Liberal and Labor leaders who embrace a military alliance with the U.S., a country which has stockpiled enough nuclear weapons to destroy the world several times over. Indeed, as noted below, history shows that the U.S. is the only country to have used nuclear weapons in wartime. We bitterly recall the enthusiastic support given by the Australian capitalist rulers to the U.S.'s horrific nuclear incineration of an estimated 200,000 Japanese civilians in the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945.

Doubtless Pine Gap and other U.S. spy bases in Australia, which collect electronic and photographic intelligence from around the world, are currently being used by the war-crazed rulers in Washington to

target Iran. *U.S./Australian imperialists hands off Iran! Down with the U.S./Australia alliance! U.S. bases out now!*

"All options are on the table." That was the response of George W. Bush, head of the most blood-drenched, massively armed imperialist power in history, on April 18 when asked whether his administration is considering nuclear strikes against Iran under the pretext that Iran is developing nuclear weapons. The whistle was first blown by the *New Yorker's* Seymour Hersh, who argued in a thoroughly documented article, "The Iran Plans" (*New Yorker* Web site, 8 April), that even as the Bush administration goes through the motions of pursuing "diplomacy" to stop Iran from developing a nuclear weapon, it has stepped up covert activities aimed at overthrowing the Iranian government and escalated plans for a major air attack. As Hersh revealed and as a series of *Washington Post* articles described in further chilling detail, such an attack may or may not involve deploying part of the U.S.'s own massive stockpile of "tactical" nuclear weapons against Iran's underground nuclear sites.

There is clear agreement across the U.S. bourgeois political spectrum, from the religious fanatics in the White House

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Andrew Taylor

May 2006: PM Howard celebrates reactionary U.S./Australia alliance with U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. Right: Iranian women form human chain at Isfahan Uranium Conversion Facility in support of Iran's nuclear program, 22 January.

