

“War on Terror” = War on Immigrants, Blacks, Labor

Fight for a Workers America!

DECEMBER 20—Moving a step closer to war, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell hit the airwaves last night to declare that Iraq had committed a “material breach” of the recently passed United Nations Security Council resolution. The supposed breach came in the form of the 12,000-page report submitted by Iraq earlier this month detailing the country’s weapons programs. From the moment the report was issued, before even one word of it was translated from the original Arabic, the U.S. and British imperialists went on a propaganda rampage, declaring it all to be “lies.” As an Iraqi official noted, “Obviously they haven’t read it. They didn’t even bother.” The Bush administration is intent on waging a reactionary imperialist war against Iraq; all the UN resolutions, the weapons inspections and the like are merely meant to provide a cover for U.S. imperialism’s designs.

The weapons inspections themselves are nothing more than a *pretext* for war. If chief inspector Hans Blix and his cohorts find something, then the U.S. will have its ostensible reason to go to war; if nothing is found, then Iraq is obviously “hiding something” and war is needed to disarm it. In fact, it was not until Blix condemned Iraq’s report that Powell made his comments, declaring: “The inspectors said that Iraq has failed to provide new information. We agree.” And even while the inspectors roam the country, U.S. and

continued on page 8



Young Spartacus
SL/SYC contingent at September 28 demonstration in San Francisco protesting war moves against Iraq and calling for defense of Palestinian people.

Defend Iraq Against U.S. Attack!

Hundreds Arrested in Racist INS Roundup in Los Angeles

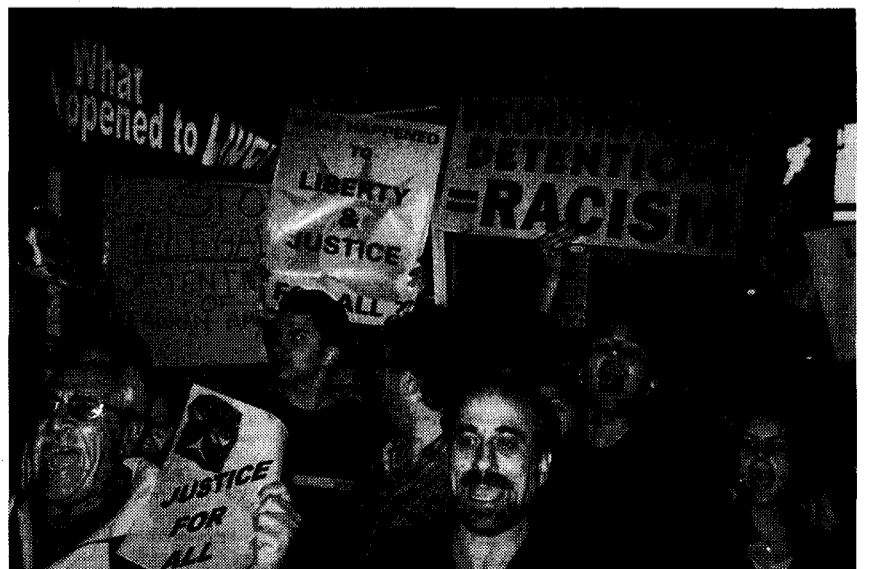
Free All the Detainees!

LOS ANGELES, December 21—More than 3,000 people, predominantly Iranian Americans, gathered at the federal building in Westwood on December 18 to protest the arrest of hundreds of Near Eastern men and boys who had been ordered to register with the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Some put the number of arrests as high as 1,000. Detainees were herded into mass holding cells and threatened with deportation. Arrests have also

taken place in Houston, Cleveland, Washington, D.C. and other cities. This adds a chilling new chapter in the U.S. government’s escalating racist state repression under the rubric of the “war on terror.”

The arrests took place when thousands complied with an order by Attorney General John Ashcroft that *all* males 16 and over from Iran, Iraq, Syria, Libya and Sudan who are not citizens or permanent residents register at an INS office by December 16. Those who showed up were photographed, fingerprinted and subjected to humiliating “interviews.” Many of these men have lived in the U.S. for over 20 years and had valid worker, student or visitor visas; many had pending applications for permanent residency. As the

continued on page 2



WV Photo
December 18: Thousands rally outside Westwood Federal Building in Los Angeles to protest anti-immigrant roundups.



INS Roundup...

(continued from page 1)

Chicago Tribune (20 December 2002) reported, this INS "program is part of the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System, designed to track millions of foreigners on temporary visas." Residents from 15 additional countries must also submit to this draconian program in the next two months. Ranging from Afghanistan and Pakistan to Yemen, Tunisia and other Islamic bourgeois societies, the list also includes North Korea, a bureaucratically deformed workers state in the cross hairs of U.S. imperialism's drive for capitalist counterrevolution.

Many in L.A. and Orange County were detained on the basis of alleged "visa violations" which were in fact caused by the failure of the INS to process its own paperwork in a timely fashion. According to the Los Angeles Times (20 December 2002), the INS "claims it had to lock some people up because it couldn't process the crush that showed up too close to the December 16 registration deadline." The detainees were strip-searched, hosed down with cold water and in many cases forced to sleep outside or on bitterly cold concrete floors in rooms holding 50

Some detainees were shipped hundreds of miles away to an INS holding facility in Arizona. One 16-year-old was seen being pulled from his crying pregnant mother, who was told by a sadistic INS agent that her son would never return home. Most were held for at least three days, often denied drinking water and given limited food rations. L.A. radio reported that one man died after being denied medicine.

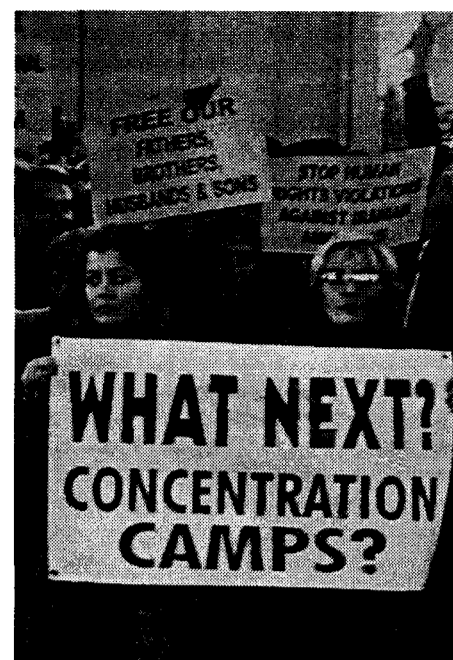
Protesters at the December 18 demonstration chanted, "Free our people now!" and raised placards demanding, "Free Our Fathers, Brothers, Husbands and Sons." Some banners pointedly asked, "What Next? Concentration Camps?" Many raised the similarity between the current mass roundup of Near Eastern immigrants and the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II. At that time, the U.S. government coupled its war in the Pacific against its Japanese imperialist rival with the roundup of its perceived Japanese American "enemies within." Now, as U.S. imperialism prepares a new devastating war against semicolonial Iraq, immigrants from the Near East in particular are deemed suspect, with legal residents from Iraq and even U.S. citizens of Iraqi descent targeted for mass detention. According to the New York Times (17 November 2002), "In the event of an American invasion of

Iraq, officials would intensify the program's mission through arrests and detentions of Iraqis or Iraq sympathizers if they are believed to be planning domestic terrorist operations" (see "Government Threatens Roundup of Iraqi Americans," WV No. 792, 29 November 2002).

While immigrants from Christian Armenia were initially included in the registration requirements, this was quickly withdrawn as a "mistake." Many of the Iranian men arrested in L.A. were Jews, including those who fled Iran after the victory of Ayatollah Khomeini's "Islamic Revolution," and are now being persecuted as perceived Muslims. Combining sheer ignorance with racist contempt, the INS in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, according to one Arab American spokesman, "informed" the Near Eastern community about the registration requirements by contacting the local "Indo-American Business Association," assuming that Indians are Arabs because "their women are covered" (Los Angeles Times, 17 December 2002)!

As of December 20, most of the victims of the racist INS dragnet in L.A. have reportedly been released after their harrowing ordeal. However, the INS, which has never revealed the number of those arrested, claims that 20 remain in custody due to expired visitor visas. This is on top of the many detainees still in custody stemming from the roundups of at least 1,200 immigrants following 9/11, hundreds of whom have already been deported. We demand: Free all the detainees—No deportations! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!

A common placard at the December 18 demonstration in Los Angeles read, "Detain Terrorists Not Innocent Immigrants." But the bipartisan "war on terror" proclaimed in the aftermath of the criminal September 11 attack on the World Trade Center is *nothing but* a pretext for imperialist war abroad and a war at home against immigrants, black people and ultimately the entire working class. Following 9/11, the government has pushed through its "anti-terror" laws by claiming that they would "only" target immigrants from Near Eastern and South Asian countries. But as the Bush administration shreds ever more constitutional rights, it is clear that the domestic "war on terror" is using the victimization of the most vulnerable as the opening shot in intimidating the population as a whole. The government has already set its sights on the trade



WV Photo
L.A. protest. Hundreds were detained and brutalized in INS dragnet.

unions in the name of "national interests," invoking the slave-labor Taft-Hartley law in October against locked-out members of the West Coast International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) and gutting membership in federal employees unions with the establishment of the Homeland Security Department.

It is crucial for the labor movement to mobilize in defense of immigrants and all those in the cross hairs of the capitalist government's "war on terror." This understanding was demonstrated in action last February when the Partisan Defense Committee and the Bay Area Labor Black League for Social Defense initiated a united-front mobilization, with ILWU longshoremen at its core, in defense of immigrants and in opposition to the USA-Patriot Act and Maritime Security Act. As the call for that demonstration pointed out (WV No. 773, 25 January 2002), Bush and his government have "created the spectre of an 'enemy within' in order to strengthen the powers of their own consummately violent state. But what America's racist rulers can get away with will be determined by class struggle. We must fight *now* to defend our rights and jobs, and the rights and jobs of our immigrant brothers and sisters." What is urgently posed is the fight for more and larger such mobilizations in defense of our rights against the racist rulers of American imperialism. ■

Those Who Labor Must Rule!

The counterposed interests of labor and capital invariably lead to class conflict. In his 1891 introduction to Karl Marx's Wage Labour and Capital, Friedrich Engels explained that only the working class has both the objective interest and social power to sweep away the inherently exploitative and irrational capitalist system and replace it with an egalitarian socialist society.



TROTSKY



LENIN

It is the working class alone which produces all values. For value is only another

expression for labour, that expression whereby in our present-day capitalist society is designated the amount of socially necessary labour contained in a particular commodity. These values produced by the workers do not, however, belong to the workers. They belong to the owners of the raw materials, machines, tools and the reserve funds which allow these owners to buy the labour power of the working class. From the whole mass of products produced by it, the working class, therefore, receives back only a part for itself. And as we have just seen, the other part, which the capitalist class keeps for itself and at most has to divide with the class of landowners, becomes larger with every new discovery and invention, while the part falling to the share of the working class (reckoned per head) either increases only very slowly and inconsiderably or not at all, and under certain circumstances may even fall.

But these discoveries and inventions which supersede each other at an ever-increasing rate, this productivity of human labour which rises day by day to an extent previously unheard of, finally give rise to a conflict in which the present-day capitalist economy must perish. On the one hand are immeasurable riches and a superfluity of products which the purchasers cannot cope with; on the other hand, the great mass of society proletarianised, turned into wage-workers, and precisely for that reason made incapable of appropriating for themselves this superfluity of products. The division of society into a small, excessively rich class and a large, propertyless class of wage-workers results in a society suffocating from its own superfluity, while the great majority of its members is scarcely, or even not at all, protected from extreme want. This state of affairs becomes daily more absurd and—more unnecessary. It *must* be abolished, it *can* be abolished. A new social order is possible in which the present class differences will have disappeared and in which—perhaps after a short transitional period involving some privation, but at any rate of great value morally—through the planned utilisation and extension of the already existing enormous productive forces of all members of society, and with uniform obligation to work, the means for existence, for enjoying life, for the development and employment of all bodily and mental faculties will be available in an equal measure and in ever-increasing fulness.

—Friedrich Engels, "Introduction" to Karl Marx, Wage Labour and Capital (1891)

SWP Editor Threatened with Deportation Hands Off Róger Calero!

Róger Calero, associate editor of the Socialist Workers Party's Spanish-language publication *Perspectiva Mundial* and a staff writer for the *Militant*, was seized by the INS at Houston International Airport as he returned from reporting assignments in Guadalajara, Mexico and Havana, Cuba. After being locked up in a crowded Houston-area INS jail for ten days, Calero was released on bond on December 13 after protests from immigrant rights and labor groups, including the president of Calero's former union, United Food and Commercial Workers Local 789 in St. Paul, Minnesota. The INS still seeks to deport Calero, a permanent resident of the United States who has lived here since 1985, to his native Nicaragua.

The government claims to be attempting to exclude Calero on the basis of a 1988 minor drug conviction from when he was in high school, but this is an utter sham. In fact, when Calero applied for permanent resident status in 1989—which was approved in 1990—he included information about his conviction, which the INS waived when they gave him his green card. The INS is clearly going after this journalist for political reasons. As a 14 December Partisan Defense Committee letter in defense

of Calero noted, "This outrage is meant to intimidate any dissenters; it is a frontal assault on all political activists who would oppose the current imperialist war drive or defend the Cuban people from the U.S. stranglehold embargo."

The threatened deportation of Calero comes in the context of a vicious nationwide dragnet following September 11 aimed at immigrants, Palestinian activists and people of Arab and South Asian descent. Under the "war on terror," hundreds have been thrown into INS detention without even the pretense of due process or respect for constitutional rights. In Southern California, the INS recently ordered that immigrants from North African, Near Eastern and Muslim countries—but also North Korea—register with the government, and at least 500 have already been arrested (see front-page article).

The arrest of a leftist immigrant guilty of nothing but practicing political journalism is a highly dangerous development for all opposed to the depredations of this rotten system. Letters demanding that deportation proceedings against Calero be dropped should be sent to Hipólito Acosta, District Director, Immigration and Naturalization Service, 126 Northpoint Drive, Houston, TX 77060; fax (281) 774-5989. *Hands off Róger Calero!* ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

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U.S. Senate: White Bigot Millionaires' Club

Trent Lott "just got caught with his mouth open," said Ramon Verdejo Jr., an aid officer at New Rochelle, New York's Monroe College, reflecting black and minority reaction to the media's revelation that the U.S. Senate contains—brace yourself—a pack of reactionary racists. At a celebration of the 100th birthday of stone segregationist Senator Strom Thurmond this December, Mississippi Senator Trent Lott gushed over the ancient all-purpose reactionary: "When Strom Thurmond ran for president, we voted for him. We're proud of it. And if the rest of the country had followed our lead, we wouldn't have had all these problems over all these years, either." Thurmond ran for president in 1948 as the candidate of the breakaway "Dixiecrat" faction of Southern Democrats galvanized into reaction by the Democrats' adoption of a mild civil rights plank and President Harry Truman's announcement that he would integrate the armed forces following World War II. White-supremacist Thurmond declared then: "All the laws of Washington and all the bayonets of the Army cannot force the n-----s into our homes, our schools, our churches."

Lott was forced to resign as Republican majority leader for spilling the beans in an unguarded moment before reporters, for talking in public the way the clubby Senators do among themselves. He openly expressed the deep racist contempt for and cruelty toward black people of this country's bourgeois politicians, whether Republican or Democrat. With dizzying hypocrisy, the Bush administration ostentatiously distanced itself from Lott's disgrace. This from a gang of "good old boys" whose narrow electoral victory involved keeping large numbers of black people from voting in Florida, whose attorney general John Ashcroft is an open admirer of the Confederacy and who are riding roughshod over the rights of immigrants, black people and workers in their brutal drive to dominate the world. Meanwhile, stung conservatives began digging skeletons out of Democrats' closets, like Senator Robert Byrd, another wizened Washington fixture. Byrd, held up today as a noble antiwar patrician, began his political career as a Kleagle (recruiter) in the Ku Klux Klan of his native West Virginia. He filibustered for 14 hours against the 1964 Civil Rights Act and ran amok on Fox News last year, babbling uncontrollably about "white n-----s" in a performance reeking with race and class viciousness.

This public eruption of Senatorial contempt for blacks and the poor recalls Southern novelist William Faulkner's comment, "The past is not dead. In fact, it's not even past." Thurmond's name alone, arch-representative of a generation of vicious racists, calls up unquiet ghosts and the great unfinished business of the Civil War. From America's origin as a slaveholding nation through the social revolution of the Civil War, the subsequent betrayal of black aspirations in the defeat of Radical Reconstruction, the battles against Jim Crow segregation in the 1950s and 1960s and on to today, the burning fault line in U.S. history is the question of black freedom. The racial oppression of black people is used to divide the working class and weaken the labor movement as a whole.

By holding celebrations for Strom Thurmond today, the Senate (and the Bush White House) thereby spit on those who battled segregation, the heroes and martyrs of the civil rights movement. Birmingham, Alabama, 1963—four little black girls dead in the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church; Philadelphia, Mississippi, 1964—civil rights workers Michael Schwerner, James Chaney and Andrew Goodman murdered by the sheriff's department and Ku Klux Klan; young black children dressed in



White-supremacist Senator Strom Thurmond (seated) celebrated by Bush, Lott and others at White House birthday party in December.

Undead Racist Zombies of Mississippi (and Beyond)

their best clothes and clutching schoolbooks walking gauntlets of shrieking, spitting, hysterical white adults; Eugene "Bull" Connor unleashing firehoses and German shepherd attack dogs on civil rights marchers in Birmingham; torture, brutal beatings by police and KKKers, firebombings and murders—that's what "Dixiecrat" means.

Scratch a Democrat and Find a Dixiecrat

That the Republican Party is an overt party of racist repression and big business is not news to our readers. One need only recall the 1988 elections, when George Bush Sr. used the "Willie Horton" affair—the escape of a black convicted murderer while on furlough from a Massachusetts prison who later raped a white woman—to portray his Democratic opponent, Massachusetts governor Michael Dukakis, as "soft on crime." Yet illusions remain that somehow the Democrats are better, or at least a real "lesser evil." They aren't, as their sordid history of smashing black aspirations makes clear. From its inception the Democratic Party was the party of the slaveholding Old South and of Dixiecrat segregation. After 1948, when Truman won the election, most of the Dixiecrats, formally known as the "States Rights Democratic Party," came back into the fold (Thurmond switched to the Republicans in 1964).

Exposing the alliance between Southern Dixiecrats and Northern liberals that was forged by Franklin D. Roosevelt, Malcolm X said in the 1960s: "A vote for a Democrat is a vote for a Dixiecrat." In a challenge to the old status quo, militant civil rights workers in SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee) organized the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, which registered 80,000 Mississippi blacks previously kept off the voter rolls and fought to have their delegation replace the usual all-white Jim Crow one at the 1964 Demo-

cratic Party convention in Atlantic City. Northern liberal darling Hubert Humphrey and his protégé Walter Mondale (who rose from the dead to run for the Senate this fall) were assigned to put the boot in the face of these black voters, keeping them from being seated. As his reward, Humphrey got the vice-presidential nomination under Lyndon Johnson.

Mild as it was, Lyndon Johnson's 1964 Civil Rights Act broke the historic Democratic Party hold over the South; ever since, the only real domestic contest between Republicans and Democrats is over who can best appeal to the Southern white racist vote, veering from Nixon's "Southern strategy" to Jimmy ("ethnic purity") Carter back to the Republicans, with an interlude of Southerner Bill Clinton, who proved his loyalty to the legacy of the Old South during the 1992 campaign by personally ensuring that a brain-damaged black man on Arkansas death row was executed. It was under Clinton that "welfare as we know it" was smashed, affirmative action programs were further gutted and a huge expansion in prisons and speedup on death row were instituted.

It's rather bitterly amusing to watch

these cynical D.C. politicians sling lots of mud at each other. But such periodic open outbursts of racism are no aberration, but reflect the reality of intensifying black oppression in this society, where the death penalty has replaced the lynch rope and prisons have replaced plantations as instruments of race subjugation. Blacks and Latinos are the majority of prisoners, and one out of every four black men in their 20s is either in prison, on probation or on parole. The present rate of joblessness for blacks is 11 percent, a nine-year high. Social researcher Dalton Conley points out in his article "Thurmond's Loss Hasn't Mattered Much After All" (*Newsday*, 19 December 2002): "The story of racial inequality is not that different than it was at the start of the civil rights struggle. In 1950, blacks were about twice as likely to be unemployed as whites. Today that figure remains unchanged." He points out that a black man earns about 70 cents for a white man's dollar, and the typical black family owns only one-eighth the net worth of the typical white family. And de facto, if not legal, segregation in schools and neighborhoods is still the norm.

U.S. Senate: Bulwark Against "Swinish Multitude"

The liberal *Nation* whines, "Lott Should Resign" because he's hurting "precious standards of government probity and equity" (30 December 2002). Well, he did. However, those "precious standards" the *Nation* is so concerned about are the standards of capitalist class rule. The American Constitution of 1787, which legitimized black chattel slavery, was consciously designed as a bulwark of social control over what Thomas Jefferson called "the swinish multitude," especially urban workingmen, whom he believed to be "the panders of vice and the instruments by which the liberties of a country are generally overturned."

The U.S. Senate, American equivalent of the British House of Lords (though lacking the requirement of hereditary insanity), was created as a bulwark against the "rabble" and is an extremely undemocratic institution. Each state gets two Senators regardless of size, which disenfranchises large urban areas with lots of minority, black and working-class people in favor of Deep South or Western thinly populated and more conservative regions. In fact, all the main structures of U.S. government, including the imperial presidency, the Electoral College system, the U.S. Supreme Court and other appointed-for-life court systems were designed as barriers to democratic freedoms.

The vile racist zombies lurching around the Senate won't be laid to rest, and our own martyrs and heroes won't be fully honored, until we win our fight for a third American revolution, a proletarian revolution led by the multiracial working class that will put an end to this racist nightmare. Only then will the unfinished business of the Civil War and the broken promises of Reconstruction be fulfilled and the way finally opened to a socialist society of equality, dignity and freedom. ■

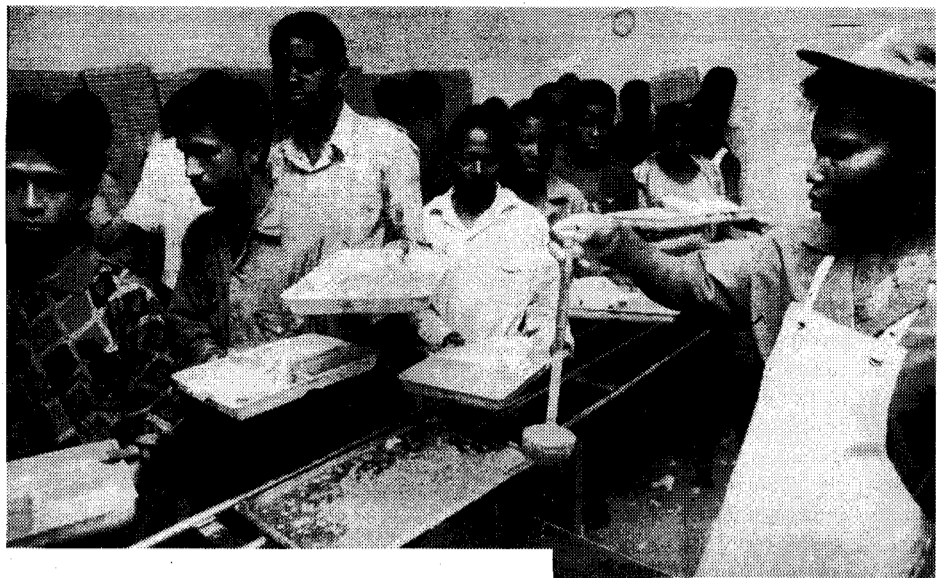


Little Rock, 1957: Black student jeered by rabid white mob as she enters Central High School. Dixiecrats vowed: Integration, never!



Waselchuk/i-Africa

Unemployed miners from Lesotho, part of South Africa's immigrant workforce.



Oscar G

Lindelani immigrant detention center.

South Africa: Down With ANC Government Anti-Immigrant Dragnet!

The following article is adapted from a Spartacist South Africa presentation at the University of the Witwatersrand in April 2002 to protest immigrant murders.

The poisoned fruit of neo-apartheid capitalist rule is seen in the unremitting roundup, detention, deportation and murder of immigrants and the massive obstacles thrown up to political asylum. The anti-immigrant witchhunt starkly reveals the reactionary face of the bourgeois-nationalist African National Congress (ANC) and its allies. In March, Nigerian and Malawian immigrants were killed at the Lindelani detention centre in Krugersdorp on the West Rand. Five guards beat and *sjambokked* [bullwhipped] them to death. Detainees said the guards responsible had taken money to release the men but brought them back to the centre instead. In April a Zimbabwean, who had fled the firebombing and looting of an "informal settlement" in Zandspruit [north of Johannesburg], also died in detention at Lindelani, where he fell ill. Roundups like "Operation Crackdown" routinely target immigrants for having skin deemed "too dark" or for not speaking "South African" languages. The front page of the Johannesburg *Star* (5 April 2002) carried a dramatic photo showing a documented Burundian ensnared in one such dragnet, with a caption including his plea: "Don't send me back—just kill me now."

The ANC-led government orchestrates and manipulates an anti-immigrant backlash, fomenting countless attacks. There were pogromist attacks against Angolans in the Du Noon suburb in the Western Cape and Somali-owned shops in Port Elizabeth. Nor are these atrocities simply a recent phenomenon. In the late summer of 1998, a rabid mob, whipped into frenzy against "foreigners" at a rally of unemployed in Pretoria, brutally murdered three immigrants from other African countries on a commuter train (see "South Africa: Protest Lynch Mob Murder of Immigrants," WV No. 696, 11 September 1998). The bourgeois press feeds into rising fratricidal hatreds, as exemplified by a typical headline from the *Sowetan*: "Nigerian Criminals Must Be Expelled" (4 August 2002). Anti-immigrant racism is a timeworn method to divide the proletariat and deflect class struggle. Spartacist South Africa stands for full citizenship rights for all who manage to cross the borders, and seeks to drive home the understanding that the source of exploitation of

Defend the Unions! Defend Immigrants!

all labour is the capitalist system.

The South African capitalists have long exploited migrant workers, coming mostly from Mozambique, Lesotho, Zimbabwe and Swaziland, who form a strategic component of labour in the gold and diamond mines. These neighbouring countries often sheltered South African exiles during the apartheid era and identified strongly with the ANC. Following the ANC's rise to power in 1994, South Africa became a magnet for labourers and merchants from across the continent looking for jobs and shelter. Some immigrants are refugees from war and famine in places like Rwanda, Nigeria and Congo—countries where the South African bourgeoisie has sought to realise its own regional expansionist ambitions, and to act as the junior partner of Anglo-American imperialism. The ascendancy of a layer of ANC politicians as black front men for white capitalist rule has facilitated South Africa's growing appetite to dominate the region.

To maintain capitalist order, the ANC increasingly relies on even the most reactionary and repressive aspects of the

previous white-supremacist regime. In a scene reminiscent of Nationalist Party rule, 1998 video footage showed cops from Benoni, east of Johannesburg, laughing as they used three immigrants from Mozambique as training bait for police dogs. The essential continuity from anti-immigrant policies of the apartheid rulers and the neo-apartheid Tripartite Alliance is readily apparent. Thus, even the bourgeois-liberal *Mail and Guardian* (24-30 May 2002) characterised the recently enacted immigration law as "just a more sophisticated version of the Aliens Control Act of 1991." In an article titled "Home Affairs Denies Targeting Africans" (*Sowetan*, 5 April 2002), the deportation of Zimbabwean musician Adrian Anesu "Appleseed" Muphemhi of the highly successful Bongo Maffin band is "justified" under the apartheid-era Aliens Control Act, because "illegal immigrants had flooded the country and were impacting negatively on its resources."

For all President Thabo Mbeki's obscurantist and reactionary talk about an "African Renaissance," the new legisla-

tion is decidedly anti-African, sending a clear message to African governments that their citizens are not welcome in South Africa, legally or otherwise. The bill empowers raids in communities and workplaces and institutionalises the identity card, or hated *dompas* [pass-book]. The possession of documentation guarantees nothing, as it is common for police raids to seize and destroy identity papers and to extort money from their victims. The enforcement strategy has been likened to the apartheid-era Influx Controls Act, which restricted the movement of Africans out of the so-called homelands. The deportation figures for immigrants from southern Africa are already staggering. The state "repatriated" about 24,000 people in January and February to Mozambique and Zimbabwe. The latest official composite figures available are from the year 2000, when 146,000 immigrants were deported. By contrast, the number of legal immigrants to South Africa in 1999 was less than 1,400 from all other countries.

Depredations of capitalism and imperialism inevitably mean a surge of immigration to South Africa, which is the economic hub of the continent. In a country where "official" unemployment among the African majority hovers around 50 per cent, the ANC-led regime has sought to blame "foreigners" for rising unemployment caused by mine closures and job losses due to its massive privatisation drive. The devastating HIV/AIDS pandemic, accelerated by the cruel and criminal obstructionism of the ANC/SACP [South African Communist Party] regime, is straining to the breaking point the social fabric. The political climate is rife with resurgent tribalism, reflected in references to the domination of the "Xhosa nostra" and in chauvinist calls for anti-Indian pogroms, embodied in Mbongeni Ngema's song "Amandiya." As we wrote in *Black History and the Class Struggle* No. 12, "South Africa Powder Keg," given the massive and stark inequalities between the white capitalist class and the impoverished black African toilers, "so long as the struggle over the redistribution of the country's wealth is defined in national-ethnic terms and limited to a purely South African framework, it could well trigger race war, bloody tribalist conflict and economic collapse. Only a *proletarian internationalist perspective*, linking the reconstruction of South Africa to a world socialist revolution, can



Johannesburg, October 1: March by COSATU union federation at start of two-day strike against government privatization plans.

ensure that a just and egalitarian society will be erected" (February 1995).

Anti-Immigrant Attacks and Bourgeois Triumphalism

Anti-immigrant bigotry has come to define racist, right-wing politics from West Europe to South Africa to East Asia. In the western countries, as much as in South Africa, many immigrants are actually refugees from imperialist wars, for example in the Balkans and Afghanistan, or from fratricidal conflicts in Africa. The South African bourgeoisie bears particular responsibility in the Congo, where, under the rubric of UN "peacekeeping," it has sought to further its aims as a regional gendarme.

Capitalism needs a bogeyman. Since the demise of the Soviet Union, the "red menace" has been largely replaced with an orchestrated hysteria against the immigrant "hordes" and in Europe and America, since September 11, against the "green menace" of Islamic fundamentalism. The ascendancy of counterrevolution in the former Soviet Union a decade ago was a monumental defeat for the international proletariat. In its wake came bourgeois triumphalism hailing the supposed "death of communism" and a reactionary social climate with a resurgence of nationalism, a sharp rise in anti-woman, anti-homosexual bigotry, fratricidal war and "ethnic cleansing" especially in Europe, but also in Africa. As we wrote in the International Communist League statement "Capitalist Europe's War on Immigrants Is a War on All Workers" (WV No. 784, 12 July 2002):

"According to its economic needs, capitalism brings into the proletariat at its bottom new sources of cheaper labour, principally immigrants from poorer countries.... We in the ICL fight for the unity and integrity of the working class against chauvinism and racism. The struggle in defence of immigrant labour today is a



Hosefros/NY Times

South African president Mbeki with Bush, June 2001. Forced from their homes, residents of Thembillhle squatter camp near Johannesburg burn Mbeki's image, July 2002.



Nadine Hutton

on Jews accused of poisoning wells. Then too, poor people from rural areas who flooded the cities were labeled as "misdoers." Along with Jews, they were made the scapegoats and victims of pogroms. Today, it is immigrants and asylum-seekers who are the "misdoers" of sub-Saharan Africa—at whose feet the scourge of AIDS is falsely laid—but with a crucial difference.

Immigrant workers, including "illegal" immigrants, are not simply defenceless victims of the capitalist exploiters and their state. They are a living link between the South African proletariat and the workers throughout the region. Detainees at the Lindelani centre conducted a courageous protest against the two murders in March, which was suppressed by police lockdown. In May, the immigrant defence organisation International Association of Foreigners (INOF) brought out thousands to protest these murders and called for the shutting down of Lindelani. At a subsequent INOF protest, Spartacist South Africa salesmen saw Nigerians, Mozambicans and Zimbabweans hovering in separate clots waiting for

democratic transition." The politically dominant force in COSATU is the South African Communist Party, whose chairman, Charles Nqakula, is the Safety and Security Minister directing the hated cops spearheading terror against immigrants.

In press statements, COSATU evinces concern for immigrant workers in mining and farming, saying that the "Department of Labour must take full responsibility to insure the enforcement of immigrant workers rights." But this is paper-thin. For example, in Gauteng in August, inspectors from the Department of Labour raided several chemical and textile plants. COSATU condemned the conditions under which the immigrant workers toiled as "tantamount to slavery" even as they were deported. Such actions are typical of reformist union bureaucrats, thus allowing the cruel exploitation to continue. Immigrants without papers can therefore be mercilessly exploited, which is why the fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants is all the more critical. In 1999, miners union leaders pushed for a moratorium on hiring Mozambicans during wage negotiations. And at a COSATU congress, a furore was raised against union caps produced in China. Such anti-Chinese diatribes are not only protectionist but anti-Communist, dovetailing with the threats of imperialism against the Chinese bureaucratically deformed workers state. The working class in South Africa and internationally should defend China against imperialist attack and internal capitalist counterrevolution. The Beijing Stalinist bureaucracy driving capitalist market restoration must be ousted through proletarian political revolution to establish a regime of workers democracy committed to proletarian internationalism and to reviving the planned economy.

On May Day, COSATU announced its launch of the "Buy South African" campaign against what it called a backdrop of "rising unemployment and poverty." This campaign pushes the lie of the essential identity of interests between the employers and the working class. Its basic premise is that consumer purchases expanding the profitability of the employers will lead to hiring of more South Africans. Such chauvinist poison only reinforces the false consciousness that non-South Africans steal "our jobs" and is an obstacle to organising immigrant workers en masse into COSATU.

Only a Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party, committed to an internationalist perspective, can effectively mobilise the workers movement and oppressed against

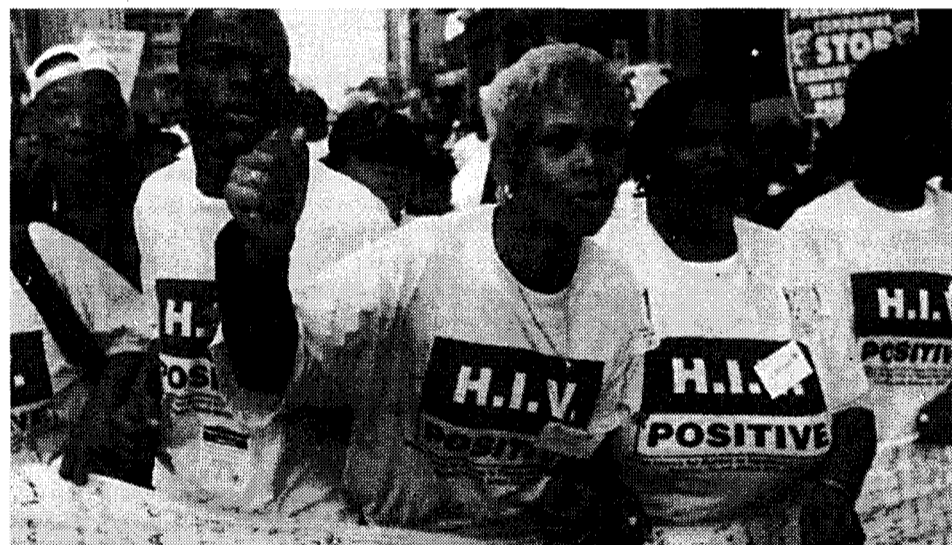
the forces of tribalism and murderous nationalism. This requires a fight for revolutionary leadership of the trade unions, against the nationalist class collaboration with the bosses' parties. A party with a perspective of workers revolution in South Africa would militantly fight the chauvinist attacks on immigrants and seize every such means to extend the struggle beyond the borders of the country.

Fake Socialists Push Illusions in ANC Capitalist State

The Anti-Privatisation Forum (APF) has drawn various disaffected elements behind Trevor Ngwane, an expelled ANC councillor, into struggle over basic services like electricity, housing and clean tap water. The APF includes pseudo-Trotskyist groupings like Keep Left!, followers of the late Tony Cliff, and the Democratic Socialist Movement (DSM), formerly known as "Militant Workers Tendency of the ANC." The APF stock in trade has been to pressure the ANC government for structural adjustments within the framework of capitalism. More recently, the APF has spouted some socialist rhetoric, denouncing the ANC government. But the APF does not address immigrant rights in its programme, despite the fact that many victims of forced removals and electricity and water cut-offs include immigrant workers.

In their publications, Keep Left! has opposed the "new racism against immigrants." In the more recent period Keep Left! has even acknowledged that this government is not acting in, but rather against, the interests of workers, blacks and immigrants. The October issue of *Keep Left!* says the Mbeki regime "attacks the workers to please the capitalists and advance South African economy among the world's capitalists." The fact remains Keep Left! supported the bourgeois-nationalist ANC coming to power in the first place by campaigning for them in the last two general elections. And until quite recently, Keep Left! was in the SACP, a component of the Tripartite Alliance implementing capitalist austerity and racist attacks. Keep Left's attempt to distance themselves from the government parties (while burying their own track record) reflects the reality that in the unions and among the plebeian poor there is increasing disillusionment with the ANC-led government and they deem it smarter to take up a more oppositional stance. Instead of warning the African masses against support to the bourgeois-nationalist ANC and its allies when it

continued on page 7



Reuters

Durban: AIDS activists demand desperately needed medications in protest outside July 2000 world AIDS conference.

vital task for the working class as a whole. We fight for: *Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! No deportations! Organise the unorganised! Cops, prison guards and security guards out of the unions! For labour/immigrant mobilisations against fascist attacks!*"

Since the criminal and indefensible attack on the World Trade Centre on September 11, capitalist governments around the world, not the least South Africa, have seized upon the U.S.-led "war on terrorism" to bolster the repressive apparatus of the state against immigrants, workers and the oppressed. In every country where we exist, the ICL has fought to expose the lie of "national unity" between workers and bosses and to rally the proletariat in class solidarity with immigrants and minorities. The "war on terrorism" is a pretext for a stepped-up offensive against the working class as a whole.

North of the Limpopo River and south of the Sahara, joblessness frequently runs as high as 70 per cent and yearly per capita income may fall to 2,865 rand [\$330] a year. AIDS is eliminating a disproportionate number of breadwinners and leaving behind an army of orphans and dependents unable to tend to fields as effectively as their parents. In the Middle Ages, the ravages of the "Black Death" (bubonic plague) were blamed

a chance to speak, and heard appeals to Pan-African "unity." Some demonstrators lamented the non-participation of Chinese or Pakistani immigrants. Pan-Africanist rhetoric is counterpoised to an international working-class fight against capitalism or any appeal to Chinese, South Asian or Arab immigrant workers. To cite one hideous historical example, the persecution and expulsion of Indians from Idi Amin's Uganda was perpetrated under the banner of "Africa for Africans." In the hands of South Africa's Mbeki, "African unity" serves the South African bourgeoisie's regional interests and also means continued domestic oppression.

At the INOF protests we have seen no representation from the COSATU union federation, a fact consistent with the perspectives of its pro-capitalist leadership. The unions should be a crucial bulwark against South Africa sliding into a vortex of racial and tribal strife and anti-immigrant racism, but this won't happen as long as the union leadership is a partner in the Tripartite Alliance government with the reformist South African Communist Party and the bourgeois-nationalist ANC. COSATU makes noises about opposing attacks on black foreigners from southern Africa and calls for an immigration policy that "reflects South Africa's

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Young Spartacus

Youth Speak at PDC Holiday Appeals

Take a Side Against the Oppressors and Exploiters!

We print below the speech of Spartacus Youth Club spokesman Erica Jones at the New York Partisan Defense Committee Holiday Appeal on December 6 and excerpts, slightly edited for publication, from two speakers at the December 8 Bay Area PDC Holiday Appeal.

Erica Jones
New York SYC

The Spartacus Youth Club, which is the youth group of the revolutionary Marxist Spartacist League, U.S. section of the International Communist League, seeks to mobilize young people and students behind the social power of the multiracial working class to fight the capitalist system. Without labor, the capitalist system cannot function, and it is the working class that has the power to bring the wheels of capitalism to a halt. Our revolutionary program is built upon the understanding that capitalism and U.S. imperialism can only be defeated through workers revolution.

At present, it is urgent to stand against the U.S. ruling class's "war on terror," which is being used to attack immigrants, the labor movement and black people at home and as a pretext for increasingly open imperialist aggression abroad. Most concretely, this is posed by the U.S.'s imminent war on Iraq. Each time the U.S. goes unchallenged in its quest to exploit and bully defenseless countries, it also emboldens the capitalist rulers to further exploit workers and oppressed minorities here. Therefore, every strike and labor action against U.S. war aims is a threat to capitalism and its thirst for war.

On the campuses, the "war on terror" has meant increased surveillance of immigrant and minority students. And the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) has begun to creep back onto campuses from which it was banished by anti-Vietnam War protests. In September, the SYC organized an impromptu demonstration at Columbia University's activities day demanding "Military recruiters off campus!" when representatives of ROTC were spotted.

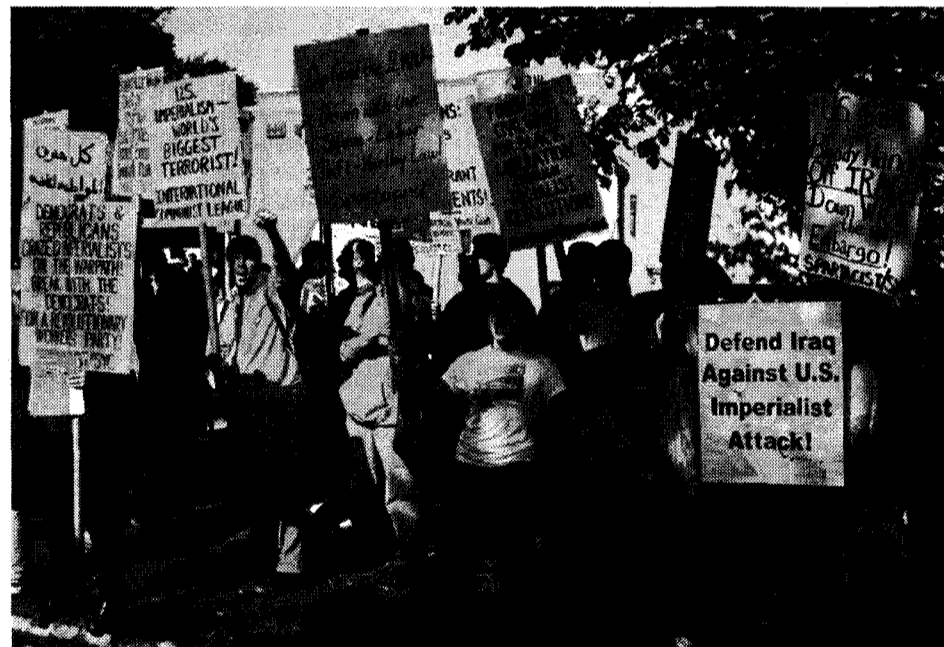
It is because of our revolutionary program of mobilizing the working class independently from the ruling class that we differ from other leftist organizations such as the International Socialist Organization (ISO), who have organized students and youth against the war on Iraq through class-collaborationist peace coalitions. In the words of *Socialist Worker* (4 October 2002): "When Washington politicians voice doubts about Bush's war drive, it opens the way for genuine opponents of the war on Iraq to be heard."

Although it is great to see people protesting the war on Iraq, groups like the ISO seek to pressure a wing of the liberal bourgeoisie to become more "enlightened" and adopt less war-mongering politics, as if it would be in the nature or interest of the capitalists to do so. For example, the October 26 antiwar demonstration in Washington, D.C. organized by the Workers World Party's ANSWER coalition featured Democratic Party politicians like Al Sharpton and Jesse Jack-

son, who pushed the illusion that change can be won by voting and told protesters: "Come alive on November 5 [midterm elections day]!"

Imperialism is not a policy, but an intrinsic part of the capitalist system. The Democratic Party, to which our fake-socialist opponents adapt themselves—the party of two world wars, of Korea, of Vietnam, Bosnia, Haiti (twice) and other imperialist rampages—has no interest in ending the brutal imperialist system. In fact, as a capitalist party, it has every interest in preserving it.

By contrast, our intervention into the antiwar movement has aimed at breaking youth opposed to U.S. imperialist degradation away from a perspective of pressuring the liberal wing of the Democratic Party and winning them over to a revolutionary socialist perspective. For the demonstration on October 26 in Washington,



Young Spartacus SYC helped organize Revolutionary Internationalist Contingent at October 26 Washington, D.C. antiwar demonstration.

D.C., we organized the Revolutionary Internationalist Contingent under three slogans including "Defend Iraq against imperialist attack!" Unlike the ISO and the Workers World Party, we call for the working class in the U.S. to take a side. We call for the military defense of Iraq against imperialist attack, while at the same time giving absolutely no political support to the vicious Saddam Hussein regime. Defeat of the imperialist aspirations of the U.S. and its allies would be a victory for the workers in the U.S. and oppressed throughout the world.

The struggle against war is essentially a struggle against the capitalist rulers. The capitalists use war to protect the profits they make on the backs of the world's workers. It is in the interests of the working class to eliminate the system that makes such wars inevitable. Only socialism can free the working class and oppressed internationally from the threat of imperialist war and from the exploitation of capitalism. The SYCs fight for new October Revolutions across the globe, like that led by the Bolshevik Party under V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky. We, unlike our leftist

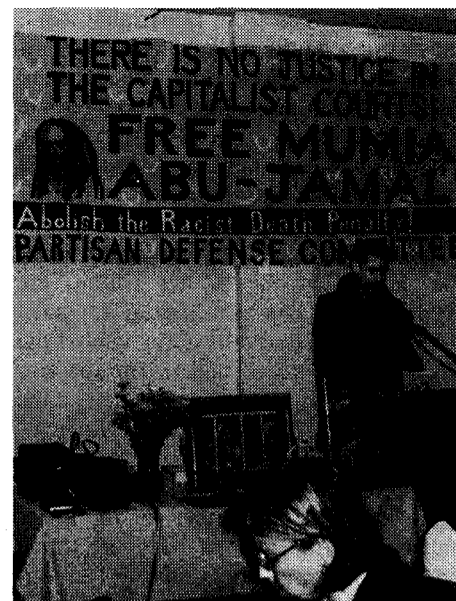
opponents, offer a solution to end class oppression through our program of building a workers party that fights for workers rule. If you are a youth who hates the system of capitalism and all forms of oppression that flow from it, join the Spartacus Youth Club.

Roberto Hernandez

Pro-Palestinian activist of the Wheeler 32, UC Berkeley

The Wheeler 32 are student protesters who face administration reprisal for an April 9 Wheeler Hall demonstration and sit-in calling for the university to divest its holdings in Israel.

I want to first thank all of you here for allowing me to come and just share a little bit about what's been going on at Berkeley with the understanding that this is not just about Berkeley, but rather about larger attacks on civil liberties that



Young Spartacus SYC speaker at Bay Area Holiday Appeal.

there was first a rally, then a march and then eventually a sit-in in Wheeler Hall. Since things went down as they did, I ended up with charges of assault and battery. A cop claims that I bit him even though I don't eat pork.

Once we had received the police videos to prepare for first the criminal proceedings and now the student conduct hearings, my first instinct was to go to the portions of the arrest where this cop claims this incident happened. So I did that, and I reviewed these tapes and there's no evidence to it, nothing like that.

Another friend of mine, though, actually was watching the whole video. It's six hours of footage, and those six hours of footage revealed something that for a lot of us is always a matter of suspicion, but never really confirmed, yet here we had evidence confirming it. Four minutes into the police video they're already zooming in on me, and they follow me. This happens actually about four times throughout the police video prior to even going into Wheeler Hall. They're zooming in on me, and they're following me around as I walk around in the crowd.

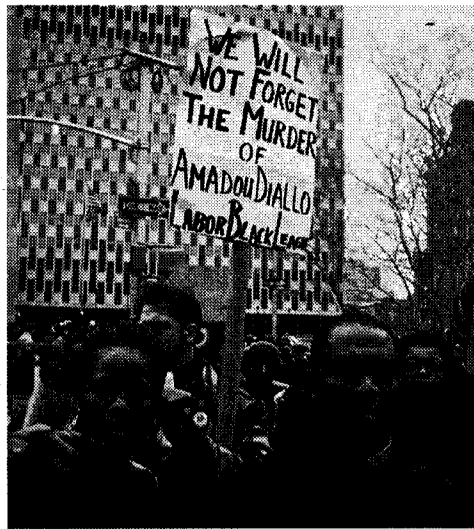
I'm not yet even part of the rally, yet the UCPD is already focusing in on me over at the table. And the reason I want to point that out is because of the targeting that we know for a fact has been going on prior to September 11, but even more so since. And here with this video we realize that it's literally really close to home, that they are in fact targeting specific individuals.

It shows where we're headed. It shows where we are at right now with this new era of fear and the Patriot Act.

Zoltan Ryman
Bay Area SYC

Our interventions here in the Bay Area show our working-class perspective as well as how we differ from the rest of the left. After September 11, the "war on terror" frenzy was used against labor, immigrants and student activists. When over 200 university administrations, including that of San Francisco State University (SFSU), handed over the records of foreign students to the Feds, the SYC initiated a united-front demonstration at SFSU with the General Union of Palestine Students around the demands: "Down with SFSU collaboration with FBI witchhunt! Defend immigrant rights!" We call for full citizenship rights for all immigrants!

Across the bay, the UC Berkeley administration faced mass opposition by students, including the SYC, after 79 pro-Palestinian demonstrators were arrested and the Students for Justice in Palestine organization suspended. The charges were dropped by the Alameda County Court, but the school administration is determined to punish 32 of the pro-Palestinian activists. We say,



WV Photo

If You Stand For—

1 Full rights for black people and for everyone else in jobs, housing and schools! Defeat the racist assault on affirmative action! For union-run minority job recruitment and training programs! For union hiring halls! Open up the universities to all—for open admissions, free tuition and a full living stipend for all students. Free, quality, integrated public education for all!

2 A fighting labor movement—picket lines mean don't cross! Defeat police scabberding and strikebreaking through mass pickets and union defense guards! For sit-down strikes against mass layoffs! Fight union-busting, keep the capitalist courts out of the unions! Organize the unorganized, unionize the South! Jobs for all—for a shorter workweek at no loss in pay with full cost-of-living escalator clause! Cops and prison guards out of the unions!

3 Fight for women's rights! Defend abortion clinics! Free abortion on de-

The first Labor Black Leagues were formed as a result of the Spartacist League-initiated, 5,000-strong labor/black mobilization that stopped the Ku Klux Klan from marching in Washington, D.C. in November 1982. We stand for mobilizing the masses of minority and working people in militant integrated struggle against

the brutal system of racist oppression that is capitalist America. Initiated by and fraternally allied with the Spartacist League, a multiracial revolutionary Marxist organization, the Labor Black Leagues are part of the revolutionary movement of the workers and oppressed against the bosses and for socialism.

mand; free, quality 24-hour childcare! Equal pay for equal work! For free, quality health care for all!

4 Full citizenship rights for all immigrants; everyone who made it into this country has the right to stay and live decently! Stop deportations! No to racist "English only" laws! Down with anti-Hispanic, anti-Semitic, anti-Arab and anti-Asian bigotry!

5 Down with anti-gay laws! Full democratic rights for homosexuals! Government out of the bedroom!

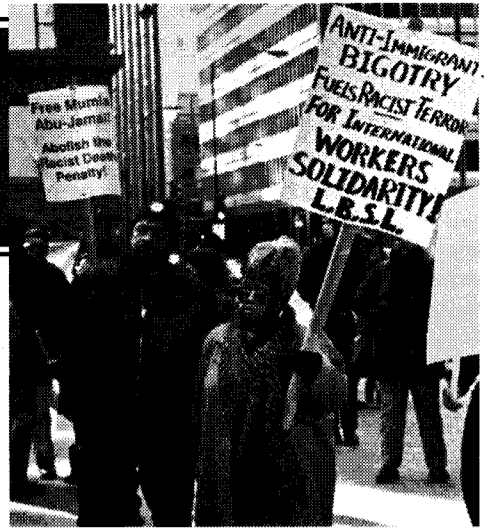
6 Mass labor/black/Hispanic mobilizations drawing on the power of the unions against the racist terrorists. Stop the Nazis! Stop the KKK!

7 Abolish the racist death penalty! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Free all victims of racist capitalist repression! No faith in the capitalist courts! No to gun control! Defend victims of cop terror and racist police frame-up! For class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense; support the work of the Partisan Defense Committee!

8 Unconditional opposition to every attempt to abolish welfare! Down with slave-labor, union-busting "workfare" schemes! Fight any and every attempt of the government to take away or cut back even more social programs such as Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, public health and aid to education and housing! For a massive program of public works—high-quality integrated housing, schools, libraries, hospitals for the working people and the poor!

9 Down with the chauvinist poison of protectionism! For international working-class solidarity! Support revolutionary struggles of working people abroad! Defend Cuba, Vietnam, China and North Korea against capitalist restoration and imperialist attack! For labor action against U.S. imperialist war moves and military adventures! For the right of independence for Puerto Rico! U.S. troops out of Puerto Rico and the Caribbean!

10 Down with the Democrats and Republicans! For a revolutionary workers party that champions the cause of all



WV Photo

the oppressed! Finish the Civil War! Those who labor must rule! For a workers government to take industry away from its racist, incompetent and corrupt owners! Rebuild America on a socialist planned economy!

—Join the Labor Black Leagues!

Membership pledge is \$3/year unemployed; \$10/year employed. For more information, contact:

CHICAGO (312) 563-0441

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Box 6938, Chicago, IL 60680

NEW YORK (212) 267-1025

Labor Black League for Social Defense
Box 2502, Church St. Station
New York, NY 10008

OAKLAND (510) 839-0851

Labor Black League for Social Defense
Box 29497
Oakland, CA 94604

South Africa...

(continued from page 5)

counted (and was unpopular), now that there is widespread discontent with the arrogant Mbeki regime, the reformists too express criticism. Keep Left! are inveterate tailists whose approach of tying the working masses to the bourgeois-nationalist ANC was simply imitating the much larger SACP, which has played a more critical role in that regard.

In a similar vein, the DSM (affiliated with the Committee for a Workers International of Peter Taaffe) programme correctly calls for "an end to persecution" of immigrants and for housing, jobs and legal rights. Yet it was only in 1996 (!), after decades of so-called entryism, that the Taaffeites launched DSM after leaving the ANC, which they suddenly dis-

covered was a capitalist party. In addition, this outfit ardently argues that police are really "workers in uniform" and potential allies of the working class and the oppressed—a view held in common with the Cliffites. In 1993 under the government of F.W. De Klerk, writing as *Congress Militant*, they demanded: "Hands off Popcru!", championing the struggles of the union for police and prison guards as a question of "labour rights." They demanded that the ANC and COSATU "defend Popcru with all of our strength. Cosatu should make Popcru a full affiliate, and pour as much resources as possible into strengthening the union" (*Congress Militant* No. 13, September 1993). They have never renounced support to Popcru.

Political support of the cop "union" reveals the utter incapacity of the Taaffeites to recognise a central premise of

politicians to have better policies, instead of teaching that capitalism *itself* is the oppressor and exploiter of the masses, that it necessarily breeds war. They attempt to tie youth and workers to the capitalist Democratic Party and its Green Party tail, which serve to keep this system alive.

The SYC has protested recent brutal attacks on gays and transgenders like the murder of Gwen Araujo in California; and we have protested the anti-gay reactionary followers of Fred Phelps, whose congregation travels around the country to whip up anti-gay hysteria. When they came to UC Berkeley's campus, they ran into gay rights activists and a militant SYC contingent. We sought to answer their provocation and make sure these religious bigots never set foot in Berkeley again. We chanted for the working class to take up the struggle for gay and women's rights as their own because the same ruling class that exploits workers looks upon gays and transgenders as "deviant." We call for government and church out of the bedroom! Down with reactionary "age of consent" laws! For full democratic rights for gays! ■

Lenin's *State and Revolution*—that the workers cannot lay hold of the ready-made machinery of the bourgeois state; it must be smashed by the working class and replaced by the dictatorship of the proletariat. Genuine communists know the police and security guards are the hired thugs of the bourgeoisie who break workers strikes and smash the heads of immigrants. Lindelani, the prisons, cops, courts and laws are the core of the state apparatus. Anti-immigrant racism is a key component of capitalist rule. It will take workers socialist revolution to sweep away the capitalist state and to bring an end to anti-immigrant racism. Under ANC rule, the cops, courts and military that enforced apartheid have remained intact.

Any pretence the Taaffeites might have to being any kind of "tribune of the people" is given the lie by the attitude taken by their British and Irish affiliates to the Catholic minority in Northern Ireland. Oppression of the Catholic minority is at the very foundation of the bourgeois order in Northern Ireland; it is reinforced by British imperialism and enshrined in the so-called peace deal, which rests on the British Army presence. Spartacist Group Ireland and the Spartacist League/Britain call for the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of British troops from Ireland as a necessary starting point for a proletarian revolutionary perspective. No good can come of British troops there and the British working class cannot make a revolution against their "own" capitalist rulers if they accept imperialist oppression in Ireland. The Socialist Party (Taaffeite group in Britain) refuses to oppose the British Army in Northern Ireland. The need to combat the oppression of Catholics is a critical point that Protestant workers must understand in order to fight in their own class interests. The Socialist Party in Ireland is known for defending the reactionary Protestant Orangemen's "right" to stage their anti-Catholic marches. Both Taaffeite groups have done their best to give credibility

within the workers movement to Billy Hutchinson, who is a spokesman for Loyalist death squads.

The nationalist ANC defends the same state borders that the British colonisers arbitrarily drew in 1910 for the old Union of South Africa—borders which have no relationship to tribal or ethnic groupings. As we noted in "South Africa Powder Keg":

"Anglo American and the other Randlords economically dominate all of southern Africa. A large percentage of the gold miners on the Witwatersrand—a key value-producing proletariat in the region—comes from *outside* the borders of South Africa, mainly from Lesotho and Mozambique.... Clearly, a democratic, egalitarian and rational solution to such questions can be worked out only in the framework of a socialist federation of southern Africa.... The struggle for a socialist federation of southern Africa linked to international proletarian revolution is the road to the social and economic emancipation of the continent."

Under the leadership of a revolutionary party that is armed with the programme of permanent revolution, the powerful South African proletariat can use its decisive social weight as the producers of wealth in society in defence of all the oppressed and exploited. The workers can place themselves at the head of a struggle to sweep away the system of capitalism and to reorganise society on a socialist basis. Socialist revolution in South Africa would not long survive without its international extension to the imperialist centres in Europe, the U.S. and Japan. The industrial and mineral wealth of a revolutionary South Africa would not be limited to the region south of the Limpopo River, but would be used to enable the impoverished masses of all of Africa to escape famine and destitution. Thus the fight of Spartacist South Africa to forge a genuine Leninist-Trotskyist party that would place the struggle against racism and chauvinism at the centre of the fight against capitalism is inseparable from the struggle of the ICL to reforge an authentically Trotskyist Fourth International. ■

Workers America...

(continued from page 1)

British jet fighters continue to pummel the U.S.-imposed "No Fly" zones in Iraq while tightening the UN starvation embargo that has already killed some 1.5 million people. Now, the Pentagon has announced the deployment of another 50,000 troops to the Persian Gulf, doubling its arsenal of war in the region. **Defend Iraq against U.S. attack! Down with the starvation blockade! All U.S./UN forces out of the Near East!**

The fact that Iraq's military capacity stands at a third of where it was during the 1991 Gulf War underlines that defense of Iraq means, above all, pursuing class struggle against the imperialist rulers at home. To wage war abroad, U.S. imperialism demands class peace at home. This was demonstrated in October when Bush, invoking "the security of our country," imposed the strikebreaking provisions of the Taft-Hartley Act against the West Coast longshore union following a lockout by the bosses. At the same time, the "national unity" hoopla propagated by the rulers following 9/11 is wearing thin under the weight of recession, mass layoffs and grotesque corporate corruption. Earlier this month, members of the powerful transit union in New York City threatened to strike in defense of their livelihoods and bring the financial capital of the world to a screeching halt.

The "war on terror" has meant a racist witchhunt against Muslims and people of Near Eastern and South Asian descent, as well as a wholesale assault on immigrant rights and the civil liberties of the population in general. Earlier this month, nearly 1,000 immigrants from Iran and elsewhere were rounded up when they appeared at INS offices following an order to register by the Justice Department. It is in the vital interest of the multiracial American working class to fight against the government's anti-immigrant witchhunts, for these attacks are also aimed at the labor movement as a whole.

The defense of Iraq against imperialist attack is integrally linked to the defense of the working masses here against increasing exploitation and oppression, which ultimately requires the overturn of the imperialist order through workers revolution. The task is to forge a Marxist workers party to educate and mobilize the proletariat to that end.

We print below a speech by Spartacist League Central Committee member Don Alexander given at the 17th annual Partisan Defense Committee Holiday Appeal for Class-War Prisoners held in New York City on December 6.

* * *

This is the time of year that the nauseating, hypocritical capitalists throw sops to the poor. We are here because we are rightly devoted to remembering and rendering concrete material assistance to those class-war prisoners who are languishing in the prison holes of this racist capitalist system: Mumia Abu-Jamal, the

members of the MOVE commune, militant mine worker Jerry Dale Lowe and many others. Today, the jails are also increasingly filled with Arabs, Muslims and people of Near Eastern descent. The fight for freedom for all class-war prisoners is an inseparable part of waging class struggle against the capitalist rulers and fighting for the rule of the working class.

What we mean by class struggle against the capitalists is mobilizing the power of labor and its allies independently of the capitalist rulers and parties, and having confidence in only that. This means having no illusions whatsoever in the supposed "benevolence" and "neutrality" of the capitalists and their state. The current capitalist government is presided over by a very nasty and violent right-wing Republican regime, whose constant refrain is "We are at war." And we are at war. Working people and the oppressed are facing a brutal, bipartisan class war at home, while abroad, U.S. imperialism is calling for pre-emptive strikes against its perceived enemies. And the Chinese deformed workers state—despite the Stalinist bureaucracy's slavish support to the so-called "war on terror"—is high on U.S. imperialism's list.

The imperialist ruling classes want nothing less than the liquidation of the collectivized property and the planned economies of the remaining bureaucratically deformed workers states of China, Cuba, Vietnam and North Korea. And everybody here knows that if the U.S. didn't think North Korea might have nuclear weapons, U.S. imperialism right now would be trying to figure out how to invade that country. We stand for unconditional military defense of these workers



Richards/U.S. News & World Report

Poverty and homelessness in U.S. are on the rise with continuing world capitalist recession.

states against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution. We fight for proletarian political revolution to oust the treacherous Stalinist bureaucracies who undermine and endanger the defense of those gains against imperialism.

In the eyes of the capitalist exploiters, immigrants, black people, women, gays—they all belong permanently beneath the jackboot of capital. And to the rulers, the labor movement is the ultimate so-called "enemy within." At the same time, the U.S. imperialist rulers—the mass murderers of Japanese in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, of over three million Koreans, of millions of Vietnamese—are gearing up to kill more Iraqis. They aren't sati-



December 8: U.S. military exercises in Kuwait in preparation for attack on Iraq. AP

ated by their United Nations-sponsored starvation sanctions, which have killed over a million and a half Iraqis. In the impending war against Iraq, U.S. imperialism is striving to grab a bigger portion of oil wealth and to send a message to their imperialist rivals: like it or not, U.S. imperialism is the world's only "superpower" and things are going to stay that way.

As revolutionary opponents of our own ruling class, we say that "anti-imperialism abroad means class struggle at home." The Bush administration and the Democrats seized on the criminal killing of thousands of innocent civilians at the World Trade Center to launch their so-called "war on terror." The bipartisan cry of "national unity" was used to mobilize the population behind U.S. imperialism's murderous imperialist adventure in Afghanistan. We opposed the U.S.

and Latino youth were framed up through coerced confessions and other means. This is the face of racist American capitalism, and this is precisely why it is very important to look at all of these cases as part of fighting for a program of united, integrated revolutionary struggle against the capitalist system.

We know that, especially in racist capitalist America today, there's deepening oppression. There is the constant and relentless assault against abortion rights, but it's not just that. You have the case of Arlene Russell, a black woman bus driver in Chicago who was viciously harassed and arrested by the police. Then you have the so-called "bad mothers" who have been thrown in jail, blamed for the deaths of their children. Remember the recent article about the woman whose child was killed by her spouse while she slept. She's been in a jail for seven years because supposedly she should have known that her boyfriend was going to kill her child!

The Bush government came down on the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU), which was slapped with a union-busting Taft-Hartley injunction after the Pacific Maritime Association bosses imposed a lockout. This was an open declaration of war against the entire labor movement. Liberal Democrats like Dianne Feinstein openly supported the Taft-Hartley injunction while Barbara Lee, the darling of the left and labor bureaucrats, just said the time to apply Taft-Hartley hadn't yet arrived. We in the Spartacist League say: Down with slave-labor Taft-Hartley! Government hands off the union!

It matters what program you have if you're fighting for power. Instead of unionizing the largely immigrant port truckers and mobilizing independent working-class action against the Taft-Hartley injunction, the ILWU leadership looks to "labor-friendly" Democrats to assist the workers. This is because of their program of class-collaborationist unity with the capitalist exploiters, which is a program to stifle and quell social struggle. And you know that a couple of months prior to the lockout of longshoremen, Homeland Security head Tom Ridge, the same Tom Ridge who as Pennsylvania governor signed a death warrant against Mumia Abu-Jamal in 1995, made a series of threats warning the longshoremen not to strike.

Even though they were locked out by the maritime bosses, the ILWU showed that working people are the power in society. The working class produces the wealth of society and has the social power to bring capitalist profit to a halt. But that power is crippled by the absence of a class-struggle leadership committed to a revolutionary struggle to abolish capitalism and replace it with a workers govern-

imperialist war in Afghanistan, which killed thousands of Afghans, and we call for U.S./UN troops out of Afghanistan, Central Asia, the Persian Gulf and the Near East.

Today, Bush goes on the airwaves to call for "regime change" in Iraq. In a U.S. war against Iraq, we have a side. We stand for the military defense of Iraq against U.S. and allied imperialism without giving an ounce of political support to the butcher Saddam Hussein, who has murdered Iraqi workers, leftists, Shi'ite Muslims, Kurdish people and others. Hussein came to power with the assistance of bloody U.S. imperialism. We say: Down with the UN starvation blockade! Defend Iraq against imperialist attack! Fight for class struggle against the capitalist rulers!

For a Workers Party That Fights for All the Oppressed!

With a deepening worldwide capitalist economic recession and plummeting stock market, hundreds of thousands of working people are being laid off and face a bleak future. Congress recently adjourned without extending unemployment benefits to thousands of people whose benefits have been exhausted. Federal workers are having their jobs privatized and face being stripped of civil service protection—all in the name of the so-called "war on terror." Homeless people who freeze and starve are treated like criminals by the capitalist politicians and jailed by their cops. And then you have the Central Park jogger case, a vicious, savage rape of a young white woman that took place in 1989 for which five black

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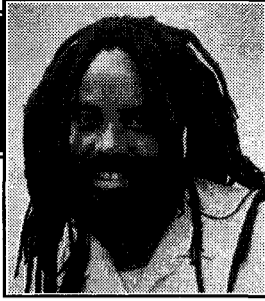
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From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal

George II—The “Son-King”



“L'état c'est moi.” (“I am the state”)

— Louis XIV, (1643-1712) The Sun King of France

Under Louis XIV, all France existed merely to reflect his luster. All around him were but satellites to his greater glory. Wars were fought, and lands were seized as soldiers were slain, for the glory of Louis, who shone like the sun.

An American state, Louisiana, was named for him. Under his reign, the idea of the divine right of kings, their inherent and eternal right to rule, reached its highest form.

Today, such ideas seem almost laughable.

This is the age of the divine right of capital, of the inherent and eternal right of amassed capital to rule all things. Corporate wealth and economic interest is the ruling principle of the day, and states are but instruments of their lust for gain.

George W. Bush, like his father, is hungry for reflected glory, and no glory shines in America like that of war. But we are not facing a war for glory. We

are facing a war for oil, a war for capital. The Bush dynasty, and those that rule them, believe in the divine right of cash.

Iraq stands as a dark straw man, while personalized in the singularity of Saddam, who is in the malevolent words of the Commander in Chief, “a bad man.” Query: Would there be these rumors of war if Iraq were—oh, I don't know, oil-free? In Africa? In Latin-America?

Louis XIV was busy basking in the “glory” of his French Empire. George II is trying to realize “Poppy's” dream—a New World Order—with the United States as the eternal Empire, Pax Americana.

The brilliance of Louis has been succeeded by the dullness of George W., who boasts of his C-averages while a student of privilege at Yale.

Louis was the ultimate peacock in Versailles; George is the boring manager of a business; his pedigree is, in truth, his business degree. And the construction of an empire is the objective of business, so that Iraq, with its 24% of the world's oil deposits, will

be little more than a vast gasoline station, with a flag. To the charge that it is in violation of international law, business has a straight-forward, simple, and, from its perspective, compelling retort: it's good for business!

When one listens to the White House these days, if you listen closely, you'll hear the nation's 30th president, Calvin Coolidge, saying, “The chief business of the American people is business.” He praised the rampant speculation that fueled the stock market. He also presided over the Great Wall Street crash of 1929, when the economy tanked. Coolidge is back!

No empire lasts forever. Rome didn't. The British didn't. The French didn't. Neither will the U.S. Empire.

24 October 2002

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If you wish to correspond with Jamal, you can write to: Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM8335, SCI Greene, 175 Progress Drive, Waynesburg, PA 15370.

Funds for Jamal's Legal Defense

We wish to inform our readers of a change in where to send urgently needed funds for the legal defense of death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. Checks made payable to “SEE Mumia Free” should be sent to: Social and Environmental Entrepreneurs, 20178 Rockport Way, Malibu, CA 90265.

ment that expropriates the capitalists. That's where the money for food, housing and decent education is initially going to come from.

In New York City, we have the contract of the Transport Workers Union (TWU) that's going to expire very soon. They face a determined capitalist enemy, a multibillionaire mayor and his Democratic Party city council partners whose response to the mounting deaths of transit workers is: “It's your fault! Eat it!” A leadership that places its faith in the Democrats, such as the “die on your knees” New Directions TWU leadership as well as the union's “old guard,” are the labor lieutenants of capital in the workers movement. They play by the bosses' rules, which is a losing game. The misleaders of labor, the black preachers and politicians, like Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton, they sell the same “lesser evil” poison.

Despite their occasional differences, the dual parties of capitalism are united in defending and extending the world dominance of U.S. imperialism, which means continued imperialist aggression against the working people around the world and intensified assaults against workers and the oppressed at home. The only difference between the parties is in their rhetoric. The Republicans openly flaunt their ties to the Wall Street blood-suckers; they revel in attacking the unions

and oppressing minorities. The Democrats do the same thing, but lie about it, using different rhetoric to fool working people and oppressed minorities. As one black comedian once said, “The only difference between conservatives and liberals, is that the latter, the liberals, hang you from the lower part of the tree.”

Those Who Labor Must Rule!

With the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union, the world is a much more dangerous place because there is no military counterweight to monstrous U.S. imperialism—the bloodiest ruling class in the world, the main enemy of workers and the oppressed throughout the world. As the U.S. plans its bloody assault against Iraq, interimperialist rivalries between the United States, West Europe and Japan are sharpening. This is driven by their competition for additional sources of profit and spheres of economic influence. Despite their differences, however, all of the imperialist ruling classes are waging war against workers and immigrants in their countries. Tony Blair's union-hating government has been mobilizing to crush the British firefighters, whose recent strikes threaten to put a dent in “national unity” and hurt Britain's alliance with the U.S. against Iraq.

Another major question intersecting war with Iraq is the continued Zionist

bleeding of the Palestinian people. It is not at all precluded that the bloody Zionist rulers might use the war against Iraq as a cover for the ethnic cleansing of the Occupied Territories. We call for Israeli troops out of the Occupied Territories. We look at the defense of Iraq as being directly linked to the defense of the Palestinian people. We are intransigent defenders of the Palestinian people against U.S.-backed, Zionist state terror.

Because of the bankruptcy of nationalism and the absence of a communist alternative, the murderous, woman-hating, anti-Semitic Islamic fundamentalists have acquired increased authority among the historically cosmopolitan Palestinian population. The desperate and criminal suicide attacks against Israeli civilians carried out by reactionary fundamentalists as well as Palestinian nationalists only serve to drive the Hebrew-speaking people further into the arms of the Zionist rulers. As revolutionary Marxists, we fight to forge revolutionary internationalist Trotskyist parties in the Near East that can unite the Arab and Hebrew-speaking workers in common struggle against the Israeli and Arab rulers, who are also oppressors of Palestinian people. Only in the struggle for a socialist federation of the Near East can national self-determination for both peoples be equitably realized. Only with the revolutionary overthrow of the Zionist rulers, the sheiks, the colonels and the monarchical parasites in the region can the road be opened to genuine national and social liberation. To achieve this goal means politically confronting and defeating anti-Semitism, bourgeois

nationalism and illusions in imperialist democracy.

Here in the U.S., the belly of the imperialist beast, every struggle against the government's assaults on democratic rights and on civil liberties, every strike in defense of labor rights is a blow against the bipartisan war drive. Our interests lie in forging a class-struggle workers party that will rally labor and minorities to stop the Klan, the racist terrorist fascists; that will fight for full citizenship rights for immigrants; that will champion black and women's liberation; that will defend gays against the attacks of foul anti-homosexual bigots like the fascist, Kansas-based Fred Phelps clan.

It is critical to look at all these struggles as part of building a party to break the chains of capitalist wage slavery and establish a workers government that overturns the rule of the capitalist class. I want to mention Colin Powell. Recently, Belafonte called him a “house slave.” That's not half of it. Powell is a conscious representative of U.S. imperialism. He was gloating in an interview that communism is the vestigial remains of a dead ideology. Well, we know that communism is not dead and class struggle is not a relic. That's precisely why the capitalists are intensifying their repression. And that's precisely why we have to build a party like the Bolshevik Party and reforge a Fourth International that fights for a revolutionary internationalist program to bring the working class to power.

We say: Free all class war prisoners! Workers of the world unite—you have nothing to lose but your chains! ■

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NYC Transit...

(continued from page 12)

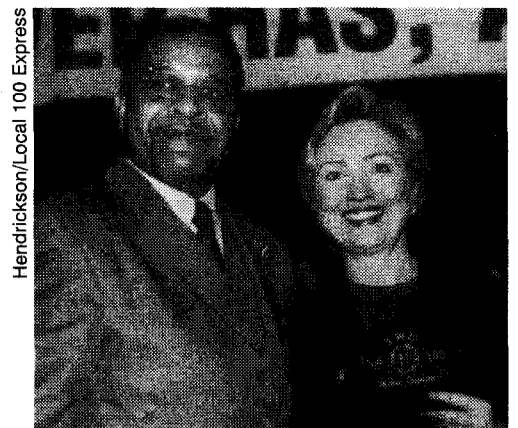
same courts threatened massive fines against the TWU criminalizing strike action and even talk of a strike, unlike the James leadership ND at least challenged the injunction in court. But ND leaders instructed workers at an ND rally the next day to obey it and not use the word "strike."

Once in office, Toussaint made clear his aim of turning Local 100 into a political machine for the Democratic Party. To this end, he opened the doors of the union to Hillary Clinton, whose Senatorial election campaign was marked by her avid support for the use of the Taylor Law against the TWU in 1999.

Today, the self-styled militants grouped around *Rank and File Advocate* (RAFA) are calling to vote against Toussaint's sellout, as is the *Revolutionary Transit Worker* (RTW) supported by the League for the Revolutionary Party (LRP). But the RAFA crew were founders and central leaders of New Directions right through Toussaint's election; indeed, they were instrumental in linking up with the AUD and launching a number of ND's court suits against the TWU. And the *Revolutionary Transit Worker* urged "critical support" for Toussaint in his bid for the local presidency based on nothing more than his empty rhetoric. The LRP claimed that this was necessary "to help



In 1999, then-Senatorial candidate Hillary Clinton supported use of strikebreaking Taylor Law against TWU. Toussaint hosting Clinton at union meeting in 2001.



For Marxists, critical support in union elections is premised on a candidate's political break with some aspect of class collaborationism. In fact, Toussaint's sellout last week was the culmination of the political program on which he ran—reliance on the capitalist state and capitalist politicians. At bottom, the RTW/LRP opportunists supported Toussaint simply because he was popular. Far from opposing anti-union court suits on principle, the LRP writes in *Proletarian Revolution* (Summer/Fall 1998): "Revolutionaries cannot absolutely rule out that there may arise exceptional and extreme situations under which using the courts in a union struggle may be necessary." As far back as the early 1970s, the LRP's predecessor organization extended critical support to Miners for Democracy candidate Arnold Miller, who was catapulted into the United Mine Workers

principle in the pursuit of opportunist appetites is to cut away the very basis of communist opposition to the reformist bureaucracy!"

The starting point for a class-struggle leadership of the unions is opposition to any intervention by the capitalist state, its cops and courts. The only road to victory for our class lies in mobilizing labor's power independently of the capitalist state and the Democratic and Republican parties of capital. The working people need a party that fights for *their* class interests, a workers party committed to overturning this whole system of capitalist exploitation, racial oppression and imperialist war.

"The Strike Card Was Never Played"

The city's tabloids are now trying to blame the miserly contract deal for a

gory of "bad workers." This amounts to a slicker form of absence control, as workers will feel pressured to work when sick to avoid being listed. Disciplinary hearings will be streamlined and held on company time, but workers who lose will be forced to pay back the wages they got for that time on top of the other penalties, thus intimidating workers from challenging management victimization at all.

While the MTA agreed to keep the Health Benefits Trust fund that it almost bankrupted afloat—over which the union will no longer have any control—co-payments will rise and many workers will feel compelled to pay for the premium plan in order to get decent medical care. The thousand-dollar lump sum that takes the place of a first-year wage increase will not be part of the baseline for future wages and pensions and amounts to chump change after the IRS gets its cut. The 3 percent in each of the next two years barely covers inflation and will come out of the workers' hides through "productivity" increases. And as the deaths of track workers Joy Antony and Kurien Baby last month underline, *productivity kills*. Now, adding insult to injury, the MTA is giving their families an abysmal \$50,000 each in blood money.

The new deal means speedup and even less safety on the job. Most significantly, the proposed contract eliminates the old no-layoffs clause, allowing management to threaten mass layoffs every time it seeks to exact a new concession from the workforce. The bosses will accelerate their drive to "broadband"—forcing workers to do jobs out of their job titles—and jobs which are currently done by crews of six will now be performed by five. The merger of the MaBSTOA bus lines in Manhattan and the Bronx with NYC Transit buses lets the company force drivers to take on added routes and creates a hornets' nest of conflicts over seniority lists and work rules that the MTA will use to pit workers against each other. This is the first step toward creating a separate "MTA Bus" company which is to eventually incorporate the city-subsidized private bus lines as well, subjecting these workers to the Taylor Law.

The contract also calls for a vast increase in the number of apprentices, creating yet another tier of workers—along with probationary and provisional workers—with lower wages and fewer job protections. The union should fight for full control over job training programs, preventing company abuse and particularly providing black, Hispanic and women workers with opportunities for advancement.

Toussaint claims this contract is the best he could do for the membership. Wall Street's mouthpieces know better: Kalikow pronounced himself "thrilled we did not have a strike," while the rabid labor-haters at the *New York Post* (17 December 2002) acknowledged that "the MTA and the governor dodged a public-relations bullet in the form of a strike." A leadership ready to defy the Taylor Law and face arrest would have ensured the election of strike committees to run the strike. But TWU members reported that no preparations had even been made for mass picketing nor was there any evidence of picket signs at union headquarters. The truth is, as Basil Paterson admitted, "The strike card was never played" (*New York Post*, 17 December 2002).

The municipal labor tops hide behind the Taylor Law to argue that you can't beat City Hall, pointing to the fines



DeMaria/NY Daily News

TWU president Mike Quill rips up anti-strike injunction on eve of victorious 1966 transit strike. TWU members at strike rally.



TWU

our fellow workers become conscious of their own power and break their illusions in the betraying leaders" (*Proletarian Revolution*, Fall 2001). But their support for Toussaint served only to reinforce illusions in ND's class-collaborationist strategy. As against these opportunists, we warned at the time ("Sellouts, Traitors, Finks: No Choice in TWU Local 100 Elections," *WV* No. 746, 17 November 2000):

"ND's stock in trade is using the courts and other government agencies as a club against its rivals, which serves only to further shackle the power of the union and place it under the thumb of the capitalist state. Such appeals to the agencies of the capitalist class enemy are proof enough why ND, despite its occasional 'militant' posture and talk of 'democracy,' offers no alternative to James."

presidency at the behest of the government and Democratic Party liberals.

Uniquely on the left, the Spartacist League opposes government intervention into the unions on principle. As we wrote after Miller's election ("Labor Department Wins Mine Workers' Election," *WV* No. 17, March 1973):

"Going to the Labor Department to 'protect' workers' rights is inviting the class enemy into the workers' organizations. The elementary first principle of a revolutionary proletarian policy toward the trade unions is the struggle for the class independence of the workers. It is this basic consideration that underlies communist opposition to the union bureaucracy, which functions in traitorous collusion with the class enemy and fosters reactionary (i.e., *bourgeois*) ideology, and therefore must suppress workers' democracy. To 'overlook' this

threatened fare hike that was planned long before negotiations got seriously underway. In fact, NYC transit workers average about \$10,000 a year less than MTA workers at the Long Island Railroad and Metro North. In 1996, the MTA also pleaded poverty, only to boast of a surplus of several hundred million dollars as soon as the union leadership agreed to a three-year contract extension. In response to the MTA's claims that it had gone from a hefty surplus to a massive deficit in one year, TWU marchers chanted on Monday, "Open the books, expose the crooks!" Now city comptroller William Thompson has called for an audit of the MTA, "adding that while he had long believed an audit was necessary he wanted to wait until after labor talks so as not to undermine them" (*New York Times*, 19 December 2002).

The proposed contract cooked up behind the closed doors of the Grand Hyatt Hotel stinks, "a contract long on respect—though short on hard cash," as *Newsday* (18 December 2002) gloated. The "respect" is pretty threadbare. In fact, the union leadership's capitulation in this contract battle will embolden supervisors to step up their routine victimizations on the shop floor. Fundamentally, it's not about what's on paper; the only way the workers can gain any real "respect" from the bosses is by flexing their muscle in strike action.

While most workers on sick leave will no longer have to phone their supervisor every time they step out of the house, the 30 percent of workers who use the most sick time will continue to be subject to company snooping and harassment; in effect, the union is sanctioning a cate-

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imposed on transit workers after the 1980 strike. But that strike was sold out just as it was beginning to bite. The Taylor Law's predecessor, the Condon-Wadlin Act, was literally torn to shreds when TWU leader Mike Quill defiantly ripped up a court injunction against the 1966 strike. Quill went to jail, but the strike won and the union forced the state legislature to pass an amnesty bill. Today, with a slumping economy and a viciously anti-labor administration in Washington pursuing an endless "war on terror," transit workers are in a tough situation. But if the transit union had proceeded with militancy and determination, appealing to other city unions to stand with them in struggle, it would have been possible for the union to prevail and defeat the Taylor Law.

Transit Bosses' "Plantation Justice"

For weeks, the capitalist politicians and press had denounced the transit workers as a bunch of lazy, greedy, well-off workers who were out to bankrupt the city, force up subway and bus fares and endanger the lives of the population. The anti-labor venom was wrapped in an envelope of raw racist contempt for this heavily black, Hispanic and immigrant workforce, with the *Daily News* (12 December 2002) grotesquely vituperating against "34,000 human factors who are larding up the system." Before that, the *Post* smeared the union's Trinidadian-born leader as a terrorist intent on "jihad." This is a broader expression of the MTA's "whole plantation mentality," as one transit worker told the *New York Times* (14 December 2002). Describing the MTA's demand that workers get company permission to see a doctor, he said: "It's like saying, 'Yes, master. Can I go get healthy, master?'"

The racist politicians who run this country—and their media mouthpieces—cried crocodile tears over the pain and suffering in New York City after the September 11 attacks. But the venom against the TWU is a reflection of how America's capitalist rulers regard the oppressed minorities who make up a large bulk of the working people of New York.

As seen by the cheers and waves that greeted TWU marchers on December 16, the racist anti-union propaganda didn't wash with the rest of the city's working people. They saw in the struggle of the powerful TWU a chance to strike a blow against the arrogant city rulers. By selling out the transit workers, the TWU tops sold out all the city workers. Bloomberg wasted no time in holding the TWU settlement over the heads of the other municipal unions, warning that "if you don't have productivity enhancements, you're not going to be able to get any raises."

In the context of a solid transit strike, a class-struggle leadership would have

sought to galvanize the passive support for the union into active solidarity on the picket lines. The largely immigrant Taxi Drivers Alliance had already declared it would walk out in solidarity with the transit workers. Had the other unions in NYC transit, the LIRR, Metro North and PATH been brought out, the city—and Wall Street—would have come to a complete standstill. It would also have been necessary to line up the rest of city labor to join in mass pickets to prevent scabbing and to walk out in solidarity action against arrests and other government reprisals.

But that would have meant a political struggle against the municipal labor tops, who fear to mobilize their ranks lest this

ensured wide support for a strike among the minority poor and other working people, even reaching into Bloomberg's yuppie base.

What is necessary is to weld the anger of the ghettos and barrios with the social power of the labor movement. Instead, the TWU tops undermined support for the union among oppressed minorities. In the face of the domestic "war on terror" targeting immigrants first and foremost, only weeks before the contract deadline Local 100 official John Samuelsen complained about subcontractors employing day laborers who do not undergo background checks, ranting, "We don't know if they have a criminal background or anything about them." Rather



TWU Local 100 members and other unionists formed backbone of labor/black mobilization that rode KKK out of New York on 23 October 1999.

upset their relationship with the capitalist politicians. Instead, Toussaint "mobilized" his fellow union bureaucrats for hot-air speechifying aimed at deflecting a strike. That the union tops share the outlook of their capitalist masters was amply demonstrated by a 9 December letter to Bloomberg by Randi Weingarten, on behalf of the Municipal Labor Committee, declaring that a transit strike "would effectively cripple our economy" and be "devastating."

A TWU leadership intent on winning active support among the ghetto and barrio masses would begin by organizing the WEP "workfare" cleaners—many of them women who are forced to labor for their meager welfare checks—into the union with full union wages, benefits and job protections. The union must take up the fight to defend women workers against discrimination and bigotry, demanding free, 24-hour childcare and paid maternity/paternity leave. A union fight for free mass transit could have

than denouncing these largely immigrant workers, the TWU should be fighting to organize them into the union at full union wages and benefits.

The TWU tops also embraced the racist cops who terrorize the ghettos. At the City Hall rally, PBA chief Lynch was followed on the speaker's platform by a representative of the corrections officers, the sadistic prison guards who brutalize Rikers Island inmates. This was a slap in the face to every unionist who has seen the business end of a billy club while picketing, and especially to the black and Hispanic workers who make up the bulk of the municipal unions' membership and know that any one of them could have been in the shoes of Abner Louima when he was tortured or Amadou Diallo when he was gunned down in a hail of 41 bullets.

Lynch grotesquely declared, "Although my members are on that side of the barricades, their hearts and minds are with you." The cops are on the other side of the

class barricades—they're the hired thugs of the capitalist rulers, paid to break strikes and bust heads. And that's what they would have done in the event of a transit walkout, assisted by transit security guards who, outrageously, are organized by the TWU. *Cops, prison guards and security guards out of the unions!*

Fight for a Workers Government!

Welcoming the capitalists' cops into a union rally is an obscene display of the union misleaders' class loyalties, which are manifested in countless other ways—from their acquiescence to binding arbitration, a weapon of the bosses to weaken and demobilize the power of labor, to their political support to the Democratic Party. Tying the unions to the parties of capital means more than just hustling votes every election day and squandering dues money that could be used to build up a strike fund. It represents an ongoing subordination of labor's class interests to those of the class enemy, as was clear in Paterson and Dinkins' role in the contract sellout. Dinkins was elected as the city's first black mayor after assuring Wall Street that "they'll take it from me." He went on to slash the municipal workforce while putting 6,000 more cops on the streets.

The allegiance of the labor bureaucracy, as well as a majority of the working class itself, to the Democratic Party is the main obstacle to successful class struggle in the U.S. It is necessary to break with the Democrats and forge a workers party. The best workers party in history was the Bolshevik Party led by V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky, which led the workers of Russia to power in the October Revolution of 1917. That party was composed of the vanguard layers of the proletariat and those revolutionary intellectuals who came over to the side of the workers. It steered the working masses for the seizure of state power through political combat against the labor bureaucrats and opportunist "socialists" of the day. It was built through leading bitter strike battles and by acting as a tribune of the people in fighting for democratic rights for all the oppressed. Above all, it brought to the proletariat the consciousness of its historic task as the gravedigger of the capitalist system of wage slavery, racist oppression and imperialist war.

Those who labor must rule! In a socialist society, the wealth produced by labor, which currently goes into the coffers of the Wall Street tycoons, would be used to rebuild the decaying subway system, the schools and the hospitals; to provide free mass transit and medical care and free, quality, integrated education for all; to provide decent, affordable housing for all. But to secure all these things requires a workers revolution that overthrows the capitalist order and lays the basis for an egalitarian socialist society internationally. ■

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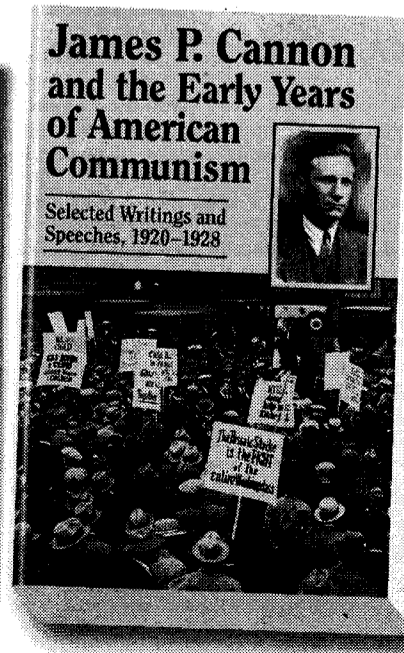
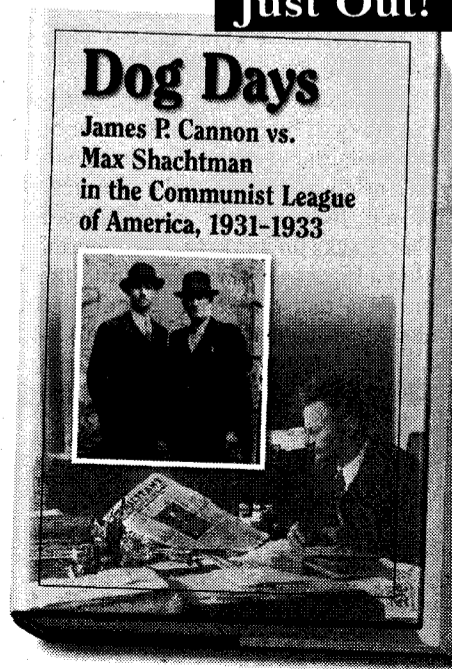
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Just Out!



WORKERS VANGUARD

NYC Transit Workers Vote for Strike, Get Sellout

NEW YORK CITY, December 22—Marching in their thousands in freezing cold weather across the Brooklyn Bridge to City Hall on Monday afternoon, members of the 34,000-strong Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 100 demonstrated their determination to defy the city rulers' anti-strike Taylor Law injunctions. They were buoyed by the support of other city workers and minorities, who joined in the demonstration or cheered, waved and honked their car horns. They had voted to authorize the strike needed to beat back the bosses' giveback offensive. Local 100 president Roger Toussaint had ruled out the wage freeze demanded by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), vowing he would accept no zeros, and slapped down billionaire mayor Michael Bloomberg's strikebreaking rants with a well-deserved "shut up."

But when the contract expired the previous midnight, Toussaint had "stopped the clock." And he didn't even show up for the City Hall rally. Instead of what should have been a *strike rally*, marchers were confronted with a speaker's platform filled with representatives of the cops, Democratic Party politicians and backstabbing labor bureaucrats like United Federation of Teachers head Randi Weingarten, who had openly denounced a possible transit strike.

Barely an hour later, workers watched in disgust as Toussaint announced a settlement on TV giving them a big zero for the first year of the contract and sealing the deal with an embrace of MTA head Peter Kalikow. From bars near City Hall that night to maintenance shops and bus barns around the city the next morning, angry talk of a sellout was rife and notice boards featured news photos of Toussaint and Kalikow, the picture of a sweetheart deal if ever there was one.

Several days after the settlement, one TWU militant told WV:

"The sentiment in the shop still seems overwhelmingly against the contract. But time works on the leadership's side, as people consider what happens if we vote it down. Can you really believe that this leadership will go back and negotiate anything better? And given the way they cynically manipulated the membership with the strike vote, it's clear these people are not going to lead a strike and challenge the Taylor Law. There have been some questions about binding arbitration, which of course in this political and economic climate would be deadly—we wouldn't do better and could do worse. A core of people feel very angry and betrayed. They soberly voted to strike and feel we needed to do so. They are bitter that we're saddled with this standard agreement without a fight. They believe we could have struck and won."

The sellout should be voted down—not in a drawn-out, undemocratic mail ballot where the most conservative and backward union members are likely to hold sway. Workers voted to strike at mass meetings and they should demand mass meetings

where they can openly debate the pros and cons of the settlement and move to immediately elect strike committees if it is rejected. But this poses the decisive question of leadership and what program that leadership fights for.

Transit workers know that the TWU has the power to shut NYC down cold, as it did in 1966 and 1980. But a transit strike would immediately confront the full might of the government, its strikebreaking laws and court injunctions, the capitalist politicians who invoke them and the cops who enforce them. The city was preparing 12,000 cops for strikebreaking duty, Governor George Pataki threatened to call out the National Guard, and every transit worker was sent a copy of a court injunction threatening severe penalties if they walked out. While Bush and his cohorts talk about imposing "democracy"



Agins/NY Times

TWU Local 100 head Roger Toussaint embraces MTA chairman Peter Kalikow after announcement of contract sellout, December 16.

immigrant rights and the civil liberties of the population as a whole. As the U.S. imperialists gear up for war against Iraq, they will further escalate their war on the unions in order to ensure class peace at home. A strike by this powerful municipal union in the financial center of American imperialism would have had an

the class enemy—the Democratic Party and the government and its cops and courts. Toussaint invited Patrolmen's Benevolent Association (PBA) chief Patrick Lynch to address TWU rallies, even having a cozy lunch with him days before the contract deadline. And Toussaint's reliance on the Democrats was exemplified by his choice of former state senator and deputy mayor Basil Paterson as a chief negotiator for the union. And standing alongside Toussaint as he announced the sellout was former Democratic mayor David Dinkins. The union tops even formed a "Committee to Prevent a Transit Strike" to implore Bloomberg and Pataki to "negotiate in good faith." It could not be clearer that the bureaucracy's class collaboration was counterposed to preparing the membership for a strike.

New Directions: Court Suits, Class Collaboration

Toussaint rode into the Local 100 presidency two years ago at the head of the New Directions (ND) slate because many transit workers believed he would fight the MTA, unlike the discredited "old guard" around Willie James, a flunky of TWU International president and former Local 100 chief Sonny Hall. The remnants of Hall's "old guard" in the Local 100 leadership are now mouthing cynical opposition to the contract. But on the eve of the contract expiration, they tried to split the private lines bus workers into a separate local—a move resoundingly rebuffed by these workers.

Toussaint may have sometimes "talked the talk," but he is no different than a slew of other out-of-office union "reformers" who preach "democracy" in order to get themselves into positions of power and occasionally pay lip service to "militancy" because they have not yet had the opportunity to push through a sellout contract themselves.

Braintrusting by the sinister Association for Union Democracy (AUD) and current Local 100 lawyer Arthur Schwartz, ND dragged its opponents in the union into the capitalist courts at every step up the ladder to power, including only weeks before the 1999 contract showdown (see "Association for Union Democracy: Lawyers for Government Union-Busting," WV No. 738, 30 June 2000). When these

continued on page 10



WV Photo

December 16: Transit workers rally outside MTA headquarters in Brooklyn prepared to fight for decent contract. Even as thousands of TWUers and supporters marched to Manhattan's City Hall, Local 100 tops were putting finishing touches on rotten deal.

in Iraq, transit workers in New York City don't have the right to strike!

With millions being laid off and essential services from subways to schools and hospitals being cut to the bone, workers and minorities around the country were closely following the transit showdown. The attacks on workers' livelihoods come atop a bipartisan "war on terror" that has meant a racist witchhunt against Arabs and Muslims and a wholesale assault on

impact far beyond New York City.

The unions must be politically armed with a class-struggle program in such confrontations, understanding who their friends and who their enemies are: the interests of labor and capital are diametrically counterposed, and the government and the Democratic and Republican parties represent the interests of the capitalist class enemy. But the Local 100 leadership embraced as "allies" the agencies of

**Democrats, Republicans: Enemies of Labor
For a Class-Struggle Leadership of the Unions!
For a Workers Party
to Fight for a Workers Government!**