

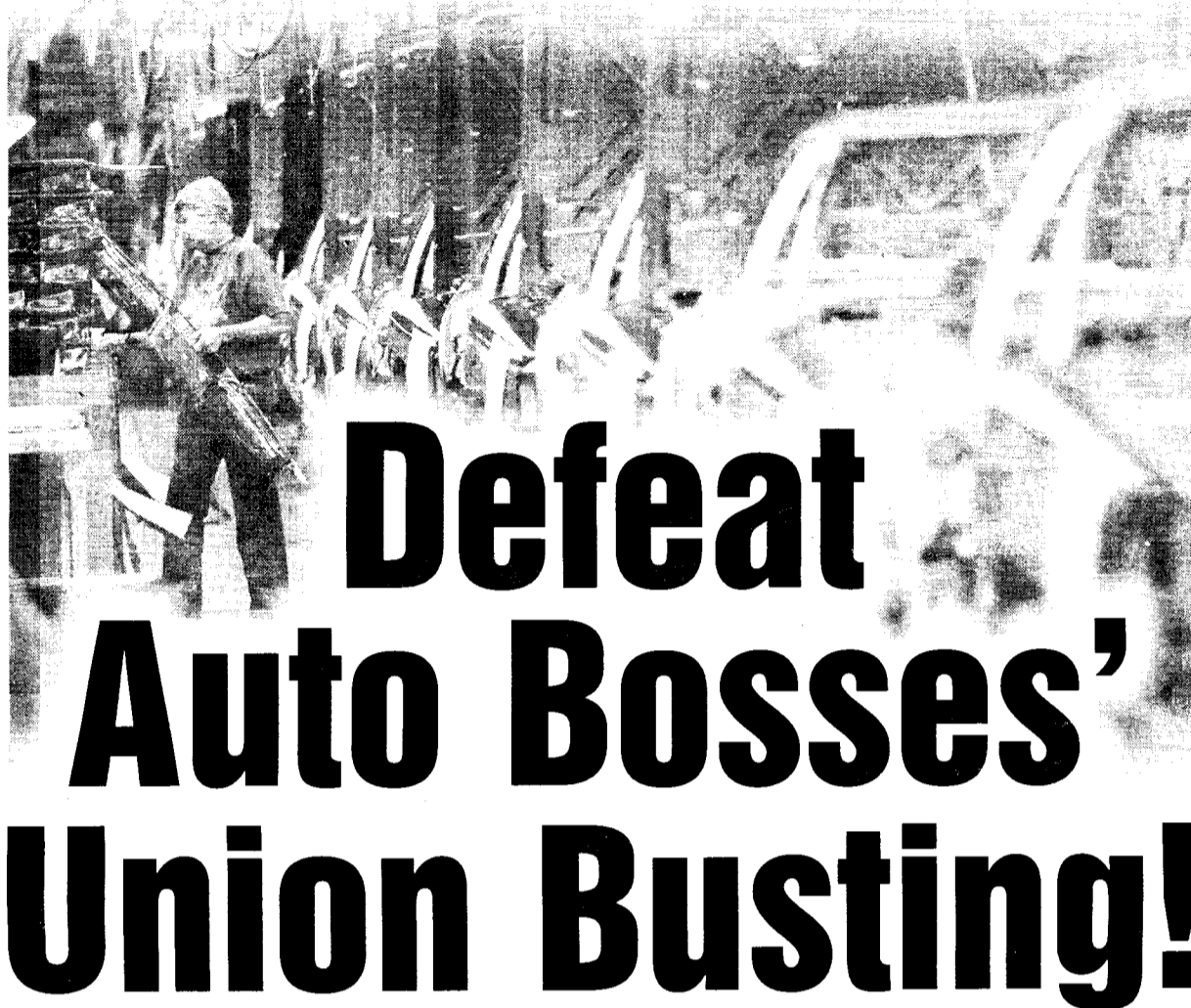
## UAW Must Fight GM/Delphi!

Delphi, the world's largest auto parts supplier, and General Motors, the world's largest automaker, have launched an unprecedented union-busting assault against the United Auto Workers (UAW). Four years into a purported economic recovery based largely on massive layoffs and deadly speedup, U.S. workers are seeing the largest decline in real wages in decades. On October 8, GM spin-off Delphi, which supplies GM with parts, went the corporate bankruptcy route already taken by most major airlines. Delphi's workers are threatened with destitution, as the company demands that their pay be cut from \$27.00 to \$10.00 per hour!

On the heels of Delphi's bankruptcy announcement, GM bosses demanded massive givebacks from the UAW. The treacherous union tops immediately surrendered to GM's demands, in the name of protecting the mammoth corporation's sacred "competitiveness." Current workers and retirees, who broke their backs for GM with six- and seven-day workweeks, are seeing their health care benefits slashed to the tune of \$1 billion annually. It was "the largest single cost-cutting initiative ever announced by the company," and "paves the way for Ford Motor Co. and the Chrysler Group to seek similar cost-savings plans with the UAW" (*Detroit Free Press*, 18 October).

The capitalists deny bankruptcy protection to their victims while wielding the bankruptcy ax to void labor contracts and "reorganize" industry at the cost of hundreds of thousands of jobs. Earlier this month, working people across the country stood in long lines desperate to file for bankruptcy before the new law limiting protection from creditors went into effect. Meanwhile, Northwest Airlines declared bankruptcy two months into a strike by AMFA mechanics, who walked off the job rather than accept a 26 percent pay cut. The refusal of the leaders of the other airline unions to shut down Northwest in solidarity with AMFA isolated the mechanics, whose jobs are being taken by scabs. And now every Northwest union is under the gun.

The venality of the capitalist rulers in attacking retirees is as brazen as it is breathtaking. Dubbed capitalism's "Mr. Fix-It," Delphi CEO Robert Miller ran workers at Bethlehem Steel through the bankruptcy wringer to slash their benefits and those of retirees and to massively reduce the workforce. Miller blithely told the *Wall Street Journal* (17 October): "When you worked for one employer till age 65 and then died at age 70, and when health care was unsophisticated and inexpensive, the social con-



## Defeat Auto Bosses' Union Busting!

tract inherent in defined-benefit programs perhaps made some economic sense." He continued, "People are living longer these days. Of course, that is a good thing. But the question is, how can we afford it?" Miller's answer? Work like slaves, then die.

And the UAW tops' response? Let us dig our members' graves! On October 18, UAW officials asked a federal court in Detroit to approve the deal with General Motors in order to *prevent individual*

*retirees from suing the company for cutting their benefits!* GM, naturally, voiced its support for this move. American socialist Daniel DeLeon captured the treachery of the U.S. labor officialdom more than a century ago, branding them the "labor lieutenants of capital."

Left unchallenged, the effect of Delphi and GM's assaults on the UAW will be enormous. Layoffs and plant closings are already being threatened, potentially affecting the bulk of the U.S. proletariat.

sulted in the shutdown of 27 of GM's 29 North American assembly facilities due to lack of parts. "I either stand now and strike or there may be no tomorrow," one worker said at the time. The strike backed the auto giant down and ended in a stand-off. GM failed to deliver a crippling blow to the union, much to the chagrin of Wall Street investors. GM then contrived to spin off Delphi, and now they're back for a second try at gutting the UAW. Instead of being picked off one by one, the union must prepare its entire membership for a hard struggle against Delphi, GM and all the auto companies.

### Black Rights and Union Rights

In this capitalist society where black people constitute a specially oppressed race-color caste, every assault on union workers hits the black population disproportionately hard. Twenty years ago, one out of every four black workers was a union member. Today that ratio has slipped to close to one in seven. This fact is directly linked to the massive deindustrialization of the U.S., particularly the big urban centers in the Midwest. There has also been a migration of jobs to the low-wage, non-union South and other areas in the U.S. and abroad. Yet the percentage of black people in unions and in basic industry is still proportionately higher than that of whites. In fact, the auto industry has one of the most racially integrated workforces in the U.S. Thus

*continued on page 10*



UAW members in Flint, Michigan walk off the job in June 1998, beginning strike that shut down bulk of GM's North American production.

**Not One Person, Not One Penny for the Imperialist Military!**

**Marxism, Militarism and War...6**



# On Cuba's Collectivized Economy

7 October 2005

Dear Comrades:

The article "Feds: Hands Off ILA!" in WV No. 854 (16 September) wrongly states that the International Longshoremen's Association represents dock workers in Montreal. This used to be the case, however several years ago Montreal dock workers, along with those in Quebec City and other smaller ports in Quebec, reorganized as locals of the Syndicat Canadien de la Fonction Publique.

In the same issue, the article "Bush Bans Cuban Medical Aid" states that "since 1991-92," the Cuban regime "has increasingly opened up the country to imperialist economic penetration." This was indeed the case following the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union and through the 1990s, as the Castro bureaucracy sought to restart a devastated economy through foreign investment from, and joint ventures with, European and Canadian corporations. At the same time, individual dollar holdings were legalized, leading, as the article states, to growing inequalities among the population.

More recently, however, following a modest economic recovery, the regime has moved to curtail imperialist holdings, as well as small-scale private businesses on the island. An article by the *Chicago Tribune's* Havana correspondent

(24 June), for example, notes how "Cuban officials have closed scores of foreign businesses that were welcomed here a decade ago to bail out the nation's faltering economy." It adds that "about a half-dozen of the more than 350 foreign firms once based in Cuba's duty-free zones are still operating." From 2002 to 2004, the number of joint ventures decreased from about 400 to about 300, while Cuba's Foreign Investment and Economic Cooperation Ministry projects that another 67 will be closed this year. Meanwhile the government has taken the dollar out of circulation, tightened controls over state enterprises doing business with foreigners, and sought to reduce dependence on imperialist investment through enacting significant new trade deals with Venezuela and China.

All this has not put an end to imperialist economic penetration, which is still significant in the tourism, nickel and telecommunications industries, or to the significant inequalities on the island. But to imply that Trotskyists should oppose all imperialist investment, joint ventures, etc. in Cuba or any other bureaucratically deformed workers state would be very wrong. With the collapse of the USSR, deals with European and Canadian capitalists are often the only means for Cuba—a resource-poor country that has faced a decades-long U.S.

economic embargo—to access modern technology and develop new economic sectors. In extremis, opposition to such investment would amount to a program of nationalist economic autarky, guaranteeing that the population remains mired in poverty.

Our opposition to the Castro bureaucracy fundamentally flows from its nationalist *political program* of "socialism in one country." The article rightly concludes that a proletarian political revolution based on a perspective of international extension of the revolution is the only ultimate means to defend and expand the gains of the Cuban Revolution. Rather than fight to win the working

masses in Latin America and beyond to the fight for socialist revolution, the Cuban bureaucracy has long fostered illusions in "progressive" bourgeois regimes, from Allende in Chile in the early 1970s to Chávez in Venezuela today. Meanwhile the regime's bureaucratic monopoly on political power has undermined the consciousness of the Cuban working class while producing economic distortions and inefficiencies. Our perspective is a centrally planned economy based on workers democracy. That said, it is important to be accurate about developments in the Cuban economy today.

Comradely,  
John Masters

## No on Anti-Union Prop 75!

### California

A sinister anti-union initiative is on the ballot for the November 8 California state election. Cynically titled the "Paycheck Protection Act," Prop. 75 would restrict trade unions' political activities, requiring that public employee unions receive prior written consent from each individual employee each year before they can collect or use dues or fees to contribute to political campaigns and candidates. The Spartacist League says: Vote no on Prop. 75! Government hands off public worker unions!

Just like anti-union "right to work" laws, Prop. 75 is being promoted as protecting workers' rights. In reality, it is part of a union-busting offensive headed by Republican governor Schwarzenegger against teachers, nurses and other unionized public sector workers and more broadly against education and social services (see "Defeat Anti-Worker Assault in California!" WV No. 853, 2 September). The initiative also continues a national campaign by the Republicans to cut off their rival capitalist politicians in the Democratic Party from the millions they get each year in union money. Similar laws are already on the books in Washington, Utah, Michigan and other states.

We oppose Prop. 75 because we oppose any and all interventions by the capitalist state—a machinery of repression defending the interests of the tiny class of exploiters against the working people—

into the labor movement. The capitalist state has no business telling the unions what they should or should not do with their money. State intervention only serves to subordinate the unions to the bosses' government and to weaken their ability to wage class struggle.

At the same time, our fight for the political independence of the labor movement from the capitalist state means struggling against the trade-union bureaucracy's support to the Democrats, those wolves in sheep's clothing who are no less of a capitalist party than the Republicans. While Schwarzenegger is leading the current drive against California's public unions and social services, it is the Democratic mayors of Los Angeles, San Francisco and other big cities that are the front-line enforcers of budget cuts and layoffs. Prop. 75 and similar measures would be used to fight any attempt by workers to organize their own party, independent of the capitalist class enemy.

Some workers rightly resent surrendering their dues money year after year for contributions to the Democrats while the pro-capitalist union tops do their best to enforce labor "peace" and sabotage strikes when they do occur. But these questions must be fought out *inside* the unions, as part of a political struggle to oust the labor traitors and replace them with a class-struggle leadership committed to building a workers party. Such a party is the necessary instrument to lead the fight for a workers government that expropriates the capitalist class. ■



TROTSKY

### Imperialist War and Opportunist "Socialism"

At the onset of World War I, the 4 August 1914 vote by the German Social Democracy for war credits for the German imperialist state signaled the definitive collapse of the Second International. Pointing to the heroic work of German revolutionary Karl Liebknecht, Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin stressed that the task of Marxists in agitating against imperialist war was to promote proletarian revolution internationally.



LENIN

Any "peace programme" will deceive the people and be a piece of hypocrisy, unless its principal object is to explain to the masses the need for a revolution, and to support, aid, and develop the mass revolutionary struggles breaking out everywhere (ferment among the masses, protests, fraternisation in the trenches, strikes, demonstrations, letters from the front to relatives—for example, in France—urging them not to subscribe to war loans, etc., etc.).

It is the duty of socialists to support, extend and intensify every popular movement to end the war. But it is actually being fulfilled only by those socialists who, like Liebknecht, in their parliamentary speeches, call upon the soldiers to lay down their arms, and preach revolution and transformation of the imperialist war into a civil war for socialism....

That mass revolutionary actions during the war, if successfully developed, can lead only to the transformation of the imperialist war into a civil war for socialism is obvious, and it is harmful to conceal this from the masses. On the contrary, this aim must be indicated clearly, no matter how difficult its attainment may appear now, while we are still at the beginning of the road.

—V.I. Lenin, "Proposals Submitted by the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. to the Second Socialist Conference," April 1916

## WORKERS VANGUARD

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

DIRECTOR OF PARTY PUBLICATIONS: Ray Bishop

EDITOR: Alan Wilde

EDITOR, YOUNG SPARTACUS PAGES: Rosemary Palenque

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Susan Fuller

EDITORIAL BOARD: Kathleen Harris (managing editor), Helene Brosius (letters editor), Linda Jarreau (production manager), Bruce André, Jon Brule, Helen Cantor, Paul Cone, George Foster, Walter Jennings, James Robertson, Joseph Seymour

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

*Workers Vanguard* (ISSN 0276-0746) published biweekly, except skipping three alternate issues in June, July and August (beginning with omitting the second issue in June) and skipping the last issue in December, by the Spartacist Publishing Co., 299 Broadway, Suite 318, New York, NY 10007. Telephone: (212) 732-7862 (Editorial), (212) 732-7861 (Business). Address all correspondence to: Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116. E-mail address: [vanguard@tiac.net](mailto:vanguard@tiac.net). Domestic subscriptions: \$10.00/21 issues. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Workers Vanguard*, Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116.

Opinions expressed in signed articles or letters do not necessarily express the editorial viewpoint. The closing date for news in this issue is 25 October.

No. 857

28 October 2005

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

Web site: [www.icl-fi.org](http://www.icl-fi.org) • E-mail address: [vanguard@tiac.net](mailto:vanguard@tiac.net)  
National Office: Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116 (212) 732-7860

#### Boston

Box 390840, Central Sta.  
Cambridge, MA 02139  
(617) 666-9453  
[bostonsyc@yahoo.com](mailto:bostonsyc@yahoo.com)

#### Los Angeles

Box 29574, Los Feliz Sta.  
Los Angeles, CA 90029  
(213) 380-8239  
[slsycla@sbcglobal.net](mailto:slsycla@sbcglobal.net)  
Public Office: Sat. 2-5 p.m.  
3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215

#### Oakland

Box 29497  
Oakland, CA 94604  
(510) 839-0851  
[slbayarea@sbcglobal.net](mailto:slbayarea@sbcglobal.net)

#### Chicago

Box 6441, Main PO  
Chicago, IL 60680  
(312) 563-0441  
[chicagospartacist@sbcglobal.net](mailto:chicagospartacist@sbcglobal.net)

#### Public Office:

Sat. 2-5 p.m.  
222 S. Morgan  
(Buzzer 23)

#### New York

Box 3381, Church St. Sta.  
New York, NY 10008  
(212) 267-1025  
[nysl@compuserve.com](mailto:nysl@compuserve.com)

#### Public Office:

Sat. 1-4 p.m.  
299 Broadway, Suite 318

#### Public Office:

Sat. 1-5 p.m.  
1634 Telegraph  
3rd Floor

#### San Francisco

Box 77494  
San Francisco, CA 94107  
[slbayarea@sbcglobal.net](mailto:slbayarea@sbcglobal.net)

### TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA/LIGUE TROTSKYSTE DU CANADA

#### Toronto

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

#### Vancouver

Box 2717, Main P.O.  
Vancouver, BC V6B 3X2  
(604) 687-0353  
[tllt@look.ca](mailto:tllt@look.ca)

Our comrade Elizabeth King Robertson died at home on October 12 after a six-year battle with cancer. Over the course of more than 30 years as a professional revolutionist, Lizzy excelled as an organizer, propagandist and editor. A patient mentor and inspiration for younger comrades, Lizzy provided a vital link in the fight to preserve our revolutionary heritage going back to Lenin and Trotsky's Communist International. At the time of her death, she was a full member of the Spartacist League Central Committee and of the International Executive Committee of the International Communist League. Her loss is incalculable both to our party internationally and to her family—Jim Robertson, Martha and Martha's children Rachel, Sarah and Kenneth—as well as her father Henry and mother Mary King and the rest of the King family.

Lizzy grew up in a large family in New York City. Following the death of her mother, Barbara, her father Henry King, a successful corporate lawyer, remarried. Mary King raised Lizzy as her own daughter, and for Lizzy she became "mom." Lizzy attended Brearley private school for girls in New York. She always valued the education she received there and many of the friendships made at Brearley endured until the end of her life. As a teenager she was sent to Miss Porter's, an exclusive finishing school for "old money" society girls. Her first-hand experience of anti-Semitism and class snobbery there played a role in her becoming a passionate fighter against racism and inequality.

Lizzy first encountered the Spartacist League in the early 1970s while a student at Boston University. Under the impact of the Vietnam War, Boston campuses were a hotbed of New Left radicalism.

Lizzy was active in the Cambridge Tenants Organizing Committee, a group trying to defend working-class families from being pushed out of their homes as the universities expanded. She was recruited to Trotskyism, joining the Revolutionary Communist Youth, the SL's youth group in 1973. For many students, the brush with radical activism was just an episode of youthful rebellion on the road to an eventual comfortable career. But Lizzy's recruitment to the fight for international socialist revolution was for keeps.

Lizzy was accepted into party membership in July 1974. She had by then transferred to Detroit, where the SL was seeking to intervene among the largely black proletariat of the auto factories. She impressed comrades as the youth organizer as well as by her participation in the lively debates that took place as the party began to get more experience in trade-union work. Here she also began the difficult training to become a legal stenographic reporter, a profession in which she was active until her debilitation by cancer.

Around 1976 she transferred to New York in order to be part of the national leadership of the youth organization (renamed the Spartacus Youth League). Lizzy was elected to the SYL National Bureau in July 1976 and was a member of the editorial board of the monthly *Young Spartacus* from October 1976 through September 1978. She served for a year as the SYL National Organizational Secretary. Her experience as youth organizer and leader was crucial to Lizzy's understanding of the importance of a youth organization in the training of party cadre.

In August 1978, she resigned her leading positions in the youth organization in order to take on the job of secretary of the Political Bureau. Not only did Lizzy fulfill the demanding assignment of getting out regular and accurate minutes throughout her years in New York, but she turned the job of PB secretary into a nexus for organizing political discussions. Her close personal association with SL national chairman James Robertson began at this time, and she remained his loving companion and closest party collaborator until her death. After serving on the party Central Committee as a representative of the SYL, Lizzy was co-opted in her own right in 1979 and elected a full CC member at the August 1983 national conference. She also took charge of the subject indexing for the bound volumes of our press, which are the documentary record of our political line and our work. Lizzy transferred to the San Francisco Bay Area at the beginning of the 1990s. She tirelessly guided the local leadership, was secretary of the West Coast CC group and also took continuous responsibility for our local in Los Angeles.

# Elizabeth King Robertson



Robertson Family



## 1951-2005

Lizzy's strength was in tackling the intersection of political principle with concrete social reality, coming up with tactics and slogans to express our program. She closely followed the work of Spartacist supporters in the trade unions and her counsel was highly valued by those involved in such work. She was a longtime member of the Bay Area Local executive committee and fought to remain on this body despite her many other responsibilities because she understood so well that making political decisions real means daily choices of "what to betray" in order to focus on the most important things; it means finding the right comrades for the concrete tasks and preparing them politically to carry out those tasks.

Lizzy was unsurpassed as a Leninist political organizer. After a party gathering, she was inevitably involved in figuring out how to shift personnel or assignments to make the political priorities just established actually happen. She had a profound understanding of how our organizational functioning corresponds to our revolutionary purpose. For decades, Lizzy was one of a handful of comrades who took initiative in formulating, refining and codifying our internal norms and practices as the party came across new situations or as problems were seen with the existing rules.

At the ICL's Third International Conference in 1998, she gave a presentation, "On the Origins and Development of Leninist Organizational Practices." Published in *Spartacist* No. 54 (Spring 1998) along with our revised "Organizational Rules and Guidelines." Lizzy's presentation educated both young comrades and experienced cadres by providing the historical background, beginning with the first Marxist organizations founded by Karl Marx himself, to enable the conference delegates to consider the Rules. In this presentation, she explained: "Living organizational rules are one of perhaps a half-dozen elements that characterize an organization; in that sense, they are political. But they are not determinate. A sound set of organizational rules is not a guard against political departures, although departures from our organizational norms are generally a signal of political problems. In the absence of Bolshevik practices, an organization is necessarily amorphous, that is, Menshevik."

Though she rarely raised her voice, Lizzy was a powerful speaker at party gatherings. Her astute judgment and forthrightness made her a uniquely authoritative voice in the deliberations through which the party selects a leadership. Numerous times she was chosen to chair the nominating commission charged with recommending a slate of candidates to the party

conference that elects the leading body (the CC in the SL or the IEC in the ICL). Lizzy was clear-eyed in seeing the weaknesses as well as the strengths of comrades, including her closest friends, and she was renowned for her fairness. This ability is crucial in a Leninist party, which aims to build its leadership as a collective that is stronger than the sum of its individual parts.

Lizzy was also her own harshest critic. Although in great pain, she authored a document on October 7 addressing her role in a political fight in the Los Angeles Local that had been marred by extreme characterizations of comrades and bureaucratic practices. Her purpose was not a *mea culpa* but a statement of conscientious regard for clarity, drawing the political lessons necessary to strengthen the party.

Beginning in early 1979, Lizzy was a mainstay of the editorial board of *Women and Revolution*, the journal of the SL CC Commission for Work Among Women. Lizzy authored or co-authored some of *W&R*'s articles on the most sensitive subjects, defending human sexuality and exposing the barbarous cruelty of the bourgeois state as it destroys the lives of people whose only "crime" is that their sexual proclivities and needs vary from the repressive, religion-based strictures of hypocritical bourgeois moralism. She wrote articles on the AIDS crisis, the crime of female genital mutilation, the fabricated "child abuse" day-care scandals, incest and the furor over so-called "date rape." When publication of *W&R* was suspended after the Spring 1996 issue, Lizzy continued to contribute to the articles published under the *W&R* masthead in the press of the national sections of the ICL, including *Workers Vanguard*, and in *Spartacist*. During the

last weeks of her life, Lizzy was heavily involved in the editing of an article for the next issue of *Spartacist* examining the debates and discussions in the Bolshevik Party over women's emancipation after the Russian Revolution.

The final undoing of the October Revolution in 1991-92 was a historic defeat for the workers of the world, ushering in a difficult period for revolutionists. Our difficulties in coming to grips with the new period have been expressed in political disorientation and corresponding internal difficulties (see "Spartacist League 12th National Conference—A Hard Look at Recent Party Work and Current Tasks," *WV* No. 841, 4 February). Nobody has been immune to these problems, but comrade Lizzy played a forward role in trying to get the party out of this morass. Several times during the past five or six years, our internal bulletins have featured a document by Lizzy, submitted early in the discussion, often less than one page in length, which became a touchstone for subsequent contributions. Often her document would begin from a concrete, seemingly tactical question of a particular projected intervention somewhere, and would proceed logically to illuminate programmatic and principled issues.

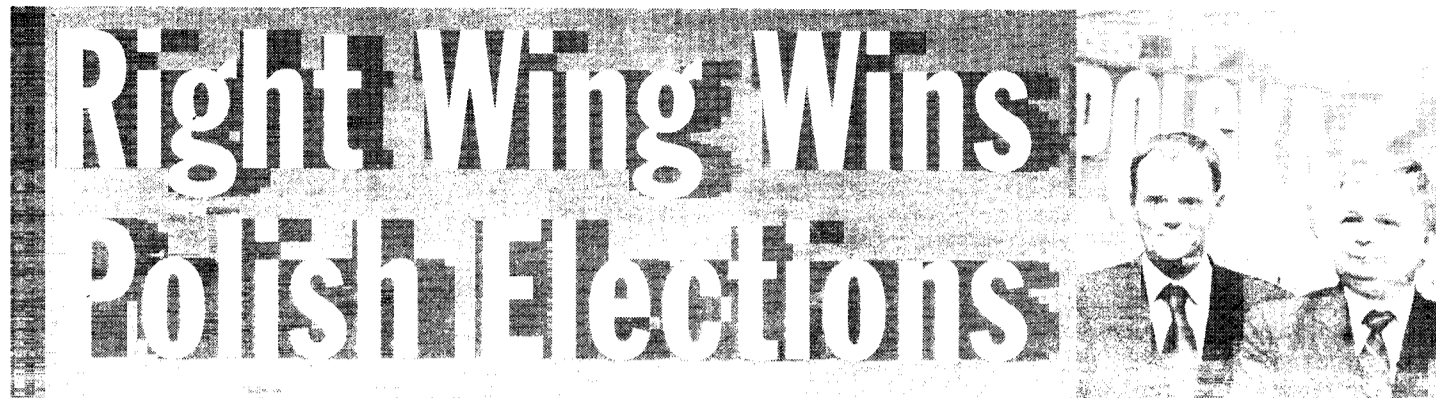
After Lizzy's cancer was diagnosed, she undertook surgery, chemotherapy and, finally, radiation. Her father ensured that she obtained high-quality care, which was ultimately unavailing. She continued to do her biweekly sales and other public political activity. In April 2003, she was wounded by a "non-lethal projectile" fired from a cop shotgun during the vicious police attack on antiwar protesters, longshoremen and port truckers at the Port of Oakland.

Her comrades, family and friends will miss Lizzy's presence in our lives for as long as we have consciousness. We will miss her fine mind, her humor, her warmth and compassion. We will always remember her beauty and courage. Even in the midst of our grief, we celebrate her life and find comfort in knowing that she lived as she chose to and never wavered in her belief that fighting for the liberation of all the exploited and oppressed was the right way for her to live. For us, she has been a very strong link in the chain of continuity that goes all the way back to Marx and Engels, Lenin and Trotsky, and Cannon. We resolve to honor our beloved comrade Lizzy by carrying on her struggle.

### Memorial Meetings

Memorial meetings are planned in New York on November 12, for information call (212) 732-7861; in the Bay Area on November 20, call (510) 839-0851.

# Fifteen Years of Capitalist Counterrevolution: Cynicism, Unemployment, Clerical Reaction



WARSAW, October 24—The recent parliamentary and presidential elections in Poland took place in the immediate aftermath of the obscene celebrations of the 25th anniversary of clerical-nationalist, anti-communist Solidarność, the spearhead of imperialist-backed capitalist counterrevolution in the former Soviet bloc. The 15 years since the triumph of counterrevolution in Poland in 1989-90 have been marked by the impoverishment of the mass of the working population and the rise of Catholic reaction. Vicious anti-communism and anti-woman bigotry, virulent anti-Semitism and Polish chauvinism—all the old garbage of Marshal Pilsudski's interwar Poland has come back.

While big Polish cities have an urban petty bourgeoisie that profited from capitalist restoration and can afford the expensive Western-style cafés in Warsaw's Old Town, official unemployment figures have remained around 20 percent for several years. German TV reported last year on the conditions of the 15,000 miners who were thrown out of work by the closure of the state-run coal mines in the southern Polish town of Walbrzych. Desperate to survive, many former miners risk their lives—and some die—digging for coal with picks and axes in *biedaszyby* (literally, shafts of the poor) as in pre-World War II capitalist Poland. What they earn from selling their coal is three or four times more than unemployment benefits and ten times more than welfare payments.

Voter turnout was the lowest since the 1989 elections that brought a capitalist government to power: only 40 percent voted in the parliamentary elections, and around 50 percent in the first round of the presidential ballot. The low turnout reflects the deep cynicism with which Poles regard the capitalist politicians who have ruled since 1989, as one capitalist coalition replaces another every four years, often falling apart when it gets voted out.

The Solidarność-derived government that took power in 1989 dismantled Poland's collectivized economy and implemented an economic "shock treatment," which destroyed the bulk of the social welfare Poles had enjoyed under the deformed workers state—from virtually free health care to cheap, subsidized housing to pensions one could live on. In line with Catholic "family values," the right to a safe and free abortion was abolished. The Solidarność government was booted out by an enraged electorate. But the capitalist government that replaced it, led by the ex-Stalinist, social-democratic Democratic Left Alliance (SLD), reversed none of these reactionary measures. In fact, the SLD—a bourgeois workers party, organizationally based on the working class but with a pro-capitalist leadership and program—proved to be a reliable tool for continuing to consolidate capitalist rule. It carried out mass deportations of Roma (Gypsies) in 1996 and welcomed the invitation for Poland to join NATO. Having frustrated the hopes of its predominantly working-class electorate, the SLD

got voted out of office in 1997, to be replaced by a government of Electoral Action Solidarność (AWS). Meanwhile, SLD leader Kwasniewski remained as president, presiding over Poland's entry into NATO in 1999.

When the SLD resumed office again in 2001, it continued the anti-working-class measures of AWS. The SLD government supported the blood-drenched U.S. rulers' invasion of Iraq in 2003, committing 3,000 Polish troops to the imperialist occupation force. This move was motivated by the Polish bourgeoisie's worries over the close relations developing between imperialist Germany and Russia. In the name of maintaining Polish "independence," the Polish ruling class has become the lackey of the imperialist U.S. Having again done its duty for Poland's capitalists and again deceived its working-class base, the SLD underwent a number of splits over corruption scandals in 2003-04 and paved the way for another right-wing victory.

Poland will now be ruled by a parliamentary coalition of the Civic Platform (PO) of Donald Tusk and the Law and Justice Party (PiS) of the twin brothers Lech and Jaroslaw Kaczyński. Lech Kaczyński, who won the presidency yesterday in

Polish president-elect Lech Kaczyński (right) with opponent Donald Tusk during campaign.

to Solidarność leader Lech Walesa on the August 1980 strike committee in the Lenin Shipyard, out of which Solidarność originated. When Walesa became the first president of capitalist Poland in 1990, he chose the "evil twins" to be his vice presidents.

## Capitalist Heritage of Solidarność

The government and the entire political spectrum in Poland from left to right celebrated the 25th anniversary of Solidarność—each in its own way. The government organized celebrations in the city of Gdansk, which included a concert by French pop star Jean-Michel Jarre in the former Lenin Shipyard. Former SLD president Kwasniewski, who was a member of the ruling Stalinist party in 1980, paid his respects to Solidarność fight for the "overthrow of Communism." In July, the Parliament proposed a "Day of Solidarność." Western statesmen joined in honoring Solidarność counterrevolutionary services in the anti-Soviet Cold War, as the European Parliament also made



Warsaw, July 2005: 5,000 Polish miners demonstrate outside Parliament in defense of pension rights.

a second round of voting, advocates a "Fourth Republic," a strong presidential state subject to even greater church influence. In propaganda sent to parish priests just before the elections, he boasted of his struggle "in defense of the Catholic faith" and against "expressions of demoralization"—a reference to a gay and lesbian "Parade of Equality" that, as mayor of Warsaw, he banned last June. While slightly more liberal on social issues, his defeated presidential rival Tusk is a strong exponent of "free market" austerity.

Despite their differences, Tusk and the Kaczyński twins will easily get along because what they have in common is being Solidarność counterrevolutionaries of the first hour. While Tusk founded the Gdansk Solidarność Student Committee, the Kaczyńskis were second in command

August 31 a "Day of Freedom and Solidarność" and recognized Solidarność contribution to the eastward extension of the imperialist European Union.

At the same time, former Solidarność luminaries Andrzej Gwiazda and Anna Walentynowicz boycotted the official celebrations and organized their own festivities. Gwiazda had been Walesa's right-hand man in 1980, and Walentynowicz was the crane operator whose firing sparked the August 1980 strike/occupation in the Lenin Shipyard. They hypocritically protested the sell-off of the shipyard, whose workforce has shrunk from 15,000 in the 1980s to 3,000 today. The September issue of *Poland Monthly* quotes Gwiazda: "What we see in Poland today is the opposite of Solidarity's ideals. Now people realize that they have been fooled.

They thought that the name 'Solidarity' and the name 'Walesa' meant something, but now they realize that it all ended in 1989." The rabidly anti-communist Walentynowicz even claimed at the "independent celebrations" that "Walesa had been directed by the communist SB security service from the very beginning" (*Warsaw Voice*, 7 September).

Joining the praise and celebrations for Solidarność are self-proclaimed socialist groups in Poland and all over the world. Zbigniew Kowalewski of the fake-Trotskyist United Secretariat (USec), who was a delegate at the 1981 founding congress of Solidarność, wrote: "The purpose of the noisy ceremonies of the anniversary of the birth of Solidarność is to hide its real nature—a workers' revolution conducted in the name of authentically socialist values" (*International Viewpoint Online*, September 2005). This is typical of the fake left's cover-up of Solidarność counterrevolution and their own support for it.

Born during the strike wave in the summer of 1980, Solidarność initially drew on legitimate worker grievances. Three times earlier—in 1956, 1970 and 1976—workers' upsurges had brought the Polish deformed workers state to the brink of proletarian political revolution. But Solidarność was a *departure* from those earlier pro-socialist struggles. Polish workers felt betrayed by the lies of Stalinist leader Gomulka, who was in power from 1956-70, and his successor Gierek. Gierek ruinously mortgaged Poland's wealth to Western bankers and also ruinously drained the economy to subsidize the landowning peasants.

When workers exploded in struggle in 1980 in response to rising prices and shortages of food and other consumer goods, they looked to the powerful Catholic church as the recognized opposition to the discredited Stalinist regime. Though the Gdansk strikers initially sang the "Internationale," this was soon replaced by the old national hymn, "Oh God, Who Has Defended Poland." Walesa declared himself at every opportunity to be a true son of the Polish church. Walentynowicz, when asked if she was a socialist, said that she was a believer. Many of the "dissidents" were openly reactionary—virulently nationalist, anti-communist, anti-democratic and anti-Semitic (despite the fact that there were few Jews left in Poland). Former leftist Jacek Kuron, whose Workers Defense Committee (KOR) braintrustered Solidarność, was a social democrat who supported peasant struggles for private property and claimed that "the Catholic movement is fighting to defend freedom of conscience and human dignity." When Solidarność gained power in 1989, Kuron became the first labor minister of a now-capitalist Poland. One of his first acts was to smash a May 1990 rail strike. And Kuron was the darling of the Western left, the "socialist" face of Solidarność reaction.

In commenting on the outcome of the Gdansk shipyard strike, we raised the call in our headline, "Fight Clerical Reaction! For Proletarian Political Revolution!" (*WV* No. 263, 5 September 1980). We wrote of the agreement that ended the strike:

"Insofar as the settlement enhances the Polish workers' power to struggle against the Stalinist bureaucracy, revolutionaries can support the strike and its outcome. But only a blind man could fail to see the gross influence of the Catholic church and also pro-Western sentiments among the striking workers. If the settlement strengthens the working class organizationally, it also strengthens the forces of reaction. Poland stands today on a razor's edge."

Solidarność consolidated around a program for capitalist counterrevolution at its founding congress in September 1981.

This was demonstrated by its calls for "free trade unions"—a war cry of Cold War anti-Sovietism—and for "free elections," which would have meant capitalist restoration under the guise of parliamentary government (which is what happened in 1989-90). Solidarność was actively supported by a wide range of reactionary forces, from the Vatican under Polish Pope Karol Wojtyła (aka John Paul II) to union-busting U.S. president Ronald Reagan and Conservative British prime minister Margaret Thatcher. Joining them were the pro-imperialist AFL-CIO labor bureaucracy and anti-communist social democrats like the German SPD, which acted as conduits for CIA funding and provided other material support to Solidarność.

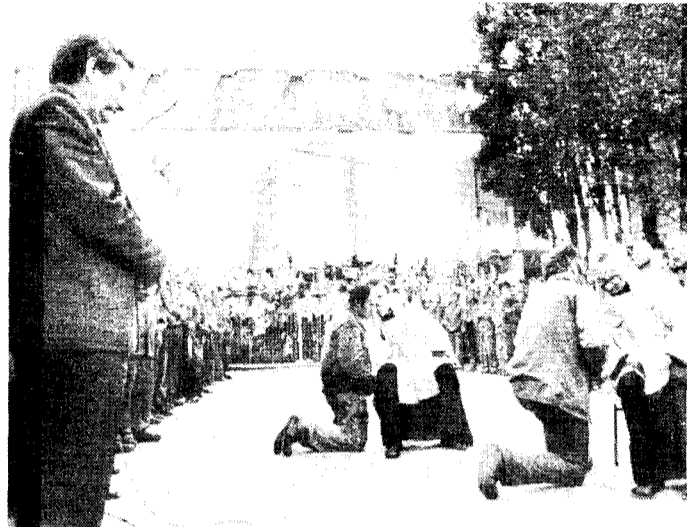
The international Spartacist tendency, precursor to the International Communist League, raised the call "Stop Solidarność Counterrevolution!" (see WV No. 289, 25 September 1981). To the anti-socialist program of Solidarność, we counterposed the call for trade unions independent of bureaucratic control and based on a program of defending collectivized property. The demands raised in our articles—for strict separation of church and state, for collectivization of agriculture, for canceling Poland's debt to the imperialist bankers, for military defense of the USSR against imperialism, for proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy—constituted the programmatic core of what a Trotskyist internationalist vanguard party would have raised in the struggle to defend the Polish workers state against imperialism and capitalist restoration. We stressed that Polish workers needed to appropriate the proud traditions of the Polish communist movement. We pointed to the example of the internationalist Jewish woman fighter Rosa Luxemburg, who was murdered at the instigation of the German SPD during the failed 1918-19 German Revolution, which she help lead. We also pointed to the Pole Feliks Dzierzhinsky, Luxemburg's comrade in the Polish revolutionary workers movement, who joined the ranks of the Russian Bolsheviks and went on to lead the Cheka—the Extraordinary Commission to Combat Counterrevolution and Sabotage—after the October Revolution.

Our support for Stalinist general Jaruzelski's suppression of Solidarność' counterrevolutionary bid for power in December 1981 was an application of our unconditional military defense of the deformed and degenerated workers states against capitalist counterrevolution. At the same time we warned that the Stalinists were capable of selling out the Polish deformed workers state—which they eventually did in 1989-90. It was the impact of our Trotskyist program in opposition to Solidarność counterrevolution and our struggle against the capitalist reunification of Germany in 1989-90 that propelled the militants of the Young Left Movement (RML) in Poland toward the ICL. This resulted in the establishment of the Spartacist Group of Poland, a



WV Photo

**Above:** September 1981 NYC Spartacist demonstration exposes Solidarność as company union for CIA and Vatican. **Right:** Solidarność head Walesa (left) praying with Gdansk shipyard workers, 1980.



Der Spiegel

sympathizing section of the ICL, which existed until 2001. In contrast to the Polish "left," who all hailed and supported Solidarność counterrevolution, the SGP exposed and opposed the clericalist, nationalist, capitalist-restorationist program which Walesa, Walentynowicz, Gwiazda, Kuron et al. stood for from the beginning.

### Pseudo-Left Still Tails Solidarność

In the recent elections there was no candidate representing the working class by running independently of and against the bourgeois parties and candidates. Yet groups like Employee Democracy (PD), affiliated with the British Socialist Workers Party of the late Tony Cliff, urged support to presidential candidate Maria Szyszkowska, a bourgeois liberal who opposes the war in Iraq. PD shares the liberal anti-communist views of Szyszkowska, who criticizes Solidarność today but praises the Solidarność of the 1980s. She opposed making August 31 "Solidarność Day," asserting that "this would be a rebuff to those who have lost by the transformations," while stating at the same time: "I do not put in question the striving for freedom of 25 years ago. I admire, e.g., Ms. Walentynowicz, Mr. Gwiazda or the sadly departed Jacek Kuron. They were the pioneers of Solidarność" (www.senat.gov.pl). From a Marxist point of view, any electoral support to this bourgeois candidate was thoroughly unprincipled. Her electoral program did not even purport to speak in the name of the working class, let alone advocate anything socialist. Thus to call on workers to vote for Szyszkowska meant subordinating the working class to a political representative of the bourgeoisie—a form of class collaboration that Marxists oppose on principle.

Szyszkowska failed to get the necessary signatures to run for president. She then got put on the slate of the Polish Labor Party (PPP) in the parliamentary elections, from which she later withdrew. All the groups of the Polish "radical left" promoted a vote for candidates of the PPP, the political arm of the right-wing union Sierpien (August) 80.

Sierpien 80 originated as a split from an outfit called Solidarność 80, led by one Marian Jurczyk. At the 1981 Solidarność founding congress, Jurczyk was one of the most rabid anti-communists, garnering a quarter of the votes as a "radical" right-wing opponent of Walesa. At the time, Jurczyk declared that three-

quarters of the Polish Stalinist leadership were really Jews who had changed their names and that "a couple of gallows would come in handy" to deal with these "traitors to Polish society." Sierpien 80 split from Solidarność 80 claiming to be for "pure economic struggle," but it was no less prone to populist nationalism, railing: "It doesn't make sense to oppress a Pole in order to please Italians, Belgians and Spaniards."

The origin of such reactionary trade unions lies in the fact that with the destruction of the Polish deformed workers state, Solidarność had served its purpose as the spearhead for capitalist counterrevolution. Its peasant sector and many intellectuals decamped, and Solidarność (and its offshoots) became more akin to a trade union in social composition. We observed: "The official Solidarność union now poses as a champion of working-class interests while revving up its anti-Communist demagogy and making overtures to openly fascist forces" (WV No. 614, 13 January 1995). Taking into account only the latter, we argued one-sidedly in a 1998 article in *Platforma Spartakusowców*, paper of the SGP: "The function of Solidarność has nothing to do with 'trade unionism' of any kind, 'militant' or otherwise." This formulation wrongly denied the fact that Solidarność is both a trade union and a reactionary clericalist organization. It organizes workers at the point of production, sometimes leading defensive economic struggles; at the same time it functions as a political movement closely allied to the Catholic hierarchy and explicitly right-wing nationalist parties.

Sierpien 80's political arm, the PPP,

originated before the March 2001 parliamentary elections as an electoral bloc of the right-wing, anti-Semitic Confederation for an Independent Poland-Fatherland and the Christian-National Union, as well as the fascist NOP. In May 2002, they sent a contingent of Polish miners to Paris to join the fascist Le Pen's National Front in a march against the European Union.

In 2004, the PPP refurbished its image. PPP chairman Daniel Podrzycki (who died in a car accident the day before the recent parliamentary elections) tried to paint the PPP in social-democratic colors. In the recent campaign they put forward such demands as the 35-hour workweek with no lowering of wages, benefits for all unemployed throughout the whole period of unemployment, separation of church and state, equality of women and men, tolerance and respect for all minorities—national, religious and sexual. The PPP also demanded withdrawal of Polish troops from Iraq. This "turn to the left" is meant to provide the PPP with access to the social-democratic salons—and, no doubt, money—of the Party of European Socialists in the European Parliament. After Poland joined the EU, the PPP toned down some of its Polish chauvinism. But despite all this newfound "leftism," Sierpien 80 wields anti-communist graphics and rhetoric in its campaign against the SLD.

The PPP organized an electoral bloc with the bourgeois liberals of the Anti-Clericalist Party of Poland, the bourgeois Greens, Solidarność-derived social democrats from the Polish Socialist Party and the ex-Stalinist Communist Party of Poland (KPP). The candidates of these parties ran on the PPP slate, which got less than 0.8 percent of the votes. Judged by its political program and history, the PPP is a bourgeois formation. To call for a working-class vote to these Polish nationalists and clerical reactionaries amounts to betraying the interests of the Polish proletariat.

Among the groups supporting PPP candidates is the Group for the Workers Party (GPR), Polish section of the Committee for a Workers' International (CWI) of Peter Taaffe. The GPR supported Grzegorz Kupis, a PPP candidate in the town of Radom, highlighting the fact that he is a tram worker and member of Sierpien 80 and more "radical" than the PPP. (The PPP slate listed him as a candidate of the Polish Ecological Party, the Greens.) The Revolutionary Left Movement (NLR), which describes itself as fraternally allied with both the Usec and the thoroughly Labourite and anti-communist British Alliance for Workers Liberty, called for critical support for the whole PPP slate and for Podrzycki in the presidential race. They described the PPP coalition as a "great chance" to gain a hearing among workers, which would supposedly make it easier to "build a strong leftist formation in the future that would express the voice and the interests of the employee class in Poland" (www.marksizm.of.pl). Similarly, the Cliffite PD described the PPP program as "the most interesting, the most leftist electoral program" and anointed Podrzycki an "anti-capitalist" (www.pd.w.pl). Just as in the 1980s, all these groups promote illusions in the "left

continued on page 10

A Spartacist Pamphlet \$1.00

## Solidarność: Polish Company Union for CIA and Bankers

Spartacist Pamphlet  
\$1 (40 pages)

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

# WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League

\$10/21 issues of *Workers Vanguard* (includes English-language *Spartacist* and *Black History and the Class Struggle*) international rates: \$25/21 issues—Airmail \$10/21 issues—Seamail

New  Renewal

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

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Apt. # \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

857

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

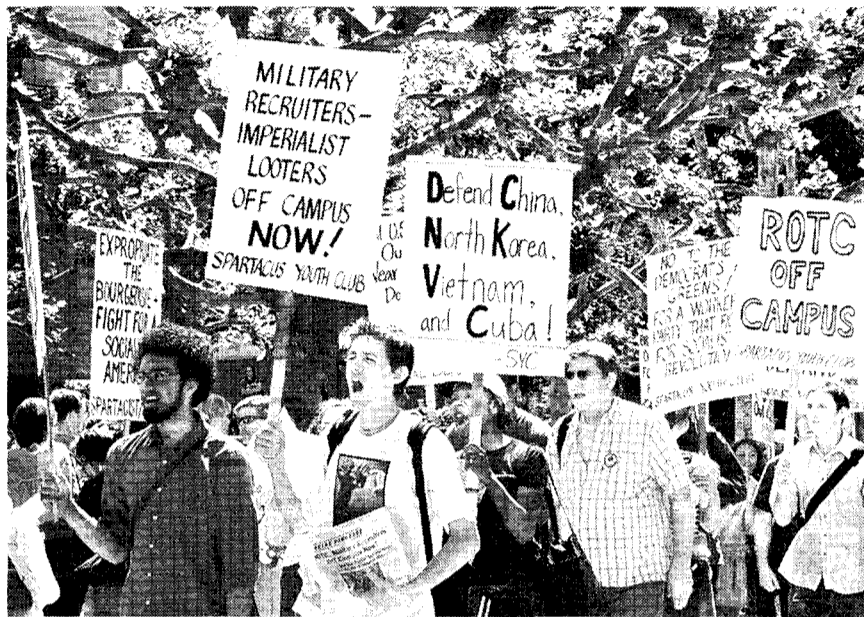
# Young Spartacus

## Not One Person, Not One Penny for the Imperialist Military! *Marxism, Militarism and War*



AP

Left: U.S. troops brutalize Iraqis in Falluja, November 2004. Right: SYC leads protest against ROTC at UC Berkeley, April 16.



Young Spartacus

The following Young Spartacus article was issued in leaflet form on October 19 and distributed by the SYC at the "On the Frontlines" national "counter-recruitment" conference at UC Berkeley on October 22-23.

\* \* \*

As the barbaric U.S. neocolonial occupation of Iraq drags on, hundreds of thousands rallied for an end to the occupation in Washington, D.C., L.A. and San Francisco on September 24. Hundreds of students in San Francisco and Washington, D.C., marched in "College Not Combat, Relief Not War" contingents. These contingents represented students around the country who have waged campaigns against military recruiters in high schools and on college campuses, broadly known as the "counter-recruitment" movement. These student protests have been motivated by opposition not only to the occupation of Iraq, but also to the "economic draft," which drives many working-class, disproportionately black and other minority youth to sign up for the military, as well as opposition to the military's anti-gay discrimination.

The U.S. rulers' crusade against Iraq for more than a decade, under both Republican and Democratic administrations, has exacted a huge death toll, primarily of Iraqis: over 1.5 million were killed by malnutrition and disease as a result of UN sanctions alone and several hundred thousand more during both wars and the occupation. While much sympathy in the U.S. is directed currently toward the almost 2,000 American soldiers who have died in Iraq, the starting point for Marxists is that working people must take a side in the war and occupation—*against* U.S. imperialism. Every blow, setback or defeat for the bloodiest imperialist power on the planet is a blow in the interests of working people around the world. Just as we stood for the defense of Iraq against U.S. attack during the war, today we stand for the *unconditional, immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops* and for defense of the peoples of Iraq against U.S. attack and repression. Insofar as Iraqi forces on the ground aim their blows against the imperialist occupiers and their lackeys, we call for their military defense against U.S. imperialism. At the

## U.S. Out of Iraq Now! Down With the Imperialist Occupation!

same time, we oppose the murderous communal violence against ethnic, religious and national populations often carried out by the same forces fighting the occupation.

While much of the activity around the "counter-recruitment" movement is directed at preventing individual youth from signing up for the military, the main campus organizers of many of the college protests, the Campus Antiwar Network (CAN), which is dominated politically by the International Socialist Organization (ISO), state: "We believe that it is not enough to convince people on an individual level that the military is a bad idea.... We need to build a movement that will force the military out of our school and our classrooms for good" ("College Not Combat: Get the Military Out of Our Schools," CAN Web site).

The question is: Can you actually accomplish that? While it is a very good thing that student protests may succeed in temporarily kicking the military off campus, the reality is that recruiters and officer training programs like ROTC will keep coming back so long as the imperialist army exists. During the late 1960s and early 1970s, ROTC was kicked off over a hundred campuses, not only as the result of student protest, but especially because there was massive social struggle going on more broadly and because the U.S. imperialists were *losing* the war against the revolutionary Vietnamese workers and peasants. But over the years, ROTC was restored to many of these campuses again. As Marxists, our goal is not just to get ROTC and military recruiters off campus for now, but to win students to the struggle to organize the social power of the working class for socialist revolution to get rid of imperial-

ist militarism, and the capitalist system it serves, once and for all.

### Revolutionary Anti-Militarism vs. Pacifist Delusion

The Spartacus Youth Clubs and the Spartacist League have initiated, led and participated in many protests to drive military recruiters and ROTC off campuses over the course of four decades. As we stated at an SYC-led protest against ROTC at UC Berkeley last April: "Military recruiters and ROTC are direct appendages of the military machine that exists to defend the American imperialist ruling class" ("SYC Leads Protest Against ROTC," WV No. 848, 13 May). We understand that the military exists to carry out imperialist conquest abroad and repression against working people at home. We uphold the call raised by German Marxist Wilhelm Liebknecht: "Not a man nor a penny" for bourgeois militarism.

We vigorously defend all those who have been victimized by campus administrations and the cops for their actions against military recruiters, including most recently, student protesters at Holyoke Community College in Massachusetts who on September 29 were assaulted by police while picketing an Army National Guard recruiting table in the school cafeteria. We also defend those organizations that have been victimized by the campus administration for organizing protests, such as the ISO and Students Against War at San Francisco State University.

As Marxists, we have a program for fighting against the imperialist military that is counterposed to that of the "counter-recruitment" movement, whose organizers range from religious and lib-

eral pacifists to supposedly socialist organizations such as the ISO. The difference comes down to how you answer two fundamental and related questions: How do you successfully fight to end imperialist war? How do you fight to end militarism? We understand that you cannot end war, imperialist militarism or the economic conditions that force working-class and minority youth into the military without getting rid of the capitalist system in which these are rooted.

In contrast, the program of the "counter-recruitment" movement is to try to reform the capitalist system to be less militarist and imperialist. This is summed up in CAN's "College Not Combat" pamphlet:

"We believe that the money that is going to fight the occupation of Iraq and the \$4 billion spent annually on military recruiting should be spent on real educational opportunities and job funding. The best way to win that demand is to build a mass movement to get recruiters off our campuses for good."

This strategy is entirely consistent with the politics of purportedly socialist organizations such as the ISO, Workers World Party (WWP) and Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), which have sought to build an "antiwar movement" consisting of "peace-loving" people of all different classes to pressure the imperialist rulers to stop the war on Iraq, end the occupation and put resources into worthy endeavors rather than war. The main goal for such organizations is to reform the capitalist system, a system that *can't* be made to serve the interests of working people and the oppressed.

The ISO, WWP and RCP's program of pressuring the capitalists to make their system more humane serves to demobilize struggles of radical youth, workers and the oppressed. Preaching pacifist reformism, these groups are an obstacle to the development of revolutionary consciousness among those engaged in struggle. A resolution during World War I by a conference of exiled Russian revolutionary Marxists in Switzerland, including Bolshevik leader V. I. Lenin, explained:

"Pacifism, the preaching of peace in the abstract, is one of the means of duping the working class. Under capitalism, particularly in its imperialist stage, wars are inevitable...."

"The propaganda of peace unaccompanied by a call for revolutionary mass action can only sow illusions and demor-

alise the proletariat, for it makes the proletariat believe that the bourgeoisie is humane."

—"The Conference of the R.S.D.L.P. Groups Abroad," February 1915

It is precisely such pacifist *duping* that reformist "socialist" groups engage in by building antiwar and "counter-recruitment" movements based on calls such as "No to war!", "War is not the answer." "Hurricane relief, not war"—the preaching of peace in the abstract with no call for revolutionary action by the working class against the capitalist system. Such campaigns push the lie that imperialist militarism and war can be ended through means other than the overthrow of the imperialist order through proletarian, revolutionary, internationalist struggle.

## The Road to Peace Lies Through Class War

As the newspaper of the American Trotskyist youth organization of the 1930s from which we take our name stated:

"For the youth, as for other workers, it is imperative that he learns the class nature of society and of government and of warfare. When he learns these lessons he will have made headway in the fundamental question. *Between classes there can be no peace* till one or the other is vanquished. The workers have to understand that the *road to peace lies through war: class war, class struggle.*"

—"Disarmament and Pacifism," *Young Spartacus* No. 3, February 1932

Imperialist war and militarism are the outcome of capitalist, class-divided society, in which a tiny minority of the population owns the banks and industry and amasses profit by exploiting the labor of the working class. The military is an integral component of the capitalist state, which consists also of the cops, the courts, the prisons—forces of repression and violence that defend the rule of the capitalist class against the working and oppressed masses.

The drive toward war is inherent in the capitalist system. In his classic work on the subject, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, Lenin laid out that imperialism is not some reformable policy, but the final stage of capitalism in its decay. Contending imperialist powers carve up the world into spheres of economic influence, as the nation-state proves too narrow and confining in terms of markets and the availability of cheap labor and natural resources. Imperialism is fundamentally an economic system backed up by massive military force to "settle" the inevitable economic rivalries between major capitalist states. These rivalries throw humanity into inter-imperialist world wars of massive devastation, such as World Wars I and II. The drive to control markets and spheres of exploitation also leads to predatory wars by imperialists against colonial and semicolonial countries.



Charles Jenks/Traprock Peace

"College Not Combat, Relief Not War" contingent in Washington, D.C., September 24. Reformist organizers of "counter-recruitment" movement push pipe-dream of "kinder, gentler" capitalism.



Dietz Verlag Berlin

**Karl Liebknecht in soldier's uniform during WWI. German bourgeoisie drafted and then jailed Liebknecht in attempt to silence his revolutionary anti-militarist agitation.**

Revolutionary Marxist Rosa Luxemburg in her 1916 *Junius Pamphlet* described the true nature of imperialist capitalism, as revealed at that time by World War I:

"Shamed, dishonored, wading in blood and dripping with filth—thus stands bourgeois society. And so it is. Not as we usually see it, pretty and chaste, playing the roles of peace and righteousness, of order, of philosophy, ethics and culture. It shows itself in its true, naked form—as a roaring beast, as an orgy of anarchy, as a pestilential breath, devastating culture and humanity."

While this barbaric system generates discontent among wide layers of the population, the only power that students have on their own is to register their anger through various forms of protest. However, there is a social force that has the power not just to protest, but to shut down the whole system we live under—the multiracial working class. Its social power derives from the fact that it has its hands directly on the means of production—the mines, factories, means of transport and communications—and can shut down production and capitalist profit by withholding its labor, by striking. One solid longshore strike during the Iraq war would have had a far greater impact on the U.S. government than many millions of peace protesters marching in the street. It is that kind of social power that students and the oppressed masses need to look to and ally with.

The working class not only has the social power but the objective interest to put an end to capitalist rule. The workers' interests can never be reconciled with those of the capitalists who exploit them. The interests of working people and the oppressed can be served only by creating a socialist society where production is for human need, not the profit of a small layer of exploiters. It is only through class war, i.e., the struggle of the working class leading the oppressed against the capitalist order, that the economic and political roots of imperialist war and militarism can be destroyed. The destruction of capitalism will not happen spontaneously, but requires the intervention of a conscious Marxist leadership, a revolutionary workers party that fights for socialist revolution. It is such a party that the Spartacist League, of which the SYCs are the student-youth auxiliary, is dedicated to forging.

## Left Servants of Imperialism

If the idea of mobilizing the working class in mass struggle seems far-fetched to most youth in the U.S. today, it is because what they have seen of class war in their lifetimes has mostly consisted of a capitalist assault on workers, with very little working-class struggle in response. It is important to understand from a historical perspective not only that the class contradictions of this system will *inevitably* lead to future mass struggles by working people, but also that the power of the working class has been kept in chains by working-class misleaderships. Class

struggle has been demobilized by the false ideology pushed by the trade-union bureaucracy and its left helpers: that the interests of labor and capital *can* be reconciled, that the overturn of this whole rotten, stinking system is impossible and therefore the best we can do is to negotiate "better" terms of capitalist exploitation for working people. As part of the struggle to uproot the whole profit system, a class-struggle leadership of the labor movement would fight for free, quality, integrated education for all, free health care, decent jobs and housing for all and against racial and sexual oppression.

The lie that working people and their exploiters can share a common interest is pushed in practice through the trade-union bureaucracy's open support to the capitalist Democratic Party and the promotion of "antiwar" Democrats and petty capitalist Greens by ostensibly socialist organizations in the antiwar movement. Pro-imperialist trade-union bureaucrats who support the "war on terror" (in reality a war on immigrants, black people and labor) and the war and occupation in Iraq are clearly misleaders of the working class. More insidious are those who stand in opposition to the war but preach a pro-

with Democratic and Green Party politicians to get city council resolutions (in New York) and ballot propositions (in San Francisco) passed against military recruiters in schools. Seeking to persuade the powers that be on the campus level, the ISO appeals to those who administer the colleges on behalf of the capitalists to stop violating their professed anti-discrimination policies and ban military recruiters. We call for a "yes" vote on San Francisco Proposition I as a basic statement of opposition to military recruiters in schools. However, it is not through propositions that you can fight to end imperialist militarism—only through working-class struggle. And working-class struggle must be *independent* of the capitalist class enemy, including the Democratic Party of racism and war.

## Revolutionary Politics and Military Defense of Iraq

The ISO, WWP and RCP's refusal to call for the military defense of Iraq against U.S. and British imperialism in the lead-up to and during the war is yet another proof of their class-collaborationist orientation. Marxists are not pacifists. In his 1915 work, *Socialism and War*, Lenin summarized the attitude of Marxists to



Panorama/DDR

**Revolutionary Marxist Rosa Luxemburg. Right: Cartoon depicting Luxemburg, 1914, titled "Militarism Stands Accused."**



Verlag Kurt Desch

gram of capitalist reform, a program that is objectively for the maintenance of the system that breeds war—these are *also* misleaders of the working class.

Such left-talking misleaders are hardly a recent development in the history of the class struggle. Lenin's trenchant polemics against two "servants of imperialism" during World War I, Karl Kautsky and Filippo Turati, fit today's ISO, WWP and RCP to a tee:

"When socialist leaders like Turati and Kautsky try to convince the masses, either by direct statements... or by *silent evasions* (of which Kautsky is a past master), that the present imperialist war can result in a democratic peace, while the bourgeois governments *remain in power* and without a revolutionary insurrection against the whole network of imperialist world relations, it is our duty to declare that such propaganda is a deception of the people, that it has nothing in common with socialism, that it amounts to the embellishment of an *imperialist* peace...."

"Their [Kautsky and Turati] attention is entirely absorbed in reforms, in pacts between sections of the ruling classes: it is to them that they address themselves, it is them they seek to 'persuade,' it is to them they wish to adapt the labour movement."

—"A Turn in World Politics," January 1917

An example of how the ISO and WWP look to the capitalist class enemy, not the working class, is their promotion of cross-class liberal "antiwar" alliances, such as the strategy of working

wars between imperialist powers and colonial or semicolonial countries:

"If tomorrow, Morocco were to declare war on France, or India on Britain, or Persia or China on Russia, and so on, these would be 'just,' and 'defensive' wars, *irrespective* of who would be the first to attack; any socialist would wish the oppressed, dependent and unequal states victory over the oppressor, slaveholding and predatory 'Great' Powers."

The Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Club applied this program of revolutionary defensism in the lead-up to and during the Iraq war, uniquely raising the slogans: "Defend Iraq Against U.S./British Imperialist Attack! Down With U.S. Imperialism! For Class Struggle Against U.S. Capitalist Rulers!" We took a side militarily with semicolonial Iraq against the U.S. imperialist invaders, while politically opposing Saddam Hussein's bloody capitalist regime. While favoring the defeat of the U.S., we understood that given the enormous military advantage of the United States, the most effective means of opposing the U.S. war drive was international working-class struggle against the capitalists, especially here in the U.S.

Forthright military defense of Iraq was anathema to the ISO, WWP and RCP because their goal was not to mobilize working people on the side of the Iraqi people and for the defeat of the U.S., but to build a "movement" for pressuring the imperialists to end the war. In practice this

*continued on page 8*

## Militarism...

(continued from page 7)

meant uniting with liberals and capitalist politicians like Democrats Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton, who came out against the Iraq war not because they are opposed to U.S. imperialism but because they don't think the war/occupation is the best way of advancing the interests of U.S. imperialism. That sentiment has grown among a layer of the ruling class who want to extract the U.S. from the quagmire the Iraq occupation has become. In addition to being the voice for a section of the ruling class who thought that an anti-Communist campaign against North Korea made more sense than going after Iraq, these "antiwar" politicians are doing their job for the capitalists of containing black and working-class anger against this system safely within the confines of bourgeois electoralism.

In a seeming about-face, the very organizations that steadfastly refused to call for the defense of Iraq during the war, i.e., when it counted, such as the ISO and WWP, are today cheering the "right to resist" the U.S. occupation forces. The ISO has suddenly discovered quotes from Lenin and Trotsky on the need to defend oppressed nations against imperialism. But what is really behind their shift in position is the hope that victories by the Iraqi "resistance" will augment support within the Democratic Party for withdrawal from Iraq. Just as the ISO and WWP practice class collaboration at home, they cheer on Islamic reactionaries and other forces as "anti-imperialists" in the neocolonial world. The ISO writes: "Even if it were true that the resistance was dominated by Baathists and hard-line Islamists, this wouldn't be the central issue. Whatever the religious and political affiliations of the different resistance organizations and groupings, the main goal—the one that unites various forces of the Iraqi resistance—is 'to liberate their country from foreign occupation'" ("Why We Support the Resistance to Occupation: Iraq's Right to National Self-Determination," *Socialist Worker*, 4 February).

In fact, the Iraqi "resistance" largely consists of disparate and mutually hostile ethnic, religious and communalist forces that aim much of their fire against rival civilian populations. When such forces do aim their blows against the occupation forces and their lackeys, we militarily defend them. However, in contrast to the ISO, we have stated: "We do not imbue the forces presently organizing guerrilla attacks on U.S. forces with 'anti-imperialist' credentials and warn that in the absence of working-class struggle in Iraq and internationally against the occupation, the victory of one or another of the reactionary clerical forces is more likely to come about through an alliance with U.S. imperialism" ("The Left and the Iraqi Resistance: U.S. Out of Iraq Now!" *WV* No. 830, 6 August 2004).

The class-collaborationist, anti-revolutionary program of groups like the ISO is defined by their visceral hostility toward

those countries where capitalism has been overturned. The ISO supported every counterrevolutionary movement that sought to overturn the gains of the Russian Revolution and cheered the destruction of the USSR in 1991-92. Capitalist restoration has been a disaster for the working people of the ex-USSR, resulting in unprecedented devastation of living standards and the destruction of historic social gains for women and ethnic and national minorities. In opposition to the imperialist triumphalism that communism is dead, as well as the widespread view among radical youth that there is nothing about the Soviet Union worth replicating today, we understand that the 1917 October Revolution remains the model for social liberation. That revolution, led by V. I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky, established the world's first workers state, a beacon for all those struggling to liberate humanity. Despite later Stalinist degeneration, the USSR demonstrated the power of a planned, collectivized economy, providing free education, health care, inexpensive housing and jobs for all.

The destruction of the Soviet Union represented a world-historic defeat for working people around the world, removing the military and industrial power that stayed the hand of the imperialists and made possible victories like the overturn of capitalism in East Europe and in Cuba,

military and their families, who are expected to unquestioningly obey "God and country" and provide the cannon fodder for the U.S. imperialist war machine.

Notwithstanding the working-class background of most U.S. troops, the imperialist armed forces are the instrument of American conquest and enforcers of the capitalist system of exploitation. Against those who in the wake of Hurricane Katrina have called to bring the troops home to help in the Gulf Coast, we say that the imperialist army is no friend of working people at home, either. There is a long and deadly history of the use of troops within the U.S. to suppress strikes, repress student antiwar protesters and crush upheavals of black people against entrenched racial oppression. And while National Guard troops sent to New Orleans have played a role in search and rescue actions that saved lives, they were sent mainly *not* to help the population but to impose reactionary "law and order." Democratic Louisiana governor Kathleen Blanco said as much when 300 members of the Arkansas National Guard were sent to New Orleans: "These troops know how to shoot and kill... and I expect they will." They were sent to hunt down "looters," desperate black people trying to find food and water, and imposed strict curfews, essentially martial law, forcing out those who didn't want to leave and preventing journalists from even photographing the dead.



Camilo Mejia escorted from court-martial, 21 May 2004. Mejia, sentenced to one year in prison for refusal to serve in Iraq, has continued to speak out against the occupation.

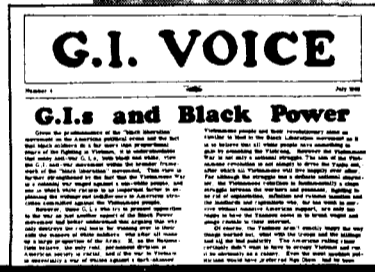
unteering for the army. We likewise oppose the reinstatement of the draft. The last time the U.S. imperialists seriously considered reinstating the draft, during the height of their Cold War II drive against the Soviet Union in 1980, we agitated against the draft and in defense of the Soviet degenerated workers state. At the same time, we have no illusions that the U.S. imperialists won't reinstate the draft when they need to, and they *will* eventually need to.

### "Individual Resistance": A Losing Strategy

The "counter-recruitment" movement has drawn inspiration from soldiers, such as Camilo Mejia and Kevin Benderman, who have refused orders to serve in the Iraq war and occupation and sought to expose the horrors of imperialist war. They and several other soldiers have been court-martialed for their refusal to serve. We say: Free Kevin Benderman and hands off the other "resisters"! "Antiwar" reformists have placed great emphasis on these acts of individual resistance, promoting the idea that if more people were prevented from signing up for the military and more soldiers refused to serve it could throw a monkey wrench in the works of the war machine. This strategy is false because it seeks to paralyze a core component of the capitalist state through pacifist resistance.

It is precisely because the military is integral to the capitalist state that it has very repressive means for dealing with those who refuse to serve. Insubordinate soldiers can face discipline in military tribunals with punishments that include execution. As we wrote in "On Draft Resistance: You Will Go!": "It would be approximately as easy to directly overthrow the government as to deprive that government of its armed forces" (*Spartacist* No. 11, March-April 1968). In other words, to talk about paralyzing the military as a repressive force means the prelude to revolution. Such a situation is possible only in the context of massive working-class and social struggle against the capitalist order. Marxists seek to organize for collective victory through proletarian struggle, not defeat through martyrdom in individual, moralistic acts of "resistance." The key task today is to imbue the discontented, exploited and oppressed working masses with the consciousness that they can and must organize to struggle on the basis of their common class interests against the war-mongering capitalist rulers.

The logic of the strategy of individual resistance parallels the promotion of draft "resistance" during the Vietnam War. This is expressed by the youth group of the WWP, which supports the "No Draft, No Way" movement that advocates "refusal to be inducted into the military under any circumstances" ([www.NoDraftNoWay.org](http://www.NoDraftNoWay.org)). The duty of



Above: Vietnamese revolutionaries appealed to black GIs during war: "U.S. Negro Army-men! You are committing the same ignominious crimes in South Vietnam that the KKK clique is perpetrating against your family at home." Left: July 1969 issue of antiwar newspaper published by Spartacist supporters in army.

North Korea, China and Vietnam. We followed in the footsteps of Leon Trotsky by fighting for the unconditional military defense of the USSR against imperialism and against the restoration of capitalism, while simultaneously fighting for working-class political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucrats. Unlike pacifists and the anti-Soviet ISO and RCP, we militarily defend the workers states, despite their Stalinist deformations, against the imperialists, which includes upholding their right to nuclear weapons. The Soviet bureaucracy's nationalist, parasitic rule undermined the gains of the Russian Revolution, especially by renouncing the struggle for international socialist revolution. The anti-Marxist Stalinist dogma of "socialism in one country" meant betrayal of revolutionary opportunities around the world and led ultimately to the final undoing of the Russian Revolution itself.

### Race, Class and Militarism

Reflecting the growing opposition among the U.S. populace as a whole to the occupation of Iraq was the outpouring this summer of support and sympathy for Cindy Sheehan, the mother of an American soldier killed in Iraq, who is for ending the occupation. Sheehan captured headlines for weeks with her encampment outside President Bush's Texas ranch. Sheehan's poignant protest exposed the capitalist rulers' contempt for the overwhelmingly working-class and minority ranks of the

At the same time that Marxists are emphatic opponents of bourgeois militarism, we recognize the internal class contradictions of the military. As Karl Liebknecht stated in his classic 1907 work, *Militarism and Anti-Militarism*:

"Thus we are confronted by modern militarism which wants neither more nor less than the squaring of the circle, which arms the people against the people itself, which dares to force the workers...to become oppressors and enemies, murderers of their own comrades and friends, of their parents, brothers and sisters and children, and which compels them to blight their own past and future. Modern militarism wants to be democratic and despotic, enlightened and machine-like, nationalist and antagonistic to the nation at the same time."

In addition to the class divide between the working-class ranks and the bourgeois officer corps present in all capitalist armies, the U.S. military reflects the deep-rooted racial oppression of black people in this country. The disproportionate number of black and minority youth in today's volunteer army—driven to join in large part because they have no jobs and no future, or because it is the only way to afford college or learn a skill—represents an Achilles heel for U.S. imperialism. The American military reflects the racism, anti-woman and anti-gay bigotry of capitalist society in a concentrated way.

Because we uphold Liebknecht's opposition to a single person or penny for the bourgeois army, we oppose vol-

### Marxism, War and the Fight For Socialist Revolution

Two-part article from *Workers Vanguard* Nos. 795 and 796, 17 and 31 January 2003

### Marxism, War and the Fight For Socialist Revolution



\$1

Order from/pay to:  
Spartacist Publishing Co.  
Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116



revolutionaries who are drafted is to go with the mass of working-class youth into the military. During the Vietnam War, as youth were chanting "Hell no, we won't go!" we said, "You will go!" Our *Spartacist* article "You Will Go!" addressed antiwar activists:

"If you refuse induction, you will either go to prison, or you will flee the country. In both cases your body will be *exactly where the rulers of the U.S. want it*: removed from struggle and removed from contact with the youth who fight the wars...."

"For prominent working-class leaders to dodge the draft earns them the disrespect of the workers and is a direct aid to the ruling class, as it removes them from any contact with the workers they claim to represent."

Our article went on to explain: "The main argument for draft resistance is that it will hurt the U.S. war effort. *But this is not going to happen.* A few hundred middle-class, anti-war students might be diverted from military service, but the tens of thousands of black and white working-class...youth who are to be drafted will not respond to the anti-draft campaign." It was with the perspective of influencing the working-class and oppressed ranks of the military with a socialist program that Spartacist supporters in the Army published several issues of an antiwar newspaper distributed to GIs during the Vietnam War called *G.I. Voice*.

## For a Class-Struggle Perspective

In fact, many of those who advocated draft resistance during the Vietnam War were students benefiting from the "College Not Combat" measure of the time: student deferments. We called for the abolition of the student deferment because it expressed class privilege, meaning that wealthy and petty-bourgeois youth who



K. A. Kuznetsov

**Leader of Bolshevik Revolution, V. I. Lenin, addresses Soviet Red Army in 1919.**

had the privilege of being in college didn't get drafted, while poor and working-class youth did. More generally, the bourgeoisie uses its wealth and privilege to keep its sons out of combat. A prime example is George W. Bush, who avoided combat in Vietnam by taking advantage of family connections to get a safe sinecure in the Air National Guard.

Polemicalizing against anarchists, Karl Liebknecht succinctly captured the difference between liberal and revolutionary anti-militarism in his *Militarism and Anti-Militarism*. Noting that "It [anarchism] lays great stress upon individual refusal to do military service, individual refusal to resort to arms and upon individual protests," Liebknecht argued:

"Anarchism works here, first of all, with ethical enthusiasm, with the stimuli of morality, with arguments of humanity, of justice: in short, with all sorts of impulses on the will which ignore the class war character of anti-militarism, and attempt to stamp it as an abstract efflux of a categorical imperative of universal application...."

"Social-Democratic [Marxist] anti-militarist propaganda, on the contrary, propagates the class-struggle and therefore it appeals on principle exclusively to

those classes which, necessarily, are the foes of militarism in the class struggle.... It enlightens people to win them over, but it enlightens them not concerning categorical imperatives, humanitarian points of view, ethical postulates of freedom and justice, but concerning the class struggle, the interests of the proletariat therein."

Military society is a reflection of civil society, and major shifts in the consciousness of the poor and working-class ranks of the military parallel such shifts in civil society. For example, many of the soldiers who carried out acts of rebellion against officers during the Vietnam War were black. This had much to do with the mass social struggle against racial oppression that was taking place back home. War often brings the class contradictions of society acutely to the fore—this was especially the case in the massive, seemingly senseless all-sided slaughter of World War I and in wars where the imperialists were losing to forces fighting for social revolution, such as Vietnam. This is why, as Leon Trotsky noted, "war is the mother of revolution" (*Military Writings*, Volume 1: 1918). War brings the contradiction between the interests of the capitalist rulers and those of working people starkly to light in a way that is often obscured in times of "peace." It is only in a revolutionary situation that the bourgeois army will split along class lines. The role of revolutionaries in such a situation is to provide the program and leadership to struggling soldiers and working people for a successful overturn of capitalism.

## Bolshevik Revolution: Model for Today

The need for a revolutionary Marxist party to lead the fight for working-class power was demonstrated in both the positive and negative during WWI. This war brought to a head a historic split in the Marxist movement throughout Europe. The war was essentially fought to redivide world markets among the belligerent imperialist powers of Europe, and was completely unprecedented in the level of death and destruction—some 15 million people were killed. Nearly every socialist party that faced the challenge of World War I failed miserably. The most spectacular failure was the German Social Democratic Party (SPD) whose parliamentary deputies voted, on 4 August 1914, for war credits, i.e., in support of the war on the side of their "own" bourgeoisie. Within the Marxist movement throughout Europe there were some leaders who similarly capitulated to the intense pressures of patriotism and declared that socialists could stand for the "defense of the fatherland." Breaking with the social-chauvinist SPD leaders in Germany, Karl Liebknecht voted against war credits in December 1914 and used his parliamentary post to agitate against the war and the social-chauvinists. The German bourgeoisie tried to silence him by drafting him into the military where he continued his agitation in his soldier's uniform, and was imprisoned a second time for his agitation against militarism and war.

Tens of thousands of leaflets authored by Liebknecht and his comrades of the Spartakusbund were published with the ringing internationalist slogan: "The Main Enemy Is at Home!" Unlike a predatory war by an imperialist power against a colonial country, in a war between imperialist powers such as WWI the working class has no side. Liebknecht's slogan paralleled Lenin's demand that the working class turn the inter-imperialist war into a civil war against their "own" capitalist rulers. This cut across not only the social-chauvinism of leading European Social Democrats, but also against the social-pacifists whose only demands were for "peace," i.e., for a return to capitalist stability.

In Russia, Lenin had fought since 1903 to build a hard revolutionary party with a clear program, and so, unlike the majority of the SPD, the Bolsheviks did not cave in to the bourgeois pressures around WWI. The social-chauvinists and social-

pacifists in Russia were constituted in the Menshevik and Social Revolutionary parties. Lenin insisted on the necessity for revolutionaries to split with the opportunists within the Marxist movement over the question of the war. Lenin described opportunism as having the same content as social-chauvinism: "collaboration of classes instead of class struggle, renunciation of revolutionary methods of struggle, helping one's 'own' government in



Boni and Liveright

**Revolutionary sailors come to defense of workers' soviets in Russia, 1917.**

its embarrassed situation instead of taking advantage of these embarrassments for revolution" (*Socialism and War*).

In this same pamphlet he continued, "Today *unity* with the opportunists *actually* means subordinating the working class to their 'own' national bourgeoisie and an alliance with the latter for the purpose of oppressing other nations and of fighting for dominant-nation privileges: it means *splitting* the revolutionary proletariat of all countries." It was this revolutionary intransigence that enabled Lenin and Trotsky's Bolshevik Party to lead the October Revolution in Russia, pulling Russia out of WWI. In 1917 rebellious soldiers took their stand with the revolutionary proletariat against Russian tsarism, capitalism and the war, signaling the collapse of the state and unraveling of capitalist rule in Russia. The Bolsheviks led these struggles toward the seizure of state power by the working class.

It was the lack of such a leadership in Germany that led to the defeat of the revolutionary wave between 1918 and 1923. The heroic leaders, Liebknecht and

Luxemburg, having eventually split first with the SPD and then the Kautskyite centrists to form the German Communist Party, were shortly thereafter murdered by counterrevolutionary forces dispatched by SPD leaders in 1919. When a revolutionary crisis erupted in 1923, the German Communist Party had a vacillating leadership and was programmatically weak (see "A Trotskyist Critique of Germany 1923 and the Comintern," *Spartacist* [English-

language edition] No. 56, Spring 2001). It is precisely the fight to expose the opportunists in the workers movement, and split the working class away from the false program these reformists offer, that is required to unshackle the power of labor today. Mobilizing that power is the critical factor in every struggle against imperialism, exploitation and the myriad forms of oppression engendered by the capitalist system. Marxist historian Isaac Deutscher powerfully summed this up in a 1966 speech addressed to New Left antiwar radicals during the Vietnam War:

"Unless you have found a way to the young age groups of the American working class and shaken this sleeping giant of yours, this sleeping giant of the American working class...out of the sleep into which he has been drugged, unless you have done this, you will be lost. "Your only salvation is in carrying back the idea of socialism to the working class and coming back with the working class to storm—to storm, yes, to storm—the bastions of capitalism."

—"On Socialist Man,"  
*Marxism in Our Time*, 1971 ■

## Spartacus Youth Club Classes

### BAY AREA

**The State and Revolution**  
Tuesday, November 1, 5 p.m.

San Francisco State University  
Cesar Chavez Student Center, Rm. T-160  
Information and readings: (510) 839-0851  
or e-mail: sycbayarea@sbcglobal.net

### CHICAGO

**The Leninist Struggle**  
**Against Imperialism**

Tuesday, November 8, 7 p.m.

University of Chicago  
Cobb Hall, Room 104, 5811 S. Ellis Ave.  
Information and readings: (312) 563-0441  
or e-mail: chicagospartacist@sbcglobal.net

### LOS ANGELES

**The State and Revolution**  
Saturday, November 12, 2 p.m.

3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215  
(Beverly/Vermont Red Line Station)  
Information and readings: (213) 380-8239  
or e-mail: slsycla@sbcglobal.net

### NEW YORK

**The State and Revolution**  
Wednesday, November 16, 7 p.m.

Columbia University  
Hamilton Hall, Room 703  
Information and readings: (212) 267-1025  
or e-mail: nysl@compuserve.com

### BOSTON

**The Russian Revolution**  
**of 1917: How the Working**  
**Class Took Power**

Thursday, November 17, 7 p.m.

Boston University  
George Sherman Union, Room 322  
775 Commonwealth Avenue  
(BU Central stop on Green Line B)  
Information and readings: (617) 666-9453  
or e-mail: bostonsyc@yahoo.com

### TORONTO

**Independence for Quebec!**  
**Marxism and**  
**the National Question**

Wednesday, November 2, 6:30 p.m.

U of T, Sydney Smith, Room 2115  
100 St. George Street  
Information and readings: (416) 593-4138  
or e-mail: spartcan@on.aibn.com

### VANCOUVER

**The Struggle for**  
**Working Class Leadership**  
**Today: Break with the**  
**Pro-Imperialist NDP!**

Thursday, November 3, 5 p.m.

UBC, Student Union Building, Rm. 211  
Information and readings: (604) 687-0353  
or e-mail: tllt@look.ca

# Paramilitaries Attack Picketers Victory to SF Hospital Strikers!

In the early morning of October 13, a squad of paramilitary mercenaries charged into nearly 200 striking health care workers picketing to stop scabs at the California Pacific Medical Center (CPMC) in San Francisco. The thugs of the Steele Foundation security firm shoved and punched the strikers, members of SEIU-United Healthcare Workers West (SEIU-UHW), trying to drive them into auto traffic. Lorena Hernandez, a dietary aide, was thrown to the ground and kicked in the stomach, requiring hospitalization. The workers held the line against this vicious attack, which followed weeks of thuggery and harassment by the mercenary goons against the mostly female and minority picketers.

Now in its seventh week, the bitter strike pits 800 vocational nurses, dietary workers, custodians and clerks against the union-busting Sutter Corp., the largest health care provider in Northern California and one of the most profitable in the country. The workers are fighting for a greater say in staffing levels and for the hospital to contribute to the union's training and education fund.

Sutter Corp. is notorious for understaffing, hounding patients who can't pay

and turning away the uninsured. The Steele Foundation, whose hired thugs are known to picketers as the "Men In Black," is a sinister international operation composed of former intelligence officers, FBI agents and Special Forces veterans, including many who have carried out bloody terror for U.S. imperialism during its occupation of Iraq. Security guards are

not part of the working class and should not be in the unions, including SEIU. Sutter has also enlisted a professional scabbing outfit that preys on the desperate poor, including evacuees from New Orleans, to scab on the strike.

On September 2, SEIU-UHW president Sal Rosselli issued a ten-day notice that workers at eight Sutter hospitals, all work-



San Francisco: SEIU-UHW health care workers picket California Pacific Medical Center, September 13. Gladstone/SF Chronicle

ing without a contract, would go on strike. But from the beginning the SEIU leadership has limited the strike to CPMC. Rosselli told *Workers Vanguard* at a strike rally: "What that horrible incident of violence did was really focus some elected leaders like Mayor Gavin Newsom and [Congresswoman] Nancy Pelosi to really start prioritizing using their influence to get this resolved." What's needed to beat back Sutter Corp. and its vicious scabherders is mass militant picket lines to *stop the scabs* and *shut down all the Sutter hospitals*, not looking to phony "friend of labor" capitalist politicians like Democrats Newsom and Pelosi.

**One out, all out!** The California Nurses Association and other unions with contracts with Sutter that had pledged to go out in solidarity with SEIU-UHW are scabbing. SEIU president Andy Stern, leader of the Change to Win Coalition that split from the AFL-CIO in July, is giving \$250,000 a week to the striking workers. That is good, but Stern has done nothing to organize labor action in defense of the brutalized strikers. Change to Win member unions like the Teamsters, San Francisco UNITE HERE hotel workers, working without a contract for over a year, and SEIU-organized S.F. school workers, who recently authorized a strike, are among the labor forces that should be mobilized to build mass picket lines to shut down CPMC and the entire Sutter medical empire. Keep San Francisco a union town! **Victory to the SEIU-UHW strikers!** ■

## GM/Delphi...

(continued from page 1)

black workers have tremendous potential social power and can play a vanguard role in defending the interests of the entire proletariat through united class struggle.

The question of the unity of the employed and unemployed in this country is the race question. Predatory union-busters have recruited desperate Hurricane Katrina survivors for deployment as scabs against striking hospital workers in San Francisco and against union musicians fighting wage- and benefit-gouging scrooges readying New York City's Radio City Music Hall for its Christmas extravaganza. Unionized black workers represent a socially powerful link to the ghettoized poor deemed a "surplus population" by the racist rulers.

Key to turning back the assault on the UAW is organizing the auto assembly and parts plants that have proliferated in the South and other non-union areas. The crucial need for the labor movement to take up the fight for black rights comes sharply into focus in any drive to organize the "open shop" South, where the racist legacy of slavery and Jim Crow segregation has always served to suppress labor struggle. Black and white workers must also champion the rights of immigrants, a growing component of the proletariat, and demand full citizenship rights for all immigrants.

The rights of black people and union rights march forward together or are thrown back separately. But it's not as simple as "black and white, unite and fight." A perspective to turn around the decades of defeat for labor and blacks in

this country requires breaking the labor movement from its political subservience to the Democratic and Republican parties of capital. It is urgently necessary for a new labor leadership to be forged in sharp class struggle. Such struggle must take political independence from the capitalist Democratic and Republican parties as its starting point. **Break with the Democrats! Build a multiracial, class-struggle workers party!**

### For International Labor Solidarity!

In his *Wall Street Journal* interview, Robert "let 'em die" Miller said that as far as he was concerned, the job of UAW head Ron Gettelfinger is "to help half a million of workers get used to the idea that globalization has taken away the ability to have someone who mows the lawn or sweeps the floor get \$65 an hour." Miller drips ruling-class contempt, acting like the working class is dust under his feet. Auto workers built the gleaming machines that drive the "American Dream." They built the Motor City that the capitalists have done their best to run into the ground. They created the fabulous wealth appropriated as profits by parasites like Miller and his class.

"Globalization" lingo is designed to mask the historic workings of imperialist capitalism: the carving out of new markets; the extraction of more profit through exploitation of labor abroad while simultaneously driving down wages and shutting factories at home; defense of "national interests" through trade wars and shooting wars. The U.S. auto industry has operations throughout the world. Earlier this year, bosses at GM's Opel plants

in Germany told workers to take wage and benefit cuts along with more forced overtime under the pretext of keeping the company competitive. Instead of the labor tops' poisonous "America first" protectionism and support to American imperialist military adventures, U.S. workers need to forge **international class-struggle solidarity**.

The screaming about rising health care and wage costs is corporate propaganda in the service of union-busting. Meanwhile, Delphi, GM et al. rake it in with their subsidiaries and international operations. The unions should fight for free, quality health care for all! For jobs for all through a shorter workweek with no loss in pay! Against the anarchy of capitalist production, we fight for workers revolutions to establish an international planned socialist economy.

### Fight or Starve!

GM/Delphi's attack on the UAW is a potential watershed for all workers. A fight against these vicious exploiters, by workers in the very heart of the industrial economy, would resonate among working people desperate to achieve or hold on to health care and pensions. U.S. imperialism's brutal occupation of Iraq has generated widespread revulsion. The Bush gang's cronyism, lethal incompetence and open racist hatred for the poor, largely black population of New Orleans in the wake of Hurricane Katrina shocked millions. The capitalist profit system was revealed to be utterly incapable of providing even the minimal necessities of life. Throwing youth into prisons while smashing public education, enforcing the racist death penalty and destroying welfare and social programs has been the

capitalists' standard operating policy for decades, under both Democratic and Republican administrations.

The U.S. ruling class has looted the wealth of this country and sabotaged its vital infrastructure by refusing to invest in and modernize basic industry like steel and auto, mortgaging the future of this society for short-term gains. That's fundamentally why GM keeps building gawking, unsafe models like the notorious tip-over SUVs, and why it's quality Japanese and German autos that consumers increasingly want to buy. Highways, levees, schools, hospitals, mass transit—it's all been run into the ground. The capitalist system deserves to perish.

But for this to happen requires forging a revolutionary workers party that will rip power out of the hands of the exploiters and create a society organized to meet human needs, not private profit. Our model is the 1917 Russian Revolution, led by Leon Trotsky's and V.I. Lenin's Bolshevik Party. The only way to guarantee good living conditions, jobs for all and an end to capitalist exploitation and racist oppression is by expropriating the capitalist class through socialist revolution. As Trotsky wrote in the 1938 Transitional Program, founding document of the Fourth International:

"If capitalism is incapable of satisfying the demands inevitably arising from the calamities generated by itself, then let it perish. 'Realizability' or 'unrealizability' is in the given instance a question of the relationship of forces, which can be decided only by the struggle. By means of this struggle, no matter what its immediate practical successes may be, the workers will best come to understand the necessity of liquidating capitalist slavery." ■

## Polish Elections...

(continued from page 5)

wing" of Solidarność reaction.

The Internet publication *Platforma Proletariacka* (PP), which first appeared in September 2002 and claimed that it "continues the work which was carried out by the Spartakusowska Grupa Polski," advocated a vote to Szyszkowska's presidential bid, but withdrew its electoral support when her candidacy on the PPP ticket was announced. When sympathizers and supporters of the ICL in Poland denounced this unprincipled support to a bourgeois

candidate in a 4 September statement as "a desperate desire to exist on a 'political scene' saturated with the reactionary climate of post-counterrevolutionary Poland," PP responded in a 6 October statement: "While the perception of Maria Szyszkowska as a liberal bourgeois candidate is quite correct, the conclusion [of not supporting Szyszkowska] is contorted and unfounded!" In other words, PP passed off as principled supporting a liberal bourgeois democrat who is outspoken in her admiration for the anti-communist founders of Solidarność. This constituted a repudiation of the ICL's principled stand for working-class independence from the bourgeoisie and its representatives. In a 13 October state-

ment, PP recognized that it had committed a "deadly error" and added, "In this way we—unwittingly—stood in the ranks of the 'Solidarność' left."

In counterposition to the Polish fake left, the SGP consistently refused to vote not only for candidates under the banner of Solidarność, but also for the SLD, which never ran on the basis of class independence. In *Platforma Spartakusowska*, the SGP called for building a Leninist-Trotskyist party—a "tribune of the people" mobilizing workers and minorities in defense of the right to free abortion on demand, to defend immigrants against racist deportations and to mobilize to stop fascist, anti-Semitic provocations. The SGP opposed Poland's

entry into the European Union—an imperialist bloc directed against the working class and all the oppressed.

Our perspective is to build in Poland and other countries revolutionary workers parties, which will provide leadership in the struggle for socialist revolutions in capitalist countries and for proletarian political revolutions in the deformed workers states China, Vietnam, North Korea and Cuba. Our record of fighting against Solidarność counter-revolution and defending the Trotskyist position of unconditional military defense of the degenerated and deformed workers states constitutes the programmatic basis for a revolutionary organization in Poland! ■

# Corsica...

(continued from page 12)

French capitalist state under Lionel Jospin from 1997 to 2002. The LTF newspaper, *Le Bolchévick*, warned against the wheeling and dealing of the pseudo-Trotskyist Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR—Revolutionary Communist League), which, having given electoral support to the 1997 popular front, now seeks to take advantage of the distrust and distaste of many workers for the PS and PCF by giving a “left” face to a new class-collaborationist electoral coalition.

While the SNCM seamen’s militant strike in defense of their jobs met broad support among workers in France, the bourgeoisie immediately sought to portray the struggle as having been hijacked by a few Corsican nationalists. Anti-Corsican chauvinism, smearing Corsicans as a bunch of tribal/clan-based Mafiosi and terrorists, is rampant, including among the CGT bureaucracy. The right of national independence for Corsica was blatantly absent from all the platform speeches at the October 3 Marseille rally. Thus the rare joint contingent of CGT union federation and STC workers from SNCM at the October 4 demonstration in Bastia was particularly important and welcome, cutting across both French chauvinism and Corsican nationalism.

On October 11, the CGT bureaucrats got the dockers to cease their strike. Two days later, on the 24th day of the ferry workers strike, CGT union leaders caved in to the threat of bankruptcy and held a secret ballot. As the daily *Le Monde* (14 October) reported, “The question was posed exactly according to the terms set by the government: ‘yes to resuming work, thus saying no to bankruptcy’ or ‘no to resuming work, thus saying yes to bankruptcy.’” Faced with the blackmail “offer” presented by their treacherous leaders, workers voted overwhelmingly to end the strike. The government is now free to proceed with its latest proposal, which would privatize the bulk of the SNCM ferry company.

\* \* \*

The attack on September 28 by the national marine and military police [*gendarmerie*] with war helicopters against an SNCM ship occupied by strikers of the Union of Corsican Workers is an act of common state terrorism that threatens the whole workers movement. With the approach of the mass strikes and demonstrations of October 4, the government has sent a message to the entire working class that if it dares to defend itself against the increasing attacks from the capitalists, it will face cop violence and even the army. The longshoremen of Marseille have now been on strike for four days in solidarity with the SNCM workers and have totally shut down the port. The whole working class should join in solidarity against the attack and demand freedom now for the imprisoned trade

unionists and that all charges against them be dropped. STC members are facing up to 20 years in jail. *Down with the privatization of SNCM and the other public companies!*

The announcement on September 26 that the SNCM had been given away as a “gift,” pure and simple, to a friend of de Villepin, with a hundred million euros added on top, set off the explosion. The official line is to predict 400 layoffs, but the workers talk of 1,000 layoffs out of 2,400 jobs, and, in fact, the company is threatened with being dismantled. The



Marseille, October 4: Ferry strikers and dockers head demonstration as part of million-strong one-day nationwide strike.

CGT sailors, who have been on strike since last week, proclaim their “solidarity with their imprisoned brothers,” but already their leadership is ready to betray them. On the day of the state’s attack, CGT leader Jean-Paul Israel very plainly, in front of the TV cameras, refused to defend the STC workers. The CGT leadership was cynical enough to talk about an “opening” on the part of the government on the very day of the assault! And the same evening, Bernard Thibault, the national leader of the CGT, went to meet de Villepin to assure him that he is ready to accept the privatization of the SNCM provided it will be “partial,” as well as to discuss how to prevent a social explosion.

### LCR and PCF Wheel and Deal for New “Popular Front”

The LCR and PCF have opposed the cop attack against the STC sailors. But at bottom they intend to channel the workers’ anger over this issue toward constituting a new “united political power,” in other words, constituting a new popular front with capitalist groupings (see *Le Bolchévick*, September 2005). Their politics as a whole are oriented toward this end. Thus, at the [PCF] *l’Humanité* Fête this year [LCR leader] Besancenot and [PCF national secretary and former gov-

ernment minister] Buffet got together with Zuccarelli, the “left Radical” mayor of Bastia, who’s such a French chauvinist that he supported the cop attack against the STC sailors. This shows that the kind of government the LCR and PCF aspire to build, including capitalist forces such as Zuccarelli’s PRG [Radical Left Party], would be a brutally anti-working-class and anti-Corsican bourgeois government, like that of Chirac-Villepin.

And it would be just like that of Jospin-Buffet—the government that began the complete privatization of Air France and

France Telecom. It was the Jospin-Buffet government that launched the manhunt against Yvan Colonna after the murder of *préfet* [central state representative in Corsica] Erignac in 1998, though the government had not a shred of evidence (and still has no evidence) that he was implicated. And it was the Jospin-Buffet government that then named Bernard Bonnet as *préfet* in Corsica, promoting Bonnet for his role repressing those defending the Catalan language when he was *préfet* in the Eastern Pyrénées. Bonnet sent out the military police at night to set fire to beach restaurants in order to terrorize Corsican nationalists. (There was a scandal only because Bonnet got caught and thus discredited the French bourgeois state.)

The alternative is not a new bloc of class collaboration between the Zuccarellis, the [PS leaders] Hollande/Fabius and Buffets, even with a Besancenot on its left, but a fight for the class independence of the proletariat against the capitalists and for the perspective of workers revolution. We fight to build a multiethnic, proletarian vanguard party to lead such a revolution to victory.

### For the Right of Self-Determination for the Corsican People!

In order to defuse the crisis, the government and the union bureaucrats count on using anti-Corsican chauvinism, which the French bourgeoisie and the reformists have always sought to use to divide French and Corsican workers, targeting Corsican workers as “terrorists” and so on. To thwart these maneuvers it is necessary to fight to mobilize the proletariat here in France against the national oppression of the Corsican people. That is the only way to fight for the class unity of Corsican and French workers against the capitalists. Corsica has been maintained in a state of underdevelopment by French imperialism. It has a massive unemployment rate, much higher than the French average. The SNCM privatization scheme would have an even more devastating impact on Corsica’s workers than on those in Marseille and on the continent. *No layoffs! For the right of the Corsican people to decide their own fate, including the right to separate from the “Hexagon” [France] if they choose! Complete equality for all languages, with no privilege whatsoever for French!* We demand free-

dom for all imprisoned Corsican nationalists, including Yvan Colonna, who is now in his third year in jail.

The whole island has now been placed under a state of siege, reinforced by hundreds of extra cops. *Down with police terror in Corsica!* As one SNCM worker said, “We’re not terrorists, we’re fathers defending our jobs” (*Grand Marseille 20 Minutes*, 29 September). One can see concretely, with the act of piracy by the military police commando unit against the STC sailors and against the public service sector, how the government’s “anti-terrorist” campaign threatens the working class itself. Most often in France it’s youth of Maghreb [North African] origin who are targeted by the racist “anti-terror” campaign. This is intended to divide the working class between “French” workers and those of immigrant origin, who suffer even more intense job instability. In Corsica, the unemployment rate for youth, particularly of Moroccan origin, is even higher than for others. Not only the French cops but also some Corsican nationalists have carried out acts of racist terror against these youth. *Full citizenship rights for all immigrants and their families, in France and in Corsica! Down with [state anti-immigrant campaign] Vigipirate!*

Last year, the SNCM sailors respected the picket lines of the STC, despite the diatribes of the CGT leadership against “Corsicizing jobs” [preferential hiring of Corsicans] as demanded by the STC. (And [the fake-Trotskyist group] Lutte Ouvrière totally supported the CGT bureaucrats on this one—see the 24 September 2004 *Lutte Ouvrière*.) In order to maintain and improve ferry service, what is in fact needed is massive hiring—of workers resident in France and in Corsica. Today hiring (or rather laying off) is controlled by the racist and chauvinist management. The unions should have a monopoly on hiring as it used to be in the Marseille harbor. This poses the need for one industrial union, regrouping all the SNCM workers, French and Corsican. The same union should also organize the workers of [low cost] Corsica Ferries, to bring wages and working conditions up to the highest level.

Racist discrimination in hiring that targets youth from the northern [immigrant/working class] districts of Marseille and those from immigrant families in Corsica must be opposed. Today workers have a leadership consisting of French chauvinist social democrats or Corsican nationalists. We fight for a *revolutionary and internationalist* leadership in the trade unions, fighting all forms of racist or nationalist division among workers, and for the complete independence of the trade unions vis-à-vis the state.

*Drop the charges against the STC and CGT trade unionists! Victory to the SNCM and Marseille dock workers strike! For the right of self-determination for the Corsican people!* ■

# Toledo...

(continued from page 12)

County Prosecutor, Lucas County Courthouse, Adams and Erie Streets, Toledo, OH 43624.

\* \* \*

The Partisan Defense Committee vigorously protests the mass arrests of anti-Nazi protesters in Toledo, Ohio on Saturday, October 15.

The race terrorists of the National Socialist Movement had announced a march in Toledo at noon on October 15. This fascist rally, built under the disgusting pretext of fighting “black crime,” was nothing but a recruitment drive for lynch mob race terror against Toledo’s black residents, making up nearly a quarter of the city’s population.

Understanding the deadly threat posed by these Hitler-loving storm troopers, several hundred mainly black residents came out in an elementary act of self-

defense and succeeded in stopping the Nazi march. These anti-fascist protesters also denounced the role of the black Democratic Mayor Jack Ford who had mobilized his cops *en masse* to protect the fascists.

In retaliation for this victory in stopping the Nazi march, Ford’s cops attacked the demonstrators, shooting “flash bang” devices and tear gas at the demonstrators. Over 110 people (including at least 17 juveniles) have been arrested on bogus charges of aggravated rioting, assault, vandalism, and curfew violations. Echoing the Nazis’ racist filth, Ford smeared the protesters as “gang members,” and imposed a “state of emergency” on the city.

In stopping the Nazis, these protesters performed a great service for all black people, immigrants, trade unionists, leftists, Jews, gays, and all potential victims of fascist race terror. We demand: *Drop all charges against the Toledo anti-Nazi demonstrators!* ■

**LE BOLCHEVIK**

PCF, LCR etc. magouillent pour un nouveau « front populaire »

A bas les rafles et les expulsions!  
A bas Vigipirate!  
Pour des mobilisations ouvrières contre la terreur raciste!

Publication of the Ligue Trotskyste de France

Subscribe! \$5 for 4 issues  
Includes *Spartacist* (French edition)

Order from/make checks payable to:  
Spartacist Publishing Co.  
Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116

# WORKERS VANGUARD

## Hands Off Anti-Fascist Protesters! Nazis Run Out of Toledo

OCTOBER 22—Some 600 people spiked a race-hate provocation by the fascist National Socialist Movement in Toledo, Ohio on October 15. Despite cop protection, the neo-Nazi filth were prevented by the overwhelmingly black demonstrators from marching through North Toledo. Having tried to protect the fascists, police then went on a rampage against the protesters. During the protest and subsequent curfew, 114 people were arrested, including 34 minors as young as 12 years old. Some are still being held. The labor movement, the left, fighters against racism must demand: Drop all charges! Free the anti-fascist protesters now!

The same day that anti-Semitic, anti-immigrant demagogue Louis Farrakhan commemorated his reactionary 1995 march for black people's "atonement" in Washington, D.C. with another rally appealing the racist capitalist rulers, the people of North Toledo took it in their hands to strike a blow for black people, Jews, immigrants—all those in the fascists' gun sights. Black Democratic mayor Jack Ford and a gaggle of preachers had exhorted residents to stay away and ignore the threat of race-terrorists marching down their streets. But as one resident told the *New York Times* (17 October), "You can't allow people to



October 15: Black North Toledo residents made up bulk of protest that drove Nazis off the streets.

come challenge a whole city and not think they weren't going to strike back."

City authorities blamed "gangs" in condemning the outpouring of protest and rage—that's the same kind of racist garbage the ruling class spewed in depicting

black people in New Orleans as "looters" for trying to get food and water after Hurricane Katrina. Mayor Ford slanderously charged the International Socialist Organization and the One People's Project group with handing out eggs to anti-

racist protesters to throw at the fascists, claiming "That's exactly what they do—they come into town and get people riled up" (CNN.com, 15 October).

Toledo has a powerful, integrated, unionized working class. The Daimler-Chrysler Jeep plant, with thousands of UAW workers, is right next to the North Toledo neighborhood. Unions in the area must use their muscle to defend those victimized for protesting the fascist menace. Any threatened Klan or Nazi provocation must be answered by a mass mobilization centered on the power of the labor movement, marching at the head of all the fascists' intended victims. But to wield that power requires fighting against the policies of the existing labor leadership, whose embrace of the capitalist profit system is antithetical to waging class struggle in defense of workers' livelihoods and the rights of black people and all the oppressed.

We reprint below an October 17 letter by the Partisan Defense Committee to the Toledo and Lucas County prosecutors protesting the arrests of the anti-fascist protesters. Letters can be sent to: David Toska, Toledo Prosecutor, Toledo Municipal Court, 555 N. Erie St., Toledo, OH 43624; and Judy Bates, Lucas *continued on page 11*

## Dockers, Seamen Shut Down Marseille Corsica and Class Struggle in France

On September 28, a French military police commando unit backed up by five helicopters attacked and seized a ferry off the coast of Corsica that was occupied by striking sailors of the Union of Corsican Workers (STC). The ferry workers, the bulk of whom are organized by the CGT trade-union federation and others by the STC (dominated by Corsican nationalists), had struck over the French government's threat to privatize the state-owned

SNCM Corsica-Mediterranean ferry line. The strike, which began on September 20, was joined by solidarity actions of Marseille dockers that shut down France's biggest port. There were two days of pitched battles with cops on the Marseille docks and in Corsica's Bastia harbor. After the government's blatant attack against the striking workers, harbor workers also blockaded ports in Corsica protesting the arrest of four STC sailors who

face charges similar to those for aircraft hijacking.

These actions are part of a wave of workers' protests that have challenged the policies of the right-wing government under Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin. On October 4, a million workers went out on strike and demonstrated across the country for higher wages and against pending anti-union measures. In Marseille, up to 100,000 people pro-

tested, with some 1,000 SNCM workers and longshoremen heading up the march, and transit workers also struck against privatization threats.

The leaflet translated below was issued by the Ligue Trotskyste, French section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist), on September 30. It was distributed at the October 4 demonstrations in Paris, Rouen and Marseille and at a Marseille rally the day before. There were those who welcomed us for speaking the truth and those who hated us for the same reason. As the leaflet explains, the reformist workers parties and organizations in France are striving to channel working-class anger into a new popular-front government, like the one including the Socialist Party (PS) and the Communist Party (PCF) that ran the *continued on page 11*



AFP

Left: Police in helicopters storm ferry seized by seamen protesting SNCM privatization, September 28. Right: Striking ferry workers in Marseille harbor, October 1.

Reuters

