

U.S./Canada/NATO Out of Afghanistan!

Torture and the “War on Terror”



Hideous accounts of torture have surfaced from some of the prisoners detained by Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan. On being handed over to the Afghan authorities, they have been beaten with cables, frozen, choked, subjected to electric shocks and killed. The most severe torture occurs at the National Directorate of Security headquarters in Kandahar, where Canada has led NATO forces and deploys most of its 2,500 troops. After a series of shifting lies and denials, the Harper government finally released a 2006 Foreign Affairs report on Afghanistan, only to censor out admissions that “extrajudicial executions, disappearances, torture and detention without trial are all too common.”

The latest revelations are neither a surprise nor an aberration. Prisoner abuse in Afghanistan is as intrinsic to the global imperialist “war on terror” as the torture by U.S. troops in Iraq and the demonizing and repression of Muslims in the U.S., Canada and other Western countries. The slaughter of Afghan civilians by the U.S.-led occupation forces is so commonplace that even Washington’s puppet president Hamid Karzai is complaining. In May alone, air strikes and other attacks killed dozens of villagers including women and children. *U.S., Canadian, all NATO troops out of Afghanistan now! Down with the neocolonial occupation of Iraq!*

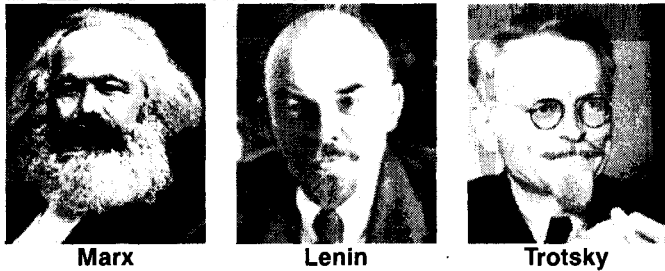
It is inconceivable that the Harper government did not know what was happening to the prisoners. Canada’s 2005 detainee transfer agreement with Afghanistan is no different than Washington’s “extraordinary rendition” program, which similarly

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McHugh/AFP/Getty Images
Canadian soldier guards prisoner later handed over to notorious Afghan police of Hamid Karzai’s imperialist-backed puppet regime.

**Defend, Extend the Gains of
the 1949 Chinese Revolution!**

— page 8 —



Marx

Lenin

Trotsky

There Is No Justice in the Courts of the Enemy

The frame-up and execution of the immigrant American anarchists Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti in the 1920s galvanized mass, worldwide working-class protest. On the eve of the execution James P. Cannon, chairman of the International Labor Defense (ILD), pointed out that Sacco and Vanzetti had already suffered a torturous seven years in prison with the death sentence hanging over them. Today Mumia Abu-Jamal, an innocent man and a courageous fighter against racist oppression, has spent almost 25 years as a death-row political prisoner. He must not suffer the fate of Sacco and Vanzetti! It is urgently necessary to rebuild the mass worldwide movement for Mumia's freedom which in 1995 stayed the executioner's hand. Like the ILD, the Partisan Defense Committee places its faith not in the "justice" system, but in the social power of the working class. For mass working-class action to free Mumia Abu-Jamal!

The Sacco-Vanzetti case is at a turning point. Legally speaking, it now rests on another appeal to the Massachusetts State Supreme Court from the latest decision of Judge Thayer refusing a new trial. But speaking from a more fundamental standpoint; that is, from the standpoint of the class struggle, the issue really hangs on developments taking place within the Sacco-Vanzetti movement which embraces workers of various views....

The Sacco-Vanzetti case is no private monopoly, but an issue of the class struggle in which the decisive word will be spoken by the masses who have made this fight their own. It is, therefore, necessary to discuss openly the conflicting policies which are bound up with different objectives.

One policy is the policy of the class struggle. It puts the center of gravity in the protest movement of the workers of America and the world. It puts all faith in the power of the

masses and no faith whatever in the justice of the courts. While favoring all possible legal proceedings, it calls for agitation, publicity, demonstrations—organized protest on a national and international scale. It calls for unity and solidarity of all workers on this burning issue, regardless of conflicting views on other questions. This is what has prevented the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti so far. Its goal is nothing less than their triumphant vindication and liberation.

The other policy is the policy of "respectability," of the "soft-pedal," and of ridiculous illusions about "justice" from the courts of the enemy. It relies mainly on legal proceedings. It seeks to blur the issue of the class struggle. It shrinks from the "vulgar and noisy" demonstrations of the militant workers and throws the mud of slander on them. It tries to represent the martyrdom of Sacco and Vanzetti as an "unfortunate" error which can be rectified by the "right" people proceeding in the "right" way. The objective of this policy is a whitewash of the courts of Massachusetts and "clemency" for Sacco and Vanzetti, in the form of a commutation to life imprisonment for a crime of which the world knows they are innocent.

The conscious proletarian elements with whom we identify ourselves unconditionally, are for the first policy. The bourgeois elements, and those influenced by them, are for the second.

The corruption and class bias of the courts of Massachusetts are already proved to the hilt. A division of the proletarian forces will only facilitate their murderous plans. They are determined to have the blood of Sacco and Vanzetti.

Only the organized and united protest movement of the masses can save them. In this movement the class conscious workers—the militants—are the driving force. Let those who hamper this movement or endanger its unity pause lest they unconsciously become the executioners of Sacco and Vanzetti.

—“Who Can Save Sacco and Vanzetti?” *Labor Defender*, January 1927; reprinted in *Notebook of an Agitator* (1958)

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David Lindorff, Michael Schiffmann: *Undermining Mumia's Fight for Freedom Class-Struggle Defense vs. Faith in Capitalist "Justice"*

Also available:
Workers Vanguard No. 893, 25 May 2007, with coverage of international rallies for Mumia's freedom, London (May 5) and Berlin (May 12).

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Quebec: Labour Must Fight Anti-Muslim Backlash

Amid a wave of racist demagoguery against ethnic minorities, especially Muslims, the March 26 Quebec elections saw Jean Charest's unpopular Liberals barely squeak back into office, forming Quebec's first minority government in over 125 years. The sovereigntist Parti Québécois, under the no less unpopular André Boisclair, won only 28 percent of the popular vote, its worst showing in 35 years. The PQ lost official opposition status to the upstart right-wing nationalist Action Démocratique du Québec (ADQ) of Mario Dumont, which rode the wave of hysteria against immigrants and minorities.

The spark was the 2006 Supreme Court of Canada ruling in favour of Gurbaj Singh Multani, a Sikh high school student in Montreal. Four years ago, Multani's refusal to remove his kirpan—a small, traditional dagger—spawned racist, “anti-violence” hysteria in the media. As a form of “reasonable accommodation” (itself a very condescending term), the court ruled that Multani could wear his kirpan at school. But this was altogether too “reasonable” for racist demagogues on radio talk shows and elsewhere, who inveighed against any so-called “concessions” aimed at easing life for minorities.

In January, the tiny rural town of Hérouxville—where there are no immigrants!—passed a series of edicts against, among other things, the stoning of women. With its fond references to crosses and other symbols of Christianity, the statement was a blatantly racist anti-Muslim provocation. In short order, a handful of other rural communities said they would follow Hérouxville's example. The ADQ, languishing far behind in the polls, saw its fortunes rise sharply when it joined this ugly campaign in the name of upholding Quebec's “traditional values.”

An outpouring of bigotry against Muslim girls and women soon followed. This included vile attacks on young Muslim girls for wearing the *hijab* (headscarf) at sporting events. Both Dumont and Charest ostentatiously endorsed banning an eleven-year-old girl from a suburban Montreal soccer tournament in February. Days before the election Boisclair, who had opposed this *hijab* ban, put himself in the vanguard of a campaign to bar the tiny minority of Muslim women who wear the *niqab* (full veil) from voting if they refused to lift it for identification. Quebec's chief electoral officer faced death threats for his initial ruling that women wearing the *niqab* would face no obstacles in voting, and he quickly reversed himself.

This tide of state-backed anti-Muslim xenophobia parallels that in Europe, where veiled women are increasingly targeted for racist abuse. In Britain the ruling Labour Party has



Frayer/CP



Ottawa Citizen

ADQ leader Mario Dumont spearheaded anti-Muslim racism during Quebec elections. Right: eleven-year-old Asmahan Mansour, barred from Montreal soccer tournament.

run point for a campaign to ban the *niqab* in certain areas of public life. This has seen teachers fired and girls excluded from school. In France in 2004 the state imposed a ban on the *hijab* in the schools, and now the Dutch government is proposing to ban the *niqab* in public places such as buses.

In English Canada, prominent *Globe and Mail* columnist Margaret Wente joined the hue and cry over the *niqab*, stating that the issue here is “Islamic separateness... the deliberate rejection of Western norms” (*Globe and Mail*, 24 October 2006). And in Quebec, Islamophobia is not confined to right-wingers, as shown by a March 22 statement by Quebec's main feminist organization, the Fédération des femmes du Québec, which denounced the initial position of the Quebec electoral office allowing women wearing the *niqab* to vote. In taking this stance, these bourgeois feminists helped to fuel support for deeply reactionary forces like the ADQ, who seek to roll back the gains won by *all* women.

As Marxists—and therefore atheists and fighters for women's liberation—we oppose the veil as both a symbol and an instrument of women's oppression. Nonetheless we unambiguously oppose any state bans or restrictions on this or any other religious symbol as racist and discriminatory. The claim that banning the veil is designed to integrate Muslims into society is false to the core. These bans will only deepen the isolation and oppression of Muslim women, driving them from workplace and school, denying them the right to vote and barring them from using public services.

The present attacks on Muslim women are an aspect of

(continued on page 18)

For Quebec Independence!

Our comrade Diana Kartsen died on April 12 from ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, better known as "Lou Gehrig's disease"). Although increasingly paralyzed as the disease progressed, Diana fought with every ounce of strength to contribute to party work and discussion, and for the preservation and continuity of the Prometheus Research Library where she was Librarian.

Diana's death is a painful blow to our comrades internationally, and to no one more than her companion and comrade Ed Kartsen. Our hearts go out to Ed, to Diana's family and to others close to her. We are bitter that we were robbed of a comrade of Diana's caliber, not least because backward religious elements at the helm of the U.S. imperialist ruling class have condemned millions to suffer hideously by blocking stem cell research that might lead to a cure for ALS and other diseases. Diana's dedication to human emancipation was also a struggle to free science from subordination to reactionary obscurantism through international socialist revolution.

Comrades who had the privilege to know and work with Diana benefited from her camaraderie in multiple ways: as a political and military leader in demonstrations; as a department head who ensured that comrades were given a thorough political briefing and overview as the precondition to any assignment, no matter how pressing the tasks or short the time at hand; as a wry wit and sympathetic friend to share a drink with; as a moral person with a strong sense of right and wrong whom you could count on for good advice. In a letter to comrades on the day Diana died, Ed Kartsen succinctly conveyed her strengths:

"Diana has been correctly honored for her military command capabilities and as an inspiring leadership role model for many of the younger cadre. Of course she should also be honored for her lifelong work in the party to preserve the political history of our movement in her library work. This was an expression of her understanding of the importance of historic knowledge for the development of Marxist theory and program. She had a clear comprehension of the unity of mental and physical labor, that is, of theory with practice. She appreciated the value of maintenance, and the concept of systems.

"Her understanding of the value of knowledge included the

Diana Kartsen



Workers Vanguard



1948-2007

understanding of the critical importance of acquiring new knowledge about the political and natural world. Diana's pursuit of knowledge was driven with the same determination she showed on the battlefield and she took an active interest in learning the principles of dialectics. Diana combined organization and theory and understood both to be necessary in the fight for a socialist future of the human race."

Diana was won to Marxism and the Spartacist League/U.S. as a student at the University of Chicago during the tumultuous period of the Vietnam antiwar movement. One comrade recalled seeing "this striking young woman with red flowing hair and a visible hammer and sickle pin on her jacket striding across campus." While a graduate student specializing in Islamic art, she was won from the orbit of the International Socialists to authentic Trotskyism—to the importance of defending the gains of the Russian Revolution and building a party capable of leading the fight for new Octobers.

After working for a period of time as a close supporter of our Revolutionary Marxist Caucus in Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), in

October 1971 she became a founding member of the Chicago branch of the Revolutionary Communist Youth, youth group of the Spartacist League. Shortly thereafter she went to live and study in India, where she functioned under the political direction of the party. She joined the Spartacist League in 1974 after her return.

That same year, a Perspectives and Tasks document passed at the SL/U.S. Fourth National Conference stated:

"One of the crucial tasks of the vanguard of the proletariat is the struggle to function as the memory of the working class. An important component of this struggle for continuity is the systematic assembling, propagation and critical assimilation of the primary documentary history of the workers movement. Given the passage of time and the accumulation of distortions and vulgarizations, only the precise, verified reconstruction of past realities can serve as a true compass....

"We recognize that archival work constitutes an important party task and project the regular assignment of a qualified comrade to direct this work."

Diana was the qualified comrade found to lead the work of the Prometheus Research Library, drawing on her experience

as an assistant at the Tamiment Library at New York University. The Prometheus Research Library's collection grew out of the 40-year accumulated and organized collection of SL National Chairman James Robertson. With Diana as Librarian and Jim as Director, the PRL accumulated over 6,000 books and periodical volumes. Particular emphasis is on minutes of leading committees and internal discussion materials from our revolutionary forebears. She also led the Library through the painstaking archival research and other work involved in the publishing of two books on historic American Trotskyist leader James P. Cannon (*James P. Cannon and the Early Years of American Communism* and *Dog Days: James P. Cannon vs. Max Shachtman in the Communist League of America, 1931-1933*), a publication of Trotsky's *Third International After Lenin* in the original Russian and six *Prometheus Research Series* bulletins.

There are few positions in top party leadership and administration where Diana did *not* serve. The delegates at the SL's Sixth National Conference in 1980 elected Diana as a candidate member of the Central Committee. For a period of time she was department head for the International Secretariat while also holding down the Library. First elected as a full member of the Central Committee in 1983, Diana was later elected to the SL/U.S. Political Bureau and to the office of National Secretary, paying particular attention to the often conflicting demands of central office departments and SL locals and to politically organizing the necessary discussion to prioritize our work. She also served for some years as Political Bureau secretary. Diana's objectivity, fairness and integrity particularly suited her longtime role as the Central Committee representative to the party's Central Control Commission.

Diana was also recognized as the party's best general. In May 1981, she received a battlefield promotion from candidate to alternate member of the Central Committee and won a commendation from the Political Bureau for fighting to marshal our forces against a daisy-chain goon squad set up by the reformist Workers World Party to seal off a rally by our Anti-Imperialist Contingent at an El Salvador demon-



Workers Vanguard

Diana leading our contingent at Philadelphia demonstration for Mumia Abu-Jamal, 12 August 1995.

stration in Washington, D.C. While Workers World appealed to Democratic Party "doves" to set a more "humane" policy for U.S. imperialism, our contingent drew the class line over the civil war raging in El Salvador with the slogans "Military Victory to Leftist Insurgents!" and "Defense of Cuba, USSR Begins in El Salvador!"

From that day forward, Diana was a central military and political leadership component of almost every mass labor/black mobilization initiated by the Spartacist League or Partisan Defense Committee to stop the KKK and Nazi fascists, and dozens of other demonstrations.

With pain and sadness, and determination to continue the struggle to which Diana dedicated her life, comrades worldwide give the party's best general a last, strong comradely salute.

—Adapted from *Workers Vanguard* No. 891, 27 April

James P. Cannon and the Early Years of American Communism

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Diana Kartsen led the Prometheus Research Library through the painstaking archival research and other work involved in publishing these two books on historic American Trotskyist leader James P. Cannon.

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Scarborough, Hamilton: Plant Occupations Turn Back Bosses' Attacks

More than 100 Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) members occupied a Scarborough, Ontario parts plant in the early morning of March 31, sparking solidarity strikes and forcing the auto companies to hand over \$6 million in withheld severance pay and benefits. A few weeks later on May 3, United Steelworkers (USW) members at Hamilton Specialty Bar (HSB) staged a similar occupation, forcing management to fork over unpaid wages and restore retiree benefits. By defying the bosses' "property rights," these plant seizures gave a taste of labour's potential power to turn back capitalist attacks through the methods of class struggle.

The CAW occupation targeted Collins & Aikman (C&A), one of North America's biggest auto parts suppliers, whose Scarborough factory makes dashboard components for nearby Chrysler, Ford and General Motors assembly plants. Since it declared bankruptcy in the U.S. two years ago, C&A has slashed 9,000 jobs—40 percent of its North American workforce. When the company announced that the Scarborough plant would close in July, CAW Local 303 negotiated severance packages for the 400 workers. But C&A accelerated the layoffs and refused to pay up. Then workers got word that key moulds and materials were about to be removed, effectively shutting the plant three months early.

CAW members were mobilized to descend on the plant, which they occupied at 4:30 a.m. Doors were welded shut and windows barricaded while other workers blockaded the gates, turning back trucks that arrived to take away the equipment. The occupation and picket continued for two days until the union won its core demands. *Spartacist Canada* supporters who went to the picket line described it as both determined and very integrated, with many Latino, South and East Asian workers and a large proportion of women.

The plant seizure was given teeth by solidarity strikes at other C&A factories as well as "hot cargoing" (refusing to handle) parts destined for the assembly plants. To force payment of the full severance deal, the union demanded that the Big Three auto companies—all major C&A creditors—fork over more than \$1 million each in amounts proportional to production received from the Scarborough plant. When workers struck the Guelph C&A plant, halting the flow of parts to Chrysler's huge Brampton assembly facility and stopping production there for four hours, Chrysler quickly agreed to pay \$1.8 million if shipments



SC photo

Picket outside CAW occupation in Scarborough, April 1. Plant seizure, solidarity strikes forced auto companies to fork over \$6 million in withheld severance pay.

resumed. The CAW then refused to allow parts from a third C&A factory to be shipped to Ford and GM. The other auto giants soon fell in line, making up the rest of the \$6 million shortfall.

The Hamilton USW occupation also targeted a company that had declared bankruptcy and was trying to renege on contractual obligations, in this case retiree health benefits and wages and vacation pay for current workers. Workers at HSB, slated for closure by the end of May, produced carbon and alloy steels for use in auto parts including engines and suspension systems. To win back the benefits and wages, 30 USW Local 4752 members seized the factory while another 100 rallied outside waving union flags and sounding car horns. Like the Scarborough CAW workers, they forced the company to meet the union's demands, in this case in less than 24 hours.

A *quarter million* manufacturing jobs have disappeared in Canada since 2002, chiefly in Ontario. While destroying tens of thousands of union jobs in the auto and other industries, the bosses have slashed the wages and benefits of many more. C&A, whose former CEO David Stockman was recently indicted for \$1.6 billion in alleged fraud, is one of many companies that have wielded the bankruptcy ax to void labour contracts and "reorganize" at the cost of workers' jobs and livelihoods in both the U.S. and Canada.

Trotskyists at Tamil Women's Rally

We reprint below an edited version of the greetings given by a Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste representative to a March 17 International Women's Day celebration organized by the Scarborough Tamil Women's Association.

Good evening. I'm Janet Yeung on behalf of the Trotskyist League of Canada, the Canadian section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist). I extend revolutionary greetings to this celebration of International Women's Day!

When I think about women's rights, I think about struggle—a struggle against gender discrimination, against chattel slavery and class struggle against a system based on inequities. I think about the 1917 Russian Revolution. That's when the Bolsheviks established full democratic rights for women. They also sought to replace the family—the root of women's oppression—through the socialization of housework and childcare. However, the isolation of the workers state in a hostile imperialist world, and the later Stalinist degeneration of the Soviet Union, did not enable these aims to come to fruition.

The destruction of the Soviet Union was a disaster for working people. Today, the world we live in is one dominated by the bourgeoisie's "war on terror." There are imperialist troops occupying Iraq, Afghanistan, Haiti and other parts of the world. Whole peoples, from Tamils to Arabs, have been targeted, as well as groups like the Communist Party of the Philippines, Colombian FARC and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

Tamil organizations like the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) have been targeted for attack by the Cana-

dian state as it follows along with the other imperialists. This resulted in a cross-border roundup of 14 people of Tamil background last summer. This was done in the context of stepped-up military actions by the Sri Lankan government to drive the LTTE from its strongholds in the largely Tamil areas in the northeast. It is this same government that lords it over the heavily exploited Tamil women slaving on the tea plantations in the middle of the island.

While our Marxist views are opposed to the politics of the nationalists, we stand in their defense against the Sri Lankan army and government attacks, which have massacred tens of thousands of Tamils and forced hundreds of thousands more into exile since the 1980s. We are for the right of an independent Tamil Eelam. We stand in defense of the 14 arrested here last summer as well as the five men targeted by the "security certificate" provisions and the countless others who have been swept up in the dragnet of the Anti-Terrorism Act. We call on the workers of the world to protest these state-sponsored acts of terror against the population both here and abroad.

This brings me back to struggle. Marxists struggle for a world where people—regardless of their gender, sexual choices or where they were born—can live free from oppression. For a world where all their material wants can be met. For a classless society. This struggle must be waged against capitalism, a system based on inequities, that supports national and gender oppression. Come talk to us if you want to find out more. For women's liberation through socialist revolution! Happy International Women's Day. ■

Fighting this onslaught requires internationalist class struggle uniting workers across the border and beyond. When they staged their nationalist split from the United Auto Workers (UAW) in the mid-1980s, leaders of the CAW said they would pursue a "no concessions" course. But their main pitch to the auto companies was the lower wages and benefit costs, especially for health care, in Canadian auto plants compared to the U.S. While occasionally employing more militant tactics than their American counterparts, the CAW bureaucrats now openly compete with the UAW in offering givebacks to the auto bosses.

On both sides of the border, the union tops push deadly nationalist protectionism, calling on the U.S. and Canadian governments to take action to stop the "export of jobs" and protect domestic industry through tariffs on imports, especially from Asia. By lining up workers to back their "own" exploiters against foreign competition, such calls are flatly counterposed to the interests of working people. Underlining their identification with the ruling exploiters, the CAW tops now openly support the capitalist Liberal Party. For their part, the USW bureaucrats back the pro-capitalist social democrats of the New Democratic Party, and in the U.S. the bourgeois Democrats, America's alternate party of capitalism, racism and war.

Class-struggle actions like the C&A and HSB occupations

can give workers a sense of their collective social power. Such consciousness must be generalized and deepened into an anti-capitalist *political* perspective. It is the bourgeois profit system that is destroying the livelihoods of millions while running basic services like welfare, health care, schools and mass transit into the ground. Instead of the labour tops' poisonous protectionism and support to parties beholden to capitalism, we need class-struggle workers parties on both sides of the border that can lead the working class to rip power from the hands of the exploiters and create a society organized to meet human needs instead of private profit. ■

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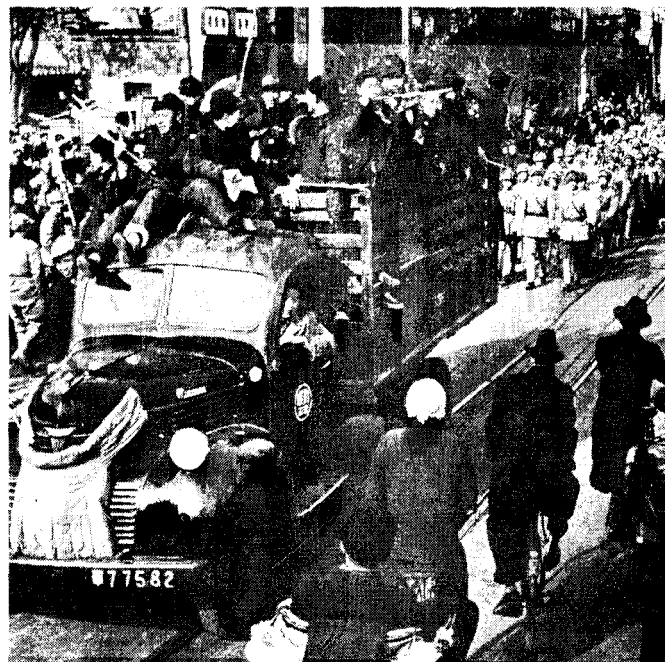
We print below, edited and slightly expanded for publication, a presentation by Trotskyist League spokesman Russell Stoker at an April 21 TL forum in Toronto. A forum on the same topic was held in Vancouver on May 19.

One of the placards on the wall over there has the slogan in Chinese and English, “For unconditional military defense of the Chinese and North Korean deformed workers states!” What do we mean by that? What are the nature and dynamics of contemporary Chinese society? Why is the fate of China one of the most crucial questions facing the working class today? And why is refusing to defend China—the position of almost all our reformist left opponents—necessarily an accommodation to the imperialist rulers in Washington and Ottawa?

To answer these questions, we must start with the 1949 Chinese Revolution. The victory of Mao Zedong’s peasant-based People’s Liberation Army destroyed capitalist rule and profoundly transformed Chinese society. The capitalists and landlords fled to Taiwan under U.S. protection. A nation that had been carved up and plundered by the imperialist powers was unified. Rebuilt as a workers state based on a centrally planned economy, China saw a huge leap in social progress. Land was distributed to the peasants, key industries expropriated and a substantial state-run industrial sector built up from virtually nothing. The revolution’s liberating impact can be seen in the status of Chinese women, who advanced by orders of magnitude over their earlier miserable existence, historically symbolized by the barbaric practice of footbinding.

Ever since, the imperialist powers that dominate the world—centrally the U.S. and Japan, but also junior players like Canada—have sought to reverse the 1949 Revolution and reopen China to full-scale capitalist exploitation. The U.S. threatened nuclear strikes on China during the Korean War of 1950-53. It has sought to isolate China economically and diplomatically. It has persistently worked with Japan and Taiwan to surround China militarily. More recently, the imperialist bandits have employed a dual strategy, combining military provocations with economic penetration of China aimed at strengthening internal counterrevolutionary forces. This has been aided immeasurably by the “market reform” policies enacted by the ruling Chinese Communist Party (CCP) starting in the early 1980s.

For all the very real gains of the Revolution, the People’s Republic of China was born bureaucratically deformed—ruled not by councils of workers and peasants but by a privileged nationalist bureaucracy. The CCP was not a proletarian but a peasant-based party, having abandoned the cities following the massacre of the workers of Shanghai by the bourgeois-nationalist Guomindang in 1927. It was able to overthrow capitalism some two decades later only under



Storia Illustrata

Mao’s People’s Liberation Army enters Beijing, January 1949. Revolution smashed landlord/capitalist rule, but was deformed from inception by Stalinist bureaucracy.

exceptional historical circumstances. The working class had been atomized thanks to vicious repression by both the Guomindang and Japanese occupation forces. Bourgeois rule was particularly unstable after Japan’s defeat in World War II, with a deeply corrupt Guomindang regime rotting from within. A final crucial factor was the existence of the Soviet Union, a workers state that could provide military and economic support to the new People’s Republic.

From the start, the CCP regime suppressed independent working-class activity while falsely claiming to be building socialism in a single, very backward country. This was in sharp contrast to the origins of the Soviet Union in the 1917 October Revolution—a proletarian revolution led by the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky that took Marxism out of the realm of theory and gave it flesh and blood. It showed that the working class could take power and run society through democratically elected workers councils. Internationalist to the core, the early Soviet Union was a beacon for workers and the oppressed everywhere.

The Bolshevik leaders understood that workers revolutions in the more advanced capitalist countries were essential to achieve international economic planning and the kind of vast growth in social production that could lay the basis for socialism, an egalitarian society rooted in material abundance. But the revolutionary upsurges that ensued, notably in Germany, were defeated, due to the treachery of

the pro-capitalist social democrats and the lack of experienced Bolshevik-style parties that could direct the masses' aspirations toward a proletarian seizure of state power. In the wake of these defeats, a conservative nationalist bureaucracy took control in the Soviet Union starting in 1923-24. Abandoning working-class internationalism, Stalin and his coterie invented the anti-Marxist dogma of "socialism in one country." Soon they were sabotaging revolutionary opportunities abroad in a search for "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism.

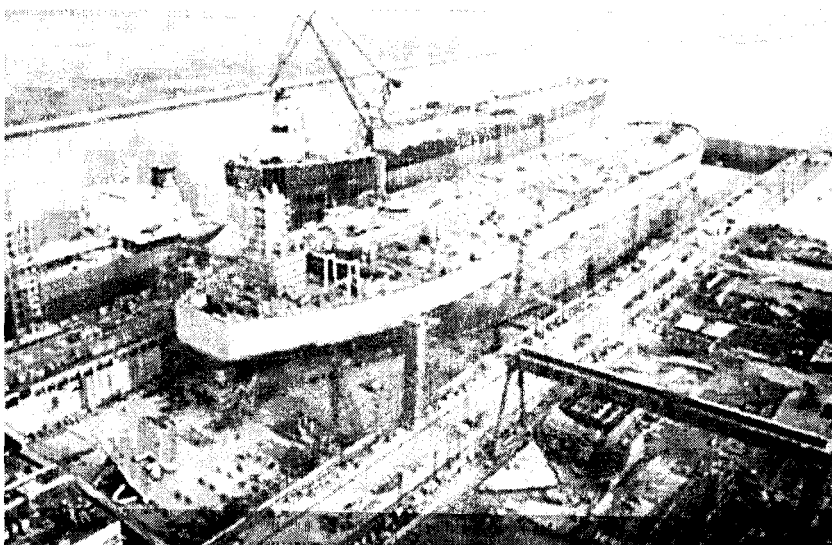
Despite this bureaucratic degeneration, the Soviet Union remained a workers state. As long as it existed, it was a crucial military and economic counterweight to the imperialist powers. The Soviet nuclear umbrella prevented the U.S. from irradiating China, North Korea and Vietnam. Even in isolation, the Soviet Union was transformed from an overwhelmingly peasant society to an industrial power, including sharp economic growth during the Great Depression of the 1930s when the economies of the capitalist world were stagnant and shrinking. This amply demonstrated the superiority of a socialized planned economy over the anarchy of capitalism, a system based on accruing private profit through vicious exploitation of the working class.

Marxism and the Proletarian Dictatorship

What do we mean by a "workers state"? This is another way of saying that the USSR was and China, etc. are forms of what Marxists call the dictatorship of the proletariat. Any state is composed of bodies of armed men—police, army, prisons—charged with defending the rule of one class against another. In Canada today we live under the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, the class of rich financiers and industrialists who mask their rule under a façade of parliamentary democracy. Behind this lies the armed fist of the state—the cops who break picket lines, who beat up and jail Natives, minorities and the homeless.

Karl Marx called the dictatorship of the proletariat "the period of revolutionary transformation" to communism, in which a state apparatus is needed to reorganize society and suppress counterrevolutionary machinations by bourgeois forces. The existence of proletarian states in one or more countries is a huge advance that must be defended by working people everywhere. But as communists from Marx on understood, it will take the triumph of workers revolutions on a worldwide basis—especially in the most industrially advanced countries—to defeat capitalism for good and ensure a communist future for humanity.

The world we live in was shaped by the destruction of the Soviet Union through capitalist counterrevolution in 1991-92. This was a terrible defeat that has emboldened the imperialist powers, especially the U.S., and thrown back the struggles and consciousness of workers and the oppressed everywhere. China is now by far the strongest of the remaining deformed workers states, the others being Cuba, Vietnam and North Korea. Its proletariat, now hundreds of millions strong, has become the largest and potentially the most powerful in the world. So the stakes here are exceptionally high: over the next period, the fate of China could shape the future of mankind, for good or ill.



Xinhua

State-owned Dalian Shipbuilding Industry plant, one of world's largest.

The imperialist powers are seeking to replicate in China the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union. They are working to cohere a right-wing political opposition centered on the class of capitalist entrepreneurs created during the past two decades of "market reforms." At the same time, Washington and Tokyo are stepping up military pressure, including encircling China with military bases.

On the pretext of defending the offshore capitalist bastion of Taiwan, they have set up a common military command against China in Yokohama. Tokyo's so-called Self-Defense Forces weigh in these days with a military budget well in excess of \$40 billion. The Pentagon is developing new weapons against China's limited nuclear arsenal to allow the option of a nuclear first strike. Defense of China against imperialism crucially includes supporting China's possession and testing of nuclear arms. In the face of U.S. imperialism's unchallenged global nuclear hegemony, the only meaningful guarantee of any nation's sovereignty today is possession of a credible nuclear deterrent.

In calling for unconditional military defense of China, we take the same stance that Trotsky took toward the Stalinist-ruled Soviet Union. "It means," as Trotsky wrote at the outset of World War II, "that we do not lay any conditions upon the bureaucracy. It means that independently of the motive and causes of the war we defend the social basis of the USSR, if it is menaced by danger on the part of imperialism" ("Again and Once More Again on the Nature of the USSR," October 1939). But, again like Trotsky, we give not an iota of political support to the program of the ruling Stalinist bureaucracy.

The anti-revolutionary nature of the Chinese bureaucracy can be seen historically in its alliance with U.S. imperialism against the Soviet Union, a logical outcome of the quest for "peaceful coexistence" with the rulers in Washington. In 1972, even as U.S. bombs rained down on Vietnam, Mao Zedong hosted and toasted U.S. president Richard Nixon in Beijing. This policy continued under his successor Deng Xiaoping. In 1979, four years after the U.S. was finally defeated by the heroic Vietnamese, Chinese troops criminally invaded Vietnam. Soon after, China supported the CIA-backed Islamic cutthroats in Afghanistan who fought against the Soviet Red Army. In multiple ways, the Mao and Deng

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Defend China...

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wings of the bureaucracy both directly aided the imperialists in destroying the Soviet Union. And it was China's alliance with the U.S., launched under Mao, that set the stage for Deng's "open door" to imperialist economic penetration.

Today the CCP regime of Hu Jintao supports Bush's "war on terror," the political rationale for the occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan and for Washington's threats against Iran, one of China's main energy suppliers. The Beijing bureaucrats have also joined the imperialist-led uproar against North Korea's nuclear weapons tests, supporting a United Nations resolution last October that imposed sanctions against the Pyongyang regime. Yet any weakening of North Korea against imperialist militarism also weakens the defense of China, which has key industrial regions directly adjacent to the Korean border.

With its appeasement of imperialism and repressive, anti-worker practices, the CCP bureaucracy is an obstacle to the defense of the workers state and to socialist revolution abroad. What is needed is a fight to sweep away bureaucratic rule and replace it with a truly communist regime based on workers and peasants councils and rooted in Marxist internationalism. This would be a *political*, not a *social*, revolution. It would defend and extend the gains of the Chinese Revolution while removing the parasitic bureaucracy that undermines and squanders them.

Given its huge population and crucial position in the global economy, the ascent of a revolutionary workers government in China would truly shake the world. It would put socialist revolution in Taiwan, and thus the revolutionary reunification of China, on the immediate agenda. It would spur a fight for revolutionary reunification in Korea through socialist revolution in the South and workers political revolution in the North. A proletarian political revolution in China would provoke revolutionary upsurges in Indonesia and the Philippines, radicalize the proletariat of Japan, the imperialist overseer of Asia, and reverberate globally, including opening up prospects for socialist revolution in the United States and Canada. The success of this perspective hinges on building Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard parties as part of a reforged Fourth International.

Contradictions of the "Market Reforms"

This is the necessary Marxist political framework for addressing the Chinese rulers' domestic policies, specifically the "market reforms" of the past 25 years. If you ask Chinese students or other informed individuals their view of these measures, you get one of two reactions. Some, looking back fondly to the egalitarian rhetoric of the Mao era, claim the "reforms" are a total betrayal of the Chinese Revolution. Most, however, say they are overwhelmingly good, as they have brought a sustained level of growth that has greatly improved living standards and economic prospects. Both views capture only part of the reality; both are one-sided, superficial and thus fundamentally false.

China's "market reforms" have intensified the contradictions inherent in any workers state in an economically underdeveloped country. Under Mao, China was able to build a substantial and relatively modern heavy industrial



Workers Vanguard

SL/U.S. in New York protests China's 1979 invasion of Vietnam: "Don't Be Cat's Paw of U.S. Imperialism!"

sector, but it remained a largely rural, peasant country. Over three-quarters of the labour force was engaged in farming and over 80 percent of the population lived in the countryside. Agricultural output did not keep pace with industrial growth and low rural productivity was a barrier to increasing industrialization.

Mao's policies were far from consistent, ranging from the economic adventurism of the "Great Leap Forward" in the 1950s to the intra-bureaucratic purges of the "Cultural Revolution" in the '60s. But on the whole, Mao promoted nationalist autarky—a profoundly unreal conception that China could achieve socialism purely through its own methods in an economically backward and resource-poor country. The "reforms" introduced by Deng after Mao's death were initially an attempt to respond, within the framework of bureaucratic rule, to the inefficiencies of the command economy—poor productivity and quality, scarcity, etc.—that marked the Mao era. Sworn enemies of workers democracy, which is necessary for the healthy operation of a planned economy, the CCP regime turned to the market as a whip to increase productivity.

The foreign investment that began under Deng opened up areas of rapid growth that would not otherwise have been possible in an isolated and largely undeveloped workers state. And growth has indeed been rapid: almost ten percent a year for more than two decades, bringing hundreds of millions out of dire poverty and creating the biggest industrial proletariat in the world. The proportion of the population living in cities has more than doubled. There has been a vast expansion of industrial capacity, and over half the labour force works in manufacturing, transport, construction and the service sector. The precondition for these hugely progressive advances was the smashing of capitalist class rule and creation of a workers state.

By every socioeconomic measure, development in China has greatly outstripped that in capitalist neocolonies like Indonesia and the Philippines. India, which the imperialists tout as Asia's other "emerging economic giant," has a per capita gross domestic product that is barely half of China's. China's poverty rate is less than half of India's, while the rate of malnutrition in children is three quarters less. Female adult

literacy is nearly 90 percent, almost double the rate in India.

We do not minimize the danger posed by substantial capitalist economic penetration within China. But we differ sharply with those liberals and reformist leftists who claim that the “market reforms” mean China is now capitalist. In fact, the core of the economy remains collectivized. The private sector, including foreign companies, is mainly made up of light industry. Heavy industry—steel, nonferrous metals, heavy machinery, telecommunications, electric power, oil extraction and refining—is concentrated in state enterprises and strategically much more important. The nationalization of land has prevented the emergence of a class of large-scale agrarian capitalists socially dominating the countryside. Continued control of the financial system has thus far enabled the Beijing regime to insulate China from the volatile movements of speculative money-capital that wreak havoc with so many neocolonial countries.

But that’s only part of the picture. The “market reforms” have massively widened the gap in living conditions in China. At one end, they have created a wealthy new class of capitalists with links to both the CCP officialdom and the offshore Chinese bourgeoisie in Taiwan, Hong Kong and elsewhere. At the other end, they have impoverished millions of workers, hollowed out crucial social programs like health care, and created tens of millions of unemployed. Workers forced to find new jobs in the private sector generally get lower wages and none of the benefits provided by state enterprises.

Some 150 million migrant workers from rural areas have moved to the cities, where many labour under often terrible conditions for imperialist and offshore Chinese companies. Under the household registration (*hukou*) system, migrant workers lack the rights of the permanent city residents to health care, education, etc. These workers are often forced to live in segregated dormitories and are looked down upon by workers with urban residence permits. Yet this development, again, is acutely contradictory. Migrant workers in the Pearl and Yangtze River deltas—now the world’s main manufacturing hubs—produce vast quantities of goods for the international market. That means, in turn, that these workers possess significant potential social power.

For years now, China has seen ongoing worker protests over unpaid wages, job losses and working conditions. Peasants too have protested against corruption, environmental disasters and land seizures by local CCP officials. According to the regime’s own statistics, there were more than 80,000 such “mass incidents” in 2005—more than 200 a day. Last month, 20,000 peasants in Hunan province confronted police in protest against a doubling of transit fares by a privatized bus company. After suppressing the revolt, the regime reinstated the original fares and suspended the bus company while arresting the protest leaders.

The regime has attempted to mollify angry workers and peasants with “anti-corruption” campaigns, even executing some high-ranking officials, and has occasionally reversed some of its own “free market” measures. This is not because the Stalinists are committed to defense of the collectivized economy. As Trotsky wrote of the Soviet bureaucracy in *The Revolution Betrayed* (1936), “It continues to preserve state property only to the extent that it fears the proletariat.”

Such actions are not those of a possessing class but rather are characteristic of a brittle parasitic caste that deeply fears social unrest. And the bureaucracy is clearly divided. Some

elements want the economic reforms to continue unabated. Others want more state intervention to curb the ravages of marketization and to stifle discontent. Still others seek a return to a bureaucratically planned economy. The bottom line is that the CCP’s economic policies are circumscribed by fear of working-class and peasant revolt. The ongoing struggles in China today are the raw material for proletarian political revolution. What is missing is revolutionary internationalist leadership.

China’s “Market Reforms” vs. NEP Under Lenin

We do not oppose China’s extensive economic relations with the capitalist world through trade and joint ventures. To do so would be to accept that Mao-style national autarky is a viable alternative, which it manifestly is not. The key question is: what is the political program of the regime that administers the economy?

Here it is useful to contrast China’s “market reforms” to the New Economic Policy (NEP) instituted by the revolutionary Bolshevik government in the Soviet Union in 1921. The NEP was an emergency measure aimed at reviving the Soviet economy, which had been crippled after three years of bitter civil war and invasions by 14 imperialist countries, including Canada. It included major concessions to small traders as well as invitations for foreign investment. Foreign currency thus earned could have enabled the workers state to purchase what it could not yet make. In the end, little investment came from a hostile capitalist world. But the perspective was completely valid—to secure the resources necessary to defend, and then extend, the revolution.

The Bolshevik leaders saw this as a necessary compromise to buy time until socialist revolutions succeeded in more developed countries. And they worked to actively prepare such revolutions. By day, the Soviet ambassador in Berlin signed trade and other agreements with German capitalists. By night, he worked secretly to help the German workers overthrow these same capitalists. The inherent danger of the NEP, which Lenin and Trotsky were well aware of, was the creation of a new class of capitalist traders and rich peasants who would act as a force against the workers state. In contrast

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Just Out!

Chinese-Language Pamphlet No. 8

Defend Chinese Deformed Workers State!
For Proletarian Political Revolution!

China’s “Market Reforms”: A Trotskyist Analysis

The Russian Revolution and the Emancipation of Women

斯巴达克斯 SPARTACIST

托洛茨基主义关于中国“市场改革”的分析



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to China today, the early Soviet regime maintained a strict state monopoly on foreign trade.

In China, one of the motivations of the ruling bureaucrats in enacting the "market reforms" is to enrich themselves, while enhancing their privileged position atop the workers state. Numerous sons of top CCP officials—the "Communist" princelings—have become millionaires. Capitalists are now officially welcome in the CCP and wealth may be inherited, a key element allowing for the cohering of a distinct bourgeois class. The regime has also been happy to act as a labour contractor for foreign capitalists to savagely exploit migrant workers, who are offered up as second-class citizens with few rights and social benefits.

When the CCP's National People's Congress recently voted a constitutional amendment to protect private property, this simply reflected reality. Even here, however, reality isn't all it seems. Of the companies quoted on the two main Chinese stock exchanges, the government controls either a majority or a strong minority of the shares. Shareholders don't have property rights in the capitalist sense of the term. They can get income from stocks and sell shares but can neither determine nor influence enterprise management or policy.

More fundamentally, it is not the bureaucracy's resolutions that will determine China's fate, but *social struggle*. Private property in China is as unstable as the bureaucracy itself: it exists to the extent that the bureaucracy authorizes it. This supposedly inviolable private property could be violated by the bureaucracy under the impact of an open counterrevolutionary threat, or by the working class in a fight for political power in the Chinese deformed workers state. At some point, the explosive social tensions of Chinese society will shatter the current political structure. When that happens, the fate of China will be sharply posed: either proletarian political revolution to open the road to socialism or a return to capitalist enslavement and imperialist subjugation.

A China of workers and peasants councils would re-establish a centrally planned economy and reinstate the state monopoly of foreign trade. It would expropriate the Chinese capitalist entrepreneurs and renegotiate the terms of foreign investment in the interests of Chinese workers—insisting, for example, on at least the same benefits and working conditions as in the state sector. It would encourage the voluntary collectivization of agriculture on the basis of large-scale mechanized and scientific farming, while recognizing that this requires substantial material aid from successful workers revolutions in more economically advanced countries. A revolutionary regime in China would be profoundly internationalist, understanding that genuine communism can only come via a globally integrated and planned socialist economy following proletarian revolution in the imperialist centers.

For Workers Political Revolution!

The potential for a pro-socialist workers uprising was shown in the May-June 1989 protests centered on Beijing's



Peter Turnley

Tiananmen Square, Beijing, 1989: Workers and students fraternize with troops called in to suppress uprising.

Tiananmen Square. At first the protests were mainly by students opposing corruption and seeking political liberalization. Soon the movement was joined by millions of workers, who began to hold mass meetings and create embryonic workers councils.

The entry onto the scene of the working class terrified the bureaucracy, which unleashed fierce repression. But the first army units it mobilized failed to suppress the protests, because they solidarized with the students' demands. The massacres of June 1989, which overwhelmingly targeted the workers, could only be carried out when the regime brought in army units considered more loyal. The Tiananmen events illustrated a key point about the army in a workers state—it can be split *vertically* during a political revolution, with sections of both the ranks and the officer corps making common cause with the insurgent workers.

Our organization, the International Communist League, covered these events extensively in our press. We called to "Oust the Bureaucrats—For Lenin's Communism! Workers and Soldiers Soviets Must Rule!" and, after the massacre, to "Defend Chinese Workers! Stop the Executions!" While we were not able to intervene directly in China in the spring of 1989, six months later we were able to intervene in another upsurge in a deformed workers state, the German Democratic Republic (DDR), that posed the possibility of proletarian political revolution. When the East German population rose up against bureaucratic privilege and mismanagement, the Stalinist regime began to disintegrate from within. Up to a million people rallied in the protests, raising slogans like "For Communist Ideals—No Privileges!" We undertook the biggest intervention in the history of our tendency, fighting for workers and soldiers councils to be forged and to take power.

Workers came to us and asked, how do we form workers councils? Enough seriously considered what the ICL was fighting for that when fascists desecrated a Soviet war memorial in Treptow Park, East Berlin, the ruling Stalinist



Spartakist

East Berlin, 3 January 1990 demonstration at Treptow Park memorial to Red Army liberators. Spartacist speaker Renate Dahlhaus addresses crowd.

party felt compelled to join a united-front protest we initiated against the Nazis and in defense of the Soviet Union. A quarter million workers and soldiers came out. For the first time ever in a deformed workers state, Trotskyists addressed a mass audience. Our speaker called for “Workers and soldiers soviets to power!”

Two programs were competing: ours, of proletarian political revolution to defend and extend the gains of the workers state, and the Stalinist program of capitulation and counter-revolution. The Treptow mobilization frightened the powers that be, both East and West, and our forces were too small. We lost, as the Soviet Stalinist regime quickly surrendered the DDR to capitalism. But the lessons of this struggle must be assimilated by the international working class, including in China. Our intervention showed how, when an accumulation of events finally produces an upheaval and crack in bureaucratic rule, it is possible for a revolutionary internationalist program to have a massive impact.

Down With Anti-Communist China-Bashing!

I now want to turn to the stance toward China taken by the social democrats and labour bureaucrats in Canada, as well as the reformist left groups that tail them. The bottom line is this: while we Trotskyists call to defend China against imperialism as part of a fight for international socialist revolution, the labour tops and fake leftists stand with the imperialists. In supporting all manner of anti-Communist campaigns against China, they are reprising their dirty work in backing the capitalist counterrevolution that destroyed the Soviet Union.

Let me start with the question of protectionism. As everyone in this room knows, the capitalists have been looting the working class of this country. Since the early 1990s, the wealth amassed by Canadian banks and corporations has soared while workers and the poor have seen huge cuts in real wages and social services. Hundreds of thousands of industrial jobs are gone, especially in Ontario. Despite outbursts of labour struggle, the union leaders have repeatedly capitulated to the attacks and giveback demands.

Instead of using class-struggle weapons like strikes, they whip up Canadian-nationalist protectionism, claiming that

workers abroad—especially in Japan, Korea and China—are “stealing jobs.” Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) president Buzz Hargrove regularly demands that Canada act against Asian automotive imports. And the UNITE HERE union is waging a joint campaign with the textile bosses demanding that Ottawa slash imports from China. This underlines the pro-capitalist character of the labour bureaucracy, a thin, privileged layer at the head of the unions. Its calls to ally with the Canadian capitalist state against foreign competition are flatly against the workers’ interests, which lie in common, internationalist class struggle against capitalism.

What I want to emphasize is how these campaigns are combined with anti-Communism against China. Take the recent furor over the award of a Toronto subway manufacturing contract to Bombardier for production at its Thunder Bay plant. When a German company claimed it could do the work cheaper, in part by assembling trains in China, the labour bureaucrats staged chauvinist rallies on the theme, “Made in Canada Matters.” Cynically manipulating

workers’ fears of job losses, the CAW tops called to “oppose politicians who want to ship jobs overseas,” while NDP councillor Howard Moscoe railed, “I don’t want to build my cars in a communist regime.... I want to make my cars where it benefits Canadian workers” (*Northern Ontario Business*, 5 June 2006).

Such calls are coupled with demands that the Canadian rulers take a hard-line stand against China in the name of “human rights.” To look to the Canadian capitalists as a progressive force for “human rights” anywhere is grotesque. This is the same ruling class that interned Japanese Canadians in World War II; that has visited unspeakable devastation on Native people from the reserves and inner-city ghettos to the residential schools; that sent the army into Quebec to suppress struggles for national and social rights in October 1970, jailing hundreds.

Yet when Chinese premier Hu Jintao visited Canada in 2005, the NDP called on the then Liberal government in Ottawa to “drive home Canada’s serious concerns with China’s record of human rights abuses.” And the Canadian Labour Congress has joined with pro-imperialist organizations including the Falun Dafa religious sect, Canada Tibet Committee and Rights & Democracy, a “non-partisan” outfit set up by the Mulroney Tory government, to form something called the Canadian Coalition on Human Rights in China. Last fall, an open letter to Stephen Harper by this outfit attacked the Liberal government’s “quiet diplomacy” with China and urged the Tories to implement a “strengthened approach.” Now they’re getting what they asked for, as Harper lectures the Chinese regime on “human rights” at every opportunity.

The Canadian labour tops, like their U.S. partners-in-crime, have a long record of dirty work on behalf of their imperialist masters. The CLC bureaucracy and the NDP were forged through vicious purges of reds from the unions from the 1940s up into the ‘60s. In the 1980s, they hailed Polish Solidarność, a reactionary movement masquerading as a union that was in the forefront of the drive for capitalist restoration in East Europe. The American AFL-CIO channeled millions in CIA money to Solidarność. In Canada, the

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NDP and B.C. Federation of Labour organized an anti-Communist picket against a Polish ship, while the CLC put on its payroll one Zygmunt Przetakiewicz, a rabidly reactionary Solidarność advocate who openly made common cause with Washington, including by supporting murderous CIA-orchestrated counterinsurgency against Central American leftists. Today, the union tops promote pro-imperialist so-called "labour activists" like the Chinese exile Han Dongfang, who broadcasts on the CIA's Radio Free Asia and is a darling of American right-wing circles.

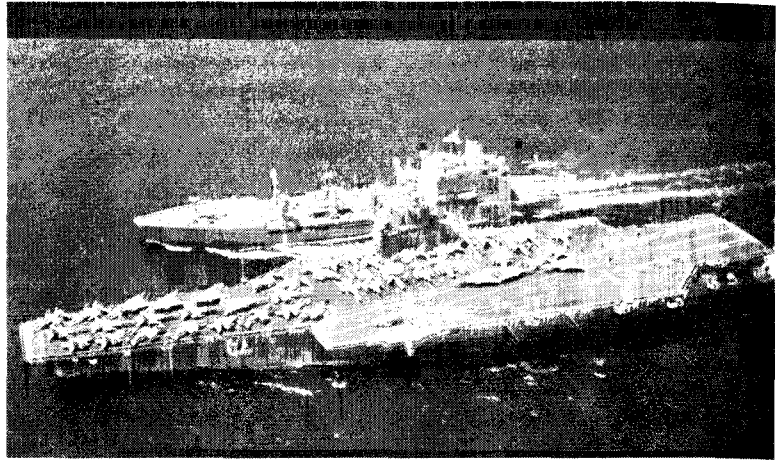
Political struggle against the pro-capitalist labour tops and their allies in the social-democratic NDP is central to the fight to forge a revolutionary workers party in this country. Buying into protectionism and anti-Communism means allying with the very capitalist exploiters who are ripping apart the livelihoods of working people. What is needed is class struggle *against* the capitalist rulers. A crucial component of this is defense of the gains of working people abroad—in China, in Cuba, Vietnam and North Korea—against the counterrevolutionary machinations of our "own" ruling class.

Pro-Imperialist Accomplices of Counterrevolution

What about the reformist "socialist" groups who claim to stand to the left of the labour bureaucracy and NDP? Almost all of them claim that China is a capitalist country. This is not a mistaken analysis but an *anti-Communist political program*. These reformist groups openly back counterrevolutionary forces inside China or among the Chinese diaspora, or even directly support U.S. imperialism and its regional allies like Taiwan.

The International Socialists (I.S.) claim China has never been a workers state but has been "state capitalist" since 1949. This absurd "theory," which they also apply to the other workers states, is a fig leaf for decades of anti-Communist practice on behalf of imperialism. The I.S. tendency began in Britain when its founder Tony Cliff bowed to bourgeois hysteria accompanying the Korean War. In a craven capitulation to the Labour Party government, which had sent troops to Korea, Cliff refused to call for defense of North Korea and China against U.S. and British imperialism. He and his followers went on to hail every manner of imperialist-backed movement against the workers states.

This included Boris Yeltsin's pro-capitalist rabble in Moscow in August 1991, whose triumph paved the way for the destruction of the Soviet Union. The I.S.'s British parent group, the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), proclaimed, "Communism has collapsed.... It is a fact that should have every socialist rejoicing" (*Socialist Worker* [Britain], 31 August 1991). Rejoicing! The return of capitalist exploitation to Russia produced armies of the unemployed and homeless, plummeting life expectancy, murderous nationalism and the destruction of women's rights. Unfettered by what had been the industrial and military powerhouse of the non-capitalist world, the U.S. has felt free to launch military adventures all over the world, while capitalist governments everywhere have accelerated their attacks on workers and the oppressed.



US Navy

U.S. warships in anti-China provocation off Taiwan, 1996. Trotskyists stand with China in any confrontation with Taiwan or its imperialist backers.

While the I.S. hailed capitalist counterrevolution, the ICL fought against it—standing, as Trotsky urged, "on the final barricade" in defense of the USSR. In the crucial days and weeks, our comrades distributed 100,000 copies of a Russian-language leaflet, "Soviet Workers: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!" at factories and in workers' districts.

Naturally, the I.S. and SWP also side with anti-Communist bourgeois forces against China. This includes the political heirs of the Guomindang, who for decades ran the brutal capitalist state of Taiwan. Eleven years ago, as U.S. warships plied the Taiwan straits in one of many provocations against Beijing, the SWP magazine *Socialist Review* (April 1996) proclaimed: "China's claim to Taiwan is a colonialist one. We would oppose any Chinese invasion of Taiwan as an act of imperialist aggression."

In sharp contrast, we Trotskyists will stand with China in any military conflict with Taiwan or its imperialist patrons. Ever since the Guomindang and the Chinese bourgeoisie fled to Taiwan, the latter has been an outpost for U.S. imperialism's counterrevolutionary schemes. Taiwan has been a part of China since ancient times—it is ethnically, linguistically and historically Chinese. We also oppose the Chinese Stalinists' proposal for reunification with Taiwan under the slogan "one country, two systems." We call instead for the revolutionary reunification of China: socialist revolution in Taiwan to overthrow and expropriate the bourgeoisie and proletarian political revolution on the mainland.

Another group that embraces imperialist anti-Communism is the International Marxist Tendency (IMT) of Alan Woods, whose Canadian affiliate is the Fightback group. This group claims that China has gradually, even imperceptibly, been transformed from a workers to a capitalist state over the past 15 years via a series of policy decisions taken by the CCP bureaucracy. A document adopted at an IMT conference last year claims that by the early 1990s the CCP leaders "began to see capitalist restoration as the solution to their own crisis, but they were determined that the process would take place under the firm control of the bureaucracy. In essence this meant that the bureaucracy was preparing the ground to transform itself into a new capitalist class" ("China's Long March to Capitalism," October 2006). They go further, asserting that China "is now behaving like an imperialist power" and has an "imperialist character."

The IMT's claim that the Chinese state became capitalist gradually in a "process" with various "turning points" is an example of what Trotsky polemicized against in the 1930s when he said, "He who asserts that the Soviet government has been *gradually* changed from proletarian to bourgeois is only, so to speak, running backwards the film of reformism" ("Class Nature of the Soviet State," October 1933).

The notion that capitalist restoration can come through incremental shifts from state to private ownership, without a counterrevolution, is the flip side of the IMT's deeply reformist belief that "socialism" can come about if a bourgeois parliament nationalizes the key sectors of the capitalist economy. This is captured in the slogan featured in every issue of *Fightback*, "NDP to Power on a Socialist Program." The idea that the NDP will ever adopt or implement a socialist program is the purest illusion-mongering, designed to pull militant workers and youth into the trap of social democracy. The IMT/Fightback reformists utterly reject the idea that the proletariat must smash the bourgeois state and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat.

As Trotsky noted concerning the former Soviet Union, the decisive arena in which a capitalist counterrevolution in China would have to triumph is at the *political* level. A likely scenario will be when bourgeois elements move to eliminate CCP political power by supporting capitalist restorationist forces. And let me make a prediction: in such an event Alan Woods & Co. will side with counterrevolution, just as they did in the former USSR when they supported Washington's man Boris Yeltsin in August 1991. A year after Yeltsin's victory, their Russian affiliate, the Rabochaya Demokratia group, wrote that this was the start of "a revolutionary anti-bureaucratic process" and denied that "the liquidation of the USSR weakened the position of socialism in the world" (*Rabochaya Demokratia*, July-August 1992).

Finally, I'd like to address the group known as the Bolshevik Tendency (BT). Those familiar with the BT will know of their preoccupation with smearing the ICL. The "Who We Are" declaration on their website screeches, for example, that we are "a grotesquely bureaucratic and overtly cultist group of political bandits." Such smears, which ape the language of anti-Communists who rail against Stalin-style gulags and personality cults, are one side of the BT's face. The other is political opportunism of the social-democratic type, including an embrace of anti-Communism whenever it counts.



SC photo

Toronto, April 1: Counterrevolutionary rally by anti-communist religious sect Falun Gong.

During the 1989-90 East German upsurge, the BT focused on denouncing the ICL, claiming we had conjured up an "imaginary political revolution." As we noted at the time, only those in thrall to the anti-Communist myth that Stalinism had rendered the workers in the deformed workers states mindless automatons incapable of struggle could so blithely dismiss any outcome other than capitalist counterrevolution. The BT denounced our work in building the 250,000-strong East Berlin anti-fascist protest in January 1990, which defended the Soviet Union and the DDR against counterrevolution. Their complaint? We did not offer a platform to the German Social Democratic Party—an openly pro-capitalist party that was the spearhead for counterrevolution in the DDR!

And what about China? While claiming for the record that China remains a workers state, the BT again embraces counterrevolutionary forces. One example is the self-styled "god-king" of Tibet, the Dalai Lama. As I noted earlier, complaints about "poor little Tibet" are a regular feature of imperialist-sponsored "human rights" campaigns against China. In fact, it was the Chinese Revolution that liberated Tibet from the barbarism of a society based on mass slavery. In 1959, China's People's Liberation Army put down a CIA-organized uprising aimed at overturning these gains. The Dalai Lama was then and is now unambiguously a creature of U.S. imperialism.

Yet the BT argues that "a revolutionary government in China would signal its willingness to coexist with Tibet's traditional ruling caste" as long as the latter "retain popular support" (1917, 2004). This grotesque respect for the devotion of benighted peoples to their religious leaders is the opposite of the Bolsheviks' policy in the early Soviet Union. Lenin and Trotsky steadfastly defended the rights of minority nationalities against Russian chauvinism, while suppressing nationalist or religious leaders who used this as a cover for pro-imperialist counterrevolution. Today, we oppose any manifestation of Han chauvinism toward the Tibetan people, while denouncing the anti-Communist hue and cry in the West that upholds supposed "rights" for Tibet's deeply oppressive priestly caste.

BT also apologizes for another anti-Communist religious force in China, the sect known as Falun Gong (or Falun Dafa). They denounce us for calling Falun Gong a "force for counterrevolution in China." They claim, "unlike Polish Solidarność, whose leadership functioned as a consciously pro-imperialist agency within the deformed workers' state, Falun Gong advances no particular political or social program." Anyone who has come across a Falun Gong rally or picked up a copy of its lavishly produced paper *Epoch Times* can see that this group openly allies with right-wing capitalist forces in calling for the counterrevolutionary overthrow of the CCP regime. Here are two of its banners at a recent Toronto rally: "The Root of Communism is Dead" and "Support 20 Million People Resigning from Chinese Communist Party."

The BT's polemic against us over Falun Gong is typically dishonest, claiming we "incline to a policy of repression" by the Beijing government and asking rhetorically, "Do you imagine that the best way to destroy the popular influence of Falun Gong practitioners, Tibetan monks and Xinjiang's mullahs is to round them all up and throw them in jail?" (1917, 2005). We call on the *working class* to combat such counterrevolutionaries as part of its struggle for a political revolution based on unconditional military defense of China against imperialism and internal capitalist counterrevolution.

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Defend China...

(continued from page 15)

This is in line with our stance toward Polish Solidarność in the 1980s. When it consolidated around an explicitly capitalist-restorationist program in September 1981, we called to "Stop Solidarność counterrevolution," and when the Stalinist rulers invoked martial law to spike its bid for power later that year we supported this measure. At the same time, we recognized that it was Stalinist misrule that had driven the historically socialist Polish working class into the arms of clerical counterrevolution. Thus we wrote, "As the immediate counterrevolutionary threat passes, these martial law measures must be ended, including release of the Solidarność leaders. A Trotskyist vanguard seeks to defeat them *politically*, by mobilizing the Polish working class in its true class interests" ("Power Bid Spiked," *Workers Vanguard* No. 295, 18 December 1981).

Why do the self-styled socialists of the BT so readily embrace right-wing religious forces like Falun Gong and the Tibetan lamocracy? The BT originated, at first as the "External Tendency," from individuals who quit our organization because they couldn't stand our forthright defense of the Soviet Union against the imperialists' renewed anti-Communist Cold War of the 1980s. In particular, they hated our call to "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!" The Soviet army entered Afghanistan in late 1979 to support a left-nationalist government that was under siege by woman-hating, anti-Communist religious fanatics who were backed to the hilt by U.S. imperialism and its Canadian junior partner. Our support to the Soviet intervention—which opened up a prospect of social liberation to the Afghan peoples, especially women—underlined our unconditional military defense of the Soviet degenerated workers state against imperialism. Today it is China that is the main target for imperialist military and other anti-Communist threats. It is crucial that revo-

lutionaries in the capitalist world fight to win the working class to defend the Chinese deformed workers state against all such threats. And once again the BT flinches when it counts.

Defense of China and International Socialist Revolution

I'd like to conclude this talk by returning to Leon Trotsky, leader of the 1917 October Revolution and founder of the Fourth International from whom our organization takes its name. The last major political struggle Trotsky waged before being struck down by a Stalinist assassin in Mexico City in 1940 was against a renegade minority of the American Trotskyists that abandoned defense of the Soviet Union against imperialism in the face of anti-Communist "public opinion" on the eve of World War II. Trotsky's polemics during this struggle are collected in a book titled *In Defense of Marxism*, where he writes the following:

"The workers' state must be taken as it has emerged from the merciless laboratory of history and not as it is imagined by a 'socialist' professor, reflectively exploring his nose with his finger. It is the duty of revolutionists to defend every conquest of the working class even though it may be distorted by the pressure of hostile forces. Those who cannot defend old positions will never conquer new ones."

—"Balance Sheet of the Finnish Events"
(April 1940)

If the working class in Canada, the U.S., Japan and the other capitalist countries do not come to understand the historic significance of the gains of the Chinese Revolution, like the collectivized economy, then they will never understand the importance of making a revolution against their own bourgeoisie. Comrades and friends, it is for the purpose of providing the necessary leadership to the proletariat in these struggles that the ICL seeks to reforge Trotsky's Fourth International as the world party of socialist revolution. ■

Afghanistan...

(continued from page 1)

passes detainees on to be tortured. It is no different than the deportation of Maher Arar to a year of imprisonment and torture in Syria. Moreover, the Canadian military is deeply embedded within the Afghan regime, with a "Strategic Advisory Team," mainly composed of Canadian military personnel, operating inside government ministries.

The hue and cry over detainee abuse by the opposition parties in parliament is sheer hypocrisy. It was the former Liberal government that sent Canadian troops to Afghanistan and approved the detainee transfer agreement. The Liberals and Bloc Québécois support keeping the army there to at least 2009, despite widespread popular opposition. The NDP also backed the Afghan occupation until quite recently, and voted for every one of the Liberals' massive hikes in the military budget.

Calling to "support our troops," Jack Layton says Canada should be fighting the "right battles," as in "the Korean War and in dozens of UN-sanctioned peacekeeping missions" (ndp.ca, 12 March). From the murderous war on North Korea in the early 1950s to the Canadian troops who tortured and murdered black youth in Somalia in the early 1990s, Canadian "peacekeeping" under UN auspices is noth-

ing but the brutal enforcement of the imperialist order.

The NDP's fealty to capitalist Canada is shared by the fake-socialists in the Iraq/Afghanistan "antiwar movement." The website of the Canadian Peace Alliance, backed by the International Socialists among others, advertises t-shirts "in UN blue" adorned with Canadian flags and the slogan, "Peace is Patriotic—Support our Troops: bring them home." The Mobilization Against War and Occupation has called to protest the deaths of Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan. The slogan raised by both these outfits, "Bring the troops home now," is meant to engender a false sense of common interest with the imperialist military.

From the start, we Marxists took a side with the poor, semicolonial countries of Afghanistan and Iraq against imperialist attack, while giving no political support to their reactionary regimes. Similarly today, military blows against the imperialist occupiers coincide with the interests of the working class, as a defeated or weakened imperialism would make room for anti-capitalist struggle at home. But we do not cheerlead for the politically retrograde "resistance" forces in Afghanistan and Iraq—we fight for international *working-class* struggle against the barbaric imperialist order.

Militarism and war are inevitable outgrowths of a worldwide system under which a handful of rich capitalist countries compete for control of the world's resources, markets

and spheres of influence through brutal exploitation, pillage and war. Real opposition to imperialist war is impossible without opposition to the system that breeds it. The army, like the police and other institutions of the capitalist state, is a weapon of the enemy class which can under no circumstances be wielded on behalf of the oppressed. We say “not a person, not a penny for the Canadian military!” The rulers’ repressive state apparatus must be smashed through proletarian revolution.

We Said: “Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!”

The disastrous plight of the masses of Afghanistan today, and particularly that of Afghan women, is a direct consequence of the Soviet Union’s military withdrawal from that country in 1989 and the subsequent triumph of fundamentalist religious cutthroats backed by U.S. imperialism. When the Soviet Red Army entered Afghanistan at the request of a modernizing nationalist regime a decade earlier, we declared “Hail Red Army! Extend social gains of the October Revolution to Afghan peoples!”

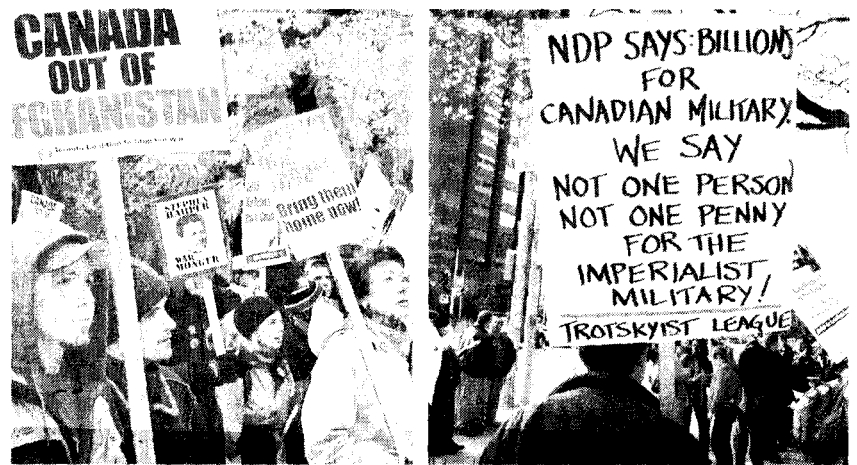
Sending the army into Afghanistan to clean out a reactionary insurgency against the government’s progressive reforms—like providing education to girls and reducing the bride price to a nominal sum—opened a road to social liberation for the Afghan people. It underlined our Trotskyist understanding that the Soviet Union was a workers state, product of the October 1917 proletarian socialist revolution, despite its subsequent degeneration under a nationalist, Stalinist bureaucracy. We called for unconditional military defense of the Soviet Union against imperialism and internal counterrevolution, and for a proletarian political revolution to oust these treacherous Stalinist bureaucrats.

Throughout the 1980s, many of the same reformist left groups who today raise the social-patriotic call to “support our troops” stood with U.S. imperialism and its Canadian junior partner in their “holy war” against the Soviet Union and the rights of Afghan women. Among the more notorious of the CIA’s Islamic fanatics was Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, whose specialty was throwing acid in the faces of unveiled women. Today one of Hekmatyar’s long-time lieutenants, Abdul Jabar Sabet, a Canadian citizen and former resident of Montreal, sits in the Afghan cabinet as Karzai’s attorney-general.

Patriotic Hoopla and Imperialist Barbarism

In an attempt to shore up support for the Afghan occupation, the Tory government orchestrated a major commemoration of the 90th anniversary of the World War I battle of Vimy Ridge. Harper and Canadian army chief of staff Rick Hillier presided over the televised April 9 ceremonies at the Vimy Ridge memorial in France along with war veterans and leaders of the WWI Allied powers. The NDP’s Layton took the opportunity to issue another “support our troops” salute, saying, “Vimy was a critical victory for the Allies in the First World War and an important moment for our nation.”

In fact, the First World War was a bloody contest among imperialist states competing to redivide the world, which sent soldiers to die by the hundreds of thousands. As Bolshevik leaders Nikolai Bukharin and Evgenii Preobrazhensky put it in *The ABC of Communism* (1920), “between 1 August 1914,



SC photos

Reformist left calls to “support our troops” at October 2006 Toronto protest. Trotskyists denounce support to Canadian military, part of our fight against imperialist system of war and exploitation.

and 1 January 1918, the capitalists had brought to market twelve hundred million pounds of putrid human flesh.” In such wars between blood-drenched imperialist powers, Marxists do not take a side but say, in the words of German revolutionary leader Karl Liebknecht, “The main enemy is at home!”—our own ruling class. In neocolonial wars of occupation and pillage such as Afghanistan and Iraq today, we do take a side—in defense of oppressed nations and peoples against imperialism.

Vimy Ridge was part of the Battle of Arras, which saw over 220,000 soldiers killed and wounded on both sides. The enormous casualties led prime minister Robert Borden to introduce conscription, which in turn produced mass protests in Quebec. WWI was already unpopular there, where it was widely seen as a “war for the English.” By Easter 1918, the protests escalated into anti-conscription riots in Quebec City. The government invoked the War Measures Act and sent in the army, killing at least four civilians.

To this day, popular opposition to Canadian militarism remains high among the Québécois, many of whom rightly view the Canadian army as a tool of oppression both abroad—as in Afghanistan today—and at home. The latter was shown in the October 1970 military occupation of Montreal, again under the War Measures Act, which aimed at suppressing the national and social discontent then sweeping Quebec. As forthright opponents of English Canadian chauvinism, Marxists advocate independence for Quebec.

The effects of World War I on the international working class were aptly described by the revolutionary leader Rosa Luxemburg: “dividends are rising—proletarians falling; and with each one there sinks a fighter of the future, a soldier of the revolution, a savior of humanity from the yoke of capitalism, into the grave” (*Junius Pamphlet*, 1916). But in Tsarist Russia, the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky was able to rally the war-weary worker and peasant masses, leading them to power in October 1917 in the world’s first proletarian socialist revolution. It is in this tradition that we seek to forge revolutionary workers parties to lead the way to new October Revolutions worldwide. The imperialist order that is unleashing barbarism on the peoples of the world from Iraq to Afghanistan and beyond must be swept away through proletarian revolution, the only road to the liberation of humanity. ■

Quebec...

(continued from page 3)

the racist “war on terror.” Yet it is also true that in Quebec the “war on terror,” and particularly Canada’s role in the brutal occupation of Afghanistan, are unpopular. In 2003, the Québécois massively opposed Canadian participation in the U.S./British assault on Iraq in large part because the Canadian military has long been seen, rightly, as an enforcer of national oppression.

Quebec is certainly the most secular part of Canada, yet as the Hérouxville edicts made clear, Catholicism has hardly departed the stage, especially in the overwhelmingly francophone rural areas. Boisclair was himself attacked for proposing to remove the crucifix from the National Assembly. In our fight for the separation of religion and state, we Marxists insist that all modern religion is an instrument of reaction that defends capitalist exploitation and befuddles the working people. Religion should not have any official state backing; at the same time, people should be free to practice their religion without state interference and persecution. Thus while we denounce the racist bans on Muslims, we also opposed the plan to allow state-sanctioned *sharia* law in Ontario when this was proposed three years ago. As we noted at the time, for the Canadian rulers, nurturing religious reaction and smearing Muslims as “terrorists” both serve to regiment and scapegoat minorities.

Chauvinism, Nationalism and Racist Reaction

Much of the English Canadian media indulged in finger-wagging at the “intolerance” toward minorities shown during the Quebec elections. Their charge, implied or otherwise, was that Quebec nationalism is uniquely intolerant and reactionary, unlike the “multiculturalism” long touted as official policy by the rulers in Ottawa. This is rich indeed considering the federal government’s years-long witchhunt of Muslims, under the Liberals and Tories alike. From Maher Arar to the new all-Canadian “no-fly list,” this campaign has seen multiple frame-ups, detentions, people “rendered” to other countries to be tortured and a sustained assault on the rights of everyone. Moreover, while the sovereignist PQ certainly played its part in fomenting anti-Muslim bigotry, it was the staunchly federalist Charest and vaguely “autonomist” Dumont who were in the forefront of the attacks.

In any case, Stephen Harper et al. were quite satisfied with the outcome of the Quebec election. The feds and sections of the English-language media claimed it dealt (yet another!) death blow to Quebec sovereignty, and presented the decline of the PQ as a good sign for a “united Canada.” This is but the habitual self-delusion of Anglo-chauvinist federalism.

Even as the PQ vote dropped, support for sovereignty remains relatively high (about 45 percent, and much higher among francophones). Indeed, a good part of the ADQ’s support came from soft-core sovereignists who don’t want another *losing* referendum right now. Dumont’s talk of “autonomy” is purposely ambivalent, aiming to rally a section of the nationalist vote while offering Québécois capitalists a “safer” alternative than outright independence. As *Toronto Star* Quebec bureau chief Sean Gordon noted (31 March):

“But there is a reasonable case to be made that the sovereignty movement is in better shape than its traditional federalist rival....



CSN-CEO

Like his forebear Maurice Duplessis (left), ADQ’s Dumont pushes reactionary “traditional values.”

“Quebec’s two mainstream sovereignist parties, the PQ and the smaller, left-wing Québec Solidaire, together won about as many votes as they did in 2003. The PQ had its worst performance in terms of total votes since 1970, but still gathered 28.5 per cent with arguably the most radical sovereignist platform in its history.”

The ADQ’s “autonomist” rhetoric harks back to the right-wing nationalist regime of Maurice Duplessis, who ran the province with an iron fist after World War II through a combination of religious obscurantism and repression, while English Canadian and American capitalists viciously exploited francophone workers. Today Dumont and the ADQ, like Duplessis, are right-wing demagogues rooted in conservative small-town Quebec. Their central aim is to roll back many of the gains for labour, women and youth stemming from the tumultuous social struggles that accompanied and fuelled Quebec’s modernizing Quiet Revolution of the 1960s and ’70s. And that means attacking the labour movement and taking the knife to social programs.

As well as targeting immigrants and ethnic minorities—who are overwhelmingly concentrated in Montreal—the ADQ has pledged to uphold the “traditional family” through such measures as providing extra cash for more babies. Driven by Quebec’s low birth rate—its population growth has for many years been solely due to immigration—similar “baby bonus” schemes were also tried in the late 1980s by the Liberal regime of Robert Bourassa. The logic of such “family values” campaigns is that women are to blame for the low birthrate and hence Quebec’s “decline,” and to compel poor women in particular to bear more children. As always, behind this looms the shadow of attacks on abortion rights and on women’s integration into the workforce. As all-round reactionaries, the ADQ also fuelled the anti-homosexual bigotry against the PQ’s openly gay leader Boisclair that was an undercurrent in the election campaign.

Labour: Break With the PQ! Forge a Revolutionary Workers Party!

We are proletarian revolutionaries who fight to overthrow the capitalist system of misery, oppression and wars in Canada and internationally. For this reason the Trotskyist



Clément Allard

Quebec labour protest against Charest's attacks on workers and social programs, April 2004.

League/Ligue trotskyste advocates independence for Quebec—both to combat the Anglo chauvinism that dominates in Canada, and to break the hold of the defensive nationalism it engenders among Québécois workers. Chauvinism and nationalism serve to tie the workers to the belief that “their” capitalist masters are somehow allies, as opposed to the brutal exploiters they really are. We advocate independence as the means to get the national question off the agenda and bring the class question to the fore. Workers must come to see that all nationalisms are ultimately tools of the bosses and that, in the words of the *Communist Manifesto*, “The working men have no country.”

The long history of English Canadian chauvinism and keenly felt national oppression has meant that the Québécois working class is largely pro-sovereignty. The rise of nationalism was fuelled by intense language discrimination, especially in the workplace, military occupation in 1970 (threatened again in 1995 in the context of the sovereignty referendum) and much more. But the national and social aspirations of the Québécois workers have long been channeled by Quebec's nationalist union tops into support for the bourgeois-nationalist PQ. In turn, the PQ has alternated with the Liberals in administering Quebec on behalf of the bosses, carrying out some of the most sweeping attacks on trade unions and social programs.

Boisclair attempted to distance the PQ from its union allies before the recent election campaign. Nevertheless, most unions called to vote for this capitalist party, and the PQ retained the strongholds of its francophone working-class base in east-end Montreal, suburban Longueuil and the industrial and mining areas of the Canadian Shield in the north. When the PQ is in power, the leaders of the FTQ, CSN and CSQ union federations look to “concertation” (collaboration) with the government. When the Liberals rule, as has been the case since 2003, they feign a more oppositional stance, only to undermine labour's struggles in the service of support to the PQ.

In 2003 and 2004, attacks by the Charest Liberals provoked the biggest labour mobilizations in two decades. The following year, tens of thousands of college and university students hit the streets in a province-wide student strike. Yet these strug-

gles were demobilized by the pro-capitalist union tops, who caved in shamefully when Charest imposed contracts on half a million public sector workers in December 2005. They called off strikes and mass protests and told workers to look instead to the next elections to “teach Charest a lesson.”

Now the results are in, and the “lesson” is that not only is Charest still in power, but the ADQ official opposition is if anything even more committed to gutting union rights and social programs. All sections of the Quebec capitalists see taking on the unions (especially in the public sector) as key to their aim of increasing productivity and competitiveness. In late 2005 former PQ premier Lucien Bouchard joined with a number of right-wing federalist bosses in the widely publicized manifesto “For a Clear-Eyed Vision of Quebec” (*Pour un Québec Lucide*) that called for sweeping attacks on social programs and “privileged” Quebec workers.

Dumont's call for more autonomy from English Canada was linked to a promise to “clean up” the province's finances through savage cutbacks and further attacks on the unions. Aside from Dumont, the ADQ's only other well-known figure is Gilles Taillon, former head of the rabidly anti-union Quebec employers association. And the PQ's likely future leader after Boisclair's post-election resignation, Pauline Marois, was a central figure in the PQ governments of the late 1990s as it launched frontal attacks on organized labour and social programs.

The only answer to the coming capitalist onslaught is hard class struggle against the exploiters and their government, wielding labour's social power at the head of all the oppressed. Yet in the wake of the elections, the union tops remain firmly wedded to their bankrupt class-collaborationist perspective. While the FTQ bureaucrats openly back the PQ, former CSN president Gérard Larose (now head of the Conseil de la souveraineté) has called for a “new sovereignist coalition.” But you can't fight the Liberals or ADQ with the equally capitalist PQ. What is needed is a break with *all* the political representatives of the bosses and the forging of a workers party committed to the class struggle in both English Canada and Quebec!

Labour Must Defend Immigrants and Ethnic Minorities!

The bourgeoisie's attacks on immigrants and ethnic minorities—the most vulnerable and exploited sectors of the working class—are poison to labour's struggle. Muslims and other ethnic minorities make up a growing part of the working class in the Montreal area. This simply underscores that to win against the bosses requires defending the unity and integrity of the working class against racist anti-immigrant demagoguery. An injury to one is an injury to all! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!

The increased prevalence of the Islamic veil in Quebec, as elsewhere, is in part due to the rise of political Islam internationally. It is also a result of the relentless racism and poverty suffered by Muslim immigrants and their descendants in the imperialist centers. The “multiculturalism” policies promoted by the Canadian rulers have served to reinforce the cultural and racial segregation of minority communities under a mask of “tolerance” and “anti-racism.” Among other

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Quebec...

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things, they obscure the fact that minority communities, like the rest of society, are *class-divided*, and that the struggles of immigrant and other minority workers for jobs, unions and equal status requires breaking the grip of religious and other conservative “community leaders.”

Since the narrow defeat of the 1995 sovereignty referendum—which then PQ leader Jacques Parizeau blamed on “money and the ethnic vote”—the PQ has attempted to shed its image of hostility to immigrants and minorities. Increasing numbers of second-generation ethnic minorities in Montreal, most of whom integrate into francophone Quebec society rather than the anglophone minority, now support sovereignty, though still in a lower proportion than among “old stock” francophones.

Whatever their particular posture, however, *all* the bourgeois parties—federalist, sovereignist and “autonomist”—necessarily promote racism against minorities, because such “divide and rule” policies are intrinsic to a social system based on the grinding exploitation of the working class. We Marxists fight for the *voluntary integration of all minorities based on full equality*. But we understand that eradicating racism, women’s oppression and all forms of discrimination requires a revolutionary struggle, mobilizing the power of the proletariat to uproot capitalism and liberate humanity from poverty and want.

Québec Solidaire: A Populist Trap

This class-struggle perspective is definitely not shared by the various reformist left groups in Quebec who have immersed themselves in Québec Solidaire (QS), the new populist political party. Dissatisfied with the PQ’s right-wing profile under Boisclair, a layer of more left-inclined nationalists have shifted their adherence to QS. While polling only 3.6 percent province-wide, QS leaders Amir Khadir and Françoise David won nearly 30 percent of the vote in their ridings in Montreal’s francophone Plateau-Mont-Royal district, a center



SC photo

Toronto, May 17: Trotskyists call for Quebec independence, denounce anti-Muslim bigotry.

of left-leaning artists, student youth and intellectuals.

But QS is not even a half-step toward an anti-capitalist alternative. While winning endorsement from some union leaders including the Montreal CSN, QS’s election platform made not even a rhetorical nod to the class struggle, let alone socialism. Instead, it was a laundry list of sub-reformist demands such as increased taxes on dividends and nationalization of the wind energy sector. This party, many of whose leaders are leftovers from Quebec’s once large “Marxist-Leninist” (Maoist) organizations of the 1970s, is an obstacle to forging the anti-capitalist proletarian leadership that is so urgently needed.

From the International Socialists (I.S.) to Socialist Action, Gauche Socialiste and the Quebec Communist Party (PCQ), the reformist left groups in Quebec are well-nigh uncritical cheerleaders for the petty-bourgeois QS. The I.S.’s French-language paper *Résistance* (January 2007) saluted QS’s tepid platform as “a clear rupture with neo-liberalism.” For the PCQ, it is “daring in its feminist, ecologist, and socially progressive tendencies” (“Quebec: A High Stakes Election,” 12 April 2007). That self-described leftists would hail QS’s populist pablum testifies to their abandonment of even a pretense of fighting for socialist revolution.

Workers and youth looking for a way forward must break with the nationalist consensus in Quebec (including left variants such as QS) and take up the fight for an internationalist proletarian perspective. Our call for Quebec independence is an element of this struggle. But only socialist revolution will lay the basis for a vast increase in production worldwide, ending poverty and scarcity and opening the road to full human emancipation, including the final liberation of women from the stultifying hold of family and religion. The Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste fights to forge a party of socialist revolution to lead the binational, multiethnic proletariat in a struggle to put an end to racist capitalism. Down with anti-Muslim racism! For the fighting unity of the working class! ■

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PDC Statement...

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and granting a new trial. Offering a more realistic view of the court, Ramona Africa, who spent seven years in prison for being the sole adult survivor of the May 1985 police/FBI bombing of MOVE's Osage Avenue home, commented after the hearing on the "legal mumbo jumbo": "They can sit there and look very attentive and appear to be leaning toward the defense and all of that. But it doesn't mean anything. They can come back with a decision completely opposite." Wolkenstein observed, "In Mumia's 1988 Pennsylvania state appeal hearing, the chief judge of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court unequivocally told the D.A. that it was a violation of due process and the court's own precedents for the prosecution to have made the 'appeal after appeal' arguments. This is the same issue now before the federal appeals court. Yet the state Supreme Court decision unanimously denied every defense claim."

Most of the questions from the judges during the two-hour proceeding focused on the issue of racial bias in the prosecution's selection of the jury. Bryan said that prosecutors struck 15 potential jurors from the jury pool, ten of whom were black and five white. That, he said, constituted "prima facie evidence" of racial discrimination. But the judges sharply questioned whether Mumia's attorneys had previously tried to establish a pattern of racist bias in his 1982 trial, including by 'determining the racial makeup of the more than 100 people who made up the jury pool. Wolkenstein pointed out, "The legal argument made on May 17 by Mumia's attorneys was incomplete. At the 1995 PCRA hearing, we subpoenaed the Philadelphia County Commissioner of Jurors to establish the racial composition of the entire jury pool, but Judge Sabo quashed that subpoena with the agreement of the prosecution!"

Wolkenstein continued, "We also fought to get additional evidence before the courts. In April 1997, we submitted a supplemental PCRA petition after a ten-year-old videotaped training lecture by then-assistant D.A. Jack McMahon was made public which confirmed that it was the policy and aim of the

D.A.'s office to exclude black jurors. This racist practice was also confirmed in a study by David Baldus, documenting that during a ten-year period blacks were 5.2 times as likely as whites to be thrown off Philadelphia juries. The Philadelphia D.A. vociferously opposed the introduction of this evidence, and both the Pennsylvania Supreme Court and Judge Sabo refused Mumia's petitions to even hold hearings. Contrary to the D.A.'s position argued on May 17 and the statement of Mumia's current lawyer, Robert Bryan, that the defense was 'a day late and a dollar short' in presenting evidence of the racist jury-rigging, *it was the D.A. and the courts* that prevented this evidence from being heard during the PCRA hearings." She summed up, "Characteristic of this *injustice* system, particularly as seen throughout the history of Mumia's case, the D.A.'s blocking of this evidence previously is now cited as the basis for the court to refuse to even consider it."

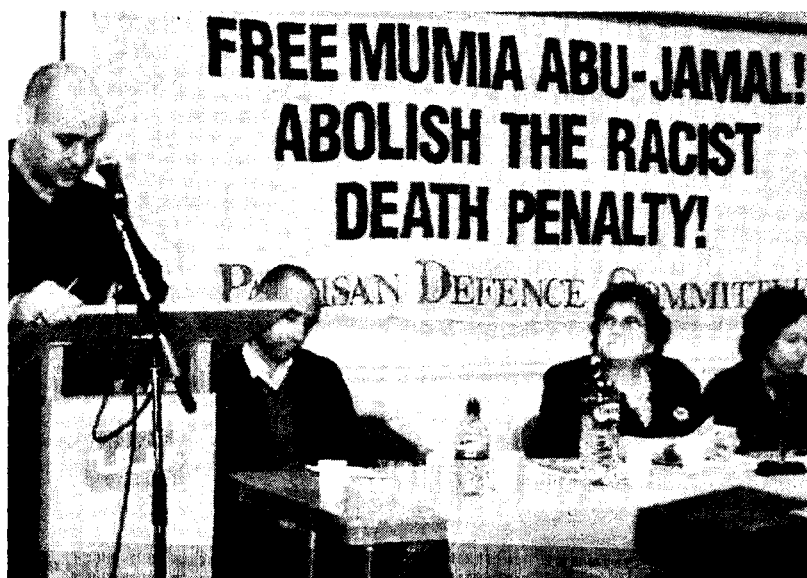
As a member of Mumia's legal team from 1995 to 1999, Wolkenstein uncovered the confession of Arnold Beverly and other key evidence. In a June 1999 affidavit, Arnold Beverly says that he was hired to kill Faulkner, who was reportedly interfering with prostitution, gambling, drugs and police payoffs, and that "Jamal had nothing to do with the shooting." Wolkenstein stressed that "no court, including the Third Circuit, has ever considered this or any other piece of the massive evidence of Mumia's innocence and of the state frame-up." Wolkenstein resigned from the legal team when Mumia's lead attorney at the time, Leonard Weinglass, suppressed the Beverly confession. After Mumia fired Weinglass two years later, his next team of lawyers submitted Beverly's affidavit to both state and federal courts, as well as a declaration by Mumia in which he stated: "I did not shoot Police Officer Daniel Faulkner. I had nothing to do with the killing of Officer Faulkner. I am innocent." The courts refused to even consider these statements.

Wolkenstein explained that "the courts have suppressed the Beverly evidence because it demonstrates that the injustice done to Mumia was not the work of one rogue cop, prosecutor or judge but the workings of a 'justice' system whose purpose is to repress the working class, minorities and the poor on behalf of the capitalist ruling class. Mean-

while, the police and prosecutors have stopped at nothing in their attacks on Mumia: intimidation of witnesses, suppression and falsification of evidence of Mumia's innocence, and campaigns against any who stand in defense of Mumia." In the weeks leading up to the May 17 court hearing, the Fraternal Order of Police harassed and threatened Mumia's supporters, forcing a change of venue for a birthday celebration for Mumia in Philadelphia, and New York City cops harassed a hip-hop event for Mumia.

Addressing the race and class bias inherent in the U.S. capitalist legal system, Wolkenstein stressed that "the kind of pressure that can have an impact on the courts is the social power of the multiracial labor movement demanding that this innocent man be freed now." The PDC mobilized contingents for the May 17 protests in Philadelphia and San Francisco under the slogans: "Mumia Abu-Jamal Is Innocent—For Class-Struggle Defense to Free Him Now! There Is No Justice in the Capitalist Courts! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!" The rally in Philadelphia was

(continued on page 22)



Workers Hammer

Paul Moffat of Communication Workers Union addresses May 5 Mumia rally organized by PDC in London, England.

PDC Statement...

(continued from page 21)

organized by the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal and the New York Coalition to Free Mumia, while in San Francisco it was organized by the Mobilization to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal.

PDC Labor Coordinator Gene Herson commented, "We support utilizing every legal recourse on Mumia's behalf, but without illusions in the capitalist court system." He pointed out, "It was mass international protest, crucially including trade unionists, that stayed the executioner's hand in August 1995, after a death warrant for Mumia had been signed. The multiracial labor movement—those who create the wealth of this society and who can shut it down—must be mobilized independently of the forces of the capitalist state." He contrasted this class-struggle perspective to "those groups who have focused on calling for a new trial for Mumia. This means relying on the same racist courts that railroaded Mumia to death row. It means sowing illusions that Mumia can get justice from the same capitalist state that killed 38 Black Panthers as part of the FBI's COINTELPRO operations, and that massacred eleven black people, including women and children, in the 1985 firebombing of MOVE." Herson added, "If successful, the fight for Mumia's freedom would strike a blow against the government's evisceration of democratic rights in the name of the 'war on terror.' It would give labor a sense of its own power. The fight for Mumia is the fight for black liberation, for the liberation of us all, part of the struggle for socialist revolution."

Speaking for the New York Labor Black League at the Philadelphia rally, Tom Cowperthwaite said that the "prosecutors, racist cops and politicians of both Democratic and Republican parties" have targeted Mumia "because he speaks the truth about bloody U.S. imperialism and the brutal system of exploitation and racial oppression that is capitalist America." Cowperthwaite, a member of New York City's Transport Workers Union Local 100, addressed the crucial



Workers Vanguard

PDC contingent on May 17 demonstration in Philadelphia.

need to mobilize labor's power on Mumia's behalf. He noted, "When we brought the Big Apple to a grinding halt for three days in December 2005, we weren't just striking for ourselves but for everyone ground down by the racist, greedy, labor-hating bosses. An injury to one is an injury to all! There's no substitute for the class struggle!"

As the powerful Congress of South African Trade Unions wrote in the March 2007 issue of *Shopsteward*: "Mumia's freedom will not be won through relying on the capitalist rigged justice system. What can really turn the tide is the power of united millions across the world—working people united in struggle to free an innocent man." Indicating the potential for mass, labor-centered protest, hundreds of trade unionists and prominent individuals internationally have signed a PDC-initiated statement titled: "We Demand the Immediate Freedom of Mumia Abu-Jamal, an Innocent Man." The statement, which cites the Arnold Beverly confession, has appeared in the *Nation* magazine and a number of major black newspapers in the U.S. and leftist publications in Europe. Recently adding its voice to this call is the Metro Detroit chapter of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists. Other signatories include Nobel Prize winning author Nadine Gordimer, Manning Marable, Henry Louis Gates Jr., Cornel West, New York City councilman Charles Barron, Illinois Congressman Danny K. Davis and former Georgia Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney.

Rachel Wolkenstein emphasized, "The ruling class is deadly serious that Mumia Abu-Jamal may soon be another victim of the barbaric death penalty. The frame-up of Mumia symbolizes what the racist death penalty in the U.S. is all about: a legacy of chattel slavery, the lynch rope made legal. We oppose the death penalty on principle—we do not accord the state the right to say who lives and who dies. Mumia must be freed, now!" ■

PDC Pamphlet

This pamphlet arms activists in the struggle for Mumia's freedom by presenting the political basis of the state vendetta against Mumia and the explosive evidence which completely destroys the more than two-decades-long frame-up of this eloquent fighter for black freedom.

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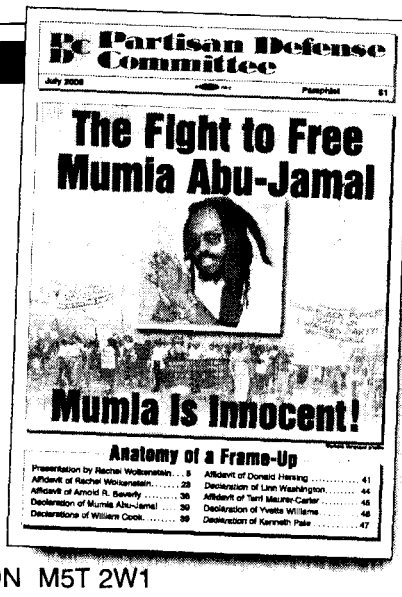
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“Class Struggle to Free Mumia!”

We print below the speech by a Partisan Defense Committee spokesman at a May 17 protest to free Mumia Abu-Jamal outside the U.S. consulate in Toronto, called by the May 17th Committee to Free Mumia. The PDC issued its own mobilizing call, “For Class-Struggle Defense to Free Mumia Now!” and brought out a contingent of 24 people, at least a third of the demonstration.

We have long insisted on the need to mobilize labour’s power to fight for Mumia’s freedom, based on the massive evidence of his innocence. At the rally, both a May 17th Committee spokesman and a speaker for Socialist Action (SA) read out statements calling for a new trial for Mumia—a bankrupt program of relying on the capitalist courts for “justice.” SA even flogged a pamphlet showcasing Mumia’s former attorney Leonard Weinglass, who refused to present the evidence of Mumia’s innocence—centrally the confession of Arnold Beverly—and was fired by Mumia six years ago.

One of the components of the May 17th Committee was the Bolshevik Tendency (BT), neither of whose two speakers uttered a word against the reformists’ “new trial” call that has so undermined mobilizations for Mumia’s defense. Instead, the BT reserves its polemical fire for the PDC, accusing us of “sectarianism” in a May 27 website posting because we declined to add our name to their demonstration call. BT et al. insisted that a condition for endorsing this event was endorsement of a lowest-common-denominator “statement” which, reflecting the BT’s longstanding indifference to the fight for black freedom, could not even choke out that Mumia was a former Black Panther and a supporter of the MOVE organization. Their purpose in this is to pursue unity with the liberals and reformists who preach reliance on the bourgeois state, and the BT’s slanders against us are cut of the same cloth. For more details on this score, see “The BT and the Fight to Free Mumia” (Workers Vanguard No. 876, 15 September 2006).

I’m Miriam from the PDC. We’re fighting for the freedom of Mumia Abu-Jamal. Because he was a Black Panther, and because he was a supporter of the MOVE organization, and because he was an outspoken opponent of racist oppression, he was targeted by the racist ruling class. Mumia is an innocent man. We’d better put that right up front. His is a voice of defiant opposition to the oppression of black people, and the ruling class wants him silenced.

What will it take to free him? It will take the organized power of the labour movement and its allies to create the kind of pressure that will impact on the courts and win him freedom. The people that run this society, that create the wealth—the multiracial working class—has to be mobilized for Mumia.

This understanding has guided the Partisan Defense Committee since our inception, and since 1987 as well when we were asked by the MOVE organization to take up Mumia’s case. And it guides us in the rallies that we’ve initiated in the recent period here and in the U.S., and in Britain and in Germany. We’re proud of this struggle to free Mumia, we say “class struggle to free Mumia!”, and we stress as well that there can be no justice in the capitalist courts. No justice!

In August 1995 Mumia won a stay of execution on the basis of worldwide protests, and the labour movement was very centrally involved in many of them. From 1995 to



SC photo

PDC at Toronto May 17 protest: Free Mumia!

1999, much new evidence poured out, further blowing the state’s frame-up to bits. This evidence was rejected. Meanwhile, the reformist left groups—in Canada, the Socialist Action group and the previous speaker from the I.S. [International Socialists]—started to call for a “new trial” for Mumia. Instead of mobilizing to free this innocent victim of a racist frame-up, they mobilized on the basis that he could get a new and fair trial from the same courts that put him on death row in the first place. But they’re wrong!

There are others, for instance the Bolshevik Tendency, who give these groups a left cover. They treat the call for a “new trial” as just another tactic among the “friends of Mumia.” But they’re wrong too. It amounts to pushing faith in the capitalist state. It’s the program that demobilized those masses who lined the streets ten and twelve years ago. We have to turn that around.

There is a mountain of evidence that shows Mumia’s innocence. And part of that evidence is the sworn confession of Arnold Beverly, who said he killed the cop, not Mumia. But this confession was rejected by the racist judges, because for them a court of law is no place for evidence of innocence for this fighter for the oppressed, the voice of the voiceless.

We of course favour all legal proceedings for Mumia, but any illusions in these courts are simply deadly. The capitalist state and its courts are organs of repression against workers and all the oppressed, and this is true in Canada as much as it is in the U.S. The mass movement for Mumia must be revived on the basis that his frame-up conviction and his death sentence were *political*. The working class has every interest in fighting to block his execution, an outcome which would further bolster the machinery of state violence against the working class.

The PDC is a class-struggle legal and social defense organization associated with the Trotskyist League. Our fight for Mumia is inseparable from building a revolutionary workers party—a party that will champion the interests of all the exploited and oppressed and lead the working class in socialist revolution to bring down this capitalist system. So join me now in chanting: *Mumia, Mumia must be free! Abolish the racist death penalty!* ■

Freedom Now for Mumia Abu-Jamal!

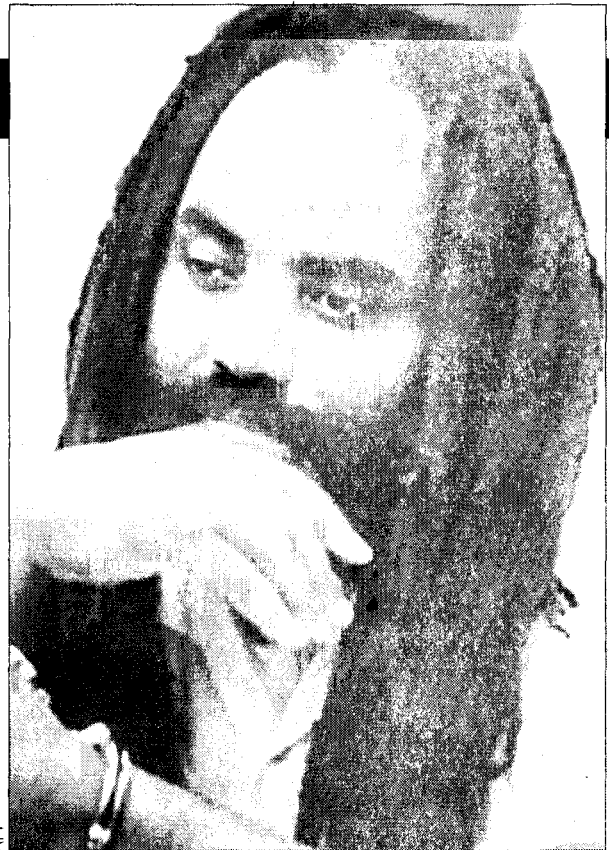
Mobilize Labour's Power

We print below a statement issued by the U.S. Partisan Defense Committee on May 19.

The U.S. Third Circuit Court of Appeals in Philadelphia heard oral arguments May 17 in what could be the final stage of legal proceedings for death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. As more than 500 of Mumia's supporters rallied outside the courthouse and many others attended the hearing, prosecutors argued to reinstate the death penalty that was overturned in a 2001 decision by federal district court judge William Yohn, which otherwise upheld every aspect of Mumia's conviction on the false charge of killing Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner in December 1981. Mumia's attorneys, headed by Robert Bryan, were allowed to raise only two of more than 20 legal challenges to Mumia's frame-up conviction—the racially biased jury selection and the prosecutor's prejudicial summary argument to the jury that Mumia would have “appeal after appeal,” which undermined the “reasonable doubt” standard.

Also before the appeals court is the challenge to the grossly biased post-conviction (PCRA) hearings from 1995 to 1997 before the notorious “hanging judge” Albert Sabo, who presided over Mumia's 1982 trial and was overheard at the time saying he'd help them “fry the n---r.” During the PCRA hearings, Sabo barred many defense witnesses, quashed defense subpoenas and arrested one of Mumia's attorneys at the time, Rachel Wolkenstein, for attempting to present evidence of the massive disproportion in death sentences handed to black people in Philadelphia compared to those handed to whites.

Following the Third Circuit hearing, Wolkenstein, who is counsel for the Partisan Defense Committee, warned that “a decision could come within weeks, and whatever they decide will likely be appealed to the reactionary U.S. Supreme Court. This makes it all the more urgent to revitalize mass protest to free Mumia on the basis that he is an innocent man and the victim of a racist, political frame-up.” Wolkenstein continued, “There should be no illusions in these federal appeal proceedings. There is overwhelming evidence of Mumia's innocence, including the sworn confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Mumia, shot and killed Faulkner. But for more than 25 years, both the Pennsylvania



AFP

state and federal courts have rejected or even refused to consider this evidence. The cops, prosecutors and courts—with the support of capitalist politicians, Democrats as well as Republicans—see in Mumia, former Black Panther Party spokesman and a MOVE supporter and outspoken journalist, the spectre of black revolution. The state is determined to carry out Mumia's legal lynching or bury him in the living hell of life in prison. This must not happen!”

The Third Circuit panel—Chief Judge Anthony J. Scirica and Judges Thomas L. Ambro and Robert E. Cowen—peppered the prosecution with questions about the instructions and verdict form given the jury considering the death penalty as well as the prosecutor's remarks during his closing argument at the trial that they should convict Mumia because he would have “appeal after appeal.” Many spectators commented afterwards that the judges appeared favorable to Mumia on these issues, which could lead to affirming the reversal of the death sentence

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