

KKK Out...

(continued from page 1)

diverse political viewpoints by all those who shared a commitment to the urgent necessity to *stop the KKK*. But it tapped into far more than that, intersecting the accumulated anger among the city's working people, particularly blacks and Hispanics, who are fed up with being pushed around for years in the one-sided war against workers and the poor.

It galvanized the anger against the marauding, racist cops which exploded earlier this year over the killing of black African Amadou Diallo by the NYPD. It gave expression to the hundreds of thousands in this city—from unionized workers to immigrant cab drivers and hot dog vendors, CUNY students, artists, AIDS victims—who have had it with Giuliani's mini-police state. It demonstrated an alternative to the Democratic Party politicians, their black front men and labor flunkies, who worked as feverishly to try to demobilize any independent outpouring of the working people and all the enemies of Klan terror as they had done to contain the protests over the Diallo killing within the confines of electoral pressure politics.

Many of the thousands who mobilized behind the anti-Klan rally were looking for the answer not only to stopping Klan terror but to fighting back against the entire system of racist capitalist exploitation and oppression. Demonstrators listened raptly to all the speeches from the platform. Many shouted, "That's right, that's right" when PDC labor coordinator Gene Herson denounced both the Democratic and Republican parties as enemies of labor and the oppressed. Calls for the working people to build their own class party were met with applause.

What was seen on the streets of New York City on October 23 was a microcosm of a workers party in action, i.e., the working class mobilized in its own interests, acting independently of the government and parties of the capitalist class. The PDC—a class-struggle legal and social defense organization whose purpose is in accordance with the views of the Marxist Spartacist League—initiated the call which brought to bear the social power of labor and its strong, militant component of black workers in defense of all the oppressed. That same power, those same forces which stopped the Klan from riding can organize the unorganized and unemployed, can mobilize in defense of the masses in the ghettos and barrios, can crack the "open shop" South—itsself a product of KKK anti-union terror.

The successful labor/black mobilization brought to life the connection between labor's fight and the fight for black freedom. Black oppression is the cornerstone of racist American capitalism. There is no road to eliminating the special oppression of black people other than the working-class conquest of power, and there will be no proletarian revolution to end class exploitation unless the working class actively takes up the fight for black rights.

The working class has the numbers, the organization and the power to win all those things that the ruling class appropriates for itself—health care, education, decent housing, abortion rights. What is lacking is the kind of leadership necessary



WV Photos

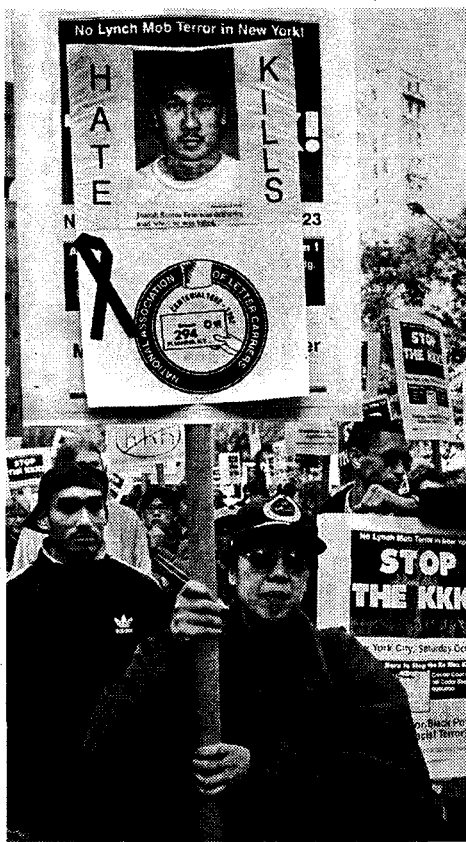
Trade unionists were the backbone of NYC mobilization to stop the KKK. Right: Postal workers carried signs honoring their brother Joseph Iletto, gunned down by fascist killer in Los Angeles in July.

to fight—a leadership of the unions that doesn't bow down to the bosses' laws, parties and state agencies, a workers party that doesn't respect the property "rights" of the bourgeoisie. We need a workers party that fights for a workers government to rip the means of production from the capitalist class and institute a planned socialist economy that operates not for the profit of a few greedy exploiters but for the working people who produce the wealth of society. That is the kind of workers party that we communists of the Spartacist League are fighting to build.

The Political Battle to Stop the Klan

Just as the mobilization to stop the Klan in New York City on October 23 gave a real taste of the social forces and leadership required for socialist revolution in this country, it also starkly exposed the enemies and obstacles to organizing struggles of the working class in its own interests and in the interests of all those at the bottom of this society. These included the capitalist cops, courts and Giuliani city administration; the American Civil Liberties Union, which continued its revolting decades-long defense of "constitutional rights" for the fascist terrorists; the Democratic Party, whose calls for a "demonstration for tolerance" were aimed at trying to demobilize the working people and others who wanted to stop the Klan; Al Sharpton and the black establishment *Amsterdam News*, who grotesquely filed a court brief on behalf of the Klan; the International Socialist Organization (ISO), who leapt into the camp of Giuliani, the Democrats, Sharpton, the ACLU and the Klan *against* the PDC-initiated labor/black mobilization.

From the day that the Klan's rally was publicly announced in a 13 October article in the *New York Post*, there was a contention of two counterposed class forces—those representing the interests of the capitalist ruling class and those representing the interests of the working class and its allies. The moment the PDC heard of the KKK's plans, it applied for a permit to



hold a demonstration at the same time and same place as the Klan's announced rally site, 100 Centre Street. The call for a labor/black mobilization was issued immediately, and met with overwhelming support when it hit the streets. This mobilization had an impact on city politics not seen in years. The issue captured the front pages of the tabloids, dominated talk shows and call-ins on black radio stations, reportedly split union executive boards and drove the Democratic Party establishment to distraction.

The Giuliani administration and NYPD responded by setting to work in an attempt to block this mobilization. Colluding with them was an unholy alliance ranging from the New York Civil Liberties Union's Norman Siegel, lawyer for the KKK, to Democratic State Assemblyman Scott Stringer and black Democrat Al Sharpton. The KKK's rally site was secretly moved a block away to 60 Centre Street, information that was not made public for days. As it became clear that thousands of New Yorkers were rallying behind the PDC's call, as tens of thousands of leaflets were distributed over the weekend of October 16-17, this cabal moved into high gear.

Stringer, joined by Sharpton and other Democratic Party pols, called a press conference on October 19 to announce that he had applied for a permit for a "demonstration for tolerance" at 60 Centre Street, where the Klan would stage its rally. That evening it came out, as a PDC press release reported, that Stringer & Co. were "colluding with the Klan and the Giuliani administration to cut a deal to share a sound permit with the KKK at 60 Centre Street." The following day, Sharpton filed his *amicus* brief on behalf of the Klan. We fought on behalf of the tens of thousands of New York's working people who wanted to *stop* the KKK, waging an incessant battle in the courts for *their* rights to free speech and assembly.

On October 21, a federal district court gave the Klansmen everything they had asked for and the working people were told they were to be muzzled. The court

approved the deal cooked up by Siegel, Stringer and the Klan to share a sound permit and gave the KKK the right to stage their race-hate provocation in hoods with masks. The judges denied a sound permit for the labor/black mobilization at 60 Centre Street. As PDC counsel Rachel Wolkenstein declared, "This deal is an attempt to guarantee that only the Klan will be heard and not their intended victims." She added, "The denial of a sound permit to the anti-Klan rally is a provocation against the mobilization organizers' ability to hold a militant, orderly mass demonstration. A rally without centrally located sound and leadership is like a car without a steering wheel."

Even the right-wing *New York Post* (23 October) denounced the court's decision that the anti-Klan mobilization could not use loudspeakers at the same time as the KKK on the grounds that that would "snuff out the free speech" of the Klan. Indeed, the court ruling was a graphic illustration of the race and class bias of the capitalist "justice" system—a free ride for Klan terror and no rights for their intended victims! This was punctuated by the fact that the courthouse was literally used as a shelter for the KKK when it staged its race-hate rally.

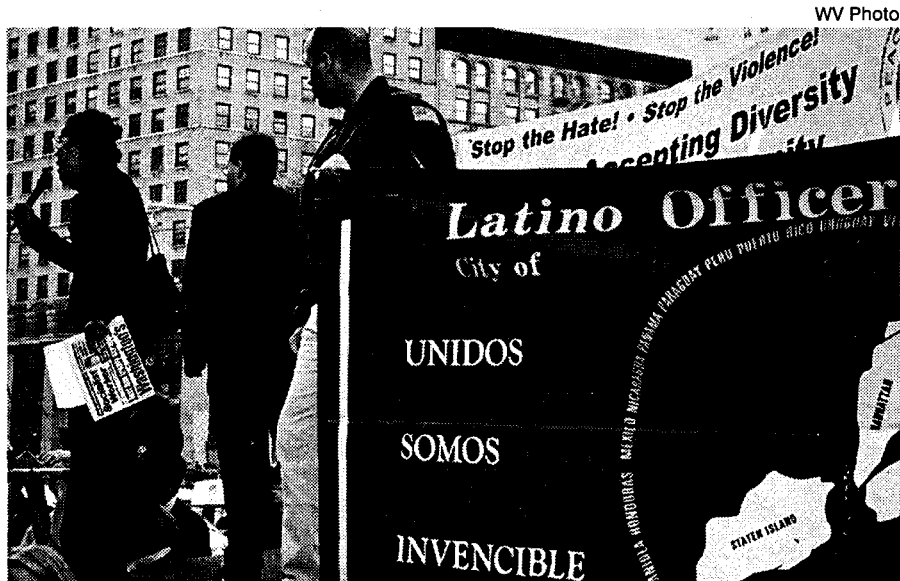
When the Klan's permit to rally with masks was retracted in a federal appeals court on October 22, a disinformation campaign was set in motion aimed at convincing people there was no reason to come out the next day since the KKK would not be there. A PDC press release that evening declared: "Whatever reports are circulating that the KKK currently has no permit to stage its race-hate provocation, the working people of this city have no reason to trust the word of these racist terrorists or the Giuliani administration. The only way to guarantee that the Klan does not rear its head in New York tomorrow is if the streets are filled with its opponents."

And, on October 23, there were many thousands of determined opponents of the Klan filling the area around Centre Street. Here was the answer to Sharpton's defense of the Klan's right to "free speech." Many of those who came out had personal experience with the burning cross, the lynch rope, the shotguns through which the Klan "speaks." Despite being separated by helmeted riot cops and police barricades at different locations, they had come out not to show "tolerance" for the KKK as preached by Stringer and the Democrats but in response to the PDC call to *stop the KKK*.

The ISO—Traitors Exposed

Except for some of the Democratic Party faithful, like Local 1199 president Dennis Rivera, and a token endorsement by the leadership of the Central Labor Council, Stringer, Sharpton et al.'s call for "tolerance" fell on deaf ears. The *only* organization to leap into Stringer's camp with energy and purpose was the International Socialist Organization, which did its level best to give a cover to the Democratic Party—and the Klan—*against* the organized working class.

The ISO endorsed a meeting called by a variety of lawyers and liberals to organize behind Stringer's "demonstration for tolerance." When representatives of the PDC intervened to call for uniting all those who wanted to stop the Klan on



Liberal and fake-socialist enemies of labor/black mobilization provided platform for KKK racist terrorists: NYCLU's Norman Siegel at Klan rally, Democrats Al Sharpton and Scott Stringer, ISO speaker next to police banner at Democratic Party diversion.

October 23, there were no takers. While Sharpton was outrageously defending the Klan's "rights" in court, at the meeting the ISO enthused over what a good speaker Sharpton was and how many people he would draw to the Democratic Party diversion! As it turned out, Sharpton never even showed up on October 23, doubtless not anxious to face the jeers of the thousands who had come out to stop the KKK. But the ISO was there with bells on.

While shamelessly enlisting with the Democrats, the ISO tried to cover its despicable role by issuing a little-distributed leaflet under the heading "Stop the Klan!" Since their main purpose was *opposed* to stopping the KKK, this was pure cynicism. On site on October 23, the ISO continued to try to deceive people who had mobilized in response to the PDC's call by steering them into the site of the Democrats' location, which was a police trap. When people discovered this deception, many who tried to leave found their way blocked by the cops.

Having been provided a temporary, if unwitting, audience by the ISO's treachery, Democrats like Senator Charles Schumer and others tried to turn the event into an election rally. They were repeatedly booed by the angry protesters who had not come out for election speeches or messages of "tolerance" but to stop Klan terror. While the anti-Klan demonstrators understood the role of the cops in protecting these nightriding terrorists, the ISO speaker stood in front of the banner of the Latino Officers Association. This is not unusual for the ISO, which has a long history of viewing the cops as "workers" and upholding their "right" to organize. Will these social democrats whose British paper once headlined "Are All Coppers Really Bastards?" now ask, "Are all Klansmen really bastards?"

With the ISO acting as the donkeys for the Democratic Party in trying to demobilize the mass labor-centered protest to stop the Klan, whatever pretenses it had to the cause of "workers power" have been stripped bare. The ISO stands exposed as the servants of capital against the interests of the working class, black people and all the oppressed.

While the rest of the left did not play so forward a role as the ISO in serving the interests of the Democratic Party, most remained silent in the face of the deadly Klan threat until Stringer and Sharpton started to call for a liberal diversion. The Communist Party endorsed the Stringer rally. Workers World Party (WWP) tried to have it both ways. Feigning some mock independence from the Democrats, they called for people to assemble at Stringer's site, but somewhat later than the official starting time. Then, on October 23, WWP also had people at the PDC rally site, where they handed out placards that called to "stop the Klan" and for a "new trial" for black death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. When SYC comrades pointed out that this sowed illusions in the very same courts that had sentenced Jamal to death and had upheld the "right" to Klan terror, many of the people who had unwittingly taken WWP's placards traded them in for PDC placards demanding *freedom* for Jamal.

In a very unusual move, the Stalin-lovers of Progressive Labor Party (PL), who smear "Trotskyites" as fascists, called on people to assemble at the site of the PDC mobilization, signing an en-

dorsement form on the spot. Now a PL Internet statement crows how "thousands" were "led by PLP" and asserts, "It took the PLP to lead a breakaway march of hundreds who really wanted to confront the Klan." In fact, what PL did was "lead" itself straight into a line of riot cops a short distance away. PL's whole strategy of individual confrontations with the cops and the fascists is based on a rejection of the working class as a force for social struggle. Giuliani's cops did arrest several anti-Klan protesters on October 23. We demand: Drop all the charges now!

The self-proclaimed redder-than-red communists of PL—who can't tell the

What was reflected here was the fear of the labor bureaucrats and black Democrats that by opposing the PDC's anti-Klan mobilization they could potentially detonate the anger building at the base of the unions, the outrage in the ghettos and barrios. But that didn't stop them from trying to head it off.

In defending their legal efforts on behalf of the Klan, the editors of the *Amsterdam News* grotesquely echoed the racists who compared the Klan with Khallid Muhammad. Condemning this equation of the victims of Klan terror with its perpetrators, PDC labor coordinator Gene Herson responded: "The purpose of this is to conceal the real enemy

that. The thousands who turned out that day sent a powerful message that the KKK had better not try it again. This mobilization was also a powerful response to the demagoguery of Muhammad and his former mentor, Louis Farrakhan, who seek to channel the anger of the ghetto into bigotry against Jewish, Arab and Asian shopkeepers in order that they can be the sole exploiters of the ghetto masses. This response was palpable in minority neighborhoods throughout the city.

A Korean shopkeeper in Harlem came out of his store to donate money and hand out leaflets to build for the anti-Klan mobilization. In Chinatown, a merchant took a stack of leaflets and taught PDC soapboxers how to say "stop the Klan" in Chinese, immediately drawing sympathetic crowds. At the mobilization itself, many black participants remarked on the multiracial character of the turnout and echoed denunciations of anti-Semitism from the speaker's platform.

In contrast to the preaching of liberal "diversity"—like Jesse Jackson's "rainbow coalition" or David Dinkins' "beautiful mosaic"—which means acceptance of the racist status quo and Democratic Party ethnic politics, this was a powerful demonstration of *class unity* and unity of the oppressed behind the social power of the multiracial working class. One chant in particular resonated at the PDC mobilization: "Asian, Latin, black and white—Workers of the world, unite!" Everyone could see that proletarian power right before their eyes in this labor-centered anti-Klan mobilization.

The Fight for a Workers America

The Klan was born out of the bloody reaction in the South following the defeat of the slavocracy in the American Civil War. These were the hooded-and-robed agents of the former Confederacy, who carried out a campaign of terror, intimidation, mutilation and murder aimed at strangling the political rights that were won by the freed slaves during Reconstruction. The KKK spearheaded the restoration of white supremacy in the form of the system of Jim Crow segregation that held sway for nearly a century. It heralded a resurgence, reaching several million strong in the 1920s, with the lynching of Jewish businessman Leo Frank in Georgia in 1915.

Today the Klan is the lowlife, terrorist bunch held in reserve by the American

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WV Photo

October 23: It took revolutionary leadership to mobilize New York labor and minorities in powerful united-front action to drive out the KKK racist terrorists.

difference between a trade union and right-wing religious bigots like the Promise Keepers—are guided by absolutely *no* class criteria. Thus, they expressed no solidarity with the powerful Teamsters union during its strike against the UPS bosses. Instead, they dismissed this struggle as a battle between two wings of the ruling class! With its utter contempt for the organized working class, PL's cries of "Kick the bosses in the ass" and "Death to the Klan" are little more than the bleatings of grandstanding liberals.

Linking the Power of Labor to the Anger of the Ghettos

The clear intent of the liberal Democrats and their allies was to block any independent expression of the power of labor and its allies to stop the Klan on October 23. But they seriously miscalculated the outrage throughout this city against the Klan rally and failed miserably in their efforts. Throughout the building for this labor/black mobilization, the Democrats and their labor lackeys evidently realized they couldn't even try the usual violence-baiting and redbaiting of the PDC which has been attempted against previous PDC-initiated anti-fascist mobilizations. That's not because they had any less fear of or hostility to labor being mobilized behind a class-struggle program, but because they recognized they couldn't openly come out against the labor/black mobilization to stop the Klan in a city where the overwhelming mass of the population is directly in the cross hairs of the racist terrorists.

Many unions told us that they couldn't endorse the PDC mobilization because their leadership was split over the question. Nonetheless, a number that didn't endorse asked for stacks of the PDC's mobilizing leaflet to put in their union halls. Dennis Rivera, who runs a well-oiled machine in Local 1199, made no overt attempt to mobilize his membership behind Stringer's "free speech" diversion. Likewise, the hidebound craft-union bureaucrats at the head of the Central Labor Council who endorsed Stringer's "demonstration for tolerance" did not put out the word that trade unionists should stay away from the labor/black mobilization.

and deny the true nature of the KKK. Khallid Muhammad is an anti-Semitic demagogue, but that's all he is. The Klan is a *terrorist action group* whose purpose is genocide." Speaking at a PDC press conference on October 19, Jim Webb of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists added, "Khallid has never murdered, lynched, burned churches, synagogues and homes."

In its call initiating this mobilization, the PDC noted that the Klan was making a big mistake by thinking it could ride in New York City, and October 23 proved

Join the Labor Black Leagues!

We stand for mobilizing the masses of minority and working people in militant integrated struggle against the brutal system of racist oppression that is capitalist America. Initiated by and fraternally allied with the Spartacist League, a multiracial revolutionary Marxist organization, the Labor Black Leagues are part of the revolutionary movement of the workers and oppressed against the bosses and for socialism.

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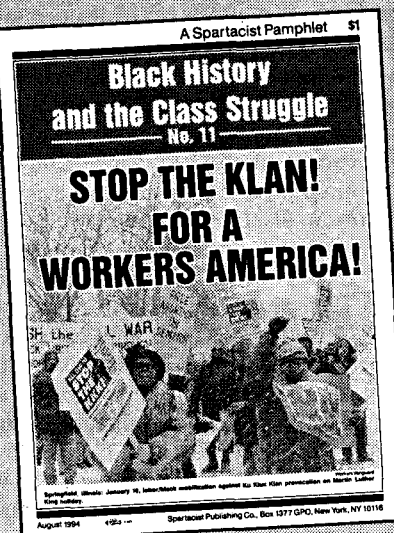
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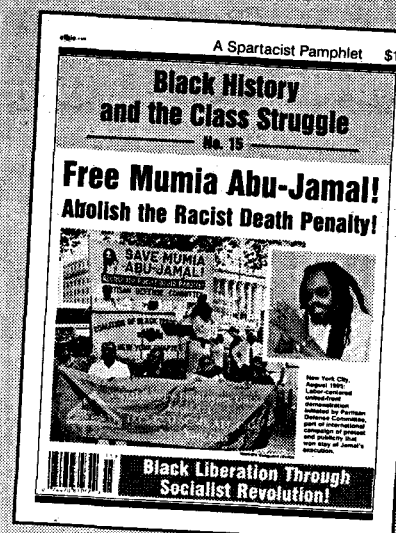
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Stay of Execution Granted, Danger Remains

Mobilize Labor/Black Power to Free Mumia!

OCTOBER 26—As we go to press, it has just been announced that Mumia Abu-Jamal has won a stay of execution from a federal judge pending a decision on his habeas corpus petition. No one among Jamal's millions of defenders must be lulled by this news into thinking that Mumia is any less endangered by the police and government forces which have long waged a concerted campaign for his legal lynching.

We print below a speech by Paul Cooperstein of the Partisan Defense Committee at a victory party immediately following the October 23 anti-Klan demonstration.

We have another urgent fight on our hands—the fight to free death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. To win his freedom, we have to mobilize the same social forces that routed the Klan today, the multiracial unions which were the bedrock of this mobilization.

Ten days ago, Pennsylvania governor Tom Ridge signed an order for Mumia to be executed on December 2. And despite Jamal's filing for *habeas corpus* in the federal courts, that warrant of execution has not been lifted. They are determined to kill Mumia. We must be more determined to win his freedom. The lynch rope of the KKK is just the other side of the legal lynchings of the capitalist state. In mobilizing against the KKK we must raise our voices to demand: Freedom now for Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the racist death penalty!

The capitalist state—made up of the cops, courts, prisons, corrections officers—is an instrument for the capitalist rulers to defend their massive profits, their class rule through vicious repression and terror against workers and minorities. The prisons today are flooded with young black and Hispanic men and women, mostly as a result of the racist "war on drugs." With them

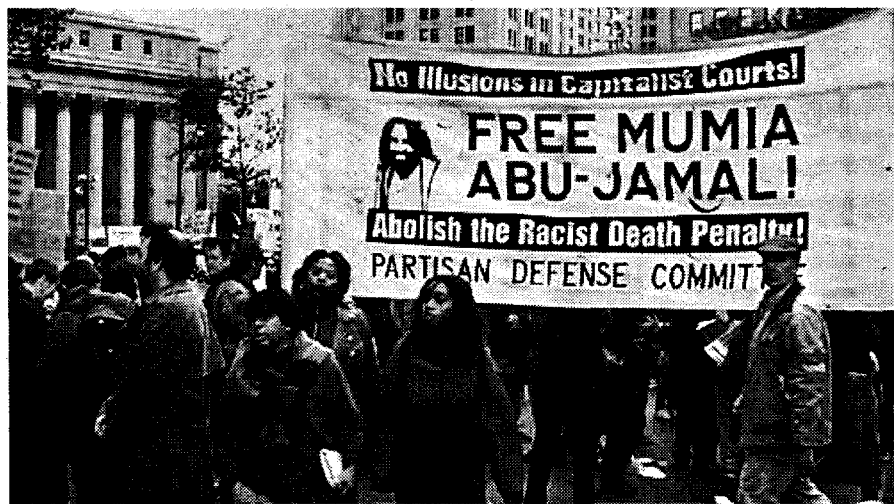
are those who have stood up for the rights of labor and blacks against this oppressive capitalist system—former Panthers like Mumia, coal miners like Jerry Dale Lowe, MOVE members. We fight for the freedom of the class-war prisoners—their fight is our fight!

At the core of this state terror machine is the racist death penalty. In this country, the death penalty is a direct legacy of slavery. It is part and parcel of the racist cop terror on the streets and the extralegal terror of the KKK. It is the lynch rope made legal. It is no accident that joining in the cops' drive for Mumia's death is the fascist National Association for the Advancement of White People. The crusade to kill Jamal is designed to sanctify this killing machine, which has already taken nearly 80 lives since January—the most in 45 years.

The Tom Ridges, the Giulianis, the Clintons—and those over there on Wall Street whom they serve—want to kill Mumia because he is a powerful spokesman for the poor and oppressed. In their eyes, he represents the spectre of black revolution. Why such concern? Because the cause of black freedom and the fight against the grinding exploitation of labor in this racist capitalist society are potential social dynamite if combined.

The PDC is a class-struggle legal and social defense organization. Guided by the principles of the early International Labor Defense, we stand unconditionally on the side of the working people and their allies in struggle against their exploiters and oppressors. We place *all* our faith in the power of the masses and *no faith whatever* in the justice of the courts.

There are some who build deadly illusions in the courts which have condemned Mumia to die, promoting the call for a new trial for Jamal. Among



WV Photo

PDC banner on October 23. Mobilizing labor/black power to win Mumia's freedom is counterposed to reliance on Democrats, capitalist courts.

them are Al Sharpton, who also threw his weight behind the effort to make sure the Klan could rally for racist terror here today. Justice in the courts? The same courts that protected the Klan's rights while denying those who wanted to stop the KKK killers a sound permit? What the courts, Stringer, the New York Civil Liberties Union wanted was to prevent us—the masses of this city who are the Klan's intended victims—from taking the streets.

Can Mumia get a fair trial in the courts of the Dred Scott decision, which said that blacks had no rights which the white man was bound to respect, the courts which declared "separate but equal" segregation the law of the land?

Can Mumia get a fair trial in the courts that said it's irrelevant that the death penalty is racist, that said it is not unconstitutional to execute an innocent man?

Can Mumia get a fair trial in the courts that ordered the execution of the Haymarket martyrs, Sacco and Van-

zetti, the Rosenbergs—that let the racist cops who killed Eleanor Bumpurs, Michael Stewart, Anthony Baez, Amadou Diallo, Gidone Busch walk the streets to stalk their prey every day?

Can he get a fair trial in the courts that enforce the slave-labor Taylor Law? Hell no!

We say: Free Mumia! That means mobilizing now, centered on the power of the multiracial working class, the workers who run the trains, make the cars, drive the trucks, lay the pipe, move the garbage, create all the wealth in this society. The workers who, by withholding their labor, can shut this city, Philly and other cities down cold, choking off the lifeblood of this racist killing machine: capitalist profits.

To win the freedom of the class-war prisoners, to put an end to this racist killing machine of lynch ropes, gas chambers and lethal injections, means getting rid of the racist capitalist system once and for all—through workers socialist revolution. Free Mumia!

KKK Out...

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capitalist ruling class. This ruling class, a tiny minority which expropriates all the real wealth of this society, believes that everyone else has no rights which this rich, white man's government is bound to respect. This capitalist ruling class needs the homegrown Nazis of the KKK, to be deployed to crush the organizations of the working class when the masses can no longer be lulled by the lie that their interests are represented by capitalist "democracy."

The political battle required to build the labor/black mobilization which stopped the Klan from riding in NYC contains important lessons for all those who want to struggle against union-busting, racism, poverty, homelessness, war and all the

It Took Money to Drive the Klan Out of NYC

Working people, blacks, Hispanics, Asians, gays, Jews, Catholics and other minorities as well as immigrants, students and youth—all opponents of racist terror—won a stunning victory over the KKK nightriders in New York City. But that cost a lot of money. If you or your organization have not yet made a contribution, show your support for stopping the KKK by sending a contribution now, payable to the Partisan Defense Committee, earmarked "Stop the KKK." Send to: Box 99, Canal St. Station, New York, NY 10013.

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other hideous expressions of a system rooted in exploitation and racial oppression. Central is that the capitalist state is not neutral. It is the instrument for organized violence to ensure the rule of one class—the capitalists—over another class, the proletariat. As Marxists, we know that the bourgeois state at its core consists of special armed bodies of men—the cops, the military, the prison system and the whole "justice system"—whose job is to protect the profits and rule of the capitalists and to repress the workers. All historical experience has shown that the working class cannot reform the state and use it in its own interests but must create its own state, a workers state. The revolutionary fight for proletarian state power is the only road to black freedom and the emancipation of labor and all the oppressed.

We didn't invent the perspective on which our anti-Klan mobilizations are based. It is the concrete application of the experience of the Bolshevik Party which led the first, and only, successful working-class revolution in history—the October Revolution of 1917. Like the pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucracy in this country which undermines the gains that were won through hard class struggle, the gains of the Russian Revolution

were betrayed by the Stalinist bureaucracy which hijacked the exercise of political power by the workers. Paralleling the policies of the AFL-CIO tops, the Stalinists pursued class collaboration, not internationalist class struggle. Ultimately, this led to the destruction of the Soviet Union by the forces of imperialism and domestic counterrevolution in 1991-92.

Since then, the imperialist rulers have

been celebrating the "death of communism." But communism isn't dead—it is the program that expresses the class interests of the workers and oppressed, growing out of their aspirations and struggles for a society of genuine equality and social justice. What is needed to realize those aspirations is a workers party, which can bring the consciousness to the working class of its social power and historic interests in fighting the rule of capital and every manifestation of the barbarity of this system. What is needed is a workers revolution, which will break the power of the few and liberate the many—the working people and their allies—who will employ the wealth created by their labor for the benefit of the majority both in America and around the globe. On October 23, thousands of New York's working people and minorities got a small taste of that workers power. ■

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