

“Right to Life” Ghouls and the Schiavo Case

MARCH 28—The spectacle of political vultures hovering over the body of Terri Schiavo has rightly disgusted millions. A CBS News poll last week revealed that an overwhelming 82 percent of the public wants the government *out* of this tragedy. This woman, irremediably brain-damaged 15 years ago, has been exploited by a despicable media frenzy and by ghoulish “right to life” reactionaries—including the Christian right and the Catholic church—who would impose their theocratic dictates on society. Terri Schiavo’s husband Michael, who has spent almost all of a \$700,000 settlement on her care, has been dragged through the mud by self-righteous politicians and sinister anti-abortion bigots.

With arrogant imperial power, President Bush and a

Congressional posse of all-purpose reactionaries have trampled human decency and their own laws in the service of a bizarre Christian fundamentalist agenda. Michael Schiavo spoke for the many thousands who face similar decisions every year in the U.S. when he said: “What kind of government is this? This is a human being. This is not right, and I’m telling everybody you better call your congressman, because they’re going to run your life.”

We say this capitalist state has no right to decide who shall live and who shall die. That is why we also

oppose the death penalty on principle. The state has no business interfering into *any* private, personal decisions. Terri Schiavo is in a persistent vegetative state from which she can never recover. She had told her husband Michael she didn’t want to be kept alive artificially, tied to tubes. That should have been the end of it.

But not for the monsters currently running the American empire. In the name of a mythical god, in the name of patriarchy, and in the name of the capitalist state, these politicians are using Terri Schiavo’s tragedy as another wedge to crush a woman’s fundamental right to abortion. In a last-ditch effort to circumvent the court rulings, Florida governor Jeb Bush unsuccessfully tried

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Free Jose Padilla and All the Detainees! U.S. Outsources Torture

That destruction, vicious racist repression and even torture is what U.S. imperialism metes out in the name of “freedom”—from the colonial occupation of the Philippines in the first half of the 20th century to the 1985 bombing of the Philadelphia MOVE commune, from Korea to Vietnam, and Central America to South Central L.A.—is nothing new. But torture is now, blatantly, U.S. policy. The zealots in the Bush administration think their cynical “war on terror” is a license to shred every civil liberty, every right working people have fought for and every rational value emanating from the Enlightenment. New attorney general Alberto Gonzales baldly stated in January that the ban on “cruel, unusual and inhumane treatment” does not apply to “aliens overseas.” Even by the U.S. government’s own admission, at least 28 prisoners have died as a result of confirmed or suspected homicide in Afghanistan and Iraq. BBC News reports that children as young as eleven years old were held at Abu Ghraib. “I don’t care if we’re holding 15,000 innocent civilians. We’re winning the war,” said Major General Wodjakowski, who in 2003 was the second-most senior army general in Iraq.

To paraphrase the infamous pre-Civil War *Dred Scott* decision, even U.S. citizens have no rights the government feels bound to respect. Jose Padilla, a U.S. citizen, was seized at Chicago’s O’Hare airport on 8 May 2002. First the Bush administration held Padilla for a month as a “material witness” in the September 11 grand jury investigation; then they declared him an “enemy combatant” on the basis of outlandish allegations that he had been thinking of trying to build and set off a radioactive “dirty bomb.” He has



Concentration camp at Guantánamo Bay, part of global network of U.S. torture centers.

been locked up in a military brig in South Carolina for almost three years without charges or recourse to a hearing or trial. In a series of rulings last June 28 on the cases of Padilla, Yasser Esam Hamdi and the Guantánamo detainees, the U.S. Supreme Court dismissed Padilla’s case on the outrageous pretext that it was filed in the wrong federal court. But on February 28, a federal judge in South Carolina gave the government 45 days to either charge Padilla with a crime or release him. The government announced it would appeal, dismissing the court order with the same contempt with which it shreds

the Bill of Rights.

Hamdi, another U.S. citizen, was picked up in Afghanistan in 2001 and held in a military brig in Norfolk, Virginia. Asserting that “a state of war is not a blank check for the president,” the June 28 Supreme Court decision ruled that Hamdi could not be held as an “enemy combatant” indefinitely, but should have a “fair opportunity to rebut the Government’s factual assertions before a neutral decision maker.” The U.S. government responded by deporting Hamdi to his home in Saudi Arabia, upon Hamdi’s agreement to renounce his U.S. citizenship.

What’s posed here is the government’s attempt to inscribe permanently into the American system of criminal justice the right to disappear political opponents—the hallmark of the police state dictatorships the U.S. has propped up around the world. In this pursuit, Bush & Co. ooze contempt for any court ruling that even modestly stands in the way of untrammelled executive power. Even a number of conservative Republicans have now joined with the ACLU in seeking to rescind certain provisions of the USA-Patriot Act. But the liberals of the ACLU do not unambiguously oppose the new arsenal of “anti-terror” repressive measures. The new coalition, Patriots to Restore Checks and Balances, declares: “We agree that much of the Patriot Act is necessary to provide law enforcement with the resources they need to defeat terrorism.” The Democrats have supported Bush in his “war on terror” at every step, from passing the USA-Patriot Act and the recent Intelligence Reform Act to endorsing the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq.

Padilla and Hamdi, because they were American citizens, at least had a chance to challenge in the courts their seizure and detention without charge by the U.S. government. In so doing, the Padilla and Hamdi cases opened a crack in the fortress wall, enabling other challenges to the plights of countless individuals rounded up and disappeared in the “war on terror” and incarcerated in hellholes worldwide.

The Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee, a legal and social defense organization associated with the SL, filed *amici curiae* (friends of the court) briefs for Padilla in the Second Circuit Court of Appeals and the U.S. Supreme Court. Our brief declared:

“The Executive has imposed martial law on Jose Padilla, a citizen, on the pretext of an alleged ‘war on terrorism’ which is in fact not a military conflict but a political agenda.... The treatment of Padilla is

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IG: Norden's Regression of Consciousness

25 March 2005

Dear *Workers Vanguard*,

As Lenin said, "A political party's attitude towards its own mistakes is one of the most important and surest ways of judging how earnest the party is and how it fulfills *in practice* its obligations towards its *class* and the *working people*." This Bolshevik practice guided us in publishing our candid, self-critical accounts of external challenges and internal problems we have faced since the destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-1992, most recently in "A Hard Look at Recent Party Work and Current Tasks—Spartacist League 12th National Conference" (*WV* No. 841, 4 February).

Our earlier article in *Spartacist* ([English-language edition] No. 58, Spring 2004) on our last International Communist League conference drew a predictably windy and dishonest response from Jan Norden and his Internationalist Group (IG). Norden's specialty is "squid tactics": squirting large quantities of ink to conceal his own flight from Trotskyism. The article, "Post-Soviet SL/ICL: New Zigzags on the Centrist Road" (*Internationalist*, Summer 2004), is a textbook example of the IG's method.

A 1994 Spartacist League/U.S. conference document wrongly asserted: "The Chinese Stalinists, with the support of Japanese and significant sections of American imperialism, are moving to attempt a cold restoration of capitalism from above" (*Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 51, Autumn 1994). This formulation was corrected in our 2003 international conference document, which noted: "The Stalinist bureaucracy is incapable of a cold, gradual restoration of capitalism from above. A capitalist counterrevolution in China would be accompanied by the collapse of Stalinist bonapartism and the political fracturing of the ruling Communist Party. What would emerge from the collapse of a Stalinist bonapartist regime, i.e., capitalist restoration or proletarian political revolution, would depend on the outcome of the struggle of counterposed forces" (quoted in "The Fight for Revolutionary Continuity in the Post-Soviet World," *Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 58, Spring 2004).

In response, the IG blustered that they had always taken "the ICL to task for their anti-Trotskyist line." The IG screams that the 1994 China formulation, among oth-

ers, is proof of our "creeping Shachtmanism"—i.e., repudiation of the unconditional military defense of the deformed workers states, including China. Of course, the IG knows this to be a lie, as the SL (unlike the IG) regularly publishes articles and holds public meetings calling for defense of China. Moreover, Norden, who was then a full member of the SL Central Committee and ICL International Executive Committee, voted *for* the 1994 formulation—a fact conveniently airbrushed out of the *Internationalist* diatribe! But honesty matters no more to the IG than political clarification, because they regard political consciousness as irrelevant to revolutionary struggle.

The mass of workers involved in militant class struggles today in defense of their livelihoods, as well as radical youth, no longer identify their struggles with Marxism or the ideals of socialism. The IG is willfully blind to this *historic retrogression* in political consciousness and shrugs:

"Moreover, the impact on working-class consciousness is quite uneven. In West Europe, workers in the large Communist parties and CP-led unions had reformist consciousness before the demise of the Soviet Union, and by and large they still do today. American workers generally support the capitalist Democratic Party—what would a qualitative step backwards in their consciousness mean. In much of the semi-colonial world, on the other hand, many workers still 'haven't got the news' of the supposed 'death of communism'."

Presumably the IG was napping while, e.g., the French Communist Party lost unquestioned allegiance of the massive CGT unions and slid from winning roughly 25 percent of electoral votes to less than 5 percent, including losing ground and supporters to Le Pen's fascistic National Front. In Italy, Rifondazione Comunista and the historically Communist trade-union federation (CGIL) have hemorrhaged members to anarchists and syndicalists. As for much of the semicolonial world, it is not the radical nationalists or reformist Communist parties but reactionary Islamic fundamentalism and other murderous religious nationalisms that have absorbed social discontent among the poor and oppressed and emerged as dangerous political forces.

The bourgeoisies of the world have learned something from the working-class defeats of recent years, but the world proletariat has not even fully grasped the enormity of the defeat embodied in the destruction of the Soviet Union. The IG denies this reality the better to capitulate to it and ingratiate itself in truly alien milieus. Thus they sneer at the ICL's proud assertion to be among the foremost opponents of Islamic fundamentalism. In a demonstration initiated by the IG at New York's Hunter College at the time of the U.S. war in Afghanistan in 2001, they dared not even mention the role of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan in combatting an Islamic fundamentalist insurgency in the 1980s, much less that

the ICL (which Norden & Co. were members of at the time) *hailed the Red Army* against the CIA's *mujahedin* cutthroats (see "IG Disappears Red Army Fight Against Islamic Reaction in Afghanistan," *WV* No. 772, 11 January 2002).

Rejecting the ABCs of Marxism, the IG equates class struggle with communist class consciousness. Asserting not much has changed since capitalist counterrevolution in the former Soviet Union, they state: "A dozen years later, history has not ended, the U.S. empire is bogged down in the aftermath of its second war on Iraq, and the class struggle continues unabated." Class struggle predates capitalist society and will be around for as long as class society continues to exist. If class struggle were simply synonymous with communist consciousness, then every strike and protest would augur a revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist order. Marx himself pointed out that even some bourgeois ideologues accept the class struggle to the dictatorship of the proletariat to open the road to an international socialist society.

Ignoring the distinction between a class in itself and a class *for* itself that fights consciously for its own rule, the IG rejects the statement from our "Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program" (*Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 54, Spring 1998):

"Trotsky's assertion in the 1938 Transitional Program that 'The world political situation as a whole is chiefly characterized by a historical crisis of the leadership of the proletariat' predates the present deep regression of proletarian consciousness. The reality of this post-Soviet period adds a new dimension to Trotsky's observation. The only way in which this regression can be overcome and the working class can become a class *for* itself, i.e., fighting for socialist revolution, is to reforge an international Leninist-Trotskyist party as the leadership of the working class. Marxism must once again win the allegiance of the proletariat."

If the undoing of the Russian Revolution had no significant impact, then conversely the IG must also believe that the working-class seizure of power in 1917 was no big deal. But Marxism gained hegemony within the left wing of the workers movement internationally particularly under the impact of the victory of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution. The ICL is dedicated to the purpose of leading new October Revolutions and to that end strives to build parties that Lenin and Trotsky would recognize as their own. We try to be honest in self-examination and public correction of errors, as we are in polemics against political opponents, because that quality is essential to a party that intends to lead a cadre of critically thinking workers to reorganize society on a socialist basis; we know if we fall short in our attempts, the likelihood of failure of proletarian revolution increases. The IG's dishonesty fools only these legends in their own minds.

A.P.

Medicine and Religious Superstition

In capitalist society, there is a monstrous contradiction between the ability of medical science to qualitatively ease suffering and the social conditions that keep these benefits from most of humanity. Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky, speaking on Soviet radio, outlined the Marxist understanding that science and technology, including the relative advances of modern medicine, exist not in a vacuum but in class society with all its social deformations, including backward religious superstitions.



TROTSKY



LENIN

Just as inside the hull of a steamship impenetrable partitions are placed so that in the event of an accident the ship will not sink all at once, so also in man's consciousness there are numberless impenetrable partitions: in one sector, or even in a dozen sectors, you can find the most revolutionary scientific thinking; but beyond the partition lies philistinism of the highest degree. This is the great significance of Marxism, as thought that generalizes all human experience: that it helps to break down these internal partitions of consciousness through the integrity of its world outlook....

Technology and science have their own logic—the logic of the cognition of nature and the mastering of it in the interests of man. But technology and science develop not in a vacuum but in human society, which consists of classes. The ruling class, the possessing class, controls technology and through it controls nature. Technology in itself cannot be called either militaristic or pacifistic. In a society in which the ruling class is militaristic, technology is in the service of militarism.

It is considered unquestionable that technology and science undermine superstition. But the class character of society sets substantial limits here too. Take America. There, church sermons are broadcast by radio, which means that the radio is serving as a means of spreading prejudices. Such things don't happen here, I think—the Society of Friends of Radio watches over this, I hope? [*Laughter and applause*] Under the socialist system science and technology as a whole will undoubtedly be directed against religious prejudices, against superstition, which reflect the weakness of man before man or before nature. What, indeed, does a "voice from heaven" amount to when there is being broadcast all over the country a voice from the Polytechnical Museum? [*Laughter*]

—Leon Trotsky, "Radio, Science, Technology, and Society" (1 March 1926), printed in *Problems of Everyday Life* (Monad Press, 1973)

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Down With Racist Frame-Up of RNC Protester Jamal Holiday!

We reprint below a leaflet in support of Jamal Holiday issued by the Partisan Defense Committee on March 18 and distributed at the New York demonstration against the occupation of Iraq on March 19. Jamal Holiday, the last protester against the Republican National Convention (RNC) still in jail, has spent seven months locked away in Rikers Island. Facing up to seven years in prison on felony assault charges, on March 21 Holiday agreed to a plea bargain, pleading guilty to a lesser felony charge of attempted assault. When he is released from jail on April 7, Holiday will face one year of "intensive supervision" probation, after which the felony will be reduced to a misdemeanor. Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly railed that the plea bargain was "outrageous" because it "does not include any jail time." Holiday should never have spent a moment in jail to begin with. In the eyes of the working class Jamal Holiday committed no crime!

Of the 1,806 protesters arrested during the RNC, some 10 percent of the cases are still pending. Another protester, Josh Banno, also faces up to seven years on trumped-up felony charges of assaulting a police officer. Banno faces additional charges of loitering, riot and reckless endangerment. We demand that all charges be dropped now! Hands off Josh Banno! Banno's trial is scheduled to begin on April 5 in New York Supreme Court. Fill the courtroom to show your support! The PDC has donated \$100 to Josh Banno's defense fund. Send your donations, check or money order made out to Josh Banno, to: Law Office of Shroff, 350 Broadway, Ste. 700, New York, NY 10013.

Jamal Holiday is a political prisoner and victim of the brutal police repression during the protests against the Republican National Convention this past summer. Holiday, a young black man arrested during these protests, spent his 20th birthday behind bars. On August 30, Holiday was part of the Poor People's

March when a plainclothes cop drove an unmarked motor scooter into the crowd of demonstrators, striking at least one woman. The protesters reacted in defense against this apparently crazed individual. As the video of the incident shows, Jamal told the police who came on the scene, "He just ran over people." The cops then ordered Holiday and other

innocence and that his actions were an elementary act of self-defense of himself and other protesters. Recently, CBS 2 News aired footage showing several cops beating and arresting three black men handing out leaflets in Times Square on March 9. The newscaster then named one of the cops in the video as William Sample and pointed out that this is the same cop

finish. It was no accident that the cops picked the heavily minority Poor People's March for their potentially deadly provocation. In video footage shown in a court hearing on March 17, the district attorney and two detectives interrogated Holiday (with no defense attorney present!) about what political groups he belongs to, what other marches he attended during the RNC and what kind of political literature he has at home. This proves that the D.A. was primarily concerned with Holiday's political beliefs and associations. The D.A. told Holiday that his case relates indirectly to terrorism because of a flyer for a Palestinian rights event taken from him when he was arrested. The leaflet was issued by Al-Awda, the Palestinian Right to Return Coalition which the D.A. maliciously equated with *Al Qaeda*! Holiday's court hearing also revealed that the FBI was among his many interrogators the night of his arrest. Holiday's case makes obvious that the government's new "red scare" equates dissent with "terrorism" and treats protesters like the "enemy within." Holiday's bail was raised from \$50,000 to \$250,000 based in part on the fact that political literature was found in his home.

The bourgeois state, with its cops and courts is not some "neutral" agency which serves society as a whole, but rather exists to defend the class rule and profits of the capitalists against those they exploit and oppress. The cops' role is to break workers strikes, and beat, kill and frame up black people and other minorities. The courts, which routinely whitewash these racist terrorists—as seen in the acquittal of the cops who, in February 1999, gunned down Amadou Diallo—and carry out the frame-ups of black militants and other leftists, cannot be relied upon to mete out justice. The case of Jamal Holiday is a racist political witchhunt! While the stakes are not as high, it recalls the political vendetta against Mumia Abu-Jamal, the courageous innocent death row prisoner, journalist, former Black

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Demonstrators arrested during RNC in New York City were held at Pier 57, abandoned bus barn with no windows or ventilation.

protesters to leave the vicinity. Holiday was arrested the following day at another protest by police who claimed surveillance cameras showed him to be wearing the same clothing (a baseball cap and T-shirt) as an individual filmed kicking the undercover provocateur at the August 30 march. He now faces up to seven years in prison on felony assault charges. **Free Jamal Holiday!**

Despite attempts to get Holiday to plead guilty, he has bravely asserted his

who was filmed driving his scooter into the crowd at the Poor People's March during the RNC. CBS 2 News also stated that Sample has received a promotion and showed Mayor Michael Bloomberg commending Sample for a job well done at the RNC protest!

Jamal Holiday's trial will begin soon. The evidentiary hearings currently being held in New York Supreme Court show that Holiday's case is a political and racist frame-up and provocation from start to

Drop the Charges Against Antiwar Protesters!

We reprint below a protest letter sent by the Partisan Defense Committee to the Cook County State's Attorney on March 22 in response to arrests and police intimidation at the March 19 Chicago rally against the occupation of Iraq. A PDC protest letter was also sent to the Suffolk County D.A. following arrests and police assaults against antiwar protesters in Boston on March 20. Three of those arrested in Boston, Michael Long, Jamie Phillips and an unnamed minor, face a slew of charges including felony assault, resisting arrest and malicious destruction of property. In New York, some 30 people were arrested in protest actions outside military recruitment stations in Manhattan and Brooklyn on March 19. On the same day in San Francisco, nine protesters were arrested in the downtown area. We demand that all charges against the antiwar protesters be dropped now!

The Partisan Defense Committee strongly protests the arrests of Andy Thayer and at least four other demonstrators at the March 19 antiwar rally

commemorating the second anniversary of the invasion of Iraq. Thayer, prominent Chicago activist and one of the organizers of the demonstration, was specifically targeted. As a result of simply voicing their opposition to the occupation of Iraq, these protesters now face bogus disorderly conduct charges. These arrests were nothing more than a vindictive move against those who dared assemble in an area deemed off-limits to free speech by the Daley administration.

As we stated in our letter of March 5 demanding that the protesters be granted a permit to march down Michigan Avenue, "In the name of the 'war on terror,' the government wants to squash any expression of dissent as the U.S. continues its brutal imperialist occupation of Iraq while at home the government wages war on immigrants, labor and black people."

The massive mobilization of police at this demonstration, which included Illinois State Police in riot gear, was intended to intimidate all those who wished to protest the death and destruc-



SL/SYC contingent at L.A. protest against Iraq occupation, March 19.

tion meted out by U.S. forces occupying Iraq. Such intimidation comes in the context of increased attacks by the Bush White House, fully supported by

the Democrats, on civil liberties.

We demand that all charges against the March 19 protesters be dropped immediately!

Brazil: Lula's Popular Front and the Left

The following article is translated from *Le Bolchévique* No. 170 (March 2005), published by the *Ligue Trotskyste de France*, section of the *International Communist League*.

LE BOLCHEVIK

PARIS, February 8—Over 100,000 anti-globalization protesters gathered for the fifth World Social Forum (WSF) held in Porto Alegre, Brazil, in opposition to “neoliberalism” and against the occupation of Iraq, among other things. The WSF was directly financed by capitalist institutions and by the bourgeois politicians who are their water boys. (This was also the case for the European Social Forums in France and Britain.) Over 1.7 million euros (about \$2.3 million) were donated by NGOs like the Ford Foundation. Brazil’s federal government run by the Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT—Workers Party) of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva contributed 2 million euros. Bourgeois politicians of all kinds also participated in the WSF. A message from [French] president Chirac was read and the two big stars were the president of Brazil, Lula, and the president of Venezuela, Hugo Chávez. As Marxists we are opposed to these social forums because they are class-collaborationist formations including the direct involvement of bourgeois organizations and bourgeois state agencies.

The capitalists and their bourgeois politicians finance and appear in the social forums to polish up their anti-American, anti-Bush credentials, raising their credibility to better implement attacks against workers in their own countries. So, at Porto Alegre, Lula launched a “campaign against poverty.” But let’s talk about poverty in Brazil: *favelas* (slums) surround every major city; there is racism against blacks, murder of *meninos de rua* (street kids); there are millions of landless peasants; and there is imperialist pillage and domination. Empty, cynical words from capitalist rulers won’t change that. Brazil has one of the biggest economies in Latin America. The powerful workers of the country produce all the wealth, from cars to petroleum to electricity. The workers are also the only force with the capacity to stop production and to lead struggles at the head of all the oppressed—from the landless peasants to the poor in the *favelas*—for a socialist revolution that would tear the factories out of the hands of the capitalists and establish a workers state. To serve the needs of the majority of the population it’s necessary to have a centralized and collectivized economy based on workers councils.

There is no solution to economic backwardness confined to the “national” development of capitalism. A workers revolution in Brazil would also have to be extended elsewhere in Latin America and to the United States. In the U.S., black people are a very powerful compo-

nent of the working class and, certainly, struggle by the largely black Brazilian proletariat would have an impact in the U.S. It is only with the participation of workers from imperialist states that capitalist imperialism will be destroyed and the enormous resources of those countries used in the service of all humanity.

Lula came to power in 2002 with the blessing of the Brazilian bourgeoisie because the capitalists thought that he had the authority necessary to convince workers to accept austerity measures. The balance sheet of those two years is: the dismantling of pensions, attacks on education that have led to protests on the campuses, no agrarian reform, and an enormous budgetary surplus that goes toward paying off the country’s debt to satisfy the demands of the IMF. Lula’s PT is a bourgeois workers party with a working-class base but a leadership with a pro-capitalist program. The coalition that brought Lula to power is an example



Members of Landless Peasants Movement protest in Pombos, Brazil. Killings and arrests of landless peasants have continued under Lula government.

of what is historically known as a “popular front,” i.e., a coalition of one or more workers parties in alliance with bourgeois forces. Lula’s PT even made an alliance with the Partido Liberal (Liberal Party) of the big capitalist José Alencar. We Marxists call that class collaboration—because the interests of the workers and of the capitalists are irreconcilable. Workers produce all the wealth of society and make the means of communication and transportation function. The profit from their labor power is appropriated by the capitalists who own the factories, the telecommunications companies, etc. It’s not possible for workers to fight politically in their own interests when they are politically subordinated to the bourgeoisie.

However, Lula’s coming to power was largely viewed as a victory or as a first step by organizations in France that claim to be Trotskyist. The *Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire* (LCR) wrote at the time:



Brazilian president Lula was booed by members of his own Workers Party at 2005 World Social Forum in Porto Alegre for implementing IMF austerity.

“The PT’s electoral results constitute nonetheless a defeat for neoliberalism and mean a significant change in the relationship of forces in Brazilian society” (*Inprecor*, January-February 2003). The sister organization of the LCR in Brazil is in the Democracia Socialista (DS—Socialist Democracy) tendency and is actually part of the PT. In fact, Lula’s minister of agrarian development, Miguel Rossetto, is a member of DS. Unlike

reform isn’t Lula’s priority and therefore, our comrade couldn’t make all the changes that he wanted to” (*Red*, January 2004). Far from what the JCR says, there has been less distribution of land by the Lula/Rossetto government than during the previous right-wing government, and Rossetto has blood on his hands for each landless peasant killed by the big landlords for whom the Lula government works.

Gauche Révolutionnaire (GR), affiliated with the Committee for a Workers’ International [CWI, whose U.S. affiliate is Socialist Alternative], at first also contributed to the illusions in Lula’s election, hailing a “victory of the working class” (*L’Egalité*, November-December 2002). From 1998 until recently, the GR’s comrades in Brazil built the PT, with some criticisms, from within the Socialismo Revolucionário (SR—Revolutionary Socialist) tendency. Therefore, however critical they are of the PT today, the truth is that their comrades in Brazil directly helped to put the current government in place.

Illusions in the Lula government have started to dissipate, and discontent is starting to grow among youth, workers and peasants. And obviously the opportunists in the DS, the SR, et al. have adapted to this change. A recent split in the PT reflects the level of discontent and anger with the government. The Party of Socialism and Liberty (P-SOL) was created as a result of the December 2003 expulsion of the parliament members Heloísa Helena, Babá, Luciano Genro and João Fontes, who had protested the federal government’s attacks on pensions. The P-SOL was officially formed at a conference in June 2004, and its leadership includes quite a few groups that call themselves Trotskyist. Heloísa Helena was a member of DS inside the PT and a minority of members previously in the DS are now in the P-SOL. The SR tendency was expelled from the PT at the same time as some members of the DS, and now they are also part of the P-SOL, as are some people who left the Morenoite PSTU and individuals from other groups.

The P-SOL program of reforms takes a position against imperialism, for a reduction in the workweek, etc. It even mentions the oppression of blacks and gays. But if they take a more leftist posture, it’s only to better channel the anger of youth and workers, not toward a struggle against the capitalist system and the building of a new revolutionary party, but toward the building of a reformist party to the left of the PT. The P-SOL’s program, adopted on 5-6 June 2004 during its founding national conference, says that it is necessary to build a new party because “it’s an objective necessity for those who, in the last twenty years, built a combative conception of the PT and offered the extraordinary possibility of opening the door to a Brazil without misery and exploitation, but who saw their struggles, dreams and aspirations betrayed.” The

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Pope greets fake Trotskyist Miguel Rossetto, minister of agrarian development in Lula’s government. Near left: Heloísa Helena, parliament member and founder of Workers Party split-off, P-SOL.

Down With the Victimizations! Democrats Turn the Screws on Chicago Transit Workers

CHICAGO—Bus drivers in Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 241 have been working without a contract for most of the last six years. The ATU International bureaucrats further undermined the ability of the local to struggle by placing it in receivership almost two years ago. Emboldened by the union tops' refusal to fight, the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) has carried out increasing attacks against the workers and the riding public.

With their latest threats of "doomsday" budget cuts, the CTA bosses have shown once again why they are hated not only by the CTA's multiracial, largely black workforce, but also by the broader mass of Chicago's working class and poor. The current cuts, as outlined in various scenarios, promise anything from 3,500 layoffs of transit employees, to nearly doubling the fare price, to drastic service reductions, to a combination of all three. And, in "Segregation City," it is black Chicago that is hit first and hit hardest. Under one of the CTA's "doomsday" plans, some residents of the predominantly black South Side would need to walk *four miles* to get to the nearest bus line!

The "transit crisis" is the product of a cynical feud between Democratic mayor Richard Daley and his fellow Democrat, Governor Rod Blagojevich, over how to balance the state budget. CTA president Frank Kruesi is himself a former roommate of and longtime gofer for Daley, and epitomizes the CTA bosses as a whole: incompetent, arrogant and corrupt. All these Democrats are committed to balancing their budgets on the backs of the working class, particularly the two ATU locals, 241 (bus) and 308 (rail). Now Chicago's capitalist rulers are carping that none of the "doomsday" proposals goes far enough in demanding union givebacks. A 25 March *Chicago Tribune* editorial clamors that it is time for the CTA to turn over bus routes to private firms and take an ax to the ATU pension fund.

Those who labor produce the wealth and those who produce this wealth have the power to shut down the economy. That is a fundamental truth of capitalist society. If the power of the union were brought to bear, these layoffs and cuts could be stopped colder than a Chicago winter. A strike against the CTA would win wide support throughout

the city, especially among the impoverished masses of the ghettos and barrios who are faced with all-sided attacks on their living conditions. *For free, quality mass transit!*

But far from mobilizing the union's



ATU Local 241 contract rally in Chicago, January 2003.

power, year after year the union misleaders have rolled over in the face of company attacks. After placing Local 241 in receivership in 2003, the ATU International forced a "binding arbitration" contract down the membership's throat (see "Chicago Transit Workers Under the Gun," *WV* No. 815, 5 December 2003). Since then, the local has not even had official union meetings (only infrequent "informational" sessions) because of the receivership. A typical refrain *Workers Vanguard* salesmen hear from transit workers is "what union?" This widespread cynicism derives from the union leadership's sellouts. But instead of writing off the union and the potential for organized struggle against the CTA, what is posed is a political fight against the union tops' policy of class collaboration.

Several workers have told *WV* salesmen about increased company harassment and outright firings, including about the case of Eric Hampton, a 26-year veteran bus operator and Local 241 union official. Hampton was fired in December in the midst of company hysteria about a rider "fare strike" being pushed

by Midwest Unrest, a small, local group of anarchists. A manager claimed to have overheard Hampton tell co-workers that, in the event of mass layoffs, bus drivers should consider responding by not collecting fares. This firing was a blatant

act of intimidation, meant to silence any union member who even thought about protesting the threatened layoffs, service cuts and fare hikes. Adding insult to injury, later that month a letter by ATU trustee Rodney Richmond was posted at bus garages, solidarizing with the company against the fare strike proposal, which would have drivers refusing to collect fares.

Driving a bus is a physically demanding, stressful and dangerous job. As Daley trashes public housing through the "Transformation" plan and takes aim at the city's unions, operators find themselves literally face to face with the increased misery and desperation. In the wake of this deterioration it is not surprising that physical assaults by passengers against drivers have escalated. The *Chicago Tribune* reported three attacks in little more than one month: one driver was stabbed, another pepper-sprayed and a third threatened with a box cutter. In another incident that was not reported in the main bourgeois newspapers, a driver who effectively defended himself against physical attack was fired for "conduct unbecoming" a CTA worker. Evidently

the CTA aspires to turn the clock back 100 years to the time when the Pullman Company required that all its black sleeping car porters submit to being called "George" by their clientele as an expression of abject servility.

Local 241 members have told *WV* salesmen that the International trustee has announced that the receivership will end sometime this summer. The workers must regain control of their union local and build a new leadership that will fight the attacks of the CTA bosses on the basis of a class-struggle program. Critical elements of such a program are:

Break with the Democrats! From Chicago's City Hall to the State House in Springfield, it is Democratic administrations that are waging war on the transit unions and the ghetto and barrio masses. The Democratic Party nationally, no less than the Republican Party, is a party of the class enemy. The interests of capital and labor are irreconcilable—yet the ATU, like most unions in this country, pumps hundreds of thousands of dollars into the Democratic Party.

No "binding arbitration"! The current proposed contract has again been sent to "binding arbitration" and the result promises to be a rotten deal just like the last one. Putting the contract in the hands of a "neutral" labor arbitrator, instead of mobilizing the union to fight for a worthwhile contract, means the company's demands will be rammed down the workers' throats.

No Contract, No Work! This basic union tradition has been buried by decades of sellouts. As an excuse not to strike, the labor bureaucrats point to the Illinois Public Labor Relations Act, which bans strikes if there is a "binding arbitration" clause in the union contract. Yet it is these same bureaucrats who *agree* to "binding arbitration" in contract after contract. The only strike that is "illegal" is a strike that loses. The relationship of forces between capital and labor—not words on paper—is what determines the outcome of class struggle, and the question of working-class leadership weighs heavily in that balance.

Everything of value that the workers movement has won has been achieved by mobilizing the ranks in hard-fought struggle. To unleash the enormous potential power of organized labor requires replacing the bureaucrats who pledge loyalty to the capitalist system at the expense of the membership. The political fight necessary to forge a class-struggle union leadership is part of the larger task before us—the urgent need to build a revolutionary workers party committed to the struggle to sweep away capitalism as a system. A workers government would seize control of production and industry, including transportation, and put it at the service of all working people and the oppressed. Those who labor must rule! ■

Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth Club Forums

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Speaker: Carla Wilson, Spartacist League Central Committee

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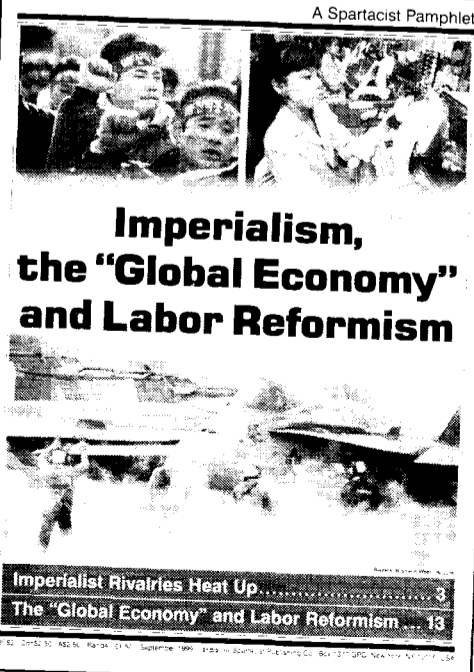
This pamphlet assesses recent changes in the world economy in a historical perspective, from the origins of modern imperialism in the late 19th century through the capitalist counterrevolution in East Europe and the former USSR and its aftermath. Reformist ideologues of "globalization" seek to obscure the role of the capitalist nation-state and the danger of interimperialist war which is inherent in capitalism, while amnestying the refusal of the labor bureaucracies to wage class struggle against their respective bourgeoisies.

Exploitation, poverty and social degradation can be eliminated only through proletarian revolutions in the imperialist centers as well as the neocolonial countries, laying the basis for an international planned socialist economy.

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Sinister "War on Terror" Prosecution Defend Steven Kurtz and Robert Ferrell!

On 11 May 2004, University of Buffalo professor and artist Steven Kurtz awoke to find his wife of 25 years, Hope, had stopped breathing. Kurtz called 911. After an unsuccessful attempt to revive his wife, one of the paramedics noticed test tubes and petri dishes Kurtz was using for his artwork. Hours later, agents of the Joint Terrorism Task Force arrived, seizing his wife's body, his house, cat and car while detaining Kurtz for questioning for 22 hours! Cordoning off the entire block around Kurtz's house, federal agents dressed in biohazard suits searched his home, impounding books, personal papers, computer and artwork.

The macabre persecution of Steven Kurtz began with the invocation of a 1989 "bio-terrorism" law expanded under the 2001 USA-Patriot Act. Even

after it was determined that Kurtz's wife had died of heart failure and that the "biological laboratory" in his home consisted only of three types of harmless bacteria and equipment to extract DNA from cells, the state convened a federal grand jury. And although the grand jury concluded that Kurtz could *not* be accused of terrorism, it argued that he and Robert Ferrell, the former chairman of the University of Pittsburgh's Department of Human Genetics, should be charged with fraudulent use of the U.S. mail and wire services. The supposed "fraud" is that Ferrell used his account with a biological supply company to obtain the bacteria for Kurtz. They were charged in Federal District Court on 8 July 2004 and await trial, facing 20 years in prison under

these outrageous charges!

So why are the Feds proceeding with this patently ludicrous prosecution against a respected artist and university professor? Steven Kurtz is a member of the internationally acclaimed Critical Art Ensemble (CAE), which is "dedicated to exploring the intersections between art, technology, radical politics and critical theory," obviously all anathema to the reactionary, bible-thumping, anti-science bigots running this country. The CAE has sought to educate the public about the politics of biotechnology. Kurtz himself noted: "I have been vocal about the way the state is using research in germ warfare. That is why they want to get me."

Artists from around the world have rallied to Kurtz's defense, noting the chilling effect of this prosecution on

those who seek to challenge U.S. government policy. Respected science magazine *Nature* (17 June 2004) noted: "As with the prosecution of some scientists in recent years, it seems that government lawyers are singling Kurtz out as a warning to the broader artistic community.... Art and science are forms of human enquiry that can be illuminating and controversial, and the freedom of both must be preserved."

The Kurtz case demonstrates that the "war on terror" has everything to do with suppressing dissent and shredding civil liberties. Drop all charges against Steven Kurtz and Robert Ferrell!

Donations to Kurtz's legal defense can be made to: CAE Defense Fund, c/o Hallwalls, 341 Delaware Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14202.

Torture...

(continued from page 1)

intended as both the precursor and legal justification for application of Executive unilateral prerogatives on a broader scale, denying due process protections in criminal prosecutions, immigration proceedings and civil challenges to government policy. It is a frontal assault on the very concepts of due process and citizenship itself. Padilla is being forcibly expatriated, confined to a civil death. The imperial Presidency's objective is nullification of First Amendment rights and a qualitative diminution of all democratic rights. The target of the Executive is any and all perceived opponents of government policy."

U.S. Imperialism's Worldwide Web of Torture

One of the Supreme Court decisions last June 28 also afforded some legal rights to the hundreds of detainees (including teenagers) incarcerated and subject to torture at the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. With a six-to-three majority, the Court ruled that the detainees have the right to file *habeas corpus* petitions challenging their imprisonment. When some of the detainees then attempted to avail themselves of the right, the Justice Department responded by claiming the Supreme Court ruling may have allowed them to file any legal papers they wanted, but since the detainees aren't citizens, they have no rights and therefore the courts are powerless to rule! On January 31, a federal court in Washington, D.C. rejected the government's Kafkaesque contentions, declaring that the detainees must be allowed to challenge their imprisonment in federal court.



Univision

Jose Padilla with relatives before his imprisonment.

Five days after the federal court ruling, the Pentagon announced that it would ship half the detainees to prisons in Afghanistan and elsewhere. The clear purpose is to get them to places where they can be tortured and disappeared without interference by the U.S. courts. An informative and chilling article headlined "One Huge U.S. Jail" (London *Guardian*, 19 March) states:

"Since September 11 2001, one of the US's chief strategies in its 'war on terror' has been to imprison anyone considered a suspect on whatever grounds. To that end it commandeered foreign jails, built cellblocks at US military bases and established covert CIA facilities that can be located almost anywhere, from an apartment block to a shipping container. The network has no visible infrastructure—no prison rolls, visitor rosters, staff lists or complaints procedures. Terror suspects are being processed in Afghanistan and in dozens of facilities in Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Jordan, Egypt, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and the British island of Diego Garcia in the

southern Indian Ocean. Those detained are held incommunicado, without charge or trial, and frequently shuttled between jails in covert air transports, giving rise to the recently coined US military expression 'ghost detainees'."

This floating population of "ghost detainees" numbers over 10,000, according to military officials.

While the U.S. has a long history of deporting refugees and others to certain torture and probable death, this policy has now been made official under the practice known as "extraordinary rendition." This practice was described by former CIA operative Robert Baer in the *Guardian* article:

"We pick up a suspect or we arrange for one of our partner countries to do it. Then the suspect is placed on civilian transport to a third country where, let's make no bones about it, they use torture. If you want a good interrogation, you send someone to Jordan. If you want them to be killed, you send them to Egypt or Syria. Either way, the US cannot be blamed as it is not doing the heavy work."

It speaks volumes about the hypocrisy of the "war on terror" that one of the countries in U.S. imperialism's global torture enterprise is none other than Syria, vilified by Washington as a "rogue" state. Canadian citizen Maher Arar was seized at JFK airport by U.S. officials and placed on a charter jet to his native Syria, where he was locked up for a year without charges and repeatedly tortured. He is now suing the U.S. for the torment he endured. In a similar case, U.S. citizen Ahmed Abu Ali was imprisoned for 20 months in Saudi Arabia, where he was held without charges and tortured. When he was finally released, he was returned to the U.S. and indicted here for supposedly conspiring with Al Qaeda.

For a Class-Struggle Fight to Defend Our Rights!

From the outset of the "war on terror," we have insisted that the government's repressive measures, directed initially at Muslims and immigrants, were an attack

on political dissent and civil liberties across the board. The outrageous prosecution and conviction of leftist attorney Lynne Stewart was a major escalation of the government's conspiracy against all our rights. As we stated in our article "Lynne Stewart, Mohamed Youssry, Ahmed Abdel Sattar Convicted—Outrage!" (WV No. 842, 18 February):

"As a government-appointed attorney for an Islamic fundamentalist cleric, Lynne Stewart was a prime target on the domestic front of the 'war on terror.' But let's be clear: black people and the working class are the ultimate target. Why? Because the politically conscious mobilization of workers and black people, in a class-divided society where the color line and the legacy of slavery prop up capitalist rule, is the combination to unlock the gate to revolutionary social change and progress."

The democratic rights under attack today were won through centuries of struggle and revolution—the parliamentary partisans in the English Civil War, the French Revolution, the U.S. Revolutionary War and the Civil War, the pitched labor battles of the 1930s and the mass movement against Jim Crow segregation in the 1950s and '60s. And they must be defended, as well, through the struggles of black people, immigrants and defenders of civil liberties welded to the power of the multiracial labor movement. What's needed is to forge a revolutionary workers party that will fight to sweep away the war criminals in the White House and Pentagon, with all their prison houses and torture chambers, as part of a socialist revolution that consigns to history the barbaric capitalist system itself. ■



WV Photo

Partisan Defense Committee and Labor Black League initiated labor-centered mobilization in Oakland, California, February 2002, in defense of immigrant rights and against "war on terror."

Partisan Defense Committee
CLASS-STRUGGLE DEFENSE NOTES

Number 31 50c Summer 2003

BRIEF OF AMICI CURIAE SPARTACIST LEAGUE
AND PARTISAN DEFENSE COMMITTEE
ON BEHALF OF JOSE PADILLA
AND GRANTING HIS WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS

In The
UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
For The Southern District of New York
Docket No. 03-2154
8/25/03

JOSE PADILLA, Dornia R. Newman,
as Next Friend of Jose Padilla,
Petitioner-Appellee-*ex-ovo*-Appellant

v.
DONALD RUMSFELD,
Respondent-Appellant-*ex-ovo*-Appellee

On Appeal from the United States District Court
for the Southern District of New York

SEE PAGE 2

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"Anti-Terror" Dragnet Threatens 13,000 with Expulsions
Stop the Deportations! 22

Class-Struggle Defense Notes No. 31, Summer 2003

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Schiavo...

(continued from page 1)

to take state custody of Terri Schiavo. In 2003, Bush similarly tried to circumvent the right to abortion by appointing a state guardian for the fetus of an indigent, mentally disabled woman who was pregnant as a result of rape. Operation Rescue founder Randall Terry today organizes for Terri's parents, while the current president of Operation Rescue and other anti-abortion groups parade before TV cameras. The Reverend Lou Sheldon of the Traditional Values Coalition, which runs vicious anti-gay campaigns, happily noted the increased contributions to his group as "the blessing that dear Terri's life is offering to the conservative Christian movement in America" (*New York Times*, 25 March).

We wrote some years ago in an article titled "In Defense of Dr. Kevorkian" (*WV* No. 593, 4 February 1994):

"The same religious fanatics who terrorize abortion clinics in the name of 'life' are a moving force to ensure that you die in agony in the name of 'god.'

"Any veterinarian will put a fatally sick dog or cat out of its misery. The opposition to applying the same elementary humanitarianism to human beings is derived from the Christian concept of the human 'soul,' which only god can take. Unless, of course, the 'soul' is one of a 'criminal'—in which case often the same bible-thumping 'pro-lifers' will campaign for your death."

Dr. Jack Kevorkian was convicted in 1999 of assisting a terminally ill patient to die. He is still in prison, though he should have never spent a day in jail.

Meanwhile, the Christian fundamentalists have taken the White House. Of course they don't care about the life of one woman. They have massacred many thousands of men, women and children in Iraq, and preside over a vast global torture network, exemplified by Abu Ghraib. They have condemned millions upon millions more—poor people, women and children—to disease, malnutrition and death in the U.S. and abroad under their cruel "ownership society,"



"Right to life" bigots converge outside Terri Schiavo's hospice in Florida.

which means, if you don't own anything, you're not part of their society. With 40 million already uninsured, this "right to life" administration is further slashing Medicare and Medicaid; "medicine for profit" means the lives of the poor are of no account.

This March a black six-month-old infant died in Texas after his breathing tube was removed under the "Texas Futile Care Law," which allows hospitals to terminate life support if there's no hope of improvement—even if the family objects. Then-governor of Texas George W. Bush had no trouble signing that law. And today, when President Bush intones "it is wisest to always err on the side of life," he's certainly not talking about the death penalty. Notorious for his scrupulous disregard of any facts or legal histories involved, he presided over 152 Texas executions.

Critic Frank Rich commented, "The Harvard Law School constitutional scholar Laurence Tribe pointed out this week that even Joe McCarthy did not go so far as this Congress and president did in conspiring to 'try to undo the processes of a state court.' But faced with McCarthyism in God's name, most Democratic leaders went into hiding and stayed silent. Prayers are no more likely to revive their spines than poor Terri Schiavo's brain"

(*New York Times*, 27 March). Of course, the Democrats, as under "born-again" Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton, play the religion card when it suits them. They have been just as faithful to their capitalist masters in enforcing the death penalty, slashing welfare, waging war and all the other necessities of maintaining capitalist class rule as their partners in the Republican Party.

The humane solution in the case of Terri Schiavo would be a swift, merciful and painless injection, a measure which is currently unavailable because of reac-

tionary laws based on religion. A doctor writing in the *San Francisco Chronicle* (25 March) described his outrage at Terri Schiavo's treatment, pointing out: "To the casual observer, when Terri Schiavo's eyes are closed, she appears to be asleep. But unlike Sleeping Beauty, Schiavo cannot be aroused. She is unable to recognize and respond to her surroundings except in one way—she can respond to noxious stimuli.... So there Terri Schiavo lies—unable to move, poked and prodded, turned and repositioned.... 'Noxious stimuli' are applied regularly to make sure she is still 'there.'"

Marxist historian Isaac Deutscher commented in his speech, "On Socialist Man" (1966), that "Trotsky, for instance, speaks of three basic tragedies—hunger, sex and death—besetting man. Hunger is the enemy that Marxism and the modern labor movement have taken on.... But is it not true that hunger or, more broadly, social inequality and oppression, have hugely complicated and intensified for innumerable human beings the torments of sex and death as well?" When the wealth, tremendous resources and medical technology of this society are put to the service of the many, not the profits of the few, we will be able to build a society, freed of cruel and crippling religious superstitions, where human life, human worth and human dignity count. ■



Michael and Terri Schiavo on their wedding day.

Holiday...

(continued from page 3)

Panther and MOVE supporter, who was targeted by the cops and sentenced to death because he was and is an outspoken fighter for the oppressed. The capitalist rulers seek to execute Mumia in order to send a chilling message to all those who challenge vicious cop repression in the ghettos, who stand up for labor rights on the picket lines as well as those who protest imperialist mass murder from Afghanistan to Iraq. **There is no justice in the capitalist courts! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal now! Abolish the racist death penalty!**

The Partisan Defense Committee, the

legal and social defense organization affiliated with the Spartacist League, champions cases and causes in the interests of the whole of the working people. Youth, workers and all opponents of racist capitalism must defend the courageous young class-war prisoner Jamal Holiday. Fill the courtroom to show your support! Organizers of last summer's RNC protests have a special responsibility to make themselves heard and come forward in defense of Jamal Holiday! An injury to one is an injury to all! What the government wants to get away with is the ability to label any and all political opponents as "violent" or "terrorists"—categories that will provide the state with a license to suspend democratic rights, criminalize polit-

ical activity and engage in legalized murder. Whatever rights we have under this oppressive capitalist order administered by both the Democratic and Republican parties, were won through tumultuous class and social struggle. Our rights must be defended through the struggles of black people, immigrants and defenders of civil liberties welded to the power of the multiracial labor movement.

* * * * *

In October 2004, the PDC began sending monthly stipends to Jamal Holiday from our class-war prisoner defense fund

and will continue to do so for the duration of his probation. The PDC's class-war prisoner stipend program continues a tradition of the early Communist movement when the International Labor Defense supported labor militants and other class-war prisoners in an act of elementary solidarity with victims of capitalist injustice. Currently we send a modest monthly stipend to 16 class-war prisoners, including to innocent death row prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. Become a PDC sustainer! Contributions can be sent to: PDC, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013. ■

A Spartacist Pamphlet

First published in 1978, this pamphlet provides a detailed historical and theoretical account of Lenin's struggle for a vanguard party. Includes: "In Defense of Democratic Centralism"

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Rwanda...

(continued from page 12)

Since September 11, the Bush gang has extended the "war on terror" to Africa, opening a military base in Djibouti and "anti-terrorist command centers" in Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda. U.S. forces have assisted military operations in the Sahel, the buffer zone between the oil fields in North Africa and the Gulf of Guinea. Over the next ten years, Africa is projected to become the U.S.' second largest supplier of oil after the Near East. France has responded by strengthening ties with oil rich countries in North and West Africa, undercutting American policies in the UN, and aggressively intervening in its "spheres of influence," for example the Ivory Coast.

Imperialist Lies, Colonial Guilt: Causes of the Rwandan Genocide

The cause of the Rwandan genocide has been the subject of enormous, deliberate obfuscation. The most vulgar example is the mantra of "age-old tribal rivalries." The Hutu and Tutsi are not tribes—a word applied to Africa with careless indiscretion—but share a common language, territory and, in parts of Rwanda, culture. Journalists often refer to the "Hutu genocide of the Tutsi," in a tropical rendition of the Goldhagen thesis that Germans bear "collective guilt" for the Holocaust. This distortion has provided a cover for mass reprisals against the Hutu. The driving force behind the genocide was fundamentally political. This was a systematic plan of eradication targeting Hutu opponents of the regime and the entire Tutsi civilian population—the potential base of support for an invading Tutsi-led army from Uganda. But it would not have occurred without the legacy of German and Belgian colonialism, without the role of the UN and without the direct military support of French imperialism.

Two myths circulate about the Hutu and Tutsi. The first is that the division has its origins in an invasion of Rwanda by irca-working, pastoral peoples from North East Africa who conquered and then subjugated the indigenous inhabitants. No archeological or linguistic evidence exists to support such claims: metallurgy first appeared in the region around the sixth century B.C.; pastoral peoples have existed in this part of Central Africa for at least 2,000 years. This myth was first used by the colonial powers to justify fortifying the rule of a "Caucasoid Hamatic" Tutsi over the "Bantu" Hutu. Africans were supposedly so primitive and savage that the complex civilization of pre-colonial Rwanda must have been imported.

The second myth is that the Hutu-Tutsi division was completely fabricated by colonialism. The main promoter of this African nationalist fairytale is the current Tutsi-dominated government in Kigali, the Rwandan capital, and its foreign defenders. By asserting that these social divisions were imposed entirely from outside, the current Kigali regime can pose as an opponent of ethnic chauvinism while continuing to viciously persecute its Hutu adversaries.

Following the German conquest of Rwanda in the late 19th century, a complex set of social relationships involving clientage, kinship and clan ties that had developed over several centuries was reduced to bipolar Tutsi-Hutu terms of racial dominance. German and then Belgian colonialism greatly strengthened the power of the Tutsi chiefs, eliminated all Hutu office holders and assisted the Tutsi monarchy in conquering the north of the country. Redefining the pre-existing divisions in racial terms, the Belgian colonialists and Catholic church limited access to education, administrative positions and most jobs to the Tutsi "master race." Collective labour for the state became a Hutu obligation.

The resulting system of "dual colonialism" was a hybrid of direct and indirect rule, where the colonial state employed



Interviews

Theoneste Bagosora, key figure in the akazu faction, widely viewed as having masterminded the April-June 1994 genocide in Rwanda.



interet-general.info

the Tutsi aristocracy to extract taxes and labour from the Hutu peasantry. Following independence from Belgium in 1962, a Hutu-chauvinist political party came to power that had fully assimilated the racial outlook of their colonial masters. This avowedly "Hutu Power" state instituted systematic discrimination against the Tutsi and launched repeated pogroms.

Like everywhere else in the colonial world, the various ploys of the imperialist rulers served to twist and distort social relations. The imperialist partition of Africa undermined the formation of indigenous property-owning classes while integrating tribal structures and chieftainships into the state apparatus. Following independence, the new African states inherited societies composed of numerous linguistic and cultural groups, often pitted against each other by the divide-and-rule strategy of colonialism. Maintaining and strengthening tribal institutions, these African nationalist regimes were locked into the politics of ethnic dominance and its murderous consequences.

The Rwandan Civil War: Setting the Stage

Political repression in Rwanda and neighbouring Burundi during the 1960s and '70s produced several waves of exiles into Tanzania, the Congo and Uganda. By the late 1980s, there was a large Rwandan diaspora throughout central Africa. Many survived for decades by scraping out an existence in permanent "resettlement" camps. Often denied citizenship and access to farmland, Rwandan refugees were the target of xenophobic attacks. In Uganda, Rwandan Tutsi exiles played a central role in the guerrilla army that brought Yoweri Museveni, a key American ally, to power in the mid 1980s.

In 1990, the Tutsi-led Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) invaded Rwanda from Uganda in order to overthrow the existing regime and forcibly repatriate tens of thousands of refugees. While the RPF's first advances ended disastrously, by 1993 Rwandan government forces were

facing defeat. As the RPF moved into the country, they killed civilians, looted and impressed youth into forced labour. By the beginning of 1993, some 950,000 people had fled its advance—roughly one in seven Rwandans—creating massive social dislocation. On both sides of the civil war, access to and control of land was a driving issue.

Internally, the Rwandan government faced mounting pressure for democratic reform. Rwanda had been in a protracted economic crisis since the late 1980s, largely due to the plummeting of coffee prices on the world market. One of the ten poorest countries in the world, 90 percent of its population engaged in agriculture. In August of 1993, the government, the RPF and the opposition signed a "power sharing" agreement, the Arusha Accord, which temporarily put an end to the fighting. Elements around Rwandan president Juvenal Habyarimana then stalled on the implementation of a coalition government with the RPF, insisting on the inclusion of rabidly anti-Tutsi politicians from the fascistic CDR (Coalition for the Defense of the Republic). Hutu-extremist radio was urging a "final solution" to crush all of the Tutsi "cockroaches." The situation further deteriorated in October 1993, when Melchior Ndadaye, the first Hutu president of Burundi, was assassinated. Following a wave of ethnic violence in Burundi, 200,000 desperate Hutu refugees fled across the Rwandan border. The stage was set.

The Rwandan Genocide Begins

On April 6, 1994, the plane of the Rwandan president was shot down, most likely by Hutu-extremist forces in the military. This signaled the start of the killing. The central force behind the genocide was the *akazu*, which means "little house" in Kinyarwanda. A military and government faction centered on the family of the president's wife, this grouping had long enjoyed substantial French backing. Like many African ruling groups, its privilege derived almost entirely from control of state power, which allowed it

to skim foreign aid, tax agricultural exports, shake down local businesses and run smuggling operations. This grouping saw the power-sharing agreement with the RPF and the prospect of an open election as a direct threat to its existence as a core element of the state apparatus.

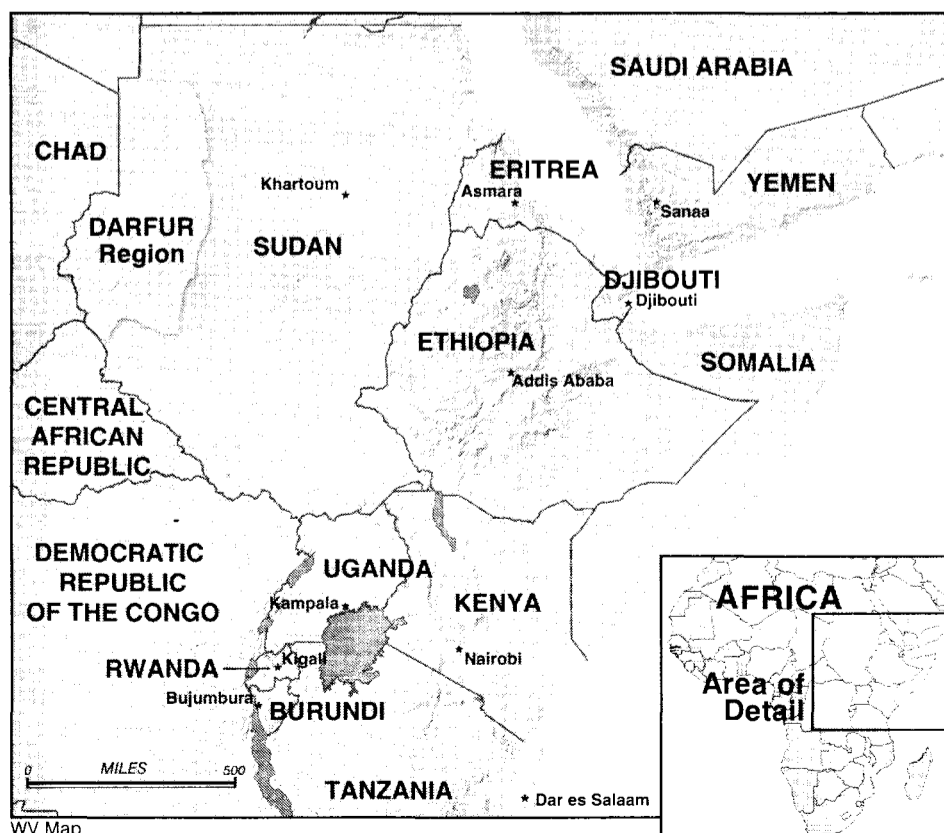
During the first stage of the genocide, the elite presidential guard assassinated opposition figures, especially moderate Hutu from the south of the country. Then the death squads of the *Interahamwe* ("those who attack together") moved through the countryside, often mobilizing landless peasants and refugees. The *Interahamwe* had originally been established as the youth group of the main government party. The orders were given by the *akazu*. Catholic clergy and schoolteachers played a key role in identifying Tutsi victims. Hundreds of thousands of Rwandans, maybe more, took part in this minutely choreographed savagery. There was scattered resistance, especially in the south. Some Hutu refused to participate, hiding Tutsi. But these instances were exceptional. Others saved friends or colleagues and then joined the mass pogroms.

It torments the intellect that so many Hutu killed their neighbours, friends, lovers, families. In a country plummeting into anarchy, torn apart by four years of civil war, untold numbers faced starvation. Desperate and driven out of their homes by the RPF advance, many killed for land and cattle. With a gun to their head, some killed in order to save their own lives. Others feared that the return of the Tutsi armed forces would lead to the reestablishment of the monarchy and the loss of what little land they had left. Decades of pogroms, chauvinist propaganda and interethnic murder have created societies in central Africa where social conflict plays itself out in the grim dialectic of racial slaughter. This is the ultimate legacy of colonial rule.

Genocide and the Marxist View of History

In a letter to a Russian leftist, Marx's life-long collaborator Friedrich Engels wrote: "But history is about the most cruel of all goddesses, and she leads her triumphal car over heaps of corpses, not only in war, but also in 'peaceful' economic development" (Letter to Nikolai Danielson, 24 February 1893). Engels is *not* writing about genocide. He is explaining how the material, scientific and cultural gains that humanity has made under class society—from the Egyptian pyramids to modern industry—have come at terrific cost, consuming the lives of untold numbers of the toiling classes. Every monument to bourgeois civilization is a monument to barbarism—no wonder Africans sometimes speak of capitalism as a form of cannibalism. But Marx and Engels' great insight was that, with the advent of science and modern industry, this terrific suffering is no longer historically necessary.

By exponentially increasing the productivity of human labour, industrialization has the potential to eliminate want and scarcity—the struggle over the basic means of survival—which is the origin of man's oppression of other humans. A centralized, rationally planned economy



could address the unequal distribution of wealth internationally and draw the billions of poor and desperately impoverished around the world into the economic, scientific, cultural and artistic work of creating a fundamentally new society. However, this potential is crippled by the capitalist system, where the application of technology is enslaved to the pursuit of profits, and where competition between capitalists produces economic anarchy. The industrial working class, whose labour creates almost all wealth, has both the power and historic responsibility to rip the means of production out of the bourgeoisie's hands. This is why Marxists see the working class as the fundamental force for progressive social change.

The genocide in Rwanda had nothing to do with the costs of historic progress, but was ultimately the consequence of a decaying system turning in on itself. Rwanda had no working class to speak of and modern industry scarcely existed. The social power Marxists look to, the proletariat, whose material interests transcend racial and ethnic divisions, was simply absent.

In the age of the great mercantile empires, European capitalism tore over 12 million people out of the African continent in the hellish "Middle Passage" to the American slave plantations. During the late 19th century, it conquered the continent with the assistance of the Gatling gun, plundering Africa's resources and impressing millions of Africans into forced labour. Reinforcing the most reactionary and oppressive aspects of pre-colonial societies, colonialism opened the continent to imperialist capitalism, while failing to extend the benefits of the industrial revolution—paid for in significant measure with African blood—beyond a few enclaves. The fate of Africa

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was chained to the world market and foreign capital.

The modest economic growth and social development that occurred in many countries following independence was devastated during the global economic crisis of the 1970s and the catastrophic economic collapse throughout Africa in the 1980s. To the imperialists, Africa is a "failed" continent, its population a write-off in the blue books of world finance. The explosive alloy of mass desperation and racial chauvinism is not unique to Rwanda. It can and will happen again. The end of Engels' letter which I quoted above reads: "And we men and women are unfortunately so stupid that we never can pluck up courage to a real progress unless urged to it by sufferings that seem almost out of proportion." Without socialism, we face the continuing descent into barbarism.

Imperialist Complicity at Every Step

The great lie surrounding the Rwandan genocide is that foreign intervention would have prevented this catastrophe. In fact, foreign intervention did occur—again, and again, and again. Viewing the Tutsi RPF as tools of the "Anglo-Americans," the French ruling class backed the Habyarimana regime to the hilt. Shortly after the beginning of the war, the government of François Mitterrand sent in 600 troops who assisted in interrogating prisoners,



Mary Evans Picture Library

transported massive military aid and managed roadblocks, demanding "Vous êtes Tutsi ou Hutu?" The French underwrote the financial risk of weapons deliveries from Egypt and brokered an arms deal with South Africa. At one point, French officers took complete control of counterinsurgency operations. Throughout this period, hundreds of Hutu opponents of the regime were arrested, and thousands of Tutsi civilians were murdered by the Rwandan army.

The IMF, the World Bank and foreign governments actually increased foreign aid to the Hutu regime during the war. (Rwanda was the number one per capita recipient of Canadian aid.) The UN-brokered Arusha Accord—which like all such agreements was incapable of addressing the fundamental causes of the conflict—in the end only provided breathing space for the *génocidaires* to organize.

In his book *Shake Hands with the Devil* (2004), Roméo Dallaire meticulously

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describes the cynical indifference of the imperialist powers toward the fate of the Rwandan people. In detailed memoranda to the UN headquarters in New York, Dallaire warned that death squads were being organized and described the progress of the genocide. The UN stopped him from intervening. Every suggestion aimed at arresting the progress of the killing was deliberately obstructed. His indictment of the UN's role is worth quoting. He writes of the

"suffering, mutilation, rape, and murder of 800,000 Rwandans, with the help of the member nations of the only supposedly impartial world body. Ultimately, led by the United States, France and the United Kingdom, this world body aided and abetted genocide in Rwanda. No amount in cash and aid will ever wash its hands clean of Rwandan blood."

Dallaire is an imperialist officer who loyally served Ottawa for decades, including in the occupation of Quebec during the 1970 October Crisis. He is far from our idea of a hero. But he was honestly driven to the edge of madness by the staggering reality of the genocide and Western racism. His book contains moments of furious honesty, like the description of Belgian troops sitting in a local bar, bragging that they know what to do with African "n-----s" and about how many hundreds of people they killed during the UN's "peacekeeping" mission in Somalia. Yet Dallaire dedicates his book to these same soldiers.



British colonial force under Lord Kitchener crushed Sudanese rebels in bloody battle of Omdurman, 1898.

His story is populated by complacent, silk-tied UN diplomats who live in palatial mansions and drive black Mercedes while refugees starve near their doorsteps. After the genocide, someone from the Clinton administration told Dallaire that it would take the deaths of 85,000 Rwandans to justify risking the life of a single U.S. soldier, expressing the imperialists' racism to the fifth decimal place. These are the same imperialists Dallaire appeals to, pleading with them to abandon "national self-interest" and adopt a humanist approach to foreign policy. Dallaire's book is an argument for how imperialist militarism, if properly deployed, could have saved the day. It is because he passionately believes his case, and because he writes about Rwandans as human beings whose lives have value, that this account is the most dangerous piece of propaganda in the new "humanitarian imperialism" crusade.

Three months into the genocide, the French government launched "Opération

Harrity/U.S. News & World Report



U.S. imperialist terror in Africa: Marines in Somalia (1992); Clinton's bombing of Sudan pharmaceutical factory (1998).

Turquoise" when it became clear that its Rwandan clients faced defeat by the RPF. Authorized by a resolution of the Security Council, the French intervention was in part commanded by officers who had recently acted as military advisers for the Hutu-power government. The *Interahamwe* cheered French troops, while waving the French flag. The French military often stood by in nearby towns while killing went on unabated in the hills a few kilometers away. Since 1994, France has continued its maneuvers, backing various forces in the Congo and the government of Zimbabwe in opposition to the U.S.' new ally in the region, RPF head Paul Kagame.

In Africa, where the imperialists created artificial states containing a multitude of peoples, the rule of a formerly oppressed people like the Tutsis in Rwanda will inevitably entail brutal methods of forced assimilation, expulsion or genocide. As the RPF took power in Kigali, a million refugees flooded into the Congo, spreading the civil war into that country. When the Hutu military began to use refugee camps to regroup, the RPF and its local proxies killed tens of thousands of Hutu refugees in the Eastern Congo. In 1996, the new Tutsi-led Rwandan army, Uganda, Burundi and Eritrea invaded the Congo (then Zaire) with full U.S. backing to overthrow the regime of Mobutu Sese Seko. Canadian corporations like Barrick Gold and Tenke Mining

underwrote this effort in order to obtain rights to the country's vast mineral wealth. One Canadian mining executive later told an African employee: "You Congolese must know that this country and all its minerals are not yours but ours."

Rwanda and Uganda invaded the Congo again in 1998, exacerbating a multi-sided regional war that plunged the Eastern Congo into chaos. The plunder has been so systematic that Rwanda has become an exporter of diamonds. There is not a single diamond mine in all Rwanda. In Rwanda, disappearances and summary executions are now common. A wave of Hutu and Tutsi government politicians has fled the country, fearing imprisonment or murder at the hands of the RPF. All of this has occurred with the knowledge, complicity and direct aid of the same imperialist powers that people like NDP stalwart Stephen Lewis and Roméo Dallaire are now calling on to intervene in Darfur.

Sudan: Colonialism, the Cold War and the "War on Terror"

Sudan is the largest country in Africa, roughly the size of the United States east of the Mississippi, with a population of nearly 30 million people. Over 100 languages and dialects are spoken, the most common being Arabic in the north and Dinka in the south. Islam was probably introduced to the north in the same fashion as the rest of sub-Saharan Africa, first through commercial networks and later the adoption of Islam and elements of Arabic culture by the indigenous ruling class. Fictional Arab genealogies became markers of elite status.

Northern and southern Sudan were first drawn into a single political economy in the 1820s, when the Egyptian army led by Muhammad Ali invaded the country in search of slaves and gold. As Douglas Johnson writes: "The incorporation of the whole of the south as the state's exploitable hinterland, the intensification of racial stratification and the widespread identification of people from the south with low status were thus consequences of Turco-Egyptian colonialism" (*The Root Causes of Sudan's Civil Wars*, 2003). After an Islamic uprising drove Egypt out in the 1880s, Britain conquered the Sudan, instituting a policy to keep the south segregated, welcoming Christian missionaries while banning Islamic proselytizers.

The "Southern Policy" kept the area economically primitive, as the British concentrated economic resources, roads and schools in the north. While giving lip service to the abolition of slavery, the British colonial administration looked the other way while the northern Arab elite kept their slaves. In 1956, under pressure from newly independent Egypt, Britain handed over political power to the northern ruling class. In anticipation of this perfidy, an army battalion in the south rebelled, presaging the first of two civil wars that have continued until today.

The bourgeois press repeats simplistic clichés about "Arab versus African" or "Muslim versus Christian," feeding into the anti-Arab racism of the "war on terror." But the Sudanese war has been driven by a combination of the historic exploitation of the south, imperialist Cold War geopolitics and the conflict over resources, especially oil. During the early 1980s, Sudan was the third largest recipient of U.S. foreign aid (massively in the form of military assistance and modern weaponry), and was cultivated by the Reagan White House as a regional counterweight to Libya and Soviet-backed Ethiopia. The Islamic fundamentalists and military officers who took power in 1989 through a coup d'état were once considered CIA "assets" because of their vehement anti-Communism and alliance with the *mujahedin* fighting the Soviets in Afghanistan. Islam has long been the militant ideology of the northern rulers. Far from being the product of a "clash of

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Rwanda...

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civilizations," the south's struggle has been driven by resistance to economic, cultural and political oppression.

The second civil war began in 1983 when the Khartoum government, seeking to maintain control over newly discovered oil reserves in the Upper Nile province, unilaterally abrogated the south's regional status and imposed Islamic *sharia* law over the entire country. The northern government has frequently pursued this war by arming local Arabic-speaking groups displaced by economic privations and encouraging them to prey on their neighbours. The Sudanese conflict provoked an international outcry in the mid 1990s, after it had come to light that government-backed militias had kidnapped and enslaved more than 15,000 women and children from the south. We have denounced the flagrant role that foreign oil corporations, such as Canada's Talisman (which withdrew in 2003), played in perpetuating this conflict and collaborating with the militias in massacres and forced displacements (see "Why Marxists Oppose UN/Canadian 'Peacekeepers'." *SC* No. 134, Fall 2002). France's repeated military interventions into neighbouring Chad are part of the broader struggle among the imperialists for control of this region.

No Imperialist/African Union Intervention into Darfur!

Darfur is not part of the south, but consists of three separate provinces in the west of the country. Populated by both agricultural and Bedouin peoples devoted to herding cattle, Darfur's entire population is Muslim. The most marginalized province of Sudan, Darfur has received less in social services, economic aid and government posts than any other region of the country. Alex de Waal explains that in the wake of famine in the mid 1980s, which killed over 100,000 people, conflict over diminishing land and resources exploded into battles between agricultural and nomadic peoples. Resentment against the Khartoum government deepened after the Islamic fundamentalist regime of Hassan al-Turabi took power in 1989. A wave of repression swept the country, including the banning of workers' unions and the total cloistering of women in the cities. In Darfur, the bankrupt local administration attempted to rule through public executions and terror, while the laws regarding access to land were revised. Returning Islamic militants from Libya, exiled under the previous regime, further polarized Darfur along racial lines.

But Turabi also extended his hand to Islamic groupings long despised by the northern Arab elite, like the Sufi and West African Fellata. When Turabi was sidelined by the officer corps in the late 1990s, many of his supporters went into



Born/ny Times

Refugees driven from their homes in Darfur, 2004.

opposition against the government, producing a "Black Book" documenting the ongoing marginalization of Darfur. In April 2003, a coalition of secular and Muslim organizations launched an audacious assault against a government military installation, taking an Air Force general hostage. The government responded by supplying arms to Arab militias, called the *janjaweed*. The militias have murdered, raped and physically branded speakers of Fur, Tunjur, Masalit and Zaghawa, while uprooting their fruit trees and destroying irrigation systems.

junior partner, the African Union is otherwise composed of neocolonial satraps and client regimes of the imperialist powers. African Union intervention, pushed throughout Africa as a nationalist alternative to the UN, is simply imperialist occupation at one remove. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has repeatedly called to implement starvation sanctions against Sudan. Unlike Rwanda, U.S. imperialism has pressing strategic concerns in Sudan, especially the control of oil reserves in the south and the political stabilization of a country long infamous as a



Trotskyist League participates in 1993 Toronto protest against U.S./UN attack on Mogadishu, Somalia.

Marxists denounce these crimes in the strongest possible terms. But the UN's plan to send over 10,000 "peacekeeping" troops to Sudan, based overwhelmingly in the south, has absolutely nothing to do with "humanitarian" concerns over this carnage. The imperialist powers want to shore up the unstable peace agreement between the north and the south, although they would prefer to subcontract out as much of the work as possible to the states of the African Union, particularly South Africa and Nigeria.

Dominated by the U.S.' South African

refuge for Islamic fundamentalist groups like Al Qaeda. This is UN "peacekeeping" as a cover for the "war on terror." We demand: No U.S./UN/African Union intervention! All occupying troops out! No to UN sanctions!

Africa and the Collapse of the Soviet Union

The Soviet Union, the first workers state in history, provided a crucial military counterweight to U.S. imperialism. Despite its political degeneration under the Stalin bureaucracy, we fought to defend the Soviet Union. We recognized that its destruction would deliver a staggering blow to working and oppressed peoples across the globe. At the same time, we sought to build Trotskyist parties in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe to remove the Stalinist bureaucrats and return these countries to the path of socialism.

For millions of working people around the world, the Soviet Union represented the possibility for a radically different kind of society, one with no unemployment or homelessness, with universal health care and free education for all. That the USSR went from an overwhelmingly peasant country, suffocated by the archaic institutions of tsarist absolutism, to the second most powerful military and industrial state in the world had enormous significance in Africa. Even pro-capitalist African nationalists looked to countries like Yugoslavia, whose multiethnic population lived together in peace under Tito's bureaucratically deformed workers state. The USSR gave military assistance to the South African ANC in the struggle against apartheid,

while Cuba sent troops to Angola, routing the U.S.-backed South African army and its puppets. The Soviet Union took dock workers from Senegal, like the world famous novelist and director Ousmane Sembene, and trained them in how to make films.

As Soviet leader Gorbachev moved to conciliate U.S. imperialism in the mid 1980s, Soviet aid to Africa began to dry up. The U.S. made clear that with the end of the Cold War, it would no longer bother to prop up its former African puppets. Since the Soviet Union's destruction in 1991-92, a quarter of Africa's countries have been plunged into war and social disintegration, while the rest of the continent is in the grip of an intractable economic and political crisis. The aftermath has been apocalyptic: a rise in witchcraft accusations and the murder of young women; the spread of fundamentalist Islam and Christianity, often intermixed with reactionary practices such as the bride price and female genital mutilation; the complete devastation of the small urban labour forces: forced labour; land shortages and rural conflict. Starting in the late 1970s-early '80s, IMF structural adjustment programs have devastated the meager social services. Famine and the AIDS pandemic threaten the eradication of tens of millions of people across the continent.

Especially since the collapse of the Soviet Union, it has become common for leftists to call on the imperialist powers to play a "humanitarian role." Feminists like the recently deceased Susan Sontag cheered the NATO bombing of Serbia. The self-professed anarchist professor Noam Chomsky called for sanctions against Iraq and he regularly appeals to the supposed principles of "international law." In a recent article, the Canadian International Socialists lamely recite the liberal line that "the Great Powers stood by and did nothing" during the Rwandan genocide (*Socialist Worker*, 5 January). In France, the fake-Trotskyist Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire and the supposedly anti-state anarchists of the CNT have provided a cover for imperialist machinations in Africa, signing a statement that calls on the African Union to supplant French troops now occupying the Ivory Coast. Their excuse for lobbying on behalf of these imperialist-backed thugs and dictators? Foreign troops are necessary to avoid another Rwanda. All of these people have fed into the lie that imperialism can come to the aid of the downtrodden.

Imperialism and Permanent Revolution

For revolutionary Marxists, "imperialism" is not simply an evocative characterization of Western foreign policy or the acts of individual corporations—grotesque as they may be. In Toronto, we have gone on protests to denounce the participation of Canadian security firms in the Iraq occupation in order to draw attention to the role of our "own" bourgeoisie. But we do not believe that altering individual company or government policies is a strategy for defending oppressed and subjugated peoples. Imperialism is—in Lenin's words—the highest stage of capitalism. In the late 19th century, monopolies, banks and finance capital came to play a predominant role in the functioning of the international economy. Since then, the world has been divided into spheres of influence manipulated and controlled by the main capitalist powers and their junior allies, like Canada. There is no hope of reforming imperialism. It must be overthrown.

As Russian Marxist Leon Trotsky argued in his theory of permanent revolution, the venal despots who run the colonial and neocolonial world are incapable of raising the economic development of their countries to the level of the advanced industrial world. Contrary to the NGOs and "development" agencies, lack of democracy in underdeveloped countries does not derive from the absence of "civil society." Caught between the seething masses and the dictates of their impe-

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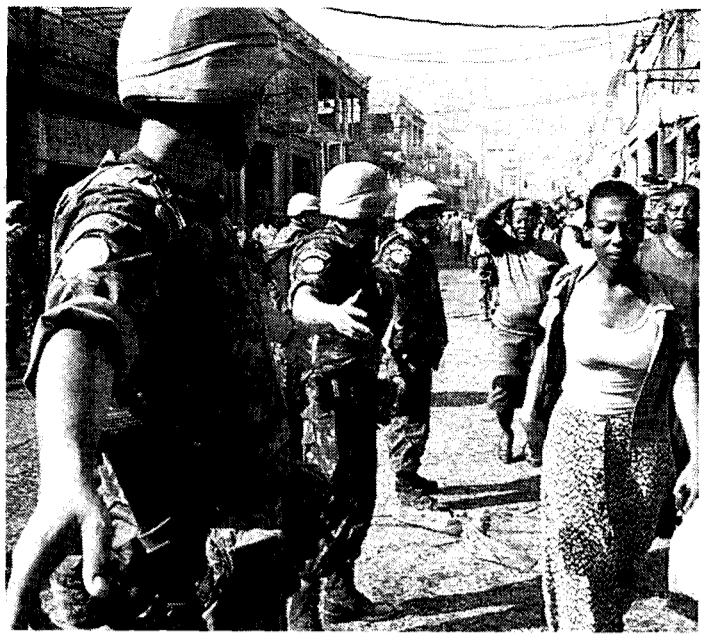
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Lula...

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P-SOL is based essentially on the idea that the PT's program was correct but that it went wrong once in power; thus the "struggles" and "dreams" of the founders of the P-SOL were "betrayed." The PT didn't betray its program at all because from the beginning it had a program of class collaboration. The PT has participated in coalitions with bourgeois parties since the 1989 presidential elections. In 2002, Lula came to power with the approval of the Brazilian bourgeoisie. But that is not in contradiction to its program because it always had the goal of running the bourgeois state.

The P-SOL says that its programmatic basis can be founded only on one principle: "The defense of the political independence of the workers and the excluded. The party that we are building will not have class collaboration as a goal." In fact, members of the USec are active in the leadership of the P-SOL, but most of their members remain in the DS tendency inside the PT, and a resolution of a DS national conference condemned the "sectarian party perspective" of what became the P-SOL (*Inprecor*, September 2004). Nonetheless, for Heloísa Helena, class independence is such an "important" principle that she remains in the *same international* with her comrades who have a minister in Lula's government. In the municipal elections of November 2004, the national P-SOL supported the PT/DS candidate, Luizianne Lins, on the second round in Fortaleza. Lins managed to win the city with support from several small bourgeois parties in the second round (which received executive posts in the municipal government in exchange for their support), such as the populist Partido Democrático dos Trabalhadores (Democratic Workers Party) and the Greens. The P-SOL also refused to oppose the PT in Porto Alegre, where the outgoing candidate, Raul Pont (also in the PT's DS tendency), was in a coalition with several bourgeois parties. The national leadership of the P-SOL sup-



Brazilian troops, part of imperialist occupation force in Haiti.

ported a declaration "against the candidate Fogaça (PPS), without calling for a vote for Raul Pont" but defended either a vote for Pont or a blank ballot ("Statement of the P-SOL National Executive Assessing the Municipal Elections," not dated, www.psol.org.br). Most of the leading members of the P-SOL come from the PT, but they have never criticized their own past activities as PT members because they continue the same practices.

If a clearer example of class collaboration were necessary, in the P-SOL's program one can read: "It's fundamental to democratize the police forces and in particular the army, with the right of troops to free political organization and to elect their officers, with the right to promotion without limits for junior officers." That's a suicidal call for workers—more "democratic" rights for the cops means better conditions for them to break the next strike and better conditions for them to kill street kids in cold blood! That is the essence of reformism and class collaboration. The capitalists maintain themselves in power in part by their ideology and in part by force through their state: cops, prison guards, the army. All the bloody lessons of history show that it is not possible to "reform" the bourgeois state; it's necessary to overthrow it, and

the workers should establish their own state—the dictatorship of the proletariat.

It's necessary to build a revolutionary party, but the French fake-Trotskyists look to Brazil as a model of how to build a reformist party. The LCR and the JCR mostly campaigned against the expulsion of Heloísa Helena from the PT, and now that their comrades have been expelled, most of the LCR's attention remains on DS. They are ecstatic with the recent victory of their PT comrade Luizianne Lins in Fortaleza, and they cry about losing the city of Porto Alegre that they long controlled. The GR/CWI "hailed the birth" of the P-SOL (*L'Egalité*, September-October 2004) because at bottom they see a big, non-revolutionary party not as an obstacle but, on the contrary, as a step toward the construction of a truly revolutionary party, and they take the P-SOL as their model. The GR says: "But one shouldn't adopt a sectarian position and mechanically demand as a prerequisite that the new party be revolutionary." However, in the next sentence they try to moderate their statement a little: "That doesn't mean that a workers party is a necessary step before the revolutionary party." For the CWI, the P-SOL program "presents the socialist perspective and strategy as a fundamental aspect of build-

ing the new party" (*L'Egalité*, January-February 2005).

We fight for an authentically Marxist party that will champion the rights of all the oppressed—blacks, women, gays, peasants—with a class-struggle program designed to bring the working class to power. That isn't possible by building a party like the P-SOL that has nice words about "feminism," blacks and gays in the program, but that does not even mention the most fundamental democratic question for women: the right to abortion. The P-SOL is certainly under pressure from the powerful Brazilian Catholic church, as the declaration by the main spokesperson of the P-SOL, Heloísa Helena, shows:

"I am Catholic. I always go to church. I have many friends in the interior who are priests. Over the last week I went to four masses in a single city, helping in the celebration. I rediscovered my faith some years ago, through pain, and am firmly resolved. My religious experience is with the comrade in the skies who has already given me much proof of love during the difficult times that I have had in life."

—Interview in the *Jornal do Brasil*, quoted in *Inprecor*, January-March 2004

We Trotskyists fight for *free abortion on demand! Cops, priests out of the bedroom!*

A revolutionary party must be able to counterpose the liberating ideals of communism to the prejudices of the dominant capitalist ideology in all aspects of social life: against the prevalent machismo, for the liberation of women through socialist revolution, against racism, upholding the banner of black liberation, and fighting to defend peasants and indigenous peoples. As we wrote in the article "Lula's Popular Front Turns Screws on Workers" (*WV* No. 818, 23 January 2004):

"[The revolutionary party] must put itself at the head of the struggles of all the oppressed as part of the fight to establish working-class rule, smashing the rule of the bosses and placing the immense resources and energies of the country in the service of the most urgent human needs. This perspective is necessarily internationalist and is part of the struggle to reforge the Fourth International to lead new October Revolutions. It is the perspective of the International Communist League." ■

rialist paymasters, democracy is a luxury the rulers of Africa can hardly afford.

Drawing on the experience of the 1917 October Revolution, Trotsky argued that the fight for national emancipation from imperialism and the struggle for democracy falls to the industrial working class in countries of belated capitalist development. And once the working class has seized power, it cannot stop at these tasks, but must move to destroy private property and establish a workers state. To survive and flourish, a socialist revolution in such a country must be extended to the imperialist heartlands.

But what about countries like Rwanda or Sudan where the working class is weak

or non-existent? As Trotsky wrote in *The Permanent Revolution* (1930): "Then the struggle for national liberation will produce only very partial results, results directed entirely against the working masses.... A backward colonial or semi-colonial country, the proletariat of which is insufficiently prepared to unite the peasantry and take power, is thereby incapable of bringing the democratic revolution to its conclusion." In such cases, there is no purely internal solution. The destiny of these countries is directly tied to the international class struggle, in the first instance to those countries in the region that *do* have important proletarian concentrations.

In South Africa there exists a powerful labour movement, whose ranks contain many adherents of a socialist vision of society. Since it came to power in 1994, we have characterized the ANC government as "neo-apartheid," underlining that the ANC serves as black frontmen for the same white capitalist rulers. The fundamental contours of South African capitalism are unchanged, while black unemployment, now 50 percent, and poverty have worsened. An estimated 5.3 million South Africans are HIV positive and the death rates are so high that the cemeteries are overflowing. But the ANC government has pursued a deadly policy of denying that HIV causes AIDS and obstructing access to treatment. In a country that produces over 50 percent of sub-Saharan Africa's economic output, instead of science and medicine, government ministers recommend the *sangomas*—traditional "healers"—whose treatments for AIDS are often lethal.

There is searing anger at the base of South African society. But working-class struggle is blocked by the false leaders of the working class, especially the South African Communist Party and the

COSATU trade-union tops who sit in the government administering capitalist austerity. Socialist revolution in South Africa would reverberate around the world, especially among black workers and in the impoverished ghettos of the U.S.

The last two decades have witnessed the near devastation of the limited industrial growth once achieved by many African countries. But small concentrations of industrial workers still exist throughout the continent. An international revolutionary party would link their struggles with the social power of the workers movement north of the Sahara and throughout the Near East. The hundreds of thousands of African immigrants who are a major component of the working class in France and elsewhere in Europe are a critical bridge for the international extension of the revolution, wherever it begins.

The final liberation of the Third World will require the destruction of capitalism in the imperialist countries. The workers of North America, Europe and Japan owe a tremendous historical debt to the oppressed masses of Africa, Latin America and Asia. Only after the working class in the imperialist countries has taken power will the social resources, technology and scientific expertise finally become available to begin addressing the plight of the African masses.

Today, solidarity with the struggles of those targeted by imperialism must begin with opposition to our "own" capitalist rulers. The Trotskyist League fights for defense of the Palestinians, opposes the murderous U.S. occupation of Iraq and exposes the crimes of the Canadian bourgeoisie whose troops are participating in the occupation of Haiti and Afghanistan. We denounce those on the left and in the labour movement who push the lie that Canadian imperialism or the UN can play

any kind of progressive role, a lie whose purpose is to reconcile Canadian workers with their exploiters. We fight to build the revolutionary internationalist workers party that will bring the fighting power of labour to bear in the struggle against every manifestation of oppression and state tyranny. We demand: *No imperialist/African Union intervention into Sudan! All UN/U.S./Canadian troops out of Africa!* ■

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Imperialist Crimes in Rwanda and Sudan

The following article is reprinted from Spartacist Canada No. 144 (Spring 2005), publication of the Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyste, section of the International Communist League. The article is based on a well-attended February 12 talk in Toronto by Jon Seville, editor of the Young Spartacus pages of Spartacist Canada. In this country, calls for U.S. intervention in Sudan are pushed particularly by an alliance of black liberals, Christian fundamentalists and pro-Zionist neoconservatives. On March 24, the UN Security Council voted to send a 10,000-member "peacekeeping" force to Sudan. We say: U.S., UN, all imperialist troops get out and stay out!

SPARTACIST CANADA

Over the course of three months in 1994, some 800,000 Rwandan Tutsis and tens of thousands of moderate Hutu were systematically murdered in a meticulously prepared genocide organized by forces within the Rwandan government and military. The details overwhelm the imagination. *Interahamwe* death squads hacked village after village to death with machetes. Neighbours executed neighbours, husbands butchered wives, or were themselves shot by government troops. Sometimes the torture continued over days. Fetuses were cut from the stomachs of their mothers and then hacked apart as the women watched and bled to death.

As the violence began, the United Nations Security Council ordered the bulk of the multinational "peacekeeping" force stationed in the country to withdraw. Imperialist politicians like U.S. president Bill Clinton and French president François Mitterrand repeatedly denied that a genocide was in process, tossing off racist explanations like "tribal resentments" to cover their profound indifference. When the French military finally intervened, it created a *cordon sanitaire* that allowed the authors of the genocide—longtime French collaborators—to flee into the Congo. The war now engulfing that country is in no small part a result of this intervention.

Fast forward to April 2003. In Darfur, a western region of Sudan, a coalition of secular and Muslim groups launched armed attacks against Sudanese government troops in response to decades of economic privation, repression and political corruption. In retaliation, government-armed militias have carried out a scorched-earth policy of crop destruction, banditry and murder. An estimated 70,000 people have died, and 2.3 million have been displaced. One observer, Alex de Waal, stated that "predictions of up to 300,000 famine deaths must be taken seriously" (*London Review of Books*, 5 August 2004). A series of "peace agreements" have collapsed as the Sudanese government mouths hollow diplomatic promises while prosecuting the war.

This is the latest episode in a series of military conflicts that have raged in the country for the last 22 years, largely between a northern Islamist government and the historically oppressed south. An estimated two million people have died in a war waged primarily against civilians, many as a result of

No U.S./UN Intervention in Africa!



Thousands march in Sudanese capital, Khartoum, in 2004 to protest threat of foreign intervention in Darfur. Annahar

government-manufactured starvation. I emphasize *estimated* because there are no truly reliable statistics given the near-complete absence of modern infrastructure and health facilities. At every level, this conflict has been compounded by the effects of British colonial policy, Cold War rivalries and the predations of foreign corporations.

My talk tonight is going to focus on the role of imperialism in Rwanda and Sudan. There is profound anger and desperation over these tragedies, *but this anger is being manipulated in defense of forces who are profoundly culpable*. The tenth anniversary of the Rwandan genocide has seen a torrent of newspaper articles, movies, documentaries and books: a concerted international propaganda campaign whose principal message is that UN intervention could have stopped the Rwandan genocide, and that the Western imperialist powers should send troops to Darfur. A chorus of voices has perversely

argued that Rwanda represents a failure of Western "conscience," thus transforming the genocide into the symbol of a new UN-led "civilizing mission" on the African continent.

The Canadian lieutenant-general responsible for the 1994 Rwandan mission, Roméo Dallaire, has written a best-selling critique of the UN and Western powers' complicity, arguing for a greater role for "humanitarian" military intervention. The social-democratic NDP [New Democratic Party] echoes these calls, pushing the Canadian nationalist myth that this is a "peacekeeping" nation. Many youth and working people, even when suspicious of Western foreign policy, see UN intervention as the only way to stop the horrific violence, however temporarily.

The ideological drive to paint the capitalist rulers of the U.S., Canada or Europe as potential allies of the impoverished and persecuted is based on a web

of myths and lies. It is also profoundly dangerous. The International Communist League categorically opposes UN "peacekeeping missions," which are in reality imperialist forces of occupation. The United Nations does *not* rise above the competing interests of its member states, as U.S. sidelining of the UN in the lead-up to the Iraq war vividly showed. UN intervention has always provided a "humanitarian" cover for the crimes of the imperialist powers, from the 1961 assassination of Congolese nationalist Patrice Lumumba to the murder and torture of Somali youth by Canadian special forces in 1993. The nightmare that Africa confronts is inextricably linked to the international capitalist system. Looking to the UN only strengthens agencies whose express purpose is to guard the current world order.

Today's call for greater Western intervention into Africa occurs in an extremely sinister context. No longer constrained by the military counterweight of the Soviet Union, the first workers state in history, U.S. imperialism has rampaged across the globe for the last 15 years, spreading death in Iraq, Afghanistan, Serbia, Colombia, Haiti and elsewhere. This has led to increasing tensions between the imperialist powers, who have moved to expand their spheres of neo-colonial influence and protect key mineral resources. In particular, France has scrambled to preserve its influence, in part through strengthening its global military infrastructure and securing its role in multilateral economic and defense agreements. A second-rate power, whose fading claim to imperial glory rests in large part on suzerainty over its former African colonies, France sees the greater economic role played by Nigeria and South Africa—both closely tied to U.S. and British capitalism—as a threat.

continued on page 8



Rwandan refugees in Tanzania, 1994. Racist colonial rule and neocolonial capitalism in Africa have produced continuing wars and destitution. Sebastião Salgado