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Afghanistan: Imperialists Escalate Occupation

All U.S., NATO and Australian Troops Out Now!

In December the Rudd Labor government fully backed the U.S. Obama regime's announcement of a further escalation of the imperialist occupation of Afghanistan. Speaking from Washington, Rudd declared "Australia takes its alliance with the United States very seriously. That's why we have been with America for a long time in Afghanistan and why we will be with America for the long haul" (www.abc.net.au, 1 December 2009).

With 1,550 Australian troops deployed in Uruzgan province Australia has the largest non-NATO troop presence in Afghanistan. In line with the mobilisation of an additional 30,000 U.S. and 20,000 NATO troops, the Australian government has promised additional federal police. Needless to say, over the years the Australian troops have been up

to their necks in the bloody slaughter that has taken place in Afghanistan since the occupation began in 2001. The recent atrocity in which a U.S. helicopter fired on and killed 27 civilians in central Afghanistan is but the latest in an endless string of deadly attacks against civilians. In February 2009, five Afghan children were slaughtered in an attack

involving Australian troops.

Like the Obama regime, the Rudd government has waged war in Afghanistan under the rubric of the "war on terror." Serving as a pretext for imperialist depredations abroad and increased state repression at home, the Rudd government's draconian "anti-terror" campaign has demonised the Muslim minority and whipped up xenophobia and nationalism. It serves to divide the working

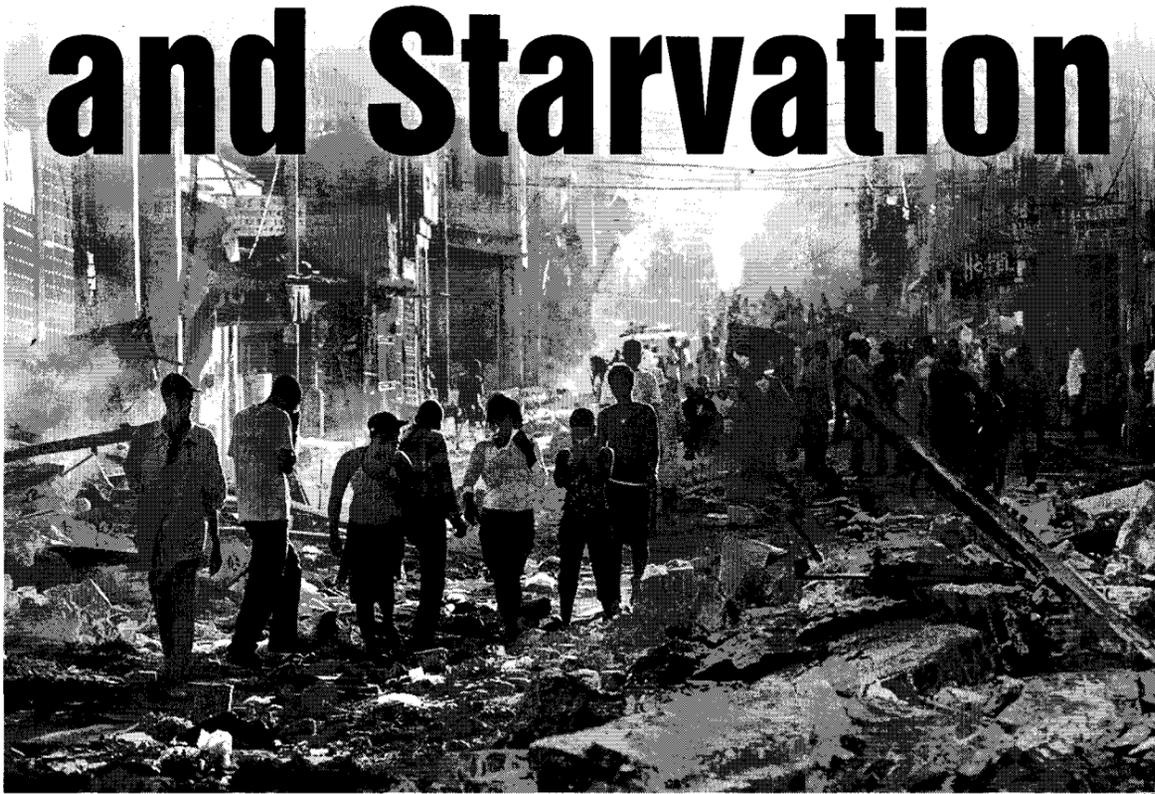
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Haiti Earthquake Horror: Imperialism, Racism and Starvation

The article below is reprinted from Workers Vanguard (No. 951, 29 January 2010), newspaper of the Spartacist League/U.S.

JANUARY 25—Any country whose capital was struck by an earthquake registering 7.0 on the Richter scale would suffer grave damage, but Haiti's unimaginable toll of death and destruction is a measure of the poverty inflicted upon it by the racist imperialist overlords. Upwards of 200,000 are believed to be dead and many more die every day from lack of food and clean water and untreated infections. Up to three million people are rendered homeless, trying to survive on the streets amid the rubble. Doctors and nurses who flew in to aid in the relief effort are performing operations in makeshift open-air "hospitals," often without anesthetic or even material to sterilize their equipment. The ramshackle state administration, such as it was, has collapsed, with the government now operating out of a police outpost at the airport.

The poorest country in the hemisphere, Haiti was totally exposed to the earthquake's impact. Even before the earthquake struck, the unemployment rate was as high as 80 percent, more than half the population lived on less than one dollar a day and nearly one out of every two Haitians had no regular access to drinking water. With little in the way of an indigenous working class, many Haitians rely on remittances from



Port-au-Prince on 16 January, four days after the earthquake.

Haitian workers in the U.S., Canada and elsewhere, which amount to nearly a quarter of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Many people lived in tin shacks that collapsed when the quake hit, and many of the concrete buildings were constructed so shoddily that they simply "pancaked."

Given the impoverishment and lack of infrastructure, the Haitian population now finds itself totally reliant on international aid efforts. Thousands of medical and search-and-rescue volunteers from many countries rushed to Haiti to provide

assistance. At the same time, the United Nations augmented its 9,000-strong occupation force with an additional 3,500 soldiers, while the Obama administration is rushing in 10,000 troops as well as military aircraft and a flotilla of naval vessels. While reformist "socialists" like the International Socialist Organization (ISO) and Workers World Party (WWP) call for the U.S. to provide aid without the exercise of American military might, we have no such illusions. Indeed, American forces in Haiti have made "security" a higher priority than providing aid. While many

planes carrying aid have landed at the Port-au-Prince airport, which is now controlled by U.S. forces, others were criminally diverted as the U.S. gave landing priority to planes carrying military personnel.

Against the backdrop of the brutal occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq as well as the escalating air strikes in Pakistan, the Haiti "relief effort" provides the Obama administration with a means to refurbish the "humanitarian" image of U.S. imperialism. As we have often pointed out, after eight years of the oddly demented regime of George W. Bush, which revealed in imperialist arrogance and barbarity, Obama is well suited to help provide a facelift for U.S. imperialism's tarnished image around the world. Yet whether the Commander-in-Chief is a Democrat or Republican, U.S. imperialism remains the most bloody and rapacious imperialist power on the face of the planet. Obama's "humanitarian" pretensions in Haiti are but a thin veneer on racist oppression and imperialist subjugation.

One of the central aims of the U.S. imperialist rulers is to prevent Haitians from fleeing the island. Thus, the U.S. quickly launched a full-scale naval blockade to prevent a seaborne exodus of refugees seeking sanctuary in the U.S. An American Air Force plane flies daily over Haiti broadcasting a Creole-language

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On Australian Imperialism and Labor Reformism

13 July 2009

Dear Comrades,

I appreciated your recent article "Recession Australia: Unemployment, Racism, Militarism" (ASp No. 205, Winter 2009), particularly the prominence given to China, as well as the polemic against protectionism. On two points I think it could have been better.

First, the article declares that the Laborite trade-union bureaucracy "is historically based on a thin layer of privileged workers who are bought off by crumbs obtained from the profits from Australian imperialist exploitation abroad." I believe that this statement is not right. The Australian bourgeoisie has never lacked the appetite or ruthlessness for such imperialist rapacity; but for most of its history it has lacked the opportunity. I don't think that the Australian capitalists significantly expanded their direct investment in and exploitation of other countries until relatively late in the twentieth century. Yet there was a trade-union bureaucracy, and reformist labor party, long before.

Instead, the Australian labor aristocracy, and the union bureaucracy based on it, developed on the basis of campaigning successfully to drive out and keep out non-white workers, and for protectionist barriers and state subsidies to foster industrial development by the Australian bourgeoisie in Australia. Thus, "White Australia" and protectionism were, and remain, two of the three essential underpinnings of Australian labor reformism and the Australian Labor Party (ALP). The third leg was integration into the capitalist state and subordination of the workers to it. Together these compose the virulent Laborite expression of Australian nationalism which has always crippled

the Australian workers, tying them to their class enemies and setting them against their working-class comrades of other nations and ethnicities.

For its first four decades or so, Australia was a settler-colonial outpost. Later, the ruling class accumulated wealth from the export of agricultural products and minerals, overwhelmingly back to England. In this way, they received indirectly the benefit of participating in the British Empire's colonial loot and dominant imperialist position.

As a small European enclave scattered thinly across a whole continent in the midst of Asia, capitalist Australia required the protection of the Royal Navy. Britain was more important to Australia than vice versa; hence the continual anxiety of the colonials. For this reason, the Australian capitalists loyally supplied cannon fodder for the Empire's wars, from the Sudan to the Boer War in South Africa to World War I, often despite popular discontent at home. At no time did Australian capital have anything like the capacity to compete with the big powers (England, France, Germany, the U.S., the Dutch, and later Japan) in the division of the spoils in Asia and the Pacific. Hence its perennial role as a (very) junior partner of the big Anglo-Saxon plunderers.

To be sure, in the late nineteenth/early twentieth century the Colonial Sugar Refining company (now CSR Limited) monopolized Fijian sugar production using indentured workers from South Asia, and Australia got its very own colony, Papua New Guinea, as a result of World War I. However, I don't think the Fijian operation came to much compared to Australia's own extractive and agricultural industries. And Papua New Guinea

did not develop prospects for major profits until the 1960s or so, when mining opened up. Before then, Australia put in little infrastructure and ran a grotesquely racist, paternalistic colonial regime. (It might have been worth mentioning Papua New Guinea, a now formally "independent" classic neo-colony—where the head of state is still the queen of England!—as one of the victims of Australian jackal imperialism.)

Australian manufacturing developed significantly to supply the home market when British imports were hit by World War I, bringing into being a modern urban proletariat. After World War II the ruling class for the most part did not export capital to super-exploit labor elsewhere. Faced with a labor shortage, it imported millions of immigrants recruited from anywhere not black or Asian, with a preference for the whitest—first the British Isles and northern Europe, then southern Europe, the Balkans and finally Turkey and the Near East. (If I remember rightly, in the early 70s they got so desperate as to start recruiting in the Philippines, until the economic crisis of 1974 drove unemployment up to the scandalous level of two percent.)

While the ALP formally dropped its "White Australia" clause (in the late 1960s, if I recall correctly), and Australia has since admitted significant numbers of Asians (beginning as a favor for U.S. imperialism with the Vietnamese "boat people" after the imperialists lost and the Vietnamese Revolution won), the underlying conditions of Australian capitalism remain, and Labor chauvinism remains along with them. Today "White Australia" takes the form of anti-immigrant bigotry and brutal repression of asylum-seekers, by Liberal and Labor governments alike.

Secondly, I thought the Soviet Union got too short shrift. The article's description of the rise of the U.S.-Australian imperialist alliance gives the Soviet Union only a passing mention. It is important to point out, as the article does, the Australian rulers' "fear of the spectre of social revolutions in Asia, particularly after the victory of Mao's Red Army in China in 1949." But the fundamental target of the Cold War, and the alliance, was not China but the Soviet Union.

The existence and power of the Soviet Union was a precondition for the creation of the People's Republic of China, a deformed workers state qualitatively similar to the product of the degeneration of the

October Revolution. The Stalinist-ruled USSR provided not only a model for the Maoist CCP, but also a critical measure of military protection. It was the Soviet bomb that ultimately prevented the U.S. from implementing MacArthur's plans for nuking China during the Korean War.

When the decline of British imperialism suddenly confronted Australia's rulers with the need for a new protector, the Australian bourgeoisie had to embrace the strategic concerns of their new sponsor as they had the Empire's. And the Australian



National Archives

Labor PM John Curtin greets U.S. General Douglas MacArthur, Sydney, 1943. With British defeat in Singapore in 1942, Curtin drew lesson that U.S. would be key lifeline in defence of fortress "White Australia."

bourgeoisie went in boots and all. Menzies' Cold War witchhunt largely failed to purge the labor movement of reds. But the ALP suffered a split by an anti-Communist operation.

Later, when Queens Counsel Gough Whitlam became ALP prime minister, he sought to modernize Menzies-era troglodyte Australian capitalism, including more "independent" moves to engage in Asia. This meant openings toward China, which not accidentally coincided with the Nixon-Mao counterrevolutionary anti-Soviet alliance. But Washington and the CIA were not appreciative, blinded by the ALP's opposition to the war in Vietnam (after all, this was just the Australian version of the growing desire by key sections of the U.S. rulers to cut their losses there), and no doubt did what they could to facilitate Whitlam's ouster. Later Labor

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Over 60,000 Pacific Islanders, many abducted, were used as indentured labour on Queensland cane fields. Laborite union bureaucracy campaigned to drive out non-"white" workers. Adoption of "White Australia" policy in 1901 by federal parliament led to final forced expulsion of all but a few.

CORRECTION

In "Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!" (ASp No. 207, Summer 2009/2010), we stated that a 5 December Melbourne rally, "Let the refugees into Australia," was organised by the Refugee Action Collective (RAC). According to their website, it was also organised by "other refugee advocates."

Our article also noted this rally "deep-sixes even the usual reformist opposition to mandatory detention." This statement correctly takes up the advertised rally demands albeit, on the day, RAC reportedly carried a banner "No Mandatory Detention" alongside reformist slogans including calling on Australian capitalism to "Process Refugees Claims in Australia."

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Anti-Communist Opportunists Fall Out

DSP Endgame; RSP Same Old Game

In January the Democratic Socialist Perspective (DSP), arguably Australia's most widely known reformist left organisation, "dissolved" into Socialist Alliance (SA), a "broad left" electoral front set up at the DSP's initiative in 2001. At its liquidation congress, *lider maximo* Peter Boyle denounced the "sectarian" idea of a single party based on a "correct" program" in favour of SA's sub-reformist and green-nationalist mish-mash of policies for a reformed Australian capitalism. Consisting of not much more than itself and a handful of lower-level union bureaucrats and Aboriginal leaders, competing opportunist appetites will surely blow this amorphous lash-up apart. Whatever happens the slippery Boyle, now SA leader, will no doubt keep control of the DSP's financial assets.

In liquidating into SA, the DSP has imitated reformist opponents of revolutionary Marxism across the world who have imbibed in the capitalist myth of the "death of communism" following capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union and dissolved into larger forces to their right, making their peace with the capitalist "new world reality" blatant. Foremost amongst these, the French "Trotskyist" Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire put the final touches on a long process of reconciliation with the French bourgeois order when it dissolved into its New Anti-Capitalist Party last year, finally junking any pretence to affinity with Trotskyism and the Russian Revolution (see "'Death of Communism' Leftists in New Guise," *Workers Vanguard* No. 934, 10 April 2009).

The only group to lament the liquidation of the DSP is the misnamed Revolutionary Socialist Party (RSP). The RSP was formed in 2008 by DSPers, including founding cadre John Percy, who opposed continuing with the moribund SA project and were expelled from the DSP after a sordid clique fight. That the RSP declares it stands proudly on the "revolutionary tradition" of the DSP underscores that it is neither "revolutionary" nor "socialist."

Anti-Soviet Pimps for Racist Australian Imperialism

The DSP was always an opportunist outfit of the most unbridled variety, lacking even the most rudimentary loyalty to the cause of the working class. Standing "for the universal application of the principle of [classless, i.e., *bourgeois*] democracy," the DSP's maximum demand was that "the main assets of society must be publicly owned and democratically managed" (*Resist!* 28 August 1998). This is a

call for "reforming" capitalism while not touching a hair on the head of the capitalist state. Consisting at its core of the military, cops, courts and prisons, this state exists to defend the rule of the exploitative capitalist class against the workers and oppressed.

A defining feature of the DSP was its social-democratic hostility to those countries where capitalism has been *overthrown*. Throughout the Cold War 1980s, its predecessor, the Socialist Workers

leader Renfrey Clarke bragged he spent a night inside Yeltsin's "White House" helping a Scottish Labour MP deliver a letter of solidarity to Yeltsin from British Labour Party leader Neil Kinnock, infamous for his role in knifing the heroic British miners strike in 1984-85. Such yeoman's service for social-democratic anti-communism summed up the DSP's political essence. Today, tailing the anti-China, protectionist, pro-capitalist Laborite union tops, SA actively supports

when then-prime minister John Howard despatched the Australian military to East Timor. To this day, the DSP/SA and RSP continue to trumpet their 1999 campaign for bloody Australian imperialist intervention. The decade-long occupation enforces the plunder by imperialism of the vast oil and gas reserves of the Timor Sea and the hideous neo-colonial impoverishment of the East Timorese people. Opposing the chauvinist campaign, we demanded not one person, not one cent for the Australian imperialist military and called for "Independence Now for East Timor! Australian/UN Imperialist Troops Out of East Timor!" (*Australasian Spartacist* supplement, 3 December 1999).

The DSP's social chauvinism has provided a culture medium for violent anti-woman and anti-communist creeps. At a 2006 Melbourne union rally, when a woman supporter of the SL offered then-DSPer Azlan McLennan a copy of *Australasian Spartacist* headlined "Australian/UN Imperialist Troops/Cops Out of East Timor and the Solomons Now!", he ripped the paper from her hand and then *punched her in the face* (see "We Will Not Be Silenced!" *ASP* No. 196, Spring 2006).

The Unspeakable In Pursuit of the Inedible

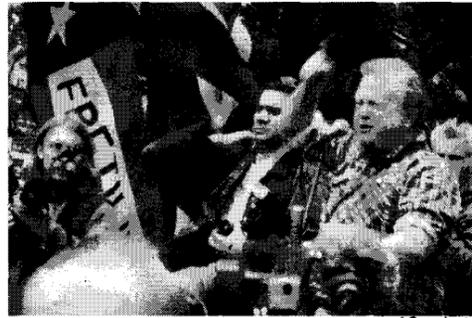
SA and the RSP are well-known as uncritical cheerleaders for the Stalinist Castro regime in geographically-distant Cuba. This selective "Stalinophilia" is and always was directed at cosying up to petty-bourgeois and bourgeois nationalist forces. Thus the SWP/DSP championed Latin American petty-bourgeois nationalists such as the Nicaraguan Sandinistas and, today, both the RSP and DSP/SA are in thrall to the so-called "Bolivarian Revolution" of Venezuelan strongman Hugo Chávez. Contrary to their anti-Marxist fantasies, Chávez is nothing more than a bourgeois nationalist running a capitalist state (see "Opportunist Left and the Chávez Referendum; Break with Bourgeois Populism! For Workers Revolution!" *Workers Vanguard* No. 907, 1 February 2008). Similarly, the DSP acted as press agents for outfits in the Asian region, from the petty-bourgeois Peoples Democratic Party (PRD) in Indonesia to Sonny Melencio's fake-socialist, and now defunct, Socialist Party of Labor in the Philippines. Today, Boyle's DSP/SA maintains an association with Melencio's new outfit, Masses Power Party, which confers with shadowy opposition groups inside the blood-drenched Philippines bourgeois armed forces.

Under pressure of anti-Soviet Cold War II, and clearing the way to its unrestrained pursuit of alien class forces, in 1984 the then-SWP dumped the "Trotskyist" label (having never in fact been Trotskyist) and denounced Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution—a program confirmed by the 1917 Russian Revolution led by Lenin and Trotsky's Bolshevik Party. (For more on permanent revolution and an extensive coverage of the DSP and its history of betrayals, see "What Is the Democratic Socialist Party?" *Australasian Spartacist* No. 167, Autumn 1999.) The SWP also declared that the ALP was, and always had been, a bourgeois party. This was a crude rejection of the Leninist understanding of the ALP as a *bourgeois workers party*—a party that is pro-capitalist in its leadership, outlook and program but based on the trade unions. In Percy's own words, "Once we had broken with Trotskyism, and once we had corrected our analysis of

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Adrees Latif/Reuters



ASp photo

Above: RSP honcho Max Lane, then with DSP, rants at chauvinist "troops in" demonstration, Sydney, September 1999. Left: Australian imperialist troops in East Timor enforce racist "law and order" for imperialist exploitation.

Party (SWP), stood with the Hawke/Keating Labor governments, the reactionary National Civic Council and all manner of rightist scum, against the Soviet Union and Eastern European deformed workers states. This included cheering on the CIA-backed, Catholic reactionary Polish Solidarność that spearheaded capitalist counterrevolution in Eastern Europe. In the service of promoting counterrevolution in Yugoslavia, they also embraced the Croatian Movement for Statehood (HDP) who identified with the fascist Ustasha, bloody butchers of hundreds of thousands of Serbs, Jews, Gypsies and Croats in World War II.

The SWP's name change to "Democratic Socialist Party" in 1989 perfectly captured this outfit's embrace of unfolding "democratic" counterrevolution across Eastern Europe. When Boris Yeltsin, hand-in-hand with U.S. imperialism, carried out his counter-coup in Moscow in 1991, the DSP joined with much of the left to cheer for capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union, an outcome that wrought devastation on the working masses. DSP

Australian imperialism's drive for capitalist counterrevolution against the Chinese deformed workers state. They champion every imperialist cause from Taiwanese "independence" to pro-imperialist dissidents like Han Dongfang, to "Free Tibet." In April 2008, following counterrevolutionary riots in Tibet, the DSP/SA scandalously joined with ardent anti-communists in a pro-Dalai Lama, anti-China demonstration in Canberra.

Against the pro-capitalist ALP, trade-union bureaucracy and their appendages on the left, we Trotskyists fought for the unconditional military defence of the Soviet Union and the deformed workers states of Eastern Europe against imperialist attack and internal capitalist counterrevolution, while fighting for proletarian political revolution to oust the venal nationalist Stalinist bureaucracies. Today we fight for this program in defence of the remaining deformed workers states of China, Cuba, North Korea, and Vietnam.

The DSP's long history of supporting capitalist counterrevolutionary movements is of a piece with promoting the "democratic" "White Australia" imperialist rulers as potential friends of the oppressed. From Cambodia to Somalia to West Papua, the DSP backed Australian imperialist military interventions under the guise of "humanitarian" assistance. In 1999, the same year it declared China had become capitalist (albeit in 1992!), the DSP's pimping for Australian imperialism plumbed new depths. Along with the bulk of the reformist left, the DSP unashamedly joined with the Laborite union tops in mobilising thousands on the streets for the Australian military occupation of East Timor. These chauvinist marches, which featured RSL "diggers" and Indonesian flag-burnings, were in some cases led by the DSP who demanded "Send Australian/UN Troops NOW!"

Having long appealed to jackal Australian imperialism to adopt "a progressive foreign policy," the DSP was ecstatic



Sigma

Boris Yeltsin's counter-revolutionary barricades, Moscow August 1991. DSP's Renfrey Clarke joined reactionary rabble on barricades to support capitalist restoration in Soviet Union.

Afghanistan...

(continued from page 1)

class and oppressed while regimenting the population into accepting gross violations of civil rights. This ultimately is in the service of suppressing class and social struggles against the exploitative capitalist system of racism, unemployment and war. The government's recent *Counter-Terrorism White Paper* proposed that the "anti-terror" laws be expanded.

Committing no terrorist act or even laying down plans for one, Muslims arrested in raids in Sydney and Melbourne in 2005 have been sentenced to draconian jail terms of up to 28 years for expressing opinions, for alleged thought crimes. Meanwhile five men ensnared in raids in Melbourne last August remain buried alive in Guantánamo Bay-like conditions at Barwon prison and may not face trial for years! We say it is in the direct immediate interests of the organised working class to fight to drop the charges. From Melbourne, to Sydney, to Iraq and Afghanistan: **Free all the detainees now! Down with racist "war on terror" government repression!**

Currently the reformist left in Australia, from Socialist Alternative (SAI) to Socialist Alliance (SA), are organising for protests during Obama's expected visit to Australia sometime in March. These protests feature their "opposition" to the war in Afghanistan, including the involvement of the Rudd ALP government. This is the same ALP that these groups gave backhanded support to, via preferences, during the 2007 federal elections. Then, these slippery reformists treacherously championed a vote to the bourgeois Greens as a means to apply pressure on the Labor party, which they above all hoped to have in government. In contrast, we Spartacists declared: "No Vote to ALP! No Vote to Bourgeois Greens!" We fight to break workers from the politics of Laborism as part of the struggle to build a revolutionary workers party.

The reformists have been ensconced for years in the Sydney "Stop the War" Coalition which channels opposition to the Afghanistan occupation into alliances with representatives of the capitalist class such as the Greens. SAI's leaders who were then in the International Socialists, sided with the imperialist-backed Islamic fundamentalist Afghan *mujahedin* women-haters against the Soviet intervention in 1979. Now they demand "End the Occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan, Bring Troops Home Now." In calling to "bring the troops home" they identify with the appetites of a wing of their own ruling class, reflected in the push by the ALP and the Greens for Australian imperialism to play a greater role in the region. Last July, Greens leader Bob Brown yet again made this explicit, declaring his only "opposition" to the troop deployment in Afghanistan was that the troops ought to be "retained for use within our region." Making his loyalty to the Australian imperialist military crystal clear Brown continued, "We will always support Australia's defence force personnel in Afghanistan or wherever else they may be deployed by the government of the day" (Greens Media



Above: Prime Minister Kevin Rudd and Barack Obama, allies in imperialist slaughter on eve of G20 meeting, March 2009. Right: Villagers mourn victims of 8 December NATO attack in Armul, Afghanistan.

Release, 21 July 2009).

Against reformists like SAI who sow illusions in such bourgeois forces, we Marxists—proletarian, revolutionary internationalists—understand that it is impossible to defeat imperialism in alliance with capitalist and pro-capitalist parties that uphold the very state that exists to defend the interests of the exploitative capitalist rulers over the working class and oppressed. In contrast, standing in class opposition to imperialist militarism, we fight for class struggle against the capitalist rulers at home and demand: **Not one person, not one cent for the Australian imperialist military. Down with the counterrevolutionary U.S./Australia alliance! U.S. bases out now! All Australian imperialist troops, and cops get out of Afghanistan, Iraq, East Timor and the Solomons!**

The following article is reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* No. 949, 1 January 2010, newspaper of the Spartacist League/U.S.

On December 1 at West Point, President Barack Obama announced a further escalation of the U.S./NATO occupation of Afghanistan through the mobilization of 30,000 U.S. troops at "the fastest possible pace." No one could miss the irony when, nine days later in Oslo, Norway, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. In his acceptance speech, Obama invoked the virtues of a "just war" in defense of a barbaric occupation that has resulted in the deaths of untold thousands of Afghans and the pounding of villages through aerial bombardment. Obama also took the occasion to rattle sabers at capitalist Iran and the North Korean deformed workers state for their work toward developing nuclear capability in defiance of imperialist threats and sanctions.

The Nobel Peace Prize itself does not have any history of nobility. Past U.S. recipients include Vietnam War criminal Henry Kissinger and Jimmy Carter, who in 1978 directed the CIA to begin a program of massive military and financial support to the fundamentalist *mujahedin* cutthroats in Afghanistan who killed Soviet troops fighting on the side of the modernizing nationalist People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) regime. The *mujahedin* forces, who threw acid in the faces of those who dared teach school-



Reuters

girls to read, included those who went on to found the Taliban and Al Qaeda—Washington's Frankenstein's monster.

In jacking up U.S. forces in Afghanistan, Obama is doing exactly what he promised in his 2008 campaign. As we wrote at the time of his election, Afghanistan is "Obama's preferred theatre of imperialist carnage" ("Fight for a Revolutionary Workers Party!" WV No. 924, 7 November 2008). Meanwhile, the slaughter under the U.S. occupation of Iraq continues unabated. Upon assuming power, Obama also stepped up bombing attacks by pilotless drones in neighboring Pakistan. Now, as Jeremy Scahill reports, in "The Secret US War in Pakistan" (*Nation*, 23 November 2009), U.S. operations in Pakistan include a secret program in which a division of the infamous Blackwater mercenary outfit working under the Joint Special Operations Command plans "targeted assassinations of suspected Taliban and Al Qaeda operatives, 'snatch and grabs' of high-value targets and other sensitive action inside and outside Pakistan." Noting the escalation of drone bombing raids since Obama's inauguration, Scahill writes, "The Obama administration has now surpassed the number of Bush-era strikes in Pakistan."

The occupation of Afghanistan by U.S., British and other NATO forces, with its attendant atrocities, has fueled bitter resentment among the Afghan peoples. Washington's quisling Afghan president, Hamid Karzai, is widely discredited, not least due to last year's rigged "election" that left him in office. As civilian deaths mount ever higher and detainees continue to be brutalized in the notorious Bagram prison, resistance to the U.S./NATO occupiers is gathering strength. Obama agreed to his military commanders' demand for more forces. However, the latest escalation has caused quivers particularly among Obama's fellow Democrats, reflecting worries in the ruling class—shared by U.S. allies, some of which are threatening to pull out—that Afghanistan is becoming another endless quagmire. Opposition to the occupation continues to grow in the U.S. population, which has been battered by the economic recession that has thrown millions out of their jobs and homes.

As revolutionary Marxists, our starting point is proletarian class opposition to the U.S. rulers and the capitalist-imperialist system as a whole. Insofar as the forces on the ground in Iraq and Afghanistan aim their blows against the imperialist occupiers, we call for their military defense despite our political opposition to Islamic fundamentalism and bourgeois nationalism. We demand the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. forces in Iraq and Afghanistan! Hands off Pakistan and Iran! Defend North Korea! The same capitalist rulers in Washington who rain death and destruction on the peoples of Iraq and

Afghanistan have seized on the recession to dole out hundreds of billions to the bloodsucking banks and to rip up union contracts while bailing out the auto giants. **For class struggle against the U.S. rulers at home! For a workers party that fights for socialist revolution!**

The liberal left cried "betrayal" over Obama's West Point speech. But Obama is loyally serving the interests of the ruling class, which wanted a facelift for U.S. imperialism after eight years of the internationally despised, wacky Bush regime. It was so-called "socialists" who betrayed the working class and oppressed by building liberal "Anybody but Bush" antiwar coalitions and then hailing the election of Obama as a harbinger of "change." The Workers World Party (WWP) proclaimed Obama's election "a triumph for the Black masses and all the oppressed" (*Workers World*, 20 November 2008), while the International Socialist Organization (ISO) enthused in *Socialist Worker* (21 January 2009): "Obama's victory convinced large numbers of people of some basic sentiments at the heart of the great struggles of the past—that something different is possible, and that what we do matters."

What the reformists do is preach the liberal lie that the wars, exploitation and oppression that are integral to the capitalist system can be stopped by exerting pressure on the rulers to change course—"democracy" from below. Thus the ISO cosponsored with the Socialist Alternative reformists a "Seattle Inauguration Day Celebration" that pathetically begged: "We Voted Barack, Now Get Out of Kabul and Iraq!" Now that Obama has done exactly what he promised over Afghanistan, the reformists have ditched their pom-poms, for the moment. Wringing its hands over the Afghanistan troop surge, *Workers World* (2 December 2009) writes that "the administration will have to rely most heavily on its vicious political enemies within the ruling establishment, while alienating its strongest rank-and-file supporters." This complaint dovetails with the worries of Congressional Democrats that the surge, combined with the effects of the recession at home, might ruin their chances in the 2010 midterm elections.

In "Answering Obama's Afghanistan Deceptions" (*Socialist Worker* online, 8 December 2009), the ISO "discovers" the war lies that are used to justify the buildup of troops, complaining that a "skeptical attitude toward the use of U.S. military power is what most of his supporters expected of an Obama presidency." Then there is the Maoist Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), which, after spending years howling to "Drive out the Bush regime," now lectures its readers to "face reality" about Obama and "judge him by what he's actually doing, not his false narratives, his empty promises, and his double-talk" (*Revolution* online, 13 December 2009).

Lying is what imperialist politicians do. Their whole system of "democracy" is based on the deception that the government serves "the people." The fact, as Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels explained more than 150 years ago, is that the bourgeois government serves as the executive committee for managing the affairs of the ruling class as a whole. Bourgeois democracy—paid for with the toil and blood of millions of the imperialists' colonial and neocolonial victims—serves as a cover for the dictatorship of the capitalist class over those they exploit and oppress.

Falling in line behind "democratic" imperialism, the bulk of the reformist left eagerly enrolled in the imperialists' Cold War drive to destroy the Soviet degenerated workers state. This included leading cheers for murderous, reactionary forces like the Afghan *mujahedin*. To this day the RCP is quite proud of standing with those who fought against the Soviet Army's intervention on behalf of the PDPA, which sought to ameliorate the conditions of

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DSP/RSP...

(continued from page 3)

the ALP, the way was open for our party to contemplate a much wider range of political options" (*A History of the DSP Part II*, January 1990).

The SWP/DSP's posture on the ALP did not stem from opposition to the ALP's pro-imperialist leadership and program but from the fact that it thought its brand of reformism did not depend on the ALP as its agency. Over the years the DSP embraced bourgeois formations from the Nuclear Disarmament Party to the Greens. In fact, the DSP leadership proved capable of adopting almost any political posture if it perceived the possibility of gaining "influence." The common thread was its disregard for basic Marxist principles, centrally the independence of the working class from all wings of the capitalist exploiters. This outlook, including rejecting the elementary working-class principle of not voting for the parties of the class enemy, is shared by SA and the RSP.

These Laborites have a strong attachment to "little Australia" capitalist democracy, particularly when administered by the ALP. Today SA, in its reformist and parochially-titled campaign brochure, "Another Australia is possible..." declares the election of the Rudd ALP government a "very small step forward." Spending years pushing for the election of Labor as a "lesser evil," an ALP win was the outcome they worked for in the 2007 federal elections. In typical DSP-style parliamentary cretinism and unprincipled manoeuvring, the DSP-led SA called for a vote to SA and then the bourgeois Greens (who delivered preferences to the ALP, winning it a significant majority).

The Rudd government a "step forward"!? Rudd's ALP government has enforced draconian anti-union laws, stepped up mandatory detention of "illegal" refugees, escalated the racist "war on terror" targeting in particular the Muslim minority and enforced the police/military occupation of Northern Territory Aboriginal lands. And under the counterrevolutionary U.S./Australia alliance the Rudd government has maintained Australian imperialist marauding from East Timor to Afghanistan.

In sharp contrast to the Labor-loyal DSP/SA and other reformist groups, who grovelled before the ALP and Greens, we forthrightly declared that Rudd's ALP was committed to waging war on workers and the oppressed, and called for "No Vote to ALP! No Vote to Bourgeois Greens!" Noting that the ALP is an obstacle to advancing the interests of the proletariat, we stated in our 16 November 2007 state-

ment, "The working class needs a party that stands on an internationalist, revolutionary, proletarian program. Such a party will be built through a political struggle against Laborism. This means splitting the working-class base of the ALP from its pro-bourgeois leadership, centrally through the fight for a revolutionary class-struggle leadership of the unions." A touchstone for revolution in this country is a political break from Laborite reformism. This is crucial to the working class achieving revolutionary class consciousness.

RSP: Old Muck in New Pail

The split in the DSP over Socialist Alliance was not based on programmatic differences but divergent opportunist appetites. The Percy wing of the leadership only began to part company with Boyle when the wheels started falling off SA. Back in 2001, when SA was launched, Percy was no less enthusiastic for the project. At that time the DSP was pumped by the "success" of its East Timor "troops in" mobilisations, energised by the anti-globalisation movement and hoping to cash in on some increased disaffection with the Labor Party. Joined by the International Socialist Organisation (ISO) and other left groups such as the Freedom Socialist Party, this electoral vehicle sought to corral opposition to the ALP safely within the Laborite parliamentarist fold. However contrary to the DSP's projection of "a period of upsurge," the world has been, and continues to be, decisively shaped by the counterrevolutionary defeat of the Soviet Union. The period is marked by a historic retrogression in the political consciousness of the working class internationally and a rise in bourgeois reaction. In Australia, the post-Soviet period has seen the growth of nationalism and militarism, which the DSP itself helped foster through promoting Australian imperialism.

Unsurprisingly, it wasn't long before the "broad left" Socialist Alliance began to shrivel, with the ISO and every other left group bailing. The Percy minority, fed up with pouring resources into a bottomless pit with little return, came to view SA as an obstacle to pursuing new and bigger opportunities like cheerleading for Chávez, and called to "resurface" the DSP as a "public revolutionary Marxist party." Devoid of any proletarian principles, Percy simply recognised, unlike Boyle, that there wasn't much to liquidate into. In short these social democrats fell out over the declining proceeds of their opportunist crimes.

Since exiting the DSP, the RSP has postured to the left of its erstwhile partners. For example, it excoriates the DSP for supporting the Indonesian PRD-Papernas (a

women who were subjected to the bride price and *burqa* and terrorized for seeking an education. No less enthusiastic was the ISO, which went on to hail the counter-revolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union itself in 1991-92.

The RCP concocted and still claims a mythical "third force"—unnamed "revolutionary Maoists" (*Revolution* online, 13 December 2009). Bunk! There were *two sides* in the civil war in Afghanistan: the Soviet Army and the U.S.-backed Islamic reactionaries, whose rebellion against the PDPA regime threatened the USSR's southern flank. We Trotskyists took a clear side, proclaiming: Hail Red Army! Extend social gains of October Revolution to Afghan peoples! We denounced Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's withdrawal of troops in 1988-89—an abject capitulation to imperialism that paved the way for the final undoing of the Soviet workers state itself. For the RCP and Maoists elsewhere, it was the Soviet Union that was the "main enemy," as Mao Zedong earlier declared when the

Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy forged its anti-Soviet alliance with U.S. imperialism. (Begun by the RCP's revered Mao, this treacherous alliance was continued by Deng Xiaoping, reviled by the RCP as a "capitalist roader.")

The ISO social democrats and RCP Maoists contributed what they could to the destruction of the USSR and the restoration of capitalism there. This was a world-historic defeat for the proletariat and the oppressed internationally, including by removing what was the main counterweight to the bloody ambitions of U.S. imperialism. The capitalist-imperialist system will continue to wreak havoc and death until it is overthrown through a series of workers revolutions.

As opposed to the reformists who lull the workers and oppressed with the promise of capitalism reformed, we revolutionary Marxists reaffirm our fight to build a workers party modeled on Lenin and Trotsky's Bolsheviks, which led the workers to power in the October Revolution of 1917. **For new October Revolutions! ■**



Spartacists at 2007 anti-APEC protest in revolutionary opposition to Australian imperialism at "home" and abroad.

2007 fusion between the PRD and the Islamist Star Reformation Party, which supported the incumbent Indonesian government). The RSP cynically attacks the DSP for covering for the PRD-Papernas' orientation towards giving electoral support to multi-millionaire ex-Kopassus leader Prabowo in the last elections. What you don't hear is that RSP cadre (then in the DSP) schooled the PRD in class-collaborationism, giving support to bourgeois PDI leader and Javanese-chauvinist Megawati Sukarnoputri in the late 1990s.

At "home," the RSP has taken the DSP to task for softness on arbitration and protectionism, two planks of Laborite reformism. This is rich coming from the RSP. It effusively praises the WA maritime union leadership of ex-SAer Chris Cain, whose idea of fighting union-busting moves behind the Maritime Security Identification Card is to disgustingly tell the government to target foreign seamen instead because they could be "Osama bin Ladens" (*West Australian*, 2 February). They also whine that SA women "watered down" the call for free abortion on demand to suit "the Greens and the more conservative elements of the pro-choice campaign" (*Direct Action*, December 2009). Yet RSPers at the 6 February Women's Abortion Action Campaign (WAAC) forum in Sydney had no problem supporting a

WAAC resolution that servilely pleaded with the Queensland Labor government of Anna Bligh to "repeal all criminal abortion laws." It was up to the Spartacists at the meeting to argue that "free abortion on demand is the bottom line!" and to link this to the fight for the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of a revolutionary government such as existed under the Bolsheviks following the 1917 Russian Revolution.

The RSP's "left" rhetoric partly reflects just how openly rightwing the DSP/SA has become. SA is currently backing a campaign embraced by the anti-union National Farmers Federation against coal-mining in Carroona, NSW. And in response to a racist motion at SA's January conference opposing "immigration and refuge" and declaring "mass migration" a threat to everything from the environment to "democracy," SA adopted a polite rejection of "simplistic populationist theories to explain climate change" and resolved to have a public "debate" in order to establish policy!

But for the most part the RSP's rhetoric is merely a pathetic and cynical attempt to politically distinguish itself from the DSP/SA. The RSP is led by the same gang responsible for some of the DSP's worst betrayals. Take, for example, Allen

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Haiti...

(continued from page 1)

appeal from that country's ambassador to Washington calling on Haitians not to attempt to flee the country by boat.

The Obama administration announced that undocumented Haitians in the U.S. would be granted "temporary protected status" allowing them to remain and work in this country—if they can even find jobs in this economy with rampant unemployment and dispossession. However, many injured Haitians were denied the visas that would allow them to be transferred to Miami for surgery and treatment—immigration officials in Florida even seized a two-year-old Haitian child who required medical treatment. At the U.S. military camp in Guantánamo, Cuba, almost 200 prisoners of the "war on terror" remain locked up in inhuman conditions. Obama's deadline for shutting down the prison passed unnoticed last week. Military authorities there are rushing to set up an installation capable of holding up to 13,000 Haitian refugees.

In preparing to interdict any Haitian refugees seeking to reach the U.S., Obama is following in the footsteps of George W. Bush and previous presidents going back to a 1981 treaty signed by President Ronald Reagan and the then-puppet dictator "Baby Doc" Duvalier. In September 1991, a military coup toppled the presidency of populist priest Jean-Bertrand Aristide after less than one year, sending many of his supporters to sea in rickety boats. The administration of the first Bush plucked thousands of Haitian refugees from their boats and imprisoned them indefinitely at Guantánamo with no right to legal counsel—a policy continued under Democrat Bill Clinton. We demand: Down with the racist ban on Haitian refugees! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! U.S. out of Guantánamo!

Down With U.S. Imperialism!

For liberals disappointed with the Obama administration's policies in Afghanistan and Iraq, the earthquake in Haiti was seen as an opportunity for the U.S. to show a benign face. This was echoed by Obama's somewhat disillusioned reformist boosters, such as the ISO and WWP. The ISO demands that "Obama immediately stop the military occupation of Haiti," while calling for the U.S. to "flood the country with doctors, nurses, food, water and construction machinery" (*Socialist Worker* online, 19 January). Likewise, a January 14 statement on Workers World's Web site demands "the removal of all U.N. combat troops," while calling for "all bonuses from executives of financial institutions that received bailout money to be donated to Haiti."

The notion that U.S. imperialism can be pressured into serving the needs of the oppressed, rather than its own class interests, shows boundless illusions in the good offices of the rapacious American ruling class. Reformists like the ISO and WWP perennially raised calls at demonstrations against the U.S. war in Iraq



Rainey/Newark Star-Ledger

Cuban volunteer medical team treats earthquake victims in Port-au-Prince, 16 January.

demanding a shift of U.S. government spending priorities from war to social services like education. But neocolonial domination and aggrandizement are inherent to imperialism, and no amount of pressure and pleading can change that.

The brutal treatment routinely meted out to Haitians seeking asylum in the U.S.—detention, humiliation, deportation—contrasts sharply with the way the U.S. welcomes counterrevolutionary *gusanos* (worms), whom they encourage to "flee" from Cuba. A social revolution in Cuba overthrew capitalism in what had been an impoverished neocolony, and ever since then the U.S. ruling class has been determined to overturn the Cuban Revolution and re-establish capitalist exploitation in that country. We stand for the unconditional military defense of the Cuban bureaucratically deformed workers state against imperialism and the forces of internal counterrevolution. At the same time, we fight for workers political revolution to oust the ruling Stalinist bureaucracy and replace it with a regime based on workers democracy and revolutionary internationalism.

Cuba has provided medical personnel and medical training to countries throughout Latin America and elsewhere, and Cuban universities have trained over 500 Haitian doctors, free of charge. Before the earthquake hit, some 350 Cuban medical personnel were already working in Haiti. Within hours of the quake, Cuba dispatched an additional 69 doctors from the Henry Reeve International Contingent of Doctors Specialized in Disaster Situations and Serious Epidemics. That brigade, named after a U.S. citizen who fought for Cuban independence from Spain in the late 19th century, was set up by the Cuban government in September 2005 to aid victims of Katrina (the Cuban doctors were refused entry into the U.S.).

Even the conservative *Wall Street Journal* (17 January) conceded: "U.S. officials have blamed security concerns for holding up providing relief. Yet a team of Cuban doctors were seen Monday treating hundreds of patients without a gun or soldier

in sight." Moreover, despite repeated attempts by U.S. imperialism to foment counterrevolution—including a decades-long U.S. starvation embargo—Cuba has temporarily allowed U.S. military aircraft to fly over its airspace in order to speed up aid efforts for Haiti.

The advantages of a collectivized econ-



Farrell/Miami Herald

Anguish over small child being removed from rubble.

omy over capitalist anarchy are evident not least in the way Cuba deals with natural disasters. Cuba, which is regularly battered by hurricanes, is well known for its efficient evacuation of citizens in the face of such disasters. When the Haiti quake struck, southeastern Cuba was put on tsunami watch for 90 minutes. During that brief period, Cuban authorities evacuated some 30,000 people from Baracoa, that part of the island closest to Haiti; they were able to return home that evening.

A History of Neocolonial Rape and Dispossession

For 200 years, the Haitian masses have been paying in blood for the revolution they carried out under the leadership of Toussaint L'Ouverture against the French colonial slavocracy. Directly inspired by the Great French Revolution, the Haitian Revolution of 1791-1804, which culminated in the creation of the first independent black state in the modern era, served as a beacon, inspiring slave revolts throughout the Americas. It was greeted with a frenzy of racist counterrevolutionary hostility from both Napoleonic France and the slave-owning United States.

In return for recognition by France, Haiti was compelled to compensate the former slaveowners to the tune of 150 million gold francs—approximately \$20 billion at today's prices. For its part, the U.S. refused to grant Haiti diplomatic recognition until 1862, during the Civil War against the Southern slavocracy. Throughout the 1800s, the U.S. and European

powers used gunboat diplomacy and the threat of military intervention to extort debt repayment. By the end of the 19th century, 80 percent of Haiti's national budget was going to pay off its former exploiters, and the country remains a hideously impoverished debtor nation today.

The U.S. militarily intervened into Haiti in 1888, 1891 and 1914. In 1915, the U.S. initiated a bloody occupation of the country that would last until 1934. The U.S. military regime in Haiti was, according to one historian, "probably the bloodiest in all of the Caribbean" (Donald Schulz and Douglas Granham [eds.], *Revolution and Counterrevolution in Central America and the Caribbean* [1984]).

The occupation and the subsequent imposition of forced labor provoked a national uprising by *cacos* (peasant bands) beginning in 1916, which lasted five years before being drowned in blood. As described by Mumia Abu-Jamal, America's foremost class-war prisoner, in a 1994 column ("American Hatred of Haiti," WV No. 609, 28 October 1994):

"When the people rebelled against this involuntary servitude in the Cacos Insurrection, the U.S. Marines responded by ruthless repression, that left an estimated 15,000 peasant casualties.

"One U.S. Marine officer, Colonel Littleton W.T. Waller (Virginia) wrote of his

impressions of the people historians now say they came to 'help'; the Haitians were 'real n-----rs and make no mistake—there are some fine looking, well educated polished men here, but they are real n-----s beneath the surface.'

"A perfect example of exported American 'democracy'."

Since then, the U.S. has propped up one Haitian despot after another, each further



Reuters

Fifteen-year-old girl shot dead by a Haitian cop for "looting," 19 January.

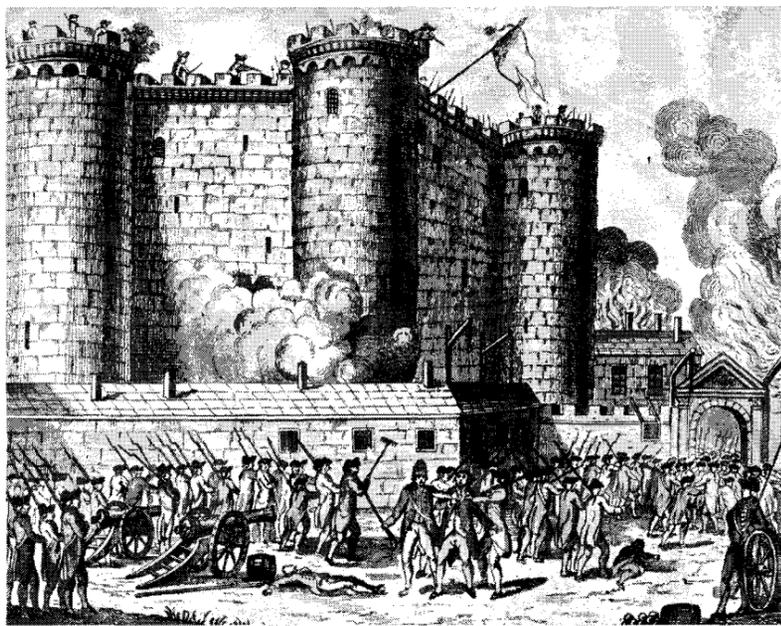
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Left: Storming of Bastille prison, opening event of French Revolution, 14 July 1789. Toussaint L'Ouverture (inset) forged army of black slaves to win freedom and independence for Haiti. Right: Emile Antoine Bayard's "Revolt of the Negroes in San Domingo." Haitian Revolution combined the struggle against slavery with the ideals of the French Revolution.

bleeding the country dry of whatever resources were left. Among these brutal dictators was the infamous "Papa Doc" Duvalier, who organized the Tonton Macoutes thugs and killed 50,000 opponents. His demented son "Baby Doc" was forced to flee to France amid a mass upheaval in 1986. One report estimated that "Baby Doc" stole the equivalent of up to 4.5 percent of the Haitian GDP for every year he was in power. As Graham Greene put it in his novel *The Comedians*, the U.S. was responsible for setting up "the nightmare republic." Americans can read the novel; Haitians had to live it.

The massive discontent that drove "Baby Doc" Duvalier out of power ultimately led to the election of radical Catholic priest Jean-Bertrand Aristide in December 1990. Virtually the entire left internationally gave him political support. WWP hailed Aristide for supposedly promising to introduce such things as "economic justice," "honest" government and "broad participation of the people" (*Workers World*, 27 December 1990). The WWP article quoted from a solidarity message they sent to Aristide hailing his "great courage in bringing the flood of the mass struggle into the election campaign." Likewise, the ISO celebrated Aristide's election, claiming that he was "fully aware that for democracy to survive in Haiti, the whole system had to be restructured" (*Socialist Worker*, November 1991).

In contrast, we warned: "Aristide will either play the role of groveling instrument of the Haitian bourgeoisie and the U.S. imperialist overlords or he will be swept away in a reactionary crack-down aimed at decisively disciplining the pitilessly oppressed population" ("Haiti: Election Avalanche for Radical Priest," *WV* No. 517, 4 January 1991). Both proved to be true.

Initially, Aristide irked the U.S. rulers by resisting their economic diktats and establishing diplomatic relations with Cuba. This was one of the few benefits from the Aristide regime since it meant that Cuban doctors and nurses began working in Haiti. Aristide was toppled in 1991. In 1994, following a starvation embargo against Haiti, President Clinton re-installed Aristide at the point of bayonets, with Marines occupying the country in a military intervention dubbed "Operation Uphold Democracy." Aristide supported both the embargo and the invasion. He proved his reliability to his U.S. overseers by agreeing in advance of his 1994 return to power to a drastic austerity program, privatization of state-owned industry, massive layoffs in the public sector and the virtual abolition of import tariffs. The latter induced the collapse of the indigenous economy as the market was flooded with, for example, American rice

at prices cheaper than the Haitian-grown product. Having dissolved the army (a center of opposition to his regime) in 1995, Aristide propped up his rule with a brutal police force and gang terror.

Again in 2004, as Haiti was being swept by armed revolts (some with the support

its colonial and semicolonial subjects, must be swept away through international proletarian revolution. Toward that end, Haitian workers in the U.S., Canada and elsewhere will serve as a vital bridge linking the struggle for national and social emancipation in Haiti with the

the poor and working people of Haiti" (emphasis in original). By the IG's reasoning, the Cuban government is to be condemned for opening its airspace to American military planes after the earthquake. The IG is cynically toying with rhetoric, blithely unconcerned with



National Archives



AP

Haiti under boot of U.S. imperialism. Left: Marines (circa 1919) during brutal 1915-34 occupation. Above: U.S. military policeman savages Haitian man during Clinton's "Operation Uphold Democracy," which restored Aristide to power in 1994.

of Washington neoconservatives), Bush sent U.S. Marines to invade Haiti as a U.S. military escort whisked President Aristide out of the country and into exile in Africa. Prominent in pushing the hesitating Bush administration to send the Marines were the Democrats of the Congressional Black Caucus, though ostensibly in defense of Aristide. The 1994 and 2004 U.S. invasions, both of which were carried out with UN backing, were largely motivated by the U.S. rulers' determination to prevent Haitians from reaching America's shores. We pointed out that the U.S. occupation of Haiti also represented a danger to the Cuban deformed workers state, as well as to the militant proletariat of the Dominican Republic, which shares the island of Hispaniola with Haiti (see "Haiti: U.S./UN Troops Out!" *WV* No. 821, 5 March 2004).

Following the 2004 U.S. invasion, an occupation force was set up under UN sponsorship, bringing with it a beefed-up Haitian police force composed of sadistic rapists and killers. The UN, since its creation at the end of World War II, has always been a fig leaf for naked imperialist aggression against semicolonial countries. During the current earthquake disaster, the U.S.-armed thugs of the Haitian police have coldbloodedly gunned down "looters," including a 15-year-old girl who was shot in the head as she carried a few wall hangings from the ruins.

The imperialist system, which imposes grinding poverty and degradation on

fight for socialist revolution in the imperialist centers of North America that have turned that country into a neocolonial hell.

For Revolutionary Internationalism

In a January 20 article posted on its Web site, the centrist Internationalist Group (IG) argued that the earthquake provides an opening for socialist revolution in Haiti. The IG wrote that Haiti's "small but militant proletariat can place itself at the head of the impoverished urban and rural masses seeking to organize their own power, particularly at present where the machinery of the capitalist state is largely reduced to rubble and a few marauding bands of police."

The stark reality that the IG would deny is that a) even before the earthquake, there was virtually no working class in Haiti; b) in the aftermath of the earthquake, not only is the state "largely reduced to rubble," but so is the society as a whole, including the desperate and dispossessed population; and c) there is a military power in Haiti that is far from "reduced to rubble," and it's U.S. imperialism.

The IG demands that "all U.S./U.N. forces get out," painting the U.S. military presence in Haiti today as aimed at suppressing a popular uprising: "This huge military occupation is not intended to deliver aid, but to put down unrest by

the fact that, in the real world, if the policies they advocate were implemented, they would result in mass death through starvation.

Notwithstanding the IG's deranged and grotesque fantasies, there are no good alternatives facing Haiti today. The U.S. military is the only force on the ground with the capacity—e.g., trucks, planes, ships—to organize the transport of what food, water, medical and other supplies are getting to Haiti's population. And they're doing it in the typical piggish U.S. imperialist manner. We have always opposed U.S. and UN occupations in Haiti and everywhere—and it may become necessary to call for U.S./UN out of Haiti in the near future—but we are not going to call for an end to such aid as the desperate Haitian masses can get their hands on. As Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky explained in his 1938 article "Learn to Think: A Friendly Suggestion to Certain Ultra-Leftists":

"An irreconcilable attitude against bourgeois militarism does not signify at all that the proletariat *in all cases* enters into a struggle against its own 'national' army. At least the workers would not interfere with soldiers who are extinguishing a fire or rescuing drowning people during a flood; on the contrary, they would help side by side with the soldiers and fraternize with them....

"In ninety cases out of a hundred the workers actually place a minus sign where the bourgeoisie places a plus sign. In ten cases however they are forced

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Britain...

(continued from page 12)

unparalleled in its barbarity. The Holocaust was the systematic extermination of six million Jews, as well as homosexuals, Gypsies and millions of Slavs. Hitler's Nazis placed themselves at the head of European reaction. From 1918 to 1923, Germany came to the brink of revolution a number of times, but the proletariat was defeated. For the failure of the Russian Revolution to spread to the rest of Europe, humanity was made to pay with Nazi terror and the Holocaust.

In the inter-war period of economic and social crisis in Europe, where the facade of parliamentary democracy could no longer deceive and contain the militant working class, the bourgeoisie looked to fascist reaction to smash the workers organisations. But this did not make the Allied imperialist "democracies" anti-fascist fighters. Contrary to the myth of the "democratic war against fascism," we uphold the Trotskyist position on WWII of revolutionary defeatism for *all* the imperialists—Allied and Axis powers—and for unconditional military defence of the Soviet Union, a bureaucratically degenerated workers state. It was the Soviet Union that smashed the Nazi war machine, at a cost of over 20 million Soviet lives.

Trade Unions/Minorities Must Stop EDL Provocations!

We warned last issue that "the election of BNers Nick Griffin and Andrew Brons to the European Parliament gives respectability to the fascist stormtroopers and will lead to increased attacks on the streets, posing *real and present danger* to minorities, gays and leftists" ("The Bankruptcy of Labour," *Workers Hammer* No. 208, Autumn 2009). This warning has been borne out: since the summer an outfit calling itself the English Defence League (EDL) has staged numerous, high-profile demonstrations in several cities, including Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds and London. EDL marches are racist provocations, targeting Muslims in particular, using outrageous slogans such as "Muslim bombers off our streets." These provocations must be met with massive protest centred on the trade unions mobilised for defence of Muslims, immigrants and all the intended victims of the EDL scum.

All evidence points to the fact that the EDL is a fascist organisation. The EDL was set up by BNP members (or recent ex-members) and organised through networks of football "casuals" who have long been linked with the fascists. In Luton, the EDL targeted Muslim organisations who protested against a parade in March 2009 by the Royal Anglian Regiment on their return from Iraq. The EDL were particularly incensed at placards describing British soldiers as "butchers of Basra." This is a rather benign description of British Army brutality in a city where in 2003 Baha Mousa was horrifically put to death in the custody of the Queens Lancashire Regiment, having suffered 93 separate injuries.

The EDL is linked to a number of fascist organisations such as "Stop the Islamisation of Europe" and its mobilisations have targeted mosques, such as in Harrow, London. Britain's fascists have historically had links to the anti-Catholic Ulster Loyalist paramilitaries. At a November 2009 demonstration in Glasgow by the Scottish Defence League the Loyalist slogan "No surrender to the IRA!" was chanted. Today, according to the anti-fascist magazine *Searchlight*, the BNP has its call centre in Northern Ireland. The EDL makes a point of thrusting a couple of mixed-race faces to the fore when facing the press but its claim that it is not racist is hogwash.

It is in the interests of the multiethnic working class as a whole to combat these



Spartacist League/Britain contingent at 16 October 1993 anti-fascist demonstration in London.

racist terrorists. We call for trade-union/minority mobilisations to stop fascist provocations. At the same time, as Marxists we make clear that the decaying capitalist system breeds the social conditions in which the fascists thrive and therefore the struggle against fascism is inseparable from the fight for socialist revolution.

The BNP führer used the BBC debate to engage in open gay-bashing, declaring that he finds the idea of two men kissing "creepy." Recent months have seen a dramatic rise in murderous homophobic attacks. On 13 October 2009 Ian Baynam died of severe injuries received in a homophobic attack in London's Trafalgar Square; on 25 October James Parkes, a 22-year-old gay man (who is a trainee cop) suffered multiple skull fractures when he was attacked by up to 20 people as he left a gay night club in Liverpool, while two transsexual women were also murdered—Andrea Waddell in Brighton in October and Destiny Lauren in London in November. In response to the rise in homophobic attacks and in memory of the victims of the fascist firebombing of a gay bar in London's Soho ten years ago, thousands held vigils in London, Liverpool and other cities at the end of October.

Our call for trade-union/minority mobilisations is counterposed to wretched appeals to the capitalist state to halt fascist provocations. Mobilising the social power of the trade unions to defend immigrants and minorities requires a political struggle against the reformist trade-union bureaucracy and is counterposed to the "anti-fascist" strategy of Unite Against Fascism (UAF), built by the Socialist Workers Party (SWP). Demonstrations organised by UAF are not intended to stop fascist provocations: the UAF slogan "Stop the BNP" in reality often means that the state should ban the BNP. We oppose calls on the capitalist state to ban the fascists, which will invariably be used against the left. The role of the capitalist state—in particular its police, prisons and courts—is to maintain order within the framework of private property relations and therefore it embodies the chauvinism that is inherent in capitalist society.

Anti-Fascist Myths Glorify Bourgeois "Democracy"

The standard reformist answer to fascism is to unite all "democratic" forces into a cross-class coalition. This is today embodied in UAF, whose strategy consists of using bourgeois "democracy" as a bulwark against the fascists. But the counterposition between bourgeois "democracy" and fascism is false. Parliamentary democracy, imperialism's preferred method of rule, is merely the best disguise for the dictatorship of the capitalists. Fascism in power is another form of the dictatorship of finance capital, one which the bourgeoisie only resorts to under extreme circumstances such as when its rule is threatened by the proletariat mobilised for revolution.

In the post-Soviet climate, the fact that the capitalist ruling classes currently face

no threat from the insurgent proletariat means that fascist organisations across Europe have increasingly focused on parliamentary activity. Thus in France in 2002 when Le Pen's National Front fascists scored big gains in the presidential elections they did so primarily as an *electoral party* and in Italy Gianfranco Fini's formerly neo-fascist party mutated into an electoral party that merged with Berlusconi's Freedom People movement in March 2009.

Our demand that fascist provocations must be *stopped* rests on the understanding that there is *nothing to debate* with fascists. What's to debate with supporters of the Holocaust, for example? The fascists' methods of "debate" are the fire-bomb, the lynch rope and other murderous weapons. However today reformists and liberals are rushing headlong to debate the fascists. Leading the pack is *Searchlight* editor Nick Lowles, who proclaimed a "new reality" in July 2009, a month after the BNP won two seats in the European Parliament. Lowles argues that:

"Searchlight comes from a proud tradition of No Platform, a belief that fascism should not be allowed to air its politics of hate publicly. We have always opposed legitimising fascism through public debate and where fascists try to incite hatred within communities through provocative marches and actions, we have backed mobilisations against them.

"While I still adhere to this in principle I also believe that we have to accept a new reality. Firstly the BNP has MEPs and whether we like it or not Nick Griffin and Andrew Brons will appear more regularly on television. No platform agreements between political parties were already breaking down before the election, with only Labour holding to them, and this process is likely to quicken now."

—"The Way Forward," *Searchlight* (July 2009)

Related to this, Lowles argues in the same article: "To fight the BNP effectively we must move away from city and town centre events to focusing on the very communities where the BNP is drawing its support"—in other words more electioneering among the racist BNP voters. The SWP's strategy of "use your vote" means voting Labour (or some alternative), absolving the Labour government of its role in putting the wind in the sails of the fascists.

The Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) in *Weekly Worker* (15 October 2009) mocks any demonstrations against the fascists as "mindless 'fash-bashing'" and an article by Eddie Ford denies that the EDL is fascist, insisting they are but "a motley and ugly" alliance of "nationalist, far-right and lumpen elements, such as intoxicated football hooligans and semi-criminal riff-raff," a description which sounds like any gang of fascist scum. The CPGB equates any opposition to the fascists with the SWP's reformism, but its criticism of the SWP for grovelling appeals to the state to ban the fascists is a cover for the CPGB's line, which amounts to *doing nothing* to combat the BNP or the EDL. Rather than protesting against Griffin outside the BBC, the CPGB suggested

that "the establishment make room for the Marxist left on its platforms" (*Weekly Worker*, 1 October 2009).

SWP honcho John Molyneux argued in a letter to *Socialist Worker* (13 June 2009) that the SWP shouldn't make a "fetish" out of not debating the fascists. Meanwhile, according to the SWP's Pre-conference Bulletin No. 1 (October 2009):

"A discussion has been taking place in the party about our stance on No Platform for the BNP. While our commitment to denying the fascists a platform is not in doubt, there have been calls from comrades centrally involved in Unite Against Fascism to scrap our opposition to debating with the BNP leadership in the media."

The SWP leadership has decided not to debate Griffin, at least for now.

When the EDL began mobilising in major city centres in the summer of 2009, UAF was lukewarm about mobilising any kind of counter-demonstration. A petition on UAF's Web site (25 September 2009) called on the home secretary, local council and police to ban the 10 October EDL demo in Manchester. According to Permanent Revolution's Web site (permanentrevolution.net, 11 October 2009), when this was denied UAF sought permission to rally on the other side of the city. However, the cops placed the UAF demo near the EDL mob of 500-700 thugs and "kettled" [tightly surrounded] the anti-fascist demonstrators. UAF deliberately called its demonstration for noon, two hours after the EDL provocation began. *Socialist Worker* (17 October 2009) reports that the North West TUC [Trades Union Congress] urged people to stay "away from the UAF protest."

Workers Power defends the position "no platform for fascists," saying: "Communists see fascist organisations as instruments of civil war against the working class. Their aim is to smash the workers movement." They conclude: "We believe they [the fascists] have to be stopped from organising their forces. This is the policy of 'no platform.' Wherever fascists seek to grow and develop their influence and support, communists seek to organise united action of workers, youth and anti-racists to stop them" (workerspower.com, 29 September 2009). What Workers Power doesn't say is that upholding the slogan "no platform for fascists" in no way precludes—indeed is often synonymous with—calling on the state to ban the fascists. Workers Power attacks UAF for its failure to physically stop the fascists in the streets, saying: "Though UAF sees the need to protest against the BNP, it suffers from having to limit its arguments and tactics to what the capitalist politicians and figures on the right wing of the labour movement will accept." The problem with UAF is not that it lacks militant tactics, but its reformist programme, which Workers Power shares.

Reformists Seek Unity Behind Chauvinist "British Jobs" Crusade

Nowhere is the political bankruptcy of the Labourite left more evident than in their pleas for unity with the leadership of the reactionary strikes for "British jobs for British workers." Both the SWP and Workers Power look to the Socialist Party and RMT [Rail, Maritime and Transport union] leader Bob Crow, who led the No2EU coalition at the time of the European Parliament elections, to form a new electoral vehicle for the 2010 general election. No2EU was founded on support to the "British jobs for British workers" strikes and protests that began at Lindsey oil refinery in January 2009.

The Socialist Party's claim that these strikes were not aimed at foreign workers is a whitewash. At a protest in Newark, Nottinghamshire on 24 February 2009 a section of the demonstrators chanted "foreigners out" while another anti-immigrant strike in May in Milford Haven, South

AUSTRALASIAN SPARTACIST

Defend Simon Singh! Defend Scientific Medicine!

The following statement was issued on 14 December by the Spartacist League/Britain, section of the International Communist League (ICL). It was distributed that evening at a talk by Simon Singh titled "Science and the Battle for Free Speech" at Imperial College London. It is reprinted here from Workers Vanguard (No. 949, 1 January 2010), newspaper of the Spartacist League/U.S.

We Marxists defend Simon Singh, the renowned science writer, against the outrageous libel action by the British Chiropractic Association (BCA). At issue is an April 2008 article by Singh, titled "Beware the Spinal Trap" published in the *Guardian* which challenged a statement by the BCA that chiropractic could help treat a number of childhood ailments including colic, ear infections and asthma. Singh said "there is not a jot of evidence" for this claim and asserted that the BCA "promotes bogus treatments." Libel suits against scientists and science journalists are becoming increasingly common. In 2007-08, the *Guardian* and journalist Ben Goldacre, author of the book *Bad Science*, fought a libel case against vitamin pill magnate Matthias Rath who published advertisements in South Africa denouncing AIDS drugs as ineffective while promoting his own supplements. Although Rath was forced to drop the case, the *Guardian* only recovered part of the whopping £500,000 legal fees it incurred.

In the reactionary political climate of today's post-Soviet world, we Marxists find ourselves defending the basic principles of materialism, secularism and the rational humanism of the 18th-century Enlightenment. Against this ideological background, snake-oil treatments, commonly referred to as alternative "medicine," are growing in popularity and many are even being funded by the state. The British government spent £20 million of taxpayers' money on the refurbishment of the Royal London Homeopathic "Hospital," while accident and emergency

units are being closed down.

Science-based medicine and quack therapies are irreconcilable. While some popular treatments may be relatively harmless and may sometimes have a placebo effect, more often they are dangerous both in themselves and because they divert patients from needed medical treatment. This is borne out in the book Singh co-authored with Edzard Ernst titled *Trick or Treatment? Alternative Medicine on Trial* (Corgi Books, 2008) an authoritative study of acupuncture, homeopathy, chiropractic therapy and herbal medicine. The authors concluded that "In fact, not only are such treatments unproven, but over and over again we have seen that alternative medicine is also potentially dangerous." Regarding chiropractic therapy, they said it "might offer some marginal benefit, but only for back pain—all its other claims are unsubstantiated."

The libel writ from the BCA quickly followed the publication of *Trick or Treatment?* The *Guardian* had offered the BCA space for a response to Singh's article. But the BCA declined, preferring instead to hide behind the English libel laws. The BCA writ has sparked a public campaign and over 20,000 people have signed a petition calling for reform of the libel laws because they "discourage argument and debate" and have no place in scientific disputes.

English libel laws, which are enforceable in other countries, are so favourable to the claimant that London has been dubbed "a town named sue." The English libel system has no relationship to the question of truth. Indeed it is nothing more than a protection from the truth for the rich and well-born. Unlike in the U.S. for example, where the accuser must prove that the statement in question is false, in England the burden of proof is on the defendant. With the costs of litigation 100 times higher than in most other European countries, more often than not cases are never taken to court but succeed in their dirty work simply by intimidating journal-

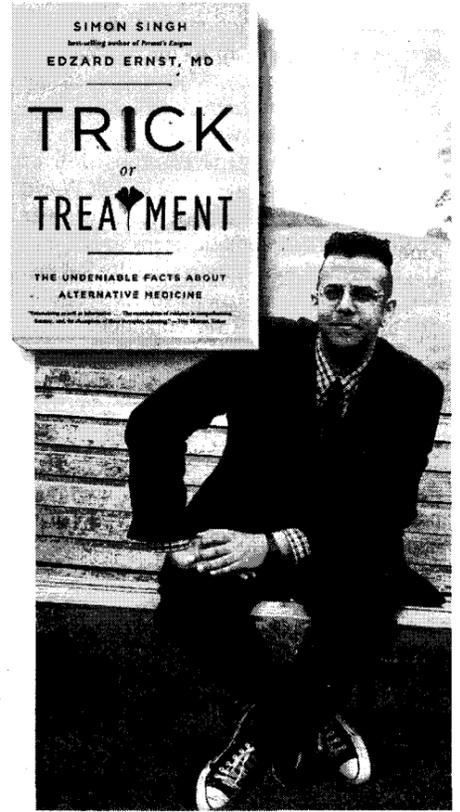
ists, newspapers and other publishers. As Simon Singh says: "Any publisher has to make a calculation on whether to defend a writ not on whether they have a strong case but on whether they can afford the extraordinary costs of running a case to court" (*Scotsman*, 11 December 2009).

The British capitalist system is to blame for the inadequate education system that results in widespread ignorance of the principles of science among the population, and for failing to provide decent healthcare for the mass of the working people. In these circumstances many people turn to remedies that promise miracles.

It is scandalous that in the 21st century Prince Charles, heir to the throne of the mediaeval institution of the monarchy, received £900,000 from the Department of Health to promote "alternative therapies," which are international multibillion-dollar businesses, while Simon Singh has had to fork out £100,000 (thus far) fighting the BCA libel suit. The libel laws are used to defend the interests of big business. We also defend Dr. Peter Wilmshurst, a consultant cardiologist at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital, who criticised the research data used to promote a new heart implant and was sued by the manufacturer. He faces financial ruin as a result of a libel suit by U.S. company NMT Medical.

Marxism has as its foundation the gains of the Enlightenment and bourgeois revolutions which freed scientific and social development from the shackles of feudalism. The triumph of capitalist counter-revolution in the Soviet Union in 1991-92 has ushered in a period of theoretical, political, social and not least sexual reaction. There has been a growing assault on science, including from Christian fundamentalists seeking to undermine the teaching of Darwin's theory of evolution. Particularly in this context it has become necessary to reassert the basic premises of historical materialism and the corresponding programmatic principles of Marxism.

The libel laws in this country are part



simonsingh.net

of a system, including the institution of Parliament, that exists to keep the working class "in its place." We look forward to the day when the libel laws and the system of lies they uphold—including feudal relics such as the monarchy, the House of Lords and established churches—will be swept away by socialist revolution. A future international planned socialist economy will provide free, good quality healthcare for all and sweep away the material basis for the persistence of dangerous anti-scientific quackery. In a world communist society—where social classes and all forms of oppression are part of a distant, barbaric past—mankind will finally be able to put into place the power of science in the service of all humanity. ■

Wales resulted in some 40 Polish workers losing their jobs. According to the *Guardian* Web site (21 May 2009), the strike was settled when "the Dutch-based employer, Hertel, agreed to withdraw 40 Poles and replace them with UK staff at the terminal owned by ExxonMobil and Total." The Socialist Party proclaimed the outcome as yet another "victory" and blatantly admitted that the British workers "were not opposed to laggards [insulation workers] from Poland getting work on the site as long as local laggards were given the opportunity of the work first as under the union agreement" (*Socialist*, 28 May-3 June 2009).

No2EU's election strategy consisted of feeding at the same trough as the BNP, aiming to compete for the racist vote. In November the Socialist Party and Bob Crow formed a new coalition for the 2010 election. Its leadership also includes Brian Caton—leader of the Prison Officers Association, part of the armed fist of the capitalist state—who is now a proud member of the Socialist Party. Given its history as No2EU and its leadership, this "new" coalition could be nothing other than a vehicle for chauvinism, class collaboration and betrayal. But Workers Power criticises this cabal because they will not form a party, and therefore "will not stop the Tories but, on the contrary, demoralise working class activists and deliver the more backward and disorganised parts of our class over to the British National Party, which can pose as 'anti-establishment' unopposed by a genuine,



Workers Hammer

March 2005 protest against planned extradition of Babar Ahmad, victim of Labour government's "anti-terror" witchhunt.

radical party of the left."

The notion that a mass workers party should accommodate would-be BNP voters expresses Workers Power's commitment to a social-democratic "party of the whole class." This view, which is common to all Labourite organisations including the Socialist Party and SWP, sees the workers party as an analogue of the trade unions, embracing the most advanced as well as the most backward layers of the working class, in which the backward layers usually dominate. In contrast, the Leninist vanguard party that we seek to build necessarily excludes from its ranks all

chauvinists and bases itself on the most advanced layers, fighting every manifestation of backwardness, chauvinism and prejudice, leading the entire working class and acting as a "tribune of the people."

The protectionist poison expressed in the "British jobs" strikes is inherent to the programme of social democracy. To workers facing ruin by the capitalist economic crisis, it substitutes class collaboration for class struggle, lining workers up behind their own capitalist rulers. Protectionism is common among "left" union leaders, including former NUM leader Arthur Scargill, militant leader of the heroic 1984-85 miners strike, who expressed his support for the "British jobs" crusade in a 4 November interview with *Indymedia* Ireland. Asked about the Lindsey oil refinery strike Scargill said: "You can't have a situation [where] you can just move migrant labour, migrant capital into a society without it having devastating effects on the whole society," while emphasising that: "I'm not talking about immigration [and] I'm not talking about asylum seekers! I'm talking about migrant labour being moved by capitalism."

Our proletarian, revolutionary and internationalist programme is flatly counterposed to nationalist protectionism. We insist that until the working class takes state power, we will not be in a position to worry about the ebbs and flows of labour migration or the world economy more generally. We have noted that in cases such as the Lindsey strike, the bottom line for the trade-union movement

must not be *whom* the contractors hire, but at *what rate of pay*. The way to undercut attempts by the bosses to "level down" the wages and working conditions, including safety standards, of all workers, by playing off one nationality against the other, is for the unions to demand: **Full union pay for all work at the prevailing rate, no matter who does the job! Equal pay for equal work!** This poses the need for international collaboration among construction workers across European countries.

Twelve years of Labour rule has meant an even more rapid de-industrialisation than under Margaret Thatcher. The chronic job losses have been devastating for the working class. Entire areas of the country, from the former coal-mining and steel-producing areas of England, Scotland and Wales to the desolate former textile towns such as Bradford and Oldham offer little hope of a decent job. The situation cries out for a socialist revolution and a planned economy to regenerate social and economic life. There is no answer to the boom-and-bust cycle of capitalism short of proletarian socialist revolution that takes power out of the hands of the irrational capitalist ruling class and establishes a planned, socialised economy. The greatest obstacle to this is the social-chauvinist Labourite leadership of the working class who are loyal to British capitalism. We seek to build a multiethnic revolutionary workers party, forged in opposition to Labourism, to overthrow the racist capitalist order and replace it with working-class rule. ■

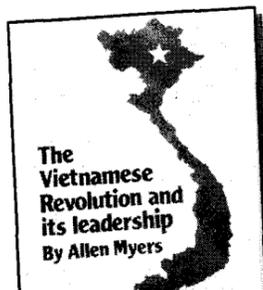
DSP/RSP...

(continued from page 5)

Myers, now assistant editor of the RSP's newspaper *Direct Action*. In 1984, in the service of cosying up to the Vietnamese Stalinist bureaucracy, Myers praised the Stalinists' 1945 *murder* of the heroic Vietnamese Trotskyists who led a workers insurrection against the reimposition of French imperialist rule at the end of World War II. Or Max Lane, one-time member of Australia's diplomatic corps in Indonesia. In 1999, Lane enthusiastically led rallies for Australian troops to East Timor. To this day the RSP considers these "troops in" mobilisations a high point of struggle. Then there is Doug Lorimer who has made it his life's work to refashion Lenin into a liberal democrat. Lorimer was the DSP's chief exponent of its denunciation of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution. As for RSP honcho, John Percy—he helped lead the DSP in its *active support* to capitalist counter-revolution in the Soviet Union in the name of "democracy"!

For New October Revolutions!

Since the destruction of the Soviet Union, the imperialist ruling classes have



SWP 1984 pamphlet (left) hails Stalinists' 1945 counterrevolutionary murder of heroic Vietnamese Trotskyists (right), including leader Ta Thu Thau (inset).

in the rural areas. It was at this time that leaders of the Trotskyists and of the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois nationalists were executed. According to most sources, the executions were ordered by Tran Van Glau. The Trotskyists and their nationalist allies had made a major contribution to the near-destruction of the revolution in the South. Preventing further damage, if necessary by physical repression, was imperative. It appears, however, that the Communist Party felt that Glau had used excessive violence in coping with the situation. Huynh reports.



Quatrième Internationale

Nguyen Khanh Hoi

been escalating their war against the working class and oppressed, ripping up social programs and democratic rights at home, while conducting military occupations abroad. To facilitate this agenda, they foster nationalism and racism along with religion and all-sided backwardness. The more politically advanced workers generally no longer identify their needs with the ideals of socialism. And the reformists trip over themselves in a race to adapt to the generalised retrogression of proletarian consciousness resulting

from the final undoing of the world's first workers state.

In spite of its later degeneration at the hands of a Stalinist bureaucracy that usurped political power beginning in 1924, the Russian Revolution showed that it was possible for the working class to overthrow capitalism, ushering in an unprecedented development of the productive forces. The fundamental lesson of the Russian Revolution is that to emancipate humanity the working class needs a revolutionary communist vanguard to

lead it, at the head of all the oppressed, in the overthrow of this rotting capitalist system. Such a party will be built in sharp political combat against the likes of the Laborite DSP/SA and RSP who are opponents of the dictatorship of the proletariat, having long ago made their peace with the imperialist ruling class. The Spartacist League of Australia, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist), is committed to building a Leninist-Trotskyist party in the struggle for new October Revolutions. ■

Letter...

(continued from page 2)

governments under Bob Hawke, the labor lawyer who ran the Australian Council of Trade Unions during Whitlam's tenure, and then Paul Keating, made clear that the ALP's administration of capitalism was thoroughly compatible with stout service in Washington's drive to crush the Soviet Union, as well as in U.S. imperialism's subsequent "new world order."

I'm not arguing that the article had to have a whole section on the Russian question, which is dealt with in the NATO article elsewhere in the issue. But it deserves a little more attention than it got. In particular, it is odd to speak of the critical U.S. imperialist military bases in Australia without mentioning that their principal target was the Soviet Union. Pine Gap, Nurrungar and North-West Cape were key to the U.S.' nuclear targeting of the USSR, and key parts of the military buildup that undermined the USSR and hastened its collapse.

Our point about China is only strengthened by noting that, with the counter-revolutionary destruction of the USSR, the U.S. imperialist juggernaut turned toward China (a stark condemnation of the Beijing Stalinists and their treacherous

alliance with U.S. imperialism). The nuclear missile subs were re-deployed from the Atlantic to the Pacific (under Democrat Clinton), the MIRVed missile warheads were re-targeted, and so too, we may be sure, were the Pentagon's Australian bases.

Lastly, in this connection, I thought it would be very useful to put forward explicitly the Russian Revolution as a model for the Australian proletariat, rather than mentioning it only in reference to its counterrevolutionary overthrow. The Russian Revolution brought out the best in the Australian working class. It brought genuine internationalism to the Australian labor movement, finding a base most naturally among the maritime unions, the Wharfies and Seamen, and continuing to find occasional expression, even if deformed, following the Communist Party of Australia's Stalinization and descent into class collaboration. The capitalists, the ALP misleaders and "White Australia" offer only depression, war and ruin. The Australian working class has a decent future only as part of communist Asia.

Comradely,
Dave Reynolds

ASp replies: We thank Dave for his incisive letter and for pointing out the incorrect assertion regarding the historical basis of the Australian Laborite trade-union bureaucracy contained in our article. For more on the origins of the ALP and Labor reformism, as well as a revolutionary internationalist perspective to sweep away the jackal Australian imperialists through workers revolution, we refer readers to "For a Workers Republic of Australia, Part of a Socialist Asia!" (1998), program of the Spartacist League of Australia. We also concur with his sharp points on the critical import of the Soviet Union and the "Russian Question" more generally. This is particularly so in this post-Soviet period where more politically advanced workers generally do not identify with the liberating goals of communism.

Dave is dead right in stating that "White Australia" and protectionism along with integration into the capitalist state, and the subordination of the workers to it, is "the virulent Laborite expression of Australian nationalism which has always crippled the Australian workers, tying them to their class enemies." Today's servile Laborite trade-union

bureaucracy repeatedly acts to divert workers' struggles into reliance on the capitalist state and its parliament. In 2006/2007 they channelled workers' anger at the Liberal/National Coalition government's reactionary union-busting *Work-Choices* legislation away from class struggle and into a nationalist campaign that pushed reliance on the courts, especially defence of arbitration, and above all the election of a Labor government in the 2007 federal elections (in the process pouring millions of dollars of workers union dues into the Labor Party's election campaign). Once elected the ALP began carrying out attacks against working people and the oppressed on behalf of the ruling class as it said it would.

Today, ACTU tops such as Jeff Lawrence enthusiastically support Rudd/Gillard's anti-union legislation, which goes under the Orwellian title of the "Fair Work Act." This legislation strengthens arbitration and maintains a ban on all but the narrowest strike actions. In February, responding to legal action by the ALP government's witchhunting Australian Building and Construction Commission, the federal court imposed fines in excess of \$1.3 million against unions for picketing at the West Gate Bridge construction site in Melbourne last year. Far from mobilising for the necessary class-struggle fight to *defend* the unions against the bosses' attacks, many union tops have found energy and purpose in backing Rudd's nationalist and racist "war on terror" state repression. From right-wing AWU honcho Paul Howes to the so-called "left" construction and maritime union tops, the Labor-loyal union misleaders push protectionist poison and feed into racist anti-immigrant hysteria under the guise of defending "local jobs" or supporting the Labor government's reactionary "border security" measures (see "Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!" *ASp* No. 207, Summer 2009/10).

The ALP is what Russian revolutionary V.I. Lenin termed a *bourgeois workers party*, thoroughly bourgeois in its program and outlook while based on the trade unions. In order for the working class to become not just a class in itself but a class *for* itself, conscious of its historic role in sweeping away capitalism, it is necessary to shatter the chains of Laborism. An internationalist revolutionary workers party will be built through a political

struggle to break the working-class base of the ALP from the nationalism and loyalty to the capitalist state purveyed by its leadership. This will centrally be through a fight to replace the hidebound Laborite union misleaders with a class-struggle revolutionary leadership.

We look to the experience of Lenin and Trotsky's Bolshevik Party which led the Russian Revolution of 1917. Mobilising the working class in political independence from all wings of the capitalist exploiters, a Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party will stand as a tribune of the people. Against this deeply male chauvinist society, it will champion the fight for women's emancipation and stand in unremitting defence of Aboriginal peoples whose deep oppression goes to the very foundation of White Australia capitalism. A Leninist-Trotskyist party will fight to unite the struggles of the Australian working class with those of its class brothers and sisters throughout the region. This is integral to the fight of the multiracial working class to overturn virulently racist Australian capitalism. *For a workers republic of Australia, part of a socialist Asia!* ■

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Mumia...

(continued from page 12)

evidence against him, he was convicted on the basis of phony ballistics and other manufactured "evidence," a "confession" concocted by cops and prosecutors, massive police intimidation of witnesses and racist jury rigging. His trial was overseen by "hanging judge" Albert Sabo, who was overheard saying he would help the prosecution "fry the n---r." To secure the death sentence, prosecutors pointed to political statements issued by Mumia as a 16-year-old Panther.

Since his trial, the courts have repeatedly tossed aside massive evidence of Mumia's innocence, not least the confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Mumia, shot and killed Faulkner. Yet Mumia remains unbowed, speaking out for the oppressed and the impoverished through his death row commentaries. The Partisan Defense Committee—a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League/U.S.—calls on trade unionists, death penalty abolitionists and all opponents of racist injustice to make their voices heard in demanding: Free Mumia now! Abolish the racist death penalty!

The Supreme Court moved against Mumia with cold calculation. Last April, it turned down Mumia's petition to overturn his frame-up conviction. At the same time, the Court held in abeyance the arguments of Pennsylvania prosecutors to reinstate his death sentence, which had been overturned by Yohn on the grounds that Mumia's trial jury had been given faulty sentencing instructions. The Supreme Court waited to rule against Mumia until after it reinstated the death sentence for Ohio neo-Nazi Frank Spisak, which had been overturned on similar grounds of faulty jury instructions. In effect, the high court gave the Third Circuit their marching orders to uphold Mumia's death sentence. Alternatively, the Third Circuit could send the case back to Yohn for a hearing to consider other still-pending claims by Mumia or, less likely, reaffirm its prior decision.

The Supreme Court cynically tied together the Spisak and Mumia cases, not despite but because of their glaring differences. Spisak is a sociopath who admitted to killing his victims and made no secret of his admiration for Adolph Hitler. Mumia has always maintained his innocence and won acclaim as the "voice of the voiceless" for his powerful commentaries. The Court is consciously manipulating abhorrence of the fascist Spisak's crimes to set a precedent for the legal murder of Mumia, a man whose "crime" was to stand up to the racist capitalist rulers. Noting how his case differed from Spisak's, Mumia aptly told Free Speech Radio News, "The law is the tool of those in power, so how they use it doesn't depend on the law; it depends on power." The Supreme Court ruling will touch off new rounds of perhaps lengthy legal

November 1998 conference at Chicago's Northwestern University School of Law featured 30 people who had been released from death row after proving their innocence.



proceedings. But even if Mumia wins his battle against execution, the "alternative" offered by the courts is a life sentence with no possibility of parole, which, as Mumia noted in one of his prison writings, "is merely slow death."

The court's linking of the two cases highlights yet again how the fight for Mumia's freedom is inseparable from the struggle to abolish the death penalty. The PDC opposes the death penalty on principle and everywhere—for the guilty as well as for the innocent. We do not accord any state the right to determine who lives and who dies.

Capital punishment is a barbaric relic of ancient codes of justice and, in the U.S., of chattel slavery. Where in medieval times those who ran afoul of Crown and Church were put to the rack or burned at the stake, today's representatives of bourgeois "civilization" debate which combination of lethal drugs to administer to writhing prisoners strapped to death gurneys. In threatening such treatment for Mumia, the courts hark back to when black slaves could be tortured and put to death for hitting a white man in self-defense or for any other act deemed a challenge to the slaveholders. The hugely disproportionate number of black people on America's death rows is a testament to the racist subjugation of the black population, which is fundamental to the maintenance of American capitalism. And while judges in their oak-paneled chambers decree the legal murder of the poor, minorities and working people, the police carry out the same sentence on a far greater scale as they gun down ghetto and barrio youth in the streets.

The death penalty stands at the apex of the machinery of state repression used by the tiny class of capitalist exploiters against the masses they exploit and oppress. The "justice" system threatens Mumia with the ultimate state sanction that it used against earlier militants deemed to be threats to capitalist "order"—the Haymarket Martyrs (1877), IWW militant Joe Hill (1915) and anarchist workers Sacco and Vanzetti (1927), to name a few. The state vendetta against Mumia began as part of the FBI's COINTELPRO campaign to wipe out the Black Panther Party, in which some

38 Panthers were killed and hundreds of others framed up and railroaded to prison. The government's intent was made clear in 1968 by FBI director J. Edgar Hoover, who warned: "The Negro youth and moderate[s] must be made to understand that if they succumb to revolutionary teachings, they will be dead revolutionaries."

Mumia's cause has been and must continue to be a focal point of the fight for abolition of the racist death penalty. Popular support for capital punishment has fallen steadily in recent years, due not least to the many cases where DNA evidence has exonerated death row prisoners. Even the conservative American Law Institute, whose death penalty guidelines were cited by the Supreme Court when it ended a brief moratorium on executions in 1976, has decided to get out of this gruesome business as ever more exposures of American injustice come to light. The Supreme Court, however, is not in the least deterred from its push to execute the innocent. Some six weeks before ruling against Mumia, the Court refused to consider the appeal of black California death row inmate Kevin Cooper despite evidence of his innocence and of a massive police frame-up. Free Kevin Cooper!

From the time we first took up Mumia's cause more than 20 years ago, the PDC has supported the use of every possible legal avenue available to Mumia while having no illusions in the courts or any other agency of the capitalist state. Our fight has centered on the struggle to mobilize the multiracial working class in the U.S. and working people internationally, based on the fact that the proletariat is the one force in this society with the social power to effectively challenge the capitalist rulers. When Mumia faced a death warrant in the summer of 1995, worldwide protests that included trade unions representing hundreds of thousands of workers played a crucial role in staying the executioner's hand.

Counterposed to this class-struggle strategy is the policy of many organizations—Socialist Action, the Workers World Party, the Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal and others—which long centered their protests on the demand for a new, fair trial for Mumia. With the judicial

appeals in which they put their faith nearly exhausted, their plea that the capitalist state deliver justice now comes in the form of petitions to Attorney General Eric Holder to conduct a civil rights investigation into Mumia's frame-up trial and to President Barack Obama to "speak out against the death penalty for Mumia Abu-Jamal."

These hat-in-hand appeals to America's top cop and imperialist Commander-in-Chief are a savage indictment of the liberal belief in the "democracy" of capitalist class rule. Holder's Justice Department recently threw leftist attorney Lynne Stewart in prison and threatened to extend her sentence by 28 more years for staunchly defending her client, who was accused of terrorist activities. Obama openly announced his support for the death penalty in his run for the White House, including in an interview with right-wing journalist Michael Smerconish, one of the voices calling loudest for Mumia's execution.

After eight years of the despised Bush regime, Obama took office to give a face-lift to blood-soaked U.S. imperialism. Reinforcing illusions that Obama represents "change," the reformist left tails after the trade-union bureaucracy, whose program of seeking "friends" in the parties and state agencies of the capitalist class enemy has gravely dissipated labor's fighting capacity. Meanwhile, the U.S. military still rains death on Iraq and Afghanistan, inmates from America's vast prison complex to the military's Bagram and Guantánamo Bay dungeons continue to be brutalized and tortured, and bankers get billion-dollar bailouts while workers lose their jobs and homes.

The fight to free Mumia, as with all struggles against social oppression and deprivation, can go forward based only on a clear understanding of the class forces involved. Make no mistake: In buying for Mumia's blood, the forces of bourgeois "law and order" are sending a message to all who would fight against exploitation, oppression and imperialist war that they, too, are in the sights of the state. Any real fight for Mumia's freedom must be based on a class-struggle opposition to the capitalist rulers, who have entombed this innocent man for more than half his life. **Free Mumia now!** ■

Haiti...

(continued from page 7)

to fix the same sign as the bourgeoisie but with their own seal, in which is expressed their mistrust of the bourgeoisie. The policy of the proletariat is not at all automatically derived from the policy of the bourgeoisie, bearing only the opposite sign (this would make every sectarian a master strategist). No, the revolutionary party must each time orient itself *independently* in the internal as well as in the external situation, arriving at those decisions which correspond best to the interests of the proletariat."

The IG's conjuring up of a proletarian revolutionary opposition in Haiti today is the demented logic of their glorification of Third World nationalism. In practice,

they deny the horrendous impact that nearly two centuries of depredation by the U.S. and other capitalist powers has had on Haiti. The bitter truth is that the desperate conditions of Haiti today cannot be resolved *within* Haiti. The key to the liberation of Haiti lies in proletarian revolution throughout the hemisphere, in which the mobilization of the sizable Haitian proletariat *in the diaspora* can play a key role. In addition to the brutally oppressed Haitian sugar cane workers in the Dominican Republic and those elsewhere in the Caribbean, hundreds of thousands of Haitian workers now live in cities from Montreal to Miami. These workers can be a vital link to class struggle by the powerful North American proletariat.

The IG's article does not even mention

the hundreds of thousands of Haitian workers in the urban centers of North America. In contrast, as a Spartacist speaker explained at an October 1991 forum in New York City ("Haitian Workers: Fight for Power!" WV No. 537, 25 October 1991):

"Haitian nationalists are forever lamenting the fact that the Haitian diaspora exists. Comrades, it is very *good* that you have this diaspora! It internationalizes the struggle of Haitian workers, gives them social power and helps forge an international vanguard directly linked to the U.S. proletariat, which has the power to bring imperialism to its knees...."

"Haitian workers throughout the diaspora are today a vital link between revolutionary class struggle in Haiti and throughout the Caribbean, and the North American continent. Organizing the most conscious

elements into an international Bolshevik party, a Trotskyist party, is the task the International Communist League sets itself in the struggle for worldwide socialist revolution."

It is only this revolutionary internationalist program that holds out any genuine perspective for the liberation of the Haitian masses. ■

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Britain: Fascists Feed on Labour Government Racism

The following article is reprinted from Workers Hammer No. 209 (Winter 2009-2010), newspaper of the Spartacist League/Britain, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

WORKERS HAMMER

The British National Party (BNP) was awarded a badge of bourgeois respectability when the BBC defied a storm of protest to host its leader Nick Griffin on *Question Time* in October 2009. Having won two seats in the European Parliament and obtained over 900,000 votes in local elections in June, the BNP thugs intend to increase their vote in the 2010 elections. The televised "debate" took place largely on the BNP's terrain of virulent anti-immigrant racism, with representatives of all parties arguing over who is to "blame" for immigration. Labour was represented by none other than justice minister Jack Straw, who in 2006 fanned the flames of anti-Muslim racism with a provocative public declaration that he "prefers" Muslim women not to wear the *niqab* (veil) when coming to his constituency office (see "Britain: Racism and the Islamic Veil," *Workers Vanguard* No. 886, 16 February 2007).

Responsibility for the current rise of the BNP lies squarely with the Labour gov-



London: Protest against fascist BNP leader Nick Griffin appearing on BBC's *Question Time* program, 22 October.

ernments of the last twelve years, which have relentlessly pursued the racist "war on terror" against Muslims and vied with the BNP for being "tough" on immigrants. The BNP is also thriving on attacks on immigrants, who are being scapegoated for the loss of jobs brought on by the capitalist economic crisis. Among those rounded up for deportation in a racist

dragnet by the state were cleaners at London's School of Oriental and African Studies and construction workers at the London Olympics site. The BNP are also reaping gains out of the reactionary crusade against foreign workers that began at Lindsey oil refinery in January 2009 under the slogan of "British jobs for British workers" [see "Down With Reaction-

ary 'Strikes Against Foreign Workers!' *ASp* No. 204, Autumn 2009]. Responsibility for this lies with the Socialist Party [of Peter Taaffe, affiliated with the Socialist Party in Australia] and the trade-union bureaucracy, who led this campaign. We say: Down with reactionary strikes against foreign workers! No deportations! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! For trade-union/minority mobilisations to stop fascist provocations!

No-one should be fooled by the BNP's posture as a parliamentarian outfit: the BNP is and has been a fascist organisation since its inception. Fascists are paramilitary shock troops for all-sided reaction, particularly racist terror against immigrants and minorities, and smashing the organisations of the working class. As Trotsky explained in *Whither France?* (October 1934):

"Finance capital is obliged to create special armed bands trained to fight the workers.... The historic function of fascism is to smash the working class, destroy its organizations, and stifle political liberties when the capitalists find themselves unable to govern and dominate with the help of democratic machinery."

Griffin was convicted in 1998 of inciting racial hatred for articles that denied the Nazi Holocaust. The Nazi regime was

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Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!

U.S. Supreme Court of Death Rules Against Mumia Abu-Jamal

The following statement was issued by the Partisan Defense Committee in the U.S. on 24 January. It is reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* (No. 951, 29 January 2010), newspaper of the Spartacist League/U.S.

On January 19, the U.S. Supreme Court took a clear step toward the legal lynching of Mumia Abu-Jamal. The Court vacated a 2001 decision by federal district court judge William Yohn overturning Mumia's death sentence. Yohn's decision had been previously upheld by the U.S. Third Circuit Court of Appeals. The new ruling by the Supreme Court underscores our insistence that fighters

for Mumia's freedom must place no faith in the courts, which, at every level, have colluded with the police and prosecutors to see through the execution of this innocent man.

Mumia was targeted by the police and FBI in his teenage years as a Black Panther leader and later as a journalist and MOVE supporter renowned for his searing exposés of cop brutality and racist oppression. In a blatantly racist and political frame-up, Mumia was railroaded to death row in 1982 on false charges of killing Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner. Without a shred of actual

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New York City rally called by Free Mumia Abu-Jamal Coalition (NYC) after 19 January Supreme Court decision.

Mumia Is Innocent —Free Him Now!