



# Torture, Deportations, Secret Trials **Down With Racist “War on Terror”!**

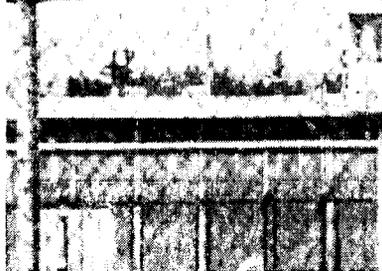
FEBRUARY 24—After seven years in prison without charge, Mohammad Mahjoub was ordered released on February 15 from the specially built “holding center” on the grounds of Millhaven Penitentiary near Kingston, Ontario known as “Guantánamo North.” Mahjoub, along with Mahmoud Jaballah and Hassan Almrei, was about to begin the fourth month of a hunger strike against the horrific conditions of their imprisonment under the “security certificate” provisions of Canada’s immigration act. Denied all rights, these men have been thrown into a nightmare world where they are tried in secret—but not charged—and may not even see the purported “evidence” against them.

The three “secret trial” detainees have been subjected to beatings and threats, as well as daily “head counts” and other humiliations by a staff of over 20 guards and administrators. They have also suffered serious health problems for which they have consistently been denied proper care. Despite being allowed only minimal contact with their families and supporters and constantly smeared in the bourgeois media, the three (along with Mohammed Harkat and Adil Charkaoui, who were released on bail earlier) have succeeded in rallying considerable public support behind their fight for freedom.

Government officials have unceasingly branded Mahjoub as a “threat to national security” and at one point attempted to deport him to Egypt where he faces torture and death. Like Harkat and Charkaoui, Mahjoub will now return to his family under house arrest. Fitted with electronic tracking devices and under permanent cop surveillance, he could be dragged back to prison for the slightest infraction of his draconian bail conditions.

On February 23, the Supreme Court struck down some aspects of the law on security certificates. The response of Public Safety minister Stockwell Day underscored that little will change for those targeted by the law: “I am pleased,” he said, “that the basic principle of security certificates has been maintained” (*Toronto Star*, 24 February). The detainees stay in jail and the onerous bail conditions for the others are unchanged, while the government

*(continued on page 17)*



Mikula/CanWest News Service

**Millhaven Penitentiary near Kingston, where “security certificate” detainees are held under brutal conditions. Right: Maher Arar, with wife Monia Mazigh, set up by Canadian government for deportation and torture.**



Young/Reuters

**Britain: Racism and the  
Islamic Veil**

page 8



Marx



Lenin



Trotsky

## International Women's Day Belongs to the Working Class

*The 1917 October Revolution laid the basis for the liberation of women, smashing the capitalist system of private property and wage slavery. The Bolsheviks established full democratic rights for women and, understanding that the oppression of women is rooted in the institution of the family, sought to replace it through socialization of housework and childcare. Impoverished and isolated, however, the young workers state was unable to achieve these aims, and the later Stalinist degeneration of the Soviet Union led to a retreat on the front of women's liberation. The counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92 threw much of the population into dire poverty, and the ravages of capitalist restoration have laid the heaviest blows on women. This 1921 commemoration of International Women's Day by Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin underlines that the fight for women's liberation is integral to the fight for international socialist revolution.*

The gist of Bolshevism and the Russian October Revolution is getting into politics the very people who were most oppressed under capitalism. They were downtrodden, cheated and robbed by the capitalists, both under the monarchy and in the bourgeois-democratic republics. So long as the land and the factories were privately owned this oppression and deceit and the plunder of the people's labour by the capitalists were inevitable.

The essence of Bolshevism and the Soviet power is to expose the falsehood and mummery of bourgeois democracy, to abolish the private ownership of land and the factories and concentrate all state power in the hands of the working and exploited masses. They, these masses, get hold of politics, that is, of the business of building the new society. This is no easy task: the masses are downtrodden and oppressed by capitalism, but there is no other way—and there can be no other way—out of the wage-slavery and bondage of capitalism.

**SPARTACIST** CANADA

Newspaper of the Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste  
Canadian section of the International Communist League  
(Fourth Internationalist)

**Editorial Board:** C. Galarneau, Tynan Maddalena (Editor, Young Spartacus pages), John Masters, Miriam McDonald (Editor), Jon Seville, Russell Stoker (Production Manager)

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Published four times a year by Spartacist Canada Publishing Association, Box 6867, Station A, Toronto ON M5W 1X6. Opinions expressed in signed articles or letters do not necessarily express the editorial viewpoint.

*Printed in a union shop by union labour.*

Publication Agreement No. 40050911 ISSN 0279-5415  
Spring 2007 Date of issue: March 2007

But you cannot draw the masses into politics without drawing in the women as well. For under capitalism the female half of the human race is doubly oppressed. The working woman and the peasant woman are oppressed by capital, but over and above that, even in the most democratic of the bourgeois republics, they remain, firstly, deprived of some rights because the law does not give them equality with men; and secondly—and this is the main thing—they remain in "household bondage," they continue to be "household slaves," for they are overburdened with the drudgery of the most squalid, backbreaking and stultifying toil in the kitchen and the family household.

No party or revolution in the world has ever dreamed of striking so deep at the roots of the oppression and inequality of women as the Soviet, Bolshevik revolution is doing. Over here, in Soviet Russia, no trace is left of any inequality between men and women under the law. The Soviet power has eliminated all there was of the especially disgusting, base and hypocritical inequality in the laws on marriage and the family and inequality in respect of children.

This is only the first step in the liberation of woman. But none of the bourgeois republics, including the most democratic, has dared to take even this first step. The reason is awe of "sacrosanct private property."

The second and most important step is the abolition of the private ownership of land and the factories. This and this alone opens up the way towards a complete and actual emancipation of woman, her liberation from "household bondage" through transition from petty individual housekeeping to large-scale socialised domestic services.

This transition is a difficult one, because it involves the remoulding of the most deep-rooted, inveterate, hidebound and rigid "order" (indecent and barbarity would be nearer the truth). But the transition has been started, the thing has been set in motion, we have taken the new path.

And so on this international working women's day countless meetings of working women in all countries of the world will send greetings to Soviet Russia, which has been the first to tackle this unparalleled and incredibly hard but great task, a task that is universally great and truly liberatory....

Nothing can stop the tide of the peoples' liberation from the imperialist yoke and the liberation of working men and women from the yoke of capital. This cause is being carried forward by tens and hundreds of millions of working men and women in town and countryside. That is why this cause of labour's freedom from the yoke of capital will triumph all over the world.

—V.I. Lenin, "International Working Women's Day,"  
4 March 1921

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# The “Nation” Debate: For Quebec Independence!

## Labour Must Oppose “Canadian Unity” Chauvinism

Quebec is a nation, oppressed within a majority English-speaking Canada. For over two centuries, attempts by the English rulers to “solve” the national question through repression, assimilation or, more rarely, accommodation have met with failure each and every time. The latest gambit by Tory prime minister Stephen Harper—a November 27 parliamentary motion stating that “the Québécois form a nation within a united Canada”—will eventually meet the same fate.

The motion, introduced by the Tories for crass electoral purposes, has no legal value and will most likely be forgotten in good time. But the hand-wringing in English Canadian ruling circles over the mere idea of acknowledging that there is a Quebec nation says much about this oppressive capitalist country. As far as the Canadian rulers are concerned, Quebec may be a nation, but it has *no national rights*. The Clarity Act, passed in 2000 by the Chrétien Liberal government with support from the Tories and NDP, effectively outlaws Quebec’s democratic right to self-determination, i.e., to independence. Harper, a founding leader of the arch Anglo-chauvinist Reform Party, was the law’s ideological father, while Stéphane Dion, now Liberal Party leader, was its chief architect, pushing the law through parliament in the face of widespread opposition in Quebec.

Behind the “we love Quebec” rhetoric currently favoured by the capitalist parties in Ottawa lies the fact of Quebec’s forcible subjugation within the Canadian state. During the 1970 “October crisis,” the Trudeau Liberal government ordered a military occupation of Quebec, aiming to crush growing national and social struggle there. Seven years later, after the election of the first Parti Québécois government, Trudeau again threatened to “use the sword” against Quebec independence. The lead-up to the PQ’s 1995 sovereignty referendum saw the federal government launch shadowy military exercises in and around Montreal. The referendum’s razor-thin defeat—a “near-death experience” for Canada, said the media—produced both the Clarity Act and the Liberals’ notorious sponsorship program, a cynical ploy to push “Canadian unity” in Quebec through bribes and corruption.

The latest “unity” gambit began last fall when Liberal leadership candidate Michael Ignatieff endorsed a “Quebec nation” motion introduced by the Liberals’ Quebec wing. The sovereigntist Bloc Québécois then presented a motion to the same effect in parliament, only to be outflanked by Harper, who added the words “within a united Canada.” Harper made no secret of his intent, telling the assembled MPs: “Our position is clear. Do the Québécois form a nation within Canada? The answer is yes. Do the Québécois form an independent nation? The answer is no and the answer will always be no” (CBC News, 22 November 2006).

Most Liberals ended up backing the motion, as did the NDP. After some hemming and hawing the Bloc did the same, underlining the fundamental meaninglessness of it all. Bloc



Reuters

**Tory prime minister Stephen Harper on Quebec: A nation, yes; national rights, never.**

leader Gilles Duceppe, joined by the PQ’s André Boisclair, argued that the motion will help the recognition of an independent Quebec in the future. Pierre Dubuc, spokesman for the PQ’s “left-wing” SPQ-Libre caucus, was more nuanced:

“...adding the complement ‘in a united Canada’ constrains us to applaud with only one hand, because the right to self-determination and secession of the Quebec nation is still denied. Prime minister Harper acts like a husband who would recognize the existence of his wife only in the framework of a ‘united couple,’ simultaneously denying her the right to divorce.”

—*l’aut journal*, December 2006-January 2007

Dubuc noted that Harper was careful to use the term “Québécois” as opposed to “Quebec” in the English version of the motion. By implying that the nation is solely that of old-stock francophones, this leaves the door open to a future partition of Quebec, most specifically, carving up the island of Montreal along linguistic lines. This program, for which Harper was a central proponent during the 1995 referendum, can only be a recipe for chauvinist “ethnic cleansing.”

### **Class Struggle and National Oppression**

The whole purpose of the capitalists’ “Canadian unity” campaigns is to reinforce the chauvinist binds that tie workers and the oppressed in English Canada to their exploiters. The NDP social democrats and the central trade-union bureaucracy promote this reactionary nationalism in the labour movement. While rarely lifting a finger when workers are under attack from the bosses, the labour tops sell to the multiracial working class of English Canada the lie that this is “the greatest country in the world,” as a solace for an increasingly oppressive and

(continued on page 14)

# Young Spartacus

## **“The Movement,” Mullahs and Liberal Muddleheads From MAWO to Revolutionary Marxism**

*The following article was written by Spartacus Youth Club member Andrew Malieni.*

I worked in the Vancouver antiwar movement for approximately a year and a half. It started when I attended a March 2004 demonstration organized by the coalition Stopwar.ca. I'd read some Marx and was politically minded, and was struck by the rally's crude Canadian nationalism and overtly reformist politics. Around this time a social-democratic government had been elected in Spain, and the new prime minister Jose Zapatero had announced that Spain would be withdrawing its troops from Iraq and, practically in the same breath, that Spain would be dramatically increasing its presence in Afghanistan. I was disgusted by the fact that the crowd cheered Zapatero's election, with encouragement from the stage. Many people at the rally, if not the majority, were also not even against the Canadian occupation of Afghanistan (it might be worth remembering that the social democrats of the NDP had not yet even adopted their current oppositional posture) and believed that Canada had a long “peacekeeping” tradition.

Stopwar.ca had formed around the lead-up to the Iraq war to put pressure on Jean Chrétien's Liberal Party government. The group consisted of a wide assortment of left groups such as the Communist Party of Canada, the International Socialists and, originally, the Vancouver-based organization Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice (FTT), along with a Liberal Party cabinet minister. Despite my disgust for Stopwar.ca, I did not yet realize what was wrong with it in class terms: it covered for the racist Canadian rulers' fake antiwar posture, and strove for an alliance with a wing of the capitalist class, to whom it necessarily subordinated the diametrically opposed interests of the working class and oppressed.

At the end of the rally, I took a newspaper from FTT, whose supporters had set up their own antiwar coalition, Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO). I was drawn to the group because I thought it was more militant than Stopwar.ca. I also liked its support for the Cuban revolution. I began working with MAWO in July 2004 and was soon handing out FTT newspapers and petitioning with MAWO to then-prime minister Paul Martin to “bring the troops home” from Afghanistan. It did not occur to me that these politics were fundamentally the same as Stopwar.ca's.

One day while I was petitioning with MAWO I bought a copy of *Workers Vanguard* from the Trotskyist League. I'd heard from some of the more active members of MAWO that the Spartacists, among other things, were in practice “sectarian” and only interested in “disrupting” the work of other groups. I took that caricature as true at the time and unfortunately did not attempt to investigate for myself.

After actively working with MAWO for several months, I was invited to join FTT's Youth-Third World Alliance (Y3WA). I was told that this organization, whose main work



mawovancouver.org

**March 2, 2006: MAWO at one of their routine “emergency” protests, called in response to the death of Canadian soldier in Afghanistan. MAWO's call for “public inquiry” into Afghan occupation fosters illusions in reformability of Canadian imperialism.**

is to direct FTT's other front groups, was trying to build a revolutionary movement in Canada against capitalism and imperialism. I joined Y3WA in November 2004.

We would often go to different mosques to distribute the FTT newspaper and MAWO literature. On more than one occasion, I went inside the mosque with FTT leader Ivan Drury, a former anarchist who has now converted to Shia Islam. To get a better hearing for our politics, we participated in the prayers! I did not see a problem with this at first, but once I began to rethink certain fundamental aspects of MAWO/FTT's politics, it became clear that we were helping to perpetuate and reinforce religious illusion, itself a tool of reaction.

A few months after joining Y3WA, I began to question the uncritical support we and FTT were offering to Vancouver's municipal social democrats, the Coalition of Progressive Electors (COPE), in their 2005 re-election campaign. During its first term in office, COPE and then-city mayor, ex-RCMP officer Larry Campbell, hired more cops and launched police offensives into the desperately poor and disproportionately Native Downtown Eastside. Now I began to understand what FTT & Co. meant by “opposing sectarianism.” In the lead-up to an internal meeting, I produced quotes by Lenin and Trotsky calling to expose reformists who keep struggles in the confines of capitalism. I was denounced. One Y3WA member replied that Lenin and Trotsky were dead and that Fidel Castro had used even the Pope for class struggle!

The logic behind his argument was that Castro had invited the Pope into Cuba and that the Pope had criticized the U.S. sanctions imposed on Cuba. In fact, the Pope's visit was a clear illustration of how the Stalinist bureaucracies act as a transmission belt for imperialist pressure. Most importantly, the Cuban bureaucracy gave the Pope virtually unlimited access to its media and he denounced materialism and secu-

larism, a move that could only encourage counterrevolutionary internal dissidents. A bulletin of the TL's comrades in the U.S., "Cuba and Marxist Theory," which I sought out independently, was decisive in helping me reach the conclusion that Cuba is a deformed workers state—a society where capitalism has been replaced by socialist property forms but political power is in the hands of a parasitic, nationalist bureaucracy.

Y3WA held an internal educational on Cuba around this time. In retrospect, it seems ironic that while MAWO poses as an organization of young people and fresh ideas, its leaders in FTT and Y3WA base their internal educationals on the politics and written materials of burnt out fake-Trotskyists from the "United Secretariat" of the 1970s, such as Joseph Hansen. When I tried to argue for my views during the class on Cuba, the other members of the organization refused to respond politically. I was informed I could not raise political criticisms at internal meetings without the prior consent of the leadership. Bureaucratically censored and accused of being "almost as reactionary" as the TL, I resigned from Y3WA for political reasons in January 2006, after which I was even banned from making any comments at MAWO's public forums.

### The 1917 Russian Revolution

Shortly after leaving Y3WA, I talked to the Spartacus Youth Club and TL. The International Communist League, of which the TL is the Canadian section, claimed forthrightly to be the party of the Russian Revolution. They used the language of the Russian Revolution and argued in terms of *class against class*, completely unlike the eclectic nationalist and populist rhetoric we had used in Y3WA. I was also struck by the ICL's integrity, which FTT lacked precisely because it wasn't revolutionary. Unlike FTT, who adapted themselves to the false consciousness pushed by anti-working-class forces, the ICL would expose the misleaders of the working class as well as every manifestation of capitalist oppression in the attempt to make the proletariat conscious of its historic

interests as a class.

After reading Lenin's *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* in an SYC readers' circle, I understood that imperialism is not simply a policy, but a system, and that putting an end to imperialist war necessarily means smashing the capitalist state through workers socialist revolution. MAWO, Stopwar.ca, and other groups in the "antiwar" or "peace" movement, on the other hand, spread the illusion that the capitalist rulers can be pressured to abandon their objective interests. For example, the May 2003 issue of *Fire This Time* made the patently absurd claim, just two months after the imperialist "shock and awe" invasion of Iraq, that the peace crawls in Vancouver had "effectively influenced imperialist politics."

In public classes, readers' circles and other organized discussions with the SYC and TL, I learned that the living example of what is required to end imperialist war was the October 1917 Bolshevik Revolution in Russia. Under the leadership of the Bolshevik party of Lenin and Trotsky, the working class and oppressed smashed the capitalist state, created a workers state based on workers councils (soviets) and expropriated the bourgeoisie. Russia had been in the midst of a reactionary inter-imperialist war that was being fought to re-divide the colonial world and spheres of financial influence among the competing imperialist countries. As revolutionary internationalists, the Bolsheviks called for the defeat of all sides in the war, took Russia out of it, and granted the right of self-determination to the nations in the former Tsarist "prison house of peoples." The creation of a workers state also led to the repeal of all laws against homosexuality and the legalization of abortion, and the Bolsheviks took the first steps to replace the institution of the family, the material basis for women's oppression under capitalism, with socialized reproductive labour such as communal kitchens and childcare.

After a devastating civil war to defend soviet power in an already backward and predominantly peasant country, the defeat of revolutionary opportunities in other countries (especially Germany), and the loss of many of the most class-conscious Bolsheviks in the civil war, a nationalist bureaucratic caste led by Joseph Stalin usurped political power from the working class in the Soviet Union in a 1923-24 political counterrevolution. Although bureaucratically ruled, the Soviet Union nonetheless remained a workers state founded on collectivized property forms which, among other things, provided the population with full employment, free education and cheap housing. Trotskyists called for its unconditional military defense against capitalism and internal counterrevolution, which they linked to the need for political revolution to replace the Stalinists with a revolutionary internationalist leadership based on workers councils. The bureaucracy sold out revolutionary opportunities in Western Europe and the colonial and semicolonial world in the name of "building socialism in one country" and "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism. But the Stalinist bureaucracy also had a dual nature and was sometimes compelled in its own way to defend the collectivized property forms.

The catastrophic 1991-92 capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union, which the ICL fought against to the end of the best of its limited resources, led to a massive increase in poverty and hunger as gross domestic product fell by over 80 percent between 1991 and 1997. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the deformed workers states in Eastern

(continued on page 6)



SC photo

TL/SYC contingent at February 2003 Vancouver antiwar demo cuts against prevailing class-collaborationism, Canadian nationalism.

## Defeat Zionist Backlash Against CUPE Ontario!

This past October, a debate erupted in CUPE Local 3902 (the teaching assistants union at the University of Toronto) over the "boycott, divestment and sanctions" (BDS) campaign against Israel. The shop stewards council, inspired by Zionists and right-wing political science students, introduced a motion rejecting CUPE Ontario's motion 50 adopted at a union convention last May, which defended Palestinian national rights and characterized Israel as an "apartheid" state. With boundless cynicism, the Zionist-authored motion sermonized about "peace" on both sides. Several members of the executive rejected this cant, including the chair of the union. Supporters of the Spartacus Youth Club attended the October 24 meeting where this was discussed and put up the only counterposed motion. After a sharp debate, the Zionist motion passed by a single vote.

While the Zionists organized a large contingent, those who opposed their motion were largely union members who came out on their own. During the debate, several people stressed it was obscene to place the actions of Israel and the Palestinians on equal footing and insisted that support for CUPE motion 50 was a basic act of union solidarity. The real purpose of calling for "peace" is defense of the status quo: sanctions starving the Palestinians, the daily assassinations in Gaza and the strangulation of the West Bank by

checkpoints and bypass roads.

A supporter of the SYC spoke first. He began by criticizing the BDS campaign: it is absurd to look to imperialist governments like Canada to defend the Palestinians. However, CUPE motion 50 at least takes a clear position of denouncing the ghetto wall sealing off the West Bank, and it asserts the right of return for all Palestinian refugees. He said that, as a revolutionary Marxist, he believes that the national self-determination of all peoples in the Near East (including the Hebrew-speaking people) is impossible under capitalism. An equitable solution to the conflicting national claims in the region requires a socialist federation of the Near East. He then argued that the unions must throw their weight behind all struggles of the oppressed. The attacks against CUPE motion 50 are aimed at weakening the labour movement as a whole.

The motion that the SYC supporters put forward read:

"As a local of CUPE Ontario, we endorse the calls in CUPE motion 50 for 'the Palestinian people's inalienable right to self-determination,' 'the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and properties,' and the 'call for the immediate dismantling of the wall' strangling the West Bank. We stand with CUPE Ontario against the Zionist-orchestrated backlash over this motion in a basic act of solidarity." ■

## MAWO...

(continued from page 5)

Europe also led to an historic retrogression of consciousness as the international working class ceased to view their defensive struggles as connected to a broader struggle for socialism, however they may have interpreted this. The imperialists attacked the Soviet Union using all forms of religious reaction. Along with Stalinist betrayals and Arab nationalism's bankruptcy, the collapse of the Soviet Union has led, among other things, to a further rise of political Islam.

### FTT and Tailing Backward Consciousness

FTT is a perfect example of the post-Soviet retrogression of consciousness. Their program is the social patriotism and

pacifism typical of so many antiwar liberals in imperialist countries. They awkwardly balance that with a vicarious form of militant Third World nationalism of a distinctly Islamist bent. What's the connection? Completely devoid of any sense of the historic interests of the working class, FTT tails virtually every movement they come across, including those that are very retrograde. On a day-to-day level, their idiosyncratic politics are held together by the highly personalist regime of leader Ali Yerevani, a self-proclaimed "participant in the Iranian Revolution."

The 1979 "Iranian Revolution" produced a horrific defeat for the working class. The organizations of the Iranian proletariat were all but destroyed in year after year of blood-drenched repression by the new Islamic regime. The mullahs' seizure of power was also a death sentence for secular women, gays and national minorities. Rather than "anti-imperialism," the Iranian clerics were motivated by opposition to the token modernizing reforms made by the bloody U.S.-backed Shah. When the rest of the left ran after Ayatollah Khomeini's reactionary mass movement, the international Spartacist tendency, forebear of the ICL, fought to break workers and leftists from their soon-to-be assassins and said: "Down with the Shah! Don't bow to Khomeini! For workers revolution in Iran!" and "No to the veil!"

Unsurprisingly, despite FTT's enthusiasm for 1979, nowhere in writing has it called for defense of Iran's contemporary nuclear program. Without giving any political support to the Iranian government, the ICL says Iran needs nuclear weapons to defend itself from the current imperialist threat.

While cheering various capitalist rulers in the semicolonial world, including recently the Catholic anti-abortion bigot Daniel Ortega in Nicaragua (*Fire This Time*, Vol. 7, No. 3, 2006), in Vancouver FTT channels anti-militarist sentiment into mindless liberal protest politics punctuated by Canadian nationalism. For instance, a MAWO press release

(continued on page 16)

### Toronto Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

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Mar. 28: Build a Revolutionary Vanguard Party!  
Marxism vs. Anarchism

University of Toronto, OISE, 252 Bloor Street West  
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### Vancouver Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

Mar. 21: Why China is Not Capitalist: Defend, Extend the Gains of the 1949 Chinese Revolution!

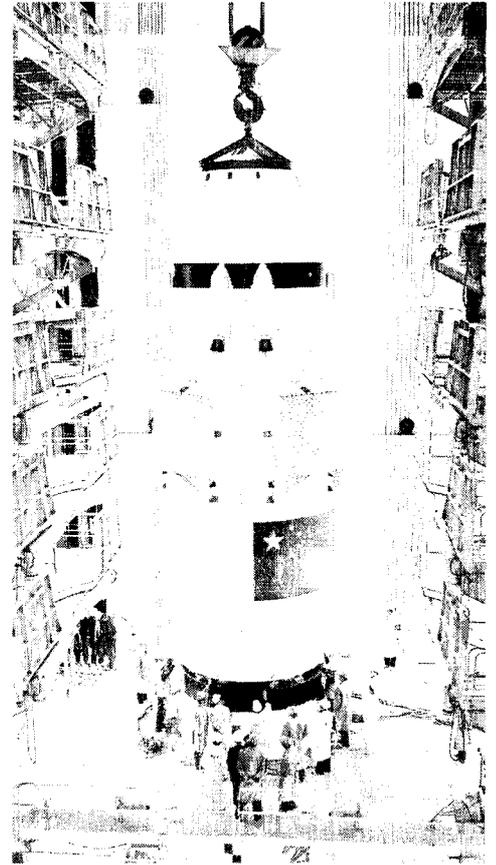
Apr. 4: Break With the Pro-Imperialist NDP!  
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# For Unconditional Military Defense of China!

## Imperialists Stung by Chinese Weapons Test



DPA

Chinapix

**China's technological development is crucial for its military defense. Left: Army parade in Tiananmen Square. Right: Shenzhou spaceship, part of manned space program.**

On January 11, a Chinese missile smashed to bits an aging Chinese weather satellite more than 500 miles above the country's Xichang space facility. The exercise marked a significant advance in the ability of the Chinese deformed workers state to defend itself against a nuclear first strike by U.S. imperialism. The threat of such an attack has grown with Washington's plans to deploy a "missile defense system" in the Asian Pacific, which would rely on satellite technology.

The U.S., British and Japanese governments raised a hue and cry over the successful test. With consummate chutzpah, a spokesman for Bush's National Security Council intoned: "China's development and testing of such weapons is inconsistent with the spirit of cooperation that both countries aspire to in the civil space area." The U.S. rulers' overwhelming military might, far exceeding that of their imperialist rivals, not to mention China, includes extensive militarization of space. In October, the administration released a new "National Space Policy" (signed by Bush two months earlier) declaring Washington's unilateral right to "deny, if necessary, adversaries the use of space capabilities hostile to U.S. national interests." In fact, this policy is principally aimed at preventing China from developing anti-satellite weapons.

Behind the imperialist hype about mythical Chinese "aggression" lies a genuine military problem. The U.S. war machine has become heavily reliant on a vast network of satellites for intelligence, communications, navigation and weapons targeting. The U.S. owns or operates more than

half of the 845 currently active commercial and military satellites in orbit. Dozens operate in low orbits similar to that of the destroyed Chinese Fengyun 1C satellite. According to *Aviation Week and Space Technology* (21 January), which broke the story of the anti-satellite test, the Chinese military can now "credibly threaten imaging reconnaissance and other satellites operated by the U.S., Japan, Russia, Israel and Europe." Moreover, according to a U.S. official, China recently "painted" U.S. satellites with a ground-based laser, a potentially disabling capability. At considerably higher orbits are the Pentagon's vital network of Global Positioning System satellites and other spacecraft.

The International Communist League, of which the Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste is a section, stands for the unconditional military defense of China and the other bureaucratically deformed workers states, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba, against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution. We support China and North Korea's development of nuclear weapons and the means to deliver them as essential to the defense of those workers states. The Chinese nuclear force, on the order of 200 warheads with an estimated 20 deployed ICBMs capable of reaching the U.S., acts as a deterrent against the U.S. mass murderers who reduced Nagasaki and Hiroshima to irradiated rubble in 1945.

China has been a target of the U.S. nuclear arsenal, currently consisting of some 10,000 warheads, since the Korean  
(continued on page 13)

# No to Racist State Bans on Muslim Dress!

## Britain: Racism and the Islamic Veil

The following article is reprinted from Workers Hammer No. 197 (Winter 2006-2007), newspaper of the Spartacist League/Britain, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

When cabinet minister Jack Straw declared in October that he would prefer Muslim women not to wear the veil that covers the face (the *niqab*) he opened the floodgates for a

### WORKERS HAMMER

torrent of racist bigotry particularly directed against Muslim women. He also unleashed a campaign for banning the *niqab* in certain areas of public life. This comes in the wake of the ban on the *hijab* ( headscarf ) imposed in French schools in 2004 which was followed by similar bans in some German states and now the Netherlands government proposes to ban the *niqab* in public places.

Straw's attack on Muslim women comes in the context of an escalation of the racist "war on terror" which seeks to brand Muslims the "enemy within." Labour ministers are trying to drum up support among the public, which is deeply opposed to the occupation of Iraq. There is also much scepticism about government "terrorism" scares, following the 2005 shooting of Jean Charles de Menezes and the police raid in Forest Gate in June 2006 in which Mohammed Abdul Kahar was shot in the chest. He and his brother were arrested although they were totally innocent. Meanwhile despite the massive "security" scare at the airports in August, no evidence whatsoever of a terror plot has been presented to the public.

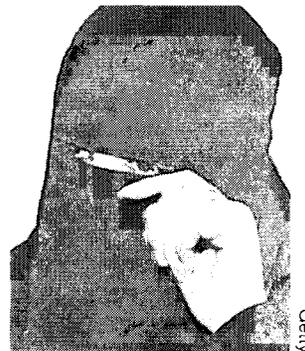
In November, to whip up support for yet another tranche of "anti-terrorism" laws, MI5 head Eliza Manningham-Buller was wheeled out to give a speech that made the country appear to be awash with terrorist plots and potential terrorists. She claimed there are 30 "major terrorist plots being planned," while 1,600 individuals are "actively engaged in promoting attacks here and abroad" and no less than 100,000 people "considered the London bombings to be justified" (*Guardian*, 10 November 2006).

Soon after Straw's statement a woman in Liverpool had her veil ripped off, there were arson attacks on mosques and the xenophobic capitalist press had a field day denouncing the veil, and all things Muslim. Straw of course says that it is Muslims wearing the veil that "could make community relations more difficult." His opposition to the veil soon took on the status of a government-backed campaign. Tony Blair proffered that the veil could make some "outside the community feel uncomfortable." Local government minister Phil Woolas called for the sacking of teaching assistant Aishah Azmi for wearing the *niqab* at work; Blair backed Kirklees Council in suspending her from her job, which was in a



HANDS OFF MUSLIM  
STOP POLICE BRUTAL  
TONY BLAIR CRUSAD!

Ray Tang/Rex Features



June 2006 protest following "anti-terror" police raid in East London, in which Mohammed Abdul Kahar was shot. Left: Teaching assistant Aishah Azmi was fired with Blair's backing for wearing the *niqab*.

Getty

Church of England school with a majority of Muslim pupils. When Azmi was subsequently sacked she denounced ministers who called for her dismissal, rightly saying it made her "fearful of the consequences for Muslim women in this country who want to work."

Meanwhile the city council in nearby Bradford—home to one of the largest concentrations of Asians outside London—is drawing up guidelines stating that pupils and staff should not wear veils during lessons. And in a landmark ruling, the House of Lords unanimously backed Denbigh high school in Luton in their exclusion of a pupil, Shabina Begum, for wearing the Muslim *jilbab* (which covers the body but not the face). This overturned a previous Court of Appeal decision that Begum's exclusion was unlawful and that she had a right to manifest her religion.

As Marxists—and therefore atheists and fighters for women's liberation—we oppose the veil as both a symbol and an instrument of women's oppression. Nonetheless we unambiguously oppose any state or government bans and restrictions on the veil, which are racist and discriminatory against Muslims. Contrary to liberal claims that banning the veil is designed to integrate Muslims into society, bans will lead to expulsions of Muslim women from schools, universities and the workforce, which will reinforce their isolation and oppression. Bans will also fuel racism and play into the hands of the fascist BNP [British National Party].

Across Europe, bans and strictures on Islamic dress are an

extension of the racist “war on terror” directed in the first instance against Muslims, who are falsely and indiscriminately branded terrorist suspects as a pretext for state repression. In Europe, people of Muslim origin are mainly the descendants of immigrant workers brought into the imperialist countries as cheap labour in previous decades to work in the lowest paid, dirtiest jobs, just like today’s new generation of immigrants. In Britain, the majority of Muslims are of Pakistani and Bangladeshi origin and constitute the most impoverished section of the population.

The “war on terror” is a classic “divide and rule” ploy, stigmatising Muslims as an excuse for a sweeping reduction in the legal rights of the entire population. It is also aimed at the working class, intended to stifle class struggle by insisting on “national unity” against a supposed common enemy. The “war on terror” must be fought by mobilisations of the multiethnic working class, involving its immigrant component, in a struggle against the hated Blair government and against the capitalist system as a whole. This system based on production for profit is the root cause of racism and of the oppression of women in society.

Straw’s provocation ignited a fierce controversy over race relations, religion and women’s rights. Supporters of Labour’s “war on terror” waxed venomous against the religious strictures of Islam, which in Britain is a minority religion of the most deprived and downtrodden. The British capitalist state has its own established Christian churches in England and Wales that are tied to the heart of the conservative establishment, the monarchy and House of Lords. British society at large has been relatively secular for decades, but the Blair government has done its utmost to change that, by funding a huge growth in religious schools while over 40 of the 100 new “city academies” are to be run by Christians.

From Blair’s crusading Christian godliness to local government minister Ruth Kelly’s membership of the far-right Catholic sect Opus Dei, Christianity constantly interferes in the private lives of the population. The social consequences are all around. Creationism—once the preserve of Christian fundamentalists—is increasingly being taught in schools, repackaged as “intelligent design” while reactionaries of all stripes have been beating the drums for a reduction in the

time limit on abortion. Religion ought not to have any official backing by the state and people should be free to practise their religion without state interference and persecution. **Abolish the monarchy, the House of Lords and the established churches! For separation of religion and state! For free abortion on demand! For an end to state funding of religious schools—for free, secular education!**

In the polarisation over the veil, Salman Rushdie, who supports the “war on terror,” was hailed in the racist gutter press for having said “veils suck.” Labour MP Harriet Harman also denounced the veil, saying “if you want equality, you have to be in society, not hidden away from it.” This hypocrisy is breathtaking coming from a cabinet member in a government that is responsible for the bloody occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan. Try telling relatives of the countless thousands of women and children slaughtered in Iraq that they ought to be “in society”!

### **Imperialist Butchers of Iraq Will not Liberate Women!**

Liberal journalist Polly Toynbee also backed Straw, arguing that “because some racists may jump on the bandwagon to attack Muslims, that’s no reason to pretend veils are OK” (*Guardian*, 17 October 2006). In the name of secularism, Toynbee is echoing the Islamophobia being whipped up by Labour ministers. This campaign has nothing to do with secularism. It is not directed at Christianity (as can be seen in Blair’s backing of a Christian airport worker’s right to wear a crucifix at work) but is part of a generalised assault on Muslims worldwide. Pope Benedict gave it his seal of approval in September when he provocatively described Islam as “evil and inhuman.” This is rich indeed, coming from the head of the Catholic Church which is responsible for the Crusades and the Inquisition.

Outrageously, the Alliance for Workers Liberty (AWL) leapt to the Pope’s defence! Condemning the international outcry from Muslims that forced him into a half-hearted apology as “the effort to silence the head of the Catholic Church,” Sean Matgamna opined: “If the spiritual absolute monarch of a billion and a quarter Catholics can be treated like that, the cause of free speech and freedom to criticise religion, is surely in a very bad way” (*Solidarity*, 28 September 2006). The AWL’s Islamophobia is an extension of their craven loyalty to “democratic” British imperialism born out of anti-communist hostility to the Soviet Union during the Cold War. Their defence of imperialist “democracy” against Islam today is a basic denial that the biggest force for terrorism on earth is U.S. and British imperialism.

Prominent liberals from Muslim backgrounds reluctantly lined up with Jack Straw, whom they otherwise despise. *Independent* columnist Yasmin Alibhai-Brown said “Jack Straw’s politics usually make me either furious or bilious,” but on the veil, “I find myself agreeing with his every word.” Alibhai-Brown was scathing against liberal apologists for the veil in Britain. Noting that unveiled women in Iran are imprisoned, “branded whores and beaten” while women in Afghanistan and Palestine suffer a similar plight, she complained bitterly that:

(continued on page 10)



Workers Hammer

**July 2005: London protest against the brutal killing of Jean Charles de Menezes by British cops.**

## Racism and the Islamic Veil...

(continued from page 9)

"Instead of expressing solidarity with these females, sanctimonious British *niqabis* are siding with their foes" (*Independent*, 9 October 2006).

Also backing Straw was Houzan Mahmoud of the Worker Communist Party of Iraq (WCPI) who said "I could never have imagined having anything in common with Jack Straw, but I find myself in agreement with him about how it feels talking to a woman covered up in hijab or the '*niqab*' that covers women fully" (*guardian.co.uk* Website, 7 October 2006). Despite the name, the WCPI is an anti-clerical reformist organisation which often looks to the imperialist powers as allies in the fight for women's rights in the semi-colonial world. Mahmoud points to the horrors of Iraq, where "the veil is being imposed at gunpoint." Yet despite the British government's role in Iraq, she sees no contradiction in calling on them to defend women at home by banning the veil.

The very institutions these people look to and support are **responsible for** the bloody mess in the semi-colonial world. It is absurd to appeal to the British imperialist state, whose military occupying forces in Iraq are actively fomenting the communalist terror Mahmoud so vehemently opposes. The imperialists are perfectly capable of seizing on the oppression of women in the Muslim world and elsewhere, but only to justify colonial subjugation. It is fatal to fall for the illusion that they will actually improve the status of women.

Afghanistan today is a case in point. In 2001, George Bush cited the status of women—who are brutally oppressed—as part of the justification for a devastating military assault on one of the poorest countries on earth. Among the liberals who fell for this lie was feminist journalist Natasha Walter who visited Afghanistan at the time. On a recent return visit she was shocked by the situation of women: the majority of girls cannot go to school; women who participate in public life, including a well-known member of parliament and a TV presenter, live in constant fear of being killed by fundamentalists (*Guardian*, 28 November 2006). The *Independent* (29 November 2006) also reported on a 46-year-old school teacher, Mohammed Halim, who was savagely killed and disembowelled by the Taliban in a

series of murders of teachers who dare to educate girls.

There is nothing new in the imperialists using the oppression of women in the colonial world to justify enslavement of a weaker country. In Victorian times Lord Cromer, the Empire's chief overlord in colonial Egypt, cited the fact that women there wore veils to justify the British occupation which began in 1882. Cromer's claim was bogus, to put it mildly: so vehement was his opposition to women's rights that in London in 1910 he became president of the National League for Opposing Women's Suffrage! He also opposed suffrage for working-class men, seeing it as a slippery slope towards socialism.

### Soviet Bureaucracy's Betrayal in Afghanistan

The U.S. and British imperialists are responsible for the growth of the global network of Islamist forces, including Osama bin Laden, committed to  *jihad*  against the West. In the 1980s, the CIA organised and armed the Afghan  *mujahedin*  (holy warriors) who were known for throwing acid in the faces of unveiled women and shooting schoolteachers for educating girls. This massive mobilisation by U.S. imperialism was directed against the Soviet Union and its allies in government in Afghanistan.

When the Soviet Army entered Afghanistan in December 1979, we said, "Hail the Red Army!" and "Extend the social gains of the October Revolution to the Afghan peoples!" The Soviet Stalinist bureaucracy—for its own reasons—sent in the army at the request of the nationalist government in Kabul which was attempting to lower the bride price and to introduce land reform. These modest measures provoked the reactionary Islamic fundamentalists into a "holy war" against the government forces. The reformist Socialist Workers Party (SWP [parent organization to the International Socialists in Canada]), the AWL and other reformists around the world lined up with the imperialists, howling against the Soviet troops, in the first war in modern history in which women's emancipation was a central issue. The reformists lined up with their own "democratic" bourgeoisie because what was at stake was not only social progress within Afghanistan but also the defence of the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union was a workers state that emerged from the victorious October 1917 Bolshevik Revolution in Russia that overthrew the rule of the landlords and capitalists and established the dictatorship of the proletariat supported by the vast peasantry. Even though Tsarist Russia was the most backward of the imperialist countries, the Russian Revolution was a beacon to workers and the oppressed in all advanced capitalist countries and of course to the oppressed masses of Central Asia. Despite the Stalinist bureaucratic degeneration that took place in the Soviet Union beginning in 1923-24, it remained a workers state until counterrevolution in 1991-92.

Nowhere were the remaining gains of the Bolshevik Revolution more clearly visible in 1979 than in Soviet Central Asia. An Afghan schoolteacher looking across the northern border at that region, which two generations earlier was as wretchedly poor as Afghanistan, saw a literate, relatively modern society where women were no longer degraded slaves. The Soviet Army presence could have resulted in the incorporation of Afghanistan into Soviet Central Asia, opening up the possibility of a social transformation, something that did not exist before because a proletariat as such did not exist. But rather than fighting to defeat the brutal  *mujahedin* , the Kremlin Stalinists under Mikhail Gorbachev criminally withdrew the Soviet troops in 1989. This was a huge betrayal of Afghanistan, espe-



AFP

British occupation troops near Nawzad, southern Afghanistan, killed 21 people in June 2006 battle.



class

**Afghan women in 1980, as Soviet Army intervention opened prospect of social emancipation. Right: In today's Kabul, woman in *burka* begs on street.**



Mirsadeq Sadeq/AP

cially its women. It also paved the way for handing over East Germany and the USSR itself to counterrevolution, a colossal defeat for the working masses of the entire world.

### SWP Extols the Virtues of Islamic Reaction

Today the SWP is allied with Islamic organisations in Respect and the Stop the War Coalition (StWC). In response to Straw's statement, StWC held a "People's Assembly" in London on 18 November against Islamophobia and the "war on terror." This gathering (which provided prayer rooms, as is now standard at SWP events) issued a declaration condemning the government's attack on Islamic religious practices, and the occupation of Iraq. But in keeping with the SWP's gross capitulation to Islamic forces, the declaration says not one word on the rights of women. Referring only obliquely to the veil, it does so positively, presenting the issue as if it were a lifestyle choice and a welcome example of "diversity." It said:

"In particular we condemn the statements made by government ministers designed to isolate, demonise and even criminalise Islamic religious practices, choice of dress and cultural expression. We affirm that such diversity in fact makes an important contribution to the overall development of our society."

The notion that the veil is just some "choice of dress" or a matter of "cultural expression" is liberal nonsense. Marxists reject such "cultural relativism" which serves to prettify hideous oppression in the neo-colonial world as merely "cultural differences." Often those who speak of "cultural relativism" do so in a laudable effort not to impose Western cultural standards on the rest of the world. However it can also be used to condone gruesome crimes like female genital mutilation or so-called honour killings. Contrary to such drivel, the head-to-toe veil is a walking prison that physically excludes women from society. It embodies the submission of women to men and their supposed inferior status. The *hijab* too is a tool of oppression, covering the hair based on the notion that female attractiveness and sexuality must be suppressed and hidden, because it leads men into "sin" and is a sign of Western "decadence." *We solidarise with the countless thousands of women who have sought to escape the tyranny of the veil, whether in the Muslim world or in the imperialist centres.*

To justify their capitulation to Islam, the SWP sometimes cites the fact that Lenin's Bolshevik Party regarded religion as a private matter. Lenin made it very clear that Marxism is based on dialectical materialism which is "absolutely atheistic

and positively hostile to all religion" and "has always regarded all modern religions and churches, and each and every religious organisation, as instruments of bourgeois reaction that serve to defend exploitation and to befuddle the working class." At the same time he noted that religion serves to solace the oppressed masses in a cruel world and therefore to free the masses from its yoke requires class struggle for socialist revolution against the capitalist system that gives rise to the brutal social conditions religion thrives on. However Lenin was adamant that revolutionaries "regard religion as a private matter *in relation to the state*, but not in relation to themselves, not in relation to Marxism, and not in relation to the workers' party" ("The Attitude of the Workers' Party to Religion," 1909).

The SWP's adaptation to Islam is based on the utterly false notion that political Islam is "anti-imperialist." Since counterrevolution in the Soviet Union in 1991-92, the imperialists have sought to portray Islamic fundamentalism—exemplified by Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda—as the replacement for the "red menace" in order to justify domestic repression and imperialist military aggression. The U.S. imperialists feel emboldened in their military adventures and are seeking to strengthen their hold on the historically-Muslim oil-rich Near East.

The dramatic rise of political Islam in this region is a result of the bankruptcy of secular nationalism and of Stalinism, forces that were once dominant among the poor and oppressed in Iraq, Iran and Egypt. Today the masses increasingly look to Islamic jihadist forces that are reactionary and hostile to any form of social progress. These forces are reacting in their own distorted way to the crimes of U.S. and British imperialism against the peoples of the Near East, including their backing for Israel's bloody repression of the Palestinians. The fundamentalists also utilise the perceived threat by the imperialists to "Westernise" Muslim societies as a justification for the degradation of women. However this threat is actually *non-existent*. The U.S. and British imperialists are not about to set up secular democracies in either Afghanistan or Iraq, or anywhere else in the neo-colonial world.

Islam is not uniquely reactionary or anti-woman, in fact anti-woman bigotry is just as much an integral part of Christianity and Judaism as of Islam. However, while Christianity and Judaism adapted to the rise of industrial capitalism, Islam remained rooted mainly in those parts of the world that remained poor and undeveloped, due to the world system of capitalism. Historically and today, the development of the

(continued on page 12)

## Racism and the Islamic Veil...

(continued from page 11)

weaker countries has been *arrested and retarded by imperialism*. Capitalist imperialism is based on the domination of the world by a handful of wealthy states using their military might to protect their markets and spheres of influence. All religions reinforce the patriarchal family, and the institution of the family is the main source of women's oppression in society. It is the mechanism for inheriting property, for socialising new generations of workers and for inculcating the moral and sexual codes of the ruling class.

### Hue and Cry Over "Multiculturalism"

The row over the veil in Britain overlaps with a controversy over "multiculturalism," a policy of voluntary cultural and racial segregation of minority communities that has been promoted by governments for decades. It has always been hated by right-wingers as a concession to racial tolerance. Now it is being denounced as "self-segregation" and Blair has declared that everyone has a "duty to be part of an integrated United Kingdom." This means conform to so-called British values, or, in Blair's words, "don't come here" (*Guardian*, 9 December 2006). Multiculturalism is also detested by liberal Muslims because it strengthens conservative, patriarchal and religious forces within minority communities. It was invoked to justify the government's tacit support to reactionary protests by Sikh elders that shut down the play *Behzti* (Dishonour) in Birmingham in December 2004. Written by a Sikh woman, the play was savagely critical of the oppression of minority women, including by religious elders.

We Marxists fight for *voluntary integration of all minorities based on full equality*. But we understand that the eradication of racism, women's oppression and all forms of discrimination requires a revolutionary struggle, mobilising the power of the proletariat, to uproot capitalism and liberate humanity from poverty and want. Predictably, the reformist SWP defends multiculturalism. This denies that minority communities, like the rest of society, are class-divided and that the struggles of immigrant and other minority workers for jobs, unions and equal status means breaking the grip of religious and other conservative community leaders. Moreover, supporting multicultural-

ism promotes illusions that the capitalist state can be used as an instrument to fight racist oppression. The capitalist state exists to defend class rule based on private property; it is the executive organ of the capitalist class for the suppression and exploitation of the working class.

The increased prevalence of the Islamic veil in Britain is in part due to the rise of political Islam internationally. It is also a result of relentless racism, poverty and hardship suffered by immigrant workers and their descendants under British capitalism. Two decades ago, religion had much less influence among minorities from South Asia. In 1985 the film *My Beautiful Laundrette*, based on a novel by Pakistani-derived writer Hanif Kureishi telling of a gay relationship between a young Asian man and a National Front "hard man," was hugely popular. Today an Asian gay film would cause uproar.

In so far as integration of minorities exists in this country it was not handed down by government policy, but was fought for in the streets and on picket lines. In 1958 in London's Notting Hill and in Nottingham, black and Asian residents fought back racist mobs backed by police in scenes similar to those in Oldham in 2001. Blacks and Asians have been integrated into the workforce and the trade unions and have historically played a prominent role in the class battles of this country. The Grunwick strike in 1976 in London was a landmark battle by Asian women for decent working conditions. In the great miners strike of 1984-85, the black and Asian communities provided huge support to the overwhelmingly white miners, as an act of solidarity against the common enemy—the Thatcher government. The Heathrow airport wildcat strike that paralysed BA [British Airways] last year and cost them millions, carried out by the ground crews in support of over 600 sacked catering workers, was a powerful demonstration of the social power of the working class. The racially integrated workforce struck in class solidarity with the catering workers, the majority of whom were Sikh women, showing how class struggle can transcend ethnic lines.

Within the Respect coalition the SWP has dropped their reformist claim to fight for "socialism" or the working class. They have disavowed secularism and any meaningful fight for women's or gay rights in order to maintain their bloc with Islamists. In its own way, this shows the SWP has absorbed the "death of communism" myth to the same degree as Jack Straw, who argues that unlike 50 years ago when the divisions in society "were ones of class," in the post-Soviet world and especially since 9/11 they are "principally ones of religion" (*New Statesman*, 18 September 2006). This myth must be combated and shattered through class struggle. A class-struggle fight to defend the rights of Muslims and all immigrants and minorities against the racist capitalist state is in the interests of all the working class. Against anti-immigrant racism, we call for *full citizenship rights for all immigrants*.

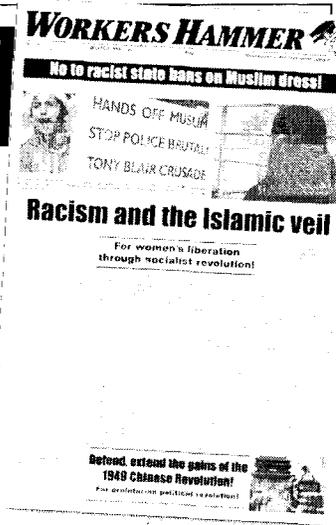
We are dedicated to building a multiethnic revolutionary workers party which will champion the rights of all the oppressed and whose task is to bring revolutionary consciousness to the working class, overcoming backwardness and prejudice in the struggle for the overthrow of capitalist class rule. The liberation of women requires successful struggle for working-class rule. This will lay the basis for an egalitarian communist society of material abundance, which alone will make it possible to replace the family, the key institution of women's oppression. This is also the only route to the eradication of racism and inequality and will open the road to the full emancipation of women. ■

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## China...

(continued from page 7)

War. For decades, the Soviet Union's nuclear force forestalled the imperialists from unleashing their deadly nukes. Since the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state in 1991-92, Washington has shifted much of its strategic forces to target China, the most powerful of the remaining countries in which capitalism has been overthrown. The Pentagon's space forces are designed to ensure its first-strike capability by suppressing any counterstrike.

It is notable that the recent Chinese and North Korean weapons tests were carried out with the U.S. bogged down in its murderous occupation of Iraq. Indeed, the Democratic Party's principal objection to Bush's Iraq policy is that it diverts resources away from more strategically important targets like China.

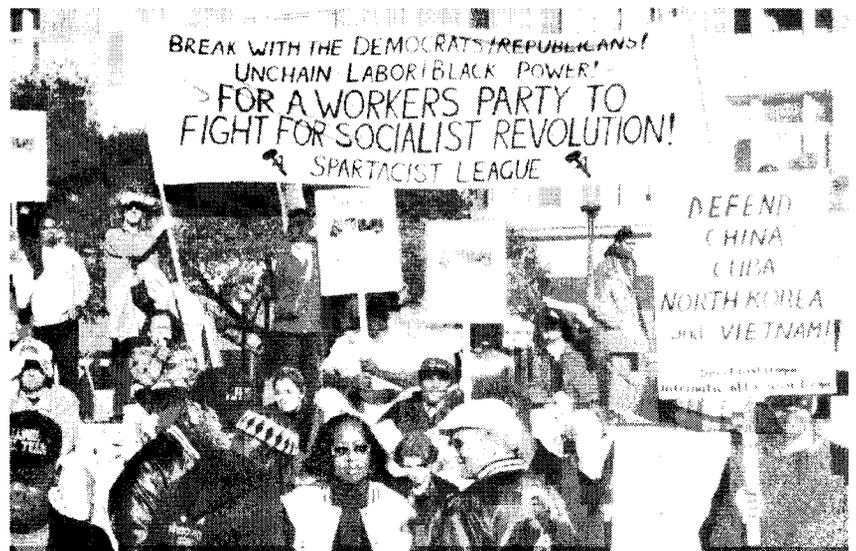
At the same time, the U.S. has pursued the encirclement of China under cover of fighting "terrorism." Treacherously, Beijing has embraced the imperialists' "war on terror" in the interest of its economic relationship with the U.S. The U.S. now has military installations in Central Asia on China's western flank and has enhanced its military presence in the Philippines. The Bush administration last year sealed a nuclear pact with India and in 2005 resumed open military relations with Indonesia. In Australia, long instrumental as a junior imperialist partner to the Pentagon's global operations, huge U.S. bases are under construction at Bradshaw and Yampi Sound.

### China in Imperialists' Cross Hairs

The 1949 Chinese Revolution overthrew capitalist/landlord rule and ripped the world's most populous country out of the clutches of the imperialist powers that had long held China in their grip. Although deformed from its inception by the rule of a parasitic Stalinist bureaucracy, the Chinese Revolution laid the basis for collectivizing the economy, resulting in enormous social progress for workers, women and peasants. Smashing the Chinese workers state is a strategic goal for the capitalist powers, who seek to turn China into a vast field for untrammelled exploitation and super-profits. In pursuit of counterrevolution, the imperialists are both increasing their military pressure against China and furthering their economic penetration of the mainland by taking advantage of Beijing's "market reforms."

Defense of the workers states against imperialism is undermined by the rule of the nationalist Stalinist bureaucracies, whose policies are encapsulated in the dogma of "building socialism in one country." The Stalinists oppose the fight for international proletarian revolution and instead pursue the futile quest for "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism. A glaring case in point is Beijing's treacherous partnership with the U.S., Japan and others in the attempt to disarm North Korea. Following North Korea's successful nuclear test in October, China criminally voted for sanctions against Pyongyang in the UN Security Council.

The Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy played no small part in the destruction of the Soviet Union, which had been the industrial/military powerhouse of the non-capitalist world. In



Workers Vanguard

**Spartacists raise fight to defend China and other deformed workers states at Oakland labour/black mobilization in defense of immigrant rights and against "war on terror" repression, February 2002.**

the wake of a falling-out between Moscow and Beijing that began in the late 1950s, Mao Zedong pursued an alliance with American imperialism against the Soviet Union. This was sealed when Mao met with U.S. Republican president Nixon in 1972 as American bombs rained down on Vietnam and Cambodia. In 1979, only four years after the victory of the heroic Vietnamese workers and peasants, China under Deng Xiaoping invaded Vietnam, acting as U.S. imperialism's cat's paw. The alliance allowed the U.S. under Reagan to add to its anti-Soviet arsenal the bulk of the nuclear weapons it had aimed at China, at the same time tying down significant Soviet forces in the Far East.

Following the demise of the USSR, China was placed once again in Washington's cross hairs. A directive signed by Democratic president Clinton in 1997 broadened the Pentagon's list of nuclear targets in China. Since issuing a Nuclear Posture Review in 2001 that included China among seven countries targeted for possible nuclear attack, the Pentagon has moved into the Pacific five nuclear submarines carrying an estimated 720 warheads, including some with advanced Trident II missiles, according to the Federation of American Scientists.

In pursuit of their own ambitions, the Japanese imperialists, who brutally colonized Korea in 1910 and occupied much of China before World War II, have embarked on a program of military expansion whose principal targets are North Korea and China. On January 9, the government of Shinzo Abe re-established a fully fledged "defense" ministry for the first time since World War II, with authority to deploy the military overseas. This is a significant step toward junking Article Nine of the U.S.-imposed postwar constitution—long flouted in practice—banning Japan from maintaining military forces. According to the *Japan Times* (22 December 2006), Japan and the U.S. signed an agreement in December "to exchange detailed global topographic data—a move apparently aimed at sharing information specifically on North Korea and China." Japan is also planning to launch a fourth spy satellite in February that will complete its system of global coverage.

The point at which imperialist military pressure bears down

(continued on page 14)

## China...

(continued from page 13)

most directly on Beijing is capitalist Taiwan, where the defeated bourgeoisie under the command of the butcher Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek fled the 1949 Revolution. In February 2005, the U.S. and Japan issued a joint policy statement declaring Taiwan a “mutual security concern” and moved to reposition their military forces, including the regional deployment of antiballistic missile systems. In response to these dangerous provocations, the Spartacist League/U.S. and the Spartacist Group Japan declared in a joint statement:

“Since the 1949 Chinese Revolution, from which the Chinese deformed workers state emerged, Taiwan has been an outpost for U.S. imperialism’s counterrevolutionary schemes, military threats and interference in Chinese internal affairs through the puppet Chinese bourgeoisie. Taiwan has been since ancient times a part of China, and we Trotskyists will stand with China in the event of any military conflict with imperialism over Taiwan.”

—*Workers Vanguard* No. 844, 18 March 2005

Now it is reported that in February the U.S. and Japan will discuss a “joint operation plan for their troops” for defense of Taiwan (Japantoday.com, 4 January).

Beijing extends a hand to the bourgeoisie in Taiwan by pushing for its reunification with China under the formula, “one country, two systems.” The nationalist Stalinist regime thus pledges to maintain capitalism on the island, as it has done in Hong Kong following the reversion of the former British colony to Chinese control in 1997. In opposition to the Stalinists and to the reactionary forces calling for Taiwanese independence, the ICL calls for the revolutionary reunification of China: for *socialist revolution* to expropriate

the Taiwanese capitalists and a *workers political revolution* to oust the Beijing bureaucracy, establishing a regime of workers democracy and revolutionary internationalism.

Washington’s current space policy opposes treaties proposed by China and Russia banning the “weaponization of space.” Clearly the administration’s intent is to put a lot more weapons there. The Democrats, the other party of U.S. imperialism, and such bourgeois mouthpieces as the *New York Times* advocate a space weapons treaty as a better means of limiting China’s capabilities and protecting the American advantage. Edward Markey, Democratic co-chair of the House Nonproliferation task force, declared on January 20: “American satellites are the soft underbelly of our national security, and it is urgent that President Bush move to guarantee their protection by initiating an international agreement to ban the development, testing, and deployment of space weapons and anti-satellite systems.”

To defend and extend the gains of social revolution in China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba requires fighting for proletarian revolution in the imperialist centers. Defense of the remaining workers states against imperialism and counterrevolution is critical to mobilizing the proletariat in the U.S., Canada, Japan and elsewhere against their own exploiters. Every advance in the workers states’ military capabilities buys more time for the international proletariat. Only when workers revolutions put the advanced technology and industrial capacity of the developed countries to use in an international planned economy will the basis be laid for a socialist society of material abundance. To this end, the ICL fights to build revolutionary Trotskyist parties as part of a reformed Fourth International.

—Adapted from *Workers Vanguard* No. 885, 2 February

## Quebec...

(continued from page 3)

economically uncertain existence. In Quebec, symmetrically, the labour tops push the more militant francophone proletariat into the trap of supporting their “own” bourgeois nationalists of the Bloc and PQ. The result is a deeply divided working class, profoundly undermining prospects for the struggle of labour against capital.

A Léger opinion poll last November gave a snapshot of this national divide: 77 percent of respondents outside Quebec rejected the notion of Quebec as a nation, while francophone Québécois supported it by 71 percent. English Canada and Quebec are divided just as two separate countries speaking different languages are divided. Indeed the division is arguably even deeper than that, if one takes into account the mutual animosity generated by never-ending “national unity” crises. The Québécois justifiably resent being treated as a second-class nation. At the same time, the dominant Anglo bourgeoisie has ample trouble defining just what *its* national characteristics are, given how little separates English Canada from the U.S. culturally, linguistically or, increasingly, economically. All this also nicely covers up the truly criminal treatment of Native people, beleaguered immigrants and ethnic minorities, and victims of Canada’s “peacekeeping” abroad like the detainees tortured in Afghanistan. It’s worth noting how the Bloc and PQ, “responsible” would-be rulers of an independent capitalist Quebec, support Canada’s role in the bloody occupation of Afghanistan.

We Marxists advocate *independence for Quebec*, both to

fight the dominant Anglo chauvinism, and as the only evident road to make clear to the workers of both nations that their enemies are their own respective capitalists and not each other. Since our inception, the Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste has upheld Quebec’s right to self-determination, not least within the English Canadian labour movement. We defended the FLQ left-nationalists jailed and persecuted in the 1970s, despite our profound political differences. We denounced the multiple threats against Quebec by Trudeau, Chrétien and others. In 1992, we called for a No vote against Brian Mulroney’s Charlottetown Accord, another attempt to “solve” the national question within a united Canada—i.e., to put Quebec “back in its place” and reinforce the Canadian state. Before the 1995 sovereignty referendum, we went over to advocacy of independence, recognizing that this is the only way to get the question off the agenda and bring the *class* question to the fore—to highlight the understanding that all nationalisms are ultimately tools of the bosses against the workers, and that, in the words of the *Communist Manifesto*, “The working men have no country.”

### Pseudo-Socialists in the Camp of Anglo Chauvinism

The Canadian capitalists (and a large proportion of the Québécois ones) will go very far indeed to stop Quebec independence, which they see as a threat to their interests, both financial and political. At the same time, they obviously worry about the constant “constitutional” and parliamentary instability borne of the unresolved Quebec national question. Entrenched support for the sovereignist Bloc—which has won

a majority of Quebec seats in all five elections since its founding in 1990—all but guarantees this will continue. Since 2004, minority governments, both Liberal and Tory, have followed one another. The next federal election, possibly this spring, isn't likely to change this. Columnist John Ibbitson expressed the rulers' concerns in the *Globe and Mail* (30 January):

"If, as expected, the next government is a minority, the cycle will repeat itself, and pre-election preparations will begin again. At some point, this constant state of political crisis will start to exact a toll.

"It will show up in desertions from the public service, in lost investment caused by the uncertain political climate, in an international reputation for instability."

Instability of bourgeois rule, even if only at the level of parliament, can be a good thing for the working class—if it learns to mobilize independently of the bosses for its own interests and not, as the groveling social-democratic NDP has done, by waving the Maple Leaf flag and supporting one capitalist party against another. A fight for a class-struggle leadership of the unions is inseparable from a fight to defend Quebec's national rights. Such a fight will pose point blank the question of a new, revolutionary party of the working class opposed to the pro-capitalist NDP and to the bourgeois nationalists in Quebec.

This is certainly not the perspective of the rest of the Canadian "left," who push support to the NDP in English Canada, or to the Quebec nationalists, or, impossibly squaring the circle, to both at once. The most blatant Canadian chauvinists are the misnamed Communist Party of Canada (CPC). Their program, "Canada's Future Is Socialism!" (2002), calls to "struggle against U.S. domination and for genuine Canadian independence," while railing vis-à-vis Quebec that "The separatist solution would bring severe additional economic hardship to the working people of both nations and would weaken their political unity against the common enemy." In the acid test of the 1995 referendum, the CPC lined up with the Canadian bourgeoisie in calling on the Québécois to vote No to independence.

The same stance was taken by the "Bolshevik Tendency" (BT), a dubious group founded by ex-members of our organization who spend much of their energy slandering us. So blatant was the BT's capitulation to the Canadian powers-that-be that they were officially welcomed to join a massive "Canadian unity" rally in Montreal organized by top business leaders on the eve of the referendum. When the BT's only Quebec member quit, he protested their "de facto bloc with the Canadian bourgeoisie" (see "Kneeling Before the Body of General Wolfe on the Plains of Abraham," SC No. 141, Summer 2004).

While noting the cynicism behind Harper's motion, the International Socialists (I.S.) saluted the "nation" vote in parliament as "a significant victory for the Québécois in their decades old struggle for recognition" (*Socialist Worker*, 16 December 2006). From the Meech Lake Accord of the late 1980s to the Charlottetown referendum and more, the I.S. has consistently backed the Canadian rulers' attempts to shore up their rule via token, overwhelmingly meaningless "concessions" to Quebec. Far from advocating Quebec independence, their aim throughout has been to act as a pressure group on the NDP, who they support in every election (including in Quebec, where the Anglo-chauvinist New Democrats have zero roots in the labour movement).

Today the I.S. begs the New Democrats to "finally get



Canapress

**Canada was founded on oppression of Quebec. Above: 1970 military occupation of Montreal ordered by Pierre Trudeau under War Measures Act.**

things right on Quebec" by backing the right to self-determination and opposing the Clarity Act. "That," they claim, "is a road that would allow the NDP to galvanize a class-based, principled pole." The idea that the NDP could provide a "class-based, principled pole" over Quebec (or any other issue) is the sheerest illusion-mongering. The role of social democrats, even on occasions when they are forced to posture more to the left, is to *defend the capitalists' state power against the working class*. They do that by seeking to divert class struggle, when it does occur, into channels that do not threaten bourgeois rule or, failing that, by directly helping the capitalists to suppress the workers. A general struggle against the capitalist system requires breaking the working class from the NDP—a process in which defense of Quebec's national rights against both the Anglo ruling class and the chauvinist NDP tops is likely to play a central role.

### Québec Solidaire: A Populist Trap

While pleading in English Canada for the NDP to clean up its act, in Quebec the I.S. enthusiastically backs the new Québec Solidaire (QS) party. When QS was formed last year, the I.S. French-language paper *Résistance* (February 2006) gushed: "It seems that the Quebec left has finally found its path, after 38 years of struggle, outside of the suffocating shadow of the PQ. It is this feeling of liberation which electrified the crowd when the name Québec Solidaire was adopted." Forgive us for not sharing this "feeling of liberation"! As we noted at the time, QS "isn't even a half-step on the road to anti-capitalist struggle: it is a populist roadblock that fosters terrible illusions in a 'reformed' bourgeois rule" (SC No. 148, Spring 2006).

QS aims to attract those opposed to the attacks of the right-wing provincial Liberal government but disenchanted with the PQ, particularly under Boisclair, a colourless technocrat who has alienated much of the party's putative left

(continued on page 16)

## Quebec...

(continued from page 15)

wing. Heavily staffed by housebroken ex-“Marxists,” and backed by just about every present-day reformist left group in Quebec, QS eschews even the rhetoric of socialism and the class struggle in favour of environmental/feminist-tinged petty-bourgeois politics.

This is seen clearly in QS’s platform for the next Quebec election (now called for March 26) adopted at a November convention. While containing detailed proposals for nationalizing wind energy, reorganizing the forestry sector and increasing taxes on dividends, it does not even rhetorically oppose capitalism (a word that appears nowhere in the lengthy document). Even minimal proposals for free drug care for all low-income Québécois and an immediate increase in the minimum wage to \$10 an hour were defeated after party leaders argued they would be too expensive. QS doesn’t even call to unconditionally withdraw Canadian troops from Afghanistan, demanding instead Canadian participation in a military force under United Nations auspices.

The I.S.’s *Résistance* (January 2007) salutes QS’s sub-reformist platform as “a clear rupture with neoliberalism” and calls to enthusiastically back it in the provincial elections. From Europe to Latin America and Quebec, “opposition to neoliberalism” has become a code phrase for unity with those supporters of capitalism who aim to co-opt the workers with chatter about “solidarity.” The Stalinists used to dress this up as the “popular front” (against monopolies, fascism, etc.). While the jargon has changed, the idea is the same: subordinating the workers’ interests to a wing of the enemy class. We Trotskyists say: QS is not a genuine left alternative to the PQ, but another trap for Quebec’s workers and oppressed. No vote to the petty-bourgeois QS, any more than to the openly capitalist PQ and Liberals! Workers in Quebec and throughout Canada need a party based on proletarian class struggle, not another class-collaborationist obstacle.

In approaching the national question in the Canadian state today, we take inspiration from the Bolshevik-led Russian Revolution of 1917, the only successful workers revolution so far in history. The Tsarist Empire was a cauldron of Great



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**Bolshevik Revolution—beacon to oppressed nationalities worldwide. Delegates at 1920 Baku Congress, Soviet Azerbaijan.**

Russian chauvinism and national antagonisms directed against myriad oppressed nations. The Bolsheviks fought as a “tribune of the people,” opposing all manifestations of great-nation chauvinism, while calling on workers and peasants of the oppressed nationalities to join with their Russian class brothers and sisters in a common struggle against capitalism. Only socialist revolution and the inauguration of proletarian power laid a basis to liberate all the oppressed from the tsarist “prison house of peoples.”

Today we advocate Quebec independence as a means of breaking the proletariat in both nations from deadly illusions in their “own” respective exploiters. The oppression of Quebec within “united Canada” has for too long poisoned relations among the workers and undermined prospects for anti-capitalist struggle. We fight for the advanced elements of the working class and radical youth to take up the struggle to construct a Marxist workers party, one that can unite the many victims of this exploitative system—women, immigrants, Native people, the Québécois—behind the social power of the proletariat in the fight for socialist revolution. ■

## MAWO...

(continued from page 6)

called the death of a Canadian “retired” RCMP officer in Haiti a “senseless and tragic loss,” and they’ve held frequent emergency pickets to protest the deaths of Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan. We communists welcome any military setbacks inflicted on the imperialist rulers, without giving an iota of support to the same forces that also frequently launch reactionary and indiscriminate communalist attacks. We call for their military defense only insofar as they target the imperialists and their lackeys.

### From MAWO to the SYC

For over a year, I worked with MAWO’s front group at the University of British Columbia. The SYC would sometimes intervene at the group’s events, where MAWO’s slogan of “self-determination for all oppressed nations” was a main theme. I remember once that the SYC showed up and exposed MAWO et al. for not publicly advocating or even mentioning

Quebec independence, a most vital question for any group in Canada that claims to oppose national oppression.

Now, after some months of political struggle, education and joint work, I’m with the SYC, the youth organization of the TL. Stung by that and unable or unwilling to defend themselves politically against our criticisms, MAWO’s UBC front group has barred us from their public events, and recently even called on the UBC student bureaucracy to enforce the ban.

The SYC intervenes into social struggles to mobilize youth as partisans of the working class and all the oppressed. We sell *Workers Vanguard* and *Spartacist Canada*, hold Marxist classes and are active in the campaign to free U.S. death-row prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. We fight the post-Soviet retrogression of consciousness by swimming against the stream and intervening to raise the political consciousness of the proletariat, rather than adapt to it. We fight to win the best elements of the antiwar movement away from its dead-end pro-capitalist politics, and to educate them in a Marxist worldview and the necessity of building a vanguard party that fights for international socialist revolution. ■

# “War on Terror” ...

(continued from page 1)

has been given a year to reconfigure the law. We demand immediate freedom for those still in prison, restoration of full civil rights to those released and an end to the deadly threats of deportation they all face.

In the Toronto area, meanwhile, 17 young Muslims including teenagers await trial for a raft of “terrorism”-related charges under the repressive Anti-Terrorism Act enacted by the Chrétien Liberals after September 11, 2001. Concocted on the word of finks paid hundreds of thousands of dollars in an RCMP sting operation, some of these cases are already unravelling, and on February 23 charges against the youngest were stayed. We condemned the June 2006 police roundups and the media smears of Muslim youth in Canada as a “Jihad Generation” and the new “enemy within,” and continue to demand immediate freedom for those still in jail. Drop all the charges!

These cases represent only small cogs in the vast machinery of the U.S.-led “war on terror” whose tentacles reach around the world: from the bloody imperialist occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan to the secret prisons and torture chambers of Syria and Egypt; from police shoot-to-kill orders on the streets of London to “extraordinary renditions,” warrantless surveillance and “terrorist watch lists” in effect at airports and border crossings throughout North America. Supplementing all this is a constant stream of government lies, police frame-ups and media manipulation aimed at maintaining public fear at the level necessary to justify growing police surveillance and intrusion into the daily lives of everyone.

But the capitalist rulers also know that keeping public hysteria indefinitely at “code red” is no slam dunk. As the U.S. occupation of Iraq drags into its fifth year, few believe anything that comes from the mouths of Bush, Cheney & Co. In Canada, Ottawa’s concerted efforts to sell the public on participation in the military occupation of Afghanistan have found little traction. Each successive “terror” scare has

met with greater scepticism and even outright ridicule from working people. This is a good thing, but throwing a wrench into this vast and growing machinery of state repression will require *class struggle*—for working people to push back against attacks on democratic rights and living standards.

As we have often noted, the “war on terror” is not a “war” at all, but a political pretext to drastically expand the repressive apparatus of the bourgeois state. The defense of the vulnerable Muslim minority—the target in the first instance of the bourgeoisie’s new arsenal of police-state measures—is therefore of vital interest to *all* working people. Russian Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin explained that the core of the state, with its “special bodies” of organized violence—the police, courts, standing armies and prisons—is the apparatus of one class for repressing another. This is all the more important to emphasize in the advanced capitalist states, where the bourgeoisie typically conceals its naked class dictatorship behind elaborate parliamentary rituals and facades.

## O’Connor Inquiry: Facelift on Racist “Anti-Terror” Campaign

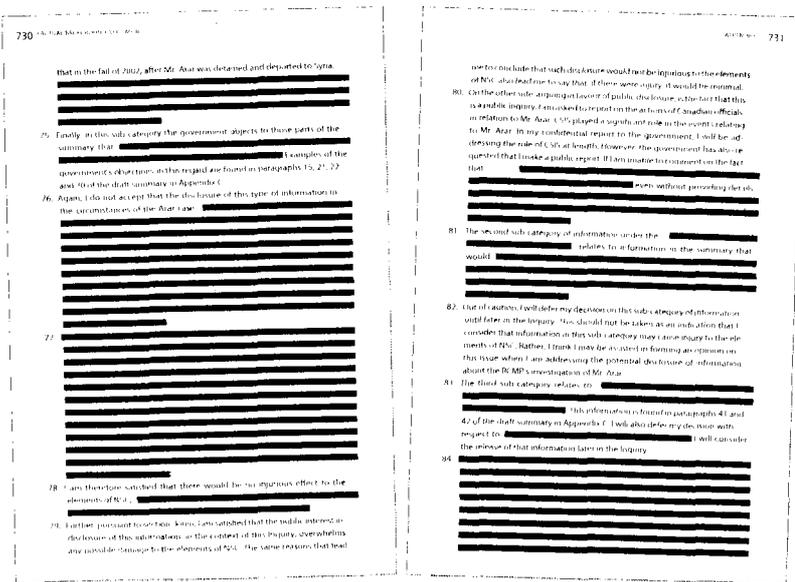
If the growing scepticism and hostility toward the “war on terror” has a name, it is Maher Arar. On September 20, 2006, the federal parliament, amid cheers and applause, unanimously passed a motion apologizing to the Canadian computer engineer who has become an iconic figure internationally for his fight to defend his rights and those of others. Joining in this cynical ovation were the Liberals, who directly connived with Arar’s abductors and torturers, and Harper’s Conservatives, who had vilified him for months on end. Truly, as Rochefoucauld noted centuries ago, hypocrisy is the homage vice pays to virtue!

This outpouring was occasioned by the release of a 822-page “Report of the Events Relating to Maher Arar.” Signed by Ontario justice Dennis O’Connor, the report “reveals” what we and many others said long ago—*Maher Arar was an innocent man*. It lays out how CSIS and the RCMP’s sinister “Project A-O Canada” fingered Arar and his wife Dr. Monia Mazigh to U.S. officials as “Islamic Extremist individuals suspected of being linked to the Al Qaeda terrorist movement.” Even their young children were put on a “border-watch” list! It shows the steps leading to his abduction in New York by the FBI and his eventual “rendition” to nearly a year of gruesome torture in a Syrian prison as Ottawa stonewalled all efforts to free him. The report also reviews government efforts to cover its trail by further smearing Arar after his return to Canada.

In January 2007, after years of negotiations, the Canadian government finally issued a formal apology to Arar, and a settlement of \$11.5 million. Welcome as the money must be, it cannot repair the damage done to this man. Arar himself told the media, “I wish... I could buy my life back.”

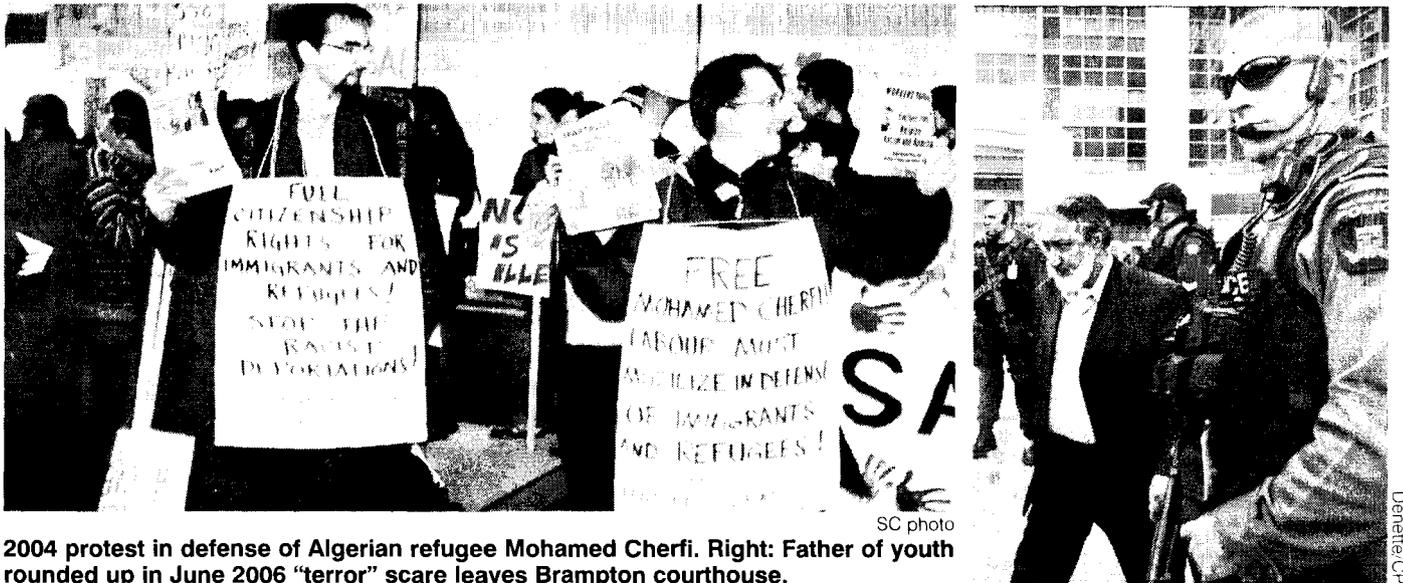
Black chattel slavery in Upper Canada, the anti-Chinese “head tax,” the internment of Japanese Canadians in World War II, the cold-blooded police murders of Native militant Dudley George and countless others: the Canadian ruling class and its forebears have committed crime after crime against the working people and oppressed. Periodically the bourgeois state “investigates” its own “excesses” in

(continued on page 18)



SC graphic

**Censored public version of O’Connor report into Maher Arar’s deportation to torture in Syria amnesties Canadian rulers’ racist “war on terror” campaign.**



2004 protest in defense of Algerian refugee Mohamed Cherfi. Right: Father of youth rounded up in June 2006 "terror" scare leaves Brampton courthouse.

## "War on Terror" ...

(continued from page 17)

Royal Commissions or "independent inquiries." The purpose of these charades is not to bring justice to those wronged, but to restore the authority of the capitalist state, pushing the idea that these are the "aberrant" acts of "rogue elements." On the contrary: these are the normal workings of the ruling class and its agents.

Even in these terms, the O'Connor report is an exceptionally insolent whitewash of the RCMP and government criminals, who evidently counted on Arar coming home from Syria in a coffin. Far from naming a single guilty party in Arar's abduction and torment, O'Connor's report—in the face of massive proof to the contrary—declares that the whole thing was merely the result of a few mix-ups, poor training and failure to follow "proper procedures." "There is no evidence," he writes, "that Canadian officials participated or acquiesced in the American authorities' decisions to detain Mr. Arar and remove him to Syria." How grotesque! It was precisely "Canadian officials" who gave the U.S. the pretext to arrest Arar and deport him.

Moreover, O'Connor's report repeatedly *endorses* the state's spying on Arar. The RCMP had, he declares, "reasonable grounds to conduct surveillance" of a meeting between Arar and Abdullah Almalki, another innocent man jailed and tortured in Syria on the basis of RCMP/CSIS lies. O'Connor agrees that it was "reasonable for the Project to investigate" Arar, and that requesting a border lookout for him "was an appropriate investigative step."

Responding to this blatant whitewash, even Alex Neve of the bourgeois-liberal Amnesty International pointed to the obvious: "targeted phone calls or information-sharing, giving a nudge, a nod, a wink, when it was known someone was going to be crossing international borders with the hope and expectation they would be arrested" amount to "Canada's own version of extraordinary rendition" (*Toronto Star*, 13 December 2006). Arar was one of at least four men jailed and tortured in Syria on the strength of Canadian disinformation.

O'Connor's report presented few difficulties to the bourgeoisie and its media. The *Globe and Mail's* John Ibbotson noted with pleasure that the report "will not satisfy conspiracy

theorists who believe our security services actively colluded to have a Canadian citizen sent to Syria to be tortured" (19 September 2006). Former solicitor-general Wayne Easter, who was in charge of the RCMP while Arar rotted in a Syrian dungeon, smirked to reporters: "I found the report really not all that critical." O'Connor, a long-time bourgeois state functionary, delivered what his paymasters ordered: an expert "legal" endorsement of Canada's secret "war on terror" apparatus.

The NDP social democrats called on the government to "respond appropriately...to the Commission's detailed recommendations" and issue an immediate apology and compensation to Arar and his family as the best way "to close this ugly chapter in Canadian history." Well, they've done that. But contrary to the NDP, this is not just a blemish on an otherwise clean historical record. The persecution of Arar fully reflects the "values" of this racist capitalist society. And if the NDP defended Arar, they criminally hailed the terror sting against the 18 Muslims in Toronto last year. Layton declared: "We join with all Canadians in saluting the efforts and cooperation of our law enforcement and intelligence gathering agencies" (press release, 5 June 2006). Out of power, the NDP is at pains to demonstrate its fitness to run the capitalist state; and when they do form governments, from B.C. to Ontario, they are as ruthless in administering racist capitalist austerity as their bourgeois counterparts. What they are emphatically not fit for is leadership of the working class.

Like the NDP, the reformists of the International Socialists (I.S.) ignore O'Connor's explicit exoneration of the cops and spy services for their crimes against Arar. *Socialist Worker*, the I.S. newspaper, breathlessly and falsely declares the report "a damning indictment of the criminal role of the RCMP" (7 October 2006). With not one criticism of O'Connor's report, the I.S. itself covers for state lies and repression.

Why would self-described "socialists" hail a snowjob like this—not to mention buying into the whole charade of such "independent inquiries" in the first place? In contrast to the Leninist view of the state, reformists like the I.S. share the premise of the NDP that the "democratic" state is not a mask for the dictatorship of capital, but a neutral body which answers not to the capitalists but to "the public." The I.S. position runs like this: with enough mass pressure, "our government" must change its policies—presumably to serve the

interests of the workers, the poor and oppressed as opposed to those of capital. Devotion to this fiction is what leads the I.S. to alibi capitalist class "justice," of which atrocities like the racist "war on terror" are the inevitable product.

### The O'Neill Affair: Anatomy of a State Smear Job

The O'Connor commission, it should be recalled, was launched not because of the crimes against Arar, but because of publicity around a bungled January 2004 raid the RCMP conducted on the home of Ottawa journalist Juliet O'Neill. After Monia Mazigh's heroic campaign had finally secured Arar's return to Canada, O'Neill was one of many journalists who willingly helped security officials continue to smear Arar as a "dangerous terrorist." A vicious screed by O'Neill in the *Ottawa Citizen* (8 November 2003) retailed lying information against Arar from a leaked "intelligence dossier."

O'Neill's article was extremely damaging to Arar. At the time, we nailed her and the other bourgeois media flacks who had "for the most part been loyal propagandists for the state 'war on terrorism'" (*SC* No. 140, Spring 2004). We also rightly opposed wielding the sinister Security of Information Act—another repressive law enacted after September 11. However, we wrongly put the raid on O'Neill on a par with the rulers' "war on terror" outrages when we wrote: "This raid, like all the recent frame-ups, Star Chamber hearings and police-state disappearances of immigrants of Arab and Muslim background, was meant to intimidate and silence *anyone* who might question the government." This was not a journalist protecting a source in the service of championing the innocent or exposing government misdeeds, but the opposite. Like *New York Times* journalist Judith Miller, who retailed the Bush administration's lies about Iraq's supposed "weapons of mass destruction" that served as the pretext for the colonial war of occupation of Iraq, O'Neill was a willing mouthpiece for government disinformation.

As Marxists, we look at all issues, including questions of democratic rights, from a proletarian class standpoint—that is, the interests of the working class in furthering the struggle for socialist revolution. To be sure, raids on a journalist have a chilling effect on free speech, but this is not the central issue here. O'Neill's right to not divulge her sources was subordinate to the right of the working class and oppressed, especially Maher Arar himself, to know exactly how the government orchestrated this witchhunt.

### The "War on Terror" and the Working Class

Between the gnawing worry that you could be next and the poisonous "divide and rule" racism targeting vulnerable minorities, the bourgeoisie's "war on terror" aims at getting workers and the oppressed to identify their interests with those of the ruling class. "Anti-terrorist" witchhunts; anti-science, anti-sex religious backwardness; deteriorating education, health care and pensions: intimidated and regimented across the board, working people are supposed to simply roll over and submit to unbridled capitalist exploitation.

The anti-terrorism laws are so sweeping as to encompass anyone whose political views run afoul of the ruling class. If Muslims are on the frontline, the ultimate target of the ramped-up "national security" arsenal is the multiethnic working class. When the Anti-Terrorism Act was introduced in 2001, the Canadian Auto Workers union protested that its definitions "could be used to apply to many trade union

activities." The capitalists would love to be able to brand any and all workers struggles as "terrorist." These laws are not fundamentally about actions or alleged crimes. They are political laws meant to buttress the rule of the capitalist class and provide a way to repress and silence those who they cannot charge with a single demonstrable criminal act. This in itself poses a direct threat to the left and labour movement. Thus, among the organizations now banned are the Communist Party of the Philippines and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. Meanwhile, sections of organized labour, such as waterfront and airport workers, are being subjected to ever more intrusive scrutiny in the name of the anti-terror hysteria.

The working class, from whose toil comes the capitalists' profits, is the one force with both the material interest and organized social power to throw back this "war on terror" and challenge capitalist rule. In October 1917 in Russia, the working class, led by Lenin's and Trotsky's Bolshevik Party, smashed tsarist/capitalist rule with its anti-Semitic Black Hundred terrorists, Okhrana secret police and bloody anti-worker repression. Today's unbridled militarism and one-sided attacks on workers and minorities were not created by "a new post-9/11 reality" but by the unipolar world of rampant capitalist imperialism that issued from the destruction of the former Soviet Union in 1991-92. The capitalists declare "Communism is dead," but what they really mean is "October 1917, never again!"

Our aim, as communists, is to fight for new October Revolutions. We have actively opposed every racist, anti-democratic outrage perpetrated by the bourgeoisie in the name of the "war on terror," and we urgently seek to mobilize workers in this struggle, because it is in their immediate and direct interests to do so. This state, whatever its "democratic" trappings, is not "our state" but that of the class enemy, which needs to be smashed by proletarian revolution. We fight for a revolutionary party of the multiethnic working class, which alone has the means and interest to overthrow the dictatorship of capital and lay the foundations of a new society based on the simple principle that those who labour must rule. ■

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## Mumia...

(continued from page 24)

in the arrest earlier this year of eight former Black Panther Party members on charges of killing a San Francisco cop over 30 years ago. Those charges had been repeatedly rejected by grand juries and in one case thrown out of court because "confessions" had been coerced by the police through torture. That Mumia is the rulers' foremost target was seen in a Congressional resolution passed with overwhelming support in December that condemned the decision by the Paris suburb of Saint-Denis to name a street after him.

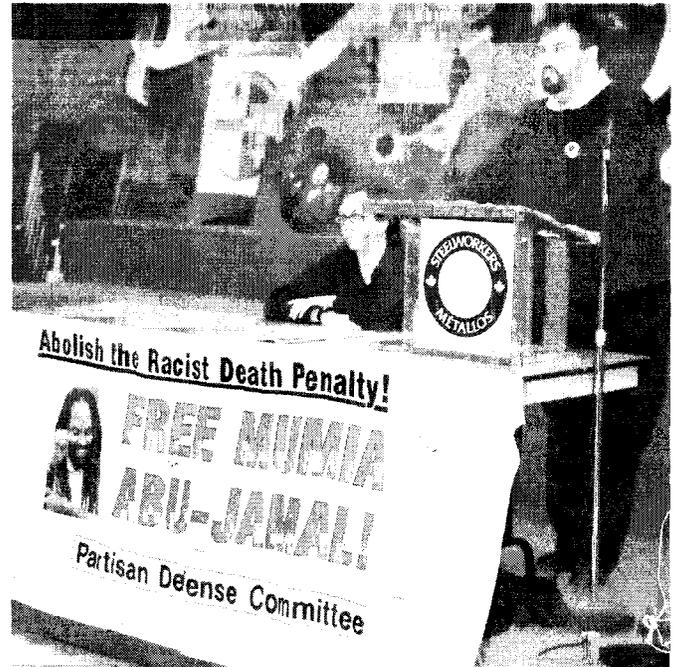
With events in Los Angeles, Chicago, the San Francisco Bay Area and New York as well as in Canada, the Holiday Appeal raised more than \$10,000 (U.S.) for 16 recipients of the PDC class-war prisoners stipend fund. In addition to Mumia, the recipients include eight members of Philadelphia MOVE, former Black Panther supporters Mondo we Langa and Ed Poindexter, Jaan Laaman and Thomas Manning of the Ohio 7, American Indian Movement leader Leonard Peltier, Mumia's son Jamal Hart and prison activist Hugo Pinell. Each of these cases illustrates that there is no justice in the bourgeois courts for anyone perceived as an opponent of the racist capitalist rulers.

The featured speaker at the Toronto event, attended by some 65 people, was Jonathan Piper, a PDC spokesman and one of Mumia's attorneys from 1990 to 1999. Other speakers included Dave Bleakney, national representative of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW); Frank Dreaver, spokesperson for the Leonard Peltier Canadian Coalition; Gabriel Galang of the Political Hip-Hop Association, University of Toronto, Mississauga; Ali Mallah of the Canadian Arab Federation; and Miriam McDonald of the Trotskyist League. Faith Nolan's rousing songs opened and closed the formal part of the meeting.

Jonathan Piper powerfully outlined the evidence that proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that Mumia is an innocent man framed up by the capitalist state, and called to continue the struggle for his freedom. Other speakers connected the state vendetta against Mumia to attacks on workers, Native people, blacks, immigrants and other minorities here in Canada. Ali Mallah, who is also Vice-President, Equity of the Canadian Union of Public Employees Toronto District Council, spoke in particular about the need for the labour movement to fight on behalf of the oppressed. Frank Dreaver spoke movingly of the all-sided oppression of the indigenous peoples and the "criminal empire" that framed up Leonard Peltier and has kept him imprisoned for over 25 years—"just an example of what happens to any one of us if we have the courage to stand up and demand what's right."

Speaking on behalf of the 55,000-strong postal union, Dave Bleakney noted CUPW's long involvement in the fight to free Mumia and thanked the PDC for keeping the struggle going. Saying he was "very happy to see the November 24 issue of the *Workers Vanguard*...with the headline, "'Strike!' and 'Free Mumia!' Should Ring Out in the Same Breath," Bleakney emphasized that we "need to put things in place now for these kinds of actions." A good place to start, he suggested, would be to demand that Mumia be a guest speaker at union conventions.

TL speaker Miriam McDonald noted how, "In confronting us starkly with the *class* nature of the capitalist state, the fight for Mumia's freedom really goes to the heart of all the vital political questions that we face daily in our struggles:



SC photo

**Toronto, 15 December 2006: Jonathan Piper, PDC spokesman and one of Jamal's attorneys from 1990-1999 addresses Holiday Appeal.**

opposing racist cop terror; defending a picket line; mobilizing against imperialist war." She continued:

"We're all here tonight to fight for Mumia Abu-Jamal's freedom, and many of you have been involved in this struggle for years. Our fight for Mumia is inseparable from our fight to build a multiracial revolutionary workers party capable of leading the working class in struggle to bring down this capitalist system for good...."

"Almost 100 years ago, the great revolutionary Rosa Luxemburg said that the choice facing mankind was socialism or barbarism. We fight for socialism: that's the class rule of the workers, the inauguration of a rational, planned economy in which production for profit is no more."

We print below an edited version of a presentation by PDC counsel Rachel Wolkenstein at the December 17 New York City benefit. It was first published in *Workers Vanguard* (No. 886, 16 February), biweekly newspaper of the Spartacist League/U.S., section of the International Communist League.

We cannot be lulled into thinking that because Mumia has an appeal pending before the Third Circuit Court of Appeals, which is hearing three (and only three) of his more than two dozen legal claims, that this is a great opportunity for Mumia. It is good that the court is hearing these claims. But it is also likely that they are just greasing the skids toward a final conclusion that Mumia should be executed.

Prior to my meeting Mumia for the first time almost 20 years ago with Paul Cooperstein, also from the Partisan Defense Committee, in August 1987, Mumia passed along a quote from *Henry VI* about how the first thing we'll do after taking power is kill all the lawyers. We sent back to him a quote from V.I. Lenin that had similar negative sentiments about lawyers.

The work that I have done along with other comrades of the Partisan Defense Committee has been, simultaneous with legal assistance, to push propaganda, publicity and protest,

concentrated on mobilizing the social power of the labor movement, of the working class, which has the only real power to change anything. We base our work on the understanding that the only way to get rid of the injustice that exists in this society is through socialist revolution, and in the process we must fight tooth and nail for Mumia's freedom, and for democratic rights of all sorts. The abuses of the capitalist system will not be reformed in any way that will be long-lasting. The only fundamental change that's possible is a change in the social system, which means socialism.

Mumia is not a Marxist. Mumia is not a socialist. But he has been absolutely steadfast in his opposition to racist oppression, to the extremes of capitalism, to injustices, to American imperialism. That is the reason that he is a target of the rulers of this country, who see in him the spectre of black revolution. They have seen that in him from his early days as a Black Panther Party member and from his becoming an advocate for the MOVE organization, for his continued statements in defense of blacks and others against the capitalist state. And for all of these reasons, the capitalist state—the courts, the prosecution, the bourgeois politicians—are committed to seeing Mumia executed or locked up in the living hell of life imprisonment.

We are up against enormous odds. So this gathering, in which we are having fun, dancing and listening to wonderful music, has to be a sort of respite and a way to reorganize ourselves for the very critical fight to prevent Mumia's execution and to see him freed. I want to make the point that millions around the globe took up Mumia's case over the years. They took it up based on the work of the Partisan Defense Committee, affiliated with the Spartacist League, as is the Labor Black League, as well as many, many other organizations that did not at all have the PDC's politics. These included the MOVE organization, the various Free Mumia coalitions, Equal Justice and Noelle Hanrahan from the Prison Radio Project and many organizations internationally. But we are unique in understanding that the capitalist state cannot be reformed and that Mumia's case, for all the reasons that we have said, represents the epitome of the race question, the class question and the fight for freedom for us all.

People around the world identified with Mumia and his

cause out of a visceral rejection of all of the injustices inherent in capitalism—poverty, war, racial and ethnic bias. In all of these ways they saw in him a symbol. Though being in lockdown 23 hours a day, seven days a week, in solitary, Mumia nonetheless has never given up his own convictions and his own fight against the injustices of the system.

What needs to be underscored here is what happens when you are on the streets demanding a new trial on the basis that the courts can be pressured to be fair. Other political organizations that say that they are socialists, like Socialist Action, the International Socialist Organization and Workers World, know full well that such demands are in contradiction with the understanding that capitalism must be overturned. These reformist groups spread illusions that the courts can be reformed, that we can count on the courts to provide some justice. Well, the courts will respond, but only from the fear of mass action, particularly the action of the organized working class, with its power to strike. It is such social unrest that drives them to make some amelioration in the system.

### Early Evidence of Innocence

I worked on Mumia's legal team from about 1995 through June 1999. Before that, we in the PDC tried our best to help Mumia get good legal counsel. We also campaigned to make it clear who Mumia was—a Black Panther Party member, a MOVE supporter, a black militant and journalist. The Partisan Defense Committee believes that Mumia is innocent. And basically the evidence of Mumia's innocence that was uncovered during the period from 1995 through 2001 is due to the work that we did. Not because we are great lawyers, or the most experienced, but because we understood that the state had framed Mumia and that he was an innocent man.

The evidence was simply there to be seen. In 1995, a man named William Singletary testified at a hearing for Mumia. Singletary is a black man who was not a leftist but a Vietnam vet who had a tow-truck company that required a lot of cooperation from the cops, and he happened to be on the street corner in the Center City area when Daniel Faulkner was shot. He tried to tell the cops that he saw somebody wearing a green Army jacket get out of a car and shoot the cop, and Mumia came along after the fact. They would not hear anything of this. They threatened him, coerced him and falsified his witness statements. He left town and was not there for the 1982 trial. We got Singletary to testify at Mumia's 1995 Post Conviction Relief Act (PCRA) appeal hearing.

We also located Veronica Jones, and she testified in court the following year. She was a prostitute who had testified in the 1982 trial that she was on the scene but really didn't see very much of what happened. This contradicted her initial witness statement that she saw the shooter running from the scene. When she testified in 1996, she admitted that she had lied at the trial. She said that her original statement was true, that she saw the shooter run from the scene, but that she had been coerced by cops, who had threatened that she would be sent away for a long time on a robbery charge and not see her young children, to say something different. As she was testifying in '96, the prosecution pulled her off the witness stand and arrested her in court on a two-year-old

*(continued on page 22)*



James/Philadelphia Inquirer  
Jamal in 1969 as Minister of Information of Philadelphia chapter of Black Panther Party.

## Mumia...

(continued from page 21)

petty larceny warrant from New Jersey.

And then we had another PCRA hearing in 1997, where another former prostitute named Pamela Jenkins, who was a prostitute-lover of a cop who had been prosecuted and convicted on federal corruption charges, testified that various police officers knew that Mumia was not the shooter. She testified that Cynthia White, another prostitute who was the key prosecution witness, had lied when she said that she saw Mumia shoot Faulkner. She lied due to threats from and fear of the cops.

These are some of the things that happened in the early period before the late Judge Sabo, the racist judge who ran the courtroom without even the pretense of what's supposed to be a fair hearing. In 1982, before Mumia's trial, Judge Sabo stated in the presence of a court stenographer and another judge, "I'm going to help them fry the n----r." That was Judge Sabo.

### The Significance of the Beverly Confession

I want to say a bit about Arnold Beverly, who confessed to killing Faulkner. Arnold Beverly was a hitman for the mob. He was hired, according to his statement, by the mob and the cops—working with a cop liaison—to shoot and kill Faulkner on that night in December 1981. He had heard—and this was all he was told—that Faulkner was a problem for the cops and the mob. Center City was rife with corruption. The cops got payoffs for the clubs, the gambling, the prostitution.

Later we learned that at the time Faulkner was killed, there were three ongoing federal investigations into cop corruption, which disclosed the fact that the cops and the mob were like one. We have an affidavit from a witness who testified in several different federal prosecutions that he had heard from cops that they were afraid that there was a cop informant working for the FBI. We believe that informant was Faulkner, that the killing of Faulkner was a hit, and that Beverly was one of the people hired to do that. When Mumia showed up on the scene, quite accidentally, the cops who were there knew exactly who he was. Some of the cops involved in corruption were the very same cops who had earlier attacked the Panthers and who had attacked MOVE.

The chief police officer on the scene on December 9, 1981, was Inspector Alfonzo Giordano. He also happened to have been the right-hand man for Frank Rizzo, the former head cop and mayor of Philadelphia. He also happened to have been the head of the Stakeout squat, the SWAT team in Philadelphia that went after the Panthers in 1969 and 1970. He also was the cop who was in charge of the barricades thrown up around the MOVE Powelton Village compound in 1977-78.

When the cops saw Mumia on the scene in December 1981, they all knew him as the one who was the 16-year-old spokesman for the Panthers back in 1970, the one who spoke out after the FBI killing of Panthers. Less than ten years later, Mumia became a reporter and exposed the lies that the cops and the city were saying about the MOVE organization. Mumia covered the trial of the MOVE 9, who were falsely convicted of killing a cop during the Powelton Village siege, when in fact the cop was killed in police crossfire. MOVE members were sent away to prison for 30 to 100 years. That trial took place in August 1981. Faulkner was shot, and Mumia was shot and almost killed, in December 1981. The

police knew exactly who Mumia was and they were really happy to get him.

Now there are a lot of stories going around about Arnold Beverly, that he is all about the money and the fame, and that he has told many different stories. There is an affidavit by Beverly in the PDC pamphlet, *The Fight to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal*, that you should read. I first talked to Arnold Beverly in 1989. He said a lot of things to me that never changed, except for one thing. In 1989 he didn't admit that he killed Faulkner. In 1999 he did admit this. The fundamentals of what he said, including the particular cops who were involved in setting this up, remain the same. Arnold Beverly confessed and is willing to testify for Mumia not because he is a good guy and is altruistic, nor for money. Rather, the cops tried to kill Beverly that night, too, because they wanted to make it look as if there was just a shootout on the street between various blacks, and Faulkner was shot in the middle of it. And Beverly was shot that night.

I also want to address the rumor that Mumia doesn't want anything to do with the Beverly evidence. Mumia knows what the PDC is doing about his case, as he has for the 20 years we've worked with him. That doesn't mean that Mumia agrees with everything the PDC says, but there is nothing we have done about his case that he has not known about, that he has not been able to say yea or nay to. He knows about the PDC-initiated newspaper ads titled "Mumia Abu-Jamal Is an Innocent Man!" that have been published which protest the state frame-up and cite evidence of his innocence, including the confession of Arnold Beverly. Mumia has approved of all the work that we are doing.

Why is there so much hullabaloo over this? I want to make it clear that the Beverly evidence did not come to the fore until 2001. His evidence presented an entire picture of what happened. The very contradictory evidence presented by the prosecution at Mumia's trial is explainable only with the benefit of the information that Beverly provided. This has to do with the number of shooters and where the shooters were. It has to do with the type of gun that was used.

Very importantly, the Beverly evidence has to do with how Mumia was shot—not by Faulkner but by another cop. And there was something that had always plagued us. We had gone through the record, and there were all these references in police reports that said that the shooter wore a green Army jacket. Somebody said that the guy in the car that was stopped by Faulkner at the site wore a green Army jacket, and somebody else said that Mumia wore a green Army jacket. Six or seven people said that there was somebody on the scene with a green Army jacket.

I've seen the evidence that the prosecution has, and I've talked to Mumia and his brother, Billy Cook. And I'll tell you that Mumia did not wear a green Army jacket that night. He wore a quilted sort of ski jacket, red with big blue stripes in the front. Billy Cook wore a blue Nehru-style jacket with brass buttons. And Faulkner wasn't wearing a green Army jacket; he wore a police uniform. Singletary said the shooter wore a green Army jacket. Two cops said there was a green Army jacket there, including one who said the shooter had a green Army jacket. Arnold Beverly said he wore a green Army jacket.

### Frame-Up and Cover-Up

In addition to that, the evidence of the shots fired does not fit with the prosecution's case. Also, the cops and prosecutors

# Join the Campaign to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!

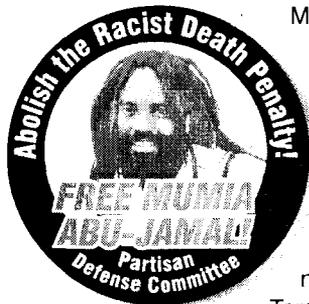
**Funds are urgently needed for legal defense!** Make a contribution today, payable to "National Lawyers Guild Foundation" (earmarked for "Mumia") and mail to: Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal, P.O. Box 2012, New York, NY 10159.

**Organize protest!** Pass motions in your unions, campus, community and religious organizations demanding Mumia's freedom. Get your union or organization to make a contribution and join rallies and protests for Mumia. Publicize Mumia's case in your union or organization's newsletter.

**Spread the word!** Contact the PDC for copies of *The Fight to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal* —*Mumia Is Innocent!* This pamphlet arms activists in the struggle for Mumia's freedom by presenting the political basis of the state

vendetta against Mumia and the explosive evidence which completely destroys the more than two-decades-long frame-up of this eloquent fighter for black freedom. It is available for \$1.

Get the PDC button: "Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!"—\$2 each. Order the PDC video, *From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal*—\$10 for DVD, \$15 for VHS. Bundles of the 4-page brochure, *Mumia Is an Innocent Man: Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!*—\$2 for 25 copies. Order from, make checks payable to Partisan Defense Committee at our Toronto address below.

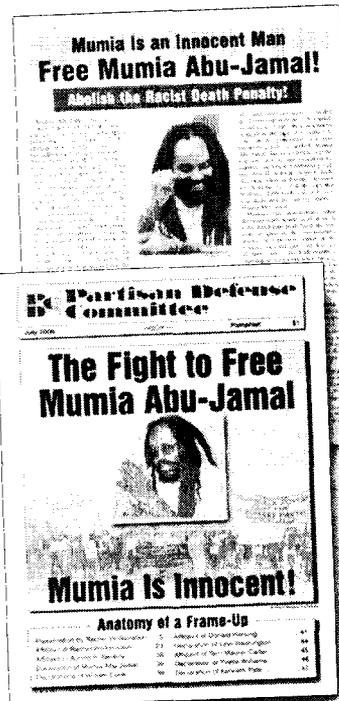


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invented a confession that Mumia supposedly made. And on this confession question, let me go back. Giordano, who was on the scene when Mumia was arrested, invented a witness to whom, it turns out, promises were made and who wasn't in the place that the prosecution said he was. Giordano also invented the story that Mumia—after he was shot, beaten up, thrown into a police van—confessed and that his gun was simply lying at the scene.

Giordano never testified at the trial. In fact, Giordano was removed from regular duty and put on desk duty during Mumia's trial. He resigned from the police the day after the death sentence came in. It wasn't until 1986 that he was actually charged with and pled guilty to corruption and tax evasion charges based on his receipt of tens of thousands of dollars in illegal payoffs during the 1979-1980 period. 1981 isn't included in there. But we have a witness who says that Giordano was a target of the federal investigations going on that year.

Nothing in the prosecution's case holds up under examination. You look at the ballistics evidence, and the witnesses and what they said they saw and what the prosecution says, and it does not hold up. There is proof over and over again that Mumia is innocent, that his conviction was a police and prosecution frame-up, that the FBI knows perfectly well who was involved in the case. They know that Faulkner was an informant or otherwise involved in this. And they know that cops like Giordano who were involved in the prosecution of Mumia were being investigated. None of that came out during Mumia's trial. And the court refused Mumia's defense any and all information during the PCRA hearings from 1995 to 1998.

What the Beverly evidence does is to make it impossible for anyone to argue that Mumia's case is about one rogue cop, or one not-so-honest prosecutor and one racist judge. Mumia's case proves the nature of the capitalist state, the

nature of the courts, the cops and the prosecution.

I got a call from Frank Serpico about a week ago. People may know him as the New York cop who spilled the beans on police corruption in 1971. What he said to me about the Fraternal Order of Police (F.O.P.) is very interesting. He said: I know about those guys. I know that the fact that the Fraternal Order of Police targets every person who has gone on record for Mumia is proof that they are covering up for something, that this is proof that Mumia is innocent, and proof of the corruption of these cops. Because the F.O.P. has protected cops all over.

Now, I don't agree with Serpico that it is possible to have a police force without corrupt cops. I want to make that clear. But this is a man who spent his life trying to find some honesty in the police force and risked his life to do that. So one has to respect that, within its own terms. These police forces are very powerful, and they are given aid and comfort and support by the Democrats and Republicans. And falling in behind are the fake socialists who promote the lie that the capitalist state can be reformed.

I want to end with the following point. We have a huge, huge battle ahead of us. It will not do us any good to think that maybe because the Court of Appeals may be hearing oral argument in Mumia's case and will be rendering a decision sometime in the next few months, that this is the answer for Mumia. Every single stage of Mumia's case has shown that the courts are committed to seeing Mumia executed or making him spend his life entombed in prison. It will take not only us here tonight but mass mobilizations, primarily focused on the power of labor with its allies—youth, the unemployed, etc.—to show that we will not permit the state to execute Mumia or entomb him in prison for life, to show that we are committed to fighting to free Mumia now. Free Mumia now! ■

## The Frame-Up of an Innocent Man **Mobilize Labour's Power!** **Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!**

The urgent effort to revitalize the fight to free U.S. death-row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal was a special focus of the Partisan Defense Committee's annual Holiday Appeal fundraisers for class-war prisoners, which were held in Toronto, Vancouver and several U.S. cities in December. A Black Panther Party spokesman in his youth, subsequently a MOVE supporter and award-winning journalist, Mumia was framed up on false charges of killing Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner on 9 December 1981 and sentenced to death explicitly for his political views and activities. With Mumia's case currently before the federal Third Circuit Court of Appeals, the fight for his freedom has entered a decisive stage. Mumia's attorney Robert Bryan recently announced in a letter to Mumia's supporters that while the court had notified him in November that oral arguments would be scheduled for January, "that was later rescinded." A decision could come within weeks or months.

The Holiday Appeal events followed a series of rallies in the U.S. in October called under the slogans: "Free Mumia now! Mumia is an innocent man! Mumia Abu-Jamal's life is in danger—Mobilize now! Abolish the racist death penalty!" Leading up to and after the rallies, full-page ads appeared in the *Nation*, the Harlem-based *Amsterdam News*, the *Chicago Defender* and the *San Francisco Bay View* listing hundreds of trade unionists, academics, authors and other notables who had signed a PDC-initiated statement declaring that Mumia is innocent and demanding his immediate freedom. Ads have subsequently appeared in Toronto's *Share* magazine, the French Communist Party's newspaper *l'Humanité*, as well as papers in Britain and Germany.

The ad (which is reprinted in *SC* No. 151, Winter 2006/2007) clearly states, "Both the Pennsylvania state courts and the federal courts have refused to consider the reams of documented evidence that prove Mumia's innocence. Foremost is the sworn confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Mumia, shot and killed the police officer." Notable signatories to the statement include Professor Henry Louis Gates, Jr.; the writers Alice Walker, John Wideman, and Nobel Prize winners Dario Fo and Nadine Gordimer; hip-hop artist Chuck D. of Public



Workers Vanguard

**PDC contingent at Philadelphia march on 25th anniversary of Mumia's arrest, 9 December 2006.**

Enemy; New York City Council member Charles Barron and Illinois Congressman Danny K. Davis. Among the signatories from the U.S. labour movement are the New York chapter of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, and Amalgamated Transit Union and International Longshoremen's Association locals. In Canada, they include NDP MP Libby Davies; Winnie Ng, Ontario Regional Director of the Canadian Labour Congress; and the Health Employees Union in B.C. The breadth of signers to the statement is evidence of the potential to mobilize mass protest on the basis that Mumia is an innocent man who was the victim of a racist political frame-up.

Those fighting for Mumia's freedom must recognize the depth of the hatred the capitalist rulers have for a man known as the "voice of the voiceless." The capitalist state's relentless vendetta against those who fight for black freedom was seen

*(continued on page 20)*