

Iraq, Afghanistan: U.S., Canadian Troops Out Now!



Carole Morissette



AP

Occupation, destruction and hell for the people of Afghanistan, Iraq. Canadian troops terrorize population of Kandahar. Right: Scene in Baghdad following car bomb in Shi'ite district.

For Class Struggle Against Capitalist Rulers at Home!

As riot cops fired tear gas and rubber bullets at protesters outside the Montebello summit in Quebec on August 20, U.S. president Bush saluted Canada for its contribution to the occupation of Afghanistan. At the same time, Stephen Harper was forced to reiterate that Canada's 2,500 troops would end their combat mission by early 2009 unless the Tory minority government can get parliamentary approval for another round of deployments.

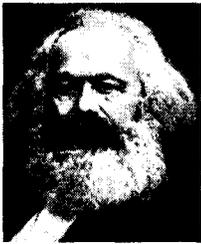
Until last year, every one of the parliamentary parties—including the NDP—supported Canada's bloody role in Afghanistan. But growing popular opposition has pushed the Liberals, who sent the troops there in the first place, to call for an end to the mission in 18 months. The Bloc Québécois

has taken a similar stand, while the New Democrats now call for "an immediate safe and secure withdrawal of our troops" from combat missions in the Afghan south, where insurgency forces have inflicted several dozen casualties on Canadian soldiers.

Meanwhile, Bush himself is in deep trouble over Iraq. The occupation of that country by some 150,000 American troops has turned into a disaster for U.S. imperialism, and major sections of the ruling class, especially in the Democratic Party, are demanding a "timetable" for withdrawal. Their aim is to cut U.S. losses and better promote the long-term interests of American imperialism by refocusing on more strategic arenas, including by shoring up the occupation forces in Afghanistan.

Hundreds of thousands of Iraqis have died under the impact of the U.S. war and occupation, a toll that increases daily with the communal warfare between Sunnis and Shi'ites unleashed

(continued on page 15)



Marx



Lenin



Trotsky

Ninety Years After the Russian Revolution

November 7 (October 25 in the old Russian calendar) marks the 90th anniversary of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, the first and to date only successful workers revolution in history. Surrounded from its inception by hostile imperialist powers and undermined by bureaucratic misrule with the ascent of Stalinism beginning in 1923-24, the Soviet Union was finally destroyed by capitalist counterrevolution in 1991-92. As American Trotskyist leader James P. Cannon stated while the Soviet Union fought for its life against Nazi Germany during World War II, the Fourth International was founded in the fight to defend the October Revolution and to fight for new Octobers on a world scale.

November 7, 1917. The death sentence on the old order of capitalism and the beginning of the new order of world socialism were both proclaimed on that day. And whatever vicissitudes, whatever setbacks, betrayals or defeats may overtake the proletariat on the road to that final goal; however sharp and deep may be the zigzags in the line which charts the course of the struggle through which humanity shall pass from capitalism to socialism; whatever may befall: the starting point in the line of development will always be traced to that great day which we commemorate tonight—November 7, 1917.

I can remember the dark days of the First World War, 1914-1918. Then as now, all the hopes for humanity's progress seemed to be drowned in the blood of the war. Reaction seemed to be triumphant everywhere. The enemies of the proletariat gloated over the treachery and capitulation of the socialist parties; and to many—to the great majority, I venture to say—the theory and the hope of socialism seemed vanished like a utopian dream. And then, as now—as has already been remarked here tonight—fainthearts and deserters mocked at those who continued the stubborn struggle

and held on to the revolutionary faith. The whole world labor movement was overcome with depression and despair in 1914-1917.

But the Russian Revolution of November 7 changed all that overnight. At one blow, the revolution lifted the proletariat of Europe to its feet again. It stirred the hundreds of millions of colonial slaves who had never known political aspiration before, who had never dared to hope before. The Russian Revolution awakened them to the promise of a new life....

The Russian Revolution proved three things for all time.... First, it proved that the party and the leadership necessary for victory can be created by the proletariat, as they have been created by the Russian proletariat.

Second, the Russian Revolution proved—I am now repeating what I said before—that the system of nationalized industry and planned economy, introduced by a Soviet revolution, is superior, more progressive, more productive, than any device of capitalism, whether democratic or fascist.

And the third thing which we can say is demonstrated by the revolution, and proved now in the test of war, is that only one class is capable of solving the great social problems of our epoch. That class is the proletariat.

The Fourth International, with its program and its tactics anchored to these three propositions, has been proven correct by the whole test of events. Therefore, on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the revolution, we do not change our course. We see not only the Soviet regime's terrible weakness, which derives from bureaucratic mismanagement and control. We see also the strength and the power which derives from the revolutionary origin of the Soviet Union and its basic conquests....

The Russian Revolution is in the greatest peril today. We do not delude ourselves about that. We do not deceive ourselves or others with any false optimism about the danger confronting the Soviet Union. We see the situation as it really is. We know that the fate of the Soviet Union hangs in the balance, that it depends now, more than ever, on the world revolution of the proletariat and the colonial masses. But we have faith in the world revolution, and because of that, we retain our hope in the ultimate regeneration of the Soviet Union. We keep undimmed our faith that the world revolution will release humanity from this terrible vise of the war and open up a new stage of progress on the way to the communist future.

—James P. Cannon, "The Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Russian Revolution" (November 1942); reprinted in *Speeches for Socialism* (1969)

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)

Circulation Manager: C. Galarneau

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.

Publications Agreement No. 40050911 ISSN: 0229-5415
Fall 2007 Date of issue: September 2007

Trotskyist League/Spartacus Youth Club Meetings

90th Anniversary of the Russian Revolution!

The Struggle for World Socialist Revolution Today

<p>Toronto</p> <p>Wed., 7 November 7:00 p.m.</p> <p>Location to be announced</p>	<p>Vancouver</p> <p>Wed., 14 November 6:00 p.m.</p> <p>Student Union Building UBC, Room 213</p>
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Guantánamo: Imperialist Barbarism

Free Omar Khadr!

In July 2002, Canadian citizen Omar Khadr, aged 15, was captured in Afghanistan after an intense battle with U.S. forces. Fifty U.S. soldiers, backed up by aerial bombing, destroyed a compound near Khost, killing four of the five inhabitants and seriously injuring Khadr. After a U.S. soldier died, Khadr was accused of throwing a grenade that allegedly killed him. At the Bagram U.S. airbase, Khadr's torture began as soon as he regained consciousness. Denied pain medication, he was carried into interrogation rooms on a stretcher. Attack dogs were set on him and he was forced to clean floors on hand and knee, his wounds still wet.

Soon after, Khadr was shipped to the U.S. base in Guantánamo Bay. To be imprisoned in Guantánamo is, by definition, to be tortured. Khadr, like many of the other 355 prisoners there, has been physically brutalized and subjected to intense psychological torment and humiliation designed to break him. He was kept in isolation, in a freezing cell, constantly hungry, sometimes drugged and denied most human contact. For two years, he was denied legal representation. When one of his lawyers visited Guantánamo, he was harassed, searched and had his documents taken. The bourgeoisie likes to invoke the "rights of children" when this serves its interests. But Khadr—captured while still a child and now facing trumped-up charges for acts that in some cases date back to when he was just ten years old—has been accorded no such rights.

Just as they aided the U.S. in Maher Arar's deportation and torture, the Canadian imperialists have actively helped railroad Khadr. The previous Liberal government made a secret deal with the U.S. to have Canadian security agents interrogate Khadr in Guantánamo and pass the "results" to his U.S. jailers (*Toronto Star*, 6 June). The British and Australian governments—also loyal toadies of the Bush administration—secured the release of their own nationals even as they unleashed murderous racist "terror" scares against Muslims and others. But successive Canadian governments have neither requested Khadr's repatriation, nor so much as protested his torture and the flagrant violations of his rights.

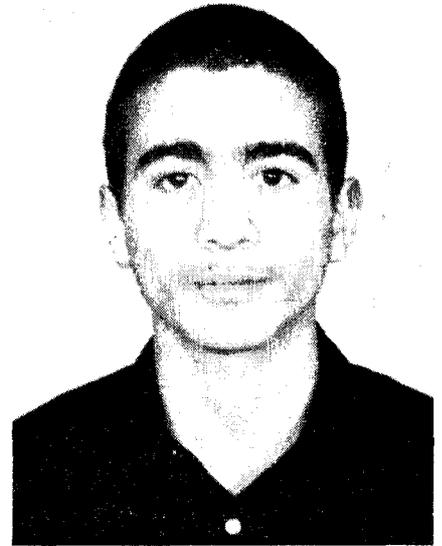
The recent show trial and guilty verdict against U.S. citizen Jose Padilla is an ominous portent of what Khadr could face. Padilla's ordeal epitomizes the Kafkaesque legal netherworld of the "war on terror." In May 2002 he was seized at Chicago's O'Hare airport and held as a "material witness." A month later he was declared an "enemy combatant." Charged with no crime, for three years and eight months Padilla was tortured by extreme sensory deprivation punctuated by blasts of harsh light and loud, pounding noise. He was held in a tiny cell, denied contact with family and access to an attorney.

After Padilla's lawyers successfully challenged his detention in a South Carolina federal court, the U.S. government concocted vague criminal

charges of involvement in a terrorist conspiracy to commit murder. Evidence that Padilla was broken by the torture his interrogators subjected him to was rejected and he was forced to stand trial. The original "dirty bomb" plot was dropped like yesterday's "weapons of mass destruction," not least because those who fingered Padilla had themselves been tortured and made no secret of that fact. The guilty verdict is simply the logical conclusion of the entire brutal and chilling frame-up process (see "Republicans, Democrats Step Up War on Our Rights," *Workers Vanguard* No. 897, 31 August).

Like Padilla, Omar Khadr was declared an "enemy combatant," to be locked up indefinitely. This spring, almost five years after his capture, he was hit with a grab-bag of frame-up charges. In a June 12 protest letter to Stephen Harper, Lawyers Against the War noted that "the charges of conspiracy to aid Al Qaida, aiding the enemy and murder by an 'unprivileged belligerent' were not crimes until the passage of the MCA [Military Commissions Act], more than four years after Khadr was taken prisoner." The Military Commission

(continued on page 14)



Cassese/Reuters

Omar Khadr: Imprisoned in Guantánamo hellhole since 2002, tortured, denied all rights.

Prepare Now for Emergency Protests!

On May 17, the U.S. Third Circuit Court of Appeals heard oral arguments in Mumia Abu-Jamal's case, and there could be a decision at any time.

If the Third Circuit Court of Appeals rules to uphold the death sentence or denies Mumia's appeals for a new trial or a new hearing, the PDC calls for protests the day after the decision.

**Mumia Abu-Jamal is an Innocent Man!
Free Mumia Now!
Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!**

Toronto

Across the street from the U.S. Consulate, 360 University Ave., between Dundas (St. Patrick station) and Queen (Osgoode station)
Rally at 6:00 p.m. if on a weekday, or at 1:00 p.m. if on a weekend

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Website: www.partisandefense.org

B.C.: Victory to CUPE, Woodworkers Strikes!

AUGUST 31—Nearly 6,000 Vancouver civic workers are into their sixth week on strike against take-back demands and union-busting maneuvers by the city bosses. Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) Local 1004, representing outside workers, began an all-out strike on July 20. It was soon followed by the inside workers of Local 15, library workers of Local 391 and North Vancouver workers of Local 389 (who have since returned to work with a new contract). The strikers are fighting for job security against anti-union “hiring flexibility” schemes as well as modest wage and benefit gains.

At the same time, some 7,000 coastal woodworkers in the United Steel Workers (USW) have been on strike for over a month against contracting out and other attacks by the forestry bosses. A key issue in this notoriously dangerous industry is safety and hours of work. Since 2004 the companies, backed by a government-imposed collective agreement, have forced workdays of 12-16 hours, when hours on the job and travel time are factored together. At least 65 B.C. forestry workers have been killed since 2005.

The capitalist media boasts of an economic boom in Western Canada, sometimes contrasting this to the massive loss of industrial jobs in Ontario and other eastern provinces. Soaring commodity prices and a pre-Olympic construction boom have lined the pockets of Alberta oil barons and B.C. construction tycoons. But workers drawn to jobs in the oil industry find themselves living in tent cities in Edmonton or paying a fortune in rent for a trailer in Fort McMurray. In B.C., corporate profits have gone up 76 percent since 2003, three-and-a-half times the rate of wage increases. And the mill and forestry towns of the coast and interior, once the core of the B.C. economy, have seen huge job losses. Since the 1980s, more than two thirds of all coastal forestry industry jobs have been axed, including 5,000 in the last three years.

In Vancouver, workers are struggling to keep up with soaring housing costs, while areas like the heavily Native Downtown Eastside remain in abject poverty. Striking CUPE members told *SC* salesmen that they are determined to hold out and win their strike. One picketer told the *Vancouver Sun* (24 July), “times are good in British Columbia right now. For us to ask for a little bit more is perfectly reasonable.” The Vancouver city administration has arrogantly refused to negotiate, even when the unions dropped some of their original demands.

The Local 391 library workers are striking for the first time in the union’s 77-year history. A central demand is for pay equity. As a union statement notes, “The library is a predominantly female workplace and, as a result, library workers have been underpaid for decades.” The disparity of wages between men and women is a reflection of the oppres-



cupe.bc.ca

Striking CUPE civic workers rally at Vancouver City Hall, August 15.

sion of women that is rooted in capitalist society. The whole labour movement must take up the fight for equal pay for equal work, and equal access to all job categories for women and minorities. In 1993, CUPE Local 391 was one of the unions that came out for a Partisan Defense Committee-initiated mobilization to stop a fascist provocation in Vancouver, giving a taste of how the power of organized labour can be mobilized to defend the oppressed.

City workers’ pickets have stopped several local businesses from undermining the strike by taking residential trash for fees. But garbage transfer stations in the suburbs, where CUPE locals have agreed to separate contracts, are open for business. Meanwhile, city managers are being allowed through the picket lines and are doing the jobs of striking workers. Combined with the impact of privatization of some services, this has weakened the strike.

What is needed is mass pickets that no one crosses as well as union solidarity actions—for example, to stop the use of suburban garbage depots to break the strike. The unions should be appealing to other workers in the Lower Mainland as well as the poor and unemployed to join the picket lines. But the B.C. Federation of Labour bureaucrats are meekly calling on the public to appeal to mayor Sullivan to negotiate with the city unions. As for the forestry strike, the USW tops’ main campaign is for a consumer boycott of lumber products from the struck companies. The working class has social power precisely because it can bring the capitalist profit system to a halt through collective action at the point of production. Looking to toothless consumer boycotts, playing by the bosses’ rigged laws, pleading for “fairness,” keeping picket lines porous and tame—this is a road to defeat.

The interests of the working class and the bosses backed

Down With Witchhunt Against Anti-Poverty Committee!

The following letter, addressed to B.C. attorney general Wally Oppal, was sent by the Partisan Defense Committee on June 22.

We protest the police crackdown against Anti-Poverty Committee members in response to their protests against the loss of low income housing in Vancouver and the 2010 Olympics. On May 22, three APC supporters were arrested and subsequently charged with mischief, breaking and entering and uttering threats for a protest at the Vancouver offices of premier Gordon Campbell. Outrageously, a condition of bail is to have no contact with other members of their organization, resulting in a seventeen-year-old woman protester being forced to move out of her home. The APC's mock "eviction" moved items around the offices of the premier as a way to protest the brutal evictions of the poor. A report by the Impact of the Olympics Community Coalition states that 800 rooms of low-income housing have been lost since June 2003. Homelessness and poverty, most evident in the heavily-Native Downtown Eastside, are the product of the capitalist system based on huge profits for the few and exploitation and misery for the many.

The May 22 arrests followed on the heels of the arrest of an APC organizer, David Cunningham, who was lured to a meeting by police impersonating a *24 Hours* reporter. His

May 19 arrest was staged to allow the cops to slap him with a peace bond on allegations that he uttered threats against the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics Organizing Committee (VANOC). This state vendetta targeting the APC is aimed at silencing protests against growing poverty and homelessness. Despicably, it has also led to the Downtown Eastside Residents' Association (DERA) being targeted and its funding cut. DERA has been fighting the grinding poverty and misery of this area for over thirty years. Cunningham has stated it is "clear that it's a political attack that we're waging on VANOC. Unlike the police, we're not a violent organization. We're guided by a nonviolent, civil-disobedience principle." The peace bond restrictions against Cunningham are intended to prevent him, and intimidate others, from protest activities.

The APC has been labeled as violent by both the police and Vancouver mayor Sam Sullivan. This violence-baiting is a pretext to intensify state repression targeting not only the APC but all left-wing activists, union militants and others who protest against poverty, racism and war. It follows years of brutal government attacks on jobs, union rights and social services. We condemn the attack on the APC and urge all leftists, the labour movement and defenders of democratic rights to join us in demanding: Drop all charges against APC protesters! Stop the witchhunt against APC! An injury to one is an injury to all!■

by the forces of the capitalist state (the government, courts and cops) are *counterposed and irreconcilable*. The unions provide a crucial first line of defense against capitalist austerities and attacks on jobs and working conditions. But the existing union leadership pushes dead-end reliance on the capitalist state, while looking to the pro-capitalist social democrats of the NDP as a political alternative.

It was the B.C. NDP governments of the 1990s that began the austerity onslaught that has been heightened under Gordon Campbell's provincial Liberal regime. While B.C. NDP leader Carole James has been silent on the CUPE strike, she *denounced* the province-wide teachers strike two years ago. Even as workers throughout B.C. rallied to the side of the teachers, who faced sweeping fines and government back-to-work orders, James railed that teachers "should follow the law.... People accept consequences when they don't follow the law" (*Vancouver Sun*, 18 October 2005).

Mirroring the politics of the union bureaucracy is the reformist Vancouver left group known as Fire This Time (FTT). A two-page spread on the CUPE strike in their press (*Fire This Time*, Vol. 4, Issue 8) provides a platform for the electoral ambitions of the social-democratic Coalition of Progressive Electors (COPE). In a fawning interview with former COPE city councilor Tim Louis, FTT asks, "What would you do if you were on city council—or Mayor of Vancouver—in this situation?" When COPE's Larry Campbell was mayor, he hired more cops and sent them to terrorize the Downtown Eastside. Campaigning for a more "progressive" capitalist administration furthers the deadly

illusion that the capitalist state can serve the interests of the working class and the oppressed.

Relying on labour's own power, forging a fighting leadership that won't bow to the bosses' state and isn't beholden to the capitalist system—this is the road to victory. The Trotskyist League fights for a revolutionary workers party that will unite labour and all of the oppressed in struggle. The only way to guarantee good living conditions, jobs for all and an end to grinding exploitation and oppression is by expropriating the capitalist class through socialist revolution.■

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Young Spartacus

I.S. Deals in Religious Opiate

Those unfamiliar with the misnamed International Socialists (I.S.) may have anticipated red flags and singing of the "Internationale" at Marxism 2007, the group's main annual event in Toronto. Instead, the organizers were baked in a green haze of environmentalism and Islamic reaction.

A comrade of the Trotskyist League and Spartacus Youth Club intervened sharply from the floor in the discussion period of their May 10 opening meeting, "Building Unity: Muslims and the Left." The spectacle was covered in a front-page article of the right-wing *National Post*, which used the I.S.'s abject political surrender to religion as an opportunity to sneer at the supposed death of communism.

The meeting featured Zafar Bangash, director of the Institute of Contemporary Islamic Thought (ICIT), a Toronto-based group that has long propagandized for Ayatollah Khomeini and the other theocratic rulers of the Islamic Republic of Iran, under whose rule tens of thousands of left-wing activists have been massacred and millions of women imprisoned under the stultifying *chador* (veil). The ICIT's *Crescent International* (16-29 February 2000) includes a report by Bangash on a "Conference on Imam Khomeini and the Islamic World Order" in Ottawa, where he says "The best tribute the Muslims can pay to the Imam is to follow in his footsteps." The I.S. introduced Bangash's speech at Marxism 2007 by showing a video of his campaign to open a mosque in the Ontario town of Newmarket, which was met with vile racist reaction by some local residents. "We need mosques; we need churches; we need synagogues," said one mosque spokesperson, flattered by the camera.

When our comrade asserted the hostility of Marxism to all religion and the necessity of the struggle for women's liberation, this proved too much for the I.S. Merely introducing our Trotskyist position hailing the Soviet Union's 1979 intervention into Afghanistan against CIA-backed Islamic reactionaries sent I.S. members into hysterics and failed attempts at censorship. Virulent anti-Sovietism has always been the hallmark of the I.S., who howled with the imperialists against the Red Army's intervention.

Trotskyists understand that the former Soviet Union was a bureaucratically degenerated *workers state*. While political rule had become concentrated in the hands of a bureaucracy whose nationalist outlook and program conciliated imperialism, collectivized property forms inherited from the 1917 revolution embodied enormous gains for workers, especially women. We were intransigent defenders of the Soviet Union.

The Red Army entered Afghanistan in 1979 at the repeated urging of the Peoples Democratic Party of Afghanistan, whose secular leftist regime had fought to seriously advance the rights of women and was under siege by Washington's Islamic insurgents. Soviet leader Gorbachev's 1988-89 pullout of the Red Army was an historic betrayal, which the I.S. hailed. Two years later, they cheered again as capitalist counterrevolution engulfed the Soviet Union. Thus the I.S. bear their own small share of responsibility for the post-Soviet world, where barbaric imperialist capitalism rides roughshod over the world, stirring up all-sided religious reaction.



ТОВ. Ленин ОЧИЩАЕТ
ЗЕМЛЮ ОТ НЕЧИСТИ.

1920 Soviet poster. Like Lenin, the SYC fights to sweep the world clean of priests, kings, capitalists.

no credit

We print below an unedited transcript of our speaker's intervention at the meeting.

I'd like to address my remarks to those leftists in the audience who are questioning whether Islam and Marxism are in fact compatible.

Now, as revolutionary Marxists, as a member of the Trotskyist League, we stand second to no one in the forthrightness of our opposition to the racist "war on terror." We oppose the racist scapegoating of Muslims at home and the draconian occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan abroad. But that does not detract whatsoever from us being, in the words of Lenin, "absolutely atheistic and positively hostile to all religion." That's a cardinal of Marxism.

Why? The goal of Marxists is to build a revolutionary party to make the working class conscious of its historic task of overthrowing capitalism and replacing it with socialism. And

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Professor Fired in Right-Wing Witchhunt Reinstate Ward Churchill!

On July 24, the Board of Regents of the University of Colorado (CU) voted eight to one to fire longtime Native American activist and tenured ethnic studies professor Ward Churchill. The ostensible reason was for supposed "research misconduct" regarding sources in some of his more than 20 books and 90 academic articles and essays. But as Churchill put it in a statement in late May in response to university president Hank Brown's recommendation to fire him: "CU's 'investigation' has all along been merely a pretext, transparently catering to the political and financial interests which dictate 'educational' policy at CU."

Hundreds of Churchill's supporters protested on the day of his dismissal, which was discussed not only behind closed doors but during summer vacation. Churchill has filed a lawsuit against the university for violating his free speech rights, demanding his reinstatement as well as monetary damages. We defend Churchill and support his demands despite our political differences with him.

Churchill has long been targeted because he is, as the 2006 "Report of the Investigative Committee" at CU put it, "one of the most widely read and influential writers in this country who deal with American Indian issues." In his scholarship, along with his activism in the American Indian Movement (AIM), he has exposed the centuries-long racist extermination of the indigenous population in the Americas, as well as the continued discrimination against and oppression of Native Americans today.

Churchill is also well known for his extensively documented and valuable studies of government repression against political dissidents. His *Agents of Repression: The FBI's Secret Wars Against the Black Panther Party and the American Indian Movement* and *The COINTELPRO Papers: Documents from the FBI's Secret Wars Against Dissent in the United States* (both written with Jim Vander Wall) detailed the bourgeois rulers' decades-long campaign against leftists and opponents of Native American and black oppression. AIM leader Leonard Peltier and former Black Panther Mumia Abu-Jamal remain in prison to this day, framed up on bogus charges for their political beliefs. Churchill has been active in fighting for both Mumia's and Peltier's freedom.

For years, bourgeois forces have been gunning for Churchill, from former Colorado governor Bill Owens to David Horowitz, a racist right-wing ideologue who in 2001 distributed an advertisement to campus papers alibiing slavery and spitting on the gains of black struggle. Bolstered by the reactionary climate created by the bourgeois rulers' "war on terror," Horowitz has led a crusade to get rid of leftist and liberal professors. His 2006 book, *The Professors: The 101 Most Dangerous Academics in America*, begins by pointing to Churchill as supposedly exemplifying how the "radical left has colonized" the campuses. Cynically claiming to stand for free speech, Horowitz has stated that it would be bad form to fire Churchill for his politics—the real problem, according to him, is that Churchill shouldn't have been hired in the first place!

The campaign against Churchill became red-hot after



AP
July 24: Ward Churchill supporters following University of Colorado Board of Regents meeting that fired him.

some students and faculty at upstate New York's Hamilton College protested his invitation to speak in February 2005. They denounced an essay he wrote in September 2001, "Some People Push Back": On the Justice of Roosting Chickens," an angry liberal response to the murderous sanctions against Iraq and other crimes of U.S. imperialism. In the essay, Churchill implied that Americans in general shared in the guilt for these crimes because of their supposed indifference to the suffering that U.S. rulers cause abroad. He argued that the attack on the World Trade Center was a counterstrike in a war between the First and Third Worlds, and referred to the "technocrats" in the World Trade Center as "little Eichmanns."

As Marxists, we find Churchill's interpretation of the attack on the World Trade Center—a criminal act that resulted in the deaths of thousands of ordinary people and a godsend to the imperialist rulers—a grotesque version of liberal "collective guilt." As we wrote in "Right-Wing Thought Police Assault Free Speech on Campus" (*Workers Vanguard* No. 842, 18 February 2005):

"Churchill's outlook divides the world into good peoples and bad peoples rather than into opposing classes. Those who carried out that attack embraced the same mentality as the racist rulers of America—identifying the working masses with their capitalist exploiters and oppressors. Unlike the World Trade Center, the Pentagon is the command and administrative center of the U.S. imperialist military, and as a military installation the possibility of getting hit comes with the territory. That recognition does not make the attack an 'anti-imperialist' act, nor does it change the fact that terrorism almost always gets innocent people—in this case, the passengers on the plane as well as the maintenance workers, janitors and secretaries at the Pentagon. Nevertheless, we vigorously oppose the persecution of Professor Churchill for his unpopular views. The witch-hunters, transparently, have seized on his World Trade Center

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Ward Churchill...

(continued from page 7)

statement in order to censor him, as payback for his long-time activism and exposure of the crimes of U.S. imperialism at home and abroad."

One of the allegations against Churchill by the CU administration is that he fabricated evidence that the U.S. Army deliberately spread smallpox among Native Americans at one location in 1837. In a *Wall Street Journal* (26 July) op-ed piece titled, "Why I Fired Professor Churchill," CU president Brown claimed that "Mr. Churchill rewrote history to fit his own theories." In fact, smallpox is widely recognized as playing an important role in devastating the indigenous population in the Americas. An article on "bioterrorism" by Dr. Mark Graber, a professor at the Iowa College of Medicine, in *Emergency Medicine* (January 2002) states:

"The first use of smallpox as a biological weapon, albeit inadvertently, occurred when Spanish conquerors led by Cortez introduced smallpox in 1520 during their assault on the Aztec capital city of Tenochtitlan in Mexico. In the years that followed, almost 90% of the population of the New World was killed by smallpox. The disease was used deliberately as a biological weapon during the French and Indian war in 1754 by the English, who distributed tainted blankets to Native Americans; the mortality reached 50% in many tribes. Smallpox was also used by the American government during its wars with Native Americans."

The administration's allegations against Churchill have the quality of disputing the timetables of the trains going to Auschwitz. As Churchill wrote in a May 2006 statement: "I have published some two dozen books, 70 book chapters and scores of articles containing a combined total of approximately 12,000 footnotes. I doubt that any even marginally prolific scholar's publications could withstand the type of scrutiny to which mine has been subjected." Even the University of Colorado's "Report of the Investigative Committee" admits: "We do not find academic misconduct with respect to his general claim that the U.S. Army deliberately spread smallpox to Mandan Indians at Fort Clark in 1837, using infected blankets. Early accounts of what was said by Indians involved in that situation and certain native oral traditions provide some basis for that interpretation."

The Spartacist League [sister organization of the Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste] and the Spartacus Youth Clubs demand the reinstatement of Churchill. The firing of Churchill clearly demonstrates the role of the campus administrations, which run the universities in the interests of the capitalist rulers in order to train the future layer of ideologues, technocrats and government officials to administer the capitalist system. We revolutionary Marxists call for free, quality education for all and to abolish the administrations—for student/worker/teacher control of the universities!

—Reprinted from the *Young Spartacus* pages of *Workers Vanguard* No. 896, 3 August

Religious Opiate...

(continued from page 6)

all religions and all religious organizations serve to mystify and obscure the class basis of oppression in capitalist society and the road forward for the proletariat to seize power through its assimilation of the principles of scientific socialism.

So that's what Lenin and Trotsky did in the Russian Revolution, and that's what we stand for today. And it's manifestly not what the misnamed International Socialist Tendency stands to do. Rather than build a genuine revolutionary party, they are a member of something in Britain called the "Respect Coalition" whose basis for unity

says nothing about socialism, nothing about class struggle, nothing about women's liberation or even something as basic as the right to abortion. Marxists [heckle from the chair] are for free abortion on demand [chair begins speaking uninterruptedly].

This is not an abstract question. There was a shooting war over this in Afghanistan [other heckles, chair's mic loudens] where the Red Army went in to free women from the walking prison that is the veil and to defend women who were wearing secular clothing [an NDP candidate stands up and begins his remarks; I.S.-dominated audience applauds him]. We said "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan! Extend the gains of the October Revolution!" ■

Spartacus Youth Club Events

Toronto

Vancouver

Meet the Marxists!

Wed. 12 September, 2:30 p.m.
Room 2101, Sidney Smith Building, 100 St. George
University of Toronto

Wed. 19 September, 6:00 p.m.
Room 213, Student Union Building
University of British Columbia

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

Alternate Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. starting Sept. 26
First Class Room 2101, Sidney Smith Building
100 St. George, U of T; other rooms to be announced.

Alternate Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m. starting Oct. 17
Room 213, Student Union Building
University of British Columbia

Vancouver SYC Video Showing

Mumia Abu-Jamal Is an Innocent Man — Free Him Now!
Tue. 25 September, 12 noon, Room 213, Student Union Building, UBC

For more information and readings, contact the SYC at:

Toronto: (416) 593-4138 or spartcan@on.aibn.com — Vancouver: (604) 687-0353 or trotskyst_vancouver@shawcable.com

“Reasonable Accommodation” and Racist Reaction in Quebec

The following letter is translated from the original French.

Montreal, August 4

Hello comrades!

Regarding the question of reasonable accommodations which you dealt with in the last issue of *SC* [“Quebec: Labour Must Fight Anti-Muslim Backlash!” No. 153, Summer 2007], I would like to add that this is an inescapable and inevitable consequence of small-nation nationalism. All nationalisms contain chauvinist and racist tendencies, but I think small nations like Quebec often feel they are threatened with extinction, and identity reactions like the one over the debate on reasonable accommodations must be viewed in this light. Quebec fears disappearing into the English-speaking North American whole, and in this context immigration can seem to be a threat to Québécois identity and values.

Of course, I don’t seek in any way to defend this type of reaction, which must be resolutely fought, but only to explain its origin. And I’m not saying either that Québécois nationalism is more racist than Anglo Canadian chauvinism, as some in English Canada have maintained. As you say so well, the workers movement must come to the defense of immigrants and ethnic minorities, in Quebec as elsewhere in the world, and it is necessary to explain to the workers that their true enemies are not Muslim, Sikh, Jewish, Hindu, etc., immigrants, but their own Québécois bosses and the others who exploit them.

It is the bourgeois media and politicians who have whipped up this hysteria, blowing small incidents like the tinted windows at the Outremont YMCA out of proportion. Personally, I don’t believe that all of the demands of religious groups should be accepted; it should be case by case. But this hysteria always was and is completely unjustifiable and dangerous. It’s necessary to avoid acting like the I.S., who blindly support every demand coming from religious minorities and abandon the fight for real secularism, but at the same time it’s necessary to vigorously oppose anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and every type of racism.

Communist greetings,
Hugo

Death on the Tracks

The following letter was first published in *Workers Vanguard* (No. 894, 8 June), newspaper of the *Spartacist League/U.S.*

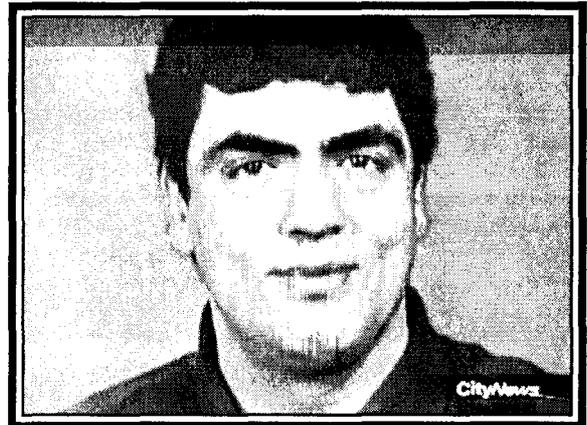
May 28, 2007

Dear *WV*,

I am writing in solidarity with the article in *WV* 892 “NY Transit: Murder by Speedup.” On April 23, one day before NYC Transit worker Daniel Boggs was killed on the tracks, Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) maintenance worker Anthony (Tony) Almeida died. He was crushed to death when scaffolding on a flatbed car caught on a cable dangling from a tunnel wall and careened on top of the subway work car Almeida was operating. An eleven-member maintenance crew had just finished its shift removing asbestos in an underground tunnel. This job is known as one of the most

dangerous at TTC. Two other workers were treated for severe but non-life threatening injuries as well.

Tony, 38 years old, had worked for TTC for the past five years. He was known by his co-workers as a model employee and leaves behind his wife and two children—an eight-year-old son and a five-year-old daughter. About 1,000 family, friends and co-workers gathered at his funeral to pay tribute. Hundreds of TTC workers walked out of the Hillcrest maintenance complex, lining both sides of the street for several city blocks as the funeral procession passed by.



CityNews.ca

TTC maintenance worker Anthony Almeida.

With vastly insufficient government funding and increased cutbacks, the number of TTC workers injured on the job has jumped significantly in the past four years. In February of 2006, a carbon-monoxide poisoning incident in a tunnel made eight workers and four firefighters seriously ill and served as one of the sparks for the wildcat strike in May of last year.

Like in NYC, Toronto Transit bosses are blaming the victims. Hypocritically talking about a “culture of safety,” the TTC plans to hire an external company to assist in a total overhaul of the TTC’s “safety programs.” But it is the bosses’ speedups and cuts that have created these unsafe conditions. At least two maintenance crews have refused to work since Almeida’s death, citing safety issues.

Grotesquely, one of the companies expected to bid on the safety contract is DuPont, the number one producer of toxic dioxins in the U.S. To cover its crimes, it has a division that specializes in “safety.” DuPont’s program blames the worker for on-the-job hazards and its goal of zero accidents encourages a system of non-reporting (i.e., covering up). The United Steel Workers (USW)—which represents 1,800 workers at six DuPont facilities—has protested unsafe conditions and brought to light DuPont’s failure to report industrial accidents. In contrast, the USW research has shown that multiple root causes related to hazards and unsafe conditions, not unsafe behavior by workers, cause accidents.

It is only through the mobilization of union power that safety can be enforced on the job. Local 113 of the Amalgamated Transit Union, representing over 8,000 transit workers in Toronto, gave a taste of their social power when they defied their contract and walked out on strike last year. This is why labour needs a leadership based on class struggle, not the sellouts who work with the bosses and capitalist politicians to sow class peace.

Yours in Struggle,
A Toronto transit worker

Chinese Counterrevolutionary Feted by Lutte Ouvrière

The following article is reprinted from *Workers Vanguard No. 896* (3 August 2007), newspaper of the *Spartacist League/U.S.*

PARIS—At its annual Fête in late May, the reformist Lutte Ouvrière (LO) invited one Cai Chongguo to speak about his latest book, *Chine: l'Envers de la Puissance* (China: The Dark Side of Power) and to share at this “socialist” gathering his account of the situation in China. Cai is the representative in France for the Hong Kong-based

France

journal *China Labour Bulletin* (CLB—now available only on the Internet). Under a guise of defending workers’ rights and fighting for “independent” trade unions, the CLB is an imperialist-backed outfit that seeks to cynically manipulate the discontent and legitimate grievances of the Chinese working class to foster capitalist counter-revolution in China, the largest and most powerful of the remaining deformed workers states.

The Ligue Trotskyiste de France, section of the International Communist League, denounced LO’s invitation to Cai as well as its history of support to similar counterrevolutionary forces during the years of Cold War II against the former Soviet Union. Speaking from the floor of the meeting for Cai, our comrades exposed him as an agent of imperialism and put forward our Trotskyist program: for the unconditional military defense of China against imperialism and capitalist counter-revolution and for proletarian political revolution to oust the Beijing Stalinist bureaucracy and establish an internationalist proletarian regime based on workers and peasants soviets (councils). This perspective requires the leadership of a Leninist-Trotskyist party, standing at the head of the toiling masses and directing the struggles of the workers toward political power. Along that road, it is necessary to politically combat those who would link Chinese workers struggles to the forces of “democratic” capitalist counter-revolution.

The CLB and its founder, Han Dongfang, have a direct relationship with the U.S. and European imperialists. Han has been a regular speaker for years on Washington-based Radio Free Asia (RFA), to which the CLB Web site offers a direct link. Spelling out the CLB’s pro-imperialist credentials, one LTF comrade noted that “the CLB works in collaboration with the American Congress and Radio Free Asia, the CIA’s radio station in Asia, under the responsibility of Condoleezza Rice among others” who sit on the RFA’s Broadcasting Board of Governors. In Europe, Cai Chongguo offers himself up as a China “specialist” to the imperialists. In his introductory remarks, Cai baldly admitted:



Le Bolchévik

Cai Chongguo (left) of imperialist-backed *China Labour Bulletin* at podium of Lutte Ouvrière Fête in May.

“I speak three to four times each week or three or four times a day...for the BBC, Radio Free Asia, French International Radio and German International Radio, and of course sometimes on the Chinese section of the Voice of America.”

Two weeks prior to the LO Fête, Cai was scheduled to speak in Berlin on “workplace rights” in China at the invitation of the European Union. But the meeting was cancelled due to the Chinese government’s protest. In December, Cai had been the guest of Nicolas Sarkozy—former interior minister and now president of France—who received Cai and other “China specialists” at his then-police headquarters at Place Beauvau, where they discussed French imperialism’s posture toward China over trade, “human rights” and independence for Taiwan, the bastion of the offshore Chinese bourgeoisie. (A 16 December 2006 posting on Cai’s blog “Journal d’un Chinois” describes his “breakfast with Sarkozy.”) Against counterrevolutionary calls for Taiwan’s independence or for capitalist reunification with the mainland, one LTF speaker put forward the ICL’s program for China’s “revolutionary reunification with Taiwan—that is, a socialist revolution in Taiwan to overthrow the bourgeoisie and a political revolution on the mainland.”

Cheerleaders for Counterrevolution

The 1949 Chinese Revolution ended the rule of the rapacious capitalists and landlords and liberated the most populous nation on earth from imperialist subjugation. Resulting from the military victory of peasant-guerrilla forces led by

the Stalinist Chinese Communist Party (CCP), the 1949 Revolution was bureaucratically deformed from its inception, requiring a subsequent political revolution to remove the nationalist, bureaucratic regime.

In his new book, the virulently anti-Communist Cai lauds the “autonomy” of villages in pre-revolutionary China! Denouncing this reactionary drivel, one of the LTF speakers stated that before 1949 “the peasants had nothing to eat and sold their children” and that the Chinese Revolution “was a great advance for the peasants and the working class in China.” Our comrade continued, “Today, there is a bureaucracy in power, as in 1949, with its own contradictions. It is absolutely necessary to defend China against the imperialists and counterrevolutionaries inside the country,” adding that it is the working class that must put in place “its own power based on soviets.”

Only the LTF protested Cai’s appearance at the LO Fête. Just as we unflinchingly defend China against capitalist counterrevolution, we also unconditionally defend the other remaining deformed workers states—Cuba, Vietnam and North Korea. The return of imperialist subjugation to China, and with it the dismantling of the gains of the 1949 Revolution, would be catastrophic for the masses of that country. Internationally, workers and the oppressed would be under renewed attack from bourgeois rulers reveling in “death of communism” triumphalism, as has happened following the collapse of the Soviet Union.

At the same time, we Trotskyists are very clear on the crimes of the Stalinist bureaucracy toward the Chinese working class. The CCP’s program of “peaceful coexistence” with imperialism, flowing from the party’s historic allegiance to the dogma of “socialism in one country” represents a threat to the very survival of the Chinese deformed workers state. The Stalinist bureaucracy is a parasitic caste that simultaneously is dependent on the collectivized property forms of the workers state and acts as the transmitting mechanism for the pressures of imperialism in undermining the workers state.

LO, like other reformist parties that continue, albeit rarely, to lay claim to Trotskyism, shows with its sponsorship of counterrevolutionary “dissidents” like Cai that the prospect they hold out for the Chinese working class is a return to an imperialist stranglehold over China. One of the LTF speakers detailed how Cai is courted by not only the imperialists but also their lackeys in the trade-union bureaucracy in France and internationally: “The fact that the CLB is supported by the FO [Force Ouvrière union federation] bureaucrats or those from the CFDT [Confédération Française Démocratique du Travail] or the ‘AFL-CIA’ in the United States only underlines the treason of the reformist leadership of these trade unions.” Pointing to our opposition to Lech Walesa’s Polish Solidarność, the CIA- and Vatican-backed “union” that spearheaded capitalist counterrevolution in East Europe, the comrade remarked, “*Le Monde*’s comparing of Han Dongfang to Lech Walesa was correct.” Our speaker continued:

“It’s not surprising that Lutte Ouvrière invites Cai to their Fête. In the 1980s LO supported bids for counterrevolution, be it by Solidarność or through LO’s support to capitalist reunification in Germany and its opposition to the Red Army in Afghanistan. Against that, we Trotskyists called to fight against counterrevolution in Poland and in East Germany.”

It was in the name of “free trade unions” that CIA money

was used to buy officials and hire goons to split, smash and subdue combative unions in West Europe at the onset of the anti-Soviet Cold War, as described in the 1981 Spartacist pamphlet, *Solidarność: Polish Company Union for CIA and Bankers*. The 1947-48 split in the Communist-led CGT federation in France, out of which Force Ouvrière was created, was financed by the CIA, with the consent and assistance of the virulently anti-Communist French social democracy.

As in the former Soviet Union and East Europe, in China the call for “free trade unions” emanating from Radio Free Asia, the CLB and their “leftist” followers is a call to mobilize workers, against their historic interests, for “democratic” counterrevolution. As one LTF speaker pointed out, in regard to the Stalinist-ruled workers states, we have fought historically for “trade unions independent of the bureaucracy that are based on the principle of defending the workers state and which struggle to defend the collectivized economy against privatizations.” This has nothing in common with the CLB’s drive for “democratic free trade unions,” a key component of Cai’s presentation.

LO: Betraying Workers’ Interests in China and at Home

Lutte Ouvrière has always absurdly characterized the 1949 Chinese Revolution as a bourgeois revolution and China as a bourgeois state. But as LO’s *Exposés du Cercle Léon Trotsky* (27 January 2006) documents, since 1998 LO has also maintained publicly that this supposedly bourgeois state did indeed “carry out the collectivization of the land,” introduce “considerable progress” in employment, housing, health and education, and that “industry developed at an average rate of 9 percent a year.” LO also admits that there is no comparison between this level of progress and the situation in such semicolonial countries as India.

LO tries to explain the positive impact of the Chinese Revolution as resulting from the policy of étatism (statism)—i.e., state direction of the economy. This notion makes no distinction between a bourgeois state and a workers state, presenting the state as fundamentally neutral: as an administrative apparatus resting above classes rather than the central tool for the ruling class to maintain its domination.

Under the strong pressure of anti-communist bourgeois public opinion, LO’s anti-Marxist “theoretical” gobbledygook serves the purpose of siding with the imperialist bourgeoisies against the Chinese deformed workers state. In the context of France, the revisionist portrayal of the state as a “neutral” body is reflected in LO’s frequent appeals to the bourgeois state to act in the interests of the French working class. This was clearly seen in LO’s program for the recent presidential elections and its call on the working class to vote for the anti-working-class popular front headed by Ségolène Royal in the second round (see *Le Bolchéviek* No. 180, June 2007).

We assert that defense of the interests of the workers in France and other capitalist countries is inseparable from defense of the remaining workers states. In the critical battles to come that will determine the fate of the People’s Republic of China, the Trotskyists will battle against the Lech Walesas of today and their “leftist” pimps, as we did in the former Soviet Union and East Europe. This is a crucial part of the ICL’s struggle to reforge the Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution. ■

Workers Fight Neo-Apartheid Misery

South Africa: Bitter End to Defiant Strike

The following article is reprinted from Workers Vanguard No. 895 (6 July), newspaper of the Spartacist League/U.S.

For four weeks, at least 700,000 teachers, hospital workers and other public service workers struck against the South African government headed by the African National Congress (ANC). A coalition of 17 unions participated in the strike. The largest of the unions are affiliated with the mainly black Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), but there were also independent unions, including some that had never called strikes before, thereby uniting workers across racial lines. The strike, the largest since the end of the apartheid government in 1994, was widely popular, particularly among the country's impoverished masses. The strikers shut down most of the schools and hospitals in the country and braved police attacks and arrests as well as a government ultimatum to return to work.

Many workers are bitter at the settlement. Although the unions had originally asked for a 12 percent wage increase, the final settlement was only 7.5 percent, not much more than the rate of inflation. One analyst noted that it could take until after 2010 for teachers to recoup the money they lost during the strike. In protest, the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU), while returning to work, refused to sign the agreement.

The strike highlighted that despite the change in the political and judicial superstructure since apartheid rule, South Africa today is a neo-apartheid capitalist state: the black masses live in Third World poverty while most whites enjoy First World conditions. The white capitalists, and their senior partners in the City of London and on Wall Street, now along with a small layer of black elite, live off the exploitation of the working class. Since 1994, the bourgeois state has been run by the Tripartite Alliance consisting of the ANC, COSATU and the South African Communist Party (SACP). Behind the failure to unleash the forces necessary to achieve victory in the strike—private sector mining, industrial and commercial unions—was the fact that the reformist union tops did not want to deal a decisive blow against the government of which they are a part.

The economy has been booming, but this has done little to improve the situation of the masses of working people. Unemployment is at least 40 percent. More than a third of all women between the ages of 25 and 29 are HIV-positive. This reflects not only the grinding poverty of the majority of the populace but also the deliberate neglect of AIDS treatment by the Thabo Mbeki regime. Commenting on the



Soobramoney/News24

June 14: Striking public service workers march in Durban.

growing gulf between rich and poor, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, once closely associated with the ANC, was compelled to observe, "I'm really very surprised by the remarkable patience of people," adding that it was hard "to explain why they don't say to hell with Tutu, [Nelson] Mandela and the rest and go on the rampage" (*Financial Times*, 28 June).

Strikers, most of whom lack savings, were left to rely on their own resources or in many cases were forced to turn to loan sharks to survive. While there were virtually no union strike funds, the COSATU bureaucrats have invested millions of rands in the Johannesburg stock exchange in their futile schemes to achieve union influence over the boards of directors of capitalist concerns. Courageous picketers defied government strikebreaking in order to shut down schools and hospitals. Several thousand nurses and other health workers were sacked on the grounds that they were violating laws prohibiting workers who did essential services from striking. The settlement reinstates them to their jobs, but *with a final warning* attached to their work record. The unions must demand: No reprisals against the strikers!

The police and army were mobilized on a large scale to patrol hospitals and schools. Army medics were used to do the jobs of strikers. Police assaulted pickets, beating strikers and hurling stun grenades; military helicopters were employed. In KwaZulu-Natal, SADTU members were shot. Suraya Jawoodeen, secretary of the National Education Health and Allied Workers Union in Western Cape province, asserted that the cops "have used more violence against strikers than during apartheid" (*Mail & Guardian online*, 15 June).

Just as in the past, when workers around the world sup-

ported the struggles of the oppressed in South Africa against apartheid, the present battle got the attention and support of unions internationally, including Transport Workers Union Local 100 in New York City, the Service Employees International Union in the U.S., UNISON in Britain, the Canadian Union of Public Employees and the Nigeria Labour Congress.

The strike demonstrated again the Marxist truth that the core of the state—the cops, the courts, prisons and army—is an armed apparatus that the ruling class uses to maintain power. However, the COSATU bureaucrats as well as the SACP treacherously treat the cops as a bona fide component of the workers movement. As the strike was going on and the police were brutalizing pickets, COSATU general secretary Zwelinzima Vavi addressed a conference of the cop “union,” the Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union (POPCRU), claiming outrageously that “we have to pay tribute to POPCRU as a mainstay of the public-service unions.” POPCRU was a member of the public-service union coalition. But POPCRU did not go on strike. Rather, it assisted the government in its attempts to *break the strike*. This underscores that the police—black as well as white—are agents of organized ruling-class violence against the working class and all the oppressed. Our comrades of Spartacist South Africa forthrightly demand: *Police, security and prison guards—out of the unions!*

One reason that the strike ended as it did was because the public workers were left to strike on their own. The powerful National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) and the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA)—both of which are part of COSATU—as well as chemical and petroleum workers continued to work, even though all these unions were already threatening strikes against companies with whom they have contracts. A watershed in the strike occurred on June 13, when there was supposed to be a general strike by COSATU unions in solidarity with the public service unions. However, NUMSA, the NUM and several other unions refused to strike, using cowardly pretexts such as that they hadn’t given the required seven-day strike notice.

As this case proved, the COSATU bureaucrats were all for “solidarity”—as long as it was acceptable to the bourgeoisie and its courts! The false idea that one has to observe the rules of the bosses and their state is contradicted by the experience of many South African workers, who on numerous occasions defied the edicts of the apartheid state. During the current battle as well, thousands of health workers regarded as providing “essential services” went on strike, knowing full well that they could be fired for doing so.

Had NUMSA, the NUM and other unions that represent workers in strategic sectors of the economy struck alongside the public workers, it would have brought the country to a grinding halt. It also would have created a political crisis for the ruling Tripartite Alliance. But this is exactly what the SACP/COSATU tops do not want.

At the same time that COSATU organizes millions of workers, its leadership forms an integral component of the same government that is carrying out attacks on its members. Blade Nzimande, general secretary of the SACP, noted, “Some of our international allies have asked us as to how come a government led by an allied formation faces such a massive public service strike led by an allied trade union federation.” While affirming the SACP’s support for the public workers strike, Nzimande was quick to assure his ANC allies that “this does not mean that the SACP supports

any or every strike by virtue of being a workers’ strike” (*Umsebenzi Online*, 20 June).

This is certainly true. One notable example took place in 1990, in the period when the “power-sharing” deal that ended apartheid was being worked out between the Randlords, the ANC and the Western imperialists. Then-SACP leader Joe Slovo and SACPer Moses Mayekiso were flown into East London to quash a powerful workers occupation at the Mercedes-Benz plant. The SACP wanted to make crystal clear that it would guarantee the sanctity of private property in the face of any proletarian challenge.

The SACP is a reformist workers party. In order to placate its working-class base, the SACP has been forced to become more critical of Mbeki. At the same time, the SACP tops are ultimately loyal to the bourgeois order. In order to justify its participation in the government, the SACP has to pretend that the Tripartite Alliance is something other than what it is: a *bourgeois government*. The SACP claims that “the post-1994 democratic state is not inherently capitalist, it is in fact, a sharply class-contested reality” and that the workers can somehow achieve “hegemony” or control over that state. This is designed to obscure the basic Marxist truth that modern society is divided into two main classes—the capitalist exploiters and the exploited proletariat—whose interests are irreconcilable. In allying themselves to the bourgeois-nationalist ANC, the SACP and the COSATU tops perform an invaluable service for the capitalist rulers in keeping the country’s powerful working class tied to the capitalist order. And as participants in the governing Tripartite Alliance, the SACP and COSATU bear responsibility for the anti-working-class austerity implemented by the government.

Within the ranks of the SACP there is increasing restlessness with the party’s servile subordination to the ANC. A March meeting of the party’s Gauteng Provincial Council recommended a resolution for the SACP’s upcoming 12th national congress that asserted: “Therefore, the Council overwhelmingly resolved that the SACP *must contest elections from 2009 at all levels by fielding its own candidates.... We cannot* continue outsourcing this important function of the Communist Party” (emphasis in original). According to the South African news Web site www.iol.co.za (3 June), a similar resolution was passed by the Port Elizabeth district of the SACP. However, although it says that SACP candidates should run in their own name rather than on the ANC slate, the Gauteng resolution asserts that the “revolutionary alliance led by the ANC” is “an historic and important alliance that should be preserved.”

Genuine working-class independence requires not only organizational independence from capitalist parties like the

(continued on page 20)

Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste

Toronto:Box 7198, Station A
Toronto, ON M5W 1X8
(416) 593-4138
spartcan@on.aibn.com

Vancouver:Box 2717, Main P.O.
Vancouver, BC V6B 3X2
(604) 687-0353
trotskyist_vancouver@shawcable.com

ICL Website:www.icl-fi.org

Free Omar Khadr!...

(continued from page 3)

tribunals were created by the U.S. government to circumvent Geneva Convention rules (e.g., against “coerced testimony,” or torture). On June 4 this tribunal threw out the case against Khadr for lack of jurisdiction. The Pentagon has appealed and the government has declared that even if Khadr is found not guilty it may continue to hold him.

Torture, frame-ups, secret trials, indefinite detention: the entire “war on terror” apparatus is meant to create a climate of fear and intimidation, to accustom the population to ever more restrictions on our democratic rights. It is a pretext to expand the repressive apparatus of the bourgeois state. As a July 2003 *amici curiae* (friends of the court) brief filed by the Spartacist League/U.S. and Partisan Defense Committee on behalf of Jose Padilla stated:

“The ‘war against terrorism’ is a fiction, a political construct, not a military reality. It is a political crusade conducted in the name of ridding society of a perceived evil.... The Executive’s declaration that its ‘war against terrorism’ forfeits constitutional protections for designated individuals echoes the regimes of shahs and colonels and presidents ‘for life’ from the Near East to Africa to Latin America, to justify the mass imprisonment and unmarked graves of political dissidents. Like them, the Executive is proclaiming the *right to disappear* citizens of its choosing.”

Labour Must Mobilize Against “Anti-Terror” Repression

The Canadian government, too, is arrogating to itself greater powers of domestic repression. The provisions of the Anti-Terrorism Act, introduced in 2001, are so sweeping as to encompass almost anyone whose political views run afoul of the ruling class. An all-Canadian “no fly” list, thought to include up to 2,000 names, was launched in June. After the courts threw out as unconstitutional the cases against the five Muslim men held under the repressive “security certificates,” the government has vowed to introduce a new law that will again allow indefinite detention without charge.

Ottawa’s many anti-terror frame-ups have resulted in not one conviction. In 2003, “Project Thread,” in which 24 young men of mostly Pakistani origin were accused of the

most outrageous and fanciful acts, was exposed as an utter racist fraud. Last year, a vicious sting operation resulted in 18 Muslim men and youth being charged in a “terror” plot. Even the cops’ own *agent provocateur* has said some of those he helped to entrap are innocent, and many of the charges have already been thrown out.

Bourgeois politicians and the press have demonized the Khadr’s as an “Al-Qaeda Family” or “Canada’s first family of terrorism,” and call to revoke their citizenship because of their relationship to Osama Bin Laden. Yet in the 1980s, the imperialist rulers hailed the likes of Omar Khadr’s father Ahmed as “freedom fighters” because they enlisted with the CIA-backed *mujahedin* cutthroats to fight the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. This is where Ahmed Khadr met Bin Laden. During its decade-long proxy war against the Red Army in Afghanistan, American imperialism embraced Bin Laden and his fellow Islamic holy warriors. In sharp opposition, Marxists stood with the Soviet Union and Afghanistan’s modernizing secular government against the U.S.-backed reactionaries. It was only after they had served their purpose in the imperialist crusade against the USSR that these one-time CIA assets were denounced as terrorists.

The September 11 attacks gave the imperialist rulers a golden opportunity to increase their repressive powers. The vulnerable Muslim minorities in the U.S., Canada and elsewhere are the immediate targets of the “war on terror,” but a more fundamental purpose is to intimidate and constrain the multiracial working class from social struggle. The kind of conspiracy charges today being wielded by the U.S. government have long been used against the left and labour movement. On both sides of the border, the rulers have exploited the repressive post-September 11 climate to directly target trade unionists, leftist university professors, foreign leftists and others. In Canada, for example, draconian new union-busting regulations now require port workers to get CSIS clearance as well as criminal record and immigration status checks.

From the start of the “war on terror,” we have stressed that what the bourgeoisie can get away with depends largely on the level of social struggle. The capitalists are plenty dangerous, but they rely on the labour of the working class for their profits. Mobilized independently of the exploiters, the proletariat, millions-strong, is the one force with both the material interest and social power to throw back this “war on terror,” defend its own interests and those of all the oppressed, and challenge capitalist rule.

One of Omar Khadr’s U.S. attorneys said: “Nothing we’ve seen comes close to the experience of Guantanamo. Not just the treatment of detainees but the brute force of state power” (rollingstone.com, 10 August). Our defense of Khadr and all those targeted by this vicious political hysteria is rooted in the Marxist understanding that the capitalist state cannot be reformed to serve the interests of the working class and oppressed. This state, whatever its “democratic” trappings, is not “our state” but that of the class enemy, which needs to be smashed by proletarian revolution.

Mobilizing workers against the state’s anti-terror hysteria is central to our struggle to build a multiethnic revolutionary party. Such a party must be a real tribune of the people, fighting every manifestation of capitalist violence and barbarism, and exposing the workings of capitalism for all to see. *Freedom for Omar Khadr! Down with the racist “war on terror”!* ■

Trotskyist League/Spartacus Youth Club Forum

Immigrants and Minorities: Key to Working-Class Struggle

Includes an update on the fight to free Mumia Abu-Jamal

Toronto: Saturday 22 September, 7:00 p.m.
Trinity-St. Paul’s Centre
427 Bloor St. W.

Vancouver: Saturday 6 October, 1:30 p.m.
WISE Hall
1882 Adanac St.

For more information, contact the TL/SYC
Toronto: (416) 593-4138, email: spartacan@on.aibn.com
Vancouver: (604) 687-0353
email: trotskyist_vancouver@shawcable.com

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under Washington's suzerainty. Two million people have fled the country while another two million have been forced to leave their homes for other regions of Iraq. A recently released study by Oxfam and other aid organizations reported that some eight million Iraqis—nearly a third of the population—need immediate emergency aid, 70 percent are without adequate water supplies and 28 percent of children are malnourished.

In Afghanistan, the occupation has produced a seemingly endless string of atrocities. In early August alone, a U.S. bombing campaign in the western part of the country killed 108 civilians, according to local elders. Canadian troops have killed unarmed civilians and handed over prisoners to the notoriously corrupt Afghan regime. The Harper government tried to cover up revelations that many of these prisoners have been tortured and some executed. As proletarian internationalist opponents of U.S. imperialism and its Canadian junior partner, the Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste says: *U.S., Canadian, all NATO troops out of Afghanistan now! Down with the neocolonial occupation of Iraq!*

Canadian Imperialism and the Afghan Occupation

Successive Canadian governments, first under the Liberals and now the Tories, have seized the opportunity of the Afghanistan intervention to push through unprecedented increases in military spending. In 2005, the Liberals—backed by the NDP—promised a nearly \$13 billion boost in military spending over five years. Last year, the Harper Tories went one better, announcing a \$15 billion allocation for military equipment. By 2010, the annual military budget is projected to hit \$20 billion, even as desperately needed social programs continue to be savaged by sweeping cut-backs. Government and army spokesmen, joined by the kept bourgeois media, have engaged in an orgy of patriotic fervour aimed at rallying support for the troops in Afghanistan—and, more broadly, at convincing working people that they have common “national interests” with their exploiters, the Canadian capitalist ruling class and its government in Ottawa.

Even as it sent the army to assist the U.S. in Afghanistan, the former Liberal regime elected to stay out of the Iraq war in the face of massive domestic opposition. This was especially strong in Quebec, where antiwar protests drew up to a quarter million people in the winter of 2002-03. Popular opposition to Canadian militarism has always been high among the Québécois, many of whom rightly view the Canadian army as a tool of oppression both abroad and at home. In October 1970, the federal government sent thousands of troops to occupy Montreal under the War Measures Act, aiming to suppress the national and social discontent then sweeping the province. During the 1995 Quebec referendum on sovereignty, the army staged mysterious military maneuvers on Quebec highways, while Ottawa secretly prepared for a military intervention in the event of a Yes vote.

The Liberal government gave covert support to the Iraq invasion in various ways, but it feared that open support for the war would bring electoral disaster in Quebec and generate a new upsurge of sentiment for Quebec independence. While the Chrétien and Martin regimes were able to ride out that storm, the Tory government now faces particularly strong opposition in Quebec to the Afghanistan intervention.



Canapress

Canadian army occupies Montreal under the War Measures Act in October 1970. Hundreds of Québécois trade unionists and left nationalists were rounded up, held incommunicado without charge.

According to a recent *Journal de Montréal* opinion poll, 70 percent of Québécois oppose the troop deployments, while nearly two thirds believe Canada is only in Afghanistan to placate the Bush regime.

This opposition threatens to increase yet further as upwards of 2,000 troops from the Quebec-based Royal 22nd Regiment (the Van Doos) begin their rotation into Afghanistan. On the eve of the deployment this summer, the army staged a provocative military parade through Quebec City, drawing a counterdemonstration by antiwar protesters. One demonstrator, Montreal academic Francis Dupuis-Déri, whose sister is a captain in the Van Doos, wrote a “Letter to My Sister Who Is Leaving for Afghanistan” that featured prominently in several Quebec newspapers:

“They have told you that you are leaving to help consolidate peace (by making war?) and protect the Afghan people (by occupying and bombing their territory?) against foreign combatants (but you, where do you come from?)....

“The politicians who today govern the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, who the Canadian army is protecting against their enemies, are in their great majority militia chiefs who have perpetrated war crimes: mass rapes of women, torture and execution of combatants and civilians.”

—*Le Soleil* [Quebec City], 20 June

In their first few weeks in Afghanistan, three Québécois soldiers were killed near Kandahar. Two Radio Canada journalists embedded with the army were injured by a roadside bomb, one seriously. In response, Harper and his new defense minister Peter MacKay vowed to “stay the course,” while leaders of the parliamentary opposition parties pledged to continue to “support our troops” while lobbying for their (eventual) withdrawal.

Gilles Duceppe of the sovereignist Bloc Québécois denounced as “irresponsible” NDP leader Jack Layton’s call for an immediate pullout. He continued: “I don’t want to act like those who exploit the emotions of the Québécois, like Jack Layton.... We have to be responsible and meet our international obligations” (*Le Devoir* [Montreal], 24 August). As responsible bourgeois politicians—would-be rulers of an eventual independent capitalist Quebec—the Bloc leaders have taken a stand over Afghanistan that is to the right of

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most of the Quebec population.

Seeking to exploit this, Layton's NDP is making a new push for support in Quebec. As Anglo-chauvinist opponents of Quebec's democratic right to self-determination—i.e., to independence—the NDP has never been a serious force in Quebec, and Layton's latest maneuvers are highly unlikely to change this. In any event, the NDP's new "troops out" call—adopted after years of support for the occupation and for ever-higher military budgets—in no way amounts to opposition to Canadian militarism. What the New Democrats want is stepped-up assistance to "reconstruction and development" in Afghanistan, including by training the regime's police force.

Layton says Canada should be fighting the "right battles," as "in the Korean War and in dozens of UN-sanctioned peacekeeping missions" (ndp.ca, 12 March). From the murderous war on North Korea in the early 1950s to the Canadian troops who tortured and murdered black youth in Somalia in the early 1990s, Canadian "peacekeeping" under United Nations auspices is nothing but the brutal enforcement of the imperialist order. The NDP social democrats are a "left" prop for this barbaric system, working to tie the working class to the interests of the Canadian capitalist rulers.

Iraq: Debacle for U.S. Imperialism

For all the Canadian government's difficulties over Afghanistan, these pale in comparison to the Bush regime's crisis over Iraq. When the bipartisan Iraq Study Group recommended late last year that the U.S. start withdrawing troops, it was a signal that important sections of the American bourgeoisie wanted to end what had become a debacle for U.S. imperialism. Bush essentially asked for one last chance to try to turn the situation around through a troop "surge." Republican politicians stood firmly behind him through the spring, while Democrats in Congress adopted a posture of loyal opposition, passing toothless resolutions for withdrawal while backing the Commander-in-Chief when it counted by voting to finance the occupation.

By summer, predominant sections of the U.S. ruling class had had enough. American military forces had failed in their attempt to assert control over Baghdad, and intercommunal slaughter continued unabated. Key Republican senators and longtime Bush allies broke with the president and began pushing for a draw down of forces. In a major editorial statement, the *New York Times* (8 July), an authoritative mouthpiece of the U.S. capitalist class, declared in no uncertain terms that it was time "to organize an orderly exit."

Opinion polls—and last year's Congressional elections—gave unambiguous signs that the American populace in its majority wants the U.S. to get out of Iraq. This sentiment has redounded to the benefit of the Democratic Party, in part due to the services of the reformist left, which built an "anti-war movement" predicated on "Anybody but Bush" lesser evilism. But contrary to bourgeois-democratic myth, the policies of U.S. imperialism are determined not by the desires of the electorate but by the interests of the capitalist ruling class, as overseen by the Democratic and Republican parties.

For the rulers of U.S. imperialism, who have destroyed what was once one of the relatively more advanced countries of the Near East, Iraq has become a quagmire threatening their ability to project American military power around the globe. As the *New York Times* editorial put it: "The war is sapping the strength of the nation's alliances and its military forces." Pentagon officials are sounding the alarm about the overstretched military and declining enlistment. As for "the nation's alliances," with Saudi Arabia reportedly financing the Sunni Muslim opposition in Iraq and encouraging the Persian Gulf states to do the same (while Iran allegedly arms Shi'ite militias), the U.S. faces the scenario of fighting a proxy war against some of its most important allies—and oil suppliers—in the Near East.

Zbigniew Brzezinski, former national security advisor under President Jimmy Carter and anti-Soviet Cold War hawk, summarized the Iraq war's impact on the long-term interests of U.S. imperialism in his book, *Second Chance: Three Presidents and the Crisis of American Superpower* (2007): "Beyond destabilizing the Middle East, the Iraq war had a further, much more important consequence. It made the success or failure of U.S. policy in the Middle East the

test case of American global leadership.... The loss of U.S. dominance in the region would have catastrophic consequences for America's position in Europe and the Far East." Many of Bush's bourgeois opponents are alarmed that the Iraq occupation has diverted Washington's attention away from more strategically important areas, in particular China, the largest and most powerful of the remaining bureaucratically deformed workers states and the imperialists' key target for capitalist counterrevolution.

For Class Struggle Against the U.S. and Canadian Capitalists!

When the U.S. launched its invasion of Iraq in March 1993, we mass distributed a statement by our comrades of the Spartacist League/U.S. that declared:

"It is in the class interest of the international proletariat to clearly take a side in defense of Iraq without giving any political support to the bloody Saddam

Spartacist No. 59
(English edition)

Spring 2006
\$2.00
(56 pages)

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NUMBER 59 FIFTY-NINTH EDITION SPRING 2006

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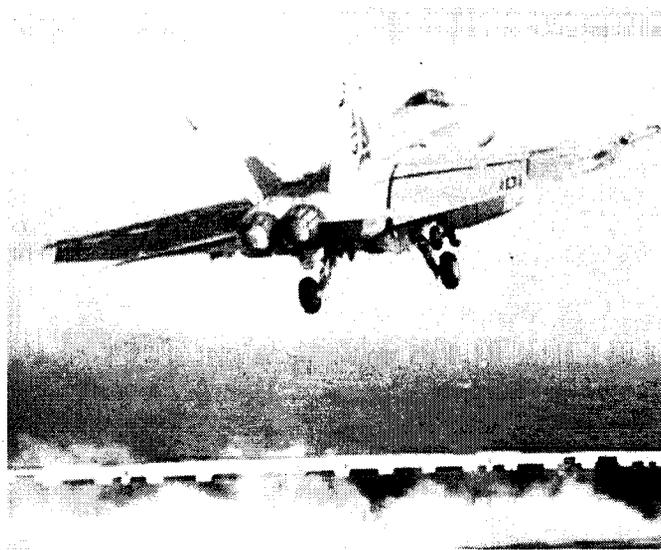
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For a Leninist Party in Greece! For a Socialist Federation of the Balkans:
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Elizabeth King Robertson, 1951-2005 4

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Alston/U.S. Navy/Getty Images

U.S. fighter jet launches from Persian Gulf aircraft carrier this year in show of force against Iran.

Hussein regime. Every victory for the U.S. imperialists can only encourage further military adventures. In turn, every humiliation, every setback, every defeat they suffer will serve to assist the struggles of working people and the oppressed around the globe."

We also called for military defense of Afghanistan against U.S., Canadian and allied attack, without extending an iota of political support to the barbaric former Taliban regime. Today we call for the military defense of Iraqi and Afghan forces on the ground insofar as they aim their blows against the imperialist occupiers and their lackeys. This does not entail the least political support to either the Islamic fundamentalists or the nationalist remnants of the Ba'athists in Iraq, or to the reactionary insurgent forces in Afghanistan. We vehemently oppose the communal violence—kidnappings, car bombings, suicide bombings—that are wracking the Iraqi population.

As we have stressed from the beginning, the chief means of defending neocolonial Afghanistan and Iraq against the overwhelming military might of American imperialism and its allies like Canada is through *international working-class struggle*. The bombings in Afghanistan and the devastation of Iraq have gone along with the capitalist rulers' onslaught against working people, minorities and most everyone else on the home front. The "war on terror" that served as the pretext for the occupations has led to the shredding of democratic rights and a massive increase in the repressive powers of the capitalist state. While the immediate targets are Muslims, Arabs and other ethnic minorities, the rulers' stepped-up repression is ultimately aimed against the multiracial working class as a whole. As the obscenely rich capitalist class further gorges itself on profits, the workers they exploit face cuts in real wages, a massive loss of industrial jobs and the systematic dismantling of social services.

In raising the call for class struggle at home, we promote the understanding of the need to mobilize the working class to sweep away the murderous imperialist order through socialist revolution. What is required is a struggle to break the political chains forged by the labour bureaucracy, and reinforced by the reformist left, that tie the workers to the class enemy, chiefly through the social-democratic NDP and,

in Quebec, the bourgeois nationalist Bloc and Parti Québécois. To this end, the Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste fights to forge the revolutionary workers party necessary to lead the working class to power.

Down With War Threats Against Iran!

The U.S. Democrats have long complained that "Bush's war" in Iraq has diverted attention and resources from the broader "war on terror." A report this summer by U.S. intelligence agencies asserting that Al Qaeda had rebuilt its strength was seized upon by Democratic Party spokesmen who criticized Bush for not having gone after Osama Bin Laden in his presumed Pakistan base. The White House countered by threatening military intervention in northwestern Pakistan, despite protests from the embattled regime of General Pervez Musharraf, who is facing mounting opposition from both Islamic fundamentalists and secular forces.

Meanwhile, the threat of a military attack on Iran still looms large. A front-page article in the influential magazine *Foreign Policy* (March/April 2007) titled "Who Wins in Iraq?" noted: "For Iran, the war in Iraq has turned out to be a strategic windfall" that "turned a large part of Iraq into an Iranian sphere of influence." The article declared that "the United States has decided that the path to regional stability lies in confrontation and rolling back Iran's regional influence." The Bush administration has announced plans to provide additional billions in advanced weapons for Saudi Arabia, Israel and Egypt to beef up the regional bulwarks against Iran.

According to the London *Guardian* (16 July), almost half of the U.S. Navy's 277 warships, including two aircraft carrier groups, are now patrolling the waters close to Iran. Titled "Cheney Pushes Bush to Act on Iran," the article observed: "The balance in the internal White House debate...has shifted back in favour of military action before President George Bush leaves office." The U.S., Britain and France are pushing other members of the UN Security Council to step up sanctions against Iran in retaliation for its uranium enrichment program.

In July, the U.S. Senate voted 97-0 to approve a resolution calling on Tehran to end all forms of "support" to "Iraqi militias and insurgents" while accusing Iran of responsibility for "the murder of members of the United States Armed Forces." None of the leading Democratic presidential candidates rules out military force—including with nuclear weapons—if Iran continues its nuclear program.

We oppose any economic sanctions against Iran, which are acts of war. As we have repeatedly stressed, in the face of imperialist nuclear blackmail and with continuing threats of attack, Iran needs nuclear weapons and adequate delivery systems as deterrence. In the event of a military attack against Iran by the U.S. or its allies, we declare that the international proletariat must stand for the military defense of Iran. At the same time, as Marxists we give not one iota of political support to the reactionary mullah regime in Tehran.

Kurdistan Trip Wire

Currently, the only support for a continuing U.S. presence in Iraq lies in the north, where the nationalist Kurdish leadership has staked its claim with the U.S. imperialists and thus subordinated itself to the occupation forces. The 8 July *New York Times* editorial proposed that U.S. forces be concentrated in military bases in the Kurdish regions of northeastern Iraq,

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from which they could “stage effective raids and airstrikes against terrorist forces in Iraq.” Likewise, Peter Galbraith, formerly President Clinton’s ambassador to Croatia, wrote in the *New York Review of Books* (16 August):

“Senator Hillary Clinton, Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Joe Biden, and former UN Ambassador Richard Holbrooke are among the prominent Democrats who have called for the US to protect Kurdistan militarily should there be a withdrawal from Iraq. The argument for so doing is straightforward: it secures the one part of Iraq that has emerged as stable, democratic, and pro-Western; it discharges a moral debt to our Kurdish allies; it deters both Turkish intervention and a potentially destabilizing Turkish-Kurdish war; it provides US forces a secure base that can be used to strike at al-Qaeda in adjacent Sunni territories; and it limits Iran’s gains.”

A “democratic” Iraqi Kurdistan under U.S. sponsorship? Hardly. The “Kurdistan Regional Government” set up under the U.S. occupation is essentially a lash-up between two rival parties, the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), which have a long and bloody history of uniting with the worst enemies of the Kurdish people while stabbing each other in the back. In the mid 1990s, the KDP and the PUK were at each other’s throats over how to divide up the profits from smuggling Iraqi oil to Turkey. The PUK got Iran to send in troops on its side, so the KDP invited Saddam Hussein to send in his tanks. While a formally unified Kurdish regional government was cobbled together last year, both organizations maintain security forces in areas they control that are notorious for their brutality. And Kurdish *pesh merga* militias have bolstered U.S. operations in Falluja, Baghdad and elsewhere.

A potential flash point is Kirkuk, where a referendum is to be held by the end of the year on whether the city is to be included in the semi-autonomous Kurdish region. Kirkuk, which sits atop a vast oil field, is a focus of ethnic conflict between its Kurdish, Arab and Turkmen populations. The Saddam Hussein regime carried out a program of “Arabization” in which Kurds and others were driven from the oil-producing regions around Kirkuk and Mosul. Since the U.S. invasion, thousands of Arabs and Turkmen have been driven out of Kirkuk and as many as 350,000 Kurds, encouraged by their leaders, have moved in, thousands of them living in dilapidated camps.

The rulers of Turkey and Iran fear that if the Kurds gain control of Kirkuk, it would provide the economic basis for Iraqi Kurdistan to move toward independence, encouraging Kurdish minorities in their own countries. Turkey has massed tens of thousands of troops on Iraq’s northern border, threatening to intervene militarily if the Kurds take over Kirkuk. At the same time, the *Guardian* (24 July) reports that Turkish prime minister Recep Erdogan is seeking to use the strong showing of his Justice and Development Party in recent parliamentary elections (including among voters in Turkish Kurdistan) to resist pressure from the military for an intervention and to push for concessions by the U.S. and Iraqi Kurdish leaders. For its part, the Pentagon has plans for a joint U.S.-Turkish military operation against the northern Iraq bases of

the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), which has waged a decades-long struggle against the Turkish state.

The struggle of the Kurdish people for self-determination—i.e., to form their own state—is a just struggle, requiring the overthrow of four capitalist states: Iraq, Syria, Turkey and Iran. We Trotskyists have long raised the call for a Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan. However, in Iraq any fight for Kurdish independence must take as its starting point opposition to the U.S. occupation and to the nationalist parties that serve it.

Reformist Pipe Dreams

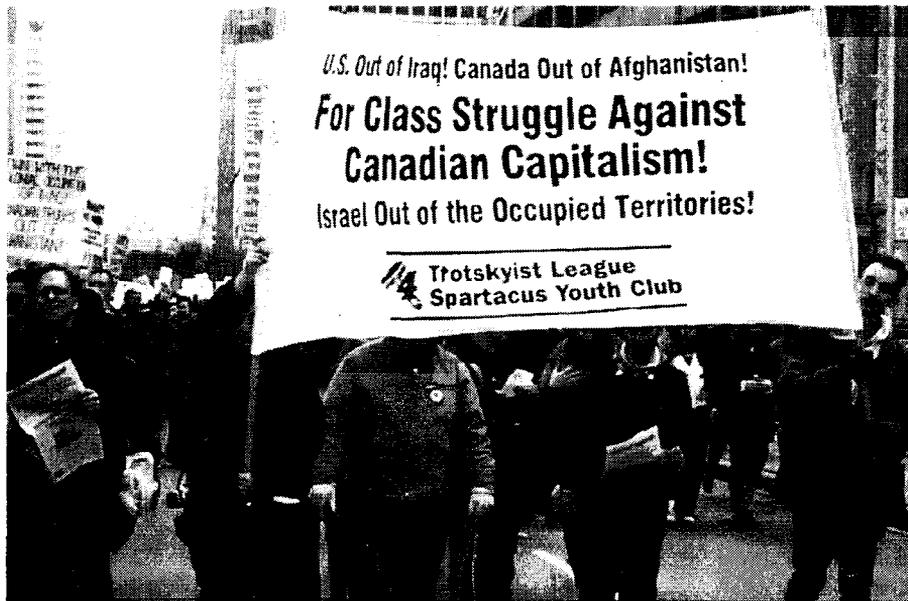
In American imperialism’s staunchest ally, Britain, Gordon Brown has replaced Tony Blair as prime minister in the Labour Party government whose own hands are soaked in the blood of Iraqis. While Britain has already withdrawn hundreds of troops from southern Iraq, Brown promptly nixed talk of reducing troop levels below 5,000. Countering suggestions that he would move to distance himself from Washington, Brown described British ties with the U.S. as “our strongest bilateral relationship” (*New York Times*, 24 July).

As our comrades of the Spartacist League/Britain wrote in *Workers Hammer* No. 199 (Summer 2007): “Brown stands foursquare on the record of Blair-led Labour governments that relentlessly attacked jobs, pensions, health and education services for the working people at home. He is notorious among public sector unions for his pay freeze below inflation and for slashing tens of thousands of civil service jobs. If anything, Brown intends to outdo Blair in the racist ‘war on terror’.” Indeed, Brown has declared that he wants to increase to 56 days the period that people suspected of “terrorism” can be held without charge. The SL/B seeks to build a multiethnic revolutionary workers party in political combat against the British reformist left whose main aim is to pressure a Labour government to administer the murderous capitalist state in the interests of the oppressed.



Michael McGregor

Reformist left raises social-patriotic call to “Support our troops” at a March protest in Toronto.



SC photo

TL banner at 2005 antiwar demonstration in Toronto.

As in Britain, the reformist left in the U.S. campaigns against the Iraq war by appealing to ruling-class sentiment that it is a lost cause. Groups like ANSWER and the Troops Out Now Coalition are organizing demonstrations in Washington in mid-September to coincide with the next report to Congress on the status of the troop “surge.” As always, these coalitions claim that mobilizing masses of “the people” can pressure the imperialists to adopt a “peaceful” foreign policy and spend money on human needs, not war. The same is true in Canada, where the various antiwar coalitions seek to pressure the government to give “Money for health care, not for war.”

“Support Our Troops” Social-Patriots

The fundamental fealty of the leaders of the Canadian “peace movement” to the interests of Canadian capitalism is captured by their now ubiquitous call to “Support our troops—Bring them home!” Early this summer, Toronto City Council under social-democratic mayor David Miller voted unanimously to keep yellow-ribbon “Support our troops” decals on the city’s fire trucks and ambulances. Soon after, leaders of Amalgamated Transit Union Local 113, representing 8,000 local transit workers, called on the city to add the “Support our troops” decals to all surface transit vehicles. Not to be outdone, the Toronto Coalition to Stop the War, which is heavily animated by the reformist International Socialists, announced its own decal campaign. These fake-socialists are now distributing “Support our troops—bring them home now” stickers—complete with yellow ribbons!

Even more explicit is the Canadian Peace Alliance (CPA), whose website advertises t-shirts “in UN blue” adorned with red Maple Leafs and the slogan, “Peace is Patriotic—Support our Troops: bring them home.” For its part, the Communist Party of Canada (CPC) attacks the CPA for supposedly insisting on “a ‘pure’ position of ‘troops out now’.” Instead, the CPC advocates “finding ways to embrace millions of deadline-supporting Liberals, while at the same time demanding that the Parliamentary parties withdraw troops at the earliest date that can be arranged” (*People’s Voice*, 16-30 June). In calling to ally with the Liberals around a call for troops out...sometime,

these Maple Leaf “Communists” now have a formal line somewhere to the right of the NDP!

The Canadian army is not “our troops”—it is the armed fist of the Canadian imperialist ruling class. Marxists say: “Not a person, not a penny for the Canadian military!” In sharp contrast to the social-patriotic reformist “left” groups, we understand that militarism and war are not “policy choices” but inevitable outgrowths of a worldwide system under which a handful of rich capitalist countries compete for control of the world’s resources, markets and spheres of influence through brutal exploitation, pillage and armed conflict. Real opposition to imperialist war is impossible without opposition to the system that breeds it, starting here at home. The Canadian army, like the police and other institutions of the capitalist state, is a weapon of the enemy

class which can under no circumstances be wielded on behalf of the oppressed.

For a Revolutionary Workers Party!

In our interventions at antiwar and anti-occupation rallies, on the campuses and among the working class, we fight to win workers and leftist youth to an understanding of the need to wield the organized power of the working class against imperialist war and domestic repression. That requires political struggle against the labour, social-democratic and nationalist misleaders who chain the workers to their exploiters.

The working class must take up the cause of immigrants and ethnic minorities, demanding an end to the “war on terror” attacks and full citizenship rights for all immigrants. Against the chauvinism of the Canadian rulers and NDP—and the bourgeois nationalism this fuels in Quebec—we advocate independence for Quebec. This will create conditions where the workers of both English Canada and Quebec can come to see that their enemy is their “own” national capitalists, not each other.

The unraveling of support for the occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan is a measure of the present difficulties of the U.S. imperialists and their Canadian junior partners. But without a proletarian struggle to overthrow the capitalist system, workers and the oppressed will continue to face a dangerous and uncertain future of more military adventures, racist and neocolonial oppression and grinding exploitation. As we wrote four years ago in “Down With Colonial Occupation of Iraq!” (*SC* No. 137, Summer 2003):

“Genuine opposition to war must be based on class struggle and political protest independent of all the political parties that uphold capitalist rule. U.S. imperialism’s conquest of Iraq will only strengthen the ability of its ruling class to plunder the world. The Canadian rulers will also seek to take advantage of this imperialist victory to reinforce their oppressive rule here and their influence abroad. The rapacious North American capitalists must be swept away through workers revolution. The Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste, along with our comrades of the Spartacist League/U.S., is committed to forging the multiracial revolutionary workers party needed to lead that struggle to victory in the heartland of world imperialism.”■

Defend Shawn Brant!

Labour Must Defend Native Rights

Native people and their supporters protested across Canada on June 29 in a National Day of Action called by the Assembly of First Nations. Marches and rallies were held in several cities, some joined by capitalist politicians paying hypocritical lip-service to Native rights. In the Bay of Quinte area of Eastern Ontario, Mohawks took more militant action, blockading a highway and the main CN rail line connecting Montreal and Toronto. This followed earlier rail and highway blockades in the same area, as well as the ongoing occupation of a gravel quarry, part of a tract long subject to a Mohawk land claim.

In the wake of the June 29 protest, police arrested Mohawk activist Shawn Brant. Charged with mischief and breaching bail conditions, Brant was detained for several weeks until he was finally released on bail on August 30. During his release, Brant may not so much as leave his house without police permission. He faces further court proceedings beginning October 5.

In a statement titled "Refusing to Be Silent" (*ZNet*, 21 August), Brant's wife Sue Collis contrasted the government's hard-line stance toward aboriginal militants to its treatment of union leaders during the 1995-97 labour Days of Action against the Ontario Conservative government:

"The economic repercussions of the labour movement's rotating and escalating city shut-downs far surpassed June 29th, and yet no labour leader was ever jailed, let alone charged.... The message appears to be if you are Indian, somehow your grievances do not warrant the same respect or attention. You are to suffer in silence."

In calling the mass labour actions of the mid '90s, the union tops sought to blow off anger at the Tory government's attacks, while working to rebuild illusions in the opposition NDP social democrats and bourgeois Liberals. Nonetheless, these strikes and protests gave a sense of the immense potential power of organized labour. It is precisely this social power that sometimes makes the capitalist rulers think twice before unleashing the full might of state repression.

The working class is central to capitalist production, in

the factories, resource and transport industries that generate profit for the ruling class. Thus it is uniquely placed to spearhead successful struggle on behalf of the many victims of capitalist exploitation and oppression. Labour mobilizations in defense of Native rights would not only bolster the struggles at hand, but would aid in winning workers to the understanding that their class interests lie in fighting to sweep away the entire capitalist system.

We print below a September 1 protest letter sent by the Partisan Defense Committee to Ontario Attorney General Michael Bryant. Messages of support and donations for Shawn Brant's legal defense can be sent to: Tyendinaga Legal Defence Fund, c/o 10 Britain Street, Toronto ON M5A 1R6.

The Partisan Defense Committee protests the arrest of Native activist Shawn Brant and demands that all charges against him be dropped immediately. Brant, a member of the Tyendinaga Mohawk community of the Bay of Quinte and a cabinet maker by trade, faces nine criminal charges arising from his participation in Native rights protests including during the June 29 Assembly of First Nations Day of Action. Activists from Tyendinaga set up road and rail blockades to raise awareness of the plight of aboriginal communities across Canada plagued by police repression, poverty and rampant suicides.

After voluntarily surrendering to police on July 5, Brant was held in custody for nearly two months before finally being released on onerous bail conditions on August 30. The persecution of this courageous militant is a blatant political assault on Native rights and on all those who speak out and mobilize on behalf of the oppressed. It shows yet again the contempt that the Canadian ruling class holds for the lives of aboriginal people, who have suffered untold torments under the racist, capitalist system.

Before turning himself in, Brant declared: "I hope they don't believe putting me in jail puts the issue in jail." Shawn Brant, as well as your government, can rest assured that the struggle for the liberation of Native people and all other oppressed minorities will go forward despite state repression. We demand: Hands off Shawn Brant! Drop all the charges now! ■

South Africa...

(continued from page 13)

ANC but also *political opposition* to them. But the SACP is and has long been politically subordinated to the bourgeois-nationalist ANC. Being allied to the ANC means accepting a common program, i.e., one that necessarily subordinates the workers and the oppressed to the capitalist order. Calls for "going it alone" while preserving the class-collaborationist alliance with the ANC can only be an attempt to refurbish the tarnished credentials of the alliance, at a time when it is facing huge anger at the base of society. The point is not to reform the ANC by futilely searching for a "pro-worker" alternative to Mbeki. An ANC run by Jacob Zuma would be just as anti-working-class as the current ANC. We call to break with the Tripartite Alliance and to forge a Leninist-Trotskyist party that fights for a workers government. This does not mean placing in power a labor government that

administers capitalism, like the British Labour governments, but a revolutionary struggle that overthrows the capitalist order, as the Bolsheviks did in 1917.

A fundamental argument raised by reformists against such a perspective is that such a revolution would be isolated and crushed by the imperialists. It is true that in the post-Soviet period the imperialists have become more emboldened and arrogant. However, workers revolution in South Africa would reverberate powerfully among the oppressed working masses, from black and other workers in the U.S. to Latin America and Europe. It would revive revolutionary class struggle internationally. Only the extension of workers revolution to the advanced capitalist countries would provide the material basis for the establishment of a genuine socialist society, one in which poverty has been abolished and classes are no more. To that end there must be an instrumentality, a world party of socialist revolution. That is why we Spartacists fight for the reorganizing of the Fourth International. ■

Australia...

(continued from page 24)

Howard's occupation force. Northern Territory ALP chief minister, Clare Martin, simply complained that the intervention should be sustained for decades! In states with a significant Aboriginal population, Labor premiers balked at participating, complaining they had not been consulted by Howard beforehand. Australian Capital Territory chief minister, Jon Stanhope, is the only prominent ALP leader to state the obvious truth that these moves against NT Aborigines are racist.

Using the reactionary views pushed within the Aboriginal community by flunkies like Noel Pearson, the government's current offensive has been prepared by an ongoing campaign to blame Aboriginal people for their own oppression. Many have already spoken out against the government's ghoulish plan to subject NT Aborigines under the age of 16 to "medical examinations" for sexual abuse. This proposal ratchets up the bourgeoisie's reactionary and hysterical anti-sex witchhunt, which is designed particularly to regiment youth by demeaning, abusing and punishing all those who engage in *consensual* sexual activity outside the bounds of the reactionary "age of consent" laws. The government uses the watchword "child sexual abuse" as a pretext for greater state intervention in Aboriginal lives.

The very real social pathologies of domestic violence, abuse of children, and drug addiction—problems which exist throughout capitalist society—are exacerbated by the brutal subjugation and enforced marginalisation of Aboriginal people. But it is the capitalist state itself which is the greatest instigator of violence against Aboriginal people, who, for example, know all too well that for a black man detention can often be a death sentence. This state, which consists at its core of the courts, prisons, police and military, exists for the purpose of enforcing capitalist rule over the exploited and oppressed masses.

It is grotesque hypocrisy for Howard and his minister for Aboriginal oppression, ex-army commander Mal Brough, to portray themselves as upholding the rights of Aboriginal children! With its prison guards, police and "Aboriginal Pro-

tection Boards," the bourgeois state has systematically killed and raped Aboriginal men, women and children for over 200 years. The Howard government has whipped up racist fear and hatred with the lie that refugees had thrown their "children overboard"; it has incarcerated refugees, including children, in hell-hole detention camps; and it is an enthusiastic junior partner in the bloody imperialist military occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan, which have left hundreds of thousands of men, women and children dead.

A recent health report noted that Aboriginal people are four times more likely to die before the age of 25 and 13 times more likely to be in jail, stating that "Indigenous Australian youth are disadvantaged on almost every welfare criterion" ([Melbourne] *Age*, 31 May). As the head of paediatrics at Royal Darwin Hospital recently pointed out, the topmost causes of suffering among Aboriginal children are overwhelmingly eminently treatable poverty-related conditions such as lung infections, rheumatic heart disease, anaemia and malnutrition. ***Down with attacks on welfare! Aboriginal people need jobs for all at equal wages and massive education, health and housing programs, including the provision of clean water and electricity. For complete equality including equal access to decent public amenities! No to forced medical examinations! For free quality healthcare and education for all!*** However, elementary justice for Aboriginal people and all the oppressed and exploited demands not some limited and ultimately reversible concessions by the bosses but the expropriation of industry, mining and agriculture from the capitalist class through victorious workers revolution. ***We need a class-struggle fight for Aboriginal rights!***

Howard aims to massively roll back land rights. As Pat Turner, a former head of the recently abolished Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, remarked: "We believe that this government is using child sexual abuse as the Trojan horse to resume total control of our lands." Some 90 Aboriginal and welfare organisations have released a statement attacking the government's plan as a smokescreen for a massive grab of those lands that had been reclaimed from the capitalist rulers. This land grab

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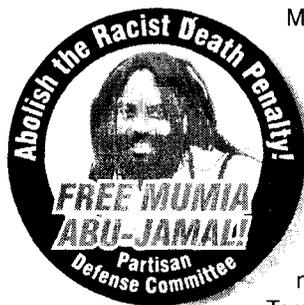
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Funds are urgently needed for legal defense! Make a contribution today, payable to "National Lawyers Guild Foundation" (earmarked for "Mumia") and mail to: Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal, P.O. Box 2012, New York, NY 10159.

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.

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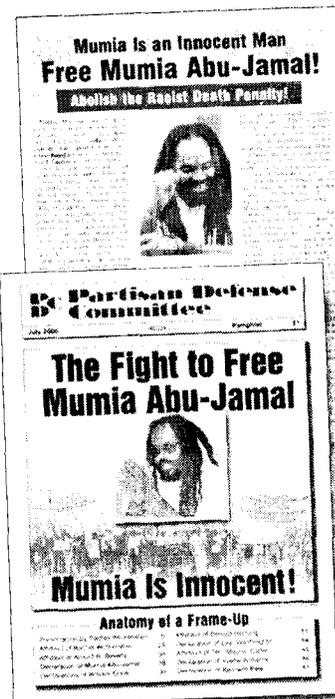


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Partisan Defense Committee

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Australia...

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paves the way for large petrochemical, mining and agribusiness to loot the incredibly lucrative resources found there. Aborigines are now facing a colonial-style military occupation similar to that which the Howard government has imposed on the oppressed people of the Solomon Islands and East Timor while plundering their resources. **Racist Australian troops/cops hands off Aboriginal lands! Get out of Iraq, Afghanistan, the Solomons and East Timor!**

Howard's declaration was also a pre-emptive strike against any outpouring of justified anger over the whitewash "trial" of the Queensland cop, Chris Hurley, for the brutal killing of Aborigine Mulrunji Doomadgee in the Palm Island lockup in 2004. Hurley's acquittal by an all-white jury gives a green light to an escalation of cop killings of Aborigines in the lockups and on the streets and will further embolden fascist scum like the KKK who terrorise besieged Aboriginal communities across the country. The current cop/military occupation will mean more Aborigines in prison and more deaths in custody. Only five days after the whitewash Hurley verdict, a 44-year-old Aboriginal man died in police custody. Meanwhile Palm Island Aboriginal leader Lex Wotton is still facing serious charges for the "crime" of protesting the cop killing of Mulrunji! **Drop the charges now! For union/black/minority action against racist terror!**

There can be no justice from the capitalist courts or governments! The brutal White Australia capitalist order was built on the plunder, theft, slaughter and degradation of the indigenous inhabitants and the systematic exclusion of Asian and dark-skinned people. The multiracial trade-union movement, which has been on the receiving end of federal

coalition and state Labor governments' relentless attacks, must take action *with* Aboriginal people against their common enemy—the bosses' state.

Only the organised working class has the objective interest and social power to take on the racist capitalist rulers and win. But as long as the working class buys into the bosses' racist divide-and-rule schemes, it will never forge the consciousness and unity necessary to liberate itself from the chains of capitalist exploitation. We communists of the Spartacist League of Australia fight to break the working class from the Laborite nationalism and loyalty to the capitalist state pushed by the pro-capitalist union leaders.

Against the Labor politicians, trade-union misleaders and their left tails who serve to subordinate the working class to capitalist rule, it is urgently necessary to build an internationalist Leninist vanguard party. Such a party, fighting to lead all the exploited and oppressed against every manifestation of capitalist oppression, will be built by splitting the working-class base of the ALP from its pro-capitalist and nationalist leadership.

It is the class struggle of the multiracial proletariat, led by a Leninist-Trotskyist party, that can open the road to overthrowing this deeply racist, decrepit, capitalist system through workers revolution. Only under the rule of the working class and based on a planned collectivised economy will it be possible to address the special needs of Aboriginal people created by more than two centuries of capitalist injustice and oppression. The multiracial working class must come to the defence of their Aboriginal brothers and sisters now! **Cops/military out of Aboriginal communities! For proletarian-centred defence of Aborigines against racist terror! For a workers republic of Australia, part of a socialist Asia!** ■

From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal

The Other Army



While media pundits and politicians bum rush the mike about President George W. Bush's plans to "surge" U.S. troop forces in Iraq, little is being said about another army there.

By this I refer not to the British, who, as the junior partners in this nefarious occupation, have contributed a significant number of troops to this operation, nor to the other so-called 'coalition of the willing', most of whom have only sent token numbers.

I mean the private armies, known best by the term "contractors"—men (mostly) who work for private corporations, who are often heavily armed, and who number some 100,000.

They often wear camouflage fatigues—and many are paid six-figure salaries!

Remember the notorious scandal of Abu Ghraib prison? While the fate of 7 low-level soldiers (and one female general) is generally well-known, there is rarely discussion (and rare still, legal action) on the actions of contractors. Such people played a key role in Abu Ghraib—and play vital roles everyday in Iraq, separate and apart from the U.S. military, or any governmental structure.

In Abu Ghraib, around the exact time of the events that are now infamous and historic, *all* of the interpreters at the prison worked for one U.S. company—Titan Corp.

At the same time (as of Jan. '04), over 1/2 of all interrogators and analysts worked for a Virginia-based company—CAGI International.

As novelist-essayist Joan Didion noted in a recent edition

of *The New York Review of Books*:

"There are now, split among more than 150 private firms, thousands of such contracts outstanding. Halliburton alone had by July 2004 contracts worth \$11,431,000,000.

"Private firms in Iraq have done more than build bases and bridges and prisons. They have done more than handle meals and laundry and transportation. They train Iraqi forces. They manage security. Contract interrogators from two firms, CAGI International (according to its web site 'a world leader in providing timely solutions to the intelligence community') and Titan ('a leading provider of comprehensive information and communications products, solutions, and services for National Security'), were accused of abuses at Abu Ghraib, where almost half of all interrogators and analysts were CAGI employees. They operate free of oversight. They distance the process of interrogation from the citizens in whose name, or in whose 'defense,' or to ensure whose 'security,' the interrogation is being conducted. They offer 'timely solutions.'"

—[Fr.: Didion, Joan, "Cheney: The Fatal Touch," *The New York Review of Books*, October 5, 2006, p. 56.]

More than any other war in U.S. history, big companies are making big bucks by privatization of almost everything. Indeed, in a very real sense, it can be said that even torture was privatized—as shown by the allegation that Abu Hamid, a Titan employee, hired to do interpreting at Abu Ghraib, reportedly raped a 15-year old boy there.

Titan held contracts worth an estimated \$657 million. CAGI had contracts in the tens of millions, at least.

Speaking of Halliburton (where Vice President Dick Cheney was CEO), it proceeded to run up so many bills that it overcharged the U.S. government by more than \$1 billion! *One Billion!*

Halliburton, by the way, provided U.S. service members with contaminated drinking water—and charged Army folks \$99 to wash their laundry—and didn't get it clean!

No matter what Bush ultimately decides, a private army continues to roam Iraq, answerable only to their bosses. Armed to the teeth, they are a private army for business.

Who says war is bad for business?
7 January 2007

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AM8335, SCI Greene,
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Australia: Racist War on Aborigines

We reprint below a June 27 leaflet issued by the Spartacist League of Australia, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

Declaring a “national emergency,” the [Liberal Party] Howard government is moving contingents of cops, backed by troops, to occupy some 60 Northern Territory (NT) Aboriginal communities. To facilitate this naked land grab, federal parliament is to be recalled to override the 1976 Aboriginal Land Rights Act and likely the 1975 Racial Discrimination Act. In the name of “law and order” against “child abuse,” the government is imposing an immediate puritanical ban on alcohol and pornography. In a chilling, racist, state-sponsored campaign of abuse and humiliation, they want to subject Aboriginal children and youth under 16 years of age to outrageous genital “medical examinations.” They are also threatening to starve impoverished Aboriginal families by withholding already meagre welfare payments for such reasons as their kids don’t or won’t go to school, which are invariably under-resourced and in some cases racist or non-existent!

Howard’s attacks have been met with fear and anger from Aboriginal communities. Women and children have already begun fleeing Mutitjulu, the first community to face the police/military takeover. This vividly recalls how terrified Aboriginal parents had to hide their children from the all-powerful “Protector” or mission manager, events powerfully portrayed in the film *Rabbit-Proof Fence*. Indeed Howard intends to turn the clock back to the days of the protector where the systematic physical, emotional and sexual abuse, which accompanied the mass institutionalisation of Aboriginal children *stolen* from their parents and used as forced labour, was rife. This was accompanied by capitalist theft of land on a grand scale by cattle barons and mining companies.

Howard’s assault on welfare within Aboriginal communities is a template for gutting welfare across the entire population. Furthermore, increased police repression, backed up by troops, comes on top of draconian laws already restricting the rights of *all*, from “anti-terror” laws to anti-union laws. Targeting the most vulnerable today, the government is greasing the skids for broader attacks on the morrow. The working class has a direct interest in taking up the fight to defend Aboriginal people and all the oppressed. **For working-class protests against racist state repression! Down with Howard’s**



Delsey Tamiano

Aboriginal people protest state harassment of the homeless in Darwin, 2003. Defense of Aborigines is key to proletarian struggle to overthrow Australian capitalism.

martial law! No to cop/military occupations of Northern Territory Aboriginal communities!

With polls projecting a defeat for Howard in the upcoming federal elections, the military occupation of Aboriginal communities is widely recognised as another of his pre-election ploys to garner white racist support while sowing racist divisions amongst the working class and oppressed. Disgustingly the government’s plan was immediately backed by the federal ALP [Australian Labor Party] leader Kevin Rudd, who scrambled to outdo the government by promising a “war cabinet” and a 20 percent increase in federal police numbers if elected. Victorian and New South Wales state Labor premiers quickly pledged contingents of cops to join

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For a Class-Struggle Fight for Aboriginal Rights!