

Down with English chauvinism!

Brown's government: racist, anti-working-class, anti-Scottish!

As widely predicted, the 3 May election to the devolved Scottish parliament resulted in a defeat for New Labour and a narrow victory for Alex Salmond's Scottish National Party (SNP), which now forms a minority government in Holyrood for the first time. The victory of the SNP, which has pledged to hold a referendum on Scottish independence, was met with a renewed barrage of English-chauvinist ranting by the British bourgeois press

and Westminster politicians. Article after article in the London-based gutter press seeks to whip up hatred in England against "Scottish freeloaders" who supposedly get everything from cancer drugs to university education subsidised at the expense of English "taxpayers". In a particularly vitriolic piece in the *Guardian* (12 June), right-wing Tory MP Boris Johnson railed that "The English have got used over many decades to subsidising the Scots".

Meanwhile attempts by the SNP to form a ruling coalition with the Liberal Democrats came to naught when the staunchly Unionist Lib Dems refused to countenance a referendum on Scottish independence.

With Labour justly hated throughout the country, especially among workers and minorities, and the Tories virtually non-existent north of the border, sections of the British ruling class fear that the rise of Scottish

nationalist sentiment could tear apart the archaic "United Kingdom". This edifice is based on English domination and on the national oppression of the Scots, Welsh and Irish as well as the racist oppression of black and Asian minorities. The "Mother of Parliaments" is merely a "democratic" façade for the system of capitalist dictatorship through which the imperialist bourgeoisie, centred on

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Reformists crawl to Labour under Gordon Brown

Britain/US out of Iraq, Afghanistan now! Hands off Iran!

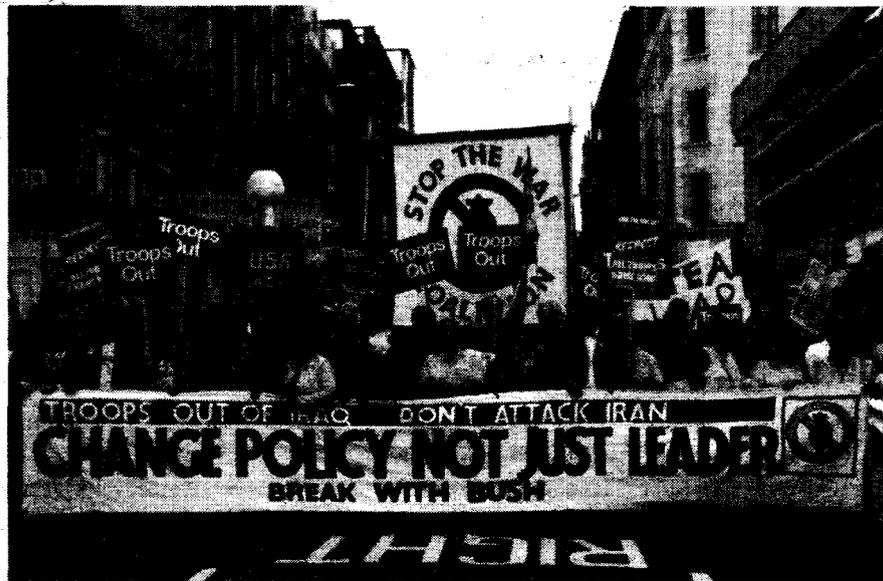
For a multiethnic revolutionary workers party!

Taking over the premiership from Tony Blair, Gordon Brown leads a Labour government that is soaked in the blood of hundreds of thousands of Iraqis. This is the bitter fruit of the imperialist occupation and the communal warfare between Sunnis and Shi'ites that it unleashed. The United Nations estimates that some eight per cent of the population has been forced to flee the country and untold thousands remaining in Iraq have been driven from their neighbourhoods and towns.

The war and occupation have devastated Iraq and its peoples, while the military adventure is increasingly becoming a debacle for US imperialism and its British ally, leading to deep unease within the British establishment. The head of the British armed forces, Sir Richard Dannatt, has said that the British military presence in Iraq "exacerbates the security problems", (BBC News Online, 13 October 2006). Blair has reduced the number of British troops in Iraq, where they increasingly lost control of Basra to Shia militias. But there is no reduction of forces in Afghanistan. Indeed senior military officers and Labour ministers admitted to the *Guardian* that they think "British forces in Iraq are on a hiding to nothing" but in Afghanistan they obscenely



Andrew Parsons/PA Wire



Richard Searle

Gordon Brown visits troops in Iraq, 11 June, to show his commitment to the occupation. Stop the War Coalition demonstration on 24 June in Manchester begging Brown for "change of policy" for British imperialism.

describe British troops as fighting for a "noble cause" (*Guardian*, 21 June).

The latest atrocities in Afghanistan include at least seven children killed by US air strikes on a school near the Pakistan border on 17 June while at least 24 people were killed by a bomb in the centre of Kabul. The level of attacks by imperialist armies on civilians is so high that the Agency Co-ordinating Body for Afghan Relief, representing nearly 100 aid organisations, has condemned foreign, particularly US, troops for the "disproportionate and indiscriminate use of force" (*Guardian*, 21 June).

It is to ruling-class sentiment that Iraq is a lost cause that the reformist left are appealing as they clamour to pressure

Gordon Brown to pull out. For the Stop the War Coalition (StWC), the transition to Brown simply means the grovelling petitions to "Dear Tony" are now directed to "Dear Gordon". To the man who fully backed Blair over Iraq and as chancellor bankrolled the invasion and occupation, they plead: "withdraw British troops from Iraq no later than October 2007; declare that this country will not participate in any attack against Iran; and pursue a foreign policy independent of the administration of the United States of America". The Socialist Workers Party (SWP) built the StWC to unite the maximum forces possible from all classes on a programme of bourgeois pacifism, duping anti-war protesters

with the myth that British imperialism can be persuaded to adopt a "peaceful" foreign policy. The StWC is an obstacle to the necessary class-struggle fight for the revolutionary overthrow of imperialism, a system under which neo-colonial adventures and wars are an inevitable and permanent condition.

Iran needs nuclear weapons to defend itself!

Washington and Downing Street have also engaged in a series of military provocations against Iran. The US has bolstered its naval presence in the Persian Gulf /Arabian Sea region and continues to push for stricter UN

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Labour...

(Continued from page 1)

sanctions against Tehran over its nuclear energy programme. The Labour government and its servile capitalist press drummed up hysteria by creating an enormous hoopla over Iran's seizure in late March (and subsequent release) of some 20 British military personnel in the Shatt Al-Arab waterway. In a 7 April statement issued by the Spartacist League/Britain (published in *Workers Vanguard* no 890, 13 April) we said: "We do not know what the British forces were up to at the time of their capture, but we do know that the imperialists are the aggressors and this semi-colonial country is in their crosshairs. The monstrous hue and cry over the captured British crew members can only serve to heighten the danger of an imperialist attack on Iran" and called for "**British, US and all imperialist troops out of Iraq and Afghanistan! Down with imperialist war provocations against Iran!**"

As revolutionary opponents of imperialism, we say that working people in Britain, the US and internationally have a side **against** the US/British occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan. This does not entail the slightest degree of political support to either the Islamic fundamentalists, the nationalist remnants of the Ba'athists in Iraq, or to the Taliban and similar reactionary forces—former assets of the CIA's war against the Soviet Union—in Afghanistan. Our statement also noted that "in the context of threats by the nuclear-armed imperialists, Iran desperately needs nuclear weapons and adequate delivery systems to defend itself", while calling for military defence of Iran in the event of an attack by imperialism, or by Israel or any other force acting as proxy for the imperialists. We condemned the StWC's support for "our boys" as expressed in a statement (undated, titled "Don't attack Iran") which opened with: "We urge the speedy release and return to this country of the detained sailors and marines." Amid a wave of nauseating chauvinism against Iran,

this is a pledge of loyalty to their "own" ruling class.

Today we also warn that sentiment among the imperialists—reflected in the Democratic Party in the US—to cut back on losses in Iraq is often motivated by a felt need to reinforce American military capabilities directed against China, the largest and most powerful of the remaining countries where capitalist rule was overthrown. We stand for **unconditional military defence** of the Chinese, North Korean, Vietnamese and Cuban workers states against imperialism and domestic counterrevolution, despite the fact they are deformed by the rule of parasitic Stalinist bureaucracies.

Labour's racist reign

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" and is likely to re-present the proposal to detain "terrorism" suspects without charge for up to 90 days which failed under Blair. Brown's "Britishness" crusade will mean more of the same anti-Muslim racism that was blatantly expressed last year in Jack Straw's diatribe against the veil (see "Racism and the Islamic veil", *Workers Hammer* no

197, Winter 2006-2007). And there will be no let-up in the xenophobia against immigrants that is commonplace among Labour ministers: Margaret Hodge recently called for social housing (such as it exists) to be given to British people first while at the GMB union conference Brown called for "British workers for British jobs".

Yet Britain's "flexible" economy is in fact heavily reliant on immigrant workers. It is in the vital interests of the whole working class to counter racist divide-and-rule ploys and to defend immigrants, including by campaigning for equal pay for equal work, opposing the work ban on workers from European Union countries such as Bulgaria and Romania, and fighting for **full citizenship rights for all immigrants!**

In sharp contrast to the reformist left, whose main aim is to pressure a Labour government to administer the murderous capitalist state in the interests of the oppressed—the Spartacist League seeks to build a multiethnic revolutionary workers party that fights for the revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist order through socialist revolution. Such a party can only be forged through breaking workers from Labourism, in all its forms, including from illusions in "old" Labour and parliament. This is counterposed to the strategy of the rest of the left in Britain for whom voting Labour in every election has historically

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TROTSKY

There is no justice in the capitalist courts

The frame-up and execution of the immigrant American anarchists Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti in the 1920s galvanised mass, worldwide working-class protest. On the eve of the executions James P Cannon, chairman of the International Labor Defense (ILD), pointed out that Sacco and Vanzetti had already suffered a tortuous seven years in prison. Today Mumia Abu-Jamal, an

innocent man, has spent almost 25 years as a death-row political prisoner. He must not suffer the fate of Sacco and Vanzetti! It is urgently necessary to rebuild the mass worldwide movement for Mumia's freedom which in 1995 stayed the executioner's hand. Like the ILD, the Partisan Defence Committee places its faith not in the "justice" system, but in the social power of the working class.

The Sacco-Vanzetti case is no private monopoly, but an issue of the class struggle in which the decisive word will be spoken by the masses who have made this fight their own. It is, therefore, necessary to discuss openly the conflicting policies which are bound up with different objectives.

One policy is the policy of the class struggle. It puts the center of gravity in the protest movement of the workers of America and the world. It puts all faith in the power of the masses and no faith whatever in the justice of the courts. While favoring all possible legal proceedings, it calls for agitation, publicity, demonstrations—organized protest on a national and international scale. It calls for unity and solidarity of all workers on this burning issue, regardless of conflicting views on other questions. This is what has prevented the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti so far. Its goal is nothing less than their triumphant vindication and liberation.

The other policy is the policy of "respectability," of the "soft-pedal," and of ridiculous illusions about "justice" from the courts of the enemy. It relies mainly on legal proceedings. It seeks to blur the issue of the class struggle. It shrinks from the "vulgar and noisy" demonstrations of the militant workers and throws the mud of slander on them. It tries to represent the martyrdom of Sacco and Vanzetti as an "unfortunate" error which can be rectified by the "right" people proceeding in the "right" way. The objective of this policy is a whitewash of the courts of Massachusetts and "clemency" for Sacco and Vanzetti, in the form of a commutation to life imprisonment for a crime of which the world knows they are innocent.

— "Who Can Save Sacco and Vanzetti?", *Labor Defender*, January 1927; reprinted in *Notebook of an Agitator* (1958)



LENIN

Partisan Defence Committee

Defend Róisín McAliskey!

The following protest letter, addressed to the then Labour Home Secretary, John Reid, was issued by the Partisan Defence Committee on 26 May.

We are writing to protest the outrageous arrest on 21 May of Róisín McAliskey, on the basis of a European arrest warrant, which has all the signs of a frame-up for alleged involvement in the 1996 IRA mortar attack on a British Army base at Osnabrück in Germany. The German prosecutors have revived their demand, first raised in 1996, for her extradition "for attempted murder in conjunction with the initiation of explosives", according to their lawyer Stephen Ritchie (*Irish Times*, 22 May) although no-one was even injured at Osnabrück.

Pregnant and ill, McAliskey was dragged through the British prison system and brutally treated in both Holloway and Belmarsh prisons during 1996-98, even though there never was a shred of evidence linking her to the Osnabrück events. In January 1998 then Home Secretary Jack Straw ruled that she was too ill to be extradited and in July 2000 the Crown Prosecution Service admitted there was not enough evidence to justify

trying her.

The McAliskey family have not only been targeted over the years by the British state as part of its continuing repression of the Catholic community in Northern Ireland but former MP Bernadette McAliskey (Róisín's mother) has also been the target of a murderous attack by Loyalist paramilitaries. As the *Irish Post* reported in 1996: "Many believe that the charges against Róisín McAliskey are a politically motivated bid to silence her mother's criticism of the peace process" (14 December 1996).

The renewed persecution of Róisín McAliskey, a mother of two children, based on an eight-month-old arrest warrant, illustrates the brutal oppression of Catholics that is inherent in the Orange statelet, including under Tony Blair's imperialist "peace process" that is premised on the British Army's presence. It is indicative of the British system of capitalist **injustice** that it systematically colludes with Loyalist paramilitaries and frames up Irish people, as it does Muslims under the racist "war on terror".

We demand: **No extradition of Róisín McAliskey! Drop the charges!** ■

WORKERS HAMMER

Marxist newspaper of the Spartacist League/Britain

For a federation of workers republics in the British Isles!
For a Socialist United States of Europe!

The Spartacist League is the British section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

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Correction

The article "Dubious BT hawks its wares to Socialist Party" published in *Workers Hammer* no 198, Spring 2007, directed the reader to an *Australasian Spartacist* article "Strange things under Wellington's rocks" for an account of the Bill Logan-led Permanent Revo-

lution Group's liquidation into the New Labour Party in New Zealand during 1989-90. While the latter article is correctly cited as being in the Summer 1995-96 issue of *Australasian Spartacist*, the number of that issue is 157, not 155 as stated.

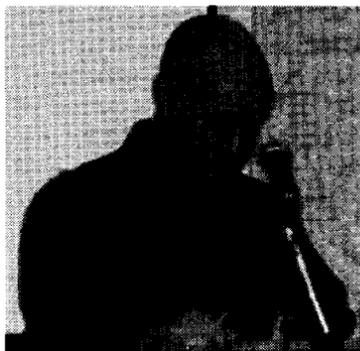


We print below edited extracts from speeches at the 5 May London rally.

Paul Moffat

Eastern Region Secretary,
Communication Workers Union

The movement is about Mumia, but it's also about the 3500 other residents on death row, a movement for social,



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economic and political justice. We have a duty to fight for Mumia and oppose the death penalty, to expose the conspiracy to commit cold-blooded, premeditated murder of an innocent man. Within the Communication Workers Union, I've raised the campaign and taken it to the regions in the UK. We must ensure we use our trade unions' influences to achieve mass support and mobilisation. We must use the Trades Union Congress and all the unions in the country to support Mumia professionally, publicly, individually both in the physical sense and also in the financial sense. I ask all unions present to take this campaign to heart, to take this back to your unions and wholeheartedly support Mumia and the abolition of the racist death penalty. I'll take this up with SERTUC myself, which is the Southern and Eastern Region TUC. I have the privilege to be on the executive committee of the TUC for the southeast region, and like the Scottish TUC, I'll be taking this to the top and the executive committee, to put through a motion as the STUC have done.

Mumia's life is in danger! Mobilise now, act now! Mumia is an innocent man. Let us all work together and work hard to free him, to expose the corruption and the web of lies of the police, the prosecutors, judges, and the state that keeps him illegally locked up for the past 25 years. Get angry, get inspired for the fight ahead! Ask for the freedom of an innocent man who is an inspiration to us all! Use your social power, use your influence, use your friends, use your colleagues, use your work, and

use your organisations. Support Mumia Abu-Jamal and those like him and let's see the freedom of an innocent man!

Stephen Hedley

London Underground Engineering
Branch of RMT

I come from the north of Ireland, which is still occupied under British rule. And a lot of things that I saw on that DVD just reminded me of home:



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the civil rights movement, which was sparked in the north of Ireland from watching the black civil rights movements in the United States; the radicalisation of youth, and the people in general, against injustice, against things like not being able to vote, not being able to have a house, and the gerrymandering of electoral wards and that sort of thing is exactly the same sort of thing that radicalised Mumia in his early years.

Another thing that became very apparent as the DVD continued was the same sort of policies that the British state carried out in the north of Ireland—the execution of anybody who raised their head above the parapet—was also carried out by the United States government. And just recently, after the main revolutionary organisation in the north has laid down its arms and gone into a peace process, we've now had the admission of what everybody in the north of Ireland knew, that there was collusion between the police and the Loyalist paramilitaries to take out not only political activists, but also lawyers who defended those political activists, and anybody who put their head above the parapet, that head was liable to be shot off by the state or its paid flunkies.

I'm here as a trade unionist, and I want to speak about the role of trade unions and what we can do. It would be

absolutely marvellous if we could call strikes in support of Mumia Abu-Jamal. But at this time it is hard enough to get trade unionists to strike in defence of their own wages and conditions, and that demand should be raised, but we should look at reality and where we actually are. My branch passed this motion unanimously but I don't see many people from my branch actually here. And that's just not good enough. It's all about raising the profile of it and convincing people. And I take my hat off to the Partisan Defence Committee. I'm not a member of it and I don't agree with a lot of their politics, but this is a very good example of awareness-raising. The last time they were going to execute Mumia it was this committee who raised [it]—he really did become an international figure because of the work that went on.

But what can the trade unions do? We're not dropping the demand that unions come onto the streets and mobilise in support of Jamal. We've got to get resolutions through branch meetings and progress them up to the top of the trade unions. I know our General Secretary Bob Crow has already, in a personal capacity, endorsed this campaign. But it's different than the whole union taking it on board and I think everybody who's a trade unionist has to get these motions passed at their meetings and pushed up to national level.

We can all see from the evidence that has just been portrayed that that is why Mumia was picked out. It wasn't because he shot anybody, it wasn't because he was a criminal. He certainly wasn't a criminal. He comes across as a very, very thoughtful man, and not someone who would criminalise himself in any way. He was a spokesman for people who were disenfranchised, and that was why they picked him out, and they made an example of him. People used to be hung by the side of the road as an example to other people: don't do this. And that's exactly what they've done with Mumia, what they're trying to do with him.

Matthew Ryder

Barrister

Not all campaigns around criminal cases are easy. Many contain grey areas, and sometimes to understand the case properly, you have to look past the crime the person is alleged to have committed and look at the political context in which they are supposed to have committed it. But this isn't really that kind of case, and it's therefore a much easier campaign for me to support than many campaigns, and the reason it's so easy is because Mumia is clearly an innocent man. The battle of course is getting the courts to accept that. An

innocent man is on death row and has been sentenced to be killed, and he should be free. And this case is that simple, and we should all be working hard to make sure he is free.

Governments in enacting the laws they enact and in prosecuting the people they prosecute are much more open than they used to be about the political nature of how they move against citizens. For many, not only do those protections not exist, but there is not even a



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pretence that they exist. Terrorism is the paradigm within which the most aggressive political action is now taken by the state against citizens. And there is no definition of terrorism in anybody's textbook or anybody's dictionary other than one that is a subjectively political definition. It creates a permanent state of emergency and a permanent state of fear. Under the guise of fighting terrorism, the most extreme forms of state political action can be sanctioned. Here in England now, you can be detained without trial. You can be prohibited from undertaking all sorts of activities, such as the use of the Internet or associating with other people, unless they've been named and approved by the government.

So, in one view, the crude framing of Mumia Abu-Jamal might not be necessary now. It might have been necessary back then, but it might not be necessary to the Mumia who would be operating today. There would be no need to pretend to give somebody a fair trial, or a fair appeal, the political nature of his case would be more transparent. Mumia, long before his trial, would probably have been characterised as a terrorist, and they wouldn't have needed to charge him with a crime. He could simply have been stopped.

So what does that difference tell us about Mumia's case today? For me in some respects, it makes Mumia's case much more straightforward because, if according to those who prosecuted and convicted him and deny his appeal, if he is simply a criminal, then why isn't he being judged on the evidence? If, as the prosecutors claim, Mumia is not a political prisoner, if Mumia is not a so-called terrorist, using the current language, then why isn't Mumia free? If this isn't a political prosecution, why hasn't he been freed, when the evidence

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“Let’s see the freedom of an innocent man.”

shows, as we’ve all seen, that he has not committed a crime? If the system that convicted him is supposedly colour-blind and supposedly politically neutral, why will it now not release him when we can all see that his conviction is wrong? Those questions for me are what makes Mumia’s case so important, not just to people in America, but to us and people all over the world.

them to stand up on their principles. There was a time when the trade union movement would have been in its droves about supporting this, and to oppose unfair deportation, and unfair immigration status. I remember supporting at the TUC with Bill Morris [of the Transport and General Workers Union], who was demanding that immigration rules be changed, the unfair system that exists. As trade unionists, we should make a further commitment to go and demand [the T&G’s] participation in issues and events like this. I’m from the age where we used to be on the street fighting deportation, carrying out pickets, ensuring that people are not sent to countries that they are running away from.

Glenroy Watson
Chair, Finsbury Park Branch of RMT and General Secretary, Global Afrikan Congress UK



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Like Steve, I hope that we can get trade unionists out on the street to make these protests. I was fortunate to have been in South Africa with my oldest daughter when we saw on the streets of Johannesburg a march for Mumia Abu-Jamal. And you didn’t need previous notification, we just saw that and we realised what it was about, and we joined in.

Mumia is known for supporting many struggles. Mumia is known for supporting the MOVE campaign. Mumia is a former member of the Black Panther Party and the state’s intention to wipe out the Black Panther Party is not unknown. So there are many reasons why this campaign screams at people for justice. And I believe we should reach out everywhere we can get such support. Probably not as appealing to the church and the mosque and so on, but we’ve got to tell them also. If they believe in justice, if they honestly believe that something should be done, then we should ask

Gareth Peirce
Lawyer



Workers Hammer

Perhaps unbeknownst to you, I have sent many faxes in the middle of the night on behalf of Mumia in the past. Not just for myself, I’ve added the names of Gerry Conlon, Paddy Hill, Billy Power, Paddy Armstrong and so on. We know that [the evidence] was suppressed, fabricated, manipulated; that there has been perjury at the highest level.

Now, in this country, we are pretty much experts in that. We’re experts because this is precisely our methodology, and it has been for many years, in how to subvert a fair trial for a person, particularly a person who is perceived by the society in which they live, as an outcast or an outlaw.

We have a situation in this country

We demand the immediate freedom of Mumia Abu-Jamal, an innocent man.

Mumia Abu-Jamal’s appeal is now on the “fast track” in the federal appeals court and the state is determined to carry out his execution.

Mumia Abu-Jamal is an innocent man. A former Black Panther Party spokesman, supporter of the MOVE organisation and award-winning journalist known as the “voice of the voiceless”, Mumia was framed up in 1982 on false charges of killing a Philadelphia police officer. Sentenced to death based on his political history and beliefs, Mumia has spent 25 years on death row for a crime he did not commit. The frame-up of Mumia Abu-Jamal shows what the death penalty is all about.

Tel: 020 7281 5504; Email: partisandefence@yahoo.co.uk

The London Underground Engineering Branch of the Rail, Maritime & Transport Union (RMT) has sponsored this ad.

Workers Hammer graphic

Following presentation and video showing about Mumia’s case by PDC, RMT London Underground Engineering branch donated union funds to publicise Mumia’s case by sponsoring notice (above) in *The Voice*.

where so much has now been done in the name of the war on terror, that it would not be the slightest surprise if the Home Office and our government said the time has come to reintroduce the death penalty. We have found ways of evading the entire question of a jury trial at all. In December 2001, in imitation of Bush and his Patriot Act, Blair said we have a threat in this country so extreme that the fabric of society is threatened, and we will therefore reintroduce internment, but we will only do it for foreign nationals. They are free to go to the countries that will torture them, but we will lock them up indefinitely without trial. And so arbitrarily, in one fell swoop in this country, without anyone knowing and with very little protest, they introduced an absolute 100 per cent avoidance of jury trial.

For a very, very brief moment when it became clear that there were British citizens in Guantánamo Bay, and that they were building a death chamber next to where they were incarcerated and that two British citizens were to be the first to be tried before those kangaroo courts, there was an across-the-board reaction in this country, and a revulsion that our government had done nothing and said nothing.

We have in our power to say we will not have this in our name. but we don’t use it. And I simply warn that: Beware. It is little use some years later being surprised at things that are done that we have watched in silence and ignorance and may have come to pass. And so part of what we can say to this amazing campaign for Mumia, amazing campaign which could not have sustained itself over all these years if there was not an absolute understanding of the integrity and truth and justice of what it was saying, and of the man it was saying it about — what we can contribute is that we must learn from history. When we defend cases now we are haunted by what goes wrong. We can see it coming. We can see the innocents now before the courts who are going down. In a way that is not intended to be callous. We are privileged to have the example of Mumia. It should haunt us. And with that privilege we should return what we have learnt and do everything we can to achieve his release. We look forward to meeting him and having him join the ranks of those who through their lives and their suffering have taught us all of the absolute injustice of our systems and our country is at the forefront of what it has contributed. ■

Mumia’s greetings to London and Berlin rallies

Ona Move!

I want to thank the PDC and all supporters of our freedom struggle for coming together, for struggling, for fighting for people like myself, and, of course, myself. It has been a long and often bitter struggle, but it is not over yet. I thank you for everything you have done, and I thank you for the work we are about to embark upon. The struggle ain’t over until we all are free.

Ona Move! Long Live John Africa!

From Death Row, this is Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Join the campaign to free Mumia Abu-Jamal!

Funds are urgently needed for legal defence!

Make a contribution today, payable to Partisan Defence Committee. Write ‘Jamal legal defence’ on the back of the cheque and mail to the address below. Every penny of such contributions is transmitted to Mumia’s legal defence team via Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal in New York.

Organise protest! Pass motions in your unions, campus, community and religious organisations demanding Mumia’s freedom. Get your union or organisation to make a contribution and join rallies and protests for Mumia. Publicise Mumia’s case in your union or organisation’s newsletter.

Spread the word! Contact the PDC for copies of our pamphlet, *The Fight to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal — Mumia Is Innocent!* This pamphlet arms activists in the struggle for Mumia’s freedom by presenting the political basis of the state vendetta against Mumia and the explosive evidence which completely destroys the more than two-decades-long frame-up of this eloquent fighter for black freedom. It is available for 70p. Get the PDC badge: “Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!” £1 each. Order the DVD made by the PDC, *From Death Row, This is Mumia Abu-Jamal*, £2 each.

Order from, make cheques payable to: **Partisan Defence Committee, BCM Box 4986, London, WC1N 3XX.** Contact us at: partisandefence@yahoo.co.uk Telephone 020 7281 5504 www.partisandefence.org

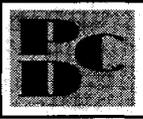
Partisan Defence Committee
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The Fight to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal

Mumia Is Innocent!

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London rally affirms: Mumia is an innocent man!

Close to a hundred people attended a Partisan Defence Committee (PDC) rally at the University of London Union on 5 May to demand freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal, a former Black Panther and MOVE supporter who has spent almost a quarter of a century on death row following his conviction on false charges of killing Philadelphia policeman Daniel Faulkner in December 1981. The PDC, a legal and social defence organisation associated with the Spartacist League, called the rally as part of an urgent international campaign to revitalise mass, labour-centred protest on behalf of Mumia on the basis that he is innocent and that he is the victim of a racist, political frame-up. A similar event was held a week later in Berlin by the PDC's fraternal organisation in Germany, the Committee for Social Defence. These mobilising efforts were given added urgency by the 17 May Appeals Court hearing in Philadelphia which heard oral arguments from prosecution and defence lawyers and could signal the final stage of legal proceedings.

Underscoring the importance of the PDC's London rally and the resonance which Mumia's case continues to have among working people and the oppressed was the impressive array of speakers and participants at the event and the seriousness of their commitment to Mumia's cause. Speakers included three trade union representatives: Paul Moffat, Eastern Region Secretary of the Communication Workers Union (CWU); Glenroy Watson, Chair of the Finsbury Park branch of the Rail, Maritime and Transport union (RMT) and General Secretary of the Global Afrikan Congress; and Stephen Hedley, also a London Underground RMT member. The trade union speakers were joined on the platform by noted civil rights lawyers Gareth Peirce and Matthew Ryder, who are particularly known today for opposing repression carried out in the name of the "war on terror", under whose rubric the US and British rulers have waged devastating wars in Afghanistan and Iraq while taking the axe to democratic rights "at home". The main rally speaker was PDC counsel Rachel Wolkenstein who was a member of Mumia's legal team from 1995 to 1999 and who led the investigation that turned up evidence of Mumia's innocence, including the sworn confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Mumia, shot and killed Faulkner. Eibhlin McDonald spoke on behalf of the Spartacist League.



Civil liberties lawyer Gareth Peirce addresses 5 May London rally

The participation of representatives of major trade unions was a key feature of the rally, pointing to the kind of working-class social power that can and must be mobilised to secure Mumia's freedom. In mid-April the Scottish Trades Union Congress passed a motion declaring: "That this Congress believes that Mumia Abu-Jamal should be freed immediately from prison, as he is innocent, and the inherently racist death penalty should be abolished." At the CWU's annual conference in Bournemouth, held in early June, Deputy General Secretary Dave Ward signed the PDC call for Mumia's freedom on behalf of the union, while Hedley's London Underground Engineering Branch of the RMT sponsored and paid for a quarter-page advert in the 4-10 June issue of black newspaper *The Voice* demanding "the immediate freedom of Mumia Abu-Jamal, an innocent man".

Down with Labour's racist "war on terror"!

The London rally began with taped greetings from Mumia and a showing of the PDC video *From Death Row, This is Mumia Abu-Jamal*. The PDC's Kate Klein, who chaired the meeting, emphasised that "the kind of pressure that will have an impact on the courts is the social power of the multiracial workers movement worldwide demanding freedom for this innocent man". Klein pointed out that in Britain the PDC was launched in 1989 with the campaign to raise funds for the civilian victims in the city of Jalalabad, Afghanistan. The Spartacist League hailed the Soviet Army intervention in the Afghan civil war in December 1979 against the cut-throat *mujahedin* as part of our unconditional military defence of the USSR, but after the Soviet Stalinist bureaucracy treacherously withdrew its troops, the people of Jalalabad were left to face the revenge of the CIA-backed Islamic fundamentalist "holy warriors". An important campaign by the PDC in the US was the fund drive for "Aid to Striking British Miners and their

Families", raising material support for the heroic 1984-85 year-long class battle against the capitalist state.

Several speakers drew parallels between Mumia's case and the anti-Irish frame-ups conducted by the British capitalist state. Gareth Peirce noted that she has "sent many faxes in the middle of the night on behalf of Mumia in the past. Not just for myself. I have added the names of Gerry Conlon, Paddy Hill, Billy Power, Paddy Armstrong", referring to both the Guildford Four and the Birmingham Six—innocent people framed up in the 1970s for IRA bombings, whom Peirce famously defended. Stephen Hedley noted that the civil rights movement in Northern Ireland was inspired by the black civil rights movement in the US and that the American state's intent to kill Mumia is similar to the British state's murderous collusion with the police and the Loyalist paramilitaries directed at political activists and also their lawyers.

A number of speakers hammered on the need to fight the rulers' equation of political opposition with "terrorism". Wolkenstein pointed out that the PDC took up Mumia's case some 20 years ago because of both its opposition to the death penalty on principle and its struggle against the state's branding of political opponents as "terrorists". Both the Black Panther Party, of which Mumia was a leading member in his youth, and the MOVE organisation, which he supports, were considered the "terrorists" of their time, which meant that the state could simply blow them away in the dead of the night or frame up their supporters on vague conspiracy charges.

It was the question of relying on the capitalist courts for justice for Mumia that sparked controversy during the discussion period. Wolkenstein had noted in her presentation that when the bulk of the opportunist left in the US—the Workers World Party, Socialist Action, the International Socialist Organization (affiliated at the time with the Socialist Workers Party in Britain)—took up

Mumia's cause, particularly during and after the mass protests in 1995, they rejected mobilising around the call to free him. Instead, they organised centrally around the demand for a new trial. Many of these "socialist" groups now raise "freedom for Mumia" in conjunction with demanding a new trial. But their politics remain in the framework of reliance on the bourgeois state, a programme directly counterposed to mobilising working-class power for Mumia's freedom.

Speaking from the floor, Niki Adams of Legal Action for Women argued that she and others "are calling for a new trial because we are taking our direction from Mumia, who is working very closely with his lawyer, Robert Bryan". Adams made clear who this call is geared towards when she told a 17 May protest in London, held on the day of Mumia's court hearing: "The demand for a new trial brings in people that may not be convinced about Mumia's innocence but can see the trial was deeply unjust."

Adams' comments were a pristine expression of the strategy that had earlier demobilised Mumia's supporters. Before the rally began, Adams distributed for signature an Open Letter to the Court entitled "Journalists in support of a new trial for Mumia Abu-Jamal." This prompted one rally participant to intervene from the floor to say that as a member of the National Union of Journalists (NUJ) he could not sign the letter since it nowhere stated that Mumia was innocent, nor that he should be freed!

Wolkenstein replied to Adams that while we vigorously oppose the strategy of reliance on the capitalist state, we have always supported scrupulous legal work on Mumia's behalf. In fact, she said, "The current legal actions in Mumia's case come from the work that I and Jon Piper did—the people on the legal team who are associated with the Partisan Defense Committee." Refuting Adams' claim that those who call for a new trial are "following Mumia's lead", Wolkenstein stated, "I have known and worked with Mumia Abu-Jamal since February 1987. I visit him regularly—before I became his lawyer, when I became his lawyer, after I stopped being his lawyer, including a week ago. He knows perfectly well every word I said here." She continued, "He sent greetings to this rally, brief though they were, making the point that he was fighting for his freedom. That is not an accident."

Wolkenstein pointed out that in earlier struggles on behalf of class-war prisoners, the call wasn't "New trial for the Guildford Four, or for Angela Davis, or Huey Newton." Wolkenstein made clear that "the quarrel here is when people basically subordinate a political movement, which should be about demanding Mumia's freedom, to a particular legal tactic—Mumia having court proceedings—something which nobody here is opposed to—not me, not the SL, not the PDC. The point is those court proceedings are not going to be the source of justice for Mumia." In regard to calls for unity, she explained that we advocate united-front defence—common actions around agreed-upon slogans with full freedom of criticism. "In our opinion", she continued, "the unifying theme is 'Free Mumia. Mumia is an innocent man. Abolish the racist death penalty!'" ■

Morning Star

Unions back Free Mumia

BRITISH trade unions gave the Free Mumia Campaign a welcome boost at the weekend, pledging to mobilise support in their branches and nationally to see 175 activists making the headlines of an international newspaper.

Time is running out for Mumia Abu-Jamal. In just 10 days time, a US court of appeal in Philadelphia will decide his fate—death in prison or yet more legal proceedings.

At this critical juncture, a diverse group of lawyers, trade unionists and activists have

LOUISE NOUSRAPOUR reports on the campaign to free political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal.

one who dated put their head above the parapet. He took. Hoping that he did not share the politics of the PDC, he had to see above the need to free above the racist divisions and unite behind this campaign.

"Trade unions can raise awareness to get a revolution through their branches and at national level," he insisted.

Comunical Union concern region secretary Paul Bluffie played his own support for the campaign and urged to raise the issue at this year's TUC annual conference.

Workers Hammer graphic

Prominent coverage of PDC London rally in *Morning Star*, 7 May



For proletarian internationalism

The following is an edited and abridged version of the remarks by Eibhlin McDonald of the SL/B at the 5 May PDC rally in London.

We think it's particularly important to campaign for Mumia's freedom here in Britain given the alliance between the Blair government and the Bush regime. Their combined military might makes the British and US imperialist rulers the most dangerous force for terrorism on the planet. Campaigning for Mumia provides an opportunity to deal a blow against the American ruling class that wants to see Mumia dead, and against British imperialism which plundered the world for centuries before handing over this role to the US.

We place all our faith in the working class and none whatsoever in the capitalist state. In Britain we find a wide resonance for Mumia's case among the trade union movement—the postal workers union; London Underground RMT and also in Scotland and Belfast. Union-centred mobilisations in Britain for Mumia's freedom would have an impact in the US. It could also help rebuild the confidence and fighting capacity of the unions to do battle against the viciously anti-working-class Labour government.

There is a mountain of lies about how British parliamentary democracy is (and has been throughout its existence) a beacon of justice throughout the world. For us Marxists, the state is the executive committee of the capitalist class: it's inherently racist, anti-working-class and cannot be reformed but has to be shattered through workers revolution. And there is no way around capitalist injustice, racism and war other than through workers revolution. The British state doesn't have the death penalty, but it executes people and expects to get away with it: look at the case of the Brazilian immigrant Jean Charles de Menezes.

This didn't begin with the so-called "war on terror", as can be seen in the incredible number of black deaths in police custody over decades. And what does capitalist "democracy" offer Britain's Muslims who are among the poorest sections of the working class? One man of Algerian origin who has been on the receiving end of the "war on terror" since December 2001—including jail without trial, "control orders" and the threat of deportation—aptly said: "I have fewer rights than an animal" (*Guardian*, 28 March).

There are very strong parallels between Mumia's frame-up and the normal workings of British imperialist "democracy" for oppressed Catholics in Northern Ireland. Last December our comrades showed our Mumia DVD to

trade unionists in Belfast, mainly women, who strongly identified with Mumia. When one trade unionist asked why the mainstream media hadn't taken up the Beverly confession, a member of the audience answered "because it shows that they knowingly framed an innocent man". Another woman said it was just like the Guildford Four. When



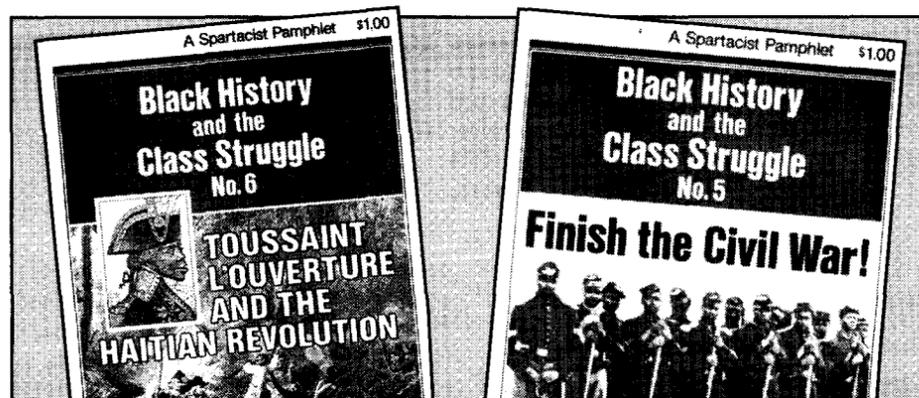
Spartacist League banner at London Iraq demonstration, September 2002.

the IRA confessed they did the Guildford bombing, the state ignored this and kept the innocent people in prison. The footage of American Civil Rights protestors being attacked by white racists reminded them of Belfast, not in the 1950s but in 2001, when Catholic parents and children attending the Holy Cross School faced baying mobs of Loyalists. This is part and parcel of Blair's imperialist "peace" deal,

(SWP), the Socialist Party and others in the Stop the War Coalition (StWC). To the millions of people who have demonstrated against the Iraq war, the reformists' strategy is to plead with Tony Blair (or Gordon Brown) to stop acting as "Bush's poodle". This demoralises activists and derails their struggle into pressuring for a more

"humane" foreign policy for British imperialism. This only adds to the mountain of lies that imperialist "democracy" can be persuaded to end war and pursue a "peaceful" foreign policy.

An example of proletarian revolutionary internationalism was seen in our statement issued last month when British soldiers and sailors were seized by Iranian forces in the Shatt al-Arab



Black History and the Class Struggle, published by Spartacist League/US, on struggle to finish the Civil War and fulfil promise of black freedom (right) and on Haitian Revolution (left).

which as we said would necessarily be at the expense of the oppressed Catholics and would not do any good for working-class Protestants either.

Campaigning for Mumia has the potential to rekindle the traditions of internationalism among the working class. Genuine internationalism is counterposed to the strategy of reformists such as the Socialist Workers Party

waterway. There was a huge chauvinist hue and cry in the British press against Iran. We said that US and British imperialism are the aggressors and they have targeted Iran, a semi-colonial country. The British forces claimed they were intercepted not in Iranian, but in Iraqi territorial waters, according to a line drawn by the British imperialists in the past, though it has never been agreed. We called for defence of Iran, and said that it needs nuclear weapons to defend itself, because having nuclear weapons today is about the only guarantee of sovereignty and we made the obvious point that British troops should get out of Iraq and Afghanistan now.

What's necessary is not a change of foreign policy, but the revolutionary overthrow of imperialism—the system that inevitably means wars and plunder. The history of British imperialism gives the lie to the notion that if only it stood more independently things would be better. Britain dominated the world for centuries, based on vast profits built

up out of slavery. This year marks the two-hundredth anniversary of the legal abolition of the slave trade in the British empire. The commemorations focus heavily on parliamentary abolitionists such as William Wilberforce, in furtherance of the notion that, in the end, parliament ensures that justice is done. In fact British parliamentarians such as William Pitt began to agitate for an end to the slave trade—not slavery itself—because sugar production was declining in the British-dominated West Indies at the time, but French-controlled Saint-Domingue (in what is now Haiti) was booming, it was the richest colony in the world. Pitt's agitation was primarily motivated by the need to cut off the labour supply to Britain's French rival. Another factor in ending the transatlantic trade was that new generations of slaves were being born in the American South.

Slavery in Saint-Domingue was abolished through a social revolution led by Toussaint L'Ouverture. Beginning in 1791, he trained an army of former slaves, took on and defeated the very best armies that the French and British empires sent to defeat him. This was inspired by the first American Revolution—the War of Independence—and by the French Revolution. In the British West Indies, the 1831 rebellion in Jamaica was decisive in putting an end to slavery. These rebellions resulted in the legal abolition of slavery in parliament in 1834. The slave owners and the British ruling class were frightened to death by what they had seen: slaves rising up against their masters and taking over society.

For the bicentenary, many reformists are calling for some form of reparations for slavery, or at least for the imperialists (particularly the G8 powers) to end poverty in Africa. The only road to "reparations" for the huge injustices of slavery is by ending the capitalist system that maintains Africa in dire poverty today. It is obscene to appeal to the British ruling class, who ran Africa with untold brutality including long after the abolition of slavery. In the 1950s in Kenya, in response to an uprising of the Kikuyu people, they killed an estimated 100,000 people. Equally obscene are appeals for imperialist intervention in Sudan where in 1898 British General Kitchener massacred 10,000 Sudanese. His army later bemoaned the cost of the bullets used to shoot the wounded as they lay on the ground!

When slavery was abolished it was replaced by the wage slavery of capitalism, to which racism was grafted on. It took a second American Revolution—the Civil War—to end chattel slavery in the US. The Spartacist League/US uses the slogan "Finish the Civil War!" to express our perspective of proletarian revolution and our understanding of the centrality of the black question. Our fight for black liberation through socialist revolution ensured that we took up Mumia's case and made it known internationally. As sections of the International Communist League, our American section is dedicated to building a multiracial revolutionary workers party to lead the American workers revolution. The Spartacist League/Britain is dedicated to building such a party to lead the fight to overthrow British imperialism. ■

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Mumia...

(Continued from page 12)

ballistics evidence and a totally fabricated confession invented by the police two months after the shooting.

As I will further explain, on a factual level, there is not a scintilla of evidence against Mumia. What is there for a jury to hear and consider?

Regarding witnesses: the prosecution produced at trial one supposed eyewitness, the prostitute Cynthia White, who, according to the police, is now dead. No witness, including Cynthia White, testified that Mumia shot Faulkner. At the 1982 trial, Cynthia White said she saw Mumia with a gun in his hand as he ran across the parking lot. But two prostitutes and one other woman who knew White have since sworn that White admitted this was false testimony under threats from the cops. Two of these women stood up to vicious cross-examination in the post-conviction hearings. Two eyewitnesses, William Singletary and Dessie Hightower, testified that White wasn't on the corner during the shooting.

The other supposed key eyewitness, a cab driver named Robert Chobert, admitted at the post-conviction hearing to receiving favours from the prosecutors. And he admitted to a defence investigator that his cab was not parked where the prosecution asserted it was and that he was not in a position to see anything. This is confirmed in photos of the scene recently brought to light by Michael Schiffmann.

Regarding Mumia's supposed confession: the hospital confession supposedly made by Mumia the night of the shooting was decisively exposed in the 1995 post-conviction hearing to be a prosecution and police fabrication, invented at a DA roundtable meeting some two months after the shooting to prepare cops for their trial testimony. No police report from that night mentions Mumia's confession, and in fact a cop who was with Mumia all night directly said that Mumia "made no comments".

Regarding ballistics: the utter nonexistence of ballistics and other physical evidence is crystal clear. There is no evidence that Mumia's gun was even fired that night, let alone that the bullet in Faulkner's head wound matched Mumia's gun. There are recently uncovered photos showing the cop at the scene walking around with his fingers all over a gun. There are discrepancies in police reports regarding the type of bullets in Mumia's gun. There is a missing bullet fragment from Faulkner's wound and a missing medical examiner's X-ray of Faulkner's body. There is no physical evidence of Faulkner being shot as described by police—straight down at his head while lying on the sidewalk. There are no divots (marks) on the sidewalk. The bullets found at the scene do not support trajectories of Mumia shooting the cop, but rather that there was more than one shooter and that one came from a totally different direction than Mumia.

Moreover, there is evidence directly in support of Mumia's innocence already testified to in court hearings in '95, '96 and '97. Vietnam vet William Singletary was an eyewitness to the shooting and testified in '95 that Mumia arrived after Faulkner was shot and that the shooter, wearing a green army jacket, came from the parked VW and then ran from the scene. Singletary told this to police the

night of the shooting, and he was repeatedly threatened, his gas station was vandalised, and he was driven from town during the 1982 trial. Other witnesses, including Dessie Hightower, who testified at the trial, said they saw someone run from the scene. At the post-conviction hearing in '95, Hightower told how he was singled out for a lie detector test and other coercion in an attempt to stop him from testifying at trial.

Veronica Jones testified in 1996 that she had seen someone run from the scene and that police threatened her with long jail time on robbery charges unless she testified differently at trial. In 1997, prostitute Pamela Jenkins testified that other cops were there during the shooting, including one Larry Boston. She also testified that prostitute Cynthia White was a police informant and performed sexual favours for cops. Another witness came forward who

efforts. In 1999, Mumia's brother admitted that the passenger in his VW, Ken Freeman, said that he was involved in the shooting of Faulkner and he ran from the scene after the shooting.

Arnold Beverly confessed that he, not Mumia, shot and killed Faulkner. Moreover, Beverly stated that he was hired, along with someone else, to do so by cops and the mob because Faulkner was a problem for corrupt cops, interfering with rackets, bribery, drug dealing, etc. Beverly states that he was wearing a green army jacket and that he himself was shot that night. The police connection for the hit, according to Beverly, was Larry Boston, who Pamela Jenkins stated in the '97 hearing had been on the scene at the time of the shooting.

At the time of Faulkner's murder in 1981, there were at least three ongoing federal investigations into police corruption in Philadelphia, including

in the 1970 attacks on the Philly Panthers. Giordano was the police supervisor of the year-long 1977-78 siege of the MOVE Powelton Village house. He knew just who Mumia was.

It is with these facts in mind that the confession of Arnold Beverly must be considered. Remember the prosecution's lying evidence. Beverly states that there was more than one shooter and that they ran from the scene. This explains witnesses seeing a passenger in the VW and seeing the shooter running away. Beverly's confession explains the absence of ballistics evidence supporting the prosecution's scenario—how the shooting happened, the direction of the shots, the conflicts regarding the calibre of the weapon. Beverly states that Mumia was shot not by Faulkner but by another police officer on the scene. That fits with the trajectory of the shot to Mumia and the statement of a homicide cop at the scene who reported that Mumia was shot by an arriving police officer. It is also supported by a witness who said that Faulkner's gun was in its holster when he was taken away from the scene. The gun that was allegedly Faulkner's was likely a "throwaway"—it was inoperable and dirty.

Moreover, some five witnesses including *two cops* have said that *the shooter wore a green army jacket*. Both Beverly and Freeman were wearing green army jackets that night. But Mumia was wearing a red quilted ski jacket with wide vertical blue stripes on the front, and Billy Cook wore a blue Nehru-style jacket with brass buttons. This is incontrovertible evidence that there was at least one person there at the shooting who was not Billy Cook or Mumia. This fact, along with the bullet trajectories and the absence of ballistics evidence supporting either the shooting of Faulkner or the shooting of Mumia, is absolute refutation of the police and prosecution version.

Mumia's arrival on the scene gave the cops a two-for-one. Mumia was well known. It had been a short span of time, less than ten years, between Mumia's prominence as a Black Panther and his becoming a prominent MOVE supporter and journalist. And prosecutions of MOVE members, including trials following the Powelton Village police siege, had taken place just a couple of months before the Faulkner shooting.

At the scene after Faulkner was killed, the cops tried to kill Mumia. He was critically wounded from a gunshot in the chest, through his lungs and to his liver. He was rammed into a lamppost and thrown into a police van. Giordano himself beat Mumia in the police van and later said Mumia had confessed to shooting Faulkner and that he threw his gun on the ground. The other cop who was in the van said there was no such confession. Giordano arranged the supposed identification of Mumia by the cab driver, Robert Chobert, who was promised favours and protected by the police. Giordano was the cop who first reported that Mumia's gun was found on the street (according to the police radio records, some 14 minutes after hordes of cops arrived in the area). This contradicts the official police story that Mumia's gun was found within a minute. Giordano's intention was to finish Mumia off by taking him to police headquarters for further questioning. Mumia's crime that night was that he survived the cops' attempt to kill him, too.

To complete the picture: despite Giordano being the senior officer at the



PACEMAKER
Massachusetts anarchist workers Bartolomeo Vanzetti and Nicola Sacco (right), executed in 1927. Above: Gerard Conlon emerges free in 1989, years after frame-up by British state for 1974 Guildford bombing.



no credit

testified that he saw undercover cops on the scene at the time of the shooting.

The Beverly confession

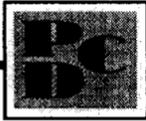
Even under the constraints of Sabo's totally biased court, the DA's evidence was smashed to smithereens over ten years ago. It would be reasonable to expect that as more and more evidence of the conscious police frame-up was brought out in court proceedings, a movement defending Mumia Abu-Jamal would embrace these legal developments. The new evidence from the court proceedings could only support a mobilisation in defence of Mumia—on the basis of Mumia's innocence and the fact that a black political activist was framed up by a state determined to see him dead. But in effect this legal evidence was rejected! The so-called left in the US that belatedly took up Mumia's defence in 1995 and afterward did not take up the call to free Mumia now, which the PDC mobilised around, but *rejected* that demand as the basis for mass protests, centring their demands instead on the call for a new trial.

In early 1999, in preparation for a likely denial of the Pennsylvania court appeals and in preparation for federal *habeas corpus* proceedings, Jon Piper and I, with some other lawyers, intensely again combed over the records of the prior proceedings and the state's evidence and also renewed investigation

police-mob connections. I recently learned that the Justice Department had evidence against some 400 Philly cops from those investigations and wanted to bring indictments. But the federal judge overseeing the investigation said to pick only the top 20 or so. Of the police involved in Mumia's case, at least one-third were indicted sometime over the next few years on corruption charges.

An FBI informant who was key to those federal prosecutions confirmed that at the time of Faulkner's shooting, the word was out that the Feds had a police informant. A former federal prosecutor acknowledged that they had a police informant whose brother was also a cop, like Faulkner's. The commanding officer of the Central Police Division, where the murder of Faulkner took place, the chief of the homicide division and one Inspector Alfonzo Giordano were all under investigation on federal corruption charges. These cops were the *chain of command* in the frame-up of Mumia.

Inspector Giordano was the ranking officer on the scene—and the central witness against Mumia at the preliminary hearing after the arrest. He not only was one of the cops under investigation for corruption but had been the right-hand man for Frank Rizzo, the former Philadelphia police chief and mayor. Giordano was involved in the daily surveillance of Black Panther Party members, and he led the police Stakeout team



scene who allegedly heard Mumia confess and found the murder weapon, he never testified at Mumia's trial. He resigned from the police force the day after the trial was over. In 1986 he copped a plea on federal charges based on his receiving tens of thousands of dollars in illegal pay-offs during 1979-80. He didn't spend any time in jail.

Reformists demobilise the fight for Mumia

Thus, the proof of Mumia's innocence and the state frame-up is overwhelming. But Mumia's former lawyers suppressed the Beverly confession and the totality of the supporting evidence. Long-time "movement lawyer" Len Weinglass rejected this evidence as too hot, unbelievable, and co-counsel Dan Williams said it would lead to arguing that the police knowingly framed up an innocent man! But this is not unbelievable, and to claim so denies the reality of the cops and the courts.

In fact, there is no limit to examples of the conscious frame-up of innocent people in the bourgeois courts. Before their convictions were exposed as complete government fabrications, the Guildford Four spent 15 years in prison, and the Birmingham Six were incarcerated for 16 years after being sentenced in the 1970s as part of British imperialism's war of terror against Irish nationalists. Before his release in 1997, former Black Panther leader Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt) spent 27 years in prison for a killing the FBI's own wiretap logs showed he could not have committed, while New York Panther leader Dhoruba bin Wahad was imprisoned for 19 years on frame-up charges before his release in 1990. "War on terror" repression has also taken many innocent victims.

Moreover, Mumia's case has been presented in court after court—each has denied the evidence of his frame-up and innocence. That includes three evidentiary hearings, plus three motions and two appeals to the Pennsylvania State Supreme Court, a federal *habeas corpus* petition filed in the US District Court, a revised federal petition and yet another state court petition as well as three applications for hearing to the US Supreme Court. A federal judge's reversal of Mumia's death sentence in December 2001 was immediately appealed by the prosecution, and Mumia has never been off death row since his conviction in 1982.

As a lawyer for Mumia, I had fought in the defence team to bring forward the evidence of the police frame-up and his innocence. When it was decisively clear with the rejection of the Beverly confession, Billy Cook's statement and all the other supporting evidence that Mumia's lead counsel, Len Weinglass, would not allow this, Jon Piper and I resigned from the legal team in July 1999. It was a betrayal of Mumia's legal defence to preclude bringing evidence of his innocence into the courts. And this betrayal is paralleled by so-called leftists who are behind the coalitions acting under the name "Free Mumia" but who mobilise on the basis of reliance on the justice and fairness of the courts and the call for a new, fair trial for Mumia.

To what end and for what purpose would leftists demand that this clearly innocent man be subjected to a new trial? As you can see, there is no evidence to be considered. Mumia himself submitted his own affidavit declaring his innocence when the Beverly confession and other evidence were finally

submitted to court in 2001, with a new legal team. Mumia states: "I did not shoot Police Officer Daniel Faulkner. I had nothing to do with the killing of Officer Faulkner. I am innocent."

The bogus argument has been raised that the Beverly evidence is "divisive". But since 1995, long before the Beverly confession, the so-called left rejected the evidence of the extent of the state frame-up and the political lessons to be drawn from that. This became explicit at a January 1999 "leadership meeting" of some 100 groups and individuals—including the Workers World Party, Socialist Action, Solidarity, Refuse & Resist (associated with the Revolutionary Communist Party)—who debated the question. The decision pushed by the reformist left, represented as well by the International Socialist Organization, was to "broaden" the movement and go to the "mainstream". They renounced the demands to free Mumia and to abolish the racist death penalty in favour of the slogan: new trial for Mumia.



Witnesses Pamela Jenkins and Veronica Jones, flanked by attorneys Rachel Wolkenstein and Leonard Weinglass, at press conference during Mumia's March 1997 PCRA hearings.

At all stages of the case, the reformists' political line is that the next court will be the just one. When the state courts ruled against Mumia, illusions were spread that the US federal court would fairly rule on his petition. Now illusions are being spread in the fairness of the US appeals courts since the US federal court upheld Mumia's conviction. And in between court proceedings, the reformists undertook no significant mobilisation.

These were political decisions, pure and simple. They were not based on fact—on Mumia's innocence and the enormity of the proven frame-up. Rather, the reformist left attempted to limit the political mobilisation in defence of Mumia to an appeal for fairness in the courts. They appeal to bourgeois liberal forces who see Mumia's case not as the political and racist frame-up of an innocent man but as an isolated "miscarriage of justice", an aberration that threatens to stain the democratic process.

Even the legal papers that I filed in 1995-97, and agreed to by Mumia's lead counsel at the time, Leonard Weinglass, did not focus on the call for a new trial! We called for dismissing the charges because of the magnitude of the frame-up. Because if you want to deal solely on the plane of what the law in the United States says, the suppression of evidence and the falsification of evidence are such that the whole case should be thrown out. This is part of the reason that I say that calling for people

to mobilise around the demand for a new trial is not guided by legal precepts, as is often claimed, but by a *political programme*.

The system of capitalist injustice

Mumia's case is a real-life case of police frame-up, an object lesson in the class nature of the capitalist state, which is not neutral. The state, with its cops and supported by the courts, is a machine of organised violence on behalf of one class, the capitalist class, defending the profit system against the working people, against minorities. The job of the courts is to mete out capitalist injustice. That is the lesson of the Haymarket martyrs, anarchists executed in 1887 in Chicago for leading struggles for the eight-hour day; of the anarchist workers Sacco and Vanzetti, framed up in Massachusetts on murder charges and executed in 1927; of the Scottsboro Boys, nine black youths arrested in 1931 who spent nearly two decades in

Alabama prison hellholes on bogus rape charges, eight of them sentenced to death; of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, executed in 1953 on espionage charges as part of the anti-Soviet Cold War.

The slogan for a "new trial" represents a programme of reliance on the racist capitalist courts that at every level have upheld Mumia's frame-up conviction. In the infamous 1857 Dred Scott case that sanctified slavery in the US, the Supreme Court said that a black man has no rights that the white man is bound to respect. The capitalist state and its courts have made clear that *Mumia has no rights the courts are bound to respect*.

Thus the significance of the Beverly evidence and why it has been suppressed in the legal battles as well as on the political plane has a simple answer. The Beverly evidence exposes the fraud that the American bourgeois legal system can provide justice. It demonstrates the unity of purpose of the cops, prosecution and courts in upholding the capitalist rulers' interest. It makes it clear that the injustice to Mumia was not the action of one rogue cop, prosecutor or judge *but the entire functioning of the capitalist system of injustice*. The role of the reformist left is to act as an obstacle to the development of that understanding. They promote the same illusions in the "justice of the courts" as liberal journalists David Lindorff and Michael Schiffmann, whose writings ostensibly on Mumia's behalf actually *undermine* the fight for his freedom (see "Class-

Struggle Defense vs. Faith in Capitalist 'Justice'," *Workers Vanguard* no 892, 11 May).

Their purpose is to promote the notion of the inviolability of the bourgeois state. This means denying Mumia's innocence. It means denying the extent of the state frame-up and why. This all serves to politically disarm and demobilise those who are drawn to Mumia's cause. This political policy served to demobilise a mass international movement. It has meant rejecting the very reasons that millions around the globe took up Mumia's cause: revulsion with the injustices inherent in capitalism—poverty, racial oppression and ethnic bias, war; identification with Mumia's fight against "the system" and for justice for all of humanity.

To free Mumia now, to save him from execution or the slow death of a lifetime in prison, it is necessary to organise on the basis of a class-struggle defence. While that means utilising all possible legal proceedings, class-struggle defence is based on an understanding of the nature of the capitalist state, and that there can be no reliance on its courts but all reliance on the power of the working class and its allies.

The courts do not sit in judgment and rule in isolation. There is a pressure that can be brought to bear. But it will take an international mobilisation of the masses, centrally labour and its allies—youth, minorities, immigrants—to turn the tide and obtain Mumia's freedom. It was an international mobilisation crucially including trade unionists, from South Africa to Europe to the US, that stayed the executioner's hand when Mumia was ten days from execution in 1995. It took that mobilisation to get the stay of execution, to push the courts to abide by their legal obligation to allow Mumia to pursue his legal appeals. Now, with the possibility that the courts could reverse the overturning of Mumia's death sentence, the issue is Mumia's very life—whether execution or the slow death of life imprisonment.

The work undertaken by the PDC, our fraternal defence organisations and the International Communist League over the past months to revive the struggle for Mumia's freedom on the basis that he is an innocent man is a step forward. Hundreds of individuals and organisations, including unions representing tens of thousands of workers, have signed our statement emphasising Mumia's innocence and demanding his freedom. But we need a mass movement based on the power of the working class, the power seen in its ability to withhold labour through strike action. Imagine, for example, what it would mean if Philadelphia and New York transit workers struck, not only to secure a decent wage, health care and job conditions but to demand Mumia's freedom! What it would mean for labour to withhold its power in other capitalist centres, stopping communications, transport and industry, demanding: Free Mumia now!

Mumia is up against the vast resources of the capitalist state. But there is a road for victory for Mumia—for his freedom. That begins with the understanding that the class enemy will stop at nothing—from lies to terror—on the street and in the courts. Freedom for Mumia lies in understanding that the power to fight and win lies in the class struggle—in the mobilisation of the multiracial, multiethnic proletariat. Free Mumia now! ■

Labour...

(Continued from page 2)

been an article of faith. In 1997, when Blair's New Labour was first elected bringing an end to 18 years of Tory rule, we issued a statement titled: "For a revolutionary workers party! For a federation of workers republics in the British Isles!" which declared:

"The Spartacist League/Britain says unequivocally: No Vote to New Labour in the general election! New Labour is pledged to maintaining the sickening reality of life under capitalism—keeping the unions in shackles, slashing welfare programmes, waging war on workers, racial minorities and immigrants, women and youth—everybody who is consigned to the bottom of the heap by rotting British capitalism. Blair's 'contract with Britain' is a pact with the bloated City of London, where vast wealth is generated from profits extracted through exploitation of workers around the world."

—reprinted in *Workers Hammer* no 156, May/June 1997

Everything we said has been borne out, down to the lavish fortunes being extracted by the private equity moguls in the City, and then some.

At the time we gave critical support to Arthur Scargill's Socialist Labour Party (SLP) which was formed in a split from New Labour in 1995 and was distinguished from the rest of the reformist left by its refusal to vote Labour. The above statement explained that "in standing against New Labour the SLP are in breach of the 'eleventh commandment' of the British left, that 'thou shalt vote Labour', come hell or high water." While we canvassed for votes to the SLP, our statement said that "there is a clear counterposition between what the Spartacist League stands for and what the SLP represents." At SLP meetings we had sharp exchanges with Scargill over his nationalist protectionism—support for British coal and British industry generally—as against proletarian internationalism. Frequently also when Spartacist speakers would argue the need for a party based on the communism of Lenin and Trotsky, Scargill would dismiss the 1917 Russian October Revolution, offering instead the Labour tradition of Keir Hardie and Nye Bevan, Labour Party "left" leaders from the periods following World Wars I and II. This old Labour tradition has always defended the interests of British imperialism at home and abroad. Labour governments presided over imperialist butchery such as the bloody partition of India in 1947, leading to mass communalist slaughter, while attacking workers at home. The British Labour Party has been an anti-communist bulwark in Europe and Labour's Ernest Bevin was instrumental in the founding of NATO, the imperialists' anti-Soviet military alliance in 1949.

Reformists still grovelling to Labour

In 1997, the SWP and Workers Power were emphatically for a Labour government; when Labour won by a landslide, then SWP leader Tony Cliff declared that his party was "over the moon". The Socialist Party ran its own candidates in some areas but their overwhelming aim was to "Get the Tories Out". Labour-loyalism was still alive and well in 2001 despite Labour's role in the bombing of Serbia in 1999. The slogan of the SWP—then a component of the Socialist Alliance, which stood candidates—was "vote socialist where you can, vote Labour where you must".

With Labour today widely reviled the reformists are more covert in their support to it. But the umbilical cord is far

from broken, as shown in their posturing over the leadership and deputy leadership of the Labour Party. The SWP, Socialist Party, Workers Power plus its erstwhile comrades now in "Permanent Revolution", and the "Communist Party of Great Britain" all backed John McDonnell. Much wailing and gnashing of teeth was occasioned by his failure to even get the nominations of 44 MPs required to get on the ballot. But for all their bellyaching against Blair and Brown, a number of Labour "left" MPs and union bureaucrats would have nothing to do with McDonnell. When McDonnell was defeated, he and his supporters bent over backwards to ingratiate themselves with Brown.

In the contest for deputy leader, not a single contender opposed the Iraq invasion in 2003. Yet predictably most of the fake left supported Jon Cruddas, a thoroughly New Labour MP who voted for the Iraq invasion in 2003 (but lately discovered this was a "mistake") and voted for ID cards and 90 days detention without trial for

party. If this were the case, for revolutionaries it would be unprincipled to advocate any form of tactics towards a bourgeois party; but for the Socialist Party, no such principles apply. Thus their paper said workers should support McDonnell for leader, even while asserting that: "New Labour today is a capitalist party devoid of rank-and-file membership", because "the majority of trade union leaders are still mistakenly arguing that New Labour can be changed. If they are sincere in this [!], those in affiliated trade unions should support John McDonnell's campaign for the leadership, as the only candidate who stands on a programme that is in the interests of trade union members, in that it is against cuts, low pay and privatisation" (*Socialist*, 14-20 September 2006).

For the Taaffeites, and indeed for the SWP, if Labour were still the traditional social-democratic party it has been for decades, it would be *obligatory* to vote for it in all circumstances. Meanwhile the Socialist Party calls for a "new mass workers party" which amounts to a ver-

paved the way for counterrevolution in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in 1991-92. This was a catastrophic defeat for the working class of the whole world which the SWP welcomed, indeed they worked hard for this throughout the anti-Soviet Cold War.

Leninists and the Labour Party

Labour was founded a hundred years ago in opposition to the capitalist Liberal Party, a separation which both Blair and Brown wish to reverse. Originating as what Lenin termed a "bourgeois workers party", Labour was defined by a mass working-class base but a pro-capitalist leadership and programme. Lenin also insisted that this party was not the political organisation of the trade union movement, but of the union bureaucracy. At the Second Congress of the Communist International in 1920 he said that "the Labour Party is a thoroughly bourgeois party, because, although made up of workers, it is led by reactionaries, and the worst kind of reactionaries at that, who act

What they said in 1997...



1997 election: SWP and Workers Power upheld "eleventh commandment" of British reformism and were over the moon at Blair's landslide.

"terrorism" suspects! Cruddas makes "Honest John" McDonnell look almost like a socialist. At least McDonnell voted against the Iraq invasion and the introduction of ID cards. But calling for a vote to McDonnell is no kind of opposition to Gordon Brown. Despite a concerted effort by the Brownites to keep him off the ballot, McDonnell endorsed Brown for leader. So much for his supposed opposition to the Iraq occupation—which is based on calling in the UN, that imposed sanctions on Iraq leading to hundreds of thousands of deaths prior to the invasion.

Many rank and file trade union members had illusions in McDonnell, not least due to an all-out campaign by the reformists to support him. This was the purpose of a letter published in the *Guardian* on 12 May, signed by many Labour councillors, ostensible socialists and trade unionists, which asked "Labour MPs to nominate John McDonnell in order to allow a genuine debate about the future direction of our party", and stated that a coronation of Gordon Brown "will be inconsistent with the proud democratic traditions of our party". Such illusions in the Labour Party's "traditions" have tied the working class to the British capitalist rulers for almost a century.

Today the SWP describes Labour as "hollowed-out", while Peter Taaffe's Socialist Party, which originated in "Militant"—an organic part of the old Labour Party for decades—proclaims that Labour has become a capitalist

sion of the old Labour Party with its record of betrayals. Endorsers of their call for a new party include Socialist Party members of the trade union bureaucracy, including those who form a majority in the national executive of the civil service union, the PCS. These reformists agreed to a rotten sell-out deal on pensions in 2005 which means new entrants will have to work *five more years* (to age 65) to qualify for their pension. This is of a piece with the Socialist Party's blatantly reformist position on the state—that the police are "workers in uniform"—which means they do not object to the presence of immigration police in the union. This is a scandal—we say: *Immigration police out of the PCS!*

The SWP's "alternative" to Labour is the "Respect" coalition, a cross-class alliance which makes no pretence whatsoever to being "socialist" or to oppose the capitalist system in the name of the working class. Under cover of fighting against Islamophobia, Respect renounces secularism and any meaningful fight for rights for women and gays in pursuit of unity with the mosques. Capitulation to Islam is not new for the SWP: these reformists backed the Islamic-fundamentalist *mujahedin* and howled along with the imperialists against the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in December 1979. We proudly proclaimed "Hail Red Army!" and "Extend the gains of the October Revolution to the Afghan peoples!" But the Kremlin Stalinists treacherously withdrew from Afghanistan in 1989, a surrender to imperialism which

quite in the spirit of the bourgeoisie." Labour's role in tying the working class to British imperialism was particularly evident in periods of upsurge by the working class, such as in the aftermath of the Russian Revolution. In 1918 Labour adopted "Clause IV" which promised "common ownership" of the means of production, which for decades served to stave off the threat of what the capitalist rulers saw and dreaded as the "threat of Bolshevism". The massive wave of struggles of the working class was diverted into the pursuit of reforms of capitalism through the "Mother of Parliaments".

A strategic task of revolutionaries in Britain has been to split the Labour Party and win its working-class base to communism. Advocating tactics—including extending critical support in elections when appropriate—the goal was to exacerbate the contradiction between the working-class base and the pro-capitalist leadership. Historically there was a symbiotic relationship between "left" and right in the party, in which figures like Tony Benn played the role of keeping more militant workers tied to Labour. They were aided and abetted by reformists like the SWP who always supported the "lefts" against the right, furthering the illusion that the way to advance the interests of the workers is through class collaboration and electing "socialists" to parliament, while leaving the capitalist state machinery intact. But the working class cannot simply take over the existing apparatus of the state; it must be

shattered and replaced by a genuinely socialist regime based not on parliament but on organs of working-class rule, and must be extended internationally.

The split taking place today between the unions and the Labour Party is not happening as it was previously envisaged by Leninists—through leftward motion away from Labourism at the base of the unions—but as part of the all-sided attacks on the working people by the Labour government. Blair has gone some way towards transforming the Labour Party into an outright bourgeois party, and Brown intends to reduce the role of the unions in the party even further. Blair sought to replace union funding with donations from millionaires (leading to the “cash for honours” scandal) but the party accounts are still in the red.

Meanwhile, loathing of the government has led the membership of many unions to seek to disaffiliate from Labour, by refusing to pay the political levy. The Fire Brigades Union (FBU) has disaffiliated and the RMT was expelled in 2004, while moves towards disaffiliation in other unions have been stymied by the union bureaucrats who wish to return to the days of class collaboration when they were treated to “beer and sandwiches” at Downing Street. The new union Unite, a merger of the TGWU and Amicus, has Labour Party affiliation written into its draft rules; the CWU, GMB and Unison remain affiliated, despite hatred of the Labour government

among their members.

However the process of transforming Labour into a version of the Democratic Party in the US is not finished and a hypothesis that Labour has now become simply a capitalist party needs to be tested in the course of social and political struggle. This may well take the form of a sharp confrontation between the Labour government and a striking union, for example. Even before Blair, Labour was a mass social-democratic party that defended the interests of British imperialism at home and abroad when in power. Labour used troops to break the firefighters strike in 1977, sent the troops to Northern Ireland in 1969 and introduced grotesquely racist immigration controls, including “virginity” tests for Asian women entering Britain in the 1970s. “Old” Labour governments however could not easily resort to actually smashing the unions, to which the party was organically linked. Key to the link was the trade union bureaucracy on whom Labour and the capitalist state relied heavily to defend the capitalist order through class-collaboration and betrayal of their members, especially through appeals to the “national interest”.

Defending the “national interest” and the capitalist order is the political basis for the union bureaucracy’s support to Labour historically and today. This shared political perspective is why the “lefts” (the so-called “awkward squad”) have been crawling on their knees before Blair for a decade. The FBU leadership

of Andy Gilchrist scandalously called off the firefighters strike of late 2002, when Blair threatened to use troops to break their strike. The leadership buckled under to national chauvinism, when the union was baited as “Saddamites”, *because* the strike—for decent wages—had the potential to disrupt the military’s preparation for the invasion of Iraq.

The CWU leadership under Billy Hayes scandalously disowned a hugely effective “unofficial” strike in late 2003 because it defied the anti-union laws. Today the postal workers, who are among the lowest paid workers in the country, are embarking on a series of one-day strikes against massive redundancies. Their leadership not only insists they play by Labour’s anti-union laws, but endorsed Alan Johnson for Labour deputy leader—an arch-Blairite, former general secretary of the union who supports privatisation schemes in the postal service. Enraged members resolutely overturned Johnson’s endorsement at the recent CWU conference.

Only through the mobilisation of workers in struggle can the workers fight for their interests and in defence of all the oppressed. The union bureaucracy is a proven obstacle to unleashing the potential power of the working class. This poses the need for a political break with the union bureaucracy and forging a revolutionary leadership in the course of struggle. The key question is what kind of party the working class needs to really represent its interests,

independently of the capitalists. As distinct from Labourite reformism, which bases itself on the chauvinism and prejudices of the dominant ethnic group and of the British ruling class, a revolutionary party must champion the rights of all the oppressed. A genuine workers party must win the working class to the understanding that the cause of all exploitation and oppression is the capitalist system and therefore fundamental change in the interests of the working class, racial minorities and all the oppressed, including women, can not come through parliamentary elections but only through revolutionary internationalist class struggle which, pursued to the end, must shatter the capitalist order.

The only solution to imperialist depredation, such as the carnage in Iraq and Afghanistan today, and to the increasing immiseration of the working class and poor, is the revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist order by the proletariat and its replacement with a rationally planned economy under the rule of the workers on an international scale. This task requires the construction of a Leninist-Trotskyist party, forged in the struggle to break the working class from all illusions in Labour and parliamentarism. The multiethnic revolutionary workers party we seek to build will be dedicated to the fight for a federation of workers republics in the British Isles, part of a Socialist United States of Europe. ■

Scotland...

(Continued from page 1)

the City of London financiers, bleeds workers in Britain and across the world. The devolved Scottish parliament and Welsh assembly were set up by Blair’s New Labour following its 1997 election victory, in an attempt to stem the growing discontent in Scotland where a majority had voted Labour for years but were repeatedly subjected to Tory rule from Westminster. However, Blair made it crystal clear at the time that English domination would remain unaltered, arrogantly asserting that “sovereignty rests with me as an English MP, and that’s the way it will stay”. Blair contemptuously snubbed the Scottish parliament during his recent visit to Libya where he signed a memorandum of understanding with the Libyan regime over the exchange of prisoners, riding roughshod over the veto powers of the Scottish parliament, provoking an angry response from Salmond. Such a prisoner exchange could include Abdelbaset Ali Mohamed al Megrahi, who is serving a life sentence in Scotland after being convicted of blowing up a Pan Am flight over the Scottish town of Lockerbie in December 1988, in a case that bears all the hallmarks of a classic frame-up.

For the right of self-determination for the Scottish and Welsh nations!

Blair’s successor Gordon Brown today pushes a reactionary agenda of promoting “Britishness”, draping himself in the Union flag—the bloody butcher’s apron of national oppression and imperialist pillage from Ireland to Iraq—while forcing new immigrants to speak English and to learn the supposedly British values of “freedom, liberty and tolerance”. Tell that to the population of Basra! Brown’s “Britishness” campaign is a pledge to his capitalist bosses that under his premier-

ship the Labour government will be, if anything, even more racist, anti-working-class and anti-Scottish than under Blair.

Nationalist sentiment in Scotland has grown significantly in the past two decades, in opposition to Margaret Thatcher’s Tory government which devastated major industrial proletarian centres in Scotland, Wales and the north of England and then in opposition to Labour under Blair which tried to outdo Thatcher in attacks on health care, education and other social programmes. Today, areas of Glasgow, such as Shettleston, are among the most impoverished and deprived in the country with a life expectancy of no more than 63—13 years less than the UK average. A *Guardian* article from 21 January 2006, referring to Glasgow’s Calton area has the startling headline: “In Iraq, life expectancy is 67. Minutes from Glasgow city centre, it’s 54”. The article describes the deadly poverty and malnutrition in an area where “deprivation bites into almost every home: 44% are on incapacity benefit, 37% live in a workless household and 30% of homes are occupied by a lone parent”. It notes:

“At one time the backbone of industrial Glasgow, the Calton, with its men working in shipyards and foundries, was skirted by the city’s markets—the meat market, fish market, cheese market—all supplying fresh food, all of them, along with the industrial jobs, gone.”

The devastation of the proletariat and the social decay engendered by capitalism cannot be addressed by either by “devolution” or independence under capitalism, but require a workers revolution throughout the British Isles which rips the means of production out of the hands of the capitalist class and begins the construction of a socialist society based on a planned, collectivised economy with production for human need, not for capitalist profits.

Hatred of Labour in Scotland has mainly benefited the bourgeois SNP which, despite its posturing as a social-

democratic party, is an outright enemy of the Scottish proletariat and seeks to rule an independent Scotland on behalf of Scottish bankers and bosses within the context of NATO and the European Union. The SNP visualises using the oil wealth of the North Sea to mimic the Irish Republic as a low-wage haven for capitalist exploitation. Salmond’s vision of “independence” entails paying allegiance to the English Queen, whom he calls “Elizabeth, Queen of Scots” (*Guardian*, 24 May), and for whom he is now a Privy Councillor.

The Spartacist League upholds the right of self-determination for Scotland—as well as for Wales—which means the right to form independent states and implies also the right *not* to separate. Our attitude is grounded in intransigent opposition to all forms of nationalism—first and foremost the dominant English chauvinism. It is possible that the pervasive anti-Scottish chauvinism of the British bourgeoisie could drive the Scots towards separation. However, given the lack of decisive national differences in either language or religion, we do not presently call for independence for Scotland and Wales but advocate a course of common class struggle against the British state.

Following Lenin’s Bolsheviks who fought for “Complete equality of rights for all nations; the right of nations to self-determination; the unity of the workers of all nations” we insist that it is the duty of a revolutionary party in England, the oppressor nation, to champion the right of self-determination for Scotland and Wales and to oppose every manifestation of English chauvinism, while the duty of the proletarian vanguard in Scotland and Wales is to fight for voluntary integration with the proletariat of England. This is the exact opposite of the approach taken by fake socialist organisations like the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), which for some years was buried inside the Scottish Socialist Party (SSP). While raising not

a peep against the pervasive anti-Scottish chauvinism in England, the SWP peddles criminal illusions in the SNP—a capitalist party in government—urging: “The Scottish left, trade unions and anti-war movement need to start fighting to ensure that the SNP delivers on its promises of radical policies that favour peace, justice and equality” (*Socialist Worker*, 19 May).

The Scottish Socialist Party (SSP), which was long touted by the reformist left in England and Scotland as a model party, failed to win a seat at Holyrood in May and saw its vote decimated. The SSP’s former leader Tommy Sheridan, who now heads Solidarity after falling out with his erstwhile comrades (see “Holier than thou’ parliamentary hopefuls fall out”, *Workers Hammer* no 196, Autumn 2006), also failed to get elected. There was never anything remotely socialist about the SSP, who aspired to take their place as reformists in parliament, administering capitalist rule on behalf of the bosses, in coalition with the SNP. The SSP split from the (notoriously British chauvinist) Socialist Party (SP) in 1998 in order to facilitate their adaptation to Scottish nationalism. But, like the SP, it remained deeply wedded to Labourite reformism, partaking of Labour’s vile social chauvinism, including on the question of Northern Ireland—promoting fascist Ulster Loyalists like Billy Hutchinson, a spokesman for the UVF—and pandering to the most backward prejudices in the working class, such as anti-immigrant racism.

In counterposition to the reformists of all stripes, we seek to build a multiethnic revolutionary workers party that fights to overthrow Westminster rule and replace it with a workers government. Abolish the monarchy, the established churches and the House of Lords! We fight for British troops out of Northern Ireland and for an Irish workers republic within a voluntary federation of workers republics in the British Isles. ■

Freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal!

We print below an edited presentation by Partisan Defence Committee counsel Rachel Wolkenstein, a member of Mumia Abu-Jamal's legal team from 1995 to 1999, at a rally in London on 5 May. Held in the lead-up to Mumia's 17 May federal appeals court hearing, the rally was called by the Partisan Defence Committee, the PDC's fraternal defence organisation in Britain, as part of an international campaign to revitalise mass, labour-centred protest on Mumia's behalf.

It's been 25 years since Mumia's conviction for the murder of Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner, a crime the police, prosecution and courts know Mumia did not commit. Mumia has been on death row all this time, isolated in a cell that he describes as living in a toilet. He was framed up for his political beliefs and activism, for having been a Black Panther Party (BPP) member, a MOVE supporter and a journalist who fought with passion and conviction against racial, ethnic and class bias, against cop terror, for social justice.

As Mumia said some 17 years ago in the interview in the PDC video, *From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal*, he is "fighting to create revolution in America. Revolution means total change." Since then Mumia has not changed his political views. He has not been intimidated into silence.

To the capitalist rulers, Mumia represents the spectre of black revolt, of defiant opposition to their system of racist oppression. For them, Mumia is a dead man on leave. All elements of the "criminal justice system" supported by both parties of American capitalism, Democrats as well as Republicans, have colluded to kill this innocent man.

Why is Mumia's cause one that needs to be fought for internationally? The PDC took up Mumia's case in 1987, some 20 years ago, because Mumia's case is the fight against the ultimate weapon of state terror, the death penalty. We are opposed to the death penalty as a matter of principle. We do not accord to the state the right to determine who shall live and who shall die. In the US, the death penalty is the legacy of slavery, racist legal lynching.

We also took up Mumia's case as part of the fight against the state deeming perceived political opponents to be terrorists. The Black Panther Party and the MOVE organisation were considered the terrorists of that time. And that meant it was legitimate for the state to blow them away in the dead of night, to frame them up on vague conspiracy charges. Mumia was targeted by the FBI's Counter-Intelligence Program (COINTELPRO), placed under daily surveillance at the age of 15 and put on the list of those to be rounded up and put in concentration camps. Mumia's conviction and death sentence were the continuation of the government vendetta against the Black Panther Party that led to the murder of 38 Panthers and the frame-up convictions of hun-



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dreds, and part of the crescendo of legal frame-ups and outright terror tactics directed at the MOVE organisation.

The fight for Mumia Abu-Jamal has everything to do with the fight against the post-September 11 "war on terror", which has led to witch hunts against immigrants, primarily Muslims, and provided justification for the evisceration of democratic rights and a massive increase in state surveillance and repressive measures, including the open use of torture.

The ultimate target of this state repression is the multiracial workers movement. The fight to free Mumia is part of the fight for black liberation, and the broader fight for socialist revolution and therefore for the liberation of us all.

Mumia's trial: a kangaroo court

We are here on the eve of Mumia's appeal arguments in the federal court on 17 May. In a matter of a few months, the court will decide what is next for Mumia — death, life in prison or possibly more legal proceedings. The US federal appeals court is not required to consider all the issues that Mumia has raised — and virtually every democratic right, from freedom of speech and association to a trial based on due process, was violated in Mumia's case. The appeals court is deciding whether or not to uphold Mumia's death sentence. The court is *not* considering *any* evidence of Mumia's innocence or the state frame-up. The state and federal courts have refused to even consider the confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Mumia,

shot and killed Faulkner.

The federal court of appeals is "allowing" only three of Mumia's more than 20 legal issues. These are the racially biased jury selection and the District Attorney's (DA) prejudicial summary argument undermining the jury's role by stating that Mumia would have "appeal after appeal". Lastly, the court is hearing a challenge to the kangaroo-court, lynch-mob post-conviction hearings from 1995 to 1997 before the notorious judge Albert Sabo, popularly known as the King of Death Row. Sabo outright stated at the time of the 1982 trial that "I'm going to help them fry the n----r."

In fact, the legal arguments before the appeals court are issues researched, developed and formulated in the lower courts by myself and Jon Piper, another lawyer associated with the PDC who was part of Mumia's legal team. In the abstract, considering the questions of law and fact applied to Mumia's case, there is no reason that Mumia should not win on appeal. But the reality is that the capitalist courts do not mete out impartial justice — and Mumia is a man the state wants dead.

To impact on that upcoming appeals court decision, a mass mobilisation based on the international working class and its allies is necessary and urgent, now more than ever. The mobilisation must be on the basis that Mumia is an innocent man, the "voice of the voiceless", a man on death row because of a political, racist frame-up. Mumia should never have been arrested, convicted, sentenced to death or spent one



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Above: Mumia Abu-Jamal. Left: Rachel Wolkenstein speaking at 5 May London rally organised by PDC.

day in jail! Our fight — and demand — is to free Mumia, now!

But instead the fight for Mumia has been and continues to be demobilised by a policy pursued by liberals and the reformist left of impotent appeals to the justice and fairness of the capitalist courts, represented by the call for a new trial, a fairer process. To understand the politics behind this demobilisation — and to turn this around — let's first examine the legal and factual issues in Mumia's case.

The frame-up

The prosecution's story is that in the early morning hours of 9 December 1981, two people were on the street corner of Locust and 13th in Philadelphia — Billy Cook, who is Mumia's brother, and Daniel Faulkner. Mumia, then 27 years old, known for his mild manner and for being level-headed, supposedly saw his brother being beaten by the cop and ran across the parking lot, shooting the cop in the back. As the cop was falling down, he supposedly shot Mumia in the chest. Then Mumia supposedly stood over the cop, then lying prone on his back, and shot directly down several times at his head, "execution style". This is all lies, a fantastical frame-up by the police and prosecution.

In the post-conviction court hearings in Mumia's case in 1995, '96 and '97, over ten years ago, the prosecution's evidence was exposed over and over as false — based on witnesses who were threatened or bought, nonexistent

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 **Partisan Defence Committee**

**London rally affirms:
Mumia is an innocent man!**

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