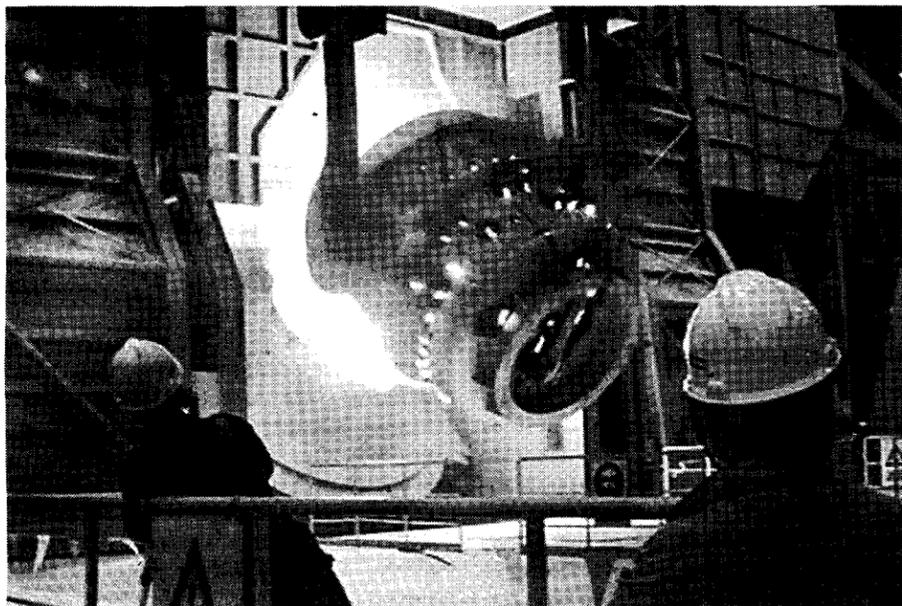


**For unconditional military defence of the
Chinese deformed workers state!**

China is not capitalist



Siemens Metals and Mining



China Photos

Left: Baosteel plant in Shanghai, part of China's collectivised industry. Right: Workers demonstrate outside paper products factory to demand back pay, Shenzhen, China, October 2007.

For proletarian political revolution!

In the run-up to the Beijing Olympics in August there is a growing crescendo of imperialist anti-Communism against the Chinese deformed workers state, promoted by the Labour government and echoed by the reformist left. There has been a military build-up against China by US and Japanese imperialism and a barrage of China-bashing that ranges from crocodile tears over the "oppression of Tibet" and "human rights" to claims that China is responsible for the horrific violence in Sudan's Darfur region.

Prime minister Gordon Brown's announcement that he will meet the Dalai Lama in London in May is the latest in this ongoing anti-Communist offensive by the bourgeoisie and its ideologues against China. Not coincidentally, the Dalai Lama has recently been met by German chancellor Angela Merkel and US president Bush. These meetings prefigured the monk-led riots in Tibet in mid-March which were a counterrevolutionary provocation against the Chinese deformed workers state. "An orgy of anti-Chinese rioting convulsed the Tibetan capital, Lhasa" is how it was described by a correspondent for the *Economist* (14 March) who reported that Tibetans were shouting slogans like "long live Tibet" and "long live the Dalai Lama".

Gordon Brown used his high-profile visit to Beijing in January to try to persuade the Chinese regime to invest its \$200 billion wealth fund in London. Fearful of incurring a diplomatic rift with Beijing, Brown refuses to boycott the Beijing Olympics and was initially hesitant to grant the Dalai Lama a meeting in London. Brown agreed to a meeting after he came under fire from the

Tories and from none other than heir to the British throne, Prince Charles, who happens to be a long-time friend of the counterrevolutionary Tibetan "God King".

Despite their differences, the aim of all the imperialist powers towards the People's Republic of China is to **destroy the workers state by counterrevolution**. On the one hand they use China's "market reforms" to pursue intensified economic penetration, thus British capitalism is a prime investor in China and a competitor for Chinese overseas investment. On the other hand the imperialists are ratcheting up the military pressure on China. British foreign secretary David Miliband leaves no doubt about British imperialism's support for this military build-up. In a February statement he cited "the moral imperative to intervene—sometimes militarily—to help spread democracy throughout the world", adding that: "After the end of the cold war it was tempting to believe in the 'end of history'—the inevitable process of liberal democracy and capitalist economics. Now with the economic success of China, we can no longer take the forward march of democracy for granted" (*Guardian*, 12 February).

In the name of "democracy", British imperialism is currently heavily involved in the brutal occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan which have resulted in the slaughter of countless thousands of people. Historically, the kind of "democracy" and "human rights" the British Empire visited upon China is exemplified by the opium wars and by the Empire lording it over Hong Kong as

racist and repressive overseers, holding the island as a protectorate until it was rightfully returned to the People's Republic of China in 1997. As in the Cold War against the Soviet Union, what the imperialists understand by "human rights" above all is one thing: the right of the bourgeoisie to unlimited exploitation and enslavement of the working masses. And this "right" was "violated" in China by the 1949 Revolution, which drove the bourgeoisie off the Chinese mainland.

The reformist left agrees with bourgeois public opinion that with the market reforms capitalism has been restored in China, or is irreversibly being restored. On the contrary, China today remains what it has been since 1949: a bureaucratically deformed workers state. While the rule of the capitalists has been overthrown, laying the basis for tremendous economic and social development, China is ruled by a nationalist, Stalinist bureaucratic caste that is hostile to workers democracy and revolutionary internationalism.

As the strongest of the remaining deformed workers states, China has

been drawn ever more into the cross-hairs of the imperialists since the counterrevolutionary destruction of the deformed workers states of Eastern Europe and, in particular, the destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state in 1991-92. As a result of the treacherous Stalinist policy of "socialism in one country" and its associated illusions in "peaceful coexistence" between the Chinese workers state and imperialism, the Chinese bureaucracy has continued its policy of concessions to the imperialists. Thus, it supports the "war on terror", the sanctions against Iran and the campaign for the nuclear disarmament of North Korea. Nonetheless, China is surrounded today by a whole system of US military bases. Along with North Korea, it is on the Pentagon's list as a potential target of a nuclear first strike by the US, while the US programme of National Missile Defense has the strategic goal of neutralising China's modest nuclear capacities. Japan and the US are cooperating militarily, subordinating their rivalry to their common hostility to the workers

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**Counter-
revolutionary
riots in Tibet**

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China...

(Continued from page 1)

states in Asia. We are in favour of China and North Korea developing, testing and producing nuclear weapons to defend themselves against British, US and Japanese imperialism.

As in the former Soviet Union, capitalist counterrevolution in China would have to triumph in the political arena, in the conquest of *state power*; it cannot take place simply through a quantitative extension of the private sector, whether domestic or foreign. Moreover, the large and growing private sector created by the market reforms, including foreign companies, is predominantly light industry. Meanwhile core elements of the economy such as heavy industry—steel, non-ferrous metals, heavy machi-

nery production, telecommunications, energy, petrochemicals—remain concentrated in state-owned companies, which are strategic. State ownership of land has prevented the development of a layer of rich large landowners dominating the rural areas. State control over the financial system has so far been able to protect the People's Republic of China from the manoeuvres of speculative capital, which have ruined the economy in so many capitalist neocolonies.

The fate of China, the most populous country on earth, where the bourgeoisie was expropriated by the 1949 Revolution, is of strategic importance to all the workers of the world, who must be won to the understanding that it must defend China against imperialism and internal counterrevolution. In Britain, the central obstacle to this revolutionary con-

sciousness is the Labourite programme of class collaboration with the “democratic” bourgeoisie at home while promoting counterrevolution in the remaining workers states under cover of “human rights” and “democracy”.

In opposition to this, we uphold the Trotskyist programme for the unconditional military defence of China and the other deformed workers states of North Korea, Cuba and Vietnam against imperialism and internal counterrevolution. We also fight for proletarian political revolution to oust the parasitic bureaucracy. Ultimately, only a political revolution in China can lead to the rule of workers and peasants soviets, and only the extension of the Chinese Revolution internationally can ensure the defence and development of its gains. Our defence of the deformed workers states is integral to our programme for proletarian socialist revolution against the capitalist ruling classes internationally. The International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) is dedicated to building a revolutionary internationalist workers party. As a section of the ICL, the Spartacist League/Britain is fighting to build a party committed to the revolutionary overthrow of British imperialism and establishing a federation of workers republics in the British Isles.

Taaffeites: handmaidens of counterrevolution

The imperialist campaign for “democratic” counterrevolution in China is echoed by the majority of the Labourite left, as can be seen in their support for the “Free Tibet” cause, which originated with the machinations of the American CIA and other imperialist forces intent on fomenting capitalist counterrevolution in China. A case in point is Peter Taaffe's Committee for a Workers International (CWI), known in Britain as the Socialist Party, which supports the recent anti-Communist riots in Tibet. Calling for Tibet's “right to independence”, the CWI solidarises with the supposed “radical layers” among Tibetan youth as against the “conciliatory approach” of the Dalai Lama, while admitting that “national independence on a capitalist basis can in no way solve the problems of the impoverished masses” (*China Worker* online, 18 March). As we note in our article (see page 5) the Taaffeites are enemies of the

Chinese deformed workers state who are willing to consign the Tibetan masses to the return of the Lamaocracy.

The CWI is currently conducting a debate about the class nature of China in which all the participants agree that, with the market reforms, the bureaucracy has restored capitalism in China. They merely disagree over whether it is “fully” capitalist yet. One contribution posted on the CWI's Chinese-English website says:

“Capitalism in China has been recreated under the tutelage of the Stalinist ruling party, in close interaction with overseas capitalism through the process of globalisation. The Chinese capitalist class is extremely dependent on this state, primarily to protect it from the working class, and for this reason its democratic ambitions—and desire for regime change—are almost non-existent.”

—“China at the Crossroads”, *China Worker* online, 24 May 2007

CWI leader Peter Taaffe says China “has been engaged in an almost 30-year long process of restoring capitalism” but although it is travelling “in the direction of a full capitalist economy”, China “has not arrived at this situation yet” (“Has capitalism been fully restored?” *socialistworld.net*, 22 March 2007). Another contribution titled “China's capitalist counterrevolution” by Vincent Kolo in *Socialism Today* (December 2007-January 2008) says: “Which is the ruling economic class in China today? With the destruction of the planned economy it is no longer the working class. A section of the former Maoist bureaucracy has converted itself through the ‘reform process’ into a property owning class.”

The CWI's attempt to portray China as capitalist is but a “theoretical” rationale for a *long-standing* policy of supporting the forces of “bourgeois-democratic” *counterrevolution* in the degenerated and deformed workers states. In the name of “democracy” the Taaffe organisation supported imperialist-backed, anti-Communist forces such as Polish Solidarność in the 1980s. In 1991 in Moscow they stood on the barricades with Boris Yeltsin's forces of counterrevolution. It didn't matter that the Taaffeites formally held that these countries were workers states governed by Stalinist regimes. The bottom line is that this social-democratic organisation's programme is counterposed to defence of the workers states.

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May 1968 in France

On the fortieth anniversary of the revolutionary events in Paris in May 1968 we reprint below an extract from our article in Spartacist at that time. What began as student protests became the spark for a revolutionary upheaval of the working class. It was this social crisis, not the student movement, that led to the workers' occupation of the factories, paralysing French industry in the largest and most powerful general strike in history.



TROTSKY



LENIN

There was a period of about a week, the high-tide of which was 29 May, when France was in the grip of a pre-revolutionary situation. The initiative was with the workers; it was within their grasp to take state power and establish the proletarian dictatorship. The old order and the Gaullist government were incapable of ruling, incapable of imposing their order on the subordinate classes or of solving the social crises tearing apart the nation. General discontent among parts of these subordinate strata—students, some farmers, the urban petty-bourgeoisie—was acute. The French state, racked by its own internal contradictions, the crisis of bourgeois order and far-reaching discontent, was for the period of a week more fragile than at any other time in a generation.

Yet the situation did not reach the point of *dual power*, which is the characteristic of all revolutionary crises. In a few cases, factory committees, replacing the existing representation in the several trade-union federations, were elected by the striking workers, but this embryonic form of workers' councils was limited to perhaps ten factories. The *comités d'action* which sprang up all over France were essentially district or neighborhood groups, not based specifically on the working class in the enterprises.

What was missing in France was a revolutionary party which could have raised the necessary demands to take the situation from a general strike to dual power, to shatter the control of the Confédération Générale du Travail (CGT) over the strike through the building of workers' councils. That the revolutionary French workers were unable to take power was principally, although not solely, due to the treachery of the French Communist Party (PCF).

The PCF leaders, along with the CGT, their trade union arm, did everything in their power to derail the movement. They attempted to split the initial student-worker alliance at the factory gates, slandering the students as “provocateurs.” In their patriotic fervor they German-baited Cohn-Bendit. They attempted to steer the whole thrust of the demonstrations, strikes and factory occupations into narrow, exclusively economic demands. They established back-to-work movements. They misdirected the struggle back into the parliamentary swamp. They allowed De Gaulle a breathing space, allowed him to retrieve the initiative and to rally back to himself wavering middle-class elements, to ally himself with the military command and a whole bloc of proto-fascist elements. The PCF's betrayals in May led directly to De Gaulle's victory at the polls on 23 June.

—“French Revolution”, *Spartacist* no 12, September-October 1968

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!

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Down with executive offices
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Remember Jean Charles de Menezes!

Craven reformists back cops



Workers Hammer



Left: Police march through London on 23 January. Above: reformist *Socialist Appeal* article in solidarity with bourgeoisie's cops, enemies of workers and oppressed.

When up to 23,000 cops marched through London on 23 January demanding better pay, Labourite reformists gave this mobilisation of the repressive arm of the capitalist state a gushing welcome. "Bolshevik Bobbies", headlined *Socialist Appeal*, published by the diehard Labourite organisation founded by the late Ted Grant. Revelling in the mood among the cops, the article by Rob Sewell enthused: "There is rebellion in the air. A pillar of the state is in a mutinous mood", whilst equating the cops with public sector workers whose wages and jobs this Labour government is slashing. Clearly this reformist outfit's drooling over the police has not gone amiss: Rob Sewell, the author of the article made the breathtaking admission that: "I knew there was something up when the 'Socialist Appeal' office got a phone call from the 'Police Review' asking for permission to republish an article from our website on the police strikes of 1918-19" (*Socialist Appeal*, 28 January).

No less jubilant over the police protest was Peter Taaffe's Socialist Party which said the police protest was "in many ways a momentous occasion". They pointed out that cops on duty were not allowed to attend but "the turnout was impressive under the circumstances". These reformists unashamedly boast of having gone to the march and "sold five copies of *The Socialist* in 20 minutes and got three sheets of our petition for a living wage and joint public-sector action filled in" (*Socialist*, 31 January).

This craven subservience to the racist capitalist state's thugs in blue is not new for these organisations, both of which have maintained for decades that the police are part of the working class when in fact they are a core part of the capitalist state. This fulsome support by "socialists" for better pay for the cops is obscene, particularly now in London where the police carried out the brutal, cold-blooded killing of Brazilian immigrant Jean Charles de Menezes in July 2005 and got away with it. This outrage by the Metropolitan Police is in continuity with their years-long role in shielding the racist killers of black teenager Stephen Lawrence in 1993, despite a

huge effort by the family campaign to have his killers brought to justice.

Support for the police is an integral part of Labour reformism which has been used to dupe the British working class into supporting the racist capitalist order for over a century. Both *Socialist Appeal* and the Socialist Party had their origins in the Militant tendency which for more than four decades was an organic part of the old Labour Party. As we wrote 14 years ago:

"Labourism is reflected in Militant's politics across the board, from its sympathetic portrayal of the British "bobby" and its appeals to the capitalist state to act against the fascists, to its gross refusal to oppose the murderous British imperialist troops sent into Northern Ireland by a Labour government."

— *Militant Labour's touching faith in the capitalist state*, Spartacist pamphlet (1994)

Today *Socialist Appeal* remains inside New Labour, while beseeching the unions to reclaim the Labour Party demanding that Labour must "immediately take over the 'commanding heights of the economy'". The Socialist Party was formed outside the Labour Party in the early 1990s and now campaigns for a "new mass workers party", but the politics of old Labour reformism remain unchanged. Both organisations hold that socialism can be achieved through parliament passing an "enabling act" giving a *bourgeois government* "emergency powers".

Police: core part of the capitalist state

In an attempt to portray the police as part of the workers movement, *Socialist Appeal* welcomes the fact that the Police Federation "has threatened to ballot its 140,000 members about the right to strike" (*Socialist Appeal*, March 2008). The 1984-85 miners strike, in which an army of cops occupied the coalfields, brutally battered the miners on picket lines and protected the scabs from the pickets, showed in unmistakable terms the true function of the cops as regards the unions: they are professional strike-breakers and enemies of the working class in struggle. That is a basic truth that reformists try to *cover up*. The only purpose served by "social-

ists" portraying the police as "workers in uniform" is to deny the need for revolution to smash the capitalist state. That is what underlies reformist illusions that the capitalist state can become an instrument capable of serving the interests of the working class and the oppressed in society.

In our last issue we scandalised the Socialist Party and others for their enthusiastic hailing of last August's prison guards strike (see "'Socialists' embrace cops and prison guards", *Workers Hammer* no 201, Winter 2007-2008). What distinguishes us Marxists from these reformists comes down to the central question of the bourgeois state, which is the divide between reform and revolution. We base our programme on Lenin's *The State and Revolution*, written in 1917 shortly before the Bolsheviks led the working class to *state power* in Russia. Lenin laid out the fundamental Marxist understanding that the state consists of "special bodies of armed men" and "is an organ of class rule, an organ for the oppression of one class by another".

Citing Marx and the experience of the Paris Commune, Lenin reiterates that "the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery, and wield it for its own purposes"; that the liberation of the working class cannot come about "without the destruction of the apparatus of state power which was created by the ruling class". The capitalist state, at its core consisting of armed bodies of men—the cops, courts, prisons and army—must be replaced "by a 'special repressive force' for the suppression of the bourgeoisie by the proletariat (the dictatorship of the proletariat)". In short, the bourgeois state is the "dictatorship of the bourgeoisie". The only way to get rid of the rotten racist system of capitalism that breeds racism, poverty, famine and war is through workers revolution that *shatters* the capitalist state and replaces it by the rule of the working class through workers councils (soviets). This fundamental truth has been obscured and contradicted by Labourite social-democratic organisations for over a century. Our task of building a multiethnic revolutionary workers party requires destroying the illusions perpetrated by Labourite reformists.

The fact that the police may demonstrate for higher wages (or even, on rare occasions, go on "strike") neither makes them part of the working class nor does it change the material reality that they serve only one master: the capitalist class. By supporting the police demonstration on 23 January, the Socialist Party and *Socialist Appeal* are supporting better pay for the police force to carry out their work. That consists of brutalising minorities by carrying out dawn raids on Asian homes under the pretext of the "war on terror", including the raid in Forest Gate in June 2006 in which police shot Mohammed Abdul Kahar and nearly killed him. These "socialists" are backing improved conditions for the police to detain and arrest black and Asian minorities under the racist "stop and search" powers that have been boosted massively. Try telling the families of the dozens of blacks and Asians who have died in police custody that "socialists" support the cops' claim for better pay for doing their job!

Appropriately enough, marching at the head of the police demonstration was the fascist British National Party (BNP) candidate for London mayor, Richard Barnbrook, who stated that "he had been told by officers that he was welcome" (*Guardian*, 24 January). As well as the fascists, with whom they overlap, the police are necessarily a sewer of concentrated racism, male chauvinism and anti-communism in capitalist society. This shows the fallacy of reformist appeals to the capitalist state to deal with the fascists. Fascists are extra-parliamentary race-terror gangs which cannot be "stopped" by state bans, nor by campaigns not to vote for fascist candidates in elections. What is necessary to combat fascist provocations is *trade union/minority mobilisations to stop them in their tracks!* The fascists are kept in reserve by the bourgeoisie to be used in times of crisis and the fight to end fascism is inseparable from the fight to overthrow capitalism.

The reformist Socialist Workers Party (SWP) has in the past argued that cops and prison guards are part of the

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China...

(Continued from page 2)

Taaffe asserts that the Chinese regime has been "at pains to avoid the 'big bang' return to capitalism witnessed in Russia in the early 1990s". This is a denial that capitalist counter-revolution would have to triumph at the political level and destroy the Chinese workers state. In fact, for capitalism to triumph and smash the workers states, first in Eastern Europe and then the Soviet Union between 1989 and 1992, the Stalinist governments had to be replaced with imperialist-backed, anti-Communist regimes. In every case, the militaries were reconstituted, their officer corps purged of pro-socialist individuals; Boris Yeltsin banned the Communist Party and anti-Communist witch hunts raged through those societies (and still do).

We of the ICL fought tooth and nail against the forces of counterrevolution in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. When a proletarian political revolution began to develop in the DDR in 1989, we mobilised all the forces of our international organisation to intervene there. We fought against capitalist counterrevolution, and for the revolutionary reunification of Germany, ie for proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy in the DDR and for social revolution in West Germany to overthrow the rule of the bourgeoisie, for a red Germany of workers councils. We called for the formation of workers and soldiers councils, in order to organise the working class as a class for itself, as a contender for political rule. Against illusions that the ruling Stalinist SED-PDS could be reformed, we fought to build a new egalitarian Leninist party.

The potential for a proletarian political revolution in the DDR was expressed on 3 January 1990 in the pro-socialist, united-front rally against the fascist desecration of the Soviet war memorial at Berlin-Treptow and in defence of the workers states in the DDR and the Soviet Union, which we initiated and which was taken up by the SED-PDS. In front of more than 250,000 demonstrators, we Trotskyists called for political revolution and warned against the social-democratic SPD as the Trojan horse for counterrevolution. The Taaffeites at that time were both organisationally and politically part of the SPD.

In Moscow in 1991 when Boris Yeltsin seized power in a counter-coup, our comrades mass distributed a leaflet titled: "Soviet Workers: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!" We fought for unconditional military defence of the Soviet Union and the Eastern

European deformed workers states against imperialist attack and counter-revolution from within, while fighting for proletarian political revolution to oust the parasitic Stalinist bureaucracies and replace them with regimes based on workers democracy and revolutionary internationalism.

Triumph of the Chinese Revolution

With the Chinese Revolution of 1949, capitalist rule was smashed and Chinese society fundamentally transformed. This victory was won by Mao Zedong's People's Liberation Army (PLA), which was based on the peasantry. The capitalists and large landowners fled to Taiwan, where they were protected by US imperialism. Mainland China, which had been divided and plundered by the imperialists, was unified. Under the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) China was reconstructed as a workers state with a centrally planned economy which was a huge social leap forward. Over the next few years, land was distributed to the peasants, the key industries were expropriated and a significant component of state-owned industry was built up. The liberating effect of the Revolution is evident in the status of Chinese women, whose previous miserable existence was symbolised by the barbaric practice of footbinding. By 1949, significant inroads had already been made into footbinding's permanent eradication and the revolution enabled women to make enormous progress.

After the defeat of the Chinese Revolution of 1925-27, when the bourgeois nationalist Guomindang massacred the insurrectionary workers in Shanghai in 1927, the CCP eventually abandoned the working class. By the time of the 1949 Revolution the CCP rested on the peasantry. Only due to an exceptional historical situation was it able to smash capitalism. The working class had been atomised by the horrific oppression under both the Guomindang and the Japanese imperialists. After the defeat of Japan in the Second World War, bourgeois rule was unstable, and the Guomindang regime was decaying from within. An additional factor was the existence of the Soviet workers state, which was able to offer economic and military assistance to the PLA during the Chinese civil war and then to the new People's Republic.

The CCP regime suppressed independent action by the working class, while falsely claiming to be building "socialism in one country". This stood in sharp contradiction to the beginnings of the Soviet Union in the October Revolution of 1917, a proletarian revolution led by Lenin and Trotsky's Bolshevik party that translated Marxism into deeds. The October Revolu-

tion showed that the working class can take power and wield it through democratically elected workers, peasants and soldiers soviets. The internationalist early Soviet Union became a beacon to the working class and oppressed worldwide.

To the Bolshevik leadership, it was clear that workers revolutions in more advanced countries were necessary to establish an international planned economy and produce the social growth rates and abundance which are the necessary foundation for socialism—a society based on equality and without material want. But the revolutionary uprisings after World War I, in particular in Germany, were crushed through the betrayal of the pro-capitalist social democrats and because of the weakness of the fledgling Communist Parties outside of the Soviet Union. In the wake of these defeats, especially that of the German Revolution in 1923, a conservative nationalist bureaucracy took political power in the Soviet Union in late 1923-early 1924. In the course of the degeneration of the workers state, Stalin and his clique turned away from proletarian internationalism and invented the anti-Marxist dogma of "building socialism in one country" and "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism. The Stalinists sabotaged revolutionary possibilities abroad, not least the Chinese Revolution of 1925-27, which they betrayed by subordinating the young CCP to the bourgeois Guomindang.

Historically, the anti-revolutionary character of the Chinese bureaucracy can be seen in its alliance with US imperialism against the Soviet Union, a logical consequence of the search for "peaceful coexistence" with the capitalist rulers internationally. In 1972, as bombs were raining down on Vietnam, Mao Zedong hosted US president Nixon in Beijing. These politics were continued by Mao's successor, Deng Xiaoping. In 1979, four years after the heroic Vietnamese had defeated the US, Chinese troops criminally invaded Vietnam. Shortly thereafter, China supported the murderous Islamic *mujahedin* in Afghanistan, who were fighting against the Soviet Red Army. In many respects both the Mao and Deng wings of the bureaucracy helped imperialism destroy the Soviet Union. And, not least, it was Mao's alliance with US



People's Liberation Army marches through Beijing, June 1949.

imperialism that prepared the way for Deng to open the door to imperialism's economic penetration of China.

Both under Mao and under Deng and his successors, including the current leadership, the CCP bureaucracy has adhered to the Stalinist policy of "socialism in one country" and "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism. This can be seen in the Beijing bureaucracy's preservation of Hong Kong as a capitalist enclave within the People's Republic following its rightful return to China in 1997. As against what the bureaucracy refers to as "one country, two systems" we wrote at the time:

"Trotskyists can only cheer as the rotted British Empire loses its last major colonial holding with the lowering of the bloody Union Jack and the raising of the five-starred red flag of the People's Republic on July 1. But as the Spartacist League/Britain wrote in 'Britain Out of Hong Kong!' (*Workers Hammer* No. 109, September 1989), we are for 'One country, one system—under workers rule!'"

— *Workers Hammer* no 157, July/August 1997

Related to the pipedream of "socialism in one country", the present CCP leaders believe that they can modernise China, transforming it into the world's next superpower, through ever greater integration into the world capitalist economy. This ignores the economic vulnerabilities of China in its relations with the world capitalist market, the implacable hostility of the imperialist bourgeoisies to the Chinese workers state, and the internal instability of Chinese society due to growing social unrest.

While the market-oriented reforms initiated by Deng in 1978 were made possible by the previous successes of the planned economy under Mao, they were an attempt to tackle the incompetence of the bureaucratic command economy within the framework of Stalinist bonapartism. As we wrote in the 1980s:

"Within the framework of Stalinism, there is thus an inherent tendency to replace centralized planning and management with market mechanisms. Since managers and workers cannot be subject to the discipline of soviet democracy (workers councils), increasingly the bureaucracy sees subjecting the economic actors to the discipline of market competition as the only answer to economic inefficiency."

— "For Central Planning Through Soviet Democracy", printed in Spartacist pamphlet, "Market Socialism" in Eastern Europe, July 1988

The Stalinist bureaucracy opened the country to imperialist investment, privatised strategically unimportant companies and ultimately abandoned the state monopoly of foreign trade. The

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Bettmann

Left: Tibetan Buddhist monks surrender to Chinese Red Army troops in Lhasa after leading reactionary armed revolt, April 1959. Right: Workers in China's Qinghai province constructing world's highest railway line that climbs to 16,640 feet above sea level to cross Tibetan plateau. The train line is now in operation.



EPA

Defend Chinese deformed workers state!

Counterrevolutionary riots in Tibet

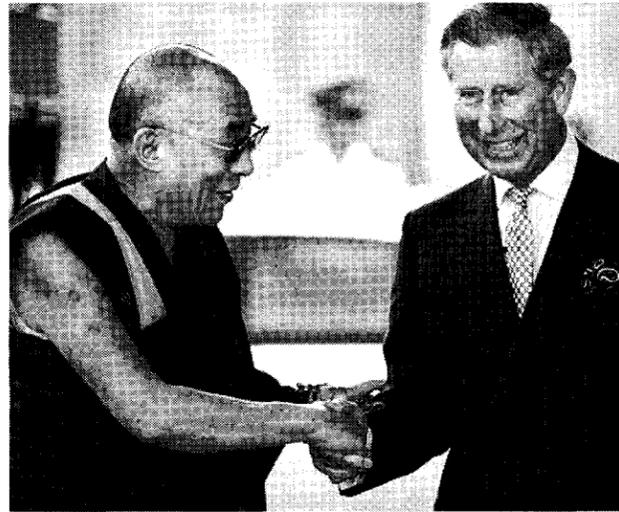
The following article is adapted from Workers Vanguard no 911, 28 March 2008.

“An orgy of anti-Chinese rioting”. That’s how the *Economist* online (14 March), which had the only official foreign correspondent in Lhasa, described the protests in the Tibet Autonomous Region. Launched on 10 March to commemorate the anniversary of the 1959 uprising against Chinese rule—an uprising inspired, armed and financed by the CIA—the protests were led by Buddhist lamas and were echoed by coordinated actions in China’s Gansu, Qinghai and Sichuan provinces, where there are substantial Tibetan populations. There was also a march in India from the centre of the Dalai Lama’s “government in exile”. Shouting “long live Tibet” and “long live the Dalai Lama”, rioters led by monks, often at the head of teenage gangs, rampaged in Lhasa’s old Tibetan quarter, burning and destroying shops run by ethnic Chinese and killing at least 13 people. Among those attacked were also ethnic Chinese Hui, a Muslim minority in the region. The *Economist* (22 March) reported that “shops owned by Tibetans were marked as such with traditional white scarves.... They were spared destruction.”

The protests in Tibet are reactionary, anti-Communist and counterrevolutionary. As Trotskyists (ie, genuine Marxists), we of the International Communist League fight for the **unconditional military defence** of the Chinese deformed workers state against imperialist attack and capitalist counterrevolution—as we do for the other remaining deformed workers states of North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba. The 1949 Revolution that overthrew capitalist rule in China has resulted in enormous gains for that country’s working and peasant masses, including for the people of Tibet, which, until the victory of Chinese forces there in 1959, was ruled by a pro-slavery “Lamaocracy”. The “Free Tibet” cause originated with the machinations of the CIA and other imperialist forces intent on restoring capitalism in China, which would once again reduce the country to semicolonial subjugation. The call to “Free Tibet” is a rallying cry for counterrevolution and would in fact mean imperialist lordship over the Tibetan masses. The counterrevolutionary destruction of the Chinese deformed workers state would be a tremendous defeat for the international proletariat, including for the Tibetan people.

Before being crushed by the People’s Liberation Army in 1959, the Lamaist theocracy in Tibet was perhaps proportionally the largest and most idle ruling stratum in human history, economically supported by peasants, growers of barley and herders of yak. At base, this meant that the back-breaking labour was mostly done by women, since both the monks and a not small portion of the male population, who emulated the monastic life after “sinning” by procreating, were employed in contemplation.

After suppressing the CIA-backed 1959 uprising, the Chinese government



Lhasa: Counterrevolutionary rioters in streets (left). Tibetan “God-King”, the Dalai Lama, welcomed to London in 2004 by Britain’s would-be king, Prince Charles.

abolished *ulag* (forced peasant labour) and put an end to flogging, mutilation and amputation as forms of criminal punishment. The land, livestock and tools of the aristocrats who fled into exile were distributed to the peasants, as were the land and chattels of the monasteries that had participated in the uprising. The Chinese deformed workers state established secular education and constructed running water and electrical systems in Lhasa. As a result, the average life span of Tibetans, which had been 35 years in 1950, rose to 67 in 2001. Infant mortality, which was an astounding 43 per cent in 1950, dramatically decreased to 0.661 per cent in 2000. The recent opening of the Lhasa-Qinghai railway, connecting Tibet to China, has led to economic development and an improvement of living standards. These gains are testimony to the social progress resulting from the expropriation of the capitalist class and landlords and the institution of proletarian property forms that issued out of the 1949 Chinese Revolution.

Especially since the counterrevolutionary destruction of the deformed workers states of Eastern Europe and, in particular, the destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state in 1991-92, China has been increasingly in the cross-hairs of the imperialists. To promote counterrevolution, they combine pursuit of the economic openings offered by the Beijing Stalinist bureaucracy, through which they seek to encourage internal counterrevolution, with escalating military pressure. China, the strongest of the remaining deformed workers states, is surrounded by a whole system of US military bases. Along with North Korea, it is on the Pentagon’s hit list as a potential target of a nuclear first strike, while the US programme of National Missile Defense has the strategic goal of neutralising China’s modest nuclear capacities.

The imperialist rulers hope to take advantage of the upcoming Beijing 2008 Olympics to intensify their pressure on China through their support to the Dalai Lama. In a provocation that prefigured the Tibet riots, within a space of five weeks beginning last

September the Dalai Lama met with German chancellor Angela Merkel in Berlin, US president Bush in Washington—the first time a sitting US president has met publicly with the Dalai Lama—and Canadian prime minister Stephen Harper. Now, British prime minister Gordon Brown has announced that he will host the Dalai Lama in London this coming May.

While the Bush administration has called on China to exercise “restraint” in Tibet, the Democrats have sought to outdo the Bush gang in belligerence towards China. After the Tibet riots broke out, Democratic House speaker Nancy Pelosi visited the headquarters of the Dalai Lama in Dharamsala, India. In a 12 March statement, Pelosi condemned “the violent response by Chinese forces to peaceful protesters in Tibet”. While Democratic presidential hopeful Hillary Clinton issued a statement declaring that “Chinese repression in Tibet continues”, Barack Obama’s statement echoed Pelosi’s in condemning “the use of violence to put down peaceful protests”. In fact, during the violent riots, China’s security forces “appear to have acted with relative restraint”, as the *Economist* online (16 March) reported.

For their part, the fake “socialists” are marching in lockstep behind their imperialist rulers’ attempts to foment counterrevolution in China, just as they supported the counterrevolutionary destruction of the USSR, a world-historic defeat for the international proletariat that has brought devastation and misery to the peoples of the former Soviet Union. In France, the misnamed Ligue communiste révolutionnaire, immediately solidarised with the lamas, condemning the “repression which is meted out by the Beijing regime” and calling for “self determination” (18 March statement). Their Japanese affiliate, Kakehashi, called for the “right of self-determination for the Tibetan people” and demanded that China “accept an international investigation team” (Kakehashi, 24 March).

Meanwhile, the reformists of the Committee for a Workers’ International, which publishes *China Worker* and is

associated with the Socialist Party in Britain, have declared themselves to be for Tibet’s “right to independence”. They saluted the supposed “radical layers” among Tibetan youth as against the “conciliatory approach” of the Dalai Lama, while admitting that “national independence on a capitalist basis can in no way solve the problems of the impoverished masses” (*China Worker* online, 18 March). Enemies of the Chinese deformed workers state, these opponents of the revolutionary internationalist workers movement are willing to consign the Tibetan masses to the return of the lamaocracy. The pseudo-Marxists’ calls for Tibetan “independence” stand to the right of even the Dalai Lama, who admitted in 2005: “As the material development of China moves forward we gain materially, like the railway. If we were a separate country it would be very difficult and we would not benefit” (*South China Morning Post*, 14 March).

Patterned after the Soviet Union after the usurpation of political power from the working class by the Stalinist bureaucracy, the Chinese workers state was deformed from its inception. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) of Mao Zedong that carried out the 1949 Revolution was not a party based on the working class, but rather the peasantry. From the start, the CCP regime suppressed independent action by the working class, excluding it from political power. Representing a nationalist bureaucratic caste resting atop the collectivised economy, the Beijing Stalinist regime preached the profoundly anti-Marxist notion that socialism—a classless, egalitarian society based on material abundance—could be built in a single country. In practice, “socialism in one country” meant accommodation to world imperialism and opposition to the perspective of workers revolution internationally.

In their futile pursuit of “peaceful coexistence” with world imperialism, the Stalinist misrulers themselves undermine the defence of the Chinese workers state. The official statements from Beijing condemning the riots in

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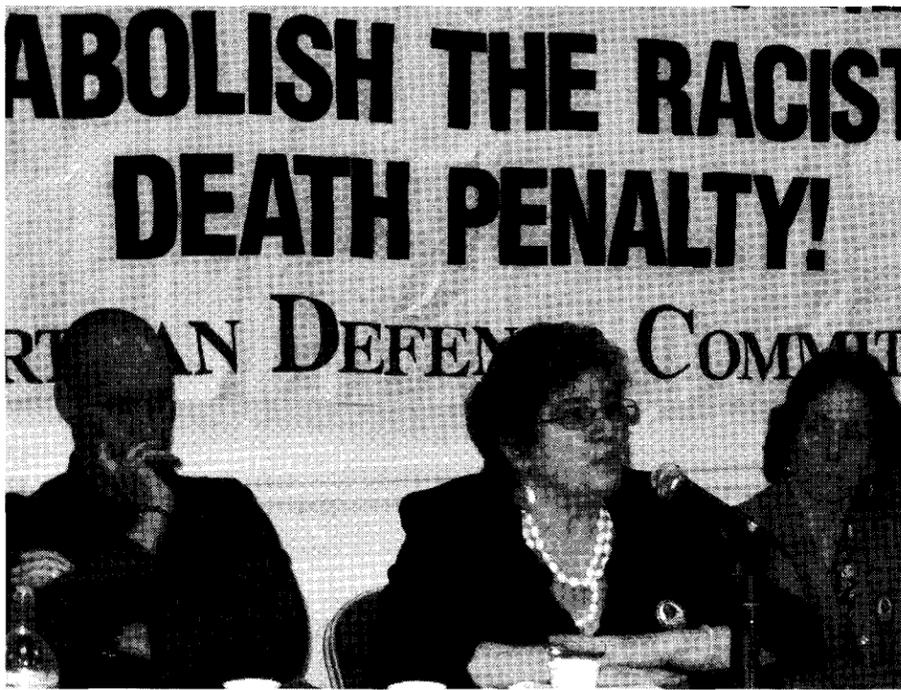
New York Holiday Appeal for class-war prisoners

Class-struggle defence and the fight to free Mumia Abu-Jamal

We reprint below a speech, edited for publication, by Partisan Defense Committee counsel Rachel Wolkenstein given at the New York City Holiday Appeal for Class-War Prisoners on 16 December 2007. This article first appeared in Workers Vanguard no 908, 15 February 2008. The PDC is a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defence organisation associated with the Spartacist League.

When we took up Mumia's case in 1987, he was not America's foremost political prisoner. In fact, hardly anybody knew who he was. We were introduced to Mumia by the MOVE prisoners whom we had begun defending after the government bombing of the MOVE commune in Philly in 1985. This was also around the time when we, starting in 1986, began our programme of sending monthly stipends to class-war prisoners. But, quite frankly, it's the work begun by the PDC—and taken up by many, many other organisations—that has made Mumia the man who represents what the death penalty is all about, who is the foremost class-war prisoner in the US, and who has come to represent the fight for black liberation in this country and the fight against the death penalty internationally.

Maureen Faulkner, widow of Police Officer Daniel Faulkner, and a man by the name of Michael Smerconish have just published a book called *Murdered by Mumia*. It came out on 6 December. Interestingly enough, Smerconish's foreword is dated 9 December, after the publication of the book, to coincide with the 26th anniversary of the date of Faulkner's killing and the beginning of the frame-up of Mumia Abu-Jamal. This book, which came on the eve of an anticipated decision by the Third Circuit Court of Appeals, is a total rehash of the police and prosecution lies to falsely convict Mumia for the killing of Faulkner on 9 December, 1981. It is an orchestrated attack written with



Rachel Wolkenstein speaking at 5 May 2007 London rally organised by PDC.

support from arch-reactionaries. Smerconish, a man who considers that Abu Ghraib was not a question of torture, worked with Frank Rizzo, the notorious, racist, brutal police commissioner and then mayor of Philadelphia.

Murdered by Mumia was written with the support of other people who are known in the far-right wing. This book is not just a right-wing tract that can be dismissed as such. It is a call for Mumia's execution. It is also an assault on those bourgeois liberals who from time to time have wavered on the question of Mumia's innocence and instead have called for having him spend the rest of his life in prison, *for burying him alive*. It makes clear that there are only two sides in Mumia's case. On one side is the struggle to fight for his freedom, based upon his innocence and the fact that he is a victim of a racist and political frame-up. On the other side,

there are the forces of racist law and terror, led by the Fraternal Order of Police, who demand his execution.

I am not going to go through all the prosecution's lies, which are virtually endless. We have written about them in our PDC pamphlets, including the pamphlet, *The Fight to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal—Mumia Is Innocent!* (July 2006). Smerconish and Faulkner repeat over and over that Billy Cook (Mumia's brother) and Mumia have never stated what they saw happen the night Faulkner was killed. They act as if the declarations Mumia and Cook wrote and submitted in 2001, along with the submission of the confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Mumia, killed Faulkner, as well as other evidence, simply do not exist. In fact, the declarations and Beverly's affidavit are on the original Daniel Faulkner website! Faulkner and Co make no bones about the political nature of Mumia's frame-up. They reiterate the prosecution's line that Mumia's Black Panther Party membership proves that he'd been planning to kill cops for years. They write that D.A. Joseph McGill "successfully established that Abu-Jamal had an anti-police, anti-establishment, anti-government philosophy that accounted for his desire to murder Danny".

When we first took up Mumia's case, it was primarily on the question of freedom of speech. Here is a man, Mumia, the only man in recent decades who, as far as we know, was sentenced to death because of his exercise of his First Amendment rights: Mumia was a member of the Black Panthers in his youth, and 12 years before the killing of Faulkner, he was interviewed after the police killing of the Chicago Panthers Fred Hampton and Mark Clark. He said in the interview that the government was trying to get the Panthers, that the Panthers should face reality. He called for "all power to the people" and noted that "political power grows out of the

barrel of a gun". And for *that* Mumia was sentenced to death, because that was considered to be the proof that he had always intended to kill cops!

In the book, Maureen Faulkner also paints a vicious, lying portrait of the MOVE organisation, of which Mumia is a supporter. His support of MOVE is also part of the reason why he was framed up in 1981. You all saw the PDC video, *From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal*, and you saw the bombing of the MOVE commune in 1985. You heard Mumia speak about how this was done under black Democratic mayor Wilson Goode, with the ATF and the FBI assisting and providing the bomb. Faulkner claims that MOVE "was responsible" for the bombing—that is, the killing of eleven MOVE members, including five children and the incineration of the entire neighbourhood. She doesn't describe the circumstances of the bombing.

Faulkner uses thinly veiled racist terms to describe Mumia's writings, his supporters and the MOVE organisation—code language for pure out-and-out racism. She also has a whole chapter on one of her major supporters, a guy by the name of Joey Vento who runs a well-known cheesesteak place in Philadelphia. Vento is known for having a sign in his window saying, "This is America. When ordering please speak English." Faulkner hails this, which tells you who this book is addressed to.

The determination of the bourgeoisie to kill Mumia or imprison him for life is no less than the determination the bourgeoisie showed for killing the two anarchist martyrs, Sacco and Vanzetti, who were executed in 1927; or for killing the Rosenbergs, Communist Party supporters executed in 1953 on charges of giving "secrets" on the bomb to the Soviets. Political repression is part and parcel of the workings of the capitalist injustice system, and it is supported by both parties of American capitalism, Democrats as well as Republicans. And it is intended to intimidate, silence and punish those who raise their voices in opposition.

Mumia Abu-Jamal is an innocent man!

The PDC video most of you saw tonight was made some 17 years ago. But the man that you heard speak there is the same man who is in prison today. He has not changed his political views one iota. He said then that he was fighting to create revolution in America, "revolution means change, it means total change". Mumia has not been intimidated into silence since then. He continues to be the voice of the voiceless, denouncing the imperial and colonial slaughter and destruction in Iraq, denouncing the US rulers' disdain for the black and the poor left to die in the face of Hurricane Katrina, defending immigrants, defending workers on strike. Now, Mumia is no Marxist revolutionary. He is not a sup-



James/Philadelphia Inquirer

Mumia Abu-Jamal as Minister of Information of Philadelphia chapter of Black Panther Party in 1969.

Prepare now for emergency protest!

On 17 May 2007, the Third Circuit Court of Appeals in Philadelphia heard oral arguments in Mumia's case and there could be a decision at any time.

If the Court rules to uphold the death sentence or denies Mumia's appeals for a new trial or hearing, the Partisan Defence Committee calls for protest the day after a decision, 5.00 pm if on a weekday, 1.00 pm if on a Saturday at the US Embassy, Grosvenor Square, London W1 (Tube: Bond Street).

Prepare now for emergency mobilisation! Encourage your friends, colleagues, unions and organisations to mobilise for Mumia's freedom. **For more information, call 020 7281 5504 and see the PDC website, www.partisandefense.org**

**Mumia Abu-Jamal is an innocent man!
FREE MUMIA NOW!
Abolish the racist death penalty!**

porter of the Spartacist League. But 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.

The fight to free Mumia also involves a political struggle within the movement of those who say that they are fighting to defend Mumia. Why is that? Because the social power to free Mumia is embodied in the international working class, but there are obstacles to unleashing that power. The so-called left serves to tie working people to the view that the bourgeoisie can somehow be reformed, that capitalism can be reformed. And so we have yet another struggle with two opposing sides. On one side are those bourgeois liberals, trade union misleaders, so-called leftists that are sowing illusions in the "fairness" of capitalist justice. On the other side, there is the PDC and its supporters and co-thinkers, and our line of class-struggle defence, which means having no illusions in capitalist "justice" and putting all faith in the power of the masses.

Today's world is profoundly shaped by the impact of the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state in 1991-92 following the decades of Stalinist rule there. And as the bourgeois rulers proclaim the lie that we're in the period of the "death of communism", the bulk of the left, which in the main joined in the imperialist anti-Soviet campaign, places its political activity solidly within the framework of the "democratic" capitalist order. In the 1960s and 1970s, nobody talked about a new trial for Huey Newton, or a new trial for Angela Davis, or more recently a new trial for

Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt). The fact that the reformist left subordinates the fight for Mumia's freedom to the call for a new trial is not an accident: it is a direct reflection of the post-Soviet period we are in and what we call the retrogression of consciousness.

The reformist left ties people—who, through Mumia's case, could otherwise



PDC contingent at 17 May 2007 protest outside US Embassy in London.

be won to the understanding of the nature of the capitalist state and what the necessary fight is—to a false view that somehow the justice system under capitalism can be made to be just. The many liberals and reformists who call for a new trial for Mumia also fling mud on the Beverly confession. Here's a man who confessed to shooting Faulkner, and instead of people saying, "Hey this is great, we got somebody who confessed", and looking at the mountains of evidence supporting his confession and explaining all the crazy

nonsensical things in the prosecution's case—the reformists and liberals say it is a terrible thing. They even cast doubt on Mumia's own statement—the statement that he presented in state and federal court—declaring, "I had nothing to do with the killing of Officer Faulkner. I am innocent." Do you ever hear anyone besides us say that Mumia has declared his innocence and explained what he saw happen that night? No. Instead you have people who are heralded on platforms by most of the rest of the left, people like David Lindorff and others who say something like: I sort of defend Mumia, but you know it's possible, even likely, that he really did shoot the cop. And *that* passes for people who say that they are defenders of Mumia.

Now why does that happen? Again, it goes back to the political period we are in, and the necessary fights we have to wage. It goes back to the whole question of what the Beverly evidence represents. What does it mean to understand that in this case there was collusion between the cops and the mob and the D.A. and the judges to see Mumia convicted of murder, to see him executed? It means that there is not just one rogue cop, or one racist judge—though Sabo is defi-

nately a racist judge—or one D.A. who is "overzealous". It is an indictment of the entire bourgeois legal system, which is class-biased and race-biased.

And what liberals want to do—and what the so-called left agrees with—is to attempt to clean up the "justice" system's bad image. They say that it was only one bad cop, and only Judge Sabo who is the racist, that the rest of them aren't that bad, that federal court judge Yohn is really an honourable man, that the Third Circuit is the most liberal in the country—though, of course, it's

where reactionary Supreme Court Justice Samuel Alito comes from. They say this even though Marjorie Rendell, the wife of Democratic Pennsylvania governor Ed Rendell, the former D.A. who prosecuted Mumia, sits on that court. What does all that amount to except trying to refurbish the credentials of the "justice" system?

For class-struggle defence!

As Marxists—and the PDC has a Marxist worldview—we understand that the cops, the courts, the prisons, the armed forces, are the core components of the capitalist state, the machinery of organised violence that protects the rule and profits of the exploiting class. We believe that the justice system, at every single level in Mumia's case and in other cases, has declared that Mumia has no rights that it is bound to respect. This is like what was done by the Supreme Court before the Civil War in the infamous Dred Scott decision, which upheld slavery and declared that black people have no rights that whites are bound to respect.

A "new trial" is a code word for a programme of reliance on the capitalist class and on some sort of benevolent Democratic Party politician, on some good judge; a code word for sowing illusions that fighters for the oppressed can obtain justice from the capitalist courts. This has retarded the political understanding of those who joined the struggle for Mumia and has ultimately served to demobilise the movement for Mumia's freedom. It is no accident that in the lead-up to the Third Circuit Court of Appeals hearing this past May, there were very few protests and events organised on Mumia's behalf. The events called by the PDC and its co-thinkers internationally numbered a modest few hundred here or there. But those were the largest events that there were. What does that tell you about the demobilisation of a movement that once numbered in the millions?

I want to make a point: I'm a lawyer, and the work that I personally did and Jonathan Piper, another lawyer associated with the PDC, has done in Mumia's case when we were on the legal team from 1995 to 1999 represents hundreds and hundreds of hours of legal work. I'm not saying that it wasn't good work to do. But the purpose of this legal work was not only to have a fight in court, but to provide key evidence for a movement that would take this evidence and fight in the streets, mobilising the working class in the fight for Mumia's freedom. The organised working class has the power to actually scare the hell out of the

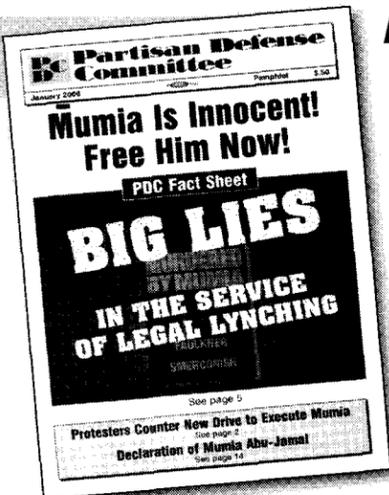
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Join the campaign to free Mumia Abu-Jamal!

Just out!

Get the facts!

New PDC fact sheet pamphlet, *Big Lies in the Service of Legal Lynching* (30p each, £2 for 10) is a detailed refutation of the recent book *Murdered by Mumia* by right-wing journalist Michael Smerconish and Maureen Faulkner, whose lying tract is a rallying cry not only to execute Mumia but for the death penalty itself.



Order from, make cheques payable to Partisan Defence Committee, BCM Box 4986, London WC1N 3XX.

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. Such contributions as well as collections at PDC or other events for Mumia's legal defence are receipted and transferred in full to the National Lawyers Guild Foundation account in New York as has been designated by Mumia's lawyer for this purpose.

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! Distribute the *Workers Hammer* supplement, "Freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal!" (July 2007), containing reports and speeches from the May 2007 rally in London, £1 per bundle of 10. Order from/make payable to: Spartacist Publications, PO Box 42886, London N19 5WY.

Order the PDC pamphlet *The Fight to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal—Mumia is Innocent!*, detailing the political basis of the state vendetta against Mumia and the explosive evidence of his innocence. 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.

Contact the Partisan Defence Committee

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China...

(Continued from page 4)

planned economy was replaced by market mechanisms and agriculture was decollectivised, so that peasant families could get their own little piece of land on a long-term lease. Over time, the regime abolished the “iron rice bowl”, which was based on guaranteeing workers a job for life and was rightly seen by urban workers as an important gain of the 1949 Revolution. But a country as poor and backward as China could obviously not offer hundreds of millions of peasants a job in state industry, guaranteed for life and at a significantly higher wage rate than the income of members of a rural commune.

When Mao died in 1976, China had constructed a substantial heavy industrial sector, but it remained an overwhelmingly (80 per cent) rural society. Agricultural production remained technologically backward and a large fraction of the peasantry lived in abject poverty. For the past two decades, China has experienced an economic growth rate of close to ten per cent. More than 40 per cent of the population is now urbanised. Chinese industry has grown enormously and over half the working population is now employed in manufacturing, transport, construction and the public service sector. Up to 150 million peasants became proletarians since market reforms began. According to *Monthly Labour Review* (July 2005), there were twice as many industrial workers in China as in all the G-7 states together. The proletarianisation of the peasantry on such a scale is a progressive development of great historical significance.

Development in China puts the growth in capitalist neocolonies in the shade, whether it be “tiger economies” like Indonesia and South Korea, or India, which won its independence around the same time as China but remained capitalist. India’s per capita gross national product is only half that of China, while the poverty rate of China is only half that of India. Child malnutrition is 75 per cent lower in China than in India. In China, almost 90 per cent of women are literate, almost twice as high as in India.

At the same time, the “reform” era has also seen a widening of inequalities, both within the cities and between urban and rural areas and therefore China today is seething with discontent. Economic penetration by

the imperialists has enormously strengthened the forces for internal counterrevolution. A class of capitalist entrepreneurs has developed with family and financial connections both to the CCP bureaucracy and to the Chinese capitalists in Taiwan and Hong Kong. A layer of well-to-do managers, professionals and technocrats has been created that enjoys a lifestyle like that in the West.

The policies carried out by the Beijing Stalinists have driven a significant component of the working class and rural toilers into poverty. Important social gains such as healthcare have been eroded, millions of unemployed are looking for new jobs, and if they find work at all, they are employed in the private sector under much worse conditions, without the social benefits of the state sector. Some 150 million migrant workers have moved from the countryside into the cities, where they toil under wretched conditions with few rights and are often scorned by urban workers.

These inequalities have resulted in massive struggles, which we support: workers protesting against non-payment of wages, lay-offs or poor working conditions; peasants protesting against corruption and illegal theft of their land by party bureaucrats or against environmental pollution. The ruling bureaucracy is clearly split between elements who want to pursue the economic “reforms” unabated, those who want more state intervention and others who want to return to a bureaucratically planned economy.

According to the bureaucrats’ official statistics, there were 87,000 protests in 2005 alone. But militancy at the economic level is not enough. The working class must take up the struggle at the political level. What’s needed is a revolutionary vanguard party in China to fight for a proletarian political revolution based on unconditional military defence of the deformed workers state. Such a party would fight to unite all sectors of the working class in an alliance with the rural workers and the urban poor. Migrant workers must receive all the rights of legal residents—including access to healthcare, housing and public education—and equal pay for equal work.

As we explain in our article “China’s ‘Market Reforms’—A Trotskyist Analysis” (*Workers Vanguard* nos 874 and 875, 4 August and 1 September



East Berlin, 3 January 1990: Spartakist speaker addresses the ICL-initiated 250,000-strong demonstration at Treptow Park against fascist desecration of Soviet war memorial and in defence of East German and Soviet workers states.

2006), a real reduction in the gap between the city and the countryside requires a massive redistribution and reallocation of economic resources. The introduction of modern technology in the countryside demands a qualitatively higher industrial base than that which exists today. Correspondingly, a growth in agricultural productivity would necessitate an enormous extension of industrial jobs in the urban areas in order to absorb the huge workforce which would no longer be required in the countryside. This would no doubt be a lengthy process, especially given the still limited size and relatively low productivity of China’s industrial base.

All this shows the strategic necessity of extending the Chinese Revolution to advanced capitalist countries like Japan and of establishing an international planned economy. This will determine both the tempo and ultimately the viability of this perspective. A red China of workers and peasants councils would be a beacon for the oppressed working masses of Asia and the entire world. A victorious proletarian political revolution would deal a deathblow to the bourgeoisie’s “death of communism” propaganda, and it would lift up the downtrodden masses of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and inspire the workers of Western Europe.

Social democracy abhors Bolshevik Revolution

Ever since the October Revolution of 1917, social democracy has condemned the workers states in the name of “democracy”, as a declaration of support to its own bourgeoisie. In Germany in 1918-19, the social democracy drowned the revolution in the blood of thousands upon thousands of workers and had revolutionary leaders Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg murdered. “Left” social democrat Karl Kautsky ranted against the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia and propagated the illusion of “pure democracy”. In 1918, in *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, Lenin replied that “democracy” is a type of state. And the state—at its core the police, army and courts—is not neutral. So the question always posed for Marxists is: **democracy for which class?** Marx drew the decisive lesson from the Paris Commune of 1871 that the proletariat cannot simply take over the bourgeois state machinery, but must shatter it and replace it with its own state: the dictatorship of the proletariat. And that is exactly what the social

democrats abhor about what Lenin and Trotsky’s Bolsheviks did in the October Revolution of 1917.

As Marx and Lenin explained, every state is an instrument of class rule, including the modern bourgeois republic, where the democratic forms of government conceal the rule of the bourgeoisie particularly effectively. Lenin’s question to Kautsky applies just as much to the CWI today: “Can it be that the learned Kautsky has never heard that the *more highly* democracy is developed, the *more* the bourgeois parliaments are subjected by the stock exchange and the bankers?” (*The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* [1918]). What is necessary is a socialist revolution that smashes the bourgeois state machinery and replaces it by the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is what the CWI, like Kautsky, is opposed to.

Because it stands firmly in the traditions of social democracy, Taaffe’s CWI regurgitates the bourgeoisie’s “human rights” campaigns against the workers states, as a cover for supporting counterrevolutionary pro-imperialist forces. The CWI upholds the programmatic core of the old Labour Party which saved capitalist rule in Britain during the revolutionary wave that shook the capitalist world at the end of World War I. When the Bolsheviks led the October 1917 Revolution to victory, the Labour Party leadership was hostile to the Revolution and took it upon itself to act as a bulwark against the spread of Bolshevism, including by derailing the mass revolutionary mobilisations that swept Britain, particularly in 1920.

As an antidote to Bolshevism, the Labour Party in 1918 adopted “Clause IV”, a nominal commitment to “common ownership of the means of production”. This was a cynical ploy to dupe the working class into believing that “socialism” could be achieved “democratically”, through parliament, without smashing the capitalist state and without establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat. Labour’s pretence to “socialism” rested upon a nominal commitment to nationalising industry through legislation in parliament.

Clause IV was abolished from the Labour Party’s constitution by Tony Blair in 1994 but it remains the cornerstone of the programme of Peter Taaffe’s Socialist Party. Marking the 90th anniversary of Clause IV’s adoption, the Taaffeites noted that since the “socialist” Clause IV was adopted, it “has been denounced by ultra-lefts as



Workers and students fraternise with troops called in to suppress 1989 Tiananmen uprising, which marked incipient political revolution against Chinese Stalinist regime.

being a fig-leaf disguising the capitalist character of the Labour Party”, and that “it is the job of the Socialist Party and the Campaign for a New Workers’ Party that it has initiated, to help mobilise the level of support that the celebrated Clause attracted in 1918” (“1918: 2008, Clause IV and nine decades of workers struggles”, Socialist Party website, 20 February).

Taaffe revises Marxism on the state

Peter Taaffe’s ludicrous assertion that the “Chinese state itself is of a ‘mixed character’”, which occupies a “halfway house position” (“Has capitalism been fully restored?” socialistworld.net, 22 March 2007), is a flagrant denial of the Marxist understanding that the state is an instrument for the suppression of one class by another. Taaffe claims that the state in China “can, under certain conditions—for instance, where there is a class deadlock—play a relatively ‘independent’ role”. This utterly social-democratic view of the state in China as a neutral force is very much in keeping with the CWI’s programme for Britain and other capitalist countries, which is based on peddling illusions that “socialism” can be achieved through legislation in parliament, ie without smashing the bourgeois state. As the Socialist Party’s election manifesto for 2007 put it: “Take into public ownership the top 150 companies, banks and building societies that dominate the economy, under democratic working-class control and management.”

While denying the need for the capitalist state to be smashed in Britain, his home terrain, Taaffe insists the *Chinese* state must be dismantled, saying: “The present ‘halfway house’ state combines some of the worst features of Stalinism and capitalism. It must be completely dismantled; it is incapable of ‘reform’”. This call to smash the Chinese state is a declaration that, when the fate of China as a workers state is decisively posed, the CWI will be on the side of forces for “democratic” counterrevolution. For Marxists it is axiomatic that the working class must establish its own state power in the course of a revolution to *defend* itself and its organs of power against the blood-soaked capitalist state.

Contrary to Taaffe, the Stalinist bureaucracy is not capable of bringing about a cold, step-by-step restoration of capitalism from above. The ruling Stalinist bureaucracy is a brittle, contradictory caste, not a class based on private ownership of the means of production. In 1936, in *The Revolution Betrayed*, Trotsky explained in regard to the Soviet degenerated workers state

that “a further development of the accumulating contradictions can as well lead to socialism as back to capitalism; h) on the road to capitalism the counterrevolution would have to break the resistance of the workers; i) on the road to socialism the workers would have to overthrow the bureaucracy”.

The idea that a workers state can gradually evolve towards capitalism was refuted at the theoretical level by Trotsky as far back as 1933, when he condemned such notions of a gradual, imperceptible, bourgeois counterrevolution in the Soviet Union. In “The Class Nature of the Soviet State” he wrote: “The dictatorship of the proletariat was established by means of a political overturn and a civil war of three years. The class theory of society and historical experience equally testify to the impossibility of the victory of the proletariat through peaceful methods, that is, without grandiose class battles, weapons in hand. How, in that case, is the imperceptible, ‘gradual,’ bourgeois counterrevolution conceivable?” Trotsky’s conclusion certainly applies to the CWI’s approach to China today: “He who asserts that the Soviet government has been *gradually* changed from proletarian to bourgeois is only, so to speak, running backwards the film of reformism.”

The accumulating contradictions in China will lead sooner or later to the collapse of Stalinist bonapartism and the political shattering of the ruling Communist Party. But whether this is followed by a capitalist counterrevolution that breaks the resistance of the Chinese working class and destroys the workers state, or by a proletarian political revolution that overthrows the rule of the Stalinist bureaucracy, establishing the political rule of workers and peasants soviets in China and fighting to extend the Chinese Revolution internationally, will be decided in struggle.

Taaffeites equate market reforms with capitalist counterrevolution

As revolutionary Marxists, we do not oppose *as such* China’s extensive economic relations with the capitalist world. A revolutionary workers state would seek to trade with capitalist countries, as the early Soviet state did under the revolutionary leadership of Lenin and Trotsky’s Bolshevik party. A China of workers and peasants councils based on workers democracy would re-establish a centrally planned economy and reinstate the state monopoly of foreign trade. It would expropriate the Chinese capitalist entrepreneurs and renegotiate the terms of foreign investment in the interests of Chinese workers —insisting for example on at least

the same benefits and working conditions as in the state sector. It would encourage the voluntary collectivisation of agriculture on the basis of large-scale mechanised and scientific farming, while recognising that this requires substantial material aid from successful workers revolutions in more economically advanced countries. A revolutionary regime in China would actively promote revolutions internationally, understanding that genuine communism can only come via a globally integrated and planned socialist economy based on the most advanced industry and technology following proletarian revolution in the imperialist centres.

The market reforms have exacerbated the *contradictions* in China, on one hand feeding the growth of enormous forces for capitalist counterrevolution while at the same time giving rise to one of the most powerful industrial proletariats in the world. Coinciding with the period in which the CWI claims counterrevolution has been underway, China has experienced a prodigious expansion of industrial capacity with a corresponding increase in the social weight of the urban working class. China has also developed a large technical intelligentsia. Overall there has been a substantial improvement in living standards, including in the countryside, with much of the populace gaining access to modern industrial culture.

The significant development of China’s infrastructure in recent years has confounded bourgeois commentators. The *Economist* noted with envy that Beijing’s new airport terminal—the largest in the world—“was planned and built in four years by an army of 50,000 workers”, in contrast to Britain where, “it took as long to conduct a public inquiry into the proposed construction of Heathrow’s Terminal Five as it took to build Beijing’s new airport terminal from scratch”. In China, between 2001 and the end of 2005 “more was spent on roads, railways and other fixed assets than was spent in the previous 50 years” and “since the 1990s China has built an expressway network crisscrossing the country that is second only to America’s interstate highway system in length” (*Economist*, 14 February). At the same time, industrialisation has come at a huge cost: China is plagued by water shortages and environmental pollution. Acid rain reduces agricultural yields and two in three cities suffer from water shortages.

While the Chinese economy will not be immune from the economic downturn facing most of the capitalist world today, China will not be affected in the same way, because it is a workers state and the core of the economy is based on collectivised property. A prevalent myth is that the Chinese economy primarily produces cheap manufactured goods which are then exported. China is the world’s largest producer of steel (producing the world’s largest cranes) and of concrete, as well as the third largest car producer (behind the US and Japan) and second largest car market. Much of that steel and concrete are used for building Chinese infrastructure and the manufactured goods are increasingly for the home market. While the productivity of labour in China is increasing, it remains very low compared to that of the US, Germany and Japan. Increasing the productivity of labour requires advanced technology. Ultimately China’s vulnerability through international trade—compounded by the bureaucracy’s dismantling of the state monopoly of foreign trade—and its low productivity underscore the necessity of workers revolutions in the imperialist centres.

At a number of points the CWI’s Vincent Kolo (“China’s capitalist counterrevolution”, *Socialism Today*, December 2007-January 2008) compares China *unfavourably* to post-Soviet Russia (for example, in terms of the percentage of government revenue contributed by state-owned enterprises). But he ignores the most important and obvious *difference* between China and post-Soviet Russia. In the 1990s, Russia and also Ukraine, as a consequence of capitalist counterrevolution, experienced a *catastrophic economic collapse* unprecedented in the history of any advanced capitalist society except in wartime. The CWI bears its share of responsibility for this disaster, having supported counterrevolution. The wind-fall gain Russia has obtained in recent years from the price boom in oil and natural gas has done little to repair its tattered social fabric. A striking index is the sharp decline in life expectancy especially for men. Even though China’s per capita gross domestic product is only a third that of Russia, the life expectancy of Chinese men (70 years) is far longer than that of Russian men (59 years).

Kolo uses a plethora of statistics to deny that China has been able to make rapid economic progress precisely because it remains a workers state. The 150 large state-owned enterprises directly controlled by the central ministries in Beijing account for one-third of China’s total national output. And that third constitutes the strategic core of China’s industrial economy. Even Kolo acknowledges that the “Big Four” banks account for 71 per cent of all loans for investment purposes. Since the early 1980s the CCP regime has used the state-owned banks as its main institutional instrument in seeking to direct the economy. In the past few years the Beijing authorities have allowed limited foreign ownership of the banks without relinquishing effective managerial control. The mass of the economic surplus generated in mainland China (except by firms owned by foreign and off-shore Chinese capitalists) continues to be channelled into and out of a handful of state-owned banks.

For proletarian internationalism!

The CWI retails the protectionism of social-democratic trade union bureaucrats in imperialist countries who howl that China—and *not* the world capitalist economic system—is responsible for maintaining low wages in the poorest regions of the world. Kolo says that: “China today is synonymous with vast sweatshops” and that the “CCP regime today is instrumental in spreading neo-liberalism globally”, adding that “Chinese companies, many of which are state-owned, are hated across whole swathes of Africa due to their union-busting, corrupt, law-breaking and environmentally destructive practises.” This is identical to the anti-Communist complaint of the British Trades Union Congress (TUC) against China’s export of textiles, the impact of which they say “has been to create mass unemployment in countries like Lesotho, and drive wages to rock bottom prices in countries like Bangladesh. And all over the developing world, workers’ rights to organise have been under attack so that employers can freely exploit labour so that they can compete with the Chinese” (“China and manufacturing”, TUC statement, 10 December 2005).

Such anti-Communist China-bashing is also a cover for the social-democratic union bureaucrats’ treachery to the working class at home which is based

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China...

(Continued from page 9)

on class collaboration rather than class struggle. This goes hand-in-hand with chauvinist protectionism, summed up in the call “British jobs for British workers”—a slogan long associated with the fascists and recently embraced by Gordon Brown. Pro-imperialist protectionism is poison for the working class, reinforcing national divisions and subordinating it to its own bourgeoisie. Against such chauvinism, we advance Karl Marx’s slogan: “Workers of the world unite!”

Pro-“democracy” movements for capitalist restoration

The CWI claims that Trotsky’s theory of permanent revolution applies to China today, as it does to the neocolonial *capitalist* countries like India, while perverting Trotsky’s theory to justify supporting pro-imperialist counterrevolutionary forces. The CWI article “China at the Crossroads” says: “The tasks facing workers in China today are a confirmation in a new and original form of Trotsky’s theory of the permanent revolution”, adding that there is a need “to link the struggle for democratic rights with the struggle for socialism”.

Permanent revolution, a programme developed by Trotsky in 1905, was in essence the programme carried out by the Bolsheviks in the Russian Revolution. It is the only means of achieving the democratic tasks in countries of belated capitalist development, such as China *prior to the 1949 Revolution*. Permanent revolution holds that the proletariat must place itself at the head of the peasant masses in a struggle for socialist revolution, against the colonial powers and against the national bourgeoisie and landlords, as part of a programme for revolution internationally.

This is a far cry from the CWI’s programme which is to seek out anti-Communist political opposition forces in China, particularly those masquerading as workers organisations. A key player among such forces is Han Dongfang, founder of *China Labour Bulletin*, who has direct connections to the European and American imperialists. Han, who is also called the “Chinese Lech Walesa” after the leader of counterrevolutionary Solidarność in Poland, has for years been a regular spokesman for Washington’s Radio Free Asia, the radio station of the

CIA, operating under the direction of, among others, Condoleezza Rice, who is on its board of directors. Han—the CIA’s favourite dissident—is reproached by the CWI for having illusions in the Stalinists, because he supposedly wants to win the official union federation “to a democratic, fighting standpoint”. This is “completely unrealistic”, says the CWI which stands for “independent” unions, just as it did when helping to build Solidarność in the 1980s. Contrary to the CWI, the fight for unions independent of the Stalinist bureaucracy in China must be based on unconditional military defence of the Chinese deformed workers state. Independent unions must stand in irreconcilable opposition to the imperialists and their ideological agencies, including the counterrevolutionary “non-governmental” organisations. Defence of workers’ rights presupposes above all the defence of the Chinese workers state and its collectivised economy.

Indeed, the CWI raises a thinly veiled call for the Chinese deformed workers state to legalise the utterly counterrevolutionary Guomindang, which was driven from the mainland by the 1949 Revolution: “Marxists support the right of all parties, except fascists (which use terror against the working class and all democratic rights), to organise independently of the state. This means we would not oppose the legalisation of the GMD, however much we oppose its anti-working class policies” (*China Worker* online, 24 May 2007). This stands completely in continuity with the CWI’s support for counterrevolution in the deformed workers states of Eastern Europe and in the degenerated workers state of the Soviet Union in the name of democracy.

The CWI actually defends “democratic” capitalist Taiwan against the Chinese deformed workers state. Upholding “independence” for Taiwan, Taaffe implies it is a distinct nation, saying: “There is now clearly a consciousness of a separate entity, Taiwan, and a broad ‘national consciousness’ amongst the majority of the population” (“Marxists, Taiwan and the National Question”, chinaworker.org, 26 August 2005). Taiwan has been part of China for centuries. For the imperialists, above all Japan and the US, Taiwan is a dagger at the throat of the Chinese deformed workers state and a springboard for counterrevolution on the mainland, which is why they arm it to the teeth.

In a military conflict between China and Taiwan—which could certainly result in a counterrevolutionary imperi-

alist attack on China—we naturally side with the deformed workers state, which we unconditionally militarily defend. In opposition to the Beijing bureaucracy’s policy of “one country, two systems”, which is intended by the bureaucracy as a pledge to preserve private property, we fight for the revolutionary reunification of China and Taiwan through proletarian *political* revolution against the bureaucracy on the mainland and *social* revolution to bring down the Chinese bourgeoisie in Taiwan. The CWI takes a side with the Taiwanese bourgeoisie and the imperialists in the name of “democracy”, saying: “Nevertheless, the Chinese regime is a dictatorship. Moreover, from the standpoint of the Taiwanese masses they would not wish to put themselves under its control, preferring the democratic rights, however limited, which they enjoy under a bourgeois-democratic regime, which is what Taiwan is” (chinaworker.org, 26 August 2005).

In 1989-90 in Germany—which was until capitalist reunification one nation separated, like China today, by a class line—the CWI argued the reverse. At that time it trumpeted: “The SPD’s Germany Policy—An Offensive for

Unity and Socialism Is Needed”, stating: “We support the unification of every nation—even the German one—as a historically progressive development and as a democratic right” (*Voran* supplement, 25 January 1990). In both cases one thing remains the same for the CWI: it is always on the side of counterrevolution, of “democratic” capitalism against “Stalinist dictatorship”, which in reality was a form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, albeit deformed.

The question of revolution and counterrevolution in China is a vital question for the working class of the whole world. We fight to build Trotskyist parties worldwide as part of a reformed Fourth International. The working class in Britain must be won to the understanding that it is necessary to defend China against the British bourgeoisie and its social-democratic agents. This constitutes a central component of breaking workers from their illusions in bourgeois democracy and ultimately mobilising them to overthrow British imperialism and to set up a federation of workers republics in the British Isles as part of a Socialist United States of Europe. ■

Tibet...

(Continued from page 5)

Tibet have laid the blame solely on the Dalai Lama; left unsaid is the role of the imperialists. But as a *New York Times* (22 March) op-ed article by one Patrick French, a former director of the “Free Tibet Campaign” in London, stated: “The International Campaign for Tibet, based in Washington, is now a more powerful and effective force on global opinion than the Dalai Lama’s outfit in northern India.” This “Free Tibet” supporter went on to underline that “the European and American pro-Tibet organizations are the tail that wags the dog of the Tibetan government-in-exile”. He also noted that “after scouring the archives in Dharamsala” he found “that there was no evidence” to support the claim raised by his and other “Free Tibet” groups that 1.2 million Tibetans have been killed since the Chinese entered Tibet in 1950.

At the same time, Chinese Stalinism has meant nationalism and Han chauvinism. During the misnamed “Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution” that began in the mid 1960s, in which Mao mobilised millions of student youth to buttress his position in an intra-bureaucratic factional feud, Mao subjected the Tibetans to fierce Great Han chauvinism. Tibetan language and native dress were proscribed. Much of what had been at the core of Tibetan culture was simply smashed up and destroyed, although with the beneficial side effect of driving monks into actual labour.

After Mao’s death, Deng Xiaoping lifted the strictures against Tibetan language, attire and hairstyles. At the same time, monasteries were rebuilt and refurbished, and idle monks returned in droves and numbered 40,000 to 50,000 by the late 1990s. Meanwhile, the “market reforms” initiated under Deng have increased Han privilege in the area. The real gains won by the Tibetan masses from the 1949 Chinese Revolution stand alongside continuing inequalities.

Over 92 per cent of China’s population is Han. It is vital for the Chinese proletariat to combat the Han chauvinism of the Stalinist bureaucracy and oppose all discrimination against Tibet-

ans, the Muslim Uighurs of Xinjiang and other national and ethnic minorities. What is needed is a fight to sweep away Stalinist bureaucratic rule in China and replace it with a regime based on workers democracy, expressed through workers and peasants councils and rooted in Marxist internationalism. This would be a workers *political* revolution, not a social one. It would be based on defending the Chinese workers state and fighting for international socialist revolution. Key to realising this perspective is the forging of a Trotskyist party in China. The fate of the Tibetan people is inextricably bound up with the struggle for proletarian political revolution in China and socialist revolution in the capitalist countries—from the Indian subcontinent to Japan, the US, Britain and other imperialist centres.

Back in 1959, in the aftermath of the failed Tibetan uprising, James Robertson, one of the founding leaders of our international tendency and national chairman of the Spartacist League/US, wrote a leaflet that was printed in *Young Socialist* (June 1959), newspaper of the Young Socialist Clubs, forerunner of the youth group of the then-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP). Robertson was a former member of a Shachtmanite organisation that had a “third campist” (ie, non-defensist) position towards the Soviet Union. An ardent communist, he was won to Trotskyism and joined the SWP. This leaflet, titled “The Tibetan Brigade: Crocodile Tears Stain the Monkscloth” and issued by the Eugene V Debs Club of Berkeley, was his first statement of Trotskyist Soviet defensism. In it he asserted:

“The real choice for Tibet if Chinese control were thrown off is not independent nationhood but abject dependence on American arms, money and advisors.... “The victory of the Chinese Communist government is clearly the progressive choice in the present contest. However, to recognize this is not to whitewash that regime. But even in its distorted way it is part of great and positive changes on the Asian mainland, changes that eventually will be the Maoists’ own undoing. Through these very achievements the regime will be overthrown by the mass of people anxious to rule their own destinies without the intervention of a privileged elite. That is the future; the Tibetan monk-rulers are the past.” ■



Spartacist literature stall, 24 February 2007 Iraq war demonstration, London. Placards oppose British imperialism, and call for defence of China and remaining deformed workers states against imperialism, counterrevolution.

Elections...

(Continued from page 12)

partially, on an issue of importance for the working class. But as a matter of principle we would not consider giving critical support to either wing of the former Respect coalition, both of which claim to stand in the true tradition of Respect. Respect has never even pretended to be a working-class formation, but was founded as a cross-class, popular-frontist coalition. As we wrote in our article "SWP wanted the post-Soviet world, now they've got it":

"Respect purports to represent Britain's Muslims, who are among the poorest sections of the population and are foremost targets of the government's racist 'war on terror' at home. Far from representing the interests of any oppressed minority, Respect is based on a bald-faced acceptance by the SWP of racist British capitalist rule, based on the monarchy, the House of Lords, the established Protestant churches and parliament. Respect certainly does not represent the interests of the working class, minorities or women. It ought to repel young activists who want to fight to overthrow the racist system of capitalist exploitation and to liberate women from the yoke of oppres-

sion and religious reaction — whether it comes from church, temple or mosque."

— *Workers Hammer* no 194, Spring 2006

Down with executive offices of the capitalist state!

George Galloway is leading Respect's list of candidates for the London Assembly, and says: "We want to hold Mayor Ken Livingstone to account" (*Respect*, March 2008). The office of mayor is an executive office of the capitalist state, which can *only* be held "to account" by the capitalist rulers. Revolutionaries would not take up executive offices such as that of mayor, nor that of president in a bourgeois republic such as Ireland, France or the US. For the same reason Marxists would not take over the running of a local council — a section of the capitalist state — as Militant proudly did in Liverpool in the 1980s. As the city's bosses, Militant became the employer of Liverpool city's 30,000 workers and had to administer budget and job cuts. Neither would we *run* for executive office, because to do so lends legitimacy to the kind of illusions that Galloway and other reformists peddle about the capitalist state.

We do not oppose taking seats in parliament, indeed we seek to use parlia-

ment as a platform from which to convince the working class of the need for revolutionary struggle to overthrow the capitalist system. Such was the policy of Lenin's Bolsheviks, who were elected to and organised a parliamentary fraction within the reactionary tsarist Duma before the 1917 October Revolution. Bourgeois parliaments, as well as local councils and assemblies, are merely a "democratic" facade that masks the fundamental nature of capitalist society as the class dictatorship of the bourgeoisie over the working class and oppressed masses. Behind the facade of parliamentary democracy is the mailed fist of the capitalist state, which consists at its core of armed bodies of men — the police, the army, the courts and prison system and all the coercive forces which the capitalist class has at its disposal to crush any real challenge to its domination. The dictatorship of the bourgeoisie cannot be reformed away by reformist "socialists" getting elected to parliament or to offices such as mayor. It can only be overthrown through workers revolution, which will shatter the capitalist state and establish organs of workers rule — workers councils (soviets), defended by the armed bodies of a workers state.

The City of London is a citadel for international finance capital. Much of the vast wealth that passes through it is produced by the sweat and blood of toilers around the world who endure desperate poverty, neo-colonial subjugation and wars, which are endemic to the world system of capitalism. The most basic needs of the working class and oppressed masses cannot be met within the framework of capitalism, which is based on production for private profit, not for human need. To end poverty and secure decent jobs and services for all, to put an end to racism and imperialism's perpetual wars of plunder requires ripping society's means of production out of the hands of the capitalists internationally through workers revolution and establishing a collectivised, planned economy and the construction of an egalitarian socialist society based on a massive expansion of the productive forces. Our task is to forge a Bolshevik party to lead the proletariat in the struggle to end the nightmare of British imperialist rule and replace it with an egalitarian socialist society where production is to meet the needs of all the toilers, not a handful of super-rich exploiters. ■

Police...

(Continued from page 3)

working class. A 26 January *Socialist Worker* article headlined: "Whose interests do police officers really serve?" It answered, somewhat surprisingly, that the state "operates as the instrument of the rich to oppress the poor" and that "the police are not part of the working class, but are rather a method of holding back the working class". But actions speak louder than words: leading SWPer Lindsey German is running for Mayor of London and giving her second preference votes to Ken Livingstone, assuring us that "it is very important that we don't let the Tory in, which is why I will be calling for all my voters to give Ken their second preference" (*Socialist Worker*, 2 February). Livingstone boasts of having put thousands more cops on London's streets and he backed the Metropolitan Police in the face of public criticism over the execution of Jean Charles de Menezes. This cold-blooded execution took place amid a wave of anti-Muslim hysteria following the criminal London public transport bombings in July 2005, at which time the Socialist Party adopted the slogan

"no to terrorism, no to war". This was an echo of Livingstone himself, who brandished his "anti-war" credentials over Iraq while backing the "war on terror" at home. Above all that meant supporting the cops.

The notion that the strike-breaking police are part of the workers movement is the outlook of Labourite union bureaucrats whose policy is class-collaboration. Thus the Socialist Party boasts that its members have a majority on the executive of the civil service union, the PCS. These "socialists", who have secured a sell-out two-tier deal on pensions, raise not a peep about the fact that the union membership includes immigration cops. We say: **all cops out of the PCS!**

Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky made it unquestionably clear that the police are the class enemy, saying:

"The fact that the police was originally recruited in large numbers from among Social Democratic workers is absolutely meaningless. Consciousness is determined by environment even in this instance. The worker who becomes a policeman in the service of the capitalist state, is a bourgeois cop, not a worker."

— "What Next? Vital Questions for the German Proletariat", January 1932, *The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany*. ■

Mumia...

(Continued from page 7)

bourgeoisie and to let them know that if something bad happens to Mumia, there will be a social explosion. This perspective is part of understanding that the fight for Mumia is part of the fight for black liberation, for that of all working people and the oppressed, which requires socialist revolution.

I also want to make the point that if bourgeois law were followed, Mumia's conviction should be thrown out, dismissed, no new trial, no nothing. This is because there is constitutional law stipulating that if the police and the prosecution withhold evidence from the defence, if they suppress evidence of Mumia's innocence, if they frame people up, it is a violation of due process for which the charges can be dismissed. So all the talk about needing a new trial to free Mumia is a lot of legal bunk. It's a way to give support to those who want to destroy a movement that could be based on the fact that Mumia is an innocent man who must be freed. The legal papers we filed called for dismissal of the charges. The call for a new trial does not even have legal credibility; it expresses the politics of sell-out, a betrayal of everything that Mumia represents.

I would just like to note that when a death warrant was signed in 1995, there were protests around the world for Mumia's cause, including protests based on trade unions representing millions of workers from South Africa and Europe to the US. The mobilisations were built on the fact that Mumia's frame-up conviction was political and

racist, and that the death sentence was the call for racist legal lynching. And the very particulars of Mumia's case provide powerful lessons, that Mumia's freedom can be wrested from the state only by the independent action of the working class acting with consciousness of its social power to withhold its labour, to shut down industry, communications and transportation. Mumia's case has the power to deepen workers' militancy, class solidarity and the recognition that the fight for black rights, for immigrant rights and to end exploitation and oppression is one fight.

What we need is class-struggle defence. We need united-front defence for Mumia based on a class-struggle programme. This means, as an initial basis, that we agree that Mumia is an innocent man. Free him now! Abolish the racist death penalty! We are prepared to work with any organisation that supports those slogans, understanding that we will continue to criticise other forces in this united front on other political issues. And there are a number of different political issues here. As I said, Mumia is not a Marxist.

Finally, I want to say this: the labour movement, the revolutionary movement internationally, has had its share of martyrs. We don't want more martyrs. We don't want Mumia to be a martyr. And he must not become a martyr to the racist viciousness of American capital. The power to free Mumia exists in the international working class and our task is to rekindle and build a mass international mobilisation based on the social power of the working class and its many allies to fight for Mumia's freedom. Free Mumia now! ■

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Elections for London mayor:

No choice for workers!



Boris-Johnson.com



Heathcliff O'Malley

Tory candidate Boris Johnson, racist bigot (left). Ken Livingstone, loyal servant of capitalists and staunch supporter of police (right).

The local elections due to be held on 1 May in England and Wales will be New Labour's first test at the polls since Gordon Brown took over as prime minister from Tony Blair last year. In London, in addition to choosing the 25-seat London Assembly, voters will also elect the mayor, who is likely to be either New Labour incumbent Ken Livingstone or his Conservative opponent Boris Johnson. Some choice! Boris Johnson is certainly bad news. He is notorious for using foul racist epithets to describe black people and has condemned "the tyranny of black majority rule" in South Africa. When the 1999 report of the Macpherson inquiry into police conduct following the murder of black teenager Stephen Lawrence concluded that the police are institutionally racist, Johnson described this as a witch hunt. This arrogant, arch-Thatcherite toff is quite open about his multiple prejudices, which include class hatred for working people, expressed in rants against Liverpool as well as English chauvinism in his diatribes against Scottish people.

For his part, Livingstone has run the capital for eight years as a loyal servant of the Labour government and the capitalist ruling class. As mayor, with some responsibility for policing, Livingstone has championed the Metropolitan Police, most grotesquely in the face of public outrage over the cold-blooded police slaying of Brazilian electrician Jean Charles de Menezes in July 2005. This heinous act was perpetrated as part of Labour's racist "war on terror" which particularly targets the Muslim population. Back in 2000, when he first stood for the newly-created office of London mayor, the Spartacist League was virtually alone on the left in saying no vote to Livingstone. At that time Blair's New Labour prevented him from running as the official Labour candidate, but that did not prevent Livingstone from openly declaring his fulsome support to the Blair government. And it certainly didn't stop the reformist left such as the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) from calling for votes to Livingstone, knowing full well that he had supported the bombing of Serbia in 1999 and backed the cops when they bloodied the anti-capitalist

protesters on Mayday 2000. In an article titled "Ken Livingstone: 100 per cent New Labour", we wrote: "Without a doubt, a vote for Livingstone in the May

Bright. Livingstone's opposition to the occupation of Iraq makes him a hate figure for the likes of Cohen, a "liberal" who passionately defends the imperialist occu-

No vote to Livingstone, Respect or the Left List!

London mayoral elections is a vote for New Labour: he supported the government's imperialist bombing of Serbia, he is for the British Army in Northern Ireland, and he is emphatically for the racist police" (*Workers Hammer* no 172, Spring 2000). Today we also say categorically: **No vote to Livingstone! A vote for Livingstone is an affront to the memory of Jean Charles de Menezes!**

The fact that Johnson, who was widely seen as a buffoon, is now a serious contender for mayor speaks volumes about the aggressively racist climate that exists in Britain today. Forty years on from Enoch Powell's racist "rivers of blood" speech, the BBC television series titled the "White Season" shows that today Powell's anti-immigrant views are being regarded as "respectable". Responsibility for generating this racist climate lies squarely with the Labour governments of Tony Blair and Gordon Brown of the past decade, during which they have taken the ground from under the Tories' feet when it comes to anti-immigrant racism and have fuelled anti-Muslim racism under cover of the "war on terror".

Johnson's campaign has been aided by a vicious witch hunt of Livingstone, conducted particularly by the right-wing *Evening Standard* which forced Lee Jasper, Livingstone's race adviser, to resign amid corruption allegations. As part of this, the *Observer* ran a rabid article by Nick Cohen on 20 January, which was followed the next day by a Channel 4 *Dispatches* programme presented by the *New Statesman's* Martin

Bright. Livingstone cultivates relations with Muslim and other minority community leaders makes him a target of frenzied Islamophobia.

Cohen and Bright rather laughably tried to red-bait Livingstone, mainly because some of his advisors—such as John Ross, who has worked for Livingstone for around 19 years and who now reputedly earns in excess of £100,000 a year—they say are former Trotskyists. Journalist Seumas Milne was scathing about this, not least the notion that Ross & Co constitute a "secret Marxist cell". Rather, he notes, these Livingstone aides have in fact "been working happily with the police and City grandees for the past eight years" (*Guardian*, 24 January). We have no truck with the witch hunt being conducted against Livingstone by the most reactionary enemies of the working class. But that hardly translates into a reason for advocating electoral support for this proven traitor to the workers' cause.

Showing their utter bankruptcy, the reformist left are lining up in support of the despicable Livingstone. Yet even the most incorrigible Labourites among them have to admit that voting for Livingstone is unpalatable. Alan Thornett of Socialist Resistance, which is inside George Galloway's Respect, admits that "Livingstone has systematically championed the police including over the Jean-Charles de Menezes shooting" and points out that, as employer in the London public transport system, in June 2004 Livingstone "attacked the RMT for striking over

pay" and "said if he was an RMT member he would cross the picket line and break the strike". But the hapless Thornett sees no alternative to voting for Livingstone, at least as second choice (second-preference votes are transferred after the first count to the best-placed candidates). Thornett argues that "in the 2004 mayoral election Respect stood Lindsey German and called on its supporters to cast a second vote for Livingstone, and many of them did. The same should apply this time" ("Socialists and Ken Livingstone", 28 January, socialistresistance.net).

No vote to Galloway's Respect or the Left List!

Following the spectacular blow-up in the Respect coalition late last year, both wings are standing rival candidates in the upcoming elections. The two wings are politically indistinguishable: the Galloway-led Respect is calling outright for first preference votes for Livingstone in the mayoral elections, while the SWP-led wing of Respect—which is standing as the "Left List"—is running SWP'er Lindsey German for mayor, and calling for a vote to Livingstone on the second round. In a 2 February article in *Socialist Worker* titled "Respect's fight for Londoners", German gushes: "I have many points of agreement with Ken Livingstone—his anti-racist and anti-imperialist policies are a credit to London and he has seriously attempted to cut car use in the city." German would be well advised not to enthuse too much about Livingstone's sterling "anti-imperialist" credentials in, for example, Belgrade given his rabid support for NATO's bombing of Serbia in 1999. And even the fawning SWP has to grudgingly accept that Livingstone has some "pretty indefensible policies" like "arguing tube workers should cross picket lines during disputes, or backing Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir Ian Blair when there were calls for his resignation after the killing of Jean Charles De Menezes".

We revolutionaries would consider giving **critical support** to working-class tendencies running in elections if their candidacy drew a class line, even

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