

Bush's Iraq Coalition Splinters

Spain: Heinous Bombing and Official Lies Topple Government

Following the criminal bombing of passenger trains in Madrid on March 11, which killed some 200 people, the population's grief and horror turned to fury over the lies manufactured by the Popular Party (PP) and Prime Minister José María Aznar. The PP is the political heir to the bloody military dictatorship of Generalissimo Francisco Franco,

who came to power in the late 1930s after crushing the insurgent proletariat during the Spanish Civil War. Aznar personally phoned the major newspapers to plant the lie that the bombing was the work of the Basque separatist group ETA, despite the organization's disavowal and condemnation of this heinous crime. The mounting evidence

that the bombing was the work of Islamic fundamentalists in payback for Spain's stalwart support to U.S. imperialism's Iraq war, which was opposed by 90 percent of Spaniards, was the political bombshell that dumped Aznar out of office in a surprise upset in the general election three days later.

Aznar had staked his career on re-

pressing the Basques and no doubt thought the Madrid bombing could be manipulated for his political convenience. But on the eve of the election, thousands took to the streets and laid siege to PP headquarters around the country, chanting, "The dead are ours! The war is yours!" Families of the

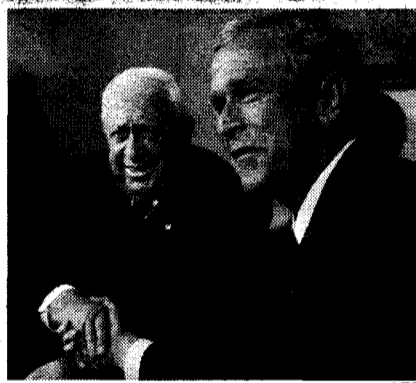
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Grotesque Assassination of Reactionary Hamas Leader

Bloody Zionist Provocation

MARCH 29—The March 22 assassination of the "spiritual leader" of Hamas, Ahmed Yassin, a partially blind 67-year-old quadriplegic, expressed the supreme arrogance and barbarism of Israel's rulers. Three shrapnel-packed missiles were fired from helicopters, hitting the wheelchair-bound cleric, killing seven others and injuring 17. Since the assassination, at least 18 Palestinians have been killed, including five in the massive protests in Gaza and the West Bank. Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon wants to make clear not only to the besieged Palestinians but also to his ministerial critics on the far right that his much-vaunted "withdrawal" from Gaza does not mean that the Zionist rulers are any less determined to destroy any vestige of Palestinian resistance.

The day following Yassin's assassination, General Moshe Yalon of the Israeli military responded when asked if Yasir Arafat and Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah were targets for elimination: "Judging by yesterday's reactions they understand that their turn draws closer." As we wrote in "Israel Hands Off Arafat!" (WV No. 810, 26 September 2003), the full intent of the threats against Arafat was clear: "The Zionist regime was announcing to the world that they were ready for a mass slaughter of Palestinians that would far overshadow the April 2002 bloodbath in Jenin.... The threat to 'liquidate' Arafat is only the most recent provocation in the Zionist state's long history of *assassination as policy*." The Israeli ruling class is sending a message to the



March 25: Palestinians gather around houses demolished by escalating Israeli incursions into Gaza following Yassin assassination. Above: Ariel Sharon and imperialist patron George Bush.

Palestinian masses—to those imprisoned in Gaza by an electric fence and those trapped in the West Bank by concrete walls—that it has license to obliterate every Palestinian leader of any stripe. **Defend the Palestinian people! All Israeli troops and settlers out of the Occupied Territories now!**

On March 25, the U.S. vetoed a United Nations Security Council resolution condemning the assassination of Yassin. U.S. imperialism certainly has no problem with "extrajudicial executions," as its history, from the repeated attempts on the life of Cuban leader Fidel Castro and Libyan leader, Muammar el-Qaddafi to the coldblooded killings of leaders of the former Iraqi regime, demonstrates. This

has been the policy of both Republican and Democratic administrations. In fact, when it comes to support to Israel—including massive U.S. military aid—the Democrats are at least as rabid as the Republicans. The U.S. rulers' main concern right now is that Israel's provocations in the Occupied Territories do not fuel further outrage toward American imperialism's bloody occupation of Iraq. We say: **Down with the colonial occupation of Iraq! All U.S. troops out now!**

The assassination of Yassin sparked widespread protests throughout the Near East, from Cairo to Damascus and occupied Iraq. Many of the protesters carried green Islamic flags and large portraits of the slain cleric. The Egyptian-based

Al-Ahram Weekly (25 March) headlined one of its articles, "We Are All Hamas Now." The killing of Yassin will likely drive many Palestinians further into the arms of reactionary, anti-woman and anti-Jewish fundamentalists like Hamas. But Hamas is a deadly enemy of Palestinian women, workers and leftists. Abhorring secularism and women's rights, they have forced many Palestinian women in the Gaza Strip into the *hijab* (headscarf).

In the 1980s, Israel encouraged the development of Hamas as an alternative to the secular-nationalist Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) of Arafat. As Palestinians grew frustrated with the bankruptcy of the PLO, especially after the treacherous 1993 Oslo accords, Hamas and other fundamentalist groups grew. At the same time, Hamas has gained prominence in Gaza by providing many of the social services that the population lacks. It is a tragedy that the violence inflicted by the Zionist rulers against the Palestinians has driven a large chunk of that historically cosmopolitan population into supporting thoroughly reactionary religious obscurantist groups like Hamas.

The murder of Yassin will not, as Israeli government spokesmen would claim, prevent terror attacks but rather guarantees there will be more of them. Such terror attacks against Israeli civilians, like the March 14 suicide bombings in the port city of Ashdod which killed ten port workers, are entirely criminal and reprehensible from the viewpoint of the international working class. They only serve to reinforce the reactionary grip of Israel's capitalist rulers over the Hebrew-speaking working masses.

There is no solution to the oppression of the Palestinian masses within the framework of decaying capitalism, which bases itself on racist national aggrandizement

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"War on Terror" Frame-Up of Radical Lawyer Drop the Charges Against Lynne Stewart!

On April 9, New York City attorney Lynne Stewart faces another day in court. This time, though, she isn't there to fight for freedom from the clutches of the state for the leftists, black activists and others deemed enemies by the U.S.' racist rulers, as she has for the past three decades. This time Stewart, a 64-year-old grandmother, is fighting for her own freedom.

She and two Arab men, Ahmed Abdel Sattar and Mohammed Yousry, were indicted on charges of supporting "terrorism" under the USA-Patriot Act. Enacted shortly after the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center, this draconian law broadens the definition of "terrorist" to include just about anybody deemed an opponent of the government. Stewart is facing up to 40 years in prison for the "crime" of being an attorney for blind

Egyptian sheik Omar Ahmed-Rahman, who is imprisoned for life on "seditious conspiracy" charges stemming from the 1993 World Trade Center bombing. Yousry is included in the indictment for having acted as Rahman's interpreter. Stewart's paralegal Sattar, alleged to be a member of Rahman's Islamic Group, has been imprisoned for two years. They are charged simply for having communicated with Rahman or with each other. The Feds are also charging Stewart with fraud for violating the "Special Administrative Measures" she allegedly agreed to in 1999, which allowed her access to her client Ahmed-Rahman on the condition that she not convey any communications to or from him.

As we wrote two years ago when the charges were first announced, the frame-

up "is part of the frontal attack on civil liberties that accompanies the U.S.-led 'global war on terror.' Using the fear born of the attack on the World Trade Center as a pretext, the Bush administration, with most Democrats in tow, pushed through a package of legislation, executive fiats and Justice Department regulations which marked a qualitative diminution of democratic rights" (WV No. 779, 19 April 2002). We demand that all charges against Stewart, Yousry and Sattar be dropped now!

What's at stake here is the Sixth Amendment right to legal representation, without which any individual running afoul of the state is thrown defenseless into the capitalist courts. As the Stewart case demonstrates, those caught in the government's anti-terror web who are lucky enough to be allowed access to legal counsel may find their lawyer in the cell next door. Stewart's attorney, Michael Tigar, accurately states in motion papers demanding the charges be dismissed, "This case is a vindictive effort to chill courageous advocacy by all lawyers."

The prosecution suffered a blow last July when district court judge John Koeltl dismissed the "terrorism" charges as unconstitutionally "void for vagueness," i.e., that no "reasonable person" could understand that the acts for which Stewart was being prosecuted are against the law. In November, the Feds vindictively filed a "superseding indictment," which merely repackages the same charges tossed out by the court four months earlier.

In dismissing the terrorism charges, Judge Koeltl admonished, "The Government accuses Stewart of providing personnel, including herself, to IG [Islamic Group]. In so doing, however, the Government fails to explain how a lawyer, acting as an agent of her client, an alleged leader of an FTO [Foreign Terrorist Organization], could avoid being subject to criminal prosecution as a 'quasi-employee' allegedly covered by the statute." That's exactly the point. Equating lawyers with the alleged crimes of their clients is noth-

ing new. In the 1950s, when the Communist Party was declared an illegal organization and its members and anyone having contact with them were dragged before the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC), their lawyers were vilified or indicted as well.

A centerpiece of the government's war on civil liberties is the denial of legal process for anybody Bush, Cheney or Ashcroft deem a "bad guy." Hundreds imprisoned in Guantánamo for over two years, many of them tortured, have no way to challenge their detention. Having been pronounced "enemy combatants" by Bush, U.S. citizens Yaser Esam Hamdi and Jose Padilla remain locked up in a South Carolina military brig, without charges against them, without access to their attorney, and with no prospect of a hearing to challenge the accusations against them. With the persecution of Lynne Stewart, Bush, Ashcroft & Co. seek to inscribe in the American judicial system that virtually no one will have any rights the government is bound to respect—from undocumented immigrants to attorneys who are supposed to have certain protections, riot least of which is the assurance that representing the accused doesn't make you a party to the crimes of which they are charged.

In the gun sights of the government's anti-terror witchhunt is just about everyone perceived as an opponent by the capitalist rulers—from those who oppose U.S. imperialist wars abroad to those who speak out against racist oppression or fight to defend their unions and livelihoods against attacks by the employers. The fact that the government is going after lawyers signifies an ominous attempt to eviscerate the right to effective counsel in the American legal system. The labor movement, fighters for black rights and all opponents of capitalist injustice have a direct interest in joining in defense of Lynne Stewart, Ahmed Abdel Sattar and Mohammed Yousry and in calling for freedom for all those detained in the anti-immigrant witchhunt. ■



TROTSKY

Proletarian Democracy vs. Bourgeois Democracy

Leading Bolsheviks Nikolai Bukharin and Evgeny Preobrazhensky wrote *The ABC of Communism* in 1919, following the victory of the October 1917 Russian Revolution, as a textbook for communist cadre education. In the following excerpt, they unmask the fraud of bourgeois democracy, counterposing to it the proletarian democracy of the early soviet workers republic. Such democracy can only be achieved through a working-class revolution against the bourgeois order.

How can there be a "common" will for bourgeoisie and proletariat? It is manifest that the very phrase about a will common to the whole nation is humbug if the words are intended to apply to all classes. No such common will has been realised or can be realised.

But this fraud is necessary to the bourgeoisie, necessary for the maintenance of capitalist rule. The capitalists are in the minority. They cannot venture to say openly that this small minority rules. This is why the bourgeoisie has to cheat, declaring that it rules in the name of "the whole people," "all classes," "the entire nation," and so on.

How is the fraud carried out in a "democratic republic"? The chief reason why the proletariat is enslaved to-day is because it is *economically* enslaved. Even in a democratic republic, the factories and workshops belong to the capitalists, and the land belongs to the capitalists and the landlords. The worker has nothing but his labour power; the poor peasant has nothing beyond a tiny scrap of land. They are eternally compelled to labour under terrible conditions, for they are under the heel of the master. On paper, they can do a great deal; in actual fact, they can do nothing. They can do nothing because all the wealth, all the power of capital, is in the hands of their enemies. This is what is termed *bourgeois democracy*....

The Soviet Power realises a new, a much more perfect type of democracy—*proletarian democracy*. The essence of this proletarian democracy consists in this, that it is based upon the transference of the means of production into the hands of the workers, thus depriving the bourgeoisie of all power. In proletarian democracy, those who formerly constituted the oppressed masses, and their organisations, have become the instruments of rule. In the capitalist system of society, and therefore in bourgeois democratic republics, there existed organisations of workers and peasants. They were, however, overwhelmed by the organisations of the rich. Under proletarian democracy, on the other hand, the rich have been deprived of their wealth. The mass organisations of the workers, the semi-proletarian peasants, etc. (soviets, trade unions, factory committees, etc.), have become the actual foundations of the proletarian State authority. In the constitution of the Soviet Republic we find at the outset the statement: "Russia declares itself to be a republic of workers', soldiers', and peasants' delegates. All power, both central and local, is vested in these soviets."

—Nikolai Bukharin and Evgeny Preobrazhensky, *The ABC of Communism* (Ann Arbor, 1967)



LENIN

Israel...

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and predatory war. The Palestinians and Hebrew-speaking people are interpenetrated, two populations with competing claims to the same piece of land. Unless a class axis is brought to the fore in this nationalist conflict, the most reactionary forces on both sides will predominate. The right of national self-determination for both the Hebrew and Palestinian peoples can only be secured by the struggle for Arab/Hebrew workers revolutions and the building of a socialist federation of the Near East. We have no illusions that it will be easy to break the Hebrew proletariat from Zionism, but it is the task of

revolutionaries to use every strike, every protest, every means to drive a wider wedge between the working class of Israel and the Zionist rulers.

Significantly, on March 23, students protested at Jerusalem's Hebrew University campus where Sharon was visiting, holding signs condemning the Yassin assassination and calling on the government to end the occupation. What is most urgently posed is the construction of international working-class parties, sections of a reformed Trotskyist Fourth International, in opposition to Zionism, Arab nationalism and all variants of religious fundamentalism. This is the task to which the International Communist League, both in the imperialist heartland and throughout the world, is committed. ■

March 23: Cops brutalize Israeli students at Jerusalem's Hebrew University protesting assassination of Yassin.



WORKERS VANGUARD

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EDITOR: Alan Wilde

EDITOR, YOUNG SPARTACUS PAGES: Michael Davissou

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Congress Passes Anti-Woman "Fetus" Bill

Utah Prosecutes Mother in Childbirth Tragedy

Melissa Ann Rowland, a poor 28-year-old mother, has been charged with murder by Salt Lake City authorities and faces lifetime imprisonment...because one of the twins she gave birth to last January 13 was stillborn! Medical staff at the hospital claim that Rowland was told one of the twins would die if she didn't have a Caesarean section (where the belly and uterus are cut open to deliver the child). Rowland did give birth by C-section, but not quickly enough to satisfy the depraved Utah prosecutors who threw her in jail *one day after her Caesarean*. First they charged her with "child endangerment" of the surviving twin by alleged drug use; then in March, while Rowland still languished in a jail cell, they slapped a charge of criminal homicide on her. We say: Drop the charges against Melissa Ann Rowland!

This prosecution is gross interference by the state into a private medical matter, as well as cruel torture of a mother.

against pregnant women for supposedly harming their fetuses. The magazine states:

"In the last few months alone, a woman in New York was charged with child endangerment for delivering a drunken baby, a mother in Hawaii was charged with manslaughter in the death of her newborn son from meth-amphetamine poisoning and a drug user in California was sentenced to life in prison for poisoning her newborn through meth-tainted breast milk."

These are very sad stories, but they aren't crimes. These pregnant women weren't helped to have healthy babies by the fact that this country has no decent health care for whole sectors of the population. Poor and minority women are being criminalized and blamed for the horrible cruelties of the capitalist system, while prison populations and poverty rates soar, and increasing numbers of children face near-starvation conditions and homelessness.

the "Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act" passed by Congress in 2003. While federal judges in Chicago, Philadelphia and San Francisco have thus far refused to order clinics and hospitals to turn over such records, in Manhattan on March 18, a federal judge ordered New York-Presbyterian Hospital to give up its records, claiming they were not covered by laws governing medical privacy because women's identities supposedly could be hidden. This extremely ominous invasion of privacy sets up both women and their doctors for potential criminal charges as well as out-and-out terror from anti-abortion fanatics.

There have already been decades of terrorist bombings of clinics and murders of doctors and clinic staff; years of Republican and Democratic administrations squeezing abortion rights by barring federal and state funding; hospitals and medical schools intimidated from even teaching the procedure; "squeal laws" and religious lectures pounding fear and ignorance about sex and its consequences into kids.

If this country's rulers want to prosecute those who cause the death of babies, then they ought to prosecute themselves. It is the ruling class that deprives poor, minority and working women of quality health care. Most women in the United States do not get paid maternity leaves, which should be a basic right. For all the drivel that America's rulers—and their media mouthpieces—spew about children, this country has always had one of the highest infant-mortality rates among the world's advanced capitalist countries. According to a February report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the infant-mortality rate in the U.S. went up in 2002 to 7.0 deaths per 1,000 live births—the first increase in 40 years. The struggle for decent, quality health care is a vital question for working people in America, as shown by the recent UFCW grocery workers strike, where tens of thousands of workers mobilized in defense of their health care benefits. And the fight for full access to abortion for all women is part of this struggle.

Today, state punishment of single mothers doesn't end with pregnancy. We



Melissa Ann Rowland

pointed out in "Depraved Court Convicts Mother for Son's Suicide" (WV No. 812, 24 October 2003) that last fall in New York City a working mother from Trinidad was charged with "reckless endangerment" when her two children died in a fire in their tiny illegal basement apartment, and another working mother was convicted in Connecticut on felony charges for her 12-year-old son's suicide. As we wrote: "Family values' anti-sex hysteria is used to punish kids and working people, setting up a patriarchal model at total variance with the way most people actually live, a fake ideal to cover the lack of social services, health care, education and day care working people urgently need."

Working and poor women urgently need the right to free, safe abortion on demand and the right to free, quality medical care. Decriminalizing drug use is also vitally important for the working class and oppressed. Anti-drug laws are used purely for intimidation and punishment—the "war on drugs" is a racist witchhunt that means police occupation of the ghettos and barrios. The only criminals involved in the case of Melissa Ann Rowland are the capitalist rulers responsible for the daily hideous tragedies afflicting such poor women and their children. As we said in our previous article, "A pack of wolves shows more solidarity and concern for its nursing females and young than the capitalist rulers do." ■



WV Photo

SL placard calls for free abortion on demand at March 20 antiwar demo, San Francisco.

As Rowland's court-appointed lawyer, Michael Sikora, said, "If a doctor says this will be a very difficult pregnancy and you should get complete bed rest for the last three months and the mother doesn't and the baby is stillborn, is she guilty of murder? If she smokes, is it murder? If she doesn't eat right, is it murder?" The press stoked an ugly misogynist hysteria against Rowland, lyingly asserting that she was a vain woman who killed her unborn child because she didn't want a scarred body. Yet Rowland had already had two previous children by C-section!

Newsweek (29 March) reports that a spokesman for the National Advocates for Pregnant Women estimates there are currently some 30 cases in state courts

The Utah assault is part of the continuing storm of religious fundamentalism and patriarchal "family values" reaction whose focus on "fetus rights" seeks to strip women of their right to abortion. On March 25, the Senate passed the "Unborn Victims of Violence Act," which was passed by the House last month and now goes to Bush for signing. This bill recognizes the fetus as a separate and distinct person under the law and crucially undermines abortion rights in this country. Utah was already one of 31 states with "fetal homicide" laws.

Another blow against abortion rights is an attempt by the Justice Department to force hospitals to turn over medical records on abortions, ostensibly to defend

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National Office: Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116 (212) 732-7860

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Chicago

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San Francisco

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TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA/LIGUE TROTSKYSTE DU CANADA

Toronto

Box 7198, Station A
Toronto, ON M5W 1X8
(416) 593-4138

Vancouver

Box 2717, Main P.O.
Vancouver, BC V6B 3X2
(604) 687-0353

Spain...

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victims issued a statement denouncing the Aznar government and demanded, "No more blood! No more manipulation! No more lies!"

The Madrid bombings were monstrous crimes *against workers and immigrants*. Intended to cause the maximum amount of carnage, the bombs were placed on trains coming from working-class districts on the outskirts of Madrid, such as the historically militant area of El Pozo del Tío Raimundo. A quarter of those killed were immigrants of 13 different nationalities. With this bloody deed, as with the criminal attack on of the World Trade Center, the Islamic fundamentalists who claimed responsibility for the attack demonstrate the same murderous nationalist mindset of the American and European rulers by punishing the working class for the policies of their rulers. The race-hatred and blood scores inculcated by religious fundamentalism of all types are indicated by a note received by an Arabic-language newspaper in London which spoke of "settling old accounts with Spain," a reference to the 15th-century Spanish *Reconquista* which reversed the Arab conquest of Spain nearly 800 years earlier!

The unexpected victory of the social democrats of the Partido Socialista Obrero de España (PSOE) sent shock waves through Europe and the Bush White House and cracked George Bush's



Guerrero/El País

Rescue workers aid the injured on the tracks outside Madrid's Atocha station, March 11.

tingent of troops to Kirkuk.

In addition to the diplomatic blow of the Spanish elections, the Bush administration is taking hits on the home front as Richard Clarke, former national security adviser to both Clinton and Bush, testified to the lies of both administrations before a Congressional committee investigating the September 11 attacks. Clarke's just-published memoir, *Against All Enemies*, became an instant best seller despite desperate attempts by the White House to discredit him. While the Bush gang's lies justly anger the American electorate, no one should have any illusions that the Democrats offer an alternative. When Zapatero announced his support to John Kerry as an "antiwar" candidate, Kerry responded by asking that Zapatero take back his pledge to withdraw Spanish troops from Iraq.

The UN's Kofi Annan and Spanish leaders are scrambling to find a way to keep the Spanish in Iraq and allow Zapatero to save face. Zapatero has offered to send more troops to Afghanistan, where Spain already has a presence. Spanish troops are part of "peacekeeping" occupations under UN mandate in Kosovo and Bosnia. Spain also maintains colonial enclaves in Morocco.

"Anti-Terror" Laws Target Labor, Immigrants and Minorities

While striking a pose against the Iraq war, Zapatero speaks for the imperialist interests of America's European rivals, led by France and Germany. They view a UN-administered occupation as a way to enhance their own interests in the region and to get a better share of the spoils than that allotted by the Bush administration, with its ties to American oil companies and firms like the infamous Halliburton, which have been awarded the contracts to pillage Iraq.

The European rulers have embraced the "war on terror" because it serves their interests against workers and the oppressed, especially immigrants at home. Zapatero vowed that "Spain could be

counted on for an 'intransigent fight against terrorism'" (*Financial Times*, 19 March). The PSOE's "anti-terror" fight the last time it held office meant launching the fascist death squads known as GAL (Grupos Antiterroristas de Liberación) in the 1980s against Basque nationalists.

Other European states lost no time in opportunistically seizing on the Madrid bombing for a domestic crackdown. France escalated its Vigipirate cop terror plan to "code red" for train stations and airports. The train station in Rouen, a heavily industrial working-class center, was occupied by cops in full riot gear. Over 12,500 people were snagged in police identity-checks in the first few days after the Madrid bombing, a dragnet to harass, detain and deport individuals from France's huge North African immigrant population.

On March 25, European Union leaders created a Europe-wide post of "counterterrorism coordinator." Tony Blair's Britain wants EU member states "to be more rigorous in tackling money flows to banned organisations. It wants to widen the net to charities, individuals and groups" (*Financial Times*, 19 March). Ultimately, the domestic target for Europe's capitalist rulers is the labor movement, which began to flex its muscle in opposition to the Iraq war with disruptions of munitions deliveries by train drivers in Scotland and Italy and which is resisting austerity attacks on hard-won gains of the labor movement all across Europe.

Down With Repression of Basque Nationalists!

Although immigrants are in the cross hairs of the anti-terror hysteria, there has also been an outpouring of support for them in the wake of the bombing. A 12 March communiqué by the popular-frontist Izquierda Unida (IU—United Left coalition, which includes the old Stalinist Communist Party and has the support of many pseudo-Trotskyist groups) commendably called "to facilitate the immediate legalization of those workers from other countries affected by the crime and who fear expulsion because of their administrative situation. We cannot allow these people to be afraid to cry for their loved ones." Even the right-wing Aznar government felt compelled to grant citizenship to the victims and their families.

Yet the national question is the Achilles' heel of the chauvinist Spanish left. The IU peddled the same lie as the PP government, issuing a communiqué on the very day of the bombing, titled "Democratic Unity Against Terrorism," in which it snarled, "With this fascist-style massacre, perpetrated with repugnant cowardice against hundreds of workers and students, with this act of Nazi barbarism, ETA is trying to end Spanish democracy and to bring to its knees the rule of law... Izquierda Unida supports all actions by the state security

forces leading to arresting and bringing to justice the murderers." IU helps to bind the workers to their exploiters as "Spaniards" against the oppressed Basque and Catalan peoples fighting Castilian Spanish domination.

The International Communist League has steadfastly fought against repression of Batasuna, which is viewed as the political arm of ETA, and ETA itself by the Spanish and the French states. The Basque region represents a classic case of an oppressed nation forcibly denied the right of self-determination, that is, the right to form an independent state. While the heart of the Basque country is in northern Spain, the Basque nation extends into southern France. As our comrades in the Ligue Trotskyste de France declared in protest of the Spanish government's suspension of Batasuna in 2002, which paved the way for the complete ban of the party last year (WV No. 787, 20 September 2002):

"It is the urgent task of the proletariat, particularly in Spain and France, to mobilize against this sinister ban, which not only targets radical Basque nationalists but also sets the stage for repression of any political dissent by workers or youth. *Down with the ban on Batasuna! Freedom now for the hundreds of Basque nationalists, some of whom have been in prison for many years in Spain and France!*"

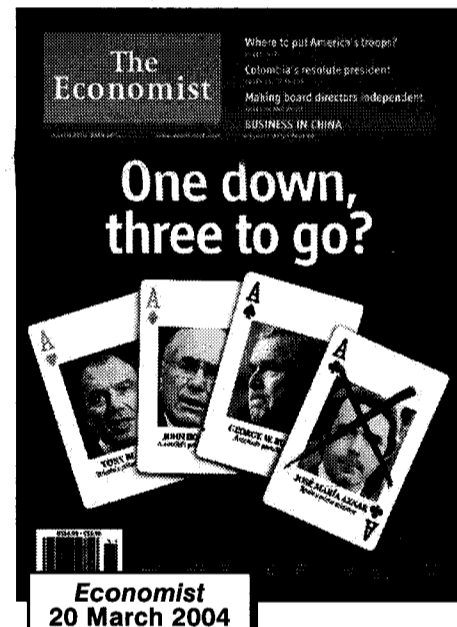
While defending Batasuna and ETA against state repression, we Marxists oppose their nationalist outlook as well as the petty-bourgeois strategy of individual terrorism, which is a desperate, losing substitute for and obstacle to the mobilization of proletarian, internationalist class struggle. The elimination of individual representatives of the capitalist state and ruling class does not address the fundamental need to replace the



Enoch Soames

Angered by government lies, crowds protest outside Popular Party headquarters in Madrid, March 13.

"Coalition of the Willing." Incoming Spanish prime minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero immediately announced that he would stick by his campaign promise to pull the 1,300 Spanish troops from Iraq if the United Nations did not take command of the occupation. The breach in the coalition then widened, with the Polish president complaining that it had been "misted" into Iraq on the false pretext of "weapons of mass destruction," and South Korea refused to carry out the scheduled deployment of its con-



Spanish elections dealt a blow to Bush's "Coalition of the Willing"—remaining are Britain's Blair and Australia's John Howard.

entire rotting capitalist system itself, which requires the collective struggle of a politically conscious working class. Moreover, the reactionary logic of nationalism leads to appalling acts of indiscriminate terror, such as ETA's 1987 bombing of a supermarket in a working-class suburb of Barcelona, which killed 21 people.

As we wrote in protest of the ban on Batasuna last year (WV No. 805, 6 June 2003):

"The rich history of united working-class struggle in Spain—from the Spanish Revolution of the 1930s to the pre-revolutionary upsurge that followed the death of Franco in 1975—has demonstrated that the resolution of the national question in Spain is inextricably linked with the struggle for workers power throughout the Iberian peninsula. Only a Leninist vanguard party defending this democratic right will be able to unite the Basques with workers throughout Spain—as well as with workers in Portugal and across the Pyrenees in France—in a common struggle for workers power."

For the right of self-determination for the Basque people! Down with "war on terror" repression of labor, the left, immigrants and minorities! ■

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Australia

Defend Redfern Aborigines— Mobilize Union Power!

We reprint below a 22 February leaflet issued by the Spartacist League/Australia in solidarity with the militant Aboriginal youth of Redfern, Sydney, who continue to face brutal state repression in the aftermath of protests against the police killing of a young Aborigine, Thomas "TJ" Hickey, in February (see "For a Class-Struggle Fight for Aboriginal Rights!" WV No. 820, 20 February).

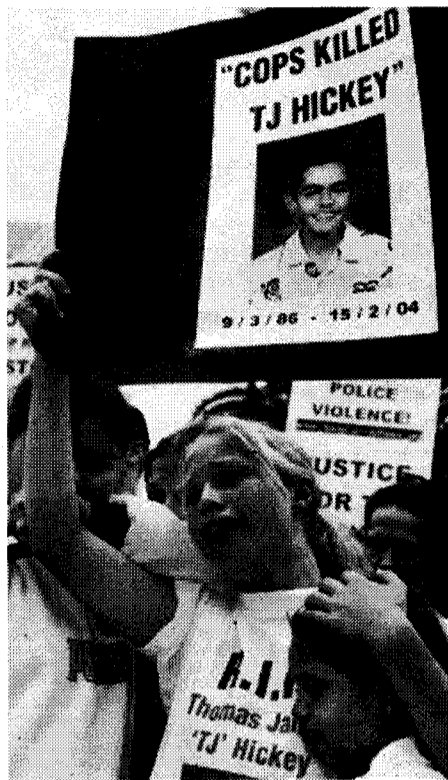
The long-felt anger of the Redfern Aboriginal community at their brutal racist oppression erupted on the evening of Sunday 15 February, as Aboriginal youth fought a nine-hour pitched battle with marauding cops. This explosion, which made headlines around the world, was sparked by the death that morning of popular 17-year-old Aboriginal youth, Thomas "TJ" Hickey. The previous day, while fleeing from police, Thomas was impaled on a steel fence, reportedly catapulted from his bicycle. Residents living in the Redfern Aboriginal community known as The Block, told a public meeting that Thomas' bike was struck by a police car. Witnesses described how, contrary to normal medical practice in such cases, police simply wrenched Thomas from the fence causing him to bleed badly. With obscene callousness, they then proceeded to search him, reportedly pinning him to the ground with their boots. It was up to a witness to call for an ambulance.

Thomas, like all Aboriginal youth, had

cause to be fearful of the racist cops. Indeed he had been beaten by a group of police only last December in what the cops described as a case of "mistaken identity." Speaking of the police, Thomas' distraught mother, Gail, declared: "They're nasty.... They manhandle our kids, they treat them like dogs.... They've got to stop chasing our kids and hurting our kids" (Sydney Morning Herald, 17 February).

Immediately following Thomas' death the police waged a series of vile provocations against the Aboriginal community. As early as midday on Sunday locals say patrolling police taunted Aboriginal youth with racist epithets. Mobilising to defend themselves, some in the Aboriginal community began pasting up posters with pictures of police and headlined "Wanted Child Murderers." The leaflet defiantly stated: "There is a gang of child killers operating in the Redfern area. They can be easily identified as they all dress the same. They are serial killers and will reoffend. Do not approach them as they are armed. Report any you see...."

A woman who has lived in the community for nine years, Victoria Dunbar, described the police provocations that day: "We kept going up [to look] and there were hundreds of them, arms locked, visors down. I've never seen so many police. Finally the kids started yelling, 'C'mon, bring it on'" (Sydney Morning Herald, 17 February). Fed up with years of systematic racist terror from the



AFP
Youth in Redfern, Sydney protest racist cop killing of Aboriginal teenager Thomas "TJ" Hickey, February 23.

Carr state Labor government's cops, up to one hundred and fifty Aboriginal youth, many of them friends of Thomas Hickey, fought back and defended themselves throughout Sunday evening against pha-

lanxes of police "stormtroops." The Aboriginal youth defended themselves with great tactical nous [savvy]. And this time the strutting arrogant "bluecoats" got more than they bargained for. Up to 50 cops were injured during the clashes.

However, by 1 a.m. on Monday morning some 250 police assembled in riot gear. They attacked and dispersed the Aboriginal protesters using shields and fire hoses and occupied the top of The Block in Eveleigh Street. A number of people have already been arrested and the police, itching for retaliation, are planning a "sweep" of up to 40 arrests—doubtless via gestapo-style raids for which they are notorious in Redfern. David Webb, a cousin of Thomas Hickey, was one of the many who quickly sent his children away from Sydney. He said: "Everyone is taking their kids out.... The TRG [Tactical Response Group] will kick in doors, I don't want my kids around it" (Sydney Morning Herald, 18 February). Already police from strike force "Time Piece" have arrested Thomas' 37-year-old aunt, charging her with riot, affray, violent disorder and throwing a missile. She has been denied bail to attend Thomas' funeral. Despicably the cops have also targeted Thomas' 14-year-old girlfriend, April, who was arrested after his memorial service and charged with resisting/hindering police and possession of cannabis. We say: **Drop the charges now!**

continued on page 11

Cop "Union" Targets Spartacist League of Australia

We reprint below a statement issued by the Spartacist League/Australia, section of the International Communist League, on March 20.

Attention Brothers and Sisters,

We write to alert you to outrageous censorship being carried out against those who defend the embattled Aboriginal people against racist cop terror. Trades Hall in Melbourne has cancelled the Spartacist League's current meeting room bookings at its building, reportedly at the behest of the Police Association.

On 17 March, Spartacist League comrades were refused entry to a room at Trades Hall that we had pre-booked for a public meeting. SL supporters were told that Trades Hall had withdrawn this and subsequent room bookings following a complaint by the Victorian Trades Hall Council (VTHC)-affiliated Police Association regarding the SL's position on recent events in Redfern where we called for working-class defence of Aborigines in the face of mounting police terror. Our bookings include one for an advertised 31 March public forum titled "Solidarise with Militant Aboriginal Youth Against Racist Cop Terror! Defend Redfern Aborigines—Mobilise Union Power!"

The SL has been holding meetings at Trades Hall for decades. However, on this day our supporters were told that the building manager had ordered that the SL room bookings be stopped. Another person stated that VTHC Secretary Leigh Hubbard demanded the room-booking cancellations, brandishing a letter from the Police Association, which reportedly made the outrageous allegation that meetings at Trades Hall on the Redfern events,

and/or flyers advertising them, were promoting illegal activities.

The long-felt anger of the Redfern Aboriginal community at their brutal racist oppression erupted on 15 February following the death of popular 17-year-old Kamilaroi Murri youth Thomas "TJ" Hickey while fleeing the NSW [New South Wales] Labor government's cops. In the wake of the courageous protests, the SL faxed to unions and distributed at work sites a leaflet which declared: "To protest the racist state attacks on the Redfern Aboriginal community, we say the social power of the working class should be mobilised in strikes, walkouts and demonstrations." We received a warm response including from young building workers and Aboriginal people for whom our forthright defence of the Aboriginal people in Redfern struck a chord.

The SL is a Marxist political organisation that openly proclaims its program for a workers republic of Australia as part of a socialist Asia. The smearing of leftist organisations by the police is a sinister pretext for censorship, disruption and repression against all those that would oppose the racist capitalist status quo and constitutes a threat against the multi-racial working people. One only has to recall the 1997 exposure of massive Victorian police spying against socialists, trade unions, Aboriginal, immigrant and women's rights groups.

As part of the armed fist of the capitalist state, which exists to defend the rule of the capitalist exploiters, the police are the deadly class enemies of the workers movement and oppressed minorities. They act to try and break strikes and bust up

workers pickets such as when mounted cops brutally attacked maintenance workers pickets at BHP Steel in Victoria in June 2002. For the leader of the peak union body in Victoria to bow to the dictates of this police body against an organisation in the workers movement is a gross travesty. What is the VTHC going to do if the Police Association demands that it hand over to the state the names of CFMEU [Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union] building union militants who are being targeted by the courts and the police auxiliary Building Industry Task Force? Who are they going to come after next? Police associations are not unions of workers and have no place in the workers movement. In response to the Redfern events, the NSW Police Association have been campaigning for a "public order-type riot squad" to carry out more vicious racist repression in Redfern.

Instead of embracing the bosses' cops, union leaderships should be mobilising their memberships to defend the arrested Redfern Aboriginal militants and defend the targeted CFMEU and AMWU [Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union] unionists as part of defending the interests of all the working class and oppressed against the racist bosses and their repressive state. In August 1996 at an ACTU [Australian Council of Trade Unions]-called rally in opposition to the Howard government's anti-union legislation and attacks on welfare, CFMEU members and other unionists came to the defence of an Aboriginal contingent which was attacked by the police. This led to the spectacular storming of parliament in Canberra by workers, Aborigines and

leftists. The interests of Aborigines, immigrant minorities and those of the working people will go forward together or fall back separately. The police force which attacks workers picket lines and seeks to jail former AMWU leader Craig Johnston for militant actions against notorious union-buster Skilled Engineering is the same police force which bashed Melbourne Aboriginal man Raymond Merritt in a Rodney King style beating. Assisting the campaigns of police organisations to silence defenders of Aboriginal rights is manifestly against the interests of all union members and the oppressed.

We urge fighters for workers rights, Aboriginal militants and all opponents of capitalist state repression to reject the smears of illegality against opponents of racist cop terror and send protest letters to the VTHC demanding that it rescind the attempted ban on the Spartacist League's hiring of meeting rooms at Trades Hall. Censorship within the workers movement acts to choke off the full debate and discussion so vitally necessary for the working class to go forward. And especially at this time, when the "war on terror" and "war on crime" provide cynical pretexts for increased anti-union, anti-Aboriginal and anti-immigrant repression, such censorship only serves the sinister aims of the enemies of all working people. **An injury to one is an injury to all!**

Send protest statements to Victorian Trades Hall Council, 54 Victoria Street, Carlton South VIC 3053, Australia.

Send copies of statements to the Spartacist League, GPO Box 3473, Sydney NSW 2001, Australia; phone: 612-9281-2181, fax: 612-9281-2185. ■

Young Spartacus

Revolutionary Communist Party: Revolutionary in Name Only

We reprint the following leaflet issued on March 18 and distributed nationwide at the March 20 anti-occupation demonstrations.

On March 20, as protesters take to the streets against the U.S. occupation of Iraq, we in the Spartacus Youth Clubs and Spartacist League will march under the slogans: "U.S. Out of Iraq! Israel Out of the Occupied Territories! Break with the Democratic Party of War and Racism—For a Workers Party That Fights for Socialist Revolution!" The official leadership of these protests seeks to channel the outrage against the imperialist war against—and subsequent colonial occupation of—Iraq into the dead ends of moral-witness pacifism and electoral pressure politics. For our part, the SYCs seek to win militant activist students and youth to take a side with the peoples of Iraq against the imperialist occupiers, as we did during protests against the Iraq war, when we built revolutionary internationalist contingents that raised the call: "Defend Iraq Against U.S. Imperialist Attack! For Class Struggle Against U.S. Capitalist Rulers! Down With UN Starvation Blockade!"

Sponsors and spokesmen for the Not In Our Name (NION) coalition, the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) and its affiliate the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade (RCYB), also had substantial contingents in the antiwar demos, including youth attracted to the red-flag-waving, "street-fighting," "anti-imperialist" posture of the RCP/RCYB. No doubt many youth around the RCYB felt revulsion at the blatant arrogance of U.S. imperialism in its drive to exert its dominance over the globe, and RCYB contingents included many black and Latino youth, who are daily treated with racist contempt by the ruling class. But for all its militant anti-imperialist posturing, the RCP/RCYB refused to defend Iraq when the U.S. imperialist rulers, commanding the largest military machine on the planet, geared up for and carried out a war of depredation against neocolonial Iraq, already ravaged by over a decade of United Nations-imposed sanctions. Instead, the RCP/RCYB opted to "unite all who can be united," not least open representatives of the bourgeois Democratic Party and the Green Party, in the NION coalition.

It is no accident that the NION "Pledge of Resistance" does not mention capital-

ism—the system which is the root cause of imperialist war and which must be uprooted and replaced in order to bring an end to such carnage. Rather, appealing to "peace patriots," NION announced: "We want to build this campaign broadly. It needs to include people who want to 'cleanse the U.S. flag' as well as those who would never under any circumstances fly the U.S. flag" ("Million Globes Campaign," undated, posted at notinourname.net). Lest it repel the Democrats like Maxine Waters who appeared on NION-sponsored platforms, NION spoke the lan-

guage of bourgeois hypocrisy, mouthing empty pacifist slogans and building illusions that "our own government" can be stopped from "this course of war and repression" through pressure politics.



Jeff Paterson/NION

March 20: NION banner at SF rally against Iraq occupation pushes anti-Bush protest in August. At same time, RCP-built NION promotes illusions in Democrats like Dennis Kucinich (left), who spoke at NION-endorsed protest in NYC.



Diane Greene Lent

Predictably, despite large numbers of people taking to the streets, such "moral witness" as organized by NION and other class-collaborationist lash-ups like Workers World Party's ANSWER and United for Peace and Justice did not stop the war

Bush's sagging poll figures may warm the hearts of those in the other party of American capitalism, but his dip in bourgeois "public opinion" is cold comfort for the Iraqi victims of mass murder and occupation.

As Marxist revolutionaries, we stand in the tradition of V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky, co-leaders of the 1917 Russian Revolution, the only successful workers revolution to date. Trotsky observed how it is impossible to stop war short of shattering the imperialist order in his "Declaration to the Antiwar Congress at Amsterdam" (July 1932):

"To condemn war is easy; to overcome it is difficult. The struggle against war is a struggle against the classes which rule society and which hold in their hands both its productive forces and its destructive weapons. It is not possible to prevent war by moral indignation, by meetings, by resolutions, by newspaper articles, and by congresses. As long as the bourgeoisie has at its command the banks, the factories, the land, the press, and the state apparatus, it will always be able to drive the people to war when its interests demand it."

Carrying the "unite all who can be united" line to its logical conclusion, on 5 April 2003 NION-Los Angeles co-sponsored a campaign rally for Democratic Party presidential candidate Dennis Kucinich. And the RCP's *Revolutionary Worker* newspaper appealed for a "resounding NO!" in the California recall election last autumn, which its readers

logically concluded meant voting against the recall of, thus giving backhanded support to, the justly unpopular Democratic governor Gray Davis. We advocated a "yes" vote to recall Davis as a vote of working-class opposition to the capitalist Democratic Party and extended critical support to the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) candidate Joel Britton, whose campaign drew a crude class line against capitalism and war. Now, in the run-up to U.S. presidential elections, the pressure to "unite all who can be united" in order to elect a Democrat will be, if anything, more in play at protests against the occupation of Iraq. In its February 9 posting on the March 20 protests, NION consciously tailors its statement for the anti-Bush bandwagon: "March 20 is a day to build our strength for the future—for the most massive resistance ever, more than a million people in the streets of NYC at the time of the Republican National Convention to say NO to the whole Bush agenda!"

Supporters of the RCP/RCYB who consider NION a "revolutionary" alternative to the (other) reformist-led coalitions formed against the Iraq war may discern a contradiction here. On the one hand, there is the red flag waving, calls to "break out," acts of civil disobedience and rhetoric in the *Revolutionary Worker* such as: "The precious resources and organized energy of our resistance must not get channeled and drained into a electoral black hole that is fully dominated by the imperialist ruling class" ("Delivering the NO to Bush and All That He Stands For," *RW*, 21 March, posted at rwr.org—emphasis in original). On the other hand, in reality and not in rhetoric, is the namby-pamby pacifist pabulum that serves as very thin cover for NION's very own contribution to channeling and draining the anger of youth and others into...the electoral black hole.

NION: The RCP's "People's Front"

Despite the RCP's appropriation of trendy "anti-globalization" jingles such as "another world is possible," there is nothing new in its strategy and practice in today's antiwar movement. It is a strategy not of class struggle but of class collaboration, the subordination of the proletariat in the name of the broadest "unity." In this, the Maoist RCP has taken a page from the "People's Front" (against war, against fascism) policy of the Stalinist Communist Party (CP). Indeed, Earl Browder's report to the Central Committee of the CPUSA on 4 December 1936 may ring a familiar bell: "We can organize and rouse them [the majority of 'the people'] provided we do not demand of them that they agree with our socialist program, but unite with them on the basis of their program which we also make our own."

Anticipating that the CP's class collaborationism would eventually lead it to outright social-patriotism in World War II, James Burnham, then a revolutionary Trotskyist, wrote in *The Peoples' Front: The New Betrayal* (1937):

"Most significant of all is the application of the Peoples' Front policy to 'anti-war work.' Through a multitude of pacifist organizations, and especially through the directly controlled American League against War and Fascism, the Stalinists aim at the creation of a 'broad, classless, Peoples' Front of all those opposed to

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war. The class collaborationist character of the Peoples' Front policy is strikingly revealed through the Stalinist attitude in these organizations. They rule out in advance the Marxist analysis of war as necessarily resulting from the inner conflicts of capitalism and therefore genuinely opposed only by revolutionary class struggle against the capitalist order; and, in contrast, maintain that all persons, from whatever social class or group, whether or not opposed to capitalism, can 'unite' to stop war... The truth is, of course, that through the Peoples' Front, the Stalinists are making ready to support the government, and to recruit the masses for such support, in the new imperialist war."

Such was the case. In line with the popular front, the American CP directed its supporters, many won through courageous campaigns to organize industrial unions and the fight for black rights, into support for the Democrat Roosevelt in the 1936 elections. When Hitler launched the attack on the Soviet Union (putting paid to Stalin's attempts at a pact with Germany), the CP wrapped itself in the Stars and Stripes, jingoistically goading Roosevelt to prosecute the imperialist "people's war." Once the U.S. was in the inter-imperialist war, the CP hailed the no-strike pledge of the CIO union tops and engaged in outright strikebreaking at the same time as it removed from its ranks its ethnically Japanese members being sent to the internment camps. Entangled by its "unity" with the Democrats, the CP went so far as to welcome the A-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In contrast, the Trotskyists were imprisoned for their refusal to support any of the imperialist combatants in the war. Where the Stalinists sold out the fight for independence



Beijing, 1972: Mao seals anti-Soviet alliance with Nixon even as U.S. imperialism carpet bombed, dropped napalm on Vietnam.



UI/AP

countries of the West. But the young Soviet workers state reeled under the blows of imperialist encirclement, a bloody civil war and the failure of the German Revolution of 1923. Under these conditions, a conservative, nationalist caste—of which Stalin was the leader—usurped political power, brutally purging the Soviet Communist Party of those, like Trotsky's Left Opposition, who sought to maintain the revolutionary internationalism which animated the October Revolution and the early Communist International. The "theory" which accompanied this Stalinist political counterrevolution was "socialism in one country," which would translate into bloody betrayal of revolutionary opportunities internationally via the popular front, in which the workers were subordinated to their class

number possible...." Just what form does the RCP's proclaimed "proletarian internationalism" take? It was over the U.S. bombing of Afghanistan that the RCP tried to cover its blatant refusal to take a side and call for the military defense of the victims of U.S. imperialist aggression by invoking "revolutionary defeatism." Thus, *Revolutionary Worker* (28 April 2002) carried an article titled "The Meaning of 'Revolutionary Defeatism'" which intoned: "Revolutionary defeatism does not mean that you should actually support the enemy of your government if that enemy and the war it is waging is equally reactionary."

For Marxists, revolutionary defeatism is the policy of revolutionaries in inter-imperialist wars or any wars between qualitatively equal capitalist states (such as the Iran-Iraq War of the 1980s). In such wars, the working class has no side and the working class of each belligerent country should desire the defeat of its "own" ruling class. But this was not the case in the neocolonial military operations led by the U.S. against Afghanistan or the war against Iraq. There is a qualitative difference between an imperialist power like the U.S., which in its pursuit of profits and spheres of influence exploits the world's dependent countries and is an enemy of the oppressed everywhere, and a tinpot dictatorship like Hussein's Iraq. Imperialism props up blood-soaked regimes all over the world, and Saddam Hussein was an on-again, off-again beneficiary of U.S. imperialist backing for years. Moreover, the RCP instinctively equates military defense against imperialist attack with capitulatory political support to any given force or regime on the receiving end. While giving not an ounce of political support to the reactionary regimes of either the Taliban or Saddam Hussein, the correct Leninist position, and ours, was to militarily defend Afghanistan and Iraq against the imperialists. As Lenin wrote in *Socialism and War* (1915):

"For example, if tomorrow, Morocco were to declare war on France, or India on Britain, or Persia or China on Russia, and so on, these would be 'just', and 'defensive' wars, irrespective of who would be the first to attack; any socialist would wish the oppressed, dependent

and unequal states victory over the oppressor, slave-holding and predatory 'Great' Powers."

Given the overwhelming U.S. military superiority, we stressed that the chief defense of Iraq was through pursuing international class struggle against the imperialist rulers, first and foremost in the U.S. Just as we fight for the complete political independence of the proletariat within the imperialist centers, so too throughout the Near East there can be no emancipation of the women of the region, of oppressed national minorities, of exploited workers short of thoroughgoing socialist revolutions which sweep away the imperialist occupiers and the sheiks, colonels and Zionists, and which link up with proletarian revolution in the West. This is the perspective of permanent revolution as opposed to the failed Maoist-Stalinist formulas for "two-stage revolution" and the "bloc of four classes."

Many of the "progressive" Democrats who campaigned for antiwar platforms made no secret of their preference to put the arsenal of U.S. imperialism to work against the North Korean deformed workers state. Revolutionary Trotskyists stand foursquare for the unconditional military defense of the North Korean, Chinese, Cuban and Vietnamese deformed workers states, where capitalism has been overthrown and proletarian property forms remain, despite the bureaucratic Stalinist regimes that undermine these gains. Trotskyists stand for proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracies. This defense includes upholding the right of these states to take any measures to protect themselves against the imperialists, including their right to possess nuclear arsenals. We stood in defense of the former Soviet Union and fought tooth and nail against the capitalist counterrevolution in 1991-92 which destroyed that military-industrial powerhouse of the non-capitalist world. This is an acid test for any would-be revolutionaries, as those who cannot defend the hard-won gains of anti-capitalist revolutions will not lead new conquests. The world we confront today, as the U.S. ruling class detects little hindrance to its vicious attacks on the workers and oppressed at home and

continued on page 8

In name of "anti-fascist unity" during World War II, the Stalinist American CP endorsed no-strike pledge, lauded A-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Daily Worker 10 August 1945

from imperialism in order to form a bloc with the allied "democratic" imperialists, the Trotskyists championed the liberation of all colonized peoples. Above all, at great personal risk, the Trotskyists fought for and acted on their program for the unconditional military defense of the Soviet Union.

While the RCP today lacks the working-class base of the Stalinist CP, and lacks association with any workers state power, the fundamental differences between us Trotskyists in the SYC and the Maoist RCP/RCYB remain: the road of class independence and proletarian revolution vs. the road of class collaboration and betrayal. For RCYBers who consider themselves revolutionaries, it is necessary to understand the history of how the Communist parties throughout the world were transformed from instruments of international proletarian revolution to those of class collaboration. The October Revolution of 1917, led by the Bolshevik Party, was not only the first and only workers revolution in history, but a beacon for the world's working people and oppressed. The Bolshevik leaders were under no illusions that "socialism" could be built in a single, backward country; they looked to and worked for the extension of the revolution to the advanced

enemy in "broad fronts" and/or coalition governments. In 1935, the Seventh Congress of the Communist International formally adopted the anti-revolutionary popular front schema. Dimitrov's report to the Congress was explicit: "Now the toiling masses in a number of capitalist countries are faced with the necessity of making a definite choice, and of making it today, not between proletarian dictatorship and bourgeois democracy, but between bourgeois democracy and fascism." Indeed, by 1943 Stalin drew the logical conclusion in yet another concession to the "democratic" imperialists and dissolved the Communist International. Further material on this history and the struggle between Trotskyism and Stalinism—including its Maoist variant—is contained in the Spartacus Youth League pamphlet *The Stalin School of Falsification Revisited*.

The RCP's Bogus Anti-Imperialism

Avakian, in "United With All Who Can Be United, in the U.S. and Throughout the World" (*RW*, 7 April 2002), said: "There is the very acute contradiction between maintaining a bedrock position and activity based on proletarian internationalism and still seeking to unite the broadest

The Stalin School of Falsification Revisited

A reply to the *Guardian*. Originally appeared as a series in *Workers Vanguard* Nos. 23-30, 22 June to 12 October 1973

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Articles reprinted from *Workers Vanguard*

A Spartacus Youth League Pamphlet

"Life After Bush" or "Dawn of the Dead"?

YDS Conference

Two Spartacist League supporters attended a February 21 plenary, titled "The Future of Radical Democracy," of the Young Democratic Socialists (YDS) "Life After Bush" conference at the City University of New York's Graduate Center. Our intent was to present Marxist politics and expose to all revolutionary-minded youth present how these tepid reformers serve to reinforce the rule of capital. In fact, the YDS tradition is that of the "stinking corpse," as revolutionary Marxist leader Rosa Luxemburg aptly described the reformist social democrats of her time when they betrayed the proletariat by delivering it to the imperialist military machines at the outset of WWI. Ninety years later, the "corpse" still walks the earth, in this country helping to shackle workers to the racist, imperialist Democratic Party.

"Life After Bush" for the YDS and its parent organization, the "State Department socialists" of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), means life with Democrat John Kerry as president. "Any such differences in the primaries must not become obstacles to unity in the fight to depose the Bush regime democratically in the fall elections," counsels the DSA Political Action Committee resolution on the 2004 elections (adopted June 2003). The bottom line for the DSA is: too bad about Dean and Kucinich, now we have to hold our noses and get out the vote for Kerry. And a pox upon that inconsiderate egomaniac Ralph Nader for stealing votes (despite the fact that he wants nothing more than to refurbish the liberal credentials of the Democrats)!

Conference participants, some 200 mostly white high school and college students, attended a series of workshops with titles like "Election 2004: What is to be Done?" and "Between Iraq and a Hard

Place: Towards a Democratic US Foreign Policy." As the workshops were breaking up and participants milled around, we talked to some youth and distributed *Workers Vanguard*. We attracted curiosity, as no other left groups were in attendance; around the hall were tables representing only liberal Democratic Party groups like the National Organization for Women, the Working Families Party and *Dissent* magazine.

The highlight of the afternoon plenary session was to be a speech by Princeton professor of religion Cornel West, an honorary chair of the DSA who was recently immortalized in the last two *Matrix* movies as one of the council of elders in weird robes. But first we had to grit our teeth through two long DSA speeches; when he finally spoke, West awoke the audience with his theatrical style. His talk was very abstract, citing Socrates, Aristotle, Plato and John Dewey. In the end, his concept of "radical democracy" amounted to teary-eyed liberal humanism, boiling down to calling the Bush gang "fascists" to justify voting for Kerry. Anyone looking for any discussion of socialism from the DSA would have about as much luck as a thirsty traveler seeking a bar in a dry county.

When the floor was opened for discussion, Spartacist spokesman Carla Norris addressed the crowd:

"Hello, I'm a supporter of the Spartacist League, a communist organization. I came here today to help anyone who has mistakenly come to the DSA thinking that they are a socialist organization; they are not. What they are is a Democratic Party support group, a very thin veneer of left-liberalism on the racist, union-busting Democratic Party, party of war and capitalist imperialism. The DSA exists to prevent working-class revolution, just like their historical forebears of the Second International. [Here she was nearly drowned out with catcalls.]

"We of the SL are revolutionaries—not 'Christian Marxists' but the kind of Marxists that Marx and Engels, Lenin and Trotsky meant. We are revolutionaries

because we hate capitalism! We hate the police gunning down black kids! We hate the dismantling of hard-won union gains! We hate the U.S. rampaging around the world like in Iraq! The DSA leaflet says, 'The people of Iraq got shortchanged.' The people of Iraq got *massacred*! We said: Defend Iraq—now we say: Down with the colonial occupation of Iraq! [Cries of "What's your question?"] "So what if Iraq had 'weapons of mass destruction'? We wish they had! Maybe it would have made the U.S. murderers think twice before bombing Iraq."

Norris pointed to a central difference between revolutionary socialists and the DSA: we fight for unconditional military defense of those countries where capitalism was expropriated, including supporting the right of the North Korean and Chinese deformed workers states to possess nukes, while the DSA sides with the imperialists against the workers states. She concluded:

"Here's a question for the DSA: The SL hailed the Soviet Red Army in Afghanistan in the late '70s—the only force fighting the murderous Islamic fundamentalist *mujahedin*. You guys supported the CIA-backed forces in Afghanistan. How do you justify that now?"

Cornel West then interjected to lecture the "democratic socialists" about democracy. West remarked that "the Spartacists have the right to disagree with us," noted that we were the only leftists from another organization present and went on to chide us for taking all of three minutes to comment on the speeches.

After a series of softball questions to which all three panelists responded ad nauseam, a second Spartacist was called on. He raised the key question of the American workers revolution, the fight for black liberation:

"Today marks the anniversary of the brutal assassination of Malcolm X, a great truth-teller of the black population. X condemned any reliance on the Democratic Party and said: When you vote for the Democrats, you vote for the Dixiecrats. So how come everyone on the panel is talking about the Democrats they supported, when these Democrats

are politically to the right of the Democrats X polemicized against?"

The SL speaker explained that the DSA/YDS, in its support to the Democrats, is supporting the racist capitalist system, a system which most viciously oppresses blacks, as well as the working class, women and immigrants. "We in the SL," he continued, "want to get to the root of the problem—we're for the revolutionary mobilization of the working class to smash capitalism in the interest of all the oppressed." He concluded by saying that breaking the working class from religious backwardness and illusions in the Democratic Party "is key to unleashing the power of labor."

West et al. felt constrained not to denounce Malcolm X, so instead they tried to weasel out of the conclusions of the SL speaker's remarks. Outrageously, West implied that because Malcolm X in later life changed his mind about white people being "blue-eyed devils" and broke with Elijah Muhammed...maybe he changed his mind about the Democrats, too. At the same time that a Spartacist yelled from the back, "He did no such thing!", West said that he "respects the Spartacists for their stand against racism and against the KKK," remarking that when the police gun down a black youth, "you only see Al Sharpton out there protesting, and the Spartacists." (As for Sharpton, to get the goods on this black front man for the Democrats, see "Al Sharpton: Political Hustler for Hire" in *WV* No. 822, 19 March.)

When people began to leave the hall, *Workers Vanguard* attracted a lot of notice, especially the article in *WV* No. 819 (6 February) condemning the recent NYPD killing of black youth Timothy Stansbury. A number of people came up to us afterward to talk, and either disagreed and argued with us or mentioned they liked what we said for providing a revolutionary antidote to the DSA's Democratic Party electioneering. ■

RCP...

(continued from page 7)

abroad, is greatly conditioned by the final undoing of the October Revolution.

The RCP's Draft Programme (Part I, p. 14) speaks of the "great revolutionary achievements of our class in this past century—especially in the Soviet Union between 1917 and 1956 and then in China, where the proletariat seized and held power between 1949 and 1976 and made great advances on the socialist road." The RCP coyly omits the fact that its slavish following of the Beijing Stalinist regime led it to denounce as "social imperialist" the Soviet degenerated workers state, which the Maoists claimed turned capitalist following a 1956 speech made by Khrushchev in which he exposed some of the crimes of Stalin. Afterwards, the RCP tailed every grotesque twist and turn of Maoist China's *bloc with U.S. imperialism* against the USSR—epitomized by Mao's welcome to Nixon in 1972 as U.S. imperialism rained terror upon the heroic Vietnamese workers and peasants. Such "anti-imperialism," particularly when Washington geared up for Cold War II against the Soviet Union, exposed the Maoists of various stripes within the U.S. as mouthpieces for their "own" rapacious rulers and led to a richly deserved decline of those organizations. As for China, the RCP went from fawning obeisance to Beijing to writing off the gains of the 1949 Revolution because its preferred faction in the Chinese bureaucracy (the "Gang of Four") lost an intra-bureaucratic power struggle in the mid-1970s. This is not



Young Spartacus
SL/SYC contingent intervenes into March 20 protests in Los Angeles with revolutionary Trotskyist program.

ancient history to be easily dismissed: today Washington longs to open China to unfettered imperialist exploitation and plunder, exerting both economic pressure aimed at strengthening the forces of internal counterrevolution and military threats against China. No amount of Avakian-speak can obscure the fact that the RCP, here in the "belly of the beast," is virulently hostile to the defense of China. And while individual RCPers would argue that they would defend North Korea on the basis of defense of a small country against a big imperialist power such as the U.S., the fact is the RCP recognizes no class difference between North Korea and cap-

italist South Korea. Indeed, capitulating to the imperialist hue and cry over North Korean nukes, *Revolutionary Worker* (25 May 2003) wrote: "Nevertheless, after the death of Mao Tsetung, North Korea mainly relied on the social-imperialist USSR. Now, it has been applying the same tactics of nuclear blackmailing, nuclear gambling and playing with nuclear bombs that Khrushchev developed after he restored capitalism in the USSR."

As for the working class, it says a lot about the preoccupations of the RCP/RCYB that during the recent UFCW grocery workers strike in Southern California—a strike which aroused the solidar-

ity of workers around the country, including a work stoppage and mass picket line by longshoremen last November—the so-called *Revolutionary Worker* said nothing until over four months into the battle, when a perfunctory article appeared in its 22 February issue. Those in the RCP/RCYB disturbed by such apathy in the face of a key class battle should understand that this shows that, despite its ritual mention of the proletariat as the gravediggers of capitalism, the RCP's practice relegates the struggle of the workers to one of many "fronts" and offers no perspective for the necessary political struggle within the trade unions against the sellout policies of the pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucracy.

We in the SYCs campaigned for student strike support and financial aid to the UFCW workers, as part of our struggle to win youth and students to the understanding that the working class has the social power to do away with the capitalist system, its wars, racist terror, oppression of women and homosexuals, once and for all. At bottom, what is crucially necessary to unleash this power is a revolutionary program for the working class, a program brought to the class and fought for within the class by a Leninist vanguard party which can break the proletariat and oppressed from their class enemy. The SYCs are dedicated to forging such a party, as part of an international party of world revolution, and the conquest of new October Revolutions. Our road is that of Lenin and Trotsky's Bolsheviks; the RCP/RCYB's is that of Chairman Avakian's bankrupt, reformist, Mao-oid shell game. Join us! ■

South Africa...

(continued from page 12)

World" standard of living, many in great opulence, the black masses face deprivation of every basic necessity. Consistent access to clean water is enjoyed by a minority, electricity cutoffs are common, houses are ramshackle and overcrowded, the infrastructure for public medical care, transport and education—substandard when it was new—is crumbling. And let me underscore that this is in the formal urban townships. This is the pinnacle of black life in South Africa.

As you go further afield from the townships, the situation degrades qualitatively. Every major urban center is surrounded by squalid slums called squatter camps. These are some of the fastest-growing communities in the country, with explosive migration from the rural areas and neighboring countries. The squatter camps consist of plywood, plastic and wire shacks. Among the children, malnutrition and waterborne diseases are endemic. Flash fires snuff out hundreds of dwellings in an instant. In the rural areas where almost half the population lives, there is yet another still more brutal kind of life where poverty, disease and isolation combine with a kind of hopeless desolation. Villages serve as holding pens of youth with no future and the old scratching out their final years. While the formal segregation is gone, we call this reality *neo-apartheid*.

The ANC has shown itself to be every bit as capable as the apartheid arch-racists before them in attacking and suppressing the working class. There have been murders on the picket line, such as the ERPM miners strike last year; brutal cop attacks, as in the metal workers strike at Columbus Stainless; and the army called out, as against striking municipal workers in Durban last year. There are myriad attacks on the oppressed every day. Immigrants are rounded up and deported, tortured and set upon by police dogs. Landless people squatting are being brutally removed from land by the state and by hired security thugs. And then we encounter another familiar signpost; with some 187,000 people in jails, South Africa is the fourth most aggressive jailer in the world.

Black people of South Africa are the majority peoples, but are marginalized in their own land. It is all a far cry from the adulation and praise heaped on the ANC by radical liberals and the reformist left during the heyday of the anti-apartheid struggle.

So now what is the way forward? The South African working class is combative and its organizations, such as COSATU, have great social power. There is no lack of militancy. Being against capitalism is not considered a dead letter in South Africa today. Quite the contrary.

The key obstacle that holds back the working class in South Africa is still the question of nationalism. The SACP/COSATU leadership keeps the working class chained to its class enemies in the name of "national liberation."

As Marxists, we are for new October Revolutions, for workers revolution. Mobilizing the working class in the struggle for power requires the construction of a revolutionary workers party. The Lenin-



Glynn Griffiths

Black people turned out in massive numbers to exercise their hard-won right to vote, 1994.

ist conception of a workers party is that it must be not merely a party that intervenes in fighting the oppression of the working class under capitalism. To be a party like the one the Bolsheviks built that smashed capitalism in Russia in the October Revolution of 1917—the world's first and only successful workers revolution—it must be a party that fights all manifestations of oppression that exist in capitalist society, that defends the oppressed against all manner of state repression. I want to spend some time this afternoon on some aspects of special oppression, particularly the AIDS pandemic and the murderous oppression of immigrants.

Interlinked with these issues is the central question of national liberation. The ANC and SACP say that there was a revolution in 1994 that was the first stage of the "national democratic revolution." There was a fundamental change in the society: a thin layer of black elites now administer the society on behalf of the white capitalist class. But the question of national liberation is still on the agenda in South Africa today. I want to spend a fair bit of time talking about this because the question of national liberation is so critical in understanding South African society, how it is fundamentally different from American society and actually unique on earth.

ANC's Criminal Policy Toward AIDS Pandemic

The AIDS pandemic poses the question of the disappearance of the most productive layer of society, young people and working people. South Africa has the largest number of HIV-positive people in any single nation-state in Africa. Approximately five million in South Africa and approximately 29.4 million in sub-Saharan Africa are HIV-positive. The situation is truly catastrophic.

Graveyards full—it's not a poetic image; it is the material truth. Certain municipalities were pursuing education programs in cremation to help ease the crush. There are too many funerals for Sundays or Saturdays only. Page after

page of pictures in the *Sowetan* show black youth who have died too young, in the prime of productive life. Life expectancy has plummeted. Thousands of children are now running households.

Particularly if you are a woman, speaking out about HIV can be deadly. The recent case of the horrible murder of AIDS activist Lorna Mlofana in Cape Town is a striking example of the brutality of life for black women in South Africa. She was gang-raped for being an activist and murdered for being HIV-

genital mutilation in some communities. And the ANC has part of its political base in such rural communities—and among tribal headmen—where these traditions are passed down.

In South Africa, the question of AIDS is the question of women's oppression. Disproportionately, this is who is dying. Transmission is mainly heterosexual, and when there is unprotected sex women are the most vulnerable. The migrant labor system, which sets up dynamics of men traveling between urban households and rural families, multiplies the impact. The hold of all manner of religious and social obscurantism adds to the deadly mix. For instance, there is a popular myth that men can cure themselves of HIV by having sex with a virgin. This has contributed to the already very high levels of rape and sexual assault in the society.

AIDS exacerbates the very harsh conditions for black women in the society, where violence and beatings are a social norm. *Lobola*, or the bride price, is found quite universally. Abortion is legal but there are substantial barriers to access, such as money and doctors, who will perform the procedure.

The AIDS treatment protest movement led by the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) sprang up in 1998 over the question of securing access to anti-retroviral therapies to stop mother-child transmission and to gain access to the cocktail therapies that have so substantially cut mortality rates in the advanced capitalist countries. Protesters have brought international attention to the situation in South Africa.

The ANC neo-apartheid capitalist government is pursuing a criminal policy, pushing anti-science nonsense. They

**1952:
Black workers defiantly taking part in burning of hated pass books which made blacks "foreigners" in apartheid South Africa.**



Anti-Apartheid Movement

positive. It stirred memories of the murder of activist Gugu Dlamini under similar circumstances, now five years ago.

We put the question of AIDS on the front page of the first edition of our South African publication. This is how central the AIDS question is to the working class in Southern Africa, and we included the story that we wrote about Gugu Dlamini's brutal murder.

The combination of sex and disease usually brings out every kind of social backwardness. The anti-gay bigotries that were unleashed and politically manipulated in the early part of the epidemic in the U.S. are an example. The question is very different in the so-called Third World. Around the world, imperialism creates societies of combined and uneven development. While the most advanced technologies and processes are brought in to maximize profits, the underlying and often backward social relations are managed, channeled to serve the interests of the capitalist order. In South Africa, you have the most sophisticated platinum mining and refining technologies in the world, and alongside this you have social relations from another age—witchcraft and other dangerous superstitions, female

have blocked every effort to bring life-prolonging therapies to the afflicted. They have given credence to "denialists" who argued that the disease was not transmitted by a virus. Ducking and dodging to this day, Mbeki recently intoned that he had never known anyone who had died of AIDS, despite the fact that it is well known that his chief press spokesperson, Parks Mankahlana, died from an AIDS-related disease about two years ago.

The TAC protest movement leadership is ANC-loyal and therefore not anti-capitalist, and this is a fundamental limitation. TAC activists were strongly inspired by the example of Brazil, where the ruling class invested early on in public health measures to stem the spread of HIV/AIDS and later produced anti-retroviral drugs for its population. Their expectation of similar relief in South Africa was not pie-in-the-sky. It would, however, have required the ANC to take on the system of intellectual property rights and the drug companies in a limited way, as did the Brazilian bourgeoisie. But the ANC nationalists did not do so, unwilling in the slightest to upset their imperialist senior partners and

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South Africa...

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fundamentally beholden to the traditionalist tribalist sector of their base.

A recent shift in November 2003 represents a formal change in posture. Now the ANC government says that it will make drugs available, but *nothing is happening on the ground*. The drugs are not being distributed at the government health institutions. Anger is mounting because each moment's delay means many more continue to die prematurely. So you have this coming to the surface, like the youth at the recent forum.

The crushing weight of oppression makes all the more impressive some of the women impelled into political life by the AIDS epidemic and the sacrifices of Gugu Dlamini and Lorna Mlofana. I will always remember a TAC protest at the Pretoria High Court where we met a number of TAC women activists who had traveled from Tembisa, the huge township north of Jo'burg. One of these women said, "These ANCers work for the rich; for us they have nothing." Women such as these played an instrumental role in the struggle against apartheid. A revolutionary workers party will fight to win them to the banner of workers revolution.

Our program for the emancipation of women is based on a *socialist reconstruction of South Africa*. We say: Free treatment for all! Free quality health care for all! Free abortion on demand! Down with *lobola* and forced polygamy! For full integration of women into the workplace and equal pay for equal work! We know that providing decent health care for all, education, housing, electrification, clean water, is not going to happen under the capitalist system. For women's liberation through socialist revolution!

Murderous Oppression of Immigrants

Now I want to turn to the less well-known but crucial question of the oppression of immigrants in South Africa today. Historically, immigrants have made a profound contribution to building the wealth of the society—in the mines, the fields, the factories. Immigrants continue to be integrated into the South African workforce, particularly in mining. Bordering countries harbored ANC guerrilla fighters and were the target of bloody cross-border raids by the apartheid regime. They felt the brunt of South African-backed right-wing armies of death in Mozambique and Angola.

Immigrants come to South Africa from every place in Africa. The majority of immigrants are from the border states of Zimbabwe and Mozambique, but there are many from Nigeria, Angola, Senegal, Ivory Coast. In a situation where a substantial proportion of the African Gross Continental Product is created in South Africa, and more specifically in the industrial area around Johannesburg, the country will continue to be a magnet for the dispossessed across the continent. Immigrants literally come risking death. Immigrants are routinely devoured by lions in Kruger National Park, which was

partly set up along the Mozambique border to deter migrants.

Anger at the lack of progress in the society is being deflected into a chronic, unremitting level of scapegoating of immigrants over jobs and drugs. My partner had the privilege of teaching English to young people from French- and Portuguese-speaking Africa. These youth were routinely targeted for extortionate rents, hassled for bribes by police and singled out as targets of violent crimes. South Africa has earned a reputation as a place of murderous hatreds for immigrants from other African countries. And for this the ANC is responsible. The government runs deportation trains where people are systematically beaten, then stacked like wood on the floors, on the seats, in overhead luggage racks.



Omar Badsha

1985: Dairy workers march in solidarity with bakery workers on strike in Durban. Black labor struggles were key to bringing down apartheid regime.

The COSATU leadership has refused to defend immigrant workers facing deportation, for example, in the mines last year. This underscores the need for a revolutionary leadership of the trade unions which would have seized on such an opportunity to cut against the xenophobia and nationalism and wage a struggle in defense of the miners on class terms. Instead the union tops get on board with the anti-immigrant witchhunt. For example, in 1999 mine workers union leaders called for a moratorium on hiring miners from Mozambique.

In our political work in South Africa, a mark of someone worth talking to was a good position on the immigrant question. Xenophobia and anti-immigrant chauvinism must be combated consciously to build the workers party. Against the attacks on immigrants, we say: Full citizenship rights for foreign-born workers and their families! Down with the government roundups and deportations! The labor movement must mobilize in defense of immigrant rights and in defense of immigrants under threat.

The Southern African proletariat exists amid a fantastic wealth of resources and productive power. It is the key to the whole of Africa. Besides making it possible to redraw the map of nations and peoples in line with their just desires, the

South African proletarian revolution would bring the material power to begin the transformation of sub-Saharan Africa, laying the infrastructure of modern society to lift it up from a place of endemic poverty, disease and conflict.

Colonial Origins of Apartheid

What is today South Africa was originally colonized by the Dutch East India Company in the mid 17th century. The next 350 years of South African history is the story of segregation in the interests of establishing and maintaining slave-labor conditions by the European colonial settlers over the indigenous people. The unfolding history was in sharp contrast to those colonial societies like the U.S. where the indigenous population was massacred, killed by new diseases or

is unique in the entire world. The large size, social diversity and permanent character of the European settler population in South Africa enabled the exploitation of the non-white toilers on a far broader scale and more intensively than, for example, in British India or French Morocco. The development of South Africa has produced a near-complete overlap between race and class. In South Africa, the struggle of labor against capital is integrally bound up with the struggle of the oppressed black African people against white domination. The proletarian revolution is at once the supreme act of national liberation.

Workers Struggle Against the Apartheid Regime

How was the formal system of apartheid ended? If you want to read a portrait of this period written from the point of view of participants later won to the politics of the ICL, I encourage you strongly to read the articles in *Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 57 (Winter 2002-2003) based on talks given by comrades Lesiba and Themba. Our understanding that the South African revolution will only go forward by building a Leninist vanguard party is clearly articulated against the backdrop of the great strikes and upheavals of the mid and late 1980s.

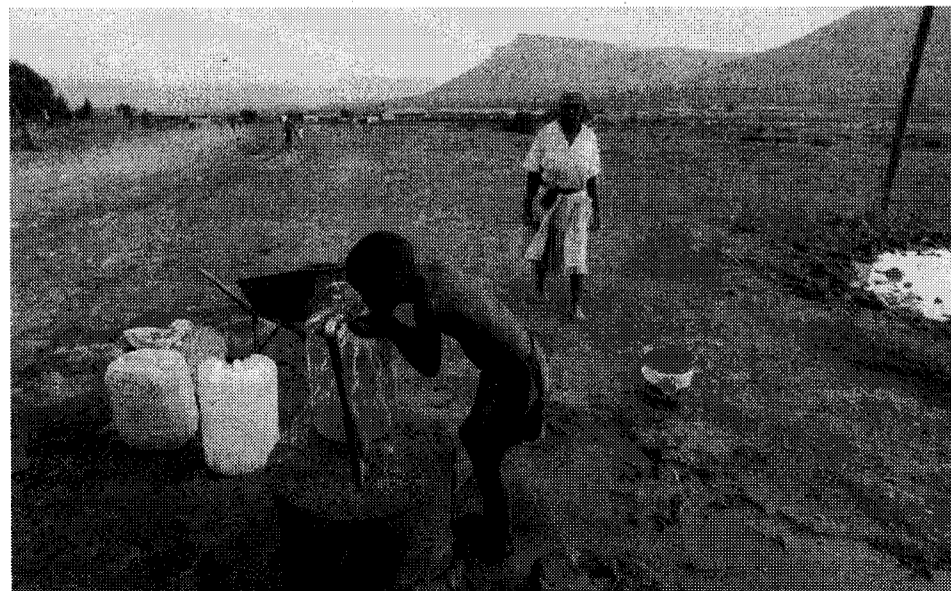
As we begin to discuss how apartheid ended and the ANC became the front men for the Randlords, it is important to keep in mind what the ANC was from its inception early in the last century. The ANC was a party that began as a vehicle to acquire the franchise, the vote, for a layer of propertied black men. It was committed to the black elite, nothing more and nothing less. It was during the decades of struggle against the intransigent apartheid regime that the SACP and the left internationally invested the ANC with a veneer of radicalism that it did not possess in its program.

The ANC's strategy all along was to find a negotiated settlement to the advantage of the future black elite. An example of the ANC's strategic orientation was the call in the 1980s to "make townships ungovernable," which involved mobilizing youth activists into impossible clashes with the armed-to-the-teeth apartheid state. Now remember that this was a formidable police state with an apparatus of torture, death squads, informants, heavy weaponry. The deaths of courageous young militants would set off massive protests usually centered on the youths' funerals. More killings by the state, then more protests and so on. It was a means of getting the brutality of the apartheid system on world display in order to appeal to liberal bourgeois public opinion in the Western imperialist centers.

The strategy of pushing divestment had a similar objective—it was a moral appeal to the rulers of Western capitalism. When this strategy had its heyday on American college campuses in the mid 1980s, it was very unpopular to oppose it. But the Spartacists correctly pointed out that divestment schemes were an appeal to imperialism to "do good." It was also potentially harmful to the black proletarians of South Africa, who had the power to struggle against apartheid.

Three critical events brought both the Nationalists and the ANC to the table: a) the growth of a powerful and militant union movement in South Africa; b) the collapse of Stalinist rule, which dried up the patronage and material support that the ANC received from the Soviet Union; and c) the recognition in key circles of the American ruling class that South Africa was approaching a crisis point in terms of ruling the same old way.

The increasing levels of unionization, the strength of organization, the militancy and sacrifice of the South African unions were the critical factors that led all contenders for power to conclude that South Africa would not be ruled in the same way. The State of Emergency in the mid 1980s and the crackdown on the township struggles opened the stage for the work-



Star

Years after the ANC came to power, rural masses continue to live in poverty.

ing class to come into play. 1987 was a particularly crucial year of intense strike activity against the apartheid regime. Railway and postal workers and retail workers went on strike. Workers from 28 gold mines and 18 coal mines, totaling more than 340,000 workers, went on strike under the leadership of the National Union of Mineworkers. And these struggles were followed in the subsequent years by still further, even more powerful and comprehensive strikes that brought production to a standstill.

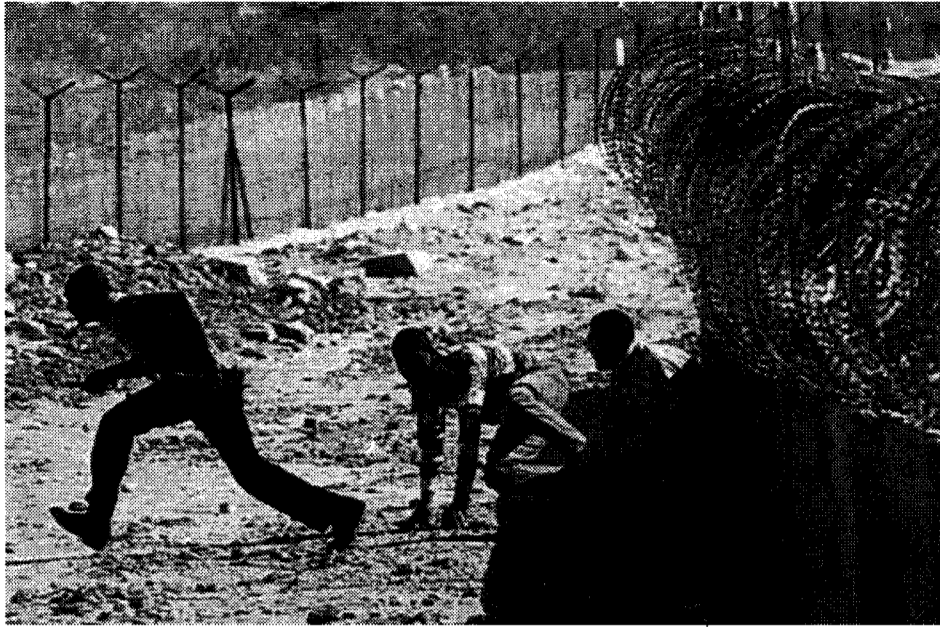
So why didn't the workers triumph? We Marxists sometimes say that while it still holds state power nothing is impossible for the bourgeoisie. In this case, the power of the working class was diverted and used ultimately to install the ANC bourgeois nationalists in power.

The ANC, the party of the black elites and the party looking to cut a deal, said to the masses: "We will be your liberators." And this was where the Stalinist South African Communist Party and its program of class collaboration came so heavily into play. To a working class hungry for both national and social liberation, the SACP promised both, but in strict sequence. This was the "two-stage revolution"—two-stage because the first stage is supposed to be democratic, the second is supposed to be socialist. Time and again in history, we have seen how the first stage is a sham in which the bourgeoisie, aided by the reformist left, reorganizes itself, stabilizes itself in order to hold power. We often say that the second stage is where the capitalists massacre the workers.

In the sharply polarized situation of the day, the missing ingredient was the workers vanguard party, fighting to inseparably link the questions of national and social liberation. Without such a party, the workers always lose. And so it was.

Our line on the 1994 elections was that the "power sharing" deal was a betrayal of black freedom. As we said then, a vote for the ANC—including its Communist Party members and affiliated trade-union leaders of COSATU—is a vote to perpetuate the racist oppression and superexploitation of the black, coloured and Indian toilers in a different political form.

In contrast, the rest of the left internationally, almost in the same language as the hugely relieved bourgeois press, hailed the ANC victory. The *Wall Street Journal* and the Socialist Workers Party's *Militant* had similar headlines. The International Socialist Organization ran the



T. Dollaart
Mozambican refugees scramble to get across South African border. Nationalist ANC continues former apartheid regime's deportations of desperate immigrants.

headline "AMANDLA," that is, "power" (*Socialist Worker*, May 1994). What a cruel joke! These types bear a share of the responsibility for the present conditions in South Africa, and that is why they have become silent about the ANC-run neo-apartheid regime.

For Permanent Revolution in South Africa

If the national question is such a decisive question, then what is our program for national liberation? The centrality of the proletarian revolution in achieving national liberation is a key aspect of the concept and program of permanent revolution. Trotsky wrote in *The Permanent Revolution* in 1929:

"With regard to countries with a belated bourgeois development, especially the colonial and semi-colonial countries, the theory of the permanent revolution signifies that the complete and genuine solution of their tasks of achieving *democracy and national emancipation* is conceivable only through the dictatorship of the proletariat as the leader of the subjugated nation."

Genuine national emancipation and basic democratic rights, economic and land distribution can only be achieved through the overthrow of capitalism. We are for a socialist federation of Southern Africa to address the question of the many interpenetrated but distinct peoples, respecting the rights of minorities such as the South African coloureds and Indians

and those whites who would join in building a society based on genuine equality. Moreover, not all black Africans are from the same community. South Africa is a capitalist state which embraces a number of tribes or pre-national peoples—Zulu, Xhosa, Sotho, Venda, Shangaan and more. There may even arise a desire for national liberation individually among the diverse peoples of Southern Africa. One thing is sure. The imperialist-drawn borders that divided the Tswana in Botswana and Ndebele in Zimbabwe from their brethren in South Africa will never be redrawn on the basis of national justice under capitalism. It will require workers revolution to resolve these questions.

We are for a socialist reconstruction of Southern Africa to provide housing, health care, education. We are for collectivized agriculture to quench the profound land hunger of the region's rural toilers. This will require that even greater resources be brought to bear. For socialist revolution to survive it must be internationally extended to the imperialist centers in Europe, the U.S. and Japan.

To conclude, let's return to South Africa today. It is a very volatile place. In recent years, workers have struck at the ports, the public sector, phone, at key auto manufacturing facilities, steel, mining, refining, actually in almost every manufacturing sector and against the government. In addition, there have been suc-

cessful national general strike actions on an almost yearly basis between 1997 and 2002. And from here in the U.S. that has to look pretty impressive. In truth, however, what is impressive is the level of anger on the ground that forces the pro-capitalist COSATU bureaucracy to regulate the pressure, to blow off steam with strike action.

There are profound strains in the Alliance, and this was evident at the COSATU congress in September. Militants who questioned support to the ANC in the upcoming 2004 election and raised the question of breaking the Tripartite Alliance were witchhunted by the COSATU tops policing the ranks for any sign of discontent, and coming down hard. This reflects the disaffections at the base of the union federation. We say that the call to break the Tripartite Alliance is about class independence and represents the beginning of wisdom.

The South African working class needs a revolutionary Trotskyist party, and this is what our comrades in Spartacist South Africa have pledged to carry out! The tasks of this party are different, broader than in the bourgeois democracies, because it must constantly present itself as not only the force of social liberation but as fighting every manifestation of national oppression, of subjugation, acting as a tribune of the oppressed. As we struggle against every remaining illusion in the ANC as a vehicle for national liberation, the question will inevitably come up: So, who will liberate us? *We will. Our class will. That is the program of permanent revolution.*

So, finally, to move to some conclusions for us here, remember that the program of permanent revolution places stiff responsibilities on the American proletariat. The South African working class sees a natural ally in black American workers. We knew in South Africa that if the working class were to succeed in overthrowing capitalism, even if it came close, the masses would be in the cross hairs of U.S. imperialism. The question of the survival of the South African revolution would depend on its extension here. To live up to that responsibility, there is some work that we have to do here to explode this vicious capitalist system from within, and each of you here has a role to play as leaders.

**Down with neo-apartheid capitalism!
Forward to workers revolution in the belly of the beast! ■**

Defend Aborigines...

(continued from page 5)

Free all those arrested! Defend Redfern Aborigines!

The reactionary bourgeois media, notoriously anti-immigrant racist Carr and his cops, and Liberal opposition leader, John Brogden, are now in overdrive fueling and promoting an outpouring of violence baiting and hate against Aborigines in Redfern. Immediately after the incident Carr announced his "full confidence in the way police tackled this incident" while Brogden, with icy racism, called for The Block to be razed. "I'd bring the bulldozers in," he said.

Following the clashes, Carr quickly announced on Monday morning no less than three inquiries, while some so-called Aboriginal "community leaders" sought to stifle the just anger of Aboriginal youth. While accusing the police of provocations, Ray Jackson, Indigenous Social Justice Association president and a member of Socialist Alliance, also outrageously condemned the actions of the Aboriginal militants as "stupid."

In stark contrast, a spokesman for the mourning Hickey family, Lyall Munro, said of Thomas Hickey's death, "as far as we're concerned, it's an Aboriginal death in custody." Speaking to a gathering of some 150 residents on Monday morning, Munro to his credit solidarised

with the actions of the Aboriginal youth: "A stand had to be taken and it was taken by some very brave young people..." (*Daily Telegraph*, 17 February).

But to prevail against the might of the capitalist state requires a political program to mobilise the social power of the working class. **For union/minority/black mobilisations to defend Aboriginal people against racist state terror! The besieged and marginalised Aboriginal people should not be left to fight alone!**

Carr's cops provocatively seek to prevent a proposed march on Redfern police station next Tuesday. To ensure that it goes ahead and to protest the racist state attacks on the Redfern Aboriginal community, we say the social power of the working class should be mobilised in strikes, walkouts and demonstrations. This is no pipe dream. In 1989, when police in Sydney gunned down and killed Aboriginal worker David Gundy, hundreds of building workers downed tools and joined the subsequent protest outside special weapons police headquarters. These workers formed a defensive perimeter around the demo, facing off the assembled cops who would have loved nothing more than to riot against the protesters. Today such union actions would give pause to the vicious NSW Labor government and their police.

It is the same police who assault Aborigines, who also attack anti-racist youth and workers picket lines, like at nearby Morris McMahon factory last year. Last October, thousands of out-

raged building workers marched through the streets of Sydney following the death of 16-year-old Joel Exner, who died as a result of his boss's failure to provide him with a safety harness. Both Joel Exner and Thomas Hickey are victims of capitalist rule. We fight to weld the social power of the organised working class to the just anger of oppressed minorities forming one giant hammer to beat back the attacks of their common enemy—the bosses and their repressive state with its cops, courts and prisons.

Far from such a proletarian perspective, Socialist Alliance in an 18 February statement call for the implementation of the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, which concluded in 1991. This whitewash by the bourgeois state endorsed the police and coroner verdicts of "suicide" and "death by natural causes" in all 99 cases it reviewed. In other words all the killer cops walked! Their verbiage about police violence notwithstanding, Socialist Alliance, in pushing the royal commission findings, give authority to this whitewash of state killings of Aborigines and sow illusions in the main force for racist oppression—the capitalist state. It was the Spartacist League who warned from the first that the royal commission would be a whitewash, just as Bob Carr's so-called inquiries will be used to protect the cops and target Aborigines today.

While correctly recognising that the royal commission into deaths in custody

was a whitewash, some outraged Aborigines are now calling on individual representatives of federal and state governments, including the NSW Police Commissioner, to conduct an "independent" inquiry by Aboriginal consultants into Thomas Hickey's death. Any inquiry set up by the racist capitalist state can only serve the interests of the ruling class against the interests of the working class and oppressed. The truth of police terror has been repeatedly written in blood for more than two centuries! There is, and can be, no justice from the capitalist state. Indeed promoting illusions in the capitalist state is counterposed to the urgently necessary working class mobilisations in defence of Aboriginal people.

The next day Spartacist salesmen went to Redfern to solidarise with the Aboriginal community. We distributed *Australasian Spartacist* featuring the back-page article "For a Class-Struggle Fight for Aboriginal Rights!" Key to our perspective is the struggle to break the working class from racist Laborite nationalism and reliance on the capitalist state. Only in coming to the defence of the most oppressed against capitalist rule can the working class liberate themselves. It is urgently necessary to build a Leninist/Trotskyist party, a tribune of all the people, to overthrow this brutal capitalist system through workers revolution. Only then will the desperation and poverty imposed upon the indigenous peoples, and increasingly felt by all, be eliminated once and for all. ■

South Africa: Workers Struggle Against Neo-Apartheid Rule

We print below, slightly edited for publication, a presentation by Spartacist League speaker Mo Nair at an SL forum in Oakland on February 28.

In the last week there were two very interesting demonstrations in the Johannesburg area that speak volumes about South African society as it approaches the tenth year of the rule of the African National Congress (ANC) and with new elections approaching in April.

One was a rally of striking airport baggage handlers. They have been out since December and have held pickets at the Johannesburg and Cape Town airports. Their strike is over wages and working conditions and has faced state harassment and arrests. The company is owned in part by an alliance of so-called "black empowerment" companies, black capitalists who are trying to do what all capitalists do: keep wages to a minimum and keep the flow of profits secure.

As the strike dragged on, with other workers from the same union continuing to work other companies at the airport, the tops at the main national trade-union federation, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), finally called for a protest. The reaction of the workers was absolutely furious. South African rallies usually kick off with call-and-response chants. The speaker will say, "Viva COSATU" for example, and the crowd replies, "Viva." Or they might start with "Phansi (down with) capitalism," and the crowd would call back, "Phansi." Well, on this occasion when the time came for "Viva ANC," the crowd roared, "Phansi" and started booing, much to the embarrassment and obvious shock of the top union people.

The placards they carried had even stronger stuff. One sign read: "Run, Black Empowerment Passengers, Before We Shoot You." Another said, "No Vote for ANC"; this placard got put on the front page of the paper with the largest circulation in the country, the *Sowetan*, and it has been the talk of the town.

I spoke to our comrades in Jo'burg this week and they also relayed my personal favorite placard: "It Is Bullshit to Vote for the ANC Again." This is actually really funny given the tradition of politeness, and, moreover, it is such an American turn of phrase.

The other demonstration happened on January 25. There was a gathering of an AIDS activist organization that top ANCers were going to address, including the premier of the South African province where Jo'burg and Pretoria are located. It was supposed to be an august sort of audience, but the activists were furious that life-prolonging drugs are not being distributed now even after the government last year agreed to this. So, the youth in the crowd started making placards on the spot. One of them read: "If You Want Votes, Go to the Nearest Cemetery!" Then the singing and "toy-totyping" (defiant marching/dancing) began. The chant rang out: "The black elite is causing this suffering."

These are small signs that point to sharper future confrontations. There is a powerful tradition of struggle in South Africa. We will have responsibilities toward this struggle. I spent the last seven years in South Africa working to help build our party, the South African section of the International Communist League.

faced by the black masses of South Africa just don't rate because it exposes the reformists. So South Africa has been taken off the radar for many people; but not for the ICL.

Let's start by going back to the 1994 elections in South Africa, which was one of the most dramatic moments in recent

class and its imperialist godfathers on Wall Street and in the City of London knew that the society could not be run in the same way, with a tiny white minority holding the political power. So they did a deal with a willing partner to reorganize South African capitalist superexploitation. The bourgeois-nationalist African National Congress was unbanned and promoted and then elected by a huge margin. Its leader, Nelson Mandela, was unquestionably the most popular bourgeois politician on the planet.

The ANC carried the day in the so-called Tripartite Alliance with the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the Congress of South African Trade Unions. It is an alliance of class collaboration that persists to this day. We called this a nationalist popular front. The working class was tied to the bourgeois nationalists of the ANC, a capitalist party, by its bureaucratic misleaders in the unions and the Communist Party. The result was that first Mandela and now Thabo Mbeki served as the leading political spokesmen for the very same white bourgeoisie that has owned the wealth of the society for the last century, the same racist ruling class that only yesterday had blessed and promoted apartheid butchery.

We in the ICL uniquely warned that a vote to the ANC-led Alliance would be a vote for continued enslavement, while the imperialist capitalists rejoiced that the elections and the power-sharing deal had been carried through. We wrote early on that this would be a situation full of profound contradictions.

In our press, we quoted a woman who had voted for the ANC and was willing to wait for a month, perhaps two, to get decent housing, to begin receiving the fruits of labors denied. Now take this one woman's aspirations, multiply by some 20 million, and then defer by ten years, and you get a picture of South Africa today. There is a raging cauldron of failed expectations at the core of South African society for which there is no relief, no solution under capitalism.

Still a Racist Hellhole

South Africa continues to be one of the most brutally unequal societies in the world as measured by the gap between the ruling class and its black front men on the one side and the working class and other toilers on the other. The bottom 50 percent of the population share 3 percent of the national income. The South African bourgeoisie and its senior imperialist partners own gold, coal and platinum mines. They own the infrastructure that generates the better part of the electrical power of sub-Saharan Africa. They own vast means of transport and distribution. They are white and mainly English-derived—though some lesser elements of the ruling class are Afrikaner.

The proletariat is mainly of black African descent. While the white population still lives in the main at a "First

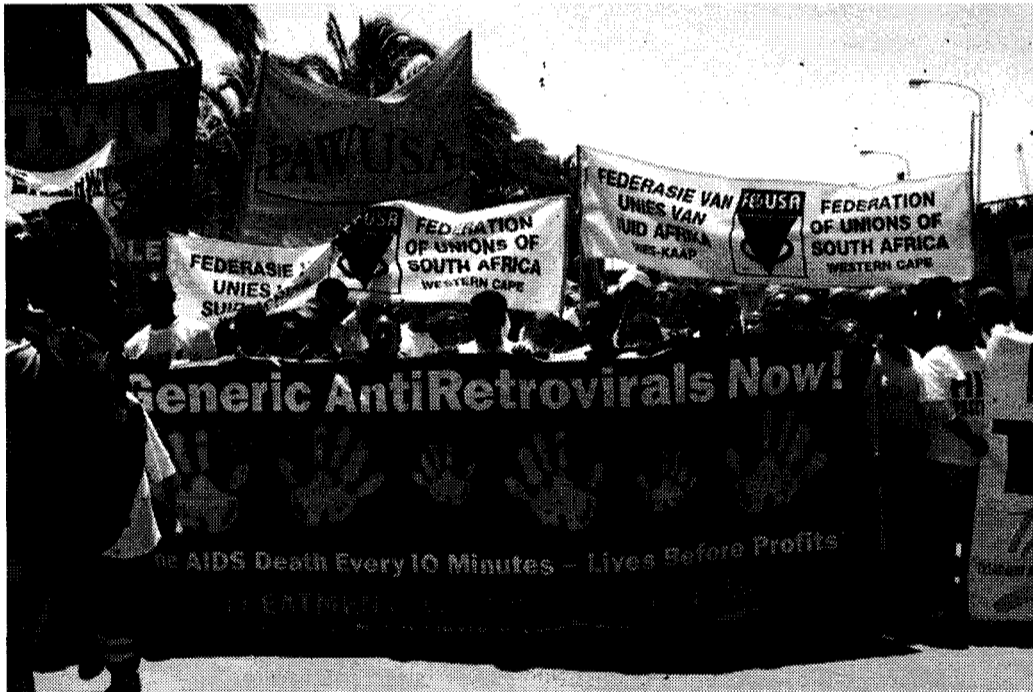
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Muntu Vilakazi

Black labor on strike under neo-apartheid rule: Baggage handlers at four of the country's six airports walked out in December in the longest strike since ANC came to power (above). Treatment Action Campaign march on Parliament in Cape Town to demand life-saving drugs to fight AIDS, 14 February 2003.

Treatment Action Campaign



This was incredibly exciting because I became political around the question of South Africa in the mid 1980s campus protest movement in the U.S. I think what made the struggles in South Africa so compelling was that the country provided a mirror of the oppression and segregation of black people here. There was a lot that you could learn from the struggles in South Africa even from a distance. We would say, "From Soweto to Harlem: smash racist terror!" There was a resonance. It really expressed a link that was so widely felt in American society among black people and leftists.

But now this felt connection has been worn down. South Africa is hardly in the news. The reformist left that used to spend so much time and ink praising the ANC has consciously buried the issue. They hope that their own role in helping usher in the new South African order of continued oppression and superexploitation would be forgotten. The horrors

world history. If you were there that day, you would have seen black Africans, coloured (mixed race) and Indian toilers—men and women, workers and students, the aged, the sick and the dying (some so ill that they had to be carried to the polls)—waiting in long lines to vote for the first time. The memories of the torture, murders and repression unleashed by the white-supremacist rulers in their efforts to retain power were fresh, but this was a day of great expectations for the future. They were there in hopes that fundamental social change had arrived, not only that they would be permanently delivered from the vile system of formal segregation known as apartheid. They also wanted genuine social liberation, an end to exploitation, and in its place some kind of egalitarian society. Of course, this isn't what happened.

In the late 1980s, in the face of some of the most powerful national strikes ever waged, the South African capitalist ruling