

ANC's Neo-Apartheid Capitalism AIDS Ravages South Africa

We reprint below an article from *Spartacist South Africa No. 4 (Spring/Summer 2004)*, newspaper of the South African section of the *International Communist League*.

The bourgeois nationalist African National Congress (ANC)-led Tripartite Alliance is celebrating "10 years of democracy" and heralding a rollout of anti-retroviral (ARV) drugs to people with AIDS. Behind the hype is the same criminal obstruction of treatment and rejection of science that has plagued official HIV/AIDS policy from the outset. The brutal reality of South Africa is the convergence of HIV-denial with the capitalist profit system. Still, whatever ARV drugs are distributed is welcome because some lives will be saved, prolonged and improved in quality—no small thing to those living with HIV/AIDS.

The development of ARV treatments has transformed lives across the globe. Yet [President Thabo] Mbeki and the ANC tops have led a cruel and ideologically reactionary campaign against these treatments that has crippled the implementation of ARV therapy such as would be possible even within a capitalist framework. This has meant an *acceleration* of the epidemic in South Africa. The deaths of at least a thousand people a day can be laid at the feet of the ANC mass murderers.

Fighting the HIV/AIDS pandemic requires a mobilisation of society and all of its scientific and medical resources. But extreme social inequality and unequal access to medical care are the reality under capitalism. Uganda, India or Brazil are all countries of massive destitution where diseases that are routinely treated in advanced industrial countries are still fatal. Even the most "rational" AIDS policy in such circumstances still entails a death sentence for untold numbers of people. In South Africa, the Milpark Hospital casualty unit in a wealthy Johannesburg suburb and the same facility in Baragwanath hospital near Soweto are in two entirely different worlds. We say: *Open the private hospitals! For free, quality health care for all!*

The powerful South African working class must take up the fight against this neo-apartheid government for ARVs. COSATU, NACTU, FEDUSA and other union federations should agitate on behalf of their members and all of the afflicted for lifesaving therapies to be made available to all, to tear up the intellectual property rights documents, and demand the immediate procurement and production of the necessary ARVs! The working class should take up the fight for the *expropriation without compensation* of the pharmaceutical companies as a vital public health measure. But the COSATU



Geert van Keulen

Free HIV Drugs for All!



Treatment Action Campaign
An estimated 5.3 million people in South Africa are infected with HIV. Above: Treatment Action Campaign march on Parliament in Cape Town demands life-saving drugs from ANC government to fight AIDS, February 2003.

union bureaucrats and the South African Communist Party (SACP) are the foremost obstacles to working-class struggle in this country, and play a key role in the government, administering capitalist austerity. This drives home the urgent need for a class-struggle leadership in the unions to break the working class from the Tripartite Alliance.

As communists with an internationalist proletarian vision, we know that only the expropriation of the bourgeoisie can eliminate the vast social inequalities of capitalism. This fight for revolutionary socialism must be consciously undertaken through the struggle for the complete political independence of the working class from all capitalist parties. The critical and urgent task is the construction of a Leninist-Trotskyist party. ▶

ANC Criminal Obstruction Continues

On 19 November 2003, the Cabinet approved a plan calling for "at least one service point in every health district" in

a year and "one service point in every local municipality" in five years. They promised anti-retroviral treatment for those with a CD4 count below 200 and/or who have AIDS symptomatic illnesses, requiring the upgrading of the health care system and the recruitment and training of "thousands of health professionals." Substantial monies have been allocated, although only a portion will go directly to the purchase and distribution of drugs.

The government's plan is a measure to dampen unrest at home and market the "new South Africa" abroad, not a fundamental change of heart. After his February state of the nation address, Mbeki denied the HIV/AIDS death toll, saying there are not proper mortality figures to know "what are the things that kill South Africans." In March, Minister of Finance Trevor Manuel said that it was a waste to spend money on ARVs, which he termed "a lot of voodoo." Meanwhile, the Health Minister has intensified her campaign pushing the African potato, suggesting

that traditional medicine may replace ARVs. Any implementation by the Mbeki government will be grudging and access to ARV drugs will be "akin to a lottery and will depend on where you live" (*Mail & Guardian*, 27 February-4 March).

In fact, except for the highlighting of the "role of traditional healers," most features of this plan will be honoured in the breach. (With this pandemic, any concession to the "legitimate" role of traditional medicine runs counter to scientific necessity.) The government specifically projected over 53,000 people would be on ARVs by the end of March 2004. As of June, only 3,667 were receiving ARVs through the national plan and four provinces had not even started distribution. This is a tragically small number when considered against the estimated 5.3 million people in South Africa who are infected with HIV. The central government only began the procurement of ARVs in February, exacerbating an acute crisis in distribution. One Health Department official justified these delays by explaining that they resulted from a trade deal with India and Brazil that would allow South Africa to become a major AIDS drugs exporter according to the "broader principles of black economic empowerment" (*This Day*, 3 March). The ANC is more than willing to crucify infected South Africans of all colours on the cross of domestic pharmaceutical profits.

The government's promise to upgrade medical delivery is hollow. The public health care system is collapsing. The Health Department has been plagued by critical vacancies for most of last year. The ANC has failed to implement even the modestly scaled post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) programme providing ARV to rape survivors. Commenting last year on a mother-to-child prevention programme started in 2001, a *Mail & Guardian* article proclaimed: "Shambles at AIDS baby treatment sites" (27 June-3 July 2003). At a 25 January AIDS forum organised by the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC), a health care worker vividly described overcrowding, shortage of nurses, and the absence of refrigeration or medicine for TB, diabetes or blood pressure. If your baby is sick, you may get some panado syrup [pain reliever] and are told to figure out the rest yourself. In rural areas, magnify this 100 times. Even according to the Health Department, "public health care has been chronically under-funded for the past five years" (*Mail & Guardian*, 20-26 February).

A report previously suppressed by the government reveals that 46 per cent of all hospital patients in the country are HIV positive. 16 per cent of health workers are likely to die from AIDS between 2002 and 2007 if they don't get ARV. A compelling course of action would mandate that ARVs be immediately procured to save lives now to sustain the key health sector. But profit, not social necessity, drives the calculations of the ANC government.

Ruling as black front men for the
continued on page 10



Protest Massacre of Unionists in Philippines!

On November 24 the Partisan Defense Committee sent the following letter to Ricardo S. Ramos, President, Central Azucarera de Tarlac Labor Union, and Rene Galang, President, United Luisita Workers Union, in the Philippines.

The Partisan Defense Committee—the legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League/U.S., section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)—denounces in the strongest terms the savage violence of the Philippine National Police and Philippine Army on Tuesday, November 16, 2004 against

striking workers of the Central Azucarera de Tarlac Labor Union (CATLU) and the United Luisita Workers Union (ULWU) at the sprawling Hacienda Luisita of the sugar barons of the Cojuangco family, including former president Corazon Cojuangco Aquino.

The multiple acts of coldblooded murder by the Philippine National Police and units of the Philippine Armed Forces who fired on thousands of striking CATLU and ULWU workers and their supporters with tear gas and high-powered rifles, repeatedly charged the strikers' barricade with armed personnel carriers and waded



Martyred workers borne in funeral procession by striking sugar workers and relatives in Luzon, Philippines.

into the strikers swinging their truncheons with wanton brutality, leaving seven dead, including one child, and hundreds injured and wounded, were acts of savage brutality which should be condemned by working people the world over. Now the over 100 arrested strikers imprisoned as a result of these attacks face dangerous government/police frame-up charges that they instigated the violence! Among others, Lieutenant General Romeo Dominguez, chief of the Armed Forces' Northern Luzon Command has retailed the dangerous lie that "The police recovered firearms in the vicinity where unidentified armed men, believed to be communist, had fired at random." This crude frame-up is carried out to set up the arrested for long prison terms and the union pickets and supporters for further armed attacks. Free the CATLU/ULWU striker prisoners! Drop all the charges! Hands off the Luisita strikers! Reinstate the 327 fired workers!

We greatly admire the courage of your members who continue the strike and the pickets at the Hacienda Luisita despite facing the state's brutal armed force and the constant threat of government murder and imprisonment. We say: Victory to the CATLU and ULWU strikers!

We know that the real source of the violence in the Philippines is the blood-drenched capitalist regime dedicated to

further grinding down the living conditions of the workers and peasants of this impoverished country in the interest of the sugar oligarchs, the International Monetary Fund and the country's semi-colonial masters in Washington. Presently presided over by aristocrat President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, the fragile system of parliamentary democracy is a paper-thin cover for brutal exploitation and savage state repression against the Philippine working class and peasantry, and their unions and political organizations, perpetrated in an unbroken line from "people power" president Corazon Aquino to Fidel Ramos, Joseph Estrada and now Arroyo, differing in form only from the dictatorial regime of the hated Ferdinand Marcos. In addition, Arroyo has for years welcomed the increase in the number of U.S. troops in the Philippines under cover of the supposed "war against terror" being carried out by the murderous madmen in Washington. Down with the Arroyo/Washington terror against the workers, peasants and minorities of the Philippines! Down with the Visiting Forces Agreement! U.S. military out of the Philippines!

Victory to the Hacienda Luisita strike! Enclosed please find our letter of protest to President Arroyo. In addition, we are mailing a \$100 donation to you for the Hacienda Luisita strike. ■



TROTSKY

Socialism and Human Liberation

In a November 1932 speech given during the Great Depression to a Danish Social Democratic student group in Copenhagen, Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky explained how socialism, by unleashing the productive forces of mankind and giving people the ability to rationally plan and control their economies, would open the door to human liberation in all spheres of life—for the first time making human beings the masters of their own destiny.



LENIN

Capitalism has outlived itself as a world system. It has ceased to fulfill its essential mission, the increase of human power and human wealth. Humanity cannot stand still at the level which it has reached. Only a powerful increase in productive forces and a sound, planned, that is, socialist organization of production and distribution can assure humanity—all humanity—of a decent standard of life and at the same time give it the precious feeling of freedom with respect to its own economy. Freedom in two senses—first of all, man will no longer be compelled to devote the greater part of his life to physical labor. Second, he will no longer be dependent on the laws of the market, that is, on the blind and dark forces which have grown up behind his back. He will build up his economy freely, that is, according to a plan, with compass in hand. This time it is a question of subjecting the anatomy of society to the X ray through and through, of disclosing all its secrets and subjecting all its functions to the reason and the will of collective humanity. In this sense, socialism must become a new step in the historical advance of mankind. To our ancestor, who first armed himself with a stone axe, the whole of nature represented a conspiracy of secret and hostile forces. Since then, the natural sciences, hand in hand with practical technology, have illuminated nature down to its most secret depths....

Technology liberated man from the tyranny of the old elements—earth, water, fire, and air—only to subject him to its own tyranny. Man ceased to be a slave to nature, to become a slave to the machine, and, still worse, a slave to supply and demand. The present world crisis testifies in especially tragic fashion how man, who dives to the bottom of the ocean, who rises up to the stratosphere, who converses on invisible waves with the antipodes, how this proud and daring ruler of nature remains a slave to the blind forces of his own economy. The historical task of our epoch consists in replacing the uncontrolled play of the market by reasonable planning, in disciplining the forces of production, compelling them to work together in harmony and obediently serve the needs of mankind. Only on this new social basis will man be able to stretch his weary limbs and—every man and every woman, not only a selected few—become a full citizen in the realm of thought.

—Leon Trotsky, "In Defense of the Russian Revolution," 27 November 1932, reprinted in *Leon Trotsky Speaks* (Pathfinder Press, 1972)

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10 December 2004

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China, Centralized Planning and "Market Socialism"

30 October 2004

Dear comrades,

In the "Exchange on the Million Worker March" in WV 834 (15 October), we assert that "Despite deep capitalist inroads fostered by the Chinese bureaucracy's 'market reforms,' the collectivized property and planned economy created by the revolution persist." While the core of the Chinese economy is still collectivized property in state-owned enterprises (SOEs) and China is still a deformed workers state, it is wrong to say that the planned economy persists. Under the Chinese Communist Party's "market socialist" reforms, centralized economic planning was replaced by a system in which autonomous state-owned enterprises compete with one another in the marketplace.

Generally, deformed workers states have either a command planned economy or a "market socialist economy." As explained in the Spartacist League's 1988 "Market Socialism" in Eastern Europe pamphlet, there is an inherent tendency for Stalinist regimes to abandon central planning in favor of "market socialist" elements. Trotsky wrote in *The Revolution Betrayed*: "It is possible to build gigantic factories according to a ready-made Western pattern by bureaucratic command—although, to

be sure, at triple the normal cost. But the further you go, the more the economy runs into the problem of quality, which slips out of the hands of a bureaucracy like a shadow."

The bureaucrats' solution to the problem of quality is to turn to "market" mechanisms to discipline factory managers and workers alike. In opposition to both bureaucratic command and "market socialism," we fight for proletarian political revolution. To quote Trotsky again: "Under a nationalized economy, *quality* demands a democracy of producers and consumers, freedom of criticism and initiative—conditions incompatible with a totalitarian regime of fear, lies and flattery."

The economic regime that exists in China today, and for the last two decades, is a variant of "market socialism." The two-part article on China, "Defeat Imperialist Drive for Counterrevolution!" (WV Nos. 814 and 815, 21 November and 5 December 2003, now translated as the ICL's sixth Chinese-language pamphlet), explains the important structural change that has taken place in the way SOEs are financed. "Under the old centralized planning system, enterprises whose costs for whatever reason exceeded their normal revenues received non-repayable grants

from the industrial ministry overseeing them.... When 'market socialism' was introduced in the early 1980's, enterprises were supposed to become profit-maximizing and financially self-sufficient." That did not happen, however, and the SOEs which could not repay their

SOEs that want to build a mill now must invest 40 percent of the capital from their own funds.

The fact that China is not a planned economy does not vitiate its character as a deformed workers state. There are many examples of Stalinist regimes which have presided over "market socialist" economies. Moreover, the Soviet Union did not have a centralized planned economy during the NEP period. As the "Market Socialism" in Eastern Europe pamphlet states: "The drift toward 'market socialism' is neither linear nor irreversible.... These measures do not amount to creeping capitalism, as many Western bourgeois



Chinese president Hu Jintao and George W. Bush at APEC conference in Chile, November.

loans were not all closed down, which would have resulted in an economic collapse. "Instead, in a totally unplanned, inadequate and haphazard way, 'non-performing' bank loans were substituted for direct government financing."

Under "market socialism," the bureaucracy maintains control over the economy, not through an overall "plan," but through political control. The two-part article on China cites the example of a profitable cement company, listed on the Shanghai stock exchange, which was forced by the local CCP to take over and operate a non-performing steel mill because the workers at the steel mill were waging protests over unpaid wages.

A telling example of the lack of planning in China today is the binge of "rogue" mini steel mills that are popping up around the country, what amounts to an investment bubble in steel mills. Local bureaucrats apparently look with favor on these new steel mills as a way to assure a local steel supply, and also because steel has been a very profitable sector of the economy. It is driving the central bureaucracy crazy because the mills are soaking up resources and energy, driving up prices for raw materials, clogging the rail system, and are often inefficient in terms of size, location and environmental factors. Beijing has cracked down on the proliferation of mills, but the main mechanism for doing so is not to change a plan, but to regulate market forces. For example, new banking regulations have been imposed to tighten bank loans for steel projects, especially for smaller mills.

commentators and not a few confused leftists contend. But they do strengthen the internal forces for capitalist counterrevolution." Notably the first counterrevolution in the Soviet bloc was consummated in the DDR (East Germany), which at the time had centralized planning and management. The "market reforms" in China have indeed created a growing class of mainland capitalists and made inroads for the Hong Kong, Taiwan and imperialist bourgeoisies, all of which creates fodder for the cause of counterrevolution. This makes all the more urgent our fight for proletarian political revolution.

Comradely,
Jon P.

"On Seniors and the Disabled" Hits Home

Received 23 November 2004

To the Editor,

The article "On seniors and the disabled" published in the September 3, 2004 Workers Vanguard hit home. As a person with a disability I can see the need to break with the capitalist parties and form a Workers Party. Here in Massachusetts as in the rest of the nation a war has been declared against the poor. Politicians like MA Governor Mitt Romney have cut and underfunded services to the poor, the disabled and the elderly.

In MA there is nothing left to school lunches for poor children. Housing for the homeless is slow with the section 8 voucher program frozen for the last four years. The numbers of the homeless and people reduced to begging to survive is epidemic.

As a person with a disability the small disability check I receive is handled by a Representative Payee. I must produce receipts for any extra spending of my own money. This is because the rich bosses and their servants the politicians want the people to think that the poor

are parasites when the exact opposite is actually true, it is the rich bosses who are parasitical living off of the labor of others.

During the last election the service agencies and charities were telling us to vote for the Democrats. Yet it was and is the Democratic led legislature who approves Romney's budgets and policies!

Recently I read Karl Marx's "The Civil War in France"—much of it could and does apply to the election. What stands out to me is when he said that voting in a capitalist election is voting for "despotism at home and war abroad."

There is only one logical conclusion which is proven that under capitalism nothing will be better without a fight, and what is won will be taken away. Only a Socialist Revolution will give people what they have a right to whether worker, retired, elderly or disabled.

Thank you,
Alan N.

P.S. To clarify the receipts I turn in are sent to the Social Security Administration for approval.

CORRECTIONS

In "Bill Cosby Rants Against Ghetto Poor: The Crisis of Black Leadership" by Don Cane (WV No. 832, 17 September), it was incorrectly stated that Julian Bond was president of the NAACP in 1998. He was the chairman of the board; Kweisi Mfume (who just announced his plans to resign) was the president and CEO. A May 26 interview with Bill Cosby by Tavis Smiley was a PBS television, not National Public Radio, broadcast. The article also misidentified Khalil Tian Shahyd, author of

a *San Francisco Bay View* article, as female.

In "Racist Fundamentalists Take White House, Again" (WV No. 836, 12 November), we incorrectly wrote that Arizona's Proposition 200 "denies government benefits to non-citizens." Prop. 200 denies some types of non-federally mandated benefits to non-citizens who cannot prove legal status, while also mandating punitive measures against state and local government workers who do not withhold benefits or report undocumented applicants.

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Young Spartacus

Defend Pro-Palestinian, Minority Student Groups at Toronto's York University!

Cops Off Campus!

The following November 12 letter, reprinted from Spartacist Canada No. 143 (Winter 2004/2005), was originally submitted by the York Spartacus Youth Club to the Excalibur campus newspaper following massive financial cuts to the funding of several student organizations. Now, outrageously, the York administration is gunning for Jewish professor David Noble for his exposure of the influence of pro-Israeli lobbyists on the York University Foundation (YUF).



We of the Spartacus Youth Club, a Marxist organization on campus, protest the York university administration's current campaign of intimidation against pro-Palestinian activists. In reaction to a vigil for victims of Israel's incursion in the Gaza Strip, the administration drew up a list of "usual suspects." Known activists were called in for meetings with the administration and security and some were issued warnings for the "crime" of issuing leaflets in defense of the Palestinians. This is blatant intimidation, an attempt to send a message to political activists.

In the context of the imperialist global "War on Terror," there has been a huge crackdown on radicalism on campuses all over North America, including York Uni-

versity. For example, the case of Dan Freeman-Maloy, a pro-Palestinian left-wing activist, who was expelled from his political activities on and off campus. Other examples are the complete ban of political discussion on the Middle East at Concordia [University in Montreal] after the protest against war criminal Netanyahu in September 2002 as well as the witchhunt on pro-Palestinian professors across the U.S. by Campus Watch.

We also write to speak out against the current call for increased security here at York, as well as the funding cuts to the York University Black Student Alliance, the Trans Bisexual Lesbian Gay at York and the Aboriginal Student Association. The current right-wing regime of the YFS [York Federation of Students] has cut down 90% of the funding of YUBSA, TBLGAY and the ASA. This is not about conservative fiscal policy but sending a message to minority groups to "stay in their place." The administration and the student government use funding as a bludgeon over the heads of student organizations to exercise political control through financial dependency—that's why we in the Spartacus Youth Club don't accept a penny from them.

Another point in the newly passed bylaws is that none of the university groups can in any way assist any charitable/volunteer organizations off the university campus. It is regarding this that another YFS representative commented: "There is no chance for student money to support terrorists in Chechnya or any bigoted and oppressive causes which

Toronto, November 25: York students protest against administration crackdown on left-wing activists.



might appear charitable to others." Now, the YFS is going after OPIRG [Ontario Public Interest Research Group], openly calling it "extremely divisive." Waiting to take back the YFS at the next student elections is a big mistake. Leftist activists and all students who defend the right to free speech must protest now.

Meanwhile, throughout the semester, the *Excalibur* has been busy enlightening readers in sensational fashion that security guards are being "held back" by the current administration and are not allowed to interfere and protect the students when the need arises. The article comes with quotes from some disgruntled campus cowboys that are quite upset that they are not allowed to carry around sticks and pepper spray, like "real cops" do.

What is the real role of the security guards and cops on campus? They're not there to make sure that women get home safe at night, they're there to protect the

property rights of corporate sponsors and interests who have turned the university into a shopping mall. An increase of campus security will also mean an increase in racist harassment.

The situation at York mirrors what is going on on a bigger scale. The increased security everywhere is a part of the racist "War on Terror," which targets current, as well as those that will be the future working class, especially immigrants and minorities. But everyone on campus is affected by the "chill effect" that the administration/YFS is implementing. Students interested in fighting the "War on Terror" on campus, as well as the broader attacks on immigrants and working people being waged by Canadian, American and other imperialists abroad, check out the Spartacus Youth Club. No reprisals against student activists! Cops off campus! For student/worker/teacher control of universities! ■

Defend Columbia Professor Joseph Massad!

About 60 people attended a press conference December 7 at Columbia University organized by the Ad Hoc Committee for the Defense of Academic Freedom, in response to a Zionist campaign to silence defenders of the Palestinian people such as Joseph Massad and other Middle East and Asian Languages and Cultures (MEALAC) professors. The Ad Hoc Committee, dominated by the International Socialist Organization (ISO), banned the Spartacus Youth Club from speaking from the podium because the strategy of militant united-front protest that we fought for on campus runs counter to their polite appeals to the university administration.

SYC member and Columbia student Quincy Lehr spoke from the floor as a reporter for *Young Spartacus*. Lehr said: "Columbia has a history of oppressing black Harlem, of union-busting like we

saw last spring with the GSEU strike.... Why is it that the coalition has put its opposition to the Zionist intimidation into toothless appeals to Bollinger, rather than seeking to mobilize more broadly?" SYC supporters flanked the room with placards, including: "Hands Off MEALAC! Defend Prof. Massad and the Other Victimized Professors!" A WV reporter also spoke, calling for taking down the gates of Columbia to let Harlem and the barrio in and for free education. We reprint below a letter sent by the SYC to Lee Bollinger, president of Columbia University, on December 2.

* * *

Ultra-Zionist and right-wing forces, including in the media, have been on a vicious smear campaign against professors in the Middle East and Asian Languages and Cultures Department, most

notably targeting Professor Joseph Massad. Your administration has launched an investigation at the behest of these forces. There is nothing to investigate! The threats against Professor Massad and other MEALAC professors are part of a nationwide campaign led by the likes of Campus Watch's Daniel Pipes and racist ideologues like David Horowitz—right-wing forces with close links to the Bush administration and/or the upper echelons of the Republican Party. In the context of U.S. imperialism's bloody occupation of Iraq and the post-September 11 bipartisan "war on terror," the aim of this sinister campaign is to silence political dissent and to roll back the campuses to something resembling the McCarthyite witchhunt period. It has already had a

chilling effect on Columbia. A regular recipient of death threats, Professor Massad declared in a statement responding to the charges in the film *Columbia Unbecoming* by the David Project: "With this campaign against me going into its fourth year, I chose under the duress of coercion and intimidation not to teach my course this year. *It is my academic freedom that has been circumscribed. But not only mine.*"

The Spartacus Youth Club adds its voice to the many around the world who defend Professor Massad against this witchhunt. We demand that the Columbia administration keep its hands off Professor Massad and other MEALAC professors, and that there be absolutely no victimizations of these professors. ■



Young Spartacus

Columbia University, December 7: SYC supporters and others raise placards in defense of Massad at Ad Hoc Committee press conference.

Spartacus Youth Club Events

BAY AREA

Saturday, December 11, 4 p.m.

Communism:

What It Is and What It Isn't

1634 Telegraph Ave., Oakland

(around the corner from 19th St. BART)

Information: (510) 839-0851

or e-mail: slbayarea@sbcglobal.net

LOS ANGELES

Saturday, December 11, 2 p.m.

The Russian Revolution

3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215

(Beverly/Vermont Red Line station)

Information and readings: (213) 380-8239

or e-mail: slsycla@sbcglobal.net

BOSTON

Wednesday, December 15, 6:30 p.m.

Spartacus Youth Club

Video Showing and Discussion of

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This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal

Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!

Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!

45 Mount Auburn St., Harvard Square

Information: (617) 666-9453

or e-mail: bostonsyc@yahoo.com

ICL Web Site:
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The Founding of the Trotskyist Group of Greece

The following was published in Greek in November 2004.

The International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) is pleased to announce the founding of the Trotskyist Group of Greece, as a sympathizing section. The Greek comrades were won to the program of the ICL over a period of time through debate over programmatic differences and testing our agreement in common work.

The first contact with the ICL was made in 1995 by Spiros, a leader of the Socialist Workingmen's Organization (SOE) which split in 1994 from the Stalinophobic fake-Trotskyist Morenoite tendency. In 1996 the majority of the SOE founded the Revolutionary Workers Communist Organization (KOEE). In January 1999, Spiros resigned from the KOEE and began to correspond with the ICL, which had been sending literature to the KOEE since 1998. In May-June 1999, the KOEE leadership purged elements perceived as sympathetic to the ICL when our principled opposition to imperialist war against Serbia found a hearing among some members. Some of those thus expelled undertook to study the ICL program and in March 2000 formed an informal discussion group. In January 2001 the members of this study circle wrote to a group of ex-members of the Communist League-Workers Power (KSEE), a 1995 split-off from the SOE, and in March 2001 constituted a discussion group with these ex-KSEE members.

The Trotskyist Group of Greece was founded by comrades who fought on the question of women's oppression in Greece and split from Spiros, primarily over the need to champion the rights of Greece's oppressed minorities, a crucial question for a Leninist-Trotskyist organization in a Balkan country.

The ICL's record of fighting against counterrevolution in the DDR [East Germany] was central to the recruitment of the TGG comrades. In the "Agreement for Common Work" printed below we make clear that we stand counterposed to organizations like the Socialist Workers Party (SEK—affiliated to the British SWP), International Workers Left (DEA—ISO) and the Taaffeite *Xekinima*,

For a Leninist Party in Greece! For a Socialist Federation of the Balkans!

SPARTACIST

**Διακήρυξη Αρχών και
Μερικά Στοιχεία Προγράμματος
Διεθνούς Κομμουνιστική Ένωση
(Τεταρτοδιεθνιστική)**

1. Η παγκόσμια σοσιαλιστική επανάσταση και η Διεθνής Κομμουνιστική Ένωση (Τεταρτοδιεθνιστική)
2. Η κρίση ηγεσίας του προλεταριάτου
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SPARTACIST

Η ίδρυση της Τροτσκιστικής Ομάδας της Ελλάδας
Για ένα Λενινιστικό κόμμα στην Ελλάδα!
Για μία Σοσιαλιστική Ομοσπονδία
των Βαλκανίων!

Η Διεθνής Κομμουνιστική Ένωση (Τεταρτοδιεθνιστική) (ΔΚΕ/ICL) ανακοινώνει με ευχαρίστηση την ίδρυση της Τροτσκιστικής Ομάδας της Ελλάδας, ως συμπαθούντος τμήματος. Οι Έλληνες σύντροφοι κερδήθηκαν στο πρόγραμμα της ΔΚΕ μέσα από μία περίοδο αντιπαράθεσεων πάνω σε προγραμματικές διαφορές και δοκιμασίας της συμφορίας μας για κοινή δουλειά.
Η πρώτη επαφή με την ΔΚΕ ήταν το 1995 από

στηκαν από τον Σπύρο, κυρίως πάνω στην αναγκαιότητα της πρόσδεσης των δικαιωμάτων των καταπιεσμένων μειονοτήτων της Ελλάδας, ένα κρίσιμο ζήτημα για μία Λενινιστική-Τροτσκιστική οργάνωση σε μία Βαλκανική χώρα.
Το ιστορικό της πάλης της ΔΚΕ ενάντια στην αντεπανάσταση στην ΓΛΔ ήταν κεντρικό για την στρατολόγηση των συντρόφων της Τ.Ο.Ε. Στην Συμφωνία για Κοινή Δουλειά που δημοσιεύσαμε

To order Greek-language edition of ICL's "International Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program" (\$1.00) and "Agreement for Common Work" with Greek comrades, "For a Leninist Party in Greece! For a Socialist Federation of the Balkans!" (\$.50), make checks payable/mail to: Spartacist Publishing Co., Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116.

which backed Yeltsin's counterrevolution in the Soviet Union in 1991-1992 and, in the latter case, even had supporters present on Yeltsin's barricades. While preparing for a class on capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union and East Europe, one of the Greek comrades wrote in June 2000:

"I studied anew Trotsky's books *The Class Nature of the Soviet Union*, *The Revolution Betrayed* and the "Declaration of Principles" of the ICL. Thereafter, together with our own discussions I consider that the positions of the ICL on the question of Afghanistan are consistent with our ideology and I agree with them on the basis of the defense of a bureaucratically degenerated workers state against the threat of the bourgeois counterrevolution.

"In regard to the question of China, what I consider applies is what Trotsky maintained in 1933, when he fought against the conception that the bureaucracy had already destroyed the Soviet workers state: Trotskyists judge that situation as dangerous but not desperate and they consider it an act of cowardice to announce that the revolutionary fight has been lost before the fight and without a fight."

In November 2000 another comrade left the KSEE after fighting in that organization for the position of defending China as a deformed workers state.

On the National Question

The Balkan peninsula is a region with myriad interpenetrated peoples and oppressed minorities. An equitable resolution of the national question in the Balkans requires a socialist federation. The ICL recognizes that the question of Macedonia is a test of the authenticity of any group claiming to be internationalist in Greece. The TGG defends the national rights of the Macedonian minority in Greece, including their right to set up their own state or unite with the existing state of Macedonia. **For full democratic rights for national minorities in Greece! For a Balkan socialist federation!**

On this basis we were won to the ICL's program, strongly opposing Greek national chauvinism, following in Trotsky's footsteps in his discussion with the Archio-Marxists on the Macedonian question:

"It's not our task to organize nationalist uprisings. We merely say that if the Macedonians want it, we will then side with them, that they should be allowed to decide, and we will also support their decision. What disturbs me is not so much the question of the *Macedonian peasants*, but rather whether there isn't a touch of chauvinist poison in *Greek workers*. That is very dangerous. For us, who are for a Balkan federation of soviet states, it is all the same if Macedonia belongs to this federation as an autonomous whole or part of another state. However, if the Macedonians are oppressed by the bourgeois government, or feel that they are oppressed, we must give them support."

—Leon Trotsky, "A Discussion on Greece," Spring 1932, in *Writings of Leon Trotsky Supplement (1929-33)* (Pathfinder, 1979)

The split inside the group in Greece came to a head over Spiros' refusal to recognize and fight against the national oppression of the Arvanites—an Orthodox Christian minority of Albanian descent who migrated to what is now Greece during the Middle Ages. The Arvanites have been forcibly Hellenized and face hideous discrimination and punishments even for speaking their own language in public.

To simply mention that national minorities exist in Greece is not merely taboo,

it carries the risk of prosecution. In 2001, Vlach activist Sotiris Bletsas was dragged through the courts for distributing a leaflet that stated there are five linguistic minorities in Greece. Bletsas' acquittal after an appeal is regarded as a landmark legal decision because it tacitly accepts that Arvanitika, Vlach, Macedonian, Turkish and Pomak are spoken on Greek soil. We defended Bletsas against the Greek bourgeois state in our intervention during the Polytechnic demonstrations in 2001.

Under capitalist rule, anti-Roma [Gypsy] racism has been rife throughout the Balkans. In Greece, 137 Roma were forced to move from their houses which were located in the vicinity of the Olympic Stadium construction site. Roma, along with Albanian immigrants, have increasingly been the victims of brutal police violence. One Albanian was murdered and around 100 injured after a football match between Greece and Albania in early September and racist mobs attacked Albanians in several cities, including Athens and Thessaloniki. Albanian immigrants in Greece number around one million people. Immigrants are not merely victims of racist terror but an integral part of the proletariat, which confirms the importance of our call for the workers movement to defend immigrants and to fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants. The defense of the rights of oppressed nationalities and immigrants is the only means by which the proletariat, consisting of workers of different ethnicities, can be united in the struggle for socialist revolution.

Another key question for revolutionaries in Greece is combatting anti-Turkish Greek chauvinism in regard to Cyprus, as we state in the "Agreement for Common Work." Any proletarian, internationalist perspective for Cyprus needs to begin with the call for the immediate withdrawal of all the Greek troops from Cyprus, as well as the Turkish army, the British troops and bases and the UN contingent!

The Greek Orthodox church is a central pillar of the Greek capitalist order and fuels national chauvinism, directed particularly against Turkish people and against all Muslims, enforcing the ties between the Greek working class and its exploiters. An example of the sinister, chauvinist role of the Church was seen in



Reuters

Mass demonstration in Athens during April 2001 general strike against attacks on pensions.

2000 when proposals by the then-PASOK government that would have removed the documenting of a person's religion on national identity cards were met with reactionary mobilizations led by the Orthodox clergy. We are for the separation of church and state!

For Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

The main institution for the oppression of women is the family. For the ruling class the family serves as the vehicle for transmitting private property from one generation to the next while serving in general as a mechanism for regimenting the population through the inculcation of conservative social values. Thus, the liberation of women cannot be achieved without the abolition of the system of private property. The expropriation of the bourgeoisie through proletarian revolution and the extension of that revolution to the more advanced industrial countries, establishing the material foundations for a socialist society of material abundance, will lay the basis for the replacement of the family.

In Greece, women did not have the right to vote until 1956, while the dowry was only formally abolished in 1986 and in reality still exists. Although abortion was legalized (with severe restrictions) in 1986, it is difficult to obtain, particularly for teenagers and poor women. We are for free abortion on demand!

Following the counterrevolution in the Soviet Union and East Europe, women workers in Greece, as elsewhere, have been those most affected by the capitalists' attacks on the working masses. Working mothers have faced the closure of public nurseries and kindergartens. We fight for free, quality health care and for free, 24-hour childcare.

Greek society is extremely homo-

phobic, as was demonstrated recently by the case of the Mega Channel TV broadcaster, which was fined €100,000 for showing a gay kiss in its *Close Your Eyes* series. In counterposition to the homophobic Greek left we seek to act as a Leninist tribune of the oppressed and defend the democratic rights of homosexuals, including their right to marriage and to have children. All consensual forms of sexuality should be private and the state or church must not intervene. We call for "state and church out of the bedroom."

For a Revolutionary Workers Party!

The Greek Communist Party (KKE) is a mass reformist party with major influence and roots in the working class. Unlike the Stalinophobic Greek fake Trotskyists, we do not ignore the KKE, but seek to win its working-class base to the genuine communism of Lenin and Trotsky. As we wrote in *Workers Vanguard* No. 565 (11 December 1992):

"The KKE is the historic mass party of the Greek working class. Its partisan struggle against the Nazi wartime occupation and in the civil war that broke out in 1944 gave it great authority. That authority was duly abused to block the seizure of power by the working class at the end of the war, when the Communist Party, as in France and Italy, made peace with the bourgeoisie, disarmed the working class and entered into a popular-front capitalist government to rebuild the Greek capitalist state machine. This 1945 betrayal did not prevent the bourgeoisie, aided and abetted by British and U.S. imperialism, from turning on the Communists, renewing the civil war and slaughtering thousands in a campaign designed to break the potential for working-class revolution.

"The defeat of the KKE-led forces in 1949, conforming to Stalin's postwar settlement with Churchill that gave Greece to imperialism, paved the way for a series of rightist regimes culminating

Thessaloniki, June 2003: Police rampage against leftist protesters outside European Union meeting.



in the infamous colonels' dictatorship of 1967-74. Despite this history, the goal of the KKE has remained to find its way back into the corridors of capitalist power."

While the KKE is a mass reformist workers party, the Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) is a bourgeois-populist formation and has been so from its foundation. In contrast to elements on the Greek left, such as the Cliffites, we reject on principle any political support to this party of the class enemy.

The Greek comrades worked together with comrades from the ICL long before the section was founded. In this collaboration we produced a number of leaflets, translating key articles—e.g., "Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program," "The Bankruptcy of 'New Class' Theories," "Women's Liberation and the Struggle Against Imperialist Subjugation" and others. We wrote a statement in defense of the arrested anarchists and other protesters in Thessaloniki in 2003 against state repression. We defend and call for the immediate release of all

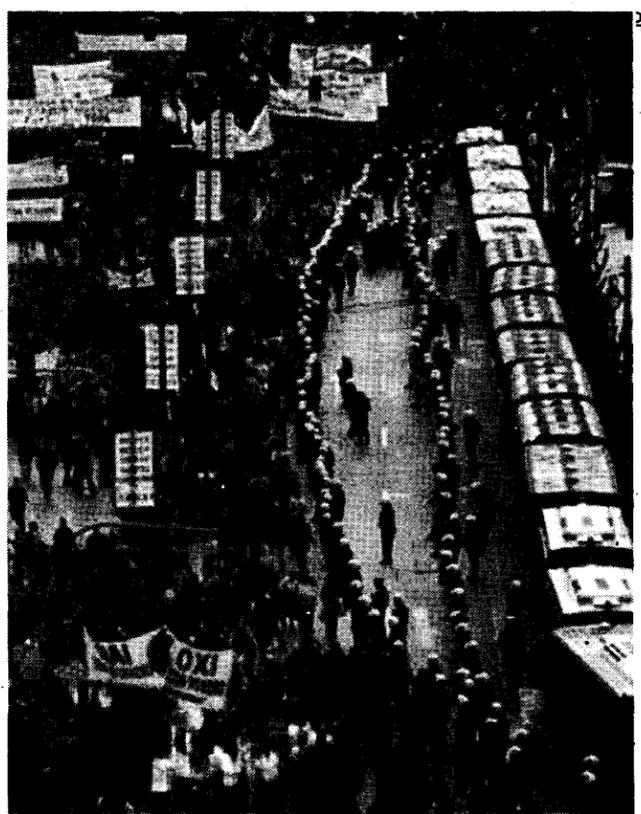
those jailed in the roundup of the ELA and "17 November" groups [two groups that grew out of opposition to the rule of the military junta in Greece from 1967-74; they generally targeted representatives of the bourgeois state and imperialism]. When the oppressed act against the bourgeoisie and its state, we defend them against capitalist repression; however, we oppose the desperate petty-bourgeois strategy of individual terrorism which is antithetical to the task of rendering the proletariat conscious that it is the only class with the historic interest and social force to smash capitalist exploitation.

The comrades of the Trotskyist Group of Greece, section of the ICL, are committed to building a party that represents the interests of the multiethnic working class and champions the rights of all the oppressed—women, homosexuals, youth, immigrants and ethnic minorities. It is necessary to fight for the political independence of the proletariat in order to overthrow the capitalist order by successful proletarian revolution.

Agreement for Common Work Between Greek Comrades and the ICL (FI)

1. The current group in Greece originated from a split within a group that had been having discussions with the ICL since 1999. The reason for the split was a months-long fight over the national question—the defense of the rights of national minorities in Greece and opposition to Greek national chauvinism. There were previously fights with others in the original group about the Russian question, the centrality of the woman question in Greece, the general strike question and the party question. As an excuse for breaking with the ICL over these questions, a minority of the group cynically accused the ICL of "centrism" and "chauvinism" when the bombing against Afghanistan began in October 2001 (*International Internal Bulletin* No. 54).

2. Comrades of the Greek group came to the politics of the ICL through fights and subsequent splits centered on the Russian question. Two members had split from the [ex-Morenoite] Communist League/Workers Power group over the defense of the Chinese deformed workers state, while another comrade of the original group wrote a document supporting the intervention of the ICL into the DDR in 1989-90. Another comrade of the current group came from the Greek Communist Party. Given the influence that the CP has in the Greek working class, it is the main obstacle, so it is very important for the future of the group that an ex-member of the CP is one of the Greek comrades. The group stands for the unconditional military defense of the deformed workers states—China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba—and for proletarian political revolution against the bureaucracy. We came to agree with the ICL's analysis of the collapse of Stalinism in East Europe through studying the "Documents and Discussion on the Collapse of Stalinism" by Seymour and St. John in *Spartacist*



More than 200,000 rally outside heavily guarded U.S. embassy in Athens during four-hour nationwide strike against U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, March 2003.

No. 45-46 (Winter 1990-91), on which a comrade of the ICL gave a presentation. The Greek group agrees with the position of the ICL on Afghanistan, "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan." There is initial agreement with the ICL's position on Poland, although it has not been discussed in the current group. We reject the Stalinophobia of the anti-communist Greek pseudo-Trotskyists who refuse to intervene into the Greek Communist Party—a mass pro-Soviet Stalinist party that has the support of the most advanced sections of the Greek working class and youth.

3. Greece is a Balkan country, and it is the only Balkan country to which the October Revolution did not extend. And

the Greek capitalist state is the only one in the Balkans that does not recognize any national minority. A Trotskyist group in Greece must fight against Greek chauvinism and defend the rights of national minorities—which are forcibly Hellenized—the Macedonians, Vlachs, Pomaks, Turks, Cham (Muslim) Albanians and the Arvanites, etc., including the right of self-determination, especially for the Macedonian and Albanian minorities. It is also important to defend the rights of the persecuted Roma people. The comrades fight against Greek chauvinist poison inside the working class. The resolution of the myriad national questions in the Balkans requires a socialist federation of the Balkans.

4. A Trotskyist group must be a Leninist "tribune of the people." And for Greece, where the ultra-reactionary Orthodox church has enormous influence, the oppression of women is extreme. The Greek "holy trinity" of "homeland-religion-family" which the capitalist state promotes is strongly connected with the national and the woman questions. A central issue for Trotskyists must be the fight for the liberation of women through socialist revolution and opposition to women's oppression. We fight for full democratic rights for homosexuals, in opposition to the male-chauvinist, homophobic Greek society and the Greek left. We are for the separation of church and state.

5. The Greek comrades stand for full citizenship rights for all immigrants. They have already carried out many interventions, both in common work with comrades of the ICL and by themselves, into immigrant demonstrations. Immigrants—Albanian, Kurd, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Russian, Iraqi, Palestinian, etc.—have become a key component of the proletariat in Greece and the Greek group has to fight for the unity of the proletariat against any kind of racism.

6. The group agrees with the position of the ICL on the recent war on Iraq and the Afghanistan war in 2001. The Greek group fought under the slogans: Defend Iraq against the imperialist attack of the U.S. and its allies! Down with the colonial occupation of Iraq! All American and allied troops out of the Near East now! We called for class struggle against the capitalist rulers at home in counterposition to the Greek left, which had a very parochial position: "No Greek participation in the Iraq war" and also against the pacifism of the antiwar movement "Stop the War." We supported the blockade of the American Souda base and we intervened in the workers strikes against the war. We

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Union Victory Against Wal-Mart

The article below was published in Spartacist Canada No. 143 (Winter 2004/2005), newspaper of the Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyste, Canadian section of the International Communist League.

SPARTACIST CANADA

When Wal-Mart workers in Jonquière won union recognition in August it was international news. Everywhere, workers who have been on the receiving end of layoffs and union-busting cheered a victory against the labour-hating retail giant. It was a hard-fought battle and the 170 mostly women workers were justly proud. A few months earlier, the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) drive at the store was set back after a union vote narrowly lost. A 2002 effort to unionize was also defeated. For now, the Jonquière store is the only unionized Wal-Mart north of Mexico.

Now comes the struggle for a first contract. It won't be easy to beat the union-busting weapons in Wal-Mart's arsenal and win more than the starvation wages—about \$7.60 to \$8.60 an hour—and terrible working conditions at Wal-Mart. In 1997, the UFCW organized a Windsor, Ontario store but the union was decertified. Wal-Mart meatcutters in Jacksonville, Texas won union recognition only to have the boss shut down its meatcutting operations. Now Wal-Mart threatens to close its Jonquière store, whining that it is suddenly unprofitable.

Wal-Mart is the biggest retailer on the planet. Sales in 2004 are pegged at \$256 billion (U.S.)—more than the GDP of Austria. It's the biggest private employer in the U.S., and in Mexico it controls half the grocery business. In Canada, with 234 stores and six Sam's Clubs, in just ten years Wal-Mart has cornered half the department store market.

What is the source of Wal-Mart's huge profits? They do what capitalists do: squeeze workers to the bone with poverty wages, keep out the union and undercut competitors. To stay "union free," Wal-Mart will stop at nothing. A company manual instructs managers that "Staying union free is a full-time commitment.... The secret of staying union free is the internal elimination of problems." And that means threats, intimidation and firing for anyone who looks sideways at a union.

For a Fighting Labor Movement! Organize the Unorganized!

Right: Wal-Mart workers in Jonquière, Canada won union recognition in August. This victory should be catalyst for union organizing drive against Wal-Mart in U.S. Below: UFCW strikers march outside Wal-Mart store in California, October 2003.



Peters/UFCW Local 1546

Wal-Mart's success is a reflection of the grim state of affairs for unionized workers in North America. In the U.S. today, the unionization rate is just 13 percent. In Canada, it is much higher at 30.5 percent. But this is deceptive: in the private sector, the rate has plummeted in just a generation from 26 percent in 1977 to just 18 percent today. Behind this number is the story of relentless attacks on workers, unions and livelihoods, compounded by a labour leadership that has pushed concessions and givebacks down the workers' throats.

The drive to organize Wal-Mart is a key challenge for all of labour: turn back the tide of defeats and start moving forward, or lose yet more ground to the profit-bloated capitalists. The UFCW has also applied for recognition in Brossard and Saint-Hyacinthe, Quebec. In Terrace, B.C. [British Columbia], Weyburn, Saskatchewan and again in Windsor, UFCW organizers are signing up Wal-Mart workers. At seven B.C. Wal-Mart Tire & Lube Express departments, workers signed cards with UFCW Local 1518.

A successful fight to organize Wal-Mart across Canada could be a springboard for a powerful organizing drive south of the border. But beating back this viciously anti-union outfit requires breaking with the UFCW leadership's legalist strategy of relying on labour boards and other agencies of the capitalist state. The labour movement has powerful tactics and traditions that can forge unions and win strikes: mass pickets, hot cargo edicts (secondary boycotts), plant and building occupations, political solidarity strikes.

Key to winning union recognition and a decent contract for Wal-Mart workers will be active solidarity by the longshore, trucking and rail unions who can stop the flow of goods to the stores and distribution centers.

Capitalist Profiteering and the Decline of Labour

Wal-Mart is poised to enter the supermarket business in Canada, now dominated by the all-Canadian grocery giant Loblaws, owned by the fabulously wealthy Weston family. Karl Marx was right on the money when he described the tendency of capitalism toward monopoly. Two decades ago, there were some 20 major supermarket operators in Canada. Today Loblaws is by far the largest national food chain, having driven out most of its competitors.

In the 1970s, a union job in a supermarket looked fairly secure and you could get by on your paycheck. The industry is still heavily unionized—at Loblaws, about 85 percent. But after years of the union tops bowing to the companies' attacks, the jobs pay only a bit better than Wal-Mart, are part-time and have multi-tier wage schemes that set workers against each other. In B.C. in the late 1980s when Loblaws opened its Real Canadian Superstores, at the company's behest the UFCW tops created a new second-class local with lower wages and conditions for the 8-9,000 workers hired over the next decade.

In 2003, the UFCW tops did another dirty deal, this time in Ontario where Loblaws plans to open superstores. In-

voking the Wal-Mart bogey, Loblaws got the UFCW misleaders to ram through an appendix to Local 1000a's current contract enforcing lower pay and benefits, no sick days, no Sunday premiums and no Christmas bonus for people at the new stores. Brazenly calling this stinker a "no concessions" package, the union brass agreed to Loblaws' demand that the 12,000-strong Local 1000a not be allowed to vote on it! As Wal-Mart and Loblaws battle for supremacy, both are waging a relentless war on current and future workers, slashing wages and conditions and keeping out the union or rendering it housebroken.

In the U.S., too, the bosses use the Wal-Mart spectre to gut union jobs and wages. A year ago, 60,000 UFCW workers waged a bitter strike against the Southern California supermarket bosses. But instead of mobilizing the collective, countrywide strength of the union, each region was left to negotiate separately. Hundreds of thousands of workers also fighting for new contracts were kept chained to the job. Massive support from other unions, including an eight-hour port shutdown by ILWU longshoremen in Los Angeles, bolstered the strike, but it was not mobilized on the picket lines and at distribution centers. Faced with a drawn-out battle and a leadership opposed to doing what was needed to win, the strikers returned to work after five months with a deeply concessionary contract that includes a three-year wage freeze and a pernicious two-tier wage scheme (see "UFCW Strike and Class Struggle in America," WV Nos. 821 and 822, 5 and 19 March).

Workers and Bosses Have No Interests in Common

A series North American organizing drive against Wal-Mart would resonate among workers everywhere. But victory requires a class-struggle perspective counterposed to the narrow pro-capitalist outlook of the current union leadership. Wal-Mart is committed to its class interests. As one union organizer put it, "They are very disciplined, and they've got a program" (*Nation*, 28 June). The workers and their unions need that same hard-nosed class understanding. Yet the union leadership instead pushes the class-collaborationist lie that workers and their bosses share a common interest.

This is seen most starkly in the view that increased profits for the bosses benefit the workers. In a memo to Local 1000a justifying their sellout deal with Loblaws, the UFCW tops were explicit: "...a more successful and profitable company will be able to provide more job security and stability." The experience of millions of workers who are ruined while they see the bosses amass vast wealth shows how false this is. As Karl Marx explained in *Wage-Labour and Capital*: "A rapid growth of capital is synonymous with rapid growth of profits. Profits can grow rapidly only when the price of labour—the relative wages—decrease just as rapidly...."

The union tops invariably urge workers to rely on capitalist governments and courts. In places like B.C. and Ontario, the UFCW puts its hopes in electing NDP [New Democratic Party] governments which they expect will undo provincial anti-union laws. But the NDP is no "friend of labour." It's a social-democratic party committed in every way to the capitalist system. Just look how they sabotaged the recent HEU hospital workers strike in B.C., helping ram through a wretched give-back deal just as the province was on the edge of a general strike

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in solidarity with the HEU. For every pro-union platitude muttered in opposition, when it's in power the NDP rules in the bosses' interests, breaking strikes and slashing social services.

In the U.S., labour is disarmed by the union leadership's allegiance to the capitalist Democratic Party. Andrew Stern, president of the Service Employees International Union, bemoaned the low unionization rate as an electoral liability: "When only 13 percent of the American work force is in unions, our ability to win national elections is limited" (*New York Times*, 10 November). Stern is calling on the AFL-CIO to use the \$25 million-a-year Union Plus credit card royalties to organize Wal-Mart and double the amount spent on organizing. But the AFL-CIO spent six times that—over \$150 million—to get out the vote for Democrat John Kerry. Bush's win is bad news for workers, but Kerry's election would not have been good news. Like the Republicans, the Democrats are a ruling-class party dedicated to the interests of the American capitalists, which are counterposed to those of workers, blacks and all the oppressed.

The union misleaders pound workers with the idea that the bosses' state—its courts and cops—can be an ally in their struggles. Countless strikes have foundered because of this. In the struggle to unionize Wal-Mart, many of the union drives in B.C. and Quebec are tied up waiting for labour board decisions. As a strategy, this demobilizes workers. Far from neutral, these boards are a weapon of the boss class, and they often back Wal-Mart.

A UFCW Canada pamphlet against Wal-Mart is called "Blowing the Whistle on a Neighbourhood Bully." One of its political themes is protectionism. "Blowing the Whistle" points the finger at cheap foreign labour in Myanmar and Thailand, and tries to scandalize Wal-Mart by pointing out that its "Made in Canada" label on manufactured goods is bogus. But Canadian capitalists are not a shred better than their U.S. counterparts. Look at Loblaws! Capitalists go where they will make the greatest profits, and they will always try to drive down wages and conditions. Protectionism doesn't save jobs. It does undermine the international class struggle needed to win, especially against global conglomerates like Wal-Mart, setting workers against each other instead of the capitalist bosses.

Protectionism, the idea that Canadian workers have interests counterposed to workers in other countries, is not unique to the UFCW leaders. Buzz Hargrove's CAW autoworkers union trumpets a "progressive," social unionism. But the CAW leadership vituperates against Japanese and Korean cars, undercutting international solidarity and the unity of workers



Jonquière, Canada: Mass demonstration in support of militant occupation of Alcan's Arvida smelter, January.

here, themselves of myriad nationalities and races. And for all Hargrove's militant posturing, many workers at A&P and Dominion stores, organized by the CAW's Retail Wholesale division, are also subjected to multi-tier wage schemes, their pay starting at around the minimum wage.

In Canada and the U.S., the union tops rail against China. Wal-Mart is the eighth largest buyer of exported goods from China. These goods are largely produced in the Special Economic Zones (SEZs) by firms usually owned at least in part by outside capitalists. This China bashing serves the U.S. imperialists and their Canadian junior partners in the counter-revolutionary crusade to open up China to full-scale capitalist exploitation, turning it into a giant sweatshop.

The union tops' fulminations against China do double duty, both pushing anti-Communism and scapegoating a "foreign enemy" for the loss of jobs, instead of fighting capitalism at home. Just as workers defend their unions—despite the sell-out leaders—against the bosses, workers must defend China against imperialist-backed counterrevolution despite the Chinese bureaucracy's accommodation to the capitalist market.

For a Fighting Labour Movement to Bring Wal-Mart to Its Knees!

What will it take to organize Wal-Mart? In a sense, the answer to this is also the answer to the question: How to turn around the situation for the working class? Militant tactics don't guarantee victory, even if the struggle is led by class-struggle Marxists. But class struggle is the only way workers have won or held on to significant gains. The problem is the present union leaders limit their

program and aims, and for the most part their tactics, to what is acceptable to the bosses.

Organizing Wal-Mart, especially as it moves into the multiracial urban areas of Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver, requires consciously fighting the anti-immigrant racism and chauvinism the bosses use to poison union struggles. During last year's UFCW strike, U.S. "Homeland Security" agents raided 60 Wal-Marts, rounding up 250 undocumented workers. Instead of fighting to defend these desperate immigrant workers, the UFCW bureaucrats—who say they want to organize Wal-Mart—did nothing to mobilize the union in their behalf.

Immigrants are a big component of the Canadian working class, and in Toronto, comprise a massive 75 percent of food industry workers. Along with their Canadian-born daughters and sons, immigrants are often in the forefront of militant class battles like the B.C. hospital workers strike last spring. The fact that Wal-Mart plays on the insecurities of immigrants who know they are vulnerable to arbitrary firings and loss of status makes concrete that the demand "Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!" is in the interests of all workers.

It's not accidental that the UFCW gained recognition first in Quebec, where the reality of national oppression has often fuelled militant class battles. The Quebec unionization rate is 41 percent, and Jonquière, and the whole Saguenay region, has a history of militant working-class struggle. Parallel to the UFCW's Wal-Mart campaign, last January Alcan workers in Jonquière occupied Alcan's Arvida smelter in a spectacular action to prevent the closure of the plant and the loss of 550 jobs. This defiance of the cap-

italists' sacred private property won the support of workers in the area and only ended after the Quebec Labour Relations Board ruled the action illegal.

It's good that an international union, the UFCW, is running a union drive spanning Quebec and English Canada, for this can help undercut the anti-Quebec chauvinism that is rife among Anglo-Canadian workers. For decades the labour leaders of English Canada—and especially the NDP—have pushed reactionary "Canadian unity," which is really support for the oppression of the Québécois nation. This undermines solidarity with the Quebec labour movement, which in the main supports independence, and drives Québécois workers into the arms of the bourgeois nationalists of the Parti Québécois. The result is a working class that is deeply divided along national lines. In English Canada militant workers must oppose Anglo chauvinism down the line and advocate Quebec independence, thus showing Quebec workers that they, not the Québécois bosses, are their true allies.

In the struggle to unionize Wal-Mart, the grinding oppression of working-class women is also a burning issue. In the biggest class-action suit in U.S. history 1.6 million former and current Wal-Mart women employees are demanding restitution for years of vicious and flagrant anti-woman discrimination. Union control of hiring, with affirmative action recruitment and training for women and minorities, would go some ways to redressing historic inequalities. For the impoverished and heavily female workforce at Wal-Mart, demands for free 24-hour child care would strike a real chord. Taking on the destruction of the health care system, the demand for decent across-the-board medical benefits must be linked to the fight for free, quality health care for all.

In the 1930s and '40s, the thousands of militants who considered themselves communists propelled the great industrial union organizing drives forward. Motivated by their ideals of building a society where those who labour rule, they knew that spiking the bosses' attacks on minorities and immigrants was crucial to victory. This must inspire today's militants who face the task of ousting the cowardly union bureaucrats and forging a new, class-struggle leadership of the unions. The fight to organize the unorganized could be the crucible in which a revolutionary workers party is forged in political struggle against the pro-capitalist labour brass and the NDP. Such a party is indispensable to unite the working class and lead it in the revolutionary overthrow of the bosses' rule. A workers government that rips the economy out of the hands of the capitalists is the only road to the creation of a truly human society in which production is for human need, not profit. ■

Greece...

(continued from page 7)

called for Greek troops out of Cyprus.

7. A key question confronting Trotskyists in Greece is the question of Cyprus and our internationalist, class-struggle opposition to the anti-Turkish chauvinism of the Greek bourgeoisie. We call for the immediate withdrawal of all Greek troops from the island. We also demand the withdrawal of the Turkish army, the UN contingent and the British troops and bases. Our fight is for a proletarian solution to the national question, which of necessity requires the revolutionary overthrow of the nationalist bourgeoisies in Nicosia/Lefkosa, Athens and Ankara.

8. The group agrees on the ICL's analysis and thesis on Pabloism. We want to fight to forge a Greek section of the ICL. We have been contributing our monthly payment since May 2002. We accept the discipline of a democratic-centralist international. The International, according to Lenin and Trotsky, is the necessary tool for the fight against capitalism,

for new October Revolutions and for the protection of national sections from alien class pressures. We fight against the pretenders to Trotskyism—the SWP, Täaffeites, etc.—who are an obstacle to the re forging of a Trotskyist party. We seek to build the party through splits and fusions, including from among the CP youth and the anarchist milieu.

9. Unlike the Stalinist Communist Party, which is a reformist party based on the industrial proletariat, PASOK is a bourgeois-populist political formation. While it has influence in the main trade-union federations in Greece (which are generally craft unions), PASOK's existence is not dependent on the labor movement. PASOK's origins are in the bourgeois Centre Party of George Papandreou—the father of PASOK founder Andreas—whose social base the party inherited. PASOK's ideological underpinnings are illustrated by the party's seminal 3 September [1974] founding Declaration, which combined hawkish Greek nationalism over the Cyprus issue with characteristic populist claims to represent all "dispossessed" Greek peo-

ple, defined to include peasants, small businessmen, managers, etc. The 3 September Declaration is moreover one of the more leftist expressions of PASOK's politics, as it is liberally spiced with some quasi-Marxist verbiage. This "left" face was, however, jettisoned within a few years of the party's founding and any would-be "leftists" were soon expelled from the party. In contrast to elements of the Greek left, such as the Cliffites, we reject on principle any political support—including electoral support—to this party of the class enemy.

10. An important task is the reading of *Workers Vanguard* and other ICL propaganda, and continuing the reading of Marxist classics for cadre development. We should study and learn from the long and complex history of the Greek Trotskyist movement (e.g., the Greek Archio-Marxists and the Communist League of America's Greek newspaper) and make it available to the rest of the ICL. As Trotskyists in Greece we have to study about the Greek Civil War/national question/Cyprus, as well as the Trotskyist movement and its split during World

War II on the Nazi occupation. The comrades need to study the ICL's statement on the imperialist bombing of Serbia and the Balkan slaughter and, with the help of the ICL, the national minorities in Greece as a part of the Balkans.

11. In order to accommodate this common work it is necessary to study the English language. It's also necessary for comrades of the ICL to study Greek.

12. As a task we have to project some modest public work in interventions through regular sales to the student milieu. In opponent meetings and in demonstrations we have already participated in common work with the ICL in Greece and in London.

13. Until it is realistic for a comrade to be able to transfer to Greece, it would be helpful for the Greek group to get more frequent visits, of longer duration. As soon as possible we need a comrade to transfer to help in the building of the section and the organizing of our political work.

14. We look forward to producing propaganda related to the class struggle in Greek society in order to intervene to give flesh to the ICL program. ■

AIDS...

(continued from page 1)

white capitalists, the ANC regime has laid off thousands of workers (with unemployment among Africans running at 50 per cent), kept education as a privilege for the children of a few ANC cronies and the white racist ruling class, and shut down hospitals. They've made their calcu-

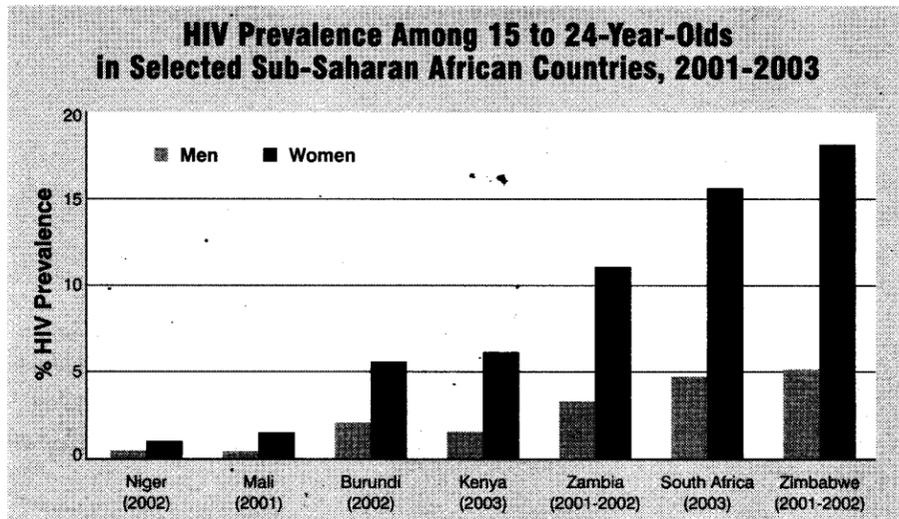
SPARTACIST SOUTH AFRICA

lations that all lives are not of equal value, that only the unskilled, unemployed and subsistence farmers and women will be hit. They have decided that the casualties of HIV/AIDS can continue to mount, with the grim reaper cutting down any movement demanding treatment.

This calculating hostility to the poor and defenceless is not only criminal, it is tragically wrong. This disease strikes at society's productive population, especially the working class. At least 100,000 students are without teachers because of HIV/AIDS. And yet another long-suppressed government study reveals the devastation of workers in public service. A staggering 46 per cent of adult deaths are AIDS related. The utter devaluation of human life by the ANC further underscores the brutality and inherent irrationality of the capitalist system.

South Africa Torn Apart by AIDS Crisis

Protests in South Africa have cast an intense spotlight, including internationally, on the ruling party's perfidy. The "new" stance of the ANC government is partially a concession designed to head off further struggle against its reactionary policies, especially by the working class. It's significant that unions like the National Union of Metal Workers of



UNAIDS

had infuriated the regime, received the Nelson Mandela Award for Health and Human Rights for struggle in the "best traditions of the anti-apartheid movement." The chairman of Anglo-America, the mining giant, chimed in lauding the TAC's leadership.

Africa and Imperialist Hypocrisy

For their own reasons, a number of South African and foreign capitalist interests prefer Mbeki adopt an official policy formally consistent with medical science. Indeed, relieving the opprobrium in which AIDS policy was viewed by the Anglo-American imperialists and the United Nations was a factor influencing the decision to announce ARV distribution. But if the imperialist powers embrace this seeming change, it is because the regionally powerful South Africa is their preferred instrument for intervention on what they call the "hopeless" continent. The ANC's extending asylum to U.S.-deposed Haitian president Aristide, opposing the war in Iraq, and supporting the Palestinian leader Arafat cannot mask the fact that

ing reserves from western and central Africa, especially Nigeria, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea and Angola. In response, France and other European countries have moved to reassert their "influence" in former colonies, like the Ivory Coast.

Along these lines, a Pentagon official made clear that a key ingredient in regional African security "is national militaries that are capable and competent and not dying of AIDS." The forging of a special relationship with the South African military and restoring its combat readiness is a priority of the American imperialists. Recently, results of soldiers coming forward for one HIV test showed an astounding 87 per cent rate of positives, and estimates for overall infection rates range from 23 to 40 per cent. It was thus mutually satisfactory then that the U.S.'s National Institutes of Health (NIH) gave \$35 million (mainly for ARVs) to the South African National Defence Force.

The U.S., Britain and other imperialist governments, despite hypocritical criticisms of Mbeki, act as enforcers for the extortionate drug monopolies. The Bush administration has waged an international campaign against generic ARVs and condoms, and manipulated billions in aid money to promote U.S. pharmaceutical interests and a reactionary Christian agenda of opposition to abortion and preaching abstinence. Since the patents for each component are held by different companies, only the generic ARVs provide necessary medication in one pill (2 or 3 in 1). This is a qualitative enhancement in economically backward countries, where access to medical treatment and transport is limited.

Cheap drugs to treat AIDS don't get to Africa because the capitalist blood-suckers on Wall Street and in the City of London don't want them to. This doesn't stop the same pharmaceutical giants from dumping all sorts of drugs not yet approved for the West on African countries. Or worse, in the late 1990s, 15 studies on mother-to-infant transmission funded by the U.S. and the UN used a placebo instead of AZT—this, when AZT was known to effectively block this type of HIV transmission. 1,502 infants were expected to die, echoing (if not replicating!) the infamous, racist U.S.-funded Tuskegee experiment where poor blacks in the rural south were denied the known treatment for syphilis. It's within this context that Mbeki's rants about using Africans as "guinea pigs" can get a hearing from Africans outraged by the suffering they've endured.

Because they perpetuate the conditions of economic impoverishment and cultural backwardness, the imperialist powers are ultimately responsible for the horrific scope of the AIDS epidemic in sub-Saharan Africa. The 1980s saw a mounting economic crisis throughout most of the continent, which was compounded by IMF and World Bank structural adjustment programmes carried out at the behest of the imperialist bankers. The wholesale economic devastation of the continent has been deepened further by the destruction of the Soviet Union, which had acted as a counterweight to American imperialism. During the Cold War, many "Third World" regimes were able to garner economic and military aid by playing off Moscow and Washington. Driven by economic desperation and the manifest bankruptcy of African nationalism, there has been a resurgence of national, tribal and clan rivalries, leading to almost continuous warfare throughout the continent, supplemented by tribal and clan massacres. In turn, these have been cynically manipulated by the imperialists and African politicians for their own ends. The UN, the IMF, and French imperialism bear significant responsibility for the 1994 Rwandan Genocide, and intervention by the UN into Darfur, Sudan is not a solution. From HIV/AIDS to "humanitarian" relief for Sudan, the crocodile tears of concern for the plight of Africa is imperialist hypocrisy: *All U.S./UN/British and French troops out of Africa! UN/South African troops out of Burundi and the DRC [Democratic Republic of the Congo]! Hands off Sudan!*

Women's Oppression and the Pandemic

In South Africa the face of HIV/AIDS is the African woman. As we said in *Spartacist South Africa* No. 1, devoted entirely to AIDS, the woman question is the burning social question here today:

"More than with any other disease in modern history, every step in the search to control and cure HIV/AIDS has been hampered by the profit-driven capitalist system and all the backward, repressive, racist and anti-woman ideological crap that comes with it.... And because it is a sexually transmitted disease, the special oppression that women suffer under capitalism creates a major obstacle to a cure. All the guilt, shame and repressive taboos about sex that are designed to subjugate women via bourgeois morality also play a major role in sabotaging a scientific response to AIDS."

African women between the ages 15 to 24 are two and a half times as likely to be HIV-infected as their male counterparts. This disparity is partially the result of the biological fact that HIV is more easily transmitted from men to women. Sexual activity also generally starts much earlier for women, typically with partners five to seven years older (increasing their chances of infection), and often as "survival sex" for groceries, transport or school fees. This is only made worse by the widespread male insistence on *nyama enyameni* (flesh on flesh) and the common belief that AIDS is a "woman's disease."

The horrific gang rape and murder of TAC AIDS activist Lorna Mlofana in a shebeen [township bar] toilet is emblematic of the degradation and oppression of women and its intersection with HIV/AIDS. She was beaten and killed after telling her attackers she was HIV-



Shayne Robinson/Sapa

ANC neo-apartheid rule: police attack demonstrator at Soweto township protest against water and electricity fees in October.

South Africa (NUMSA) and the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) worked out agreements with the bosses to get ARVs to strategic layers of the proletariat (in auto, gold and platinum mining) that will keep capitalism churning out profits. While these are piecemeal efforts derived from the strategic interests of the capitalists, they also reflect searing anger and resentment at the base of society.

The divisions on HIV/AIDS within the ruling ANC and South Africa as a whole run deep. A University of Cape Town economist wrote: "The cabinet was probably forced into announcing a treatment programme by the sheer weight of public pressure and by concerns to defuse the issue before the 2004 elections" (Nicoli Nattrass, *The Moral Economy of AIDS in South Africa*, 2004). In September 2003, Mbeki told the *Washington Post* he had no personal knowledge of anyone who had the virus or had died of AIDS. In a reply that resonated widely, the Afrikaner satirist Pieter-Dirk Uys said: "He lies and so condemns his nation to death.... Like when Steve Biko died the then-apartheid minister of 'Justice' Jimmy Kruger famously said: 'It leaves me cold.' South Africa leaves Thabo Mbeki cold." That October the TAC, which had earlier launched and then suspended civil disobedience that

the ANC is a junior partner to the bloody Bush gang. Under their rule, the South African capitalists have sharply increased investment in sub-Saharan Africa and provided troops for imperialist "peacekeeping" schemes. After the Iraq war, U.S. president Bush visited South Africa and declared that Mbeki is his point man on Zimbabwe.

The recent period has seen intensified jockeying between imperialist powers over the control of Africa. The U.S. is setting up "anti-terrorist command centres" in the eastern African countries of Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda. According to journalist Pierre Abramovici, U.S. forces have also recently been involved in a series of military operations in the Sahel, the buffer zone between the oil fields in North Africa and those of the Gulf of Guinea (*Le Monde Diplomatique*, July 2004). Using the "war on terror" as a pretext, the U.S. imperialists have strengthened their ties to African officer corps and are moving in to protect sources and supply lines for important primary resources like manganese, cobalt, chrome, gold, industrial diamonds and (especially) oil. Over the next ten years, Africa is projected to become the U.S.'s second most important supplier of oil after the Near East, and the imperialists are greedily eye-

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positive. Her doctor at the Khayelitsha clinic said Mlofana, a 21-year-old mother of a 3-year-old boy, had been taking anti-retroviral drugs for the past two years and was a healthy woman who courageously talked about the disease to educate and counter the stigma associated with it. We solidarise with the TAC's vigorous protest of this atrocity.

There are some 50,000 reported cases of rape per year in South Africa. Just under a third of high school girls indicate they are victims of rape, and 70 per cent say they have been coerced into having sexual intercourse. The myth that sex with a virgin can cure AIDS has become a further catalyst in escalating incidents of rape of young girls. One South African journalist who was raped and fought bureaucratic obstacles to get AZT to prevent HIV infection said: "We won't end this epidemic until we understand the role of tradition and religion—and of a culture in which rape is endemic and has become a prime means of transmitting the disease to young women as well as children." Mbeki labelled the journalist "racist" for this observation. In fact, traditional views are frequently comingled and overlap with the religious doctrines of the Christian church and missionaries wherein sex is made a "moral" issue, thereby reinforcing the stigma of AIDS. The control of this pandemic is inconceivable without a profound struggle against this retrograde social backwardness.

The oppression of women and children is bound up with the role of the bourgeois monogamous family under capitalism, where women are treated as property of men, slated to raise the next generation of wage slaves. The oppression of women may take an even more extreme form in the traditional African family, especially when polygamy is still sanctioned. The



Nurses during 1995 wildcat strike carried signs reading "Away with Mandela," denounced ANC leader as "driver of gravy train" for aspiring black capitalists. ANC government fired 6,000 nurses after strike.

ARVs. In one public incident, the Minister of Health labelled the combative TAC leader Mark Heywood as a "white man" who tells "our Africans" that "you must toyi toyi [martial protest dance] here." In a speech at Fort Hare University in 2001, Mbeki slanderously ascribed the view to AIDS scientists that Africans are "germ carriers, and human beings of a lower order" who must "adopt strange options, to save a depraved and diseased people from perishing from self-inflicted disease." Likewise, the ANC expounds on the "African Renaissance" and energetically promotes the authority of "tribal leaders" and "traditional healers."

The ANC government's cynical refusal to recognise the crisis around AIDS is

the false belief that the black African people—brutally oppressed by the white rulers of South Africa—all have a common interest which stands higher than class divisions. All working people in this country—Zulu or Xhosa, Indian or Coloured [mixed-race], immigrant or native born, African or white—have a common interest in fighting against ANC capitalist austerity and neo-apartheid.

Break with the ANC-Led Tripartite Alliance!

The Tripartite Alliance between the misnamed SACP, COSATU and the ANC is a *nationalist popular front* through which the African working class and dispossessed are chained to their exploiters. The SACP and COSATU have acted as a medium for pressure at the base of society that low cost ARVs be made available. They have utilised differences over the epidemic in the ruling party to push for a formal change in the government's position on ARV distribution. But simultaneously, they are part of a division of labour that marshals support for the ANC and keeps any expression of disgruntlement with the HIV-denialist Mbeki regime confined to "safe" limits. They thus seek to shackle the oppressed to their literal executioners.

At last year's COSATU conference, the SACP/COSATU tops dismissed the idea of a split in the Tripartite Alliance and announced a long-term (to 2015) programme of cooperation. Opponents of the Alliance were told that their identities were known and they should get out. The COSATU tops and SACP quite consciously *did not* use the national stage to galvanise South African society on HIV/AIDS. Any display of indignation was buried as the Minister of Health and other ANC luminaries were in attendance. Instead Blade Nzimande, SACP general

secretary, addressed COSATU on the need to renew the ANC by a massive workers infusion into it for the upcoming elections. An obligatory resolution calling on the government to dispense ARVs was passed. But the truth was captured by a reader of *Spartacist South Africa* and COSATU member, who explained to us that within COSATU itself there are inadequate structures to deal with the epidemic even as its members are dying daily.

The SACP is integral to the administration of the capitalist state, which is an instrument for the suppression of the interests of the working class and oppressed. The chairman of the SACP is Minister of Safety and Security with direct control over the police, and Ronnie Kasrils is the minister in charge of the National Intelligence Agency that has been in the vanguard of intimidation and worse of the "social movements." The SACP's role in covering the ANC's flank on HIV/AIDS will prove to be one of the singular betrayals in the sordid history of class-collaborationist (popular-front) politics.

Acting as a political auxiliary to the ANC is the TAC, a militant single-issue pressure group arising out of the mass desperation of the situation. The ANC regime has employed repression against the Anti-Privatisation Forum (APF) and detention and torture against the Landless Peoples Movement (LPM). TAC, another one of the "social movements," is seen to be more acceptable because of its craven political support for the ANC. (Although this didn't stop COSATU tops from warning the TAC that their short-lived civil disobedience better not challenge the "authority" of the state.) Given the unprecedented destructive scope of the epidemic, a denialist regime that withholds medicine that could save the lives of thousands, and the intransigence of the drug companies on pricing and cheaper generics, "rampant, militant protest would seem a given." But, as even the bourgeois press notes in the course of praising this group's tactics, they are merely a "whisper" on the "sliding scale of a people's revolutionary cause" (*Sunday Independent*, 7 December 2003).

On January 25th, the TAC held a "People's AIDS Forum" at Johannesburg City Hall to build a "real partnership for implementation" with the government. At this event, the leadership policed the audience to stifle militant expressions of outrage. A person with AIDS spoke and, pointing her finger at ANC Gauteng Premier Mbhazima Shilowa, said: "We are bleeding and the government is doing nothing." When she finished, a group of youth converged to the front of the hall *toyi toying* and chanting "Manto and Mbeki are selling us out. We are going to give them one minute to get out." This prompted the TAC to say that the woman's sickness was the source of her words, so for the TAC the government was not the enemy. When Shilowa got up

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Powerful black proletariat creates the wealth of South Africa.

Economist

only solution is the destruction of the capitalist system by the working class, expropriating the capitalist class through victorious socialist revolution, and preparing the way for a classless society. Then the material basis would exist for replacing the family through collectivising household drudgery and child rearing.

The oppression and abuse of women is reinforced by the anti-working-class, anti-woman, anti-poor practices of the regime. There is a huge gulf between official policy as embodied in the "most progressive constitution in the world" and reality. Only 45 per cent of the 309 designated abortion clinics actually provide this vital procedure. Women stuck without employment outside the home care for the sick and dying, while the swelling ranks of AIDS orphans battle for survival. The ANC has never taken a public stand against the prevalent *lobola* (bride price) in which women's status is reduced to property, or female genital mutilation, still practised openly in rural areas and secretly in the townships.

Bourgeois Nationalism Is the Main Obstacle to Revolutionary Consciousness

The Western-educated Mbeki and many ANC bourgeois nationalists embrace conspiracy theories and AIDS denial. Mbeki and his ministers employ sinister race-baiting in their attacks on proponents of

also underpinned by its elemental hostility on the gay question. It is common to hear that homosexual sex is not "African." The association of AIDS with homosexuals, drug users, or any other particular group has always been the ideological cover for the concrete failure to fight it. There is no such thing as a "homosexual disease" or a "heterosexual disease." HIV is a *virus*. We fight for *full democratic rights for gays and lesbians*.

Likewise, the ANC-led government orchestrates and manipulates an anti-immigrant backlash. Today, it is immigrants and asylum seekers at whose feet the scourge of AIDS is falsely laid. These migrant workers, including "illegal" immigrants, are a living link between the South African proletariat and the workers throughout the region. *Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!*

Mbeki et al.'s "Africanist" denunciations of Western science, race-baiting and touting of "African solutions" are intended to disguise the fact that the *bourgeois-nationalist ANC regime is the main political agent of world imperialism and the South African capitalist class*. The ANC's nationalism is a wellspring for retrograde consciousness on HIV/AIDS and women's oppression. To break the chains of neo-apartheid capitalism, and achieve genuine national and social liberation, the working class must transcend the ideology of nationalism,

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Ukraine...

(continued from page 4)

embraced Bush's "war on terror"—not least in justifying its own murderous colonial occupation of Chechnya.

Capitalist counterrevolution has brought with it a recrudescence of all the old regional and interimperialist rivalries, and ushered in new ones. While Germany is going along with the U.S. vendetta against Kuchma/Yanukovich, Social Democratic chancellor Gerhard Schröder has demonstratively maintained friendly relations with Putin throughout the confrontation. Meanwhile, Poland—this time acting as a lackey of U.S., not French, imperialism—has moved aggressively to reassert its historic interests in Ukraine. Ex-Stalinist president Aleksander Kwasniewski and former Solidarność leader Lech Walesa both visited Kiev, the former as a "mediator" blessed by Bush and the latter in open solidarity with the "Orange Revolution." The Polish Sejm (parliament), with many parliamentarians ostentatiously dressed in orange, passed a resolution demanding that the Kiev regime "respect free elections," while rallies supporting Yushchenko have been staged throughout the country, in at least one case raising the demand, "Ukraine Without Putin."

For New October Revolutions!

The Bolshevik Revolution transformed what Lenin called the tsarist "prison house of peoples" into a multinational federation. What made this possible was the Bolsheviks' internationalist program, which asserted full and equal national



Progress Publishers

Red Army units entering Kiev, 1919. Christian Rakovsky, head of the Ukrainian Soviet government from 1919-23, with Leon Trotsky in 1927.



Wide World

rights for all peoples—including the right of national independence—in order to secure the fullest unity of the workers of all nationalities. From 1919 to 1923, the head of the Ukrainian Soviet government was Christian Rakovsky, the outstanding Romanian revolutionary socialist and Bolshevik leader, who later became Trotsky's key ally in the International Left Opposition.

Keenly sensitive to any hint of anti-Ukrainian prejudices among the largely Russian or Russified Bolsheviks in the Ukraine, Lenin and Trotsky insisted that all Communist administrators working there had to speak Ukrainian. Rakovsky continued this tradition. In line with Lenin's express concerns, Rakovsky was singularly outspoken at the Twelfth Party Congress in 1923 in denouncing the chauvinist treatment by Stalin and his allies of the Georgian Communists, an early sign of the nationalist bureaucracy consolidating around Stalin's leadership. Placing the struggle against Russian chauvinism firmly in the context of the

program of world socialist revolution, Rakovsky declared: "If we are to become the centre of the struggle of the oppressed nationalities outside the boundaries of the USSR, we must internally, within the boundaries of the USSR, make a correct decision on the national question" (Christian Rakovsky, *Selected Writings on Opposition in the USSR 1923-30* [1980]).

The kind of ethnic and regional hostilities that are coming to the fore today can only be overcome through proletarian class struggle. This was palpable in the 1993 Donbass miners strike, the first major workers struggle in the former Soviet Union after the capitalist counterrevolution. A red banner at one of the strike demonstrations proclaimed: "Nationalism Shall Not Pass!" The strike soon spread from the Donbass coal fields to the cities and on to the western Ukraine, including cities near the Polish border. But the union leadership, working closely with the mine directors, derailed the struggle into a demand for regional

"self-administration" in the east, whereby the mine directors would get regional autonomy in order to exercise control over profits.

In a 1996 article titled "Why Marxists Do Not Raise the Call 'Restore the Soviet Union'" (WV No. 639, 16 February 1996), we wrote: "What will the interpenetrated and heavily assimilated Eastern Ukraine population want to do in the aftermath of proletarian revolution—go with Russia, the Western Ukraine, a socialist federation linking them, or some other variant?" The outcome of this question depends heavily on whether the next wave of revolutionary ferment is generated, for example, from Warsaw or Berlin in the west or Moscow in the east—or Central Asia. One thing is certain: the only way out of the immiseration and fratricide unleashed by capitalist counterrevolution lies in socialist revolution to sweep away all the new capitalist ruling classes and return to the Bolshevik internationalism of Lenin and Trotsky. ■

AIDS...

(continued from page 11)

to speak, the chanting and *toyi toying* began again: "The Black Elite is causing this suffering." Shilowa's speech was an insult and youth in the back of the hall started making placards: "African potato, olive oil, she must taste it first" and "Phansi nge Beet Root" [Down with beet root]. Another read "If you want votes go to the nearest cemetery." TAC members roamed the hall collecting the offending placards.

The TAC's whole strategy exemplifies the limits of keeping the struggle for decent health care and living conditions within the confines of capitalism, especially when the vast majority of the world's population lives in poverty. Politically loyal to the ANC, their "watchdog" strategy of pressuring the regime has turned them into political cops suppressing the immense and justifiable rage against the government. Disenchanted TAC activists must break with single-issue activism and *with the ANC* and struggle against the capitalist profit system of exploitation, poverty and war.

A "Left" Opponent of Revolutionary Marxism

Posturing to the left of the ANC/SACP is the Democratic Socialist Movement (DSM), affiliated with the Committee for a Workers International of Peter Taaffe. The DSM has opposed Mbeki's HIV/AIDS denial and criticised the TAC for, among other things, defending the profits of drug companies. They say "the battle against AIDS cannot be won in the Courts, but in the struggle against capitalism itself" (*Izwi Labasebenzi*, June 2002). They criticise TAC leader Zackie Achmat's public posture as a "loyal ANC member bewildered by the apparently inexplicable position of his leader,

Mbeki..." This might lead some to give credence to the DSM as bona fide defenders of the downtrodden. Nothing could be further from the truth. For a group that spent some 20 years (!) inside the ANC as the so-called Marxist Workers Tendency (MWT), to attack Achmat for his slavish loyalty to the same ANC takes some truly self-serving memory loss. Ignoring the clear print of the Freedom Charter, they repeatedly state the ANC's capitalist programme began in 1996 with the imposition of GEAR. But the ANC did not just recently go bad. It has always been explicitly capitalist. The MWT stayed inside the ANC when it negotiated the historic betrayal of the African masses in 1994. They were in the ANC when the Mandela government unleashed repression against the national nurses strike and fired 6,000 in the Eastern Cape in 1995. Their current opposition to the ANC, including on HIV/AIDS, does not diminish the responsibility they bear for the crimes of the ANC, which *they helped put into power*.

Forge a Leninist-Trotskyist Party!

South Africa is an example of what Marxists call combined and uneven development. The technologies to build nuclear reactors and chronic outbreaks of cholera have an uneasy coexistence. On the streets of Durban, purveyors of *muthi* (traditional medicines) offering mystery powders and ground bones as cures for the ravages of AIDS are found side by side with the advanced technology necessary to operate one of the world's most active industrial ports. Modern industrial and mining complexes were built through the superexploitation of the black toilers by the white capitalist class. The privileged white minority enjoys living standards comparable to the wealthiest enclaves in North America and West Europe, including having access to the best medical care money can buy. But a powerful working class exists that will be the gravedigger of the neo-apartheid social order.

In South Africa, with its significant economic development in the crucial urban centres and its *relatively* advanced medical care, ARVs could be distributed on a massive scale. Less developed Botswana is distributing ARVs free to 17,400 people, which is, however, only

a fraction of its 260,000-strong HIV-positive population (the government estimates that 100,000 people are in immediate need of ARVs). But even the most rational and humane policy under neo-apartheid capitalism may well not be enough to save the lives of millions of people in this country, including entire sections of the South African proletariat. Poverty, homophobia, women's oppression and "traditional institutions" will continue to plague any approach to this disease, strongly affecting who is treated. The availability of drugs and the rational utilisation of technology are hamstrung by private medical services and profiteering pharmaceutical companies. In rural areas, the absence of infrastructure, transport and refrigeration presents additional obstacles to be overcome.

South Africa has the most powerful proletariat on the continent. There are in its ranks many adherents of a socialist vision of society. This proletariat has not been defeated in battle, although its liberation was "negotiated" away at least temporarily. The powerful strikes against privatisation over the past three years have not raised the basic call for *free ARVs for everybody now!* This would destabilise the ANC and South Africa in a profound way, so deeply is the country fractured by this crisis.

Massive unemployment and land hunger, the displacement of the African population in townships, the migrant labour system with its single-sex hostels—the entire edifice of social inequality—these

are the core characteristics of neo-apartheid capitalism *today*. If it is to fight for its own liberation against capitalist exploitation, the South African working class must lead the battle against the obstruction of the Alliance on AIDS. It must oppose the brutal oppression of women, immigrants and the rural poor. It must take up the cause of the millions who languish in the country's impoverished shantytowns.

Spartacist South Africa is dedicated to the task of building a revolutionary internationalist vanguard party as the critical step in unchaining the power of the South African proletariat. It will struggle against every manifestation of social oppression and police tyranny. It will be, in Lenin's words, a "tribune of the people." The South African working class must be an instrument of its own emancipation and all the oppressed by sweeping away capitalism in sub-Saharan Africa. However, the scourge of HIV/AIDS cannot be eliminated within the colonial-derived boundaries of the South African state. The survival of socialist revolution on the subcontinent requires its international extension to the metropolitan bastions of imperialism in the West and Japan. This is the task to which the International Communist League is dedicated. Then and only then will the necessary social resources and the most advanced medical and scientific techniques be employed in the service of all humanity to truly tackle the plague of HIV/AIDS. ■

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Workers Vanguard skips an issue in December.

Our next issue will be dated January 7.

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GUIDE TO THE SUBJECT INDEX

• This subject index covers issues of *Workers Vanguard* published during 2004, from issue No. 817 (9 January) through the end-of-the-year issue No. 838 (10 December). During this time, *WV* was published biweekly, except skipping three alternate issues in June, July and August, and skipping the last issue in December.

• The fullest listing is by SUBJECT. Subject headings are arranged alphabetically. Entries are listed chronologically with two exceptions: all entries comprising a series are listed together immediately following the first entry of the series; corrections immediately follow the relevant entry. An asterisk (*) after the page location of an entry indicates that a correction follows.

• Entries are listed under subject heads. In some cases, subject heads are broken down into subcategories. These subcategories are listed immediately after the initial subject head and preceded by a dot (•). The numbers following each entry headline give the issue number, date and page number(s) for the article. Thus:

Fight Sinister Government "Terrorism" Smear, #836, 12 Nov. (16, 13)

means the headline of the article, issue No. 836, dated 12 November 2004, beginning on page 16 and continuing on page 13.

• No entry is listed twice; refer to cross references for guidance in locating the subject head for particular articles. Cross references are of two types: those following the word "see" deal centrally with the subject head; those following the words "see also" are related articles. Subject heads in cross references are separated by a semicolon, while subcategories of subject heads are separated by a comma. Thus:

Sex Witchhunt—See **Black Question; Britain; Civil Liberties: General, Cases; U.S.: General.** See also **Mexico.**

means that articles about the anti-sex witchhunt can be found by going to the subject heads **BLACK QUESTION** and **BRITAIN**; by going to the subject head **CIVIL LIBERTIES** and looking under the subcategories **General** and **Cases**; and by going to the subject head **UNITED STATES** and looking under the subcategory **General.**

Related articles can be found by going to the subject head **MEXICO.**

• Individuals mentioned in articles are usually not listed separately unless the article is primarily about the given person. Foreign political organizations are generally listed under appropriate countries, while U.S. political organizations are listed under their organizational names.

• Articles relating to foreign countries are listed under geographical headings and not normally under any other subject heading. Articles which deal centrally with U.S. foreign policy will be found under **U.S.: International Relations**, except those articles that refer to the U.S. invasion of Iraq, which will be found under **IRAQ: U.S. War and Occupation.** Articles dealing with domestic aspects of the "War on Terror" are located under **CIVIL LIBERTIES: General**; those dealing particularly with attacks on immigrants will be found under **IMMIGRATION.**

• Articles on protests that take place on a campus will generally be found under the subject of the protest. Protests on miscellaneous subjects will be found under **CAMPUS PROTESTS.** Articles that concern repression on campus by the administration or attempts by government or right-wing forces to repress the political views of students and faculty will be found under **CAMPUS REPRESSION.**

• The periodic columns by death-row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal are listed under the subject heading **ABU-JAMAL** in the subcategory **Message from Death Row**; articles on his case and the campaign to free him are in the subcategory **Defense Campaign.**

• Articles under the *Class-Struggle Defense Notes* (CSDN) masthead are by the Partisan Defense Committee, a class-struggle, non-sectarian, legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League.

• Abbreviations used in entries are:

C: Correction

CSDN: *Class-Struggle Defense Notes* article

E: Editorial Note

L: Letter

R: Review

S: Series

W&R: *Women and Revolution* article

YSp: *Young Spartacus* article

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