

Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants! For Worker/Immigrant Action to Stop Deportations

From Day One, Donald Trump has been waging a relentless war on immigrants. After launching his campaign for president by demonizing Mexicans as drug dealers, criminals and rapists, he smeared Muslims as terrorists. On taking office, his first act was to issue a ban on refugees, immigrants and visitors from Middle Eastern countries. Despite huge protests at the airports and court rulings against his blatantly discriminatory action, the racist in the White House issued a new Muslim ban at the end of September. Earlier in the month he decreed the end of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, lifting the temporary hold on deportation of almost 800,000 young immigrants. And in January, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) may end the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) of almost 60,000 Haitians.

Meanwhile, the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (I.C.E.) police have been terrorizing immigrant communities across the country. In the first seven months of Trump's administration they detained al-

most 100,000 undocumented immigrants, up 43% over the same period last year. The DHS claims it "targets criminals," but the number detained who have no criminal record at all has almost doubled over 2016,

some 28,000 people torn away from their families just because of their immigration status. Now I.C.E. acting director Thomas Homan has declared that the agency plans to increase factory and restaurant raids by

400-500%, and would continue to carry out immigration arrests around courts and schools (where the I.C.E. agents have been lurking, despite supposedly being off-limits along with hospitals and places of worship).

The U.S. has become deportation nation. But it's not just since Republican immigrant-basher-in-chief Trump took over. Democrat Barack Obama became known as deporter-in-chief by expelling a record number of immigrants – over 8 million when you include those stopped near the border. The "well-oiled deportation machine" he handed over to his successor is now going into high gear. Under Trump's executive orders, all 15 million or more undocumented immigrants in the U.S. are potentially at risk. In early October, the White House sent a document to Congress outlining 39 measures for intensifying repression of immigrants inside the U.S., including hiring 15,000 more Border Patrol and I.C.E. agents. In fact, Democrats in Congress voted for many of these measures as part

continued on page 10



On May 1, Internationalist Group and Trabajadores Internacionales Clasistas joined unionized immigrant workers in New York who marched with signs calling to "strike against deportations."

The Central Enemy Is the Capitalist State

The Fascist Threat, And How to Fight It

Suddenly in mid-August, millions across the country and around the world were shocked into awareness of the infestation of outright fascists in the United States. People were horrified as they watched video footage of the dramatic murder of Heather Heyer (and the injuring of 19 others) by a Nazi who plowed his car into a crowd of anti-racist protesters in Charlottesville, Virginia. For many it was a wakeup call, making it crystal clear that such racist killers pose a significant and growing threat. The liberal bourgeois media, as well, were jolted by the sight of hundreds of action-ready white supremacists, many of them heavily armed, in a Nazi-style night march with blazing torches chanting Hitlerite slogans like "Blood and soil" (*Blut und Boden*) and openly anti-Semitic appeals ("Jews will not replace us").

The assorted Ku Klux Klans, paramilitary fascist militias, Alt-Right fascist "fight groups," champions of the Confederate slavocracy, worshippers of the Third Reich and bizarrely costumed Internet publicity hounds that banded together in the Charlottesville "Unite the Right" march have



Charlottesville, Virginia, August 12: anti-racist demonstrators face off with helmeted white supremacists and Nazis thirsting for blood.

proliferated under the cover of the Republican regime of Donald Trump. There were the usual Trump election posters and red "MAGA" (Make America Great Again) caps. Kluxer David Duke (Mr. Klan in a

suit) declared that they were "going to fulfill the promises of Donald Trump" to "take our country back." So unsurprisingly Trump's reaction to the horrific murder of Heather Heyer in Charlottesville was to

blame "violence on many sides," saying not a word about racism. What else would one expect from the white supremacist in the White House?

When Trump's refusal to condemn white supremacists set off a chorus of complaints from Democrats and especially Republicans, an anonymous White House spokesman declared that "of course" he condemned "white supremacists, K.K.K., neo-Nazi and all extremist groups." That lasted barely two days before Trump was not just putting an equal sign between racists and anti-racists, but declaring the swastika-sporting, race-hate-spouting fascists to include some "very fine people" and denouncing the violence of the "Alt-Left." But, significantly, he was soon joined by the *Washington Post* (the voice of Amazon), *The Atlantic* and other liberals, who denounced antifa (anti-fascist) groups as just as bad as the fascists. The aim of this grotesque equation of wannabe genocidal murders with those who seek to stop the Nazi-fascists in their tracks was to call for more police repression.

continued on page 2

Fascist Threat...

continued from page 1

We must start by calling the fascists by their right names. Liberals seek to make them seem harmless – “*verharmlosen*” in German (as in portraying the “identitarian” Aryan supremacists as only concerned with preserving cultural identity), “*dédiaboliser*” in French (painting the fascist National Front as mere populists). In the U.S., along with accepting as good coin their cynical pose as champions of free speech, the media regularly refers to these Confederacy lovers as “white nationalists,” making a parallel to black nationalists. The would-be führer of the Alt-Right, Richard Spencer, claims to seek a “White Ethno-State,” a racist conception in itself. In reality, he is a *white supremacist* and millionaire Mississippi plantation owner¹ who yearns for the days of Jim Crow segregation.

For opponents of racist reaction and defenders of the oppressed, the poor and working people, the issue is starkly posed: *how to defeat these deadly white supremacists*. Liberal Democrats usually tell people to ignore the fascists, and rely on the police. But the cops are by far the biggest, most organized force of racist killers around, and as the enforcers of capitalist “law and order,” they are often in league with and defend the fascists. Various groups that claim to be socialist but in reality seek to reform the (unreformable) capitalist system call to bring out large numbers in alliance with the liberals for “peaceful protests” that seek to prevent protesters from directly confronting the fascists to put a stop to their deadly provocations. That losing “strategy” likewise lets the Nazis and Kluxers stage their bloody provocations, recruit and grow.

Some militant anti-fascists (“antifa”) call for taking on the fascists wherever they show their faces. This horrifies the liberals and reformist pseudo-socialists who denounce such “violence.” We defend antifa against the state repression that these denunciations set them up for. But in doing so, we point out that endless inconclusive fights, or pepper-spraying them isn’t enough to stop the fascist menace. And the serious fascist outfits have made it clear that they’re not relying on their fists. What’s needed to actually *stop* the fascists, not just show moral indignation, is to bring out a superior power. A power strong enough to go up against the capitalist state, whose blue-uniformed

¹ See report by the Center for Investigative Reporting, “White nationalist gets his money from cotton fields – and the government,” *Reveal*, 17 March.



Behind the fascists is the capitalist state. Police protected racist rally in Portland, June 4. Labor mobilization brought out some 300 unionists and supporters.

enforcers stand behind (and often with) their auxiliaries in white sheets and brown shirts. That power is the organized working class, and *the Internationalist Group has repeatedly called for workers mobilization and defense guards to CRUSH the fascist threat*. Now, before it grows stronger.

What Is Fascism?

The fascists have been growing for some time, often claiming to defend free speech, a pretext that the liberals buy into. The would-be nightriders and stormtroopers are not trying to convince people of their “ideas,” much less win a popularity contest – they want to instill fear in those who would be their victims. Their rallies are provocations to lynchings and racist pogroms, as their Black Hundreds forebears carried out, attacking Jewish ghettos in Russia before they were put out of business by the Bolshevik October Revolution, exactly 100 years ago. They are mortal enemies of the working people and every oppressed group. For those who foolishly believe “it can’t happen here,” we’ve got news: it’s beginning to happen, although on a relatively limited scale. Charlottesville was hardly the first recent case of murder by fascists.

- In June 2015, Dylann Storm Roof (a fan of the Daily Stormer web site) slaughtered nine African Americans in a Charleston, South Carolina church.²
- On March 22, James Harris Jackson (a subscriber to the Cybernazi channel and that of the National Policy Institute and Radix journal of Richard

² See “Charleston Massacre and Cop Terror: It’s Racist American Capitalism,” *The Internationalist* No. 40, Summer 2015.

Spencer) traveled to New York City where he killed Timothy Caughman with a sword.

- On May 21, Sean Urbanski (a member of the Facebook group, Alt-Reich: Nation) stabbed to death African American student Richard Collins III at the University of Maryland’s College Park campus where the fascist Vanguard America has been recruiting.
- On May 26, Jeremy Christian (who had attended a “free speech” rally draped in a Nazi flag) murdered Taliesin Myrddin Namkai-Meche and Ricky John Best on a Portland, Oregon street car when they came to the aid of two young black women he was berating with anti-Muslim slurs.
- And on August 12, James Fields (who was earlier photographed marching with Vanguard America carrying its shield with crossed *fasci*, the Roman symbol adopted by Mussolini) slammed his car into a crowd of anti-fascists in Charlottesville, killing Heather Heyer.

For months beforehand, videos had circulated on right-wing web sites including the Daily Caller and Fox Nation promoting the tactic of driving cars into crowds of anti-racist protesters.

In the aftermath of the election of a viciously racist, sexist and xenophobic right-wing billionaire, the pseudo-populist Donald Trump, a lot of liberals and a number of leftists started referring to Trump and his then chief advisor, Steve Bannon, as “fascists.” *The Internationalist* wrote that one should not throw around such terms loosely, as an epithet meaning “very bad” or “very repressive.” A Latin American military dictatorship is not the same as Hitler’s Germany or Mussolini’s Italy. We noted that Stalinists in particular often used the term in order to justify an “anti-fascist popular front,” as Stalin and his henchmen did in the 1930s, chaining workers to an alliance with a supposed “anti-fascist” wing of the bourgeoisie, and thus blocking the necessary revolutionary struggle against fascism.

In an article on “Donald Trump, the ‘Alt-Right’ and Fascism” (*The Internationalist* No. 46, January-February 2017) we quoted Leon Trotsky, co-leader together with Lenin of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution and founder of the Fourth International, who wrote in 1932 of the rise of the German Nazis and their Italian predecessors:

“At the moment that the ‘normal’ police

and military resources of the bourgeois dictatorship, together with their parliamentary screens, no longer suffice to hold society in a state of equilibrium – the turn of the fascist regime arrives. Through the fascist agency, capitalism sets in motion the masses of the crazed petty bourgeoisie and the bands of declassed and demoralized lumpenproletariat – all the countless human beings whom finance capital itself has brought to desperation and frenzy.”

–“What Next? Vital Questions for the German Proletariat” (1932)

After quoting Trotsky’s analysis of victorious fascism, which uses the methods of civil war to annihilate the workers’ organizations, we stressed:

“This scenario is *not* a description of what is happening in the United States today. What *is* happening is plenty dangerous, a drive toward increasing *bonapartism*, that is military/police rule. Moreover, the ominous expansion of police powers has been promoted by the Democratic administrations of Bill Clinton and Barack Obama no less than by the Republican Bushes. It is the product of decaying capitalism which increasingly discards its ‘democratic’ trappings.”

–“Donald Trump, the ‘Alt-Right’ and Fascism”

However, we added: “But while neither Trump nor Bannon are fascists, actual fascists are crawling out of their holes and looking forward to the Trump years.” And in an article written the day after Trump’s election, we warned:

“As violent racist and outright fascist forces are emboldened by Trump’s victory, Muslims and Middle Eastern immigrants in particular may be singled out for attack. Class-conscious militants should begin the work now of building *workers defense guards*, based on the mass organizations of the working class and oppressed, to counter this threat.”

–“Post-Traumatic Election Shock: To Defeat Trump ... And the Democrats, Fight for Workers Revolution” (10 November 2016), in *The Internationalist* No. 46, January-February 2017

The Fascists and the Capitalist State

We have been careful to distinguish between proto-fascist self-promoters and actual fascists, while countering the liberal (and reformist pseudo-socialist) refrain that shutting down such dangerous provocateurs with mass action would violate “free speech.” We noted that a Milo Yiannopoulos poses a very real danger to those he seeks to victimize, such as undocumented immigrants or transsexual people, whether by state repression or individual assault (or both). (See our article, “Milo Yiannopoulos, ‘Free Speech’ and the Assault on Universities,” *The Internationalist* No. 47, March-April 2017; and also the recent Revolutionary Internationalist Youth leaflet, “Dangerous Provocateurs: Milo Yiannopoulos and His Fascist Entourage.”) Moreover, proto-fascists and crypto-fascists are frequently mixed in together with the Nazis, Kluxers and militias, as in the “Unite the Right” event in Charlottesville.

We have also put our calls for workers action against the fascists into practice. A week after Trump’s election, members of Class Struggle Workers – Portland (CSWP, fraternally allied with the Internationalist Group) sparked a motion which was

continued on page 7

Visit the League for the Fourth International/
Internationalist Group on the Internet
<http://www.internationalist.org>

The Internationalist

A Journal of Revolutionary Marxism
for the Reforging of the Fourth International

Publication of the Internationalist Group,
section of the League for the Fourth International

EDITORIAL BOARD: Jan Norden (editor), Fred Bergen, Mark Lazarus, Abram Negrete,
Marjorie Salzburg, Ines Young

The Internationalist (ISSN 1091-2843) is published bimonthly, skipping July-August, by Mundial
Publications, P.O. Box 3321, Church Street Station, New York, NY 10008, U.S.A.
Telephone: (212) 460-0983 Fax: (212) 614-8711 E-mail: internationalistgroup@msn.com
Subscriptions: US\$10 for five issues.

No. 49



1162-M

September-October 2017



AUGUST 12 – BREAKING NEWS!
Donald Trump is a liar. A Big Liar.

Okay, so it's not news. It is a given of contemporary political culture that Trump lies about pretty much everything great and small. Trump's lies have garnered a whole industry of online lying lists at *PolitiFact* and other fact-chasing organizations. But when it comes to lies, size matters, particularly as concerns the lies that serve as pretexts to launch wars. Those lies kill millions, and almost every imperialist slaughter begins with them. Now we are seeing the Big Lie in action over Korea, and while Democrats may be getting nervous about the megalomaniac Republican president with his finger on the nuclear trigger, liberals have been promoting warmongering Big Lies about Korea, Iraq, Yugoslavia, Vietnam and elsewhere for decades.

But first the smaller lies: Donald Trump tells lies to puff up his fragile and aggrieved ego. Those lies often take the form: "It was the greatest _____ (fill in the blank: speech, victory, witch hunt, crowd, executive order, etc.) in history." Everything he does is the greatest in history, because he demonstrably doesn't know anything about history. He said that Andrew Jackson (U.S. president between 1829 and 1837, died in 1845) could have avoided the Civil War (1861-65). He heard that Abolitionist leader Frederick Douglass (1818-1895) "is doing a good job." Trump is a fitting heir to the 19th century anti-immigrant racists known as the "Know Nothing" movement.

Trump lied about getting a phone call from the leader of the Boy Scouts saying his speech to the Jamboree was the "greatest ever" delivered to them. That's where he told the Scouts about his pal who sold his business and partied bigly on his yacht. The White House had to admit there was no phone call, and Scouts leaders apologized for Trump's partisan diatribe. He lies about things that are demonstrably false, that people can easily see with their own eyes, like bragging that his inauguration crowd was bigger than Obama's. That time he even lied gratuitously about the weather, saying the sun was shining as people opened their umbrellas.

And he lies as he contradicts himself. These lies usually take the form: "I have always said... _____ (fill in the blank: I was against the Iraq war, let Obamacare implode, I am a champion of gay rights, etc.) Sometimes he contradicts himself in the same sentence. Trump also lies to set up and denigrate political opponents and critics on his extensive enemies list. Such are the dumb lies that reflect the style of the reality TV persona, media-obsessed Donald Trump who back when he was in the celebrity-branding business would call media outlets pretending to be a P.R. person lathering compliments on none other than Donald Trump. Explaining those lies is best left to psychiatrists and Trump's hapless apologists.

But his Big Lies have more serious real world-consequences. Trump was catapulted into his candidacy on the racist "birther" lie that Barack Obama was ineligible for the presidency because he was supposedly born in Kenya. When Trump says that three million people voted illegally for Hillary Clinton, he is not merely lying to assuage his ego for losing the popular vote. This lie has led to a commission of far-right zealots aiming to disenfranchise blacks and Latinos. When Trump says that Mexican immigrants are criminals and rapists and that immigrants

Trump and Crazy Liberals on the Warpath Defend North Korea!



Simultaneous multiple launch of North Korean missiles, March 2017.

Lies, Dumb Lies, and Imperialist Whoppers

have driven down wages for U.S. workers, it is in the service of an intensified racist dragnet by the I.C.E. immigration cops. These are lies that the working class must take seriously and combat.

Bipartisan Big Lies in the Service of Imperialist War

Trump's near constant lying has driven liberals crazy just as it has delighted and congealed his tribe of ever-loyal nativists. Liberals are embarrassed to the core by the vulgar narcissist who disgraces their exalted idea of the imperial presidency. They cringe at the saccharine testimonials at cabinet meetings. They act as if this is the first time a liar has been discovered in the Oval Office. Pundits in the liberal media sanctimoniously agonize over Trump's ungrammatical tweets, and claim that "truth itself" has become lost in the Trump regime. As if their newspapers and talking heads represented truth. In fact, the "free but responsible press" is constantly serving up disinformation and outright falsehoods in the interests of the capitalist rulers. They're just different lies, reflecting at most different policies and different sectors of the same ruling class.

Most of Trump's lies are dumb if not pathological. But the lies that matter most are the strategic ones that U.S. imperialism cooks up regularly to justify its oppressive policies and drive the population into war. And here liberal Democrats and conservative Republicans have equally blood-stained hands. U.S. presidents new to the office often start out by invading some country, like liberal Democrat John F. Kennedy with the Bay of Pigs (1961) and Vietnam. So when Trump launched an attack against Syria back in April based on the lie spread by the liberal media that Syrian president Bashar al-Assad had used chemical weapons "on his own people," all the Democrats applauded. Launch cruise missiles while eating chocolate cake at his Mar-a-Lago resort

in Palm Beach, and suddenly Trump was deemed to be acting "presidential."

The deadliest imperialist lies are often bipartisan. Consider the lie by Republican president George Bush II about Iraq's non-existent "weapons of mass destruction." Colin Powell held up phony photos to justify the invasion and occupation that killed perhaps as many as a million Iraqis, including at least twice as many civilians as soldiers due to the destruction of waterworks and food supplies that caused the spread of infectious diseases and malnutrition. That murderous lie was pushed by the liberal media, particularly the *New York Times* that acted as a state media propaganda outlet. And before Bush, hundreds of thousands more Iraqis, particularly children, were killed due to lethal sanctions imposed by the Democratic administration of Bill Clinton.

Consider Democrat Obama's lie that his secret CIA drone "targeted killing" (assassination) program was "surgical," carefully avoiding civilian casualties as the U.S. flew more than a thousand drone strikes in Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia and Afghanistan. How many were killed? Government estimates are in the thousands, human rights groups say it is many more. And how about Ronald Reagan's lies that enabled the Iran-Contra deals for providing arms to drug-trafficking death squads in Central America, supposedly to spread "democracy" at gunpoint? Or the lie that the anti-Soviet *mujahedeen* in Afghanistan, armed by the CIA under Democrat Jimmy Carter and continuing under Republican Reagan, were "freedom fighters"?

Of course, there are many other historical whoppers like "Remember the *Maine*!" (the U.S. warship which blew up in Havana harbor) that served to justify the 1898 U.S. invasion of Cuba and Puerto Rico. Don't forget Woodrow Wilson's vow to "make the world safe for democracy" to justify U.S. entry into the imperialist World War I after he vowed as a candidate to stay out of the

war. Or one of biggest whoppers of all – the 1964 Gulf of Tonkin fake "incident" which provided the pretext for bombing North Vietnam. The Gulf of Tonkin resolution was approved by a near-unanimous U.S. Congress and supported by a jingoist press which didn't ask for evidence and supported the war until the U.S. started to lose.

Adolf Hitler staged a phony attack on German soldiers in Danzig (Gdansk) as the excuse to launch his invasion of Poland in 1939, and his propagandist Josef Goebbels was the consummate practitioner of the Big Lie. Hitler wrote in *Mein Kampf* that "the broad masses of a nation" are easily corruptible because "in the primitive simplicity of their minds they more ready fall for the big lie than the small lie, since they themselves often tell small lies in little matters" but "would not believe that others could have the impudence to distort the truth so infamously." Yet the history of "democratic" U.S. imperialism is replete with Big Lies often used to deceive and mobilize a war-reluctant population.

Trump Lies and Threatens to Lay Waste to North Korea

So far Trump's lies have not yet produced the level of lethality of such historic imperialist whoppers. Yet. But the president and his circle of financial oligarchs and militarists are busily fabricating the lies that could push the U.S. into a first-strike war on North Korea. If Trump does attack, the way will have been paved by the bipartisan War Party, including Congressional Democrats and Republicans, the chiefs of the Pentagon and spy agencies, and the mainstream media, led by the Democrats in their anti-Russian frenzy. Against these warmongers, it is the duty of all class-conscious workers and opponents of imperialism to *stand with North Korea and its right to nuclear, or any other kind of weapons to defend itself against the imperialist behemoth.*



Elderly woman with grandchild views wreckage of their home, in aftermath of U.S. air raid on Pyongyang, ca. 1950. Today South Korean militarists threaten to incinerate the North Korean capital again.

At the outset of the 1990s, the triumphant bourgeoisie trumpeted the “death of communism” upon the fall of the Soviet Union: the first workers state in history, born of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, undermined and betrayed by the Stalinist bureaucracy, destroyed by imperialist-led counterrevolution. Liberals, conservatives and their social-democratic camp followers cheered, working people the world over suffered the consequences. But today the left-over Cold Warriors, with Hillary Clinton at the head, still vituperate against the Kremlin, and the bureaucratically deformed North Korean workers state is a prime target. Handing over the presidency, Democrat Obama told Republican Trump to put North Korea at the top of his priorities list. And so he has.

Trump’s most dangerous lies are not about who talked to Russia when and about what regarding the 2016 election, for which Democrats accuse him of “treason.” Trump’s whoppers include the assertion that the U.S. military was “hollowed out” (although the U.S. war budget is bigger than that of China, Russia and the next five countries combined) and that Washington must go on the warpath to enforce its hegemony. With this rationale, the War Party voted almost unanimously to sanction and provoke North Korea and Russia. Now they spread the truly dangerous Big Lie that North Korea has nothing to fear from the U.S. military. Nonsense. If Kim Jong Un ever agreed to give up the North’s nuclear deterrent, imperialist “contingency” plans for counterrevolution and a new Korean War would immediately go live.

Trump the president mimics the Trump the real estate mogul and Trump the reality TV celebrity. His M.O. is to look tough and intimidate. But he’s having trouble when people aren’t cowed by his bully-boy tactics. He couldn’t browbeat Republican senators into passing his repeal of Obamacare by threatening to cut off funds to Alaska, and he’s having trouble bellowing “you’re fired” to his racist attorney general Jeff Sessions. So now liberals are coming to the defense of the immigrant-bashing top cop in their call for anti-Trump “resistance,” and they are lionizing his clique of generals (Kelly as chief of staff, McMaster as national security chief, Mattis at the Pentagon) in hopes of “disciplining” the dysfunctional Trump

White House. Yet a more coherent administration would more effectively implement his reactionary policies.

On Korea, Trump tweeted on January 2 that the North would not be allowed to develop an intercontinental ballistic missile that could reach the United States (“won’t happen”). But on July 28, Pyongyang lofted an ICBM whose range may extend to the U.S. East Coast.¹ Then in April when Trump escalated his threats to thwart a possible North Korean nuclear test (the only activity spotted at the test site was a volleyball game), he said he had dispatched an “armada” heading toward the Korean peninsula. Except the U.S. fleet was heading in the opposite direction, toward Australia. So either Trump didn’t know what the Pentagon (“my military”) was doing, or it was all a bluff, and one which would almost inevitably unravel, so that next time no one would believe his threats. Either way a disaster for the “credibility” of U.S. imperialism.

Remember Nagasaki, Remember Vietnam

The bipartisan Big Lie holds that Washington only seeks to counter a mad ruler who issues threats to the U.S., failing to mention that North Korean statements refer to the response to a U.S. attack. Meanwhile, the U.S. military conducts provocative maneuvers in South Korea to simulate “decapitating” (murdering) the North Korean leadership, along with B-52 and B1-B overflights from Guam (which in South Korean propaganda videos are depicted as dropping bombs on Pyongyang). We hear crazed, perilous talk about the prospect of millions being killed and the chances of survival after a nuclear war, about nuclear first strikes being “on the table,” while the impulsive Trump talks of loosing “fire and fury...the likes of which this world has never seen before.” Watching TV news is like overhearing plans in the war room in *Dr. Strangelove*.

Trump is joined in this lie about benign U.S. intentions toward North Korea by Democrats and Republicans, aided by

¹ But with a nuclear warhead only as far as Anchorage, Alaska (or Seattle Washington or Portland, Oregon, with a smaller payload). See Theodore Postol, Markus Schiller and Robert Schumucker, “North Korea’s ‘not quite’ ICBM can’t hit the lower 48 states,” *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* (11 August).

a hypocritical liberal media. Senator John McCain calls Kim a “crazy fat kid” who is getting ready to bomb Denver or Los Angeles. Looking for a nuclear-deranged ruler? Try closer to home. Only one government has rained down nuclear death on a defenseless civilian population, incinerating some 250,000 and poisoning thousands more in generations then still unborn: the United States. The lie about Hiroshima and Nagasaki was that it saved lives by shortening the war. In truth its aim was to send a ruthless warning to the Soviet Union to stay out. And now, on the anniversary of the A-bombing of Japan, Trump echoes President Truman’s threat of “a rain of ruin from the air, the like of which has never been seen on this earth.”

The Kim dynasty and their supporters are nationalist bureaucrats atop a workers state who seek to build an isolated “socialist state” in the North. If they are delusional, it is in thinking that rapacious U.S. imperialism might tolerate a live-and-let-live relation, if only they hang tough. But as Lenin and Trotsky warned, and the fall of the USSR tragically demonstrated, socialism cannot be built in a single country, not even one as enormous as the Soviet Union (or China today), much less in half a country on the front lines with imperialism. To achieve a *revolutionary reunification of Korea*, Trotskyists fight for a *political revolution in the North* to replace the conservative ultra-Stalinist bureaucracy with internationalist soviet democracy, and for *socialist revolution in the South* to overthrow capitalism and drive out the imperialists.

North Korean leaders certainly remember what happened to the truly irrational Muammar Qaddafi, who made a deal with the U.S. to give up his nuclear material. Soon after, Libya was attacked by NATO, killing Qaddafi and destroying the country. And the population remembers the devastation of the Korean War, when mad bomber General Curtis LeMay boasted that “we [the U.S.] killed off ... 20 percent of the population” and “burned down every town in North Korea and South Korea, too.”² General Douglas MacArthur, hailed by Trump as a hero, wanted to drop atom bombs along the Chinese border, saying it would win the war in ten days. Truman fired the unhinged general but bought the lie that the U.S. could push up to the Yalu River with impunity. But then China entered the war and inflicted the U.S.’ worst-ever battlefield defeat.

Trump has repeatedly boasted “I want to be unpredictable.” Some have suggested that he is borrowing Nixon’s “madman theory,” to force Kim to the bargaining table. But North Korea has repeatedly made clear it will never give up its nukes, nor should it. Perhaps Trump is trying to get China to tighten the screws on North Korea and sponsor talks, as it did after Bush II included North Korea in his “axis of evil” along with Iran and Iraq, and then invaded the latter in 2003. China’s agreement at the U.N. to stiffer sanctions on the North is certainly a treacherous stab in the back against its fellow deformed workers state. Yet for all their illusions in an impossible “peaceful coex-

² See “U.S. War on North Korea Never Ended,” *The Internationalist* No. 32, January-February 2011.



As Trump escalated threats of military action against North Korea, Internationalist Clubs at the City University of New York held an emergency speakout against imperialist war, April 21.

istence” with the imperialists, the Stalinist bureaucrats in Beijing prize stability. Why should they believe Trump’s empty threats? Unless they aren’t empty.

Trump’s latest is a twitter message proclaiming, John Wayne style, that the U.S. military is “locked and loaded,” ready for action against North Korea if Kim “utters” an “overt threat.” Many Democrats are now calling Trump’s bluster “irresponsible” or worse, saying his verbal brinksmanship could set off an actual nuclear holocaust. But back in April when the loose-lipped Republican president began his escalating threats, the liberal Democratic senator who calls himself a socialist, Bernie Sanders, declared that Trump is “doing the right thing” to get China to blackmail North Korea. Bernie said “North Korea is a real danger to this world and we must do everything we can ... to get them to stop their nuclear program.”³ Another lie. The United States is the prime danger to the world, and North Korea’s nukes are key to deterring a U.S. attack.

The 1,800 deployed nuclear warheads in the Pentagon’s arsenal (plus another 4,000 stockpiled) are a far cry from the M-1 carbines Trump fooled around when he was at military academy. So if liberals are now getting nervous about Trump’s bellicose threats, what are they doing about it? Earlier, 64 Democratic legislators sent a letter about a “pre-emptive” military attack, saying that “a move to launch attacks, or declare war, on a nuclear-armed state such as North Korea” would require a Congressional debate. Fat chance of that. More down-to-earth, they called on Secretary of State Rex Tillerson to rein in his bombastic boss. Tillerson says not to worry, that “Americans should sleep well at night” and “have no concerns about this particular rhetoric of the last few days.” But even U.S. imperialist allies aren’t sleeping easily.

Some of the president’s far-right advisors are adding fuel to the rhetorical fire. White House advisor Sebastian Gorka, a member of a Hungarian fascistic order and favorite Trump surrogate on Fox News, dismissed Tillerson’s comments. Gorka compared the present crisis over North Korea to the 1962 showdown over Soviet missiles in Cuba, which brought the world to the brink of nuclear war. (Revolutionaries unconditionally supported Cuba’s right to have nukes for self-defense against Yankee imperialism.) But in the faction-ridden Trump White House, it is reportedly the coterie of generals favored by the liberals who are the hard-liners, labeling “North Korea a pre-eminent threat that requires a

continued on page 6

³ “Sanders: Trump on right track with North Korea,” CNN, 28 April.

“This Is a Union Town, Labor Shut the Fascists Down!” Fascists Forced to Flee San Francisco – A Significant Victory

Statement of the Internationalist Group

SAN FRANCISCO, August 26 – Fascists who planned a deadly provocation in this center of union power were dealt a humiliating defeat today as they were forced to call off their rally in a federal park near Golden Gate Bridge, then cancel a fall-back “press conference” and high-tail it out of town. This was a significant victory for all who are determined to take action against the fascists. The need to prevent their violent provocations was written in blood in Charlottesville, Virginia. Key to running off the fascists was the move by International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 10 to shut down the port and march to stop the fascist “Patriot Prayer” rally. (See “ILWU Local 10 Moves to Stop the Fascists in San Francisco,” on this page.) Galvanized by this decision of the city’s most powerful and historically militant union, thousands of determined anti-fascists planned to join the dockers in driving the fascists out.

Facing this prospect, “Patriot Prayer” leader Joey Gibson announced yesterday afternoon that the rally scheduled for Crissy Field was cancelled. Instead, Gibson declared, they would hold a “press conference” at Alamo Square Park, closer to the downtown area. But as anti-fascists organized to converge on that location, city authorities hastily set up heavy-duty fencing around the park to keep them out. Gibson then abruptly called off the “press conference” as well. Instead, thousands of counter-demonstrators filled the streets right in front of where he had vowed to hold it. With chants and speeches, the crowd celebrated the defeat of the fascists’ plans, then headed to the largely Latino Mission District, applauded by onlookers during the two-and-a-half mile march. Internationalist comrades raised the chant, “Joey Gibson ran away – Fascist thugs, not your day,” which was picked up by many of the marchers.

At the impromptu rally at Alamo Square, the last speaker was a representative of a delegation from Painters union (IUPAT) Local 10, which had come down from Portland, Oregon. Their union played a central role in the Portland Labor Against the Fascists mobilization against the Patriot Prayer racist/fascist rally held there on June 4. The speaker read out the Painters’ message of solidarity to ILWU Local 10, which concluded: “If you use your power as workers to take action against the fascists on August 26th, that will be a call to action of workers and oppressed people throughout this country. Today, more than ever, workers need solidarity. It would be a proud day for us to send representatives, and stand shoulder to shoulder with you in the struggle.” Early that morning, the Portland Painters joined longshoremen at the ILWU hall, where the dock workers held aloft a huge banner reading “STOP FASCIST TERROR.”

This gave a glimpse of the potential power of this workforce and its union which have repeatedly shut down the ports against police terror, war and racist repres-

sion. Not only the fascists, but also the cops and their Democratic Party bosses are well aware that going up against this heavily black powerhouse of Bay Area labor is quite a different matter than attacking loosely organized protesters drawn largely from student and middle-class sectors. Outraged longshore workers have the power to paralyze shipping, cost the bosses millions, and crush fascist and racist terror groups in a way they would not soon forget. The need for this has been repeatedly shown on the waterfront in the recent period when racist slurs and hanging nooses – a threat of lynching – have been left at the SSA terminal in the Port of Oakland.

After the murderous fascist August 9 attack in Charlottesville, outrage swept the country. In Boston, some 40,000 poured into the streets to protest the white supremacists and Nazis. As a result, dozens of Muslim-bashing rallies were called off. When Joey Gibson’s fascist road show cancelled its San Francisco rally after the ILWU voted to use its power to stop it, if the longshore union had taken the next step to bring out the membership in a mass labor-led victory march, it would have really driven home the lesson. Yet the dock workers’ move to make short shrift of the fascist provocation inspired many. Among them was a contingent of SF electrical workers which gathered at the IBEW Local 6 hall and together with the Portland Painters, as well as Internationalist supporters, marched to Alamo Square, chanting: “This is a union town, labor shut the fascists down” and “Up with the workers, down with the fascists.”

The perspective of mobilizing working-class power in defense of all the oppressed poses the need for a class-struggle leadership of the unions and a revolutionary workers party. Far from abstract, this has been starkly shown in the recent pe-



After cancellation of the fascist rally was announced, longshore workers gathered at 6 a.m. at their union hall in front of the ILWU Local 10 banner calling to “Stop Fascist Terror.” They were joined by a delegation from Painters Local 10 from Portland, Oregon.

riod. Both in San Francisco and across the Bay in Berkeley, Democratic politicians and their cohorts in the union bureaucracy have sought to channel opposition and revulsion into diversionary events aimed at preventing mass struggle to stop the fascists. These events call on all and sundry to “unite against hate” far from where the fascists intend to rally. Signing on to love-ins for class-collaboration like the one called in Berkeley on August 27 are not only a long list of Democratic Party organizations but the bulk of the reformist left, from the Democratic Socialists of America, Socialist Alternative and the International Socialist Organization to smaller groupings.

If such diversions for class collaboration had prevailed in San Francisco, they

would have let the planned provocation go forward. Instead, longshore and other workers made it clear that the fascists better stay away from the waterfront or anywhere else in SF. But the fascist danger has not disappeared. It is backed up by the far more powerful repressive apparatus of the capitalist state, presided over in almost every big city by Democratic mayors. A crucial task in the next period is the preparation of disciplined, organized workers defense guards in labor strongholds. Capitalism breeds racist and fascist terror. This understanding is a first step to doing something real and effective about it. Class-conscious action mobilizing the workers’ power to defeat this deadly system and its fascist attack dogs is vital to clearing the road to ending it once and for all. ■

Longshore Workers: Shut It Down!

ILWU Local 10 Moves to Stop the Fascists in San Francisco

We print below excerpts from the Internationalist Group leaflet distributed in the Bay Area during the days leading up to the threatened fascist provocation. For the full text, see www.internationalist.org.

SAN FRANCISCO, August 18 – At last night’s meeting of International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 10, an urgent motion for labor mobilization to “Stop the Fascists in San Francisco” was passed. The dock workers, who have a long history of port shutdowns against racism, war and police terror, aim to prevent a repeat of last week’s murderous Nazi/white supremacist attack in Charlottesville, Virginia. By using the power of *independent working-class action to stop the fascists*, they can point the way for all labor and the oppressed at this critical moment.

White-supremacist and other fascist

groups have repeatedly targeted the Bay Area in recent months. Now they have announced a weekend of potentially deadly provocations on August 26-27. The fascist “Patriot Prayer” outfit that has staged such events in Portland, Oregon and Seattle, Washington has called a rally for Saturday, August 26 at Crissy Field in San Francisco. The following day, several fascist groups are calling a “No to Marxism in America” rally in Martin Luther King Park in Berkeley. Some of those involved in the Charlottesville Nazi march are reported among those planning to attend one or both of these fascist rallies.

Today, Los Angeles KPFK radio broadcast a feature on the planned longshore workers action, noting that “Local 10 of the ILWU has moved to walk out and march, and they are calling on labor and community to join them to stop the fascists.” Later in the show,

KPFK interviewed Local 10 President Ed Ferris and long-time longshore militant Jack Heyman, who spoke about the importance of working-class mobilization to stop the fascists in the union stronghold of the Bay Area.

The ILWU Local 10 motion states that, “far from a matter of ‘free speech’, the racist and fascist provocations are a deadly menace as shown in Portland on May 26 when a Nazi murdered two men and almost killed a third for defending two young African American women he was menacing.” It underlined that “our sisters and brothers in the Portland labor movement answered racist terror with the power of workers solidarity, mobilizing members of 14 unions against the fascist/racist rally there on June 4.”

The motion emphasized that, “ILWU Local 10 has a long and proud history of
continued on page 11

Solidarity with Charlottesville Anti-Fascist Protesters – Honor Heather Heyer!

Labor/Black/Immigrant Mobilization to Smash Fascist Terror – Build Workers Defense Guards!

Statement of the Internationalist Group

AUGUST 14 – The racist terror bred in the bone of American capitalism struck again this weekend, in Charlottesville, Virginia. Local activist Heather Heyer was murdered and at least 35 people were treated for injuries, 19 of them hospitalized, as Ohio Nazi James Alex Fields deliberately rammed his car into a crowd. Fields went to Charlottesville to join swarms of Klan, Nazi and other fascists and white supremacists at a “Unite the Right” rally called by Charlottesville “alt-right” spokesman James Kessler and built by fascist leader Richard Spencer.

The fascists said they were marching to “save” a statue of Robert E. Lee. This vile symbol of the slave-owners’ “Lost Cause” has been revered by racist scum ever since 180,000 black slaves joined the Union army and turned the tide in the Civil War, crushing the Confederacy in the “Second American Revolution.” The statue was slated to be removed after the city council voted 3-2 in April to sell (!) it, following the outcry after white supremacist Dylann Roof gunned down nine African American churchgoers in Charleston, South Carolina two years ago. As he did last May, fascist leader Richard Spencer headed a mob of hundreds on August 11 marching with flaming torches in imitation of the German Nazis, while yelling racist, anti-immigrant and anti-Semitic slogans.

Large numbers of anti-racist protesters came out the next day to courageously stand up against the fascists and white supremacists – many of them heavily armed – while cops stood by watching the racists attack. Among those injured, according to activists’ reports, were members of Antifa groups, Black Lives Matter, Democratic Socialists of America, Industrial Workers of the World, the International Socialist Organization and others. The Internationalist Group says: **Honor Heather Heyer! Solidarity with the anti-fascist protesters in Charlottesville! Drop any charges against them immediately!**

The Charlottesville events are the latest in a series of deadly fascist and



Joshua Roberts/Reuters

Anti-fascist protesters confront Nazis in Charlottesville, Virginia, August 12.

racist provocations and attacks that have escalated since Donald Trump’s election. This has included the murder of African American student Richard Collins by an alt-right fascist at the University of Maryland on May 20, which has been rightly called a lynching; the murder of two men and near-murder of a third by a Nazi in Portland, Oregon, on May 26; fascist/racist rallies in Portland on June 4 and New York City on June 10; the bombing of a mosque in Bloomington, Minnesota on August 5; and many others. The weekend prior to the August 11-12 fascist rally in Charlottesville the “Patriot Prayer” fascist outfit viciously beat counterprotesters in Portland.

It is urgently necessary to **mobilize labor/black/immigrant power**, in alliance with all those targeted by racist and fascist terror, to **smash the fascist provocations**. Crucial to this is the disciplined, organized preparation of **workers defense guards** based on the power of the labor movement and the multiracial working class that makes everything run and can bring everything to a stop in this country. Portland,

Oregon labor militants pointed the way with the June 4 Portland Labor Against the Fascists mobilization, which brought out several hundred workers, including members of 14 unions, against the fascist/racist provocation there.

Alt-right forces are reportedly targeting New York, Los Angeles, Seattle and several other cities for provocations this coming weekend. Union stalwarts who spent weeks on the Verizon strike picket lines two years ago have expressed burning anger against Nazis’ threats to bring their race-terror to NYC. Currently, the strike of 1,800 Spectrum workers is in its fifth month, solidarity actions with the immigrant workers fighting union-busting at B&H Photo continue, and TWU transit workers (along with just about everyone who works in the city), are living through the “summer from hell.” The potential for mass mobilization bringing out the power of the workers and oppressed is right here.

But to do that, this power must be **un-chained** from its subjugation to the bosses’ politicians and parties. Who paved the way for Trump? The Democrats, with

Obama beefing up the I.C.E. immigration police and deporting well over five million immigrants, Wall Street warmonger Clinton vowing more of the same and Bernie Sanders rounding up votes for Hillary. Around the country, Democratic mayors are the bosses of the armed fist of the biggest and most powerful force of racist terror, the American capitalist state. The drumbeat of racist police terror continues unabated, as more names are added each week to those of Philando Castile, Freddie Gray, Michael Brown, Sandra Bland, and so many others.

While KKK and Nazi terrorists parade with assault rifles and automatic pistols, liberals preach gun control, which would disarm black people. Gun-control laws took off in the late 1960s to stop the Black Panthers and empower the racist police. We defend the right of black self-defense, particularly in the face of the escalation of lynch-murders. Meanwhile, the Democrats’ recipe for “resisting” Trump is to whip up hysteria over a “Russian menace” while calling for attacks on Syria. And don’t forget it was Obama who counseled Trump to go after North Korea.

Now the Democrats – with the neo-Confederate attorney general Jeff Sessions and other Republicans getting in on the show – have pressured Trump to be “more forceful” in ritually criticizing alt-right and fascist groups. So the immigrant-bashing president reads out some rote phrases like “racism is evil” and denounces “hate” – while continuing to stoke racist terror with every move, first and foremost threatening to rain “fire and fury” on North Korea. The Internationalist Group calls to **defend North Korea against U.S. imperialism!** As IG signs have stated in protests over the past days, “Fascists: Toxic Product of Imperialism.” Bolshevik revolutionary Leon Trotsky emphasized that to fight fascism, it is necessary to fight imperialism, which can only be overthrown through international socialist revolution.

Liberals and reformists who look to Democratic politicians – whether Virginia governor McAuliffe, Charlottesville mayor Michael Signer, or NYC mayor Bill de Blasio on up to Bernie Sanders et al. – put forward a strategy for defeat. McAuliffe and Signer are the bosses of the cops in Charlottesville who pepper-sprayed anti-fascist protesters as the Nazis carried out their terror, while de Blasio is the boss of the cops who murdered Eric Garner, Akai Gurley and others. Every historical struggle against fascism underlines that to defeat this deadly menace, we must mobilize our own class power independent of all wings of the capitalist rulers.

Many people are alarmed, frightened, outraged, indignant – looking for a way to fight effectively against racist terror “at home” and U.S. imperialism’s endless wars, and threat of nuclear war, abroad. There is a way: **Fight to mobilize labor/black immigrant power – Build workers defense guards – Break with the Democrats and build a workers party to fight for international socialist revolution.** ■

You Can’t Fight Trump with Democrats

North Korea...

continued from page 4
tough response,” while the ultra-rightists around Steve Bannon argue to “not give more prominence” to Kim (*New York Times*, 10 August).

Many “experts” worry about “stumbling into war unintentionally,” recalling how World War I broke out. South Koreans report fear that Trump could “recklessly if unintentionally trigger the Second Korean War.” But it could also be intentional. Trump used the same “locked and loaded” phrase to describe his dinner party decision to launch a cruise missile attack on Syria. And along with his praise of General MacArthur in Korea, the U.S.

president declared on the campaign stump that he would “bomb the shit out of” adversaries, and also “I love war.” (This is from the “chicken hawk” who, like other right-wing warmongers starting with George W. Bush and Dick Cheney, did everything to stay out of the Vietnam War.) Trump has also questioned that if nuclear weapons are not to be used, “Then why are we making them?”⁴

It is entirely possible that the current gang in control of the White House and the Pentagon are so deluded that they imagine that they can get away with

⁴ “With ‘fire and fury,’ Trump revives fears about his possession of nuclear codes,” *Washington Post*, 9 August.

naked aggression in North Korea with little or no response from their target, as Trump did with his missile strike on Syria. But U.S. war moves could easily create a situation where North Korea would have no choice but to respond militarily. As the bipartisan War Party builds up for a showdown and possible first-strike attack in Korea, internationalist workers and opponents of imperialist war must stand ready to take to the streets to oppose the plans of U.S. imperialism and defend North Korea (and China, the U.S.’ main target). That starts by shooting down the dangerous Big Lies that are coming from the White House and every quarter of capitalist media. ■

Fascist Threat...

continued from page 2

adopted by Painters Union (IUPAT) Local 10 calling for “mobilizing against the clear and present danger that the provocations of racist and fascist organizations pose to us all.” Similar motions were then passed by six other area unions. When the locally based fascist Patriot Prayer group announced a “Trump free speech rally” for June 4, the CSWP initiated the Portland Labor Against the Fascists mobilization that brought out some 300 unionists and supporters from at least 14 area unions, the first significant labor anti-fascist action in decades.

In a lead article in our last issue (“Portland Labor Mobilizes to Stop Fascist Provocation,” *The Internationalist* No. 48, May-June 2017), we highlighted this important action. It stated, referring to previous articles: “We noted that in the U.S. today, there is not a mass fascist movement, since the ruling class does not feel immediately threatened by a radicalized working class, mainly due to the sabotage of struggles by the pro-capitalist bureaucratic misleaders of labor.” A comrade wrote in to correctly observe that, while true, “this is partial and one-sided,” pointing in particular to “the million-strong KKK of the Twenties, which flourished after the defeat of the post-WWI labor upsurge and at a time at which trade unions and working-class struggle were in retreat.”

The comrade also noted: “Further, and this is a separate, but closely related question, fascism does not always come to power to head off incipient proletarian revolution.” These points are particularly relevant in the current context. While fascism involves the threat and often the reality of violence against those perceived as a danger to a particular capitalist regime (such as KKK attacks on demonstrators protesting Jim Crow segregation), that is not in contradiction to having mass fascist parties in elections (such as the National Front in France). There can also be particular varieties, such as the clerical fascists with their virulent anti-Semitism in Austria and Croatia in the 1930s and ’40s, as well as Father Coughlin in the U.S. The fascists’ targets can shift, as shown by the example of the Klan in the 1920s, which



Capitalist “justice” at work: DeAndre Harris (on ground) beaten by fascists in parking garage in Charlottesville, August 12. Victim Harris is charged with wounding one of the attackers, while the club-wielding racists go free.

while continuing its lynchings of African Americans took aim at the influx of immigrants.

The United States today has been mired in an economic crisis since 2007-08 – a depression rather than a cyclical recession – which despite rosy talk of a “recovery” (for profits!) has not reduced the level of unemployment from the figure of 23 million that it hit in 2009. Official statistics hide this stark fact by simply eliminating from the workforce all those out of work for over two years, a gimmick introduced by Bill Clinton. But these “non-people” vote, and many (particularly the ruined middle class) voted for Donald Trump. This fact is also reflected in various forms of social pathology, from the opioid crisis that has taken a particular toll on unemployed workers, the mounting death rates in areas of economic devastation (life expectancy in West Virginia is 10 years below the national average) to the growth of fascist groups.

Another key element in the proliferation of fascist and proto-fascist groups is the fact that the United States has been at war continuously ever since the counter-revolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union at the turn of the 1990s: Iraq (1991), Serbia (1994), Iraq again (1998), Serbia again (1999). Then after having sponsored Islamist *mujahedin* in Afghanistan in the 1980s, post 9/11 the U.S. invaded

Afghanistan in 2001, to fight its former anti-Soviet allies, a war/occupation that continues 16 years later. Add in the 2003 invasion and occupation of Iraq, and now war in Syria. The result of this has been a whole layer of ex-military professionals, many of them virulently anti-Muslim, itching to put their deadly skills to use “at home.” Add to this current and former police who are incensed at the Black Lives Matter movement.

Today in the U.S. there is a continuing economic crisis and ongoing political paralysis in Washington, even with Republican/right-wing control of the White House, both houses of Congress and the Supreme Court. Both capitalist parties are stoking “anti-terrorist” hysteria, as the U.S. has had a quarter century of unrelenting imperialist war, waged by a professional army and military “contractors” (mercenaries). Add in mass unrest over the endless murders by the racist police (over 1,100 a year killed by cops) and you have one toxic culture medium. This gives rise to a notable feature of the current crop of fascists, namely that they are *acting in large part as auxiliaries to the police*. This is not a new phenomenon: in the 1960s, Southern sheriffs beat civil rights marchers in the day and became KKK death squads at night. But it has been particularly pronounced recently.

This was dramatically shown in the preparations for Charlottesville. While the media and politicians professed surprise, it was prepared by two previous fascist provocations there (in May and July). In the days leading up to the August events, the ultra-right organizers were discussing their deadly intentions over the Internet. The media collective Unicorn Riot received from an anonymous source chat logs of the conversations from the chat platform Discord connected with “Unite the Right.” Participants included such fascist outfits as Vanguard America, Identity Evropa, the Traditionalist Workers Party, League of the South, Anti-Communist Action as well as a number of followers of the Internet Nazi Daily Stormer.³

In these logs, there is talk of embedding screws in flagpoles to use as stabbing weapons (“impaling people is always the best”); messages urging driving into

³ These are presently available at: <https://www.unicornriot.ninja/2017/charlottesville-violence-planned-discord-servers-unicorn-riot-reports/>

crowds of counter-protesters (#shuttle_service_information chat thread); advice from organizer Jason Kessler about bringing “MAGA” caps and “triggering” antifa to provoke a confrontation portrayed as an attack on Trump supporters; what kinds of knives and automatic weapons could be brought; a dress code (body armor, shields, okay, full KKK regalia no), etc. In an audio file of a planning meeting, answering “what if” anti-racist protesters try to drown out the white supremacists, a response was “well then they get attacked by right wing death squads.” The fascist organizers stated that they had reason to believe the Charlottesville police would be cooperative. And in fact, videos show the police standing aside to let the fascists leave after attacking anti-racists.

A telling sequel which shows how the system of racist repression works concerns DeAndre Harris, the 20-year-old black man who was shown on video being savagely beaten by the Alt-Rightists in a Charlottesville parking garage on August 12. Harris suffered a spinal injury and head laceration requiring ten stitches. Internet sleuths have been pouring over video images of fascist rallies to identify the assailants, tracking down three, who have been arrested. The Charlottesville police, meanwhile, have come up with nothing. But on October 11, Harris, the victim, was charged with unlawful wounding of one of the attackers, Harold Ray Crews, the head of the North Carolina chapter of the League of the South. A local magistrate issued a warrant on Crews’ say-so, without any evidence whatsoever (*Washington Post*, 11 October).

In short, to fight the fascists it is necessary to understand their relationship to the capitalist state. Marxists do not seek to conflate the cops and courts with the Nazis and Klan, but as capitalism rots from within, they are increasingly intertwined. Fascist marches are not exercises of free speech but provocations to promote lynch mobs, death squads and government repression. They seek to terrorize vulnerable populations and bring down the force of the capitalist state against those who oppose their racist, anti-communist terror. Left unchecked, they would annihilate the workers movement and unleash racist genocide, as their forebears did in Italy and Germany. They must be stopped by mass mobilizations of the multi-racial working class to crush them in the egg before they can carry out their program of mass murder. Charlottesville was only a foretaste.

Today the struggle must be to bring out the power of the workers movement, and to begin the effort to build workers defense guards, as Trotsky advocated in the 1930s. And as Trotsky emphasized, in its terminal decay, decaying capitalism breeds the fascist provocateurs and killers it would use to annihilate the workers movement, even as it promotes “popular fronts” to hold the workers back from revolutionary action. Lasting victory over the fascists can only be achieved through international socialist revolution. To accomplish that requires the leadership of a revolutionary workers party built on the program of authentic Trotskyism, that tells the truth to the masses and calls them to action when the hour strikes. To stop the fascists, that hour is now, before it’s too late. ■



Internationalists at protest against Muslim-bashing “anti-sharia” rally, New York, June 10. Labor defend all those targeted by racist terror.

Workers Power Can Crush the Fascists

A strategy to fight the deadly danger posed by the fascists must take account of their role in “triggering” state repression. We are not only dealing with the several thousand organized neo-Nazis and Klansmen, who are plenty dangerous, or a few masked buffoons waving sticks, but the more powerful and sinister forces arrayed behind them. The liberal tactic of ignoring these violent racists while relying on the police and demonizing antifa militants only intensifies the danger. The pseudo-socialists who organize diversionary parades far from the sites of the fascist provocations are aiding the government in trying to prevent mass action that could actually drive the fascists off the streets. *Militant workers action* is urgently needed to bring to bear the power of the proletariat against these provocateurs who would act as a battering ram for the bourgeoisie to destroy the unions and all those who fight against oppression. *They can and must be stopped.*

This call for workers action is not some abstract or unrealizable pipedream. It has begun to be carried out, first in Portland, Oregon¹ and now in the San Francisco Bay Area. As always, the key is the intervention of class-struggle militants. In Portland, preparations for labor action against the fascists go back to the motion that was approved by Local 10 of the Painters Union (IUPAT) last November as racist attacks multiplied in the aftermath of the election of Donald Trump. The motion to “Mobilize Labor to Stop the KKK” was put forward by members of Class Struggle Workers – Portland.² This inspired six other area unions to pass similar resolutions. As a result, when a fascist/racist rally was announced for June 4, the groundwork had been laid for the Portland Labor Against the Fascists mobilization which brought out several hundred unionists from 14 area unions in the first significant labor action against the fascists in decades.

In the Bay Area, the announcement of a rally on August 26 by some of the same fascists who staged the provocation in Portland led Local 10 of the International Warehouse and Longshore Union (ILWU) to likewise pass a “Motion to Stop the Fascists in San Francisco.” The union vowed to shut down the port and “march to stop the racist, fascist intimidation.” This call to action was directly inspired by the Portland mobilization, and IUPAT Local 10 sent a message of solidarity to ILWU Local 10. Other unionists and leftists, galvanized by this call by the most powerful and historically militant union in the area, mobilized to follow the ILWU into battle. The fascists, seeing the balance of forces arrayed against them in this union town, felt compelled to run away before the fight



June 4 Portland Labor Against the Fascists mobilization brought out hundreds.

had even begun.³ *This victory should be a clarion call to labor and opponents of racism and fascism everywhere.*

Workers mobilization is key to stopping the racist terrorists in their tracks. That requires painstaking preparation, and the relentless exposure of the bourgeois liberals and opportunist leftists who stand in the way of effective antifascist action.

In the San Francisco Bay Area in late August, the counterposed strategies were thrown into sharp relief when fascist groups called a weekend of rallies amid the outrage over the murder in Charlottesville. On Saturday, August 26, Joey Gibson of Patriot Prayer called a “Freedom Rally” at Crissy Field in San Francisco near the Golden Gate Bridge. The next day a “No to Marxism in America” rally was called by Alt-Rightist Amber Cummings at Martin Luther King Park next to Berkeley’s Old City Hall. In both cases, liberal Democratic politicians moved to ban the rallies, then ended up promoting “peaceful” events together with various human rights groups and labor bureaucrats to promote “love” over “hate,” and above all to avoid “confrontation.” But others were determined to stop the provocations. In the end, both fascist events were called off.

The first and key event was the Saturday Patriot Prayer rally in San Francisco. Democratic politicians including House of Representatives minority leader Nancy Pelosi and SF mayor Ed Lee tried to get the federal Park Service to cancel the rally permit, as the Portland, Oregon mayor also tried leading up to June 4. In the face of the feds’ refusal, the mayor called a “San Francisco Stands United Against Hate” rally at City Hall on Friday (endorsed by the SF Labor Council). A Saturday march was called by “San Francisco Peacefully Unites Against White Nationalists” at the Civic Center, far from the scheduled fascist event. But those events hardly fazed Gibson’s “patriots.” Both would have let the racist/fascist rally go ahead unimpeded.

What tipped the balance was the decision by ILWU Local 10 to call for labor mobilization to “Stop the Fascists in San Francisco” (see page 5). This became the rallying point for leftists and union militants vowing to stop the fascist provocation. The Internationalist Group publicized this significant motion and comrades traveled to the Bay Area to help build for an action by the most powerful and historically militant union in the area to shut down the fascists. But there were difficulties in

organizing, and a contentious planning meeting four days before the event. Most importantly, Local 10 president Ed Ferris got cold feet, issued a statement saying members could choose what event to go to, and joined the Democrats’ call on the feds to cancel the permit.

However, the day before the event, Gibson called off his rally saying that he “felt like it was going to be a huge riot,” specifically citing counterprotesters. He called a press conference for Alamo Square Park, but as antifascist demonstrators mobilized to gather there, he cancelled that as well. On Saturday close to Crissy Field, IG supporters met a group of workers from IBEW (International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers) Local 6 who had also been inspired by ILWU Local 10’s resolution. Together with a contingent of painters from IUPAT Local 10 who had traveled from Portland to join the antifascist mobilization, IG comrades later joined the IBEW Local 6 activists at their union hall and marched as a small labor contingent to Alamo Square where they were joined by members of the ILWU-affiliated Inland Boatmen’s Union. They were cheered as they arrived, and after some speeches – the last being greetings from the Portland painters – over a thousand protesters held a victory march to the Mission District.

In San Francisco, a reformist left coalition, which had planned to join the ILWU march on Crissy Field and then went to Alamo Square after Patriot Prayer canceled, adopted the name “San Francisco Against Hate,” mimicking the mayor’s event. This liberal terminology is a deliberate attempt to obscure the need for sharp class struggle against the fascists. Even Donald Trump could denounce “hate” in his “both sides to blame” whitewash of the fascists. Across the Bay in Berkeley on Sunday, August 27, the reformists went a step further and themselves organized a stay-away-from-the-fascists event under the name of “Bay Area Rally Against Hate.” But despite their best efforts, a big chunk of the crowd didn’t want to stay away and marched to the fascists’ rally site, only to find that the handful who showed up had already been run off by several hundred antifa militants.

In the aftermath, the International Socialist Organization (ISO) has tried to credit the “Rally Against Hate,” which it played a large part in organizing, with the departure of the fascists, claiming “Bay Area resistance scares away the alt-reich” (*Socialist Worker*, 28 August). Other co-sponsors of the anti-hate rally include the social-demo-

cratic Socialist Alternative (SAlt), Socialist Action and Democratic (Party) Socialists of America (DSA), the Maoist Revolutionary Communist Party (via its RefuseFascism.org front group), the Communist Party USA and “dozens of unions, student and community groups.” It was a typical popular-front event tying labor and the left to Democratic Party liberals, in this case including the East Bay Young Democrats, Berkeley Democratic Club, Cal Berkeley Democrats, etc.

To accomplish its sleight-of-hand, the ISO tries to disguise the nature and location of the “Rally Against Hate.” In an article purporting to criticize the media and Democratic politicians for denouncing antifa “violence” in Berkeley, it claims that the rally was held “on the edge of the UC campus in downtown Berkeley, near the far-right rally site, but not directly adjacent” (“Who was the real threat in Berkeley?” *Socialist Worker*, 7 September). However, the Facebook page for the event put it differently, with liberal claptrap about how it’s “time to get together, to celebrate our differences in solidarity, and peacefully speak out against the hateful currents in American society. We’re meeting near UC Berkeley campus, blocks away and on the other side of the downtown, for a peaceful rally to speak to each other about the world we want.”

The ISO also tries to make out that the anti-hate rally was counterposed to Berkeley mayor Jesse Arreguin, who got the city council to pass an emergency ordinance allowing the police to regulate demonstrations in the downtown area. But after earlier telling people to stay off the streets, Arreguin ended up printing 20,000 “Berkeley Stands United Against Hate” posters and issuing an August 23 statement urging people to go to the Bay Area Rally Against Hate, among other events. The ISO also neglects to mention that there was another antifascist rally, called by SURJ (Standing Up for Racial Justice), that met at a site closer to MLK Park and which from the outset said it would march to the fascists’ announced meeting place. That march drew several thousand, while others, including antifa and By Any Means Necessary, went directly to the Park.

The only reason that the reformist/liberal “Rally Against Hate” ended up getting anywhere near the fascists’ meeting place is that with their elaborate regulations and barriers the campus and city police effectively pushed it out of the UC Crescent Lawn and into the street. Then around noon “a part of the rally began marching toward City Hall,” as the ISO delicately put it. As for the fascists, after Cummings called off the “No to Marxism” rally, handfuls showed up anyway, including Joey Gibson. The police set up barricades, but when a force of several hundred masked-up antifa activists arrived, the cops suddenly stood down. But when antifa activists spotted Gibson and began to chase him, he literally ran to the cops, asking them to “arrest” him in order to get out of there. The police later classified this as a “rescue.”

¹ See “Portland Labor Mobilizes to Stop Fascist Provocation,” in *The Internationalist* No. 48, May-June 2017.

² See “Portland Union Calls to Mobilize Against the Ku Klux Klan and Other Racist Forces,” in *The Internationalist* No. 46, January-February 2017.

³ See “Fascists Forced to Flee San Francisco – A Significant Victory,” on page 5 of this issue.

Also present at Sunday's social-democratic/liberal stay-away-from-the-fascists rally in Berkeley was the Spartacist League (SL) and its Partisan Defense Committee, which had a contingent with banners against the Democratic Party and calling for labor/black mobilization to stop the fascists. The SL had earlier greeted the ILWU Local 10 motion, saying it would join the union in fielding its own contingent on Saturday in San Francisco. However, *no such Spartacist contingent was to be seen at Crissy Field or Alamo Square.*

In its article on the Bay Area events (*Workers Vanguard*, 8 September), the SL goes on at length denouncing the "Cynical Charlatans of the Internationalist Group" for supposedly helping union bureaucrats "perpetrate" a "fraud." It additionally takes aim at Jack Heyman, a retired longshoreman who drafted the "Motion to Stop the Fascists in San Francisco" and who has initiated and helped lead militant actions by Local 10 against racist attacks and police terror for decades.

So what was our supposed "crime"? Publishing a photo of ILWU longshoremen, along with the IUPAT delegation and other supporters, gathered in the ILWU hall in front of a union banner saying "Stop the Fascists" to celebrate the fact that the fascists had been forced into canceling their rally, and second, putting out a leaflet on Saturday night which was distributed in Berkeley at the different antifascist protests on Sunday, August 27 proclaiming "Fascists Forced to Flee San Francisco – A Significant Victory."

The ILWUers "had gone to the hall for work, not to march against the fascists," wrote WV. The WV article disappears a fundamental fact: *the fascist event had already been called off the day before.* In our leaflet we wrote that the longshore union should have "taken the next step to bring out the membership in a mass labor-led victory march." But the reality is that the union leadership called off the march *for the same reason the SL didn't show up with its promised contingent:* Gibson had cancelled. The fact is that the SL joined with the ILWU tops in demobilizing.

The Spartacist League has made much of a supposed qualitative "retrogression of consciousness" of the working class, in order to justify the SL's flight from the class struggle. Blinded by its "theory" of abstentionism, the SL can't fathom that the heavily black unionists of Local 10 who had voted unanimously to stop the fascists would want to celebrate the fact that the would-be lynchers had been prevented from mobilizing for racist terror in their city, and that they had played a key role in this. To label that and the whole effort toward a labor mobilization a fraud speaks volumes about the *actual retrogression of consciousness of these ex-Trotskyists.*

Just look at the accompanying report by an IBEW member, a supporter of the SL. He writes that after meeting up with the Internationalist Group on Saturday morning, "Later in the day we marched with the IG and members of the Painters Union in Portland chanting about the need for labor action to smash the fascists and for the unity of the workers of the world. We chanted up with the workers and down with the fascists as we joined those that had come out to try and confront the alt-right at Alamo Square. The crowd was excited to see an organized contingent of labor, even relatively small and unofficial."



Portland Painters and IG with IBEW Local 6 members on August 26.

Interesting account. What's missing in this picture? Nothing about the Spartacist League. Why? Because the SL *wasn't there*, while the IG was.

The report takes us to task for "claiming a great victory by the ILWU" while the WV article denounces us as "shamelessly cynical" for writing in our leaflet that the ILWU's call to march to stop the fascists was key to forcing the fascists to flee, and that this was a significant victory. Yet earlier on in its article, the SL writes: "It is a victory that the fascists had to call off their SF rally and press conference."

So according to WV it was a victory after all. What led to that? The preceding paragraphs call Gibson's whining about the Democratic city officials whipping up "tons of extremists" against him an "invention." They note that over 1,000 protesters marched to Alamo Square to confront the fascists. That's who Gibson was afraid of. And who were they? These were same protesters who had called to march behind the banner of the ILWU.

The reality is that the fascist provocation was stopped, that was a victory, and the ILWU's call to action was key. Our leaflet told the truth, the SL denies it in order to justify their inaction.

As for the denunciation of retired Local 10 militant Jack Heyman, a recurring obsession for the SL, WV writes: "The *only* call to action ever issued to the Local 10 membership was signed by Heyman and an active longshoreman, who called themselves 'Longshore Workers to Stop the Fascists.' This is a "crime"? So when the union leadership fails to take steps to carry out the motion – not the first time that has happened – union members who seek to mobilize the ranks are denounced as "serving as the bureaucracy's handmaiden!"

As for the SL's claim that Heyman covered for the union president's support for the Democratic politicians' attempt to get the fascist rally banned, the leaflet said emphatically that "pleas for Trump's Department of the Interior to deny a permit for Crissy Field are a diversion. Any bans, especially in a port city, could be used against workers fighting for their rights."

The real fraud is the Spartacist League's claim to be for labor/black mobilization to stop the fascists. The SL's whole flimflam is a cover for the fact that it didn't lift a finger to try to bring out the ranks of labor, not then or any time in the last few months. It didn't even bother to attend the union-called planning meeting. It didn't show up at Crissy Field or Alamo Square. Its only action that weekend was

a contingent at the reformist/liberal don't-confront-the-fascists rally in Berkeley.

The SL is fixated on denouncing Heyman for the same reason he is constantly attacked by the ILWU International tops: because he has over and over sparked and played a leading role in the class-struggle actions by Local 10 *that the union bureaucracy has sought to sabotage and that SL supporters in the union have boycotted and bad-mouthed.* The SL obsessively attacks Jack Heyman because he is the mirror in which its own abstentionism is reflected.

To justify this shameful policy, the serial prevaricators of the latter-day Spartacist League have had to repeatedly lie about, distort or be silent about actions initiated by or participated in by the Internationalist Group and the League for the Fourth International, of which the IG is the U.S. section (and which the SL never mentions).

WV has never written a word about the statewide work stoppage by teachers in Rio de Janeiro in April 1999 demanding freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal. Sparked by our comrades of the Liga Quarta-Internacionalista do Brasil, this was the first labor strike ever to demand Mumia be freed. Instead, the SL slandered the Brazilian comrades, who uniquely fought to oust municipal *guardas* (police) from a municipal workers union. The SL claimed they had sued the union in the bosses' courts, which is absolutely false. The exact opposite is the case: LQB supporters were the union leadership, who were sued by pro-police elements *whose lies the SL has peddled ever since.*⁴

On 24 April 1999, the day after the Brazilian teachers' work stoppage and in coordination with it, the ILWU (on a motion by the same Jack Heyman) shut down every port on the West Coast for eight hours demanding freedom for Mumia. The union marched in San Francisco at the head of 25,000 people chanting "An injury to one is an injury to all, Free Mumia Abu-

⁴ The SL and its misnamed International Communist League abandoned the Brazilian comrades in 1996 precisely when they were under attack by pro-police elements who brought cops into the union meeting, saying they had to "take their hands out of the boiling water," quit their elected union posts and leave town. And then the SL/ICL smeared the black Trotskyist militants as "dangerous hustlers" and actively tried to sabotage their defense campaign when police raided their office demanding lists of their members. For documentation, see our dossiers on *Class Struggle and Repression in Volta Redonda, Brazil* (February 1997) and *Responses to ICL Smear Campaign Against Brazilian Trotskyists* (May 2010).

Jamal." The SL's response was to deride the union action as nothing more than an extended lunch break. It later admitted that its response had been sectarian.

Then when on May Day 2008, the ILWU again shut down all 27 West Coast ports calling to stop the war in Iraq and Afghanistan, the SL dismissed this as a flag-waving social-patriotic cover for the Democratic Party and U.S. imperialism. It quoted the words of the ILWU International president who had opposed the walkout, and when he couldn't stop it, tried to sabotage and then distort it. The SL blithely ignored the fact that the motion calling for this first-ever strike by U.S. workers against a U.S. imperialist war explicitly denounced the Democrats for failing to stop the war.

Nor has the SL even mentioned the Portland Labor Against the Fascists June 4 mobilization, initiated by Class Struggle Workers – Portland, which is fraternally allied with the IG. In reality, the SL's latest hit piece in *Workers Vanguard* is its desperate attempt at a response to the Portland workers' groundbreaking action, grasping at straws to excuse its own abstention. There's a method here, beyond the transparent sectarianism. In each case, the Spartacist League takes the betrayal or sabotage or demobilization by the bureaucracy as an excuse to attack the militants who fought for class-struggle action.

And when the chips are down, when they're going up against the power of the capitalist state, these self-proclaimed "revolutionaries" collapse. That's what happened in Brazil in 1996, and that's what happened on the Oakland docks in 2002, when the feds threatened to militarize the port (during the buildup for the Iraq war) in order to ram through a take-back contract. The Spartacist League's response was to shamefully drop the call for "hot-cargoing" war materiel because it was too dangerous, while the Internationalist Group was on the docks daily during the lockout agitating to stop war cargo. The SL later excused voting for the sellout contract as well.⁵

The fact that the union misleaders fail to mobilize, that they support the Democratic Party, that they push through sellout contracts only underscores the need to build a class-struggle opposition in the unions, which the Internationalist Group does and the Spartacist League does not – even where they have supporters in the union, as in the ILWU.

In fact, the SL regularly *supports* the ILWU bureaucracy, as it did in 2011 when the International sabotaged the struggle to stop a scab grain terminal in Longview, Washington. The SL *defended* the bureaucratic goons who busted up a solidarity meeting in Seattle with five ILWUers on the stage. The IG, in contrast, intervened actively to support that key class struggle.⁶

But one of the most revealing facts about the August 26-27 Bay Area struggle against the fascists is how the opportunists joined hands. In their different ways, with different arguments, but ending up in the same place (the mayor-endorsed stay-away-from-the-fascists rally against hate), the reformist social democrats and centrist ex-Trotskyists both undermine the fight to mobilize the power of the working class to **crush the fascists.** ■

⁵ See our article "SL: Hard to Starboard," in *The Internationalist* No. 15, January-February 2003.

⁶ See "SL's Wrong Lessons of Longview," in *The Internationalist* supplement, March 2012.

Deportations...

continued from page 1

of Obama's failed 2013 immigration "reform" bill.

But although detentions and detention orders have sharply increased, actual "removals" have fallen. This is partly because of smaller numbers of border crossers but also due to congestion in the administrative immigration courts. There is a backlog of 600,000 cases and an average two-year wait. With more immigration arrests, the number of people held in the I.C.E. labyrinth of detention centers (concentration camps), mostly private prisons run by corporations like GEO, is mushrooming. The government is planning a major increase in immigration jails, expanding the daily count of detainees from 41,000 to 48,000, and I.C.E. says it has secured 33,000 more slots in city and county jails and state prisons where it can warehouse immigrants. In those cases, the agency is threatening to break up families, separating mothers from their children.

Daily there are new atrocities. The administration went all out to stop a 17-year-old woman detained in Texas from having an abortion. Only an emergency hearing by a full federal court was able to stop this act of gratuitous cruelty. And in Oregon, I.C.E. cops were captured on a video uploaded to Facebook as they barged into a home in Beaverton where without a warrant they arrested a house painter they "thought" was "illegal." (As public outrage grew, the worker was released.) Two weeks earlier, agents stopped a Latino U.S. citizen outside the nearby Washington County courthouse — a blatant case of racial profiling. Being in the country without authorization is not itself classed as a crime, but as they step up "collateral" detentions, I.C.E. agents in Oregon and around the U.S. are grossly violating the Fourth Amendment prohibition of unreasonable search and seizure.

A sizeable majority of the public does not support Trump's heavy-handed crack-down on immigrants. In a recent Washington Post-ABC News poll, 62% disapproved of Trump's handling of immigration, and 62% opposed his proposal to build a wall along the Mexican border. Barely a third supported his hard-line anti-immigrant policies. Moreover, a whopping 86% were in favor of letting young undocumented immigrants who fill the requirements for DACA stay in the country. Yet as part of a purported deal to extend legal status (but no "path to citizenship") for so-called "Dreamers," Democratic Congressional leaders Chuck Schumer and Nancy Pelosi agreed in principle to intensified "border security" and compulsory use of the e-Verify program used to fire undocumented workers. But then Trump upped his demands.

Even before the failed agreement was announced, we warned: "The Democrats would try to get immigrant youth to accept such a deal and throw their own parents, families and friends under the bus. We say, Hell no! **We demand full citizenship rights for all immigrants.**" ("Beware of Trump/Democrat Deal, Defend DACA and All Immigrants," *Revolution*, 7 September). Many DACA recipients weren't fooled. At a September 18 Bay Area press conference by Pelosi, activists from the California Immigrant Youth Justice Alliance interrupted her, chanting "We are not your bargaining chip." They denounced the House minority leader, saying: "Democrats created an out-of-control deportation machine and handed it over



Lea Suzuki/San Francisco Chronicle

Immigrant youth protest Democratic Party leader Nancy Pelosi over failed deal with Trump to "protect" DACA recipients by sacrificing their parents.

to Trump." They added, "Democrats are not the resistance of Trump. We are" (Huffpost, 18 September).

For immigrants, the United States is now a police state. Arbitrarily picked up in their homes, at their workplaces, outside courthouses or on the street, often by plainclothes I.C.E. cops in unmarked cars, immigrants must be wary as they would be in some authoritarian regime. As Trump stokes xenophobia (fear and hatred of foreigners), and particularly since the constitutional rights being trampled on apply to everyone in the U.S., not just citizens, the threat to all represented by this unbridled exercise of police power should be obvious. *Yet even as fear stalks the land, there has also been defiance.* But beware, we are dealing with a regime that has no compunction about ripping up rights: protest alone will not stop them. *What is crucial is to bring to bear the power of a force that can stymie the deportation machine — the working class.*

Above all, the struggle for immigrant rights must be waged *politically*, understanding that both parties of capital, Democrats and Republicans, as well as minor-league capitalist politicians and parties like the Greens are enemies of immigrants, the oppressed and working people. Talk of "immigration reform" in this imperialist epoch of decaying capitalism will always be a fraud. Just look at where full citizenship rights for everyone has actually been won: in the French Revolution of 1789, the Paris Commune of 1871 and, exactly a century ago, the Russian October Revolution of 1917.

Skirmishing Over "Sanctuary Cities"

A focal point of the skirmishing between Republicans and Democrats over immigration has been so-called "sanctuary cities." These are the roughly 400 localities (mostly counties) that have to varying degrees limited cooperation by local police with the immigration cops. The Trump administration has threatened to cut off federal funds to "sanctuary" jurisdictions. The reason it is so exercised about this is that the federal government has only about 6,000 agents in its snatch squads, hardly enough to deport millions of undocumented immigrants. So Washington wants to rely on local cops to do the arresting, for traffic violations for instance, and then I.C.E. would just drop by to pick up the supposed "criminal aliens."

The monstrosity of police collaboration in deportations was highlighted by the testimony of René Lichtman, a 79-year-

old Holocaust survivor, in opposition to a bill in the Michigan state legislature which would ban cities from enacting policies limiting cooperation with I.C.E. Lichtman said, "My family members were picked up in the streets of Paris in the very same way that I.C.E. people are deputizing local police and picking [undocumented immigrants] up in the streets." He said that the French police, "deputized by the Nazis," kept lists of Jews in Paris:

"including Jewish children, including children on my street, who were picked up and went to the gas chambers while I was fortunate to be in hiding.... I see a lot of parallels to what is going on in cities like Ann Arbor and Pontiac, where I.C.E. is coming in and with the help of the local police are picking up immigrants."

—Huffington Post, 9 June

In "sanctuary cities" local authorities typically say they will not honor I.C.E. "detainer" requests to hold undocumented immigrants arrested on other charges after they are supposed to be released. But even where such blatantly unconstitutional cooperation with I.C.E. is ostensibly refused, it often happens anyway. In New York City, mayor Bill de Blasio has sought to calm immigrants' fears, saying "This is your city. Your city will stand by you. Your city will protect you" (*Daily News*, 21 March). Not so. What happens, as the *Daily News* (2 April) headlined, is that the "NYPD alerts feds to Criminal Court appearances of immigrants facing deportation despite 'sanctuary' vow." Plus there are some 170 offenses for which NYC will illegally hold immigrants for I.C.E.

Much of the fireworks over "sanctuary cities" has been focused on two states, Texas and California. In Texas, the Republican state legislature and governor rammed through a law last spring, Senate Bill 4 (SB 4), ordering cities and counties to cooperate with I.C.E. and authorizing local and state police to question anyone about their immigration status. This "show me your papers" law (as in Nazi Germany or apartheid South Africa), like Arizona's notorious racist SB 1070, would lead to rampant racial profiling. During the debate on SB 4, a Republican legislator, Matt Rinaldi got annoyed with the hundreds of largely Latino protesters chanting in the gallery and called I.C.E., thus assuming many were undocumented. Rinaldi also threatened on the floor to shoot Democratic representative Poncho Nevárez (*Texas Observer*, 29 May).

The Texas law is currently on hold due to a federal court ruling that its key provisions violate the Fourth Amendment. But

that hasn't stopped *la migra*. As Hurricane Harvey approached in late August and residents were urged to leave coastal areas, the Border Patrol refused to close highway checkpoints north of the Rio Grande Valley, effectively trapping undocumented residents of Brownsville, Harlingen and other South Texas cities. And then at the end of October, Border Patrol agents stopped an ambulance at 2 a.m. carrying a 10-year-old girl with cerebral palsy as she was being transferred from a medical center in Laredo to a specialized hospital in Corpus Christi for a gall bladder operation. Armed agents waited outside her room until she was released and then detained her, all because she arrived in the U.S. without papers when she was 3 months old.¹

California, meanwhile, recently enacted a statewide "sanctuary" law, to the great annoyance of I.C.E. acting director Homan, who announced that "As a result, I.C.E. is forced to dedicate more resources to conduct at-large arrests in these communities." In a nationwide round-up in late September targeting "sanctuary cities" in particular, during which it arrested almost 500 immigrants, I.C.E. reported it had detained 167 people in and around Los Angeles. Yet the "sanctuary state" law does not apply to anyone convicted of any of 800 (!) offenses, and it won't stop I.C.E. agents from entering jails. In signing the law California governor Jerry Brown said it was "important to note what the bill does not do," namely it "does not prevent or prohibit" I.C.E. or the DHS "from doing their own work in any way" (*Los Angeles Times*, 6 October). Exactly.

It's also important to note that the "sanctuary city" ordinances were enacted *against the "Secure Communities" program of the Obama administration*. For all their empty talk of "immigration reform," the Democrats in office transformed this from a tiny pilot project into a giant nationwide immigrant-catching dragnet leading to the deportation of hundreds of thousands of people living in the U.S. And in defending "sanctuary cities" against the Trump regime's attack we have repeatedly denounced the criminal action of Democratic city governments which day-in and day-out work hand-in-glove with *la migra* in persecuting immigrants.

For Worker/Immigrant Mobilization to Stop Raids and Deportations

In defending young immigrants in the DACA program or opposing deportations, a vital question is: how?

Most social-democratic and other self-styled socialist groups whose aim is to reform capitalism basically look to pressuring the government. The International Socialist Organization (ISO) calls to "revitalize the fighting movement that stopped mass criminalization of the undocumented in 2006 with its incredible 'mega-marches' and that won DACA in 2012 by relentlessly pressuring politicians of both parties, including Barack Obama as he campaigned for re-election" (*Socialist Worker*, 7 September). Yet Obama offered DACA in order to deflect criticism over his failure to enact any immigration "reform," despite his campaign promises. And we warned from the start it could be easily canceled by the next president, after undocumented youth and their parents had supplied the feds with detailed information on where to find them.

¹ See the article by Class Struggle Education Workers, "The Crime of Medical Deportations," *The Internationalist* No. 47, March-April 2017.

The ISO is always out to build one “mass movement” or another, joining with liberals on a program of class collaboration with Democrats or some other capitalist party or politician. But pressuring the racist Trump, whose campaign was built on vilifying immigrants? This can only create dangerous illusions that lead to demoralization when they are dashed. Yet fostering illusions is what these social democrats are all about. A follow-up article on DACA calls for “Protection for all” – not full citizenship rights, but simply “protection.” Meaning what? Under temporary protection programs the recipients still have no real democratic rights and not even a “path to citizenship.” Putting all undocumented immigrants into the limbo that DACA and TPS recipients now occupy is no solution. And, of course, there is no mention of capitalism, socialism or revolution, of course.

The centrist Spartacist League (SL), which puts on “revolutionary” airs, recently published a front-page article headlined “No Deportations!” (*Workers Vanguard*, 22 September). Nice sentiment. So how is this to be accomplished? While routinely calling for citizenship rights for immigrants, beyond general calls for “militant class struggle” and “world socialist revolution,” nowhere does it put forward any concrete program for what a struggle for “no deportations” should consist of. Neither does the SL have anything to say to the thousands of protesters in Texas who have demonstrated against SB 4 outlawing sanctuary cities.

Earlier this year, the SL published a smear against the Internationalist Group for calling to defend sanctuary cities, which it dismissed as nothing but a “scam.” The fact that these minimal constraints can be hugely important to immigrants facing the federal I.C.E./D.H.S./BP juggernaut is of no concern to them. For our response to this, and the slander that we didn’t denounce the Democrats, as well as to the SL’s refusal to call for asylum for refugees, dismissing them as “displaced persons” with no rights, see “Spartacist League vs. Refugees,” *The Internationalist* No. 47, March-April 2017.

The Internationalist Group has long called to mobilize the power of labor to stop immigration raids and deportations. Our very first article, distributed to an October 1996 immigrants rights rally in Washington, D.C., called for “union-led mobilization, bringing out contingents from the black ghettos and Latino barrios in a solid show of force the next time there are big INS factory raids.” We pointed to the labor action by Latino truckers who drove from the L.A./Long Beach port to ring Los Angeles city hall with their rigs to protest the anti-immigrant Prop 187. (“Mobilize the Working Class to Smash Anti-Immigrant Offensive!” *The Internationalist* No. 1, January-February 1997). On the day after Trump’s election last November, we wrote:

“If the new regime seeks to reinstitute raids in the urban centers, there should be **workers mobilizations to prevent deportations**, including blocking them by flooding the area with defenders of immigrant rights.”

–“Post-Traumatic Election Shock: To Defeat Trump ... And the Democrats, Fight for Workers Revolution” (10 November 2016), *The Internationalist* No. 46, January-February 2017

Today, immigrants have several times acted to oppose the ICE raids. They must not stand alone.

In early February, just days after

Trump’s inauguration, I.C.E. agents arrested Guadalupe Garcia de Rayos in Phoenix, Arizona. A mother of two who had been in the U.S. since the age of 14, Garcia’s deportation was prepared by the Obama administration, which initially arrested her in 2008 in a workplace raid. But while virulent anti-immigrant racism is rampant in Arizona, scores of immigrants and their supporters courageously blocked an I.C.E. van for hours seeking to stop the deportation of Guadalupe (see “All Out on May Day! Strike In Defense of Immigrants and All Workers,” *The Internationalist* No. 47, March-April 2017).

Then on May 30 in New York City, as I.C.E. agents attempted to arrest Hadrat Sampat, an immigrant from the South American country of Guyana, in the heavily Guyanese immigrant neighborhood of Richmond Hill in Queens, NY, dozens of neighbors poured into the street to block the arrest. Sampat’s wife parked her car in front of the I.C.E. vehicles to prevent them from moving. The standoff lasted until the NYPD came to I.C.E.’s aid, forcing Sampat’s wife to move her car and the crowd to disperse. Despite New York’s claim to be a “sanctuary city” and Mayor de Blasio’s claims the police don’t carry out immigration tasks, in this and other cases NYC cops are acting as auxiliaries for I.C.E.

Recently, on October 11, immigrants rights activists outside the I.C.E. offices in Portland, Oregon blocked a van transporting detained immigrants to the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, Washington. They managed to hold up the transport for several hours, their arms locked together with “sleeping dragons” (a device made of pipe, plastic, chicken wire, duct tape and chains). While sawing these off, the Portland cops put hoods over the protesters’ heads that recall those used in torturing detainees at the U.S.’ notorious Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq. The brave action of the activists dramatized the abomination of mass deportations, now carried out in unmarked white vans and buses instead of in box cars, like the Nazis did with Jews in World War II. Nonetheless, such actions are basically symbolic.

The Trump regime won’t be moved by symbolism or protest. What’s needed to thwart the deportations is to mobilize the power of the workers movement in mass action to immobilize the “immigrant removal” system, and ultimately to paralyze capitalism. On May Day this year, unionized immigrant workers at B&H Photo and Video and their supporters demonstrated outside the store in Midtown Manhattan with signs in English and Spanish calling to “Strike Against Deportations,” “Defy ICE,” “Strike for Black and Brown Lives,” “Strike for Immigrants’ Rights,” “Strike for Women’s Rights,” or more simply, “*Chinga la migra*” (Screw ICE). Workers at the two B&H warehouses slated for closure walked out that May 1. Earlier, on February 16, workers throughout B&H struck in solidarity with the “Day Without Immigrants.”

Such actions send a powerful message, one that should be picked up by the entire workers movement. The Internationalist Group has been actively involved in supporting the B&H workers’ struggle from the start, and the transitional organizations fraternally allied with the IG – Class Struggle Education Workers, Trabajadores Internacionales Clasistas (Class Struggle International Workers) and Class Struggle

Workers – Portland – have undertaken initiatives to support immigrant workers against deportations. In New York, CSEW members have fought for and initiated immigrant defense committees in schools and hospitals, as have the Internationalist Clubs at the City University. In Portland, the CSWP has sparked union participation in protests outside I.C.E. offices and in communities such as Woodburn hit by I.C.E. raids on farm workers.

These are only small beginnings. As the racist deportation machine goes into overdrive, with factory raids and street arrests in immigrant neighborhoods, there is a tremendous potential for mass action to stop the I.C.E. body snatchers. A successful action anywhere in the country could spark an enormous response from the millions who not only oppose but *despise* Trump and his I.C.E. cops. But it is necessary to publicize and spread the example, to organize it and above all what’s key is for labor to use its muscle in powerful *class* action of Latinos, African Americans, immigrants and students. That can only be accomplished by simultaneously fighting against the stranglehold of the capitalist parties, notably the Democrats, who built up the sinister deportation police force and now stand in the way of effective action to stop it.

Immigrant workers are treated as disposable labor without rights, to be hired by the millions as low-wage workers when the economy is booming, and then thrown back over the border when it goes bust. Just that happened in 1954, in the economic downturn after the end of the fighting in the Korean War, as more than a million Mexican workers were deported in “Operation Wetback.” In the 1990s, the mass migration from Mexico was the direct result of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), negotiated by Democrat Bill Clinton, which effectively destroyed Mexican agriculture, forcing millions of peasants to emigrate to the North. Today class-conscious workers in the U.S., Canada and Mexico should join to bring down NAFTA through joint class struggle.

Any victory we achieve may be partial and temporary. The lasting impact of the struggle must be to raise the consciousness and will to fight of the workers and the oppressed against the monstrous capitalist edifice built on wage slavery, and that of doubly oppressed immigrant workers in particular. A successful fight to stop deportations and achieve full rights for everyone – a simple democratic right – requires **building a revolutionary workers party** on a program of militant class struggle leading to **international socialist revolution**. That is our key task today. ■

ILWU Local 10...

continued from page 5

standing up against racism, fascism and bigotry and using our union power to do so; on May Day 2015 we shut down Bay Area ports and marched followed by thousands to Oscar Grant Plaza demanding an end to police terror against African Americans and others,” and that “the San Francisco Bay Area is a union stronghold and we will not allow labor-hating white supremacists to bring their lynch mob terror here.”

In fact, nooses – a threat of lynching – were found on a series of occasions earlier this year at the SSA Marine terminal in the Port of Oakland in California. On the morning of May 25, when a noose was found at the terminal, which is one of the port’s

largest, ILWU longshoremen walked off the job in protest. “Container trucks were backed up all around the port and on Interstate 880,” reported the *East Bay Times* (26 May). Longshore workers’ anger against the current fascist and white-supremacist provocations will likely have a similar result but on a larger scale.

Since the election of Donald Trump, the Internationalist Group has called for and helped organize labor/black immigrant mobilization to stop fascist and racist terror. The June 4 Portland labor mobilization was an important first step, the first significant workers action against fascists in decades. Longshore workers **shutting down the port and leading a mass march to sweep away the fascist provocation on August 26** is now the task of the hour. This can point the way for workers action from coast to coast after decades of attacks on the working class.

Millions of people are outraged by the fascist murder in Charlottesville. Millions are disgusted by Donald Trump’s open praise of the fascists. But it’s not just Trump. The Democratic Party was founded as the political arm of the slavocracy, becoming, after the Civil War, the party of the Klan and Jim Crow.

Liberal Berkeley mayor Jesse Arreguin is telling everyone to “stay away” from the fascist rally there – including the *opponents* of fascist terror who rightly want to make sure the fascist terror carried out in Charlottesville is not repeated in the Bay Area. House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi, in turn, has called on the National Parks Service, which administers Crissy Field, to “reevaluate” the permit it granted to the “Patriot Prayer” rally. This appeal is not just a diversion from mass protest but a trap, as it could easily be used against anti-fascist demonstrators. In fact, both Republicans and Democrats – who under Obama deported more than 5 million immigrants, waged endless war abroad and ramped up police repression “at home” – fear independent mobilization of the working class.

Liberals and reformist pseudo-socialists, for their part, have sought to organize tame protests “against hate” far away from the fascists in order to avoid confrontation. The answer to the fascist threat is not to ignore it, or endless inconclusive skirmishes, but to mobilize *workers action to stop the fascists*, linking up with the rest of labor and opponents of racist terror. The Bay Area longshore workers have taken the lead, and it is vital to make the August 26 mobilization a resounding success.

That can open a path for all the exploited and oppressed, at a time when large numbers of people are seeing the threat that the irrational and bankrupt system of capitalism poses here and around the world. In recent days and weeks, the Internationalist Group has highlighted calls for labor/black/immigrant mobilizations to smash racist terror; for the disciplined, organized preparation of **workers defense guards** to stop the kind of fascist attacks seen in Portland and Charlottesville; and for the workers movement to unchain its power from the Democrats and all bosses’ parties by forging a class-struggle workers party.

At this time a big step forward for the whole working class can be taken by the Bay Area longshore workers, by **shutting down the port and leading a mass march that brings out the power of labor and opponents of racist terror to stop the fascists on August 26**. ■

Defend the Right to Self-Determination and Independence! Mobilize Labor's Power Against Spanish Police/Military Occupation!

Mass Resistance to Police Repression in Catalonia

OCTOBER 4 – Sunday was “D-Day” in Catalonia. For the last three weeks, the population of the northeastern region of Spain was preparing for a “self-determination referendum” on October 1, called by the Catalan regional government, the Generalitat, to vote on the question of independence from the Spanish state. And for the last three weeks the Spanish government in Madrid was daily escalating threats and repression, declaring the referendum illegal and vowing to do “whatever is necessary” to prevent people from voting. On the night before the vote, tens of thousands of people in Barcelona and around Catalonia occupied more than 1,100 schools designated as polling places, many in sleeping bags outside the gates in the rain, in order to block the thousands of Guardia Civil and National Police from sealing them off to stop the vote.

The showdown began at daybreak. Occupiers had been ordered to vacate the premises by 6 a.m. Nobody left. Ballot boxes started arriving from where they had been hidden in closets and storage rooms, basements and attics, to prevent the police from seizing them. Ballots had been printed again after the Guardia Civil seized more than 3.5 million in raids on printing plants. By 7 a.m., the police of the autonomous regional government, the Mossos d'Esquadra, began showing up, but after noting the size of the crowds, they left. Soon, however, the more than 10,000 paramilitary police that had been brought in from elsewhere in Spain began barging into schools and seizing ballot boxes. But that was not enough for the cops. They were out to terrorize and humiliate the populace that was defying the orders of the Madrid government, courts, police and army by the simple act of voting.

Earlier, after some 40,000 people in Barcelona surrounded offices of the Generalitat, trapping the notorious Guardia Civil inside as it was carrying out a raid on September 20, Spanish prime minister Mariano Rajoy declared in truly Orwellian fashion that “disobedience is a totalitarian act.” It was in character: Rajoy's party, the Partido Popular (PP), is the political heir of the decades-long dictatorship of Francisco Franco. So on October 1, his cops were going to root out disobedience. Police in riot gear stormed the schools. Millions around the world watched videos showing black-clad, masked police brutally yanking elderly retirees out of lines where they were waiting to vote. They would snatch someone at random from the crowds of hundreds and beat them bloody. The Generalitat reported 893 people injured by the police on Sunday.

As the day ended, the Spanish prime minister went on TV to make an “institutional declaration” proclaiming victory. A Pyrrhic victory,¹ perhaps, with heavy consequences

¹ After “winning” his battle against the Roman Army in 280 BC while suffering heavy casualties, King Pyrrhus of the Greek state of Epirus reportedly said, “One more victory like that and I'll come back to Epirus alone.”

for the future. “Today there was no referendum on self-determination in Catalonia,” declared Rajoy in his Franco-style *pronunciamiento*. As for the images of club-wielding police beating elderly women in the head, Rajoy said: “We did what we had to do” against the “perpetrators” whose peaceful defiance amounted to a “coup against the law-based State.” The orgy of violence against defenseless voters unleashed by the authoritarian Spanish regime made a genuine referendum on independence impossible. But they did not stop people from voting. Late on Sunday, the Generalitat announced that more than 2.2 million people had cast ballots, 42% of the electorate, and 90% voted for independence.

“Fracture Consummated” headlined *La Vanguardia* (2 October), the leading daily paper in Barcelona which speaks for the “mainstream” Catalan bourgeoisie. The “unbreakable unity of Spain” had effectively been fractured, but Catalonia itself is deeply divided. Some 40% of registered voters had cast ballots for independence, which corresponds to figures that serious opinion polls have repeatedly shown. Those opposed to independence overwhelmingly did not vote. We have explained that opposition to separation from Spain is strongest in the (largely Spanish-speaking) working-class areas of Catalonia (see our article, “Defend the Right to Self-Determination and Independence for Catalonia,” *The Internationalist*, September 2017). At the same time, more than 2 million people braved violence by the Spanish state in order to vote on independence, and tens of thousands, many of them young people, actively participated in defending the polling places, an experience they will never forget.

Rajoy's brutal onslaught has stoked fear. “Moderate” independence supporters are calling on the Generalitat to step back from the brink and call new elections to prove its “legitimacy.” For militants, defiant opposition to the brutal crackdown by the authoritarian Madrid government doesn't necessarily equal support for independence under the bourgeois Catalan nationalist movement and its right-wing, anti-working-class leadership. It could also fuel revolutionary struggle *against capitalism*, the fundamental source of the suffering of working people, immigrants and youth in Catalonia and all of Spain. But that requires building an *internationalist* leadership of the working class to wage a class-struggle battle first and foremost against the neo-Francoist Rajoy regime



Police charge voters outside IES Ramon Llull secondary school. Barcelona, 1 October 2017.

and its henchmen – in particular the despicable leadership of the Socialist Party (PSOE), enforcers of capitalist austerity and repression – but also against the capitalist would-be masters of an independent Catalonia. That is the task of the hour.

The League for the Fourth International has upheld the right to self-determination (i.e., the right to independence) for Cata-

lonia while not advocating separation from Spain, which could seriously undercut the potential for united struggle of the working class throughout the peninsula. We defended the holding of the October 1 referendum against the Spanish government's attempt to suppress it, while saying we would cast a blank ballot. But, as we noted, in the face

continued on page 16

For International Workers Solidarity! New York Protest Against Repression in Catalonia



Internationalist demonstrators outside Spanish government office in New York City protest repression in Catalonia, October 6.

NEW YORK, October 6 – An emergency protest was held here today to denounce police repression against voters in the referendum on independence for Catalonia last Sunday, October 1. Demonstrators called for defense of the right to self-determination (the right to independence) for Catalonia, for workers unity throughout the Spanish state and for international workers solidarity actions.

The text of the leaflet distributed at the protest outside the Spanish government tourist office in Midtown Manhattan read:

“The Internationalist Group and Trabajadores Internacionales Clasistas (Class Struggle International Workers) are calling an urgent protest to denounce the brutal police attack on the October 1 referendum on independence in Catalonia. Almost 900 people were injured as thousands of riot police brought in from elsewhere in Spain dragged retirees out of voters lines to beat them bloody. It was a throwback to the days of the dictatorship of Francisco Franco, and a clear attempt to intimidate and humiliate the population

continued on page 17

Against the Francoist Assault:

Defend the Right to Self-Determination and Independence for Catalonia

Translated from Revolución Permanente, the newspaper of the Grupo Internacionalista, Mexican section of the League for the Fourth International.

BARCELONA/MEXICO CITY, September 29 – The countdown is coming to its end. Less than 48 hours before the beginning of the October 1st referendum (known in Spain as “1-O”), activists and parents have been mobilizing all around Catalonia to protect the schools which have been selected as polling places where people will respond “yes” or “no” to a single question: “Do you want Catalonia to become an independent state in the form of a republic?” Carles Puigdemont, *president* of the Generalitat, the government of the autonomous region of Catalonia, announced today that the preparations for voting are ready. But the central government of the Spanish state led by Mariano Rajoy, a political heir of the dictatorship of Francisco Franco, is threatening a massive police operation to prevent the carrying out of the independence referendum.

As the hours pass, tension is mounting. Over the last three weeks, the Madrid government, the Constitutional Court and the National Police have set in motion a large-scale repressive operation. Only hours after the Generalitat issued the decree calling the referendum – in a fast-track parliamentary procedure lasting a single day and ending close to midnight on September 6 – the Constitutional Court issued a ruling prohibiting the vote from being carried out. The Rajoy government then immediately resorted to censorship of the media, confiscation of printed material for the referendum and blocking the bank accounts of the Generalitat, a veiled way of cancelling the already threadbare Catalan autonomy.¹ Then, in an explosion of repression, on September 20 Madrid authorities proceeded to arrest 14 officials of the Catalan government, carry out searches of a dozen of its offices, cordon off the headquarters of the pro-independence party CUP (Popular Unity Candidacy) and send 7,000 members of the National Police to Catalonia, all with the mission of preventing the 1-O referendum from taking place.

In addition, in a crudely choreographed media op, Civil Guards and National Police from Huelva, Santander, Cádiz and Granada heading to Catalonia were given a send-off by small groups of rightists shouting, “Go after them!” But the government may have ended up shooting itself in the foot, given the sparse attendance and markedly fascis-

¹ Under the 1978 constitution (which proclaims the “indivisibility” of the Spanish state), the country is divided into 17 “regions and nationalities” which have a limited degree of autonomy and self-government, although considerably less than a state in the United States.



Thousands went into the streets in Barcelona on September 20 to protest against the invasion by the Guardia Civil and National Police who raided offices of the Generalitat, the government of the Catalan autonomous region.

Resist Attempts to Prevent the October 1 Referendum!
Forward to a Workers General Strike in All of Spain!
For a Federation of Workers Republics in the Iberian Peninsula, Part of a Socialist United States of Europe!

tic tone of these events. Given the determination of the Catalan *govern* (the regional government) and of independence backers to go ahead with the referendum, the effort by the neo-Francoist Spanish government to maintain the “sacred unity” of Spain at all costs could backfire. Add to this the drama around the Catalan police, the Mossos d’Esquadra, which Rajoy is trying to place under the orders of a colonel of the Guardia Civil (who is No. 3 in the Interior Ministry). The commander of the Mossos, Josep Lluís Trapero, temporarily refused to follow the repressive orders, saying this would damage the “prestige” of his force. But finally, out of respect for “the law,” Trapero ended by promising to evict people from the schools early on Sunday, although saying it would be done “without violence.”

In the international press, and particularly in social media, the impression is given that support for independence is practically unanimous in Catalonia, or at least among the “popular classes.” A correspondent for *Revolución Permanente* was in Barcelona for a week and we can state that this is far from the case. The population of the autonomous region (in which less than one-third speak Catalan as their first language) is deeply divided. Even the detailed opinion surveys carried out by the Generalitat show that only a minority – around 40% – of those interviewed want to have an independent state, separated from Spain. The nationalist movement is dominated by the Catalan bourgeoisie. In addition, its main leaders (not only Puigdemont but also his

predecessors Artur Mas and Jordi Pujol) are rightists who are profoundly hostile to the workers. Meanwhile, the opposition to the independence movement is particularly notable in areas of Catalonia that are home to Spanish-speaking workers and immigrants.

What is true is that currently the *independentistas* are the most mobilized. However, and particularly given the authoritarian blows struck by Rajoy (whom the Catalan *president* aptly described as a “guardian of Franco’s tomb”) and his Popular Party (PP) – backed up by the Socialist Party of austerity and repression, led by Pedro Sánchez and the furiously *españolista* (Spanish central-

ist) Susana Díaz – the vast majority of the Catalans, more than 80%, insist on their *right to decide*. Thus the current showdown is focused on *resistance to the attack by the Spanish-centralist government* against the population of Catalonia as a whole. And Marxists say that this task falls not only to the Catalans but also is incumbent on the working people and defenders of democratic rights throughout Spain, and around the world.

In the face of this ominous situation, revolutionaries and class-conscious workers must take a side. Against the police assault by Rajoy and his accomplices it is necessary to mobilize to *defend the right of self-determination and independence for Catalonia*. Moreover, it’s necessary to *support the holding of a binding referendum* on the question and *resist any attempt by the Spanish government to prevent it*. Against any attempt to unleash massive repression in Catalonia, *the working class in the whole of Spain must mobilize with strikes and occupations*, including an *open-ended, active general strike*. Some minority union federations have called for a “general strike” on October 3, which in actuality appears to be more like what in Latin America is

called a “*paro cívico*” (civic work stoppage) in a popular front with pro-independence sectors of the bourgeoisie. Proletarian militants should agitate to turn the fight against repression into a class-struggle action by the entire Spanish workers movement.

The workers struggle cannot be limited to defending Catalonia’s right to self-determination. The bourgeois politicians of the Barcelona *govern* are just as “neo-liberal” as those of the government in the Moncloa Palace in Madrid. They have voted for the capitalist austerity laws put forward by Rajoy, and in the Catalan Generalitat they have imposed the same policies. They are just as



Some 40,000 people gathered in the center of Barcelona September 20 to protest the Guardia Civil’s raids, filling Plaza Catalunya until well into the night.

Susana Vera/Reuters

much or even more submissive to the dictates of the European central bankers who have condemned the working people of Greece to poverty. (The slogan of the bourgeois pro-independence movement is to make Catalonia “a new state of Europe.”) Puigdemont, Mas, Pujol and the likes are enemies of the working class. In order to beat back the attacks of the repressive apparatus of the Spanish state, what’s needed is a mobilization of the power of the working class, including with occupations of factories and industrial zones, *on the basis of class independence* in order to politically fight those who aspire to become the new masters of Catalonia.

All this points to a *socialist revolution* extending throughout the Iberian Peninsula and the rest of the continent, to sweep away once and for all the European Union, that imperialist, anti-working-class and anti-immigrant cartel which sees itself as a Fortress Europe. The key to making this a reality is building a revolutionary leadership of the working class, a genuine Leninist-Trotskyist party fighting for a red Europe of workers councils.

The October 1 Referendum

On September 6, the Catalan parliament approved at breakneck speed a *Law for the Binding Self-Determination Referendum for the Independence of Catalonia* and an accompanying *Law for the Legal Transfer of Powers*. They stipulate that independence shall be declared two days after the victory of a “Yes” vote in the 1-O referendum. The two laws were approved with the 72 votes of the parties that make up the Junts pel Sí (JxSí, Together for Yes) coalition – whose main components are the traditional representatives of the Catalan bourgeoisie, namely the liberal² Catalan Democratic Party of Europe (PDeCAT, formerly Convergència i Unió) and Esquerra Republicana (ERC, Republican Left) along with their petty-bourgeois partners of the CUP. The 11 *consellers* (members of the Catalan parliament) of the CSQEP (Catalunya Sí Que Es Pot, Catalonia Is Possible, linked to the populist Spanish party Podemos), the Greens and Izquierda Unida (the United Left) abstained, while the 52 *consellers* of the Catalan branches of the Spanish-centralist parties – the Francoist PP, the ultra-rightist Citizens party (C’s), and the Catalan Socialist Party – boycotted the session, calling it illegal.

From that moment on, the entire judicial, police and military apparatus inherited from the Francoist dictatorship went into action. On September 7, the Constitutional Court suspended the laws approved in Barcelona the night before, declaring them unconstitutional for “breaking the unity of Spain.” At the same time, the Court warned Catalan mayors that they were prohibited from participating in organizing the October 1 referendum, and hauled into court 712 of them who had stated their intent to participate. Meanwhile, the national prosecutor in Madrid initiated a legal action against the Generalitat as a whole. The initial response of the population to these threats was the march on September 11, the Catalan national day commemorating the disappearance of the Principality of Catalonia due to defeat in 1714 in the War of the Spanish Succession. In this *Diada pel Sí* (national day for a “yes” to independence), up to a million people filled the streets of Barcelona. The next day, the repressive

² In Europe, “liberal” parties are generally hard right-wing proponents of “free market” capitalism.



The president of the Generalitat, the rightist Carles Puigdemont, together with Josep Lluís Trapero, commander of the Mossos d'Esquadra, inspects police of the autonomous Catalan region in dress uniform during the diada (march celebrating Catalonia's national day), 11 September 2017.

measures were intensified.

Enter the Guardia Civil, which carried out so many massacres before, during and after the Civil War of 1936-39; which during the following three and a half decades of the Francoist dictatorship enforced the prohibition of the Catalan language; and which after the so-called “transition” of 1975-78 has continued to sow terror in Euskadi (the Basque Country) and against immigrants in Ceuta (a Spanish-held enclave in Morocco). Police patrols barged into printing plants looking for propaganda and ballots for the referendum, confiscating millions of pieces of paper. The Catalan public television channel, TV3, was banned from even mentioning the October 1 vote. Some people pasting up posters for the referendum were arrested. In Valencia, Madrid and throughout the country public meetings in support of the Catalan referendum were banned. On September 15, police evicted a meeting that was underway in Gasteiz/Victoria, the capital of the Basque region. Taken together with the measures preventing the Generalitat from paying public employees, obviously we are barely a step away from applying Article 155 of the Spanish Constitution, which would suspend any remnant of regional autonomy for Catalonia.

During our stay in Barcelona, on September 20 the day broke with the characteristic sound of police helicopters hovering overhead to keep watch on the streets. News spread of the arrest of 14 mid-level functionaries of the Generalitat, including one of the main collaborators of its vice president, Oriol Junqueras of the ERC. On the pretext of searching for proof of the “diversion” of public resources in order to organize the referendum, National Police occupied several offices of the Generalitat. Early on, hundreds of people gathered in front of the Economics Ministry on the main avenue of Rambla Catalunya, where a search operation was underway. The crowd kept growing to the point where, as night fell, the media reported the presence of some 40,000 people. When the Generalitat reported the “tumultuous” nature of the crowd, the Rajoy government pounced in this to justify ordering the dispatch of another 3,000 police, to support the 4,000 that had been brought in earlier.³ Now Madrid is complaining that their cops were trapped for hours.

³ By October 1 over 10,000 police from these paramilitary units had been brought into Catalonia to stop the vote.

On the streets there were hundreds of Catalan independence flags (the *estelada*, whose design is similar to the Cuban and Puerto Rican independence flags) flying. The crowd chanted over and over, “*Votarem! Votarem!*” (we’re going to vote). You could also hear “*Catalunya antifeixista*” (Catalonia is anti-fascist) and “*Occupation troops get out!*” They were noticeably concerned to keep an appearance of respectability. A young man was berated for carrying a flag of the POUM (Workers Party of Marxist Unification) from Civil War days because it had a hammer and sickle. In contrast, along with the Catalan nationalist *estaladas* there were flags of the European Union. In the afternoon people began gathering outside the nearby headquarters of the CUP, where masked police agents were waiting for a judicial warrant in order to proceed with a search. Although the crowd outside the CUP offices was smaller, it seemed more inclined to resist. “This occurred under Franco,” they shouted. But CUP leaders labeled anyone suggesting that the vastly outnumbered cops should be driven out a provocateur.

The intensification of the repression from Madrid brought into the streets many people who defend the democratic right of the Catalans to hold a referendum of self-determination – *el dret a decidir* (the right to decide) – but wouldn’t necessarily vote for independence. This is a crucial distinction, which at a distance may seem a very fine point, but one which in Catalonia is very clear to all. According to the Baròmetre d’Opinió Política published by the Generalitat, in its most recent survey (the second in 2017) only a minority of 41% of those surveyed are for Catalonia becoming an independent state, and only 39% said they would vote for independence in a referendum, whereas 49% are against declaring independence. Given more options, only 34% favored independence – barely one-third of the population – while 31% were in favor of an autonomous community within Spain, and another 22% would like a state in a federal Spain.

Doubtless, some of those who reject independence do so because they are nostalgic for Francoism. But within the population of Catalonia, the division over independence coincides in large part with a class difference. Rejection of the independence movement is particularly widespread in the industrial region of Baix Llobregat, with its huge concentration of Spanish-speaking workers, where only 29% support

independence while 58% oppose it. Many city governments in the region, as well as in Lleida, Tarragona, Mataró and other cities, are controlled by the PSC, which is hostile to independence. In fact, a very large part of the working class of Catalonia comes from Andalucía and other regions of Spain, or from North Africa, Ecuador, the Dominican Republic and other Latin American countries. Comisiones Obreras (CC.OO.), the largest labor federation, reports that in a survey only 40% of its members in Catalonia want an independent state, while 43% want a state in a federal Spain, and 13% prefer it to be an autonomous community.

What is the explanation for this? The relative lack of support for independence among these sectors doesn’t reflect disdain for Catalans, and much less support to the neo-Francoist *españolistas*. To be clear, Catalonia is a nation with its own language, culture, economy, history and territory, and like any nation it has the right to form an independent state. However, the Catalan region of the Spanish state is by no means a homogenous nation. A linguistic survey by the Generalitat reports that Catalan is the first language of only 30% of the population – *less than a third* – while Castilian Spanish is for 55%. Add to this more than a million immigrants, representing 15% of the total population, only a tiny portion of whom speak Catalan. Many workers who speak Spanish, Arabic or Romanian feel that their rights could be limited if, for example, Catalan is made the *only* language for public affairs. And that is precisely what the pro-independence parties call for.

When our correspondent was in the industrial town of El Prat de Llobregat, speaking with union members of the CC.OO., one of them remarked that for him (born in Catalonia) and for his father (from Andalucía), Catalan is the “language of the bosses.” In reality, that is true for many. This worker told us that when he visited an office of the autonomous regional government for some matters relating to his pension, the official only spoke Catalan to him, refusing to speak in Spanish, making it hard for him to understand. This corresponds to the law for “linguistic normalization,” which seeks to force *everyone* to speak Catalan. Also, according to Law 1 of 1998, the “language of instruction and learning” must be *Catalan only*. However, the reality is quite different because many parents want their children to learn Spanish, Catalan and English. The census mentioned above reports that among youth, almost all are trilingual. But Catalan nationalists continue to seek to impose Catalan as the sole language of instruction in education.

The impulse for independence comes above all from powerful sectors of the well-to-do Catalan bourgeoisie. It’s not like some national liberation movement in a semi-colonial country. The main complaint of the Catalan bourgeoisie, repeated by the independence movement, is the so-called “*espoli fiscal*” (fiscal plundering) of Catalonia by the Spanish state. “*ESPANYA ENS ROBA!*” (Spain is robbing us) they scream. But, what does this “theft” and “fiscal plundering” consist of? It is the difference between the amount of money paid by Catalonia into the national treasury and the money received from Madrid. If it wasn’t for this deficit, they argue, “We could be one of the richest states in Europe.” The “deficit” is due in large part to the investments and official expenses in the more impoverished regions of the Spanish state,

continued on page 16

The Left in Catalonia and Independence

Today, as in the 1930s and '70s, the left groups in Catalonia that falsely claim to be socialist capitulate before one or another bourgeois formation.

A case in point is that of the group Lliuta Internacionalista (LI, Internationalist Struggle), the section of the International Unity of Workers (UIT) tendency, one wing of the followers of the late Argentine pseudo-Trotskyist Nahuel Moreno. Its slogan is “1-O, sí o sí” (October 1, One Way or Another), and on that basis they justify voting in favor of independence under the Generalitat headed by the right-wing capitalist politician Carles Puigdemont. According to these opportunists, a victory for a “Yes” vote would make it possible to establish a “Republic of the Working People” (*República dels i de les treballadores*). A “Republic of the working people” is a formula with a history. Can it be an accident that LI is repeating here the self-description of the Second Spanish Republic, whose 1931 Constitution defined it as a “Republic of the working people of all classes”? In any case, the slogan of Lliuta Internacionalista is not a revolutionary call to overthrow capitalist rule, but instead a call for a *bourgeois republic* in Catalonia, in the image of and similar to that which came about following the fall of the Primo de Rivera dictatorship in 1931.

This is further demonstrated by the fact that Lliuta Internacionalista (LI) is part of the Popular Unity Coalition (CUP, the petty-bourgeois leftist pro-independence coalition), as is the section of the main Morenoite organization, the International Workers League (LIT), Corrent Roig (Red Tendency). In the Spanish-centralist media, the CUP is often presented as an “anti-system” and even “socialist” force, and supposedly the one truly responsible for the independence process. Despite certain “socialist” rhetoric, there is nothing revolutionary about the CUP. It is not opposed to capitalism, but to “crony capitalism,” as former CUP parliamentary deputy David Fernández put it. According to Quim Arrufat, a member of the National Secretariat of the CUP, its imagined republic would be based on diversity, on the right to decide; it would be feminist, built on “sovereign solidarity.” “And in a society devastated by voracious markets, which know no limit or brake,” it would be “the republic of the people and their welfare.”¹ In other words, a capitalist Catalunya with a few touches of a (now impossible) welfare state.

In this sense, the Popular Unity Candidacy bears remarkable similarities to SYRIZA in Greece at the beginning of this decade: a populist coalition of the petty-bourgeois left which proposes to modify the anti-working-class austerity policies (but which doesn't question the system of bourgeois property), and which includes in its ranks organizations which falsely proclaim themselves socialists. We already know the outcome. Within a few years, SYRIZA turned into a bourgeois party, and finally (with

¹ “The Potentialities of a New Republic” [in Catalan], in the collection of articles, *Referendum 2017: La clau que obre el pany* [Referendum 2017: The Key That Opens the Lock].

the aid of the pseudo-socialists) it became the instrument for imposing the dictates of the Frankfurt bankers and the Brussels bureaucrats. Already the CUP has been the indispensable partner in the bosses' co-government of the PDeCAT (Catalan Democratic Party of Europe) and the ERC (Catalan Republican Left) in the Junts pel Sí (JxSí, Together for Yes) coalition, playing the role of a loyal stooge covering its left flank. This is how its supposedly socialist components have been integrated into the mechanisms of bourgeois politics.

Another group which calls itself Marxist is Izquierda Revolucionaria (IR, the Revolutionary Left), which after breaking with the International Marxist Tendency (IMT) led by Alan Woods recently affiliated with Peter Taaffe's Committee for a Workers International (CWI). In a leaflet distributed during the occupation of the main building of the University of Barcelona on September 23, its Catalan group, Esquerra Revolucionaria, called for “the right to self-determination, for a socialist Catalonia.” However, at the same time it calls for a vote in federal elections for the bourgeois populists of Podemos, and in Catalonia for its local branch, Podem, which today controls the Barcelona city government in the person of the mayor Ada Colau. IR/ER is pressuring the CUP to “put a stop to the policy of class collaboration,” ignoring the fact that it is precisely its support to the government of Puigdemont's PDeCAT which gives the CUP political relevance.

Particularly illustrative is IR/ER's conception of a “socialist republic.” According to them, such a republic “would inscribe in its constitution the nationalization of the banks and big monopolies under the democratic control of the working people, while guaranteeing the creation of millions of jobs with decent wages, with high-quality education and public health care, with the right to housing for all, through a system of accessible public housing” — all without overthrowing the capitalist state. This social-democratic pipedream reflects their origins in the Militant tendency led by Woods and Taaffe in the Labour Party in Britain. Another legacy is the illusion that police are “workers in uniform,” when in reality they are the armed fist of the bourgeoisie. This anti-Marxist conception is particularly dangerous in Catalonia today, where the Mossos d'Esquadra (the police of the Catalan autonomous region) and their chief, *Major* Trapero, are praised as heroes by Catalan nationalists.

A particular trait of the heirs of the



The image of the chief of police of the Catalonia autonomous region, Josep Lluís Trapero, with the quote: “Okay, very well. So, goodbye.” Trapero said these words when a foreign correspondent left a press conference because it was conducted partly in Catalan. They are now repeated as an Adios to Spain. Be careful of nationalist movements that have police chiefs as their heroes.

Militant tendency is to give a labourite tone to their class-collaborationist politics. The group of Woods' IMT in Spain, Lucha de Clases (Class Struggle), published a declaration today (September 29) calling on workers to participate massively in the “general strike” called for October 3, without mentioning its “civic,” multiclass character of support to Puigdemont's capitalist government. They also call to “Extend the Committees for the Defense of the Referendum,” which are led by Òmnium Cultural and the Catalan National Assembly, the extraparliamentary support groups of the PDeCAT. What they don't do is call for a struggle for *workers revolution* which would *expropriate* the capitalists, overthrow the capitalist state (including in Catalonia) and install a federation of workers republics of the Iberian Peninsula on the road to socialist revolution throughout Europe.

To complete this panorama of the main groups in Catalonia and the Spanish State who call themselves Trotskyist, *Viento Sur*, the magazine of the Anticapitalistas — the current organizational incarnation of those coming out of the tendency of the late Ernest Mandel (whose heirs call themselves the International Committee of the Fourth International) — published on September 28 a dossier dedicated to the October 1 referendum. As always enthusing over anything that moves, the Anticapitalistas are trying to find a way to join the *procès independentista*, both in Catalonia and in the rest of Spain. The article “Class, Hegemony and the Catalan Independence Movement” recognizes that “we are in the presence of a multiclass movement, in which there are workers, small property owners, government officials, politicians, professionals, small and mid-size entrepreneurs, etc., but whose relationship with the independence

movement is not determined by the economic position they occupy but rather by their adherence to the popular-nationalist project of an independent Catalonia.”

Oof! A lot of words to explain, although they don't say so clearly, that this is a *bourgeois* nationalist movement. As a result, they correctly note that “these evident limitations prevent us from speaking of the independence movement as a socially revolutionary movement, since it doesn't question the material foundations of capitalism.” But why should it? The leaders of this movement are the leaders of the traditional parties of the Catalan bourgeoisie! Despite this, the Anticapitalistas pose the need to join the movement (as they did with the Indignados in 2011²), in order to bring in “the world of labor and social movements” to “produce a ‘constituent’ force.” So the Catalan *procès* should lead to a constituent assembly in Catalonia, and in the other regions of the Spanish state, “which would contest the neoliberal ‘constituent’ agenda of the Junts pel Sí.” In other words, “our” constituent assembly versus theirs. As clear as a barrel of (unrefined) oil.

Finally there is the local group of the Fracció Trotskyista (FT, Trotskyist Faction), the Corriente Revolucionaria de Trabajadores y Trabajadoras (CRT, Revolutionary Workers Tendency), today present only as *Izquierda Diario* on the Internet, which published an article “Five Reasons Why Workers Should Support Catalonia's Right to Decide” (29 September), explaining that it was necessary to fight for a “generous democracy.” Might that be the same as the “loving republic” called for by Andrés Manuel López Obrador in Mexico together with his megacapitalist buddy Carlos Slim, which was also supported by the FT?³ They sum up by calling to “impose by means of mobilizations, strikes, self-organization and struggle, constituent processes ... which would take power out of the hands of the entrepreneurs of the IBEX35” — i.e., only from Spain's top 35 companies, not capitalism — “with the perspective of governments of the working people.” What a gratifying “perspective”! As in the case of the Mandelites, these neo-Morenoites who call for constituent assemblies here, there and everywhere seek to disguise with a lot of verbiage their social-democratic brand of stagist policies.

In the rest of the world, virtually the whole of the opportunist left is trying to hop aboard the train of the *independentista* movement, including the International Communist League (Spartacist tendency), which in its own terminal process has fervently embraced a bourgeois nationalist perspective toward Catalonia, Quebec and in multinational countries (France, Belgium) in general. But that particular and peculiar story requires separate treatment. ■

² See “Rebellion of the Outraged,” *The Internationalist* No. 33, Summer 2011.

³ See “Defeat the Union-Busting Attack on Mexican Teachers,” *The Internationalist*, August 2015. The Mexican FT section is the MTS (Socialist Workers Movement).

Catalonia...

continued from page 14

from Galicia to Andalucía. Thus the Catalan bourgeoisie is seeking independence *in order not to have to pay for the Southern poor*. This is not that different from the Lega Nord (Northern League) in Italy, which with slogans like “ROMA LADRONA” (Rome the Thief) seeks to free itself from subsidizing the southern regions (and which strongly supports independence for Catalonia).

Obviously not all backers of independence for Catalonia support this bourgeois program. However, this is a nationalist movement led by the richest bourgeoisie in Spain. Far from being a colony, if Catalonia achieves independence it will be a second-tier imperialist country. Of the three biggest Spanish banks, the two largest are of Basque capital (Banco Santander and BBVA) and the third is Catalan (CaixaBank), as is the fifth-largest (Banc Sabadell). The first two have a very strong position in Latin America. Santander and the BBVA, as good imperialist banks, are also heavily involved in military industry, as are CaixaBank and Banc Sabadell. And the Generalitat itself has subsidized a number of the 35 companies in Catalonia that make weapons. One of those subsidized is Expal, of the Maxam group, whose Turkish subsidiary manufactured explosives to be used by the “rebels” armed and financed by the imperialists in Syria, as Vice News (14 March 2016) reported.

As revolutionary Marxists, we judge democratic questions from the class standpoint of the proletariat. Concerning the question posed in the 1-O referendum, yes or no to the independence of Catalonia, we would be in favor of going to the polls, but to cast a blank ballot. Still, massive repression by Rajoy and his PP in order to prevent the holding of the referendum could radically change matters. By denying the elemental right of the population of Catalonia to decide their own fate, these crazed “ex” Francoists could provoke a clash in which there are only two sides. In that case, and particularly if it comes to a physical confrontation, the duty of revolutionaries is to stand with those fighting for the rights of the Catalans and for independence, but at the same time seeking to mobilize the working class in the struggle for power against the big bourgeoisie both of the Spanish state and of Catalonia.

Forge a Leninist-Trotskyist Workers Party!

The key is in fighting for the complete *class independence* of the proletariat from the Iberian bourgeoisie and its various national sectors. This depends above all on the working class having its own revolutionary workers party, based on defending the internationalist program of V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky, who led the October Revolution of 1917. That heritage was later betrayed by the usurpers of the nationalist bureaucracy headed by Stalin, who in rejecting the program of international socialist revolution sought to ally with sectors of the bourgeoisie. The Stalinist program of class collaboration prepared the road for the capitalist counterrevolution, which under the blows of imperialism finally destroyed the Soviet Union, the first workers state in history, during 1989-92. The same policy guided the Spanish Communist Party (PCE) during the 1930s Civil War, strangling proletarian revolution in what was the biggest class



Workers uprising during the Barcelona May Days, 1937.

struggle of the decade in Europe.

Spain is a country in whose history the Socialist and Communist parties have played a prominent, and fateful, role. After the founding of the Second Republic in 1931, a revolutionary period opened in which the working class at various points was in a situation where it could contend for power. On 18 July 1936, the coup d'état headed by Francisco Franco took place against the government of the Popular Front, a coalition in which the leaders of the reformist workers parties – the PSOE and PCE – chained the workers to capitalist politicians (whom Trotsky referred to as “the shadow of the bourgeoisie”) such as the Catalan Lluís Companys. The initial failure of the coup in the face of workers mobilization opened a revolutionary situation as the workers in the major cities, above all in Barcelona, organized workers militias and imposed workers control in various branches of industry in order to resist Franco's bonapartist assault.

The policy of the popular front subordinated the tremendous power of a mobilized working class to the capitalist policies of Companys, Manuel Azaña and other leaders of the *bourgeois* Republic. By blocking socialist revolution, they opened the way for the victory of Franco. The responsibility for this defeat falls on the Socialists led by Largo Caballero and particularly on the Stalinists, who with their Republican Guards dissolved the workers militias (as you can see in the magnificent film by Ken Loach, *Land and Freedom*) and drowned the insurrectionary proletariat in blood in the May Days (*Els Fets de Maig*) in Barcelona in 1937. But responsibility also falls in particular on the anarchists of the CNT, who participated in the Popular Front government and played a terrible role in demobilizing the workers uprising in Barcelona, and on the centrists of the POUM, who signed the Popular Front pact in the 1936 elections and whose leader Andreu Nin entered the Generalitat government of Catalonia as minister of justice.

The Spanish left today are the heirs of the popular-frontists who preserved bourgeois domination in the 1930s, and who did so again following the death of Franco when large-scale workers mobilizations opened new opportunities for socialist revolution throughout the Spanish state. In the elections to the Cortes (parliament) in 1978, the workers parties – the Unified Socialist Party of Catalunya (PSUC) and the PSC – together won an overwhelming 80% of the votes in Catalonia. In order to dis-

sipate the working-class militancy, which was expressed in common actions by the multinational and multiethnic proletariat, the Eurocommunists of the PCE and their Catalan branch, the PSUC, supported nationalist policies in Catalonia. From subordination to the bourgeois Republic in the 1930s they now passed over to defense of a monarchy in which the regional autonomy statutes served to embellish the regime of reformed Francoism.

So once again, the reformists betrayed the working class. And as in the 1930s, they were aided by the new centrists, pseudo-Trotskyist organizations (like the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria and the Liga Comunista de España) who only sought to reestablish a Generalitat “in the service of the working people,” just as Nin and the POUM sought to do 40 years earlier.

The working class in Catalonia continues to form an integral part of the working class of the Spanish state. This is shown over and over in the common actions that its different components have waged with the other regions of Spain. An important recent case is that of the struggles of education workers against Rajoy's anti-education law (the Lomce), which slashed as much as 30% of the budget in this sector. Also extremely important is the constant struggle of longshore workers throughout the peninsula, resisting anti-union policies imposed jointly by Rajoy and Puigdemont in the service of the European Union. In fact, the Barcelona dock workers gave an example of what can be done to defeat the onslaught by Rajoy by last week refusing to load or unload the cruise ships housing thousands of police.

Actions such as this should be extended and deepened. The working class should mobilize its enormous power throughout the Spanish state in order to defeat the repressive assault which is a threat to all. This could put on the agenda the issue of which class shall rule. The struggle in Catalonia against the neo-Francoist regime could make bourgeois Europe shake, but only on the condition that it is converted from a bourgeois nationalist movement into a struggle of the working class against capitalism. And that requires forging a revolutionary, Leninist and Trotskyist workers party in the heat of the battle. This is the indispensable instrument in order to turn into reality what was prevented by the Popular Front in the 1930s: a socialist revolution that crosses the Pyrenees to shake the entire Old Continent, and the world. *For an Iberian federation of workers republics, as part of a socialist united states of Europe!* ■

Mass Defiance...

continued from page 12

of massive repression unleashed by Rajoy, the place of revolutionary Marxists, those who stand on the Bolshevik program of V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky, is in the streets defending the right to self-determination and opposing police repression alongside those calling for Catalan independence, even as we fight for workers revolution. And we underline that to actually *defeat the blood-thirsty latter-day Francoists and their military-police apparatus requires mobilizing the social and economic power of the working class throughout Spain*.

What Next for Catalonia – And for Spain?

The outcome of October 1 poses a difficult situation for the Catalan *independentistas*: they do not have the military force to stand up to the Spanish state – unlike the Iraqi Kurdish leaders with their *peshmerga* army funded, trained, armed and advised by the imperialists, who held their independence referendum a week earlier. Carles Puigdemont, the *president* of the Catalan Generalitat, and his predecessor Artur Mas, together with the rest of the bourgeois Junts pel Sí (JxSí, Together for Yes) coalition have looked to the European Union (EU) for support. Having won the “war of images” with scenes of bloody cop attacks in Barcelona all over TV and social media, Puigdemont appealed to EU leaders for support in mediating. But although it made a routine condemnation of “violence” and a lukewarm appeal for “dialogue,” the EU backed the Spanish government and unequivocally stated (again) that an independent Catalonia would be “outside” the European Union, which could cripple it economically.

The population, meanwhile, continues to be mobilized. In two towns north of Barcelona, popular opposition led to the Guardia Civil being run out of local hotels. Yesterday (October 3), a civic “*aturada de país*” (countrywide work stoppage) to protest the police rampage was called by a popular front, the Taula per la Democràcia (Platform for Democracy), including the three main labor federations (CC.OO., UGT and USOC) and a number of independent unions along with employers associations, NGOs (“non-governmental organizations”) and the Catalan National Assembly and Òmnium Cultural, extraparlimentary support groups of the capitalist JxSí government. Government offices were closed (by the Catalan government), downtown Barcelona was jammed and huge marches were estimated at 300,000 people at noon and 700,000 in the evening. The world-famous Barcelona Football Club (Barça) shut down in solidarity. At the same time a “general strike” called by several smaller labor federations stopped public transportation for most of the day, while dock workers shut down the port.

As the marches dispersed, thousands of the more leftist sectors headed to the downtown National Police HQ, laying siege to the barracks for hours. Finally, around 9:30 p.m., the cops piled into their vans and took off to avoid being trapped all night. As this was happening, King Felipe VI went on TV with an unprecedented speech backing the Rajoy government to the hilt, declaring that the Catalan authorities have been “breaching the constitution and the autonomy statute” by “illegally” seeking independence, that the crown was committed to the “unity” of Spain, includ-

Internationalistische Gruppe Founded

German Section of the League for the Fourth International

On 20 August 2017, the *Internationalistische Gruppe*, German section of the League for the Fourth International, was founded in Berlin. Together with representatives of the international leadership, German supporters of the LFI discussed perspectives and tasks of the new organization and drew up its founding statement (printed below). After having published a first issue of *Permanente Revolution* as the German-language newspaper of the LFI in June (see *The Internationalist* No. 48, May-June 2017), we have added a German page of the LFI web site.

One hundred years after the Russian October Revolution, we hereby declare the founding of the Internationalistische Gruppe, German section of the League for the Fourth International, as the nucleus of the urgently needed revolutionary internationalist workers party. We undertake this step amid a continuing economic crisis encompassing the entire capitalist world with no end in sight. This crisis is particularly acute in Europe, where its consequences are felt by the oppressed and working people from Britain to Greece. Along with endless imperialist wars and the resulting refugee crisis, the upshot has been the revival of right-wing populist and fascist forces, but also the reappearance of old-school reformists like Jeremy Corbyn in the Labour Party, who however are unable to save the rotting capitalist system.

The deteriorating situation urgently calls out for a revolutionary leadership, not least in the heart of German imperialism, the political and economic center of Europe. Such a leadership cannot simply arise out of nothing

(*ex nihilo*) but must be built on the political and programmatic basis of revolutionary Marxism, i.e., Trotskyism. The founding document of Leon Trotsky's Fourth International, the Transitional Program, declared that conditions are ripe for revolution (in a capitalist system that has long since lost any progressive character and continuously subjects the world to economic crises and wars), that the crisis of humanity is reduced to the crisis of revolutionary leadership, i.e., the construction of revolutionary parties around the world. Every conceivable variety of ex-Trotskyist revisionism has dismissed this thesis as outdated, thereby abjuring the possibility of proletarian revolution as well.

This is particularly noticeable with the International Communist League (in Germany, the Spartakist-Arbeiterpartei [SpAD, Spartacist Workers Party]), which for three decades upheld the program of Trotskyism. However, following the destruction of the Soviet Union and the East European deformed workers states during 1989-92, which constituted a world-historic defeat of the proletariat, the ICL fell into abject defeatism, succumbing to the wave of bourgeois triumphalism over the supposed "death of communism." In Germany, where the ICL uniquely fought consistently against capitalist reunification and counterrevolution, this turn away from a revolutionary perspective was particularly acutely felt, leading to a sharp internal fight in 1995.

Together with a series of expulsions of veteran cadres internationally, and as part of this struggle and justification for its flight from the class struggle into abstentionism, the restructured "new leadership" of the ICL

suddenly discovered that the consciousness of the proletariat had suffered a "qualitative regression" worldwide. The expelled ICL cadres did not become demoralized, but instead formed the League for the Fourth International (with sections in Brazil, Mexico and the United States), in order to carry forward the Trotskyist program of international socialist revolution.

In subsequent years, the ICL has revised one Trotskyist position after another until in 2010 it supported the U.S. invasion of Haiti, as a supposed rescue mission after the earthquake. Some months later, the ICL itself had to renounce this self-described "social-imperialist betrayal." Later, the increasingly social-chauvinist position of the ICL leadership on the refugee crisis – refusing to take up the call for asylum for Syrian refugees, among others – led to an outbreak of internal fights.

The founding of the Internationalistische Gruppe in Germany, as well as of our sister section, the Nucleo Internacionalista d'Italia last year, goes back to this betrayal, as well as to the expulsion of the Better-Late-Than-Never Faction from the Spartacist League/U.S. in early 2016. All these comrades, veteran cadres of the ICL, have now joined the League for the Fourth International because it stands for the genuine Trotskyist program that they joined the ICL to carry out. Together we seek to intervene in the struggles of the workers and the oppressed in order to link them to the struggle for socialist revolution – in contrast to the pseudo-Trotskyists who seek to divert social and class struggles into the bourgeois parliamentary dead end.

Everywhere the need for Leninist-Trotskyist parties to expand and deepen

current struggles can be seen. While a majority of the left tailed after the swindler Alexis Tsipras in Greece and joined in his [July 2015] referendum maneuver, the LFI cut through the cynical games of the Greek government. In opposition to the social demolition plans of both the Frankfurt bankers and the bourgeois-populist SYRIZA government, the LFI called to occupy companies, ports, hospitals, etc. In the U.S., our comrades fight in the unions for workers mobilizations to stop the fascists. Thus, for example, in Portland (Oregon), where on June 4 hundreds of trade-unionists and supporters from at least 14 unions mobilized together against a racist/fascist provocation.

In Germany, the overwhelming majority of the left subordinates itself to the social-democratic Left Party (either directly as part of the membership, or as an external pressure group), which joins in administering the capitalist state at the state level. This includes supporting attacks on the unions as well as racist deportations. In order to stop the deportations of refugees, to prevent the constant Nazi provocations or to beat back the huge low-wage sector, it is necessary to mobilize the social power of the working class. This can only be led by an authentic Bolshevik party that politically combats the reformism and protectionism of the social-democratic labor misleaders and counterposes to them the perspective a socialist united states of Europe. The Internationalistische Gruppe sets as its task the building of the nucleus of this party, in the struggle for the reforging of the Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution.

Berlin, 20 August 2017

Naucher Global



Dockers shut down port of Barcelona on October 3 to protest brutal police attack on October 1 referendum.

ing Catalonia, and calling on the "legitimate powers of the State to ensure order." This bloodcurdling speech underlines the need for workers revolution to sweep away the monarchy. Instead, Puigdemont again appealed for European mediation, while repeating that the Generalitat would proceed with a unilateral declaration of independence (UDI) "in a matter of days." This afternoon, the petty-bourgeois leftist Popular Unity Candidacy (CUP), without whose votes in the Catalan *parlament* the right-wing capitalist JxSí government would fall, demanded a plenary session on Monday, October 9, to hear the results of the

vote and immediately proceed to a UDI.

The stage is set for a showdown, in which the first act may be implementing Article 155 of the Spanish Constitution, suspending the Catalan statute of autonomy. Court cases are also being prepared against Puigdemont and the entire Catalan government for "disobedience" and against the Catalan police chief for "sedition," which could lead to their arrest. This afternoon it was announced that the Madrid government's contract for the cruise ships housing Civil Guards and National Police in the harbor has been extended, that two Navy frigates will arrive in the Catalan capital on October 10, and that several convoys of army logistical units have been deployed to a base next to Barcelona, "in case, when the moment arrives, the Armed Forces and Security Corps of the State need to use the military facility" (*El Confidencial*, 4 October). A military occupation of the region may be in the offing. Maintaining it over a lengthy period, seeking to discipline a restive population with sheer terror, is another matter. Heavy-handed repression backfired and didn't stop the voting on October 1.

The focus will then be on the working class, for what counts is not images but raw power – and the key is leadership. The PSOE has played a despicable role throughout, defending the neo-Francoist PP government's ban on the self-determination referendum, praising the Guardia Civil and National Police and denouncing those who oppose these uniformed terrorists. Without the support of

these vile social democrats, Rajoy's minority government would fall. In Catalonia, the CC.OO. and UGT unions joined the call for a popular-front "civic work stoppage" but opposed the call for a general strike. The union bureaucrats made sure that key factories did not walk out, notably the SEAT auto plants, where there was only a five-minute stoppage at noon. If the brutal police assault on the population leads to a growth of support for the Catalan nationalists – whose capitalist program offers only the dead end of passive resistance – rather than mobilizing workers' power to drive out the occupation forces, it will centrally be because of the betrayal by the pro-capitalist labor fakers.

In Catalonia and Spain today – as in struggles around the globe in recent years, from Greece to Mexico, from South Africa to South America, in Ukraine and the Middle East and even in the imperialist colossus of the United States – the excruciating need is to forge a revolutionary leadership, a workers party built on the internationalist program of Lenin and Trotsky. Much of the left in Catalonia has tailed after the bourgeois nationalist independence movement, just as they habitually chase every new "movement" with little regard to its actual politics. The opportunists hope to gain popularity, but with such a tailist policy they can never *lead* a real class struggle, much less a revolution. The Fourth International was formed in 1938 in the shadow of huge defeats and in the midst of the Spanish Civil War. It sought with its tiny

forces and powerful program to resolve the crisis of revolutionary leadership. That is the task facing the League for the Fourth International today, when Catalonia is, as it was eight decades ago, a key battlefield. ■

NYC Protest...

continued from page 12

of this restive region who dared to defy the neo-Francoist Spanish government. Two days later (on October 3) there was a work stoppage throughout Catalonia as hundreds of thousands marched to denounce the vicious repression.

"We are calling for *International Workers Solidarity Against Police Repression in Catalonia* and to *Defend Catalonia's Right to Self-Determination and to Independence*, while fighting for the *United Action by the Working Class Throughout the Spanish State* against the repression. The urgency of the protest is heightened as the government appears to be preparing to cancel Catalonia's regional autonomy and impose direct rule from Madrid through a military/police occupation (army units are already being brought in)."

Other signs carried by protesters included: "Guardia Civil and National Police, Out of Catalonia!" "It's Time to Bury Francoism Now! For Workers Revolution in the Entire Iberian Peninsula!" and "Down with the Monarchy! For an Iberian Federation of Workers Republics, in a Socialist United States of Europe!" ■

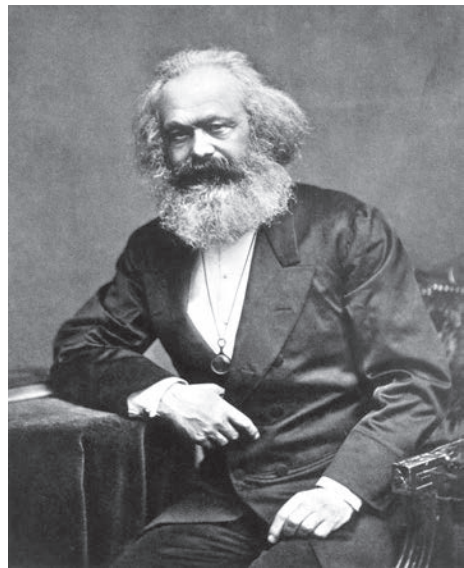
Revolutionary Internationalist

Below we print an excerpted version of the founding declaration of the Internationalist Group's newly-formed youth section, the Revolutionary Internationalist Youth, adopted at its founding meeting on 13 August 2017. The RIY will serve as a transitional organization for radical youth eager to fight for socialist revolution in the process of becoming Marxist cadre. Genuinely revolutionary youth organizations, going back to Karl Liebknecht's International Union of Socialist Youth, helped develop tomorrow's revolutionary leadership, providing a means for youth to develop their organizational and political skills. As part of the IG/LFI's fight to reforge the Fourth International, the founding of the RIY represents a significant step forward. Along with Class Struggle Education Workers, Class Struggle Workers – Portland and Trabajadores Internacionales Clasistas (Class Struggle International Workers), the RIY will develop a new layer of Marxist fighters that will strengthen the common movement for socialist revolution, of which the IG/LFI seeks to be the vanguard party.

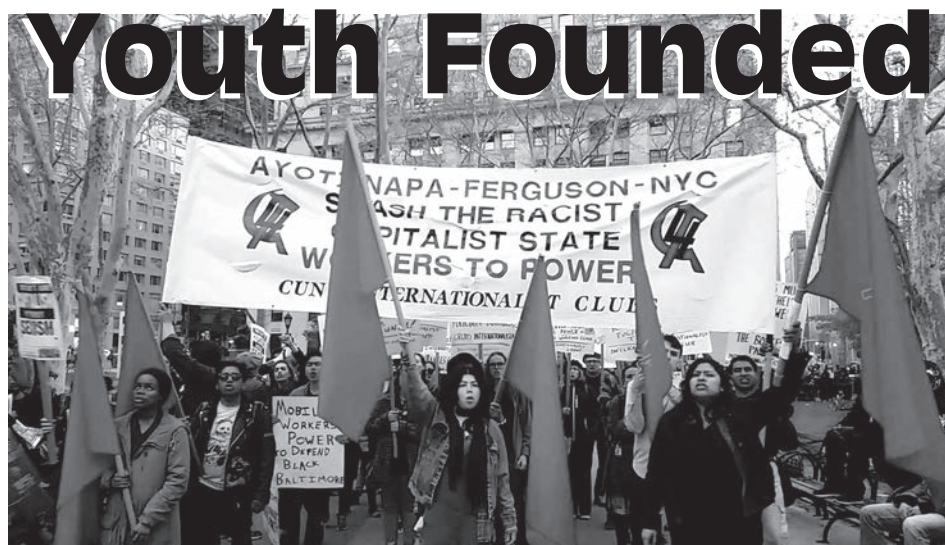
Founding Declaration of the Revolutionary Internationalist Youth

We are founding the Revolutionary Internationalist Youth as the youth section of the Internationalist Group, U.S. section of the League for the Fourth International. One hundred years after the 1917 October Revolution, the RIY will be a training ground for young revolutionaries, as part of the common movement of the IG/LFI, to carry through to victory the genuine communist program of Marx, Lenin and Trotsky. To resolve the crisis of revolutionary leadership described in Trotsky's Transitional Program, it is crucial to win youth to the fight to reforge the Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution.

The 1989-1992 counterrevolutionary destruction of the bureaucratically degenerated Soviet workers state and East European deformed workers states reestablished capitalist rule throughout the region and was a world-historic defeat for the working class. The so-called "New World Order," declared by president George H.W. Bush in 1990 on behalf of the U.S. bourgeoisie, was an assertion of imperialist might that led to the First and Second Gulf Wars, the bombing of Yugoslavia and Iraq (by Democrat Bill Clinton), and



Karl Marx



Internationalist contingent at New York City May Day 2015 march.

the wars and occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq by Bush II, and continued under Barack Obama. This imperialist offensive has been mirrored on the domestic front with a dramatic escalation of repressive measures. The police and other repressive forces of the bourgeois state murder black and Latino people with impunity, terrorize immigrant workers with deportations (over 5.5 million under Democrat Obama), and herd scabs against striking workers.

An entire generation of youth has grown up witnessing the continual wars and ongoing economic crisis of the capitalist order. After the Democrats paved the way for President Donald Trump, he has even further ramped up anti-immigrant *migra* arrests and now threatens to unleash "fire and fury like the world has never seen" on North Korea. Large numbers of youth express disillusionment with the state of U.S. society and are seeking an alternative. With numerous youth organizations that claim to be leftist channeling radical-minded youth back into bourgeois politics, there is an urgent need for an authentic Leninist-Trotskyist youth organization, based on the program of world socialist revolution.

Many young people active today were galvanized by the election of Barack Obama in 2008, having bought into the illusion of "Hope and Change" that he campaigned on. Instead of "Hope and Change" there was unrelenting war, privation and racist terror under Wall Street's hand-picked Democrats. The high-profile murders of Oscar Grant by Oakland cops, Trayvon Martin by racist vigilante George Zimmerman, Michael Brown by police in Ferguson, Missouri, Freddie Gray by the Baltimore PD, Eric Garner by the NYPD, and countless others highlighted that the system is racist to its very core, including with a black president at its helm.

The world capitalist economic crisis of 2008 that continues today flung millions of people into desperate conditions. Young people, many with college degrees, struggle to make ends meet by working multiple part-time, low-paying jobs and are saddled with unpayable college debt. Meanwhile the capitalist government spared no expense in keeping the parasitic financial institutions responsible for the crisis afloat – to the tune of trillions of dollars. As the working class and poor took the brunt of the damage, the glorified thieves on Wall Street got golden parachute severance packages and millions of dollars in bonuses and raises.

The economic crisis in particular has

contributed to significant shifts in a country where virulent anti-communism was once the norm and even "socialism" was long considered a dirty word. A 2016 Harvard Institute of Politics poll found that 51% of people aged 18-29 now say they "do not support" capitalism, and 33% say they "support socialism." While what this means is doubtless ill-defined for most, these figures do represent a growing desire among youth for an alternative to the chaos, violence and increasing destructiveness of capitalism in the age of imperialist decay.

Development of Internationalist Youth Work

After the Internationalist Group's foundation in 1996, it won an important layer of immigrant worker activists, but initial efforts at systematic youth work faced many obstacles. This began to change with the largely successful Internationalist-initiated campaign in Fall 2001 to defeat the "war purge" undertaken by the administration of the City University of New York, which sought to drive thousands of undocumented students out of CUNY by massively increasing their tuition, as part of the "post-9/11" anti-immigrant witch hunt and preparation for the Afghanistan war. (See Internationalist pamphlet *Defend Immigrant Students! Stop CUNY's "War Purge"!* [2001].) The CUNY Internationalist Clubs were born from this campaign and in September 2003 began publishing their newspaper, *Revolution* – which will now be the political organ of both the Internationalist Clubs and the RIY.

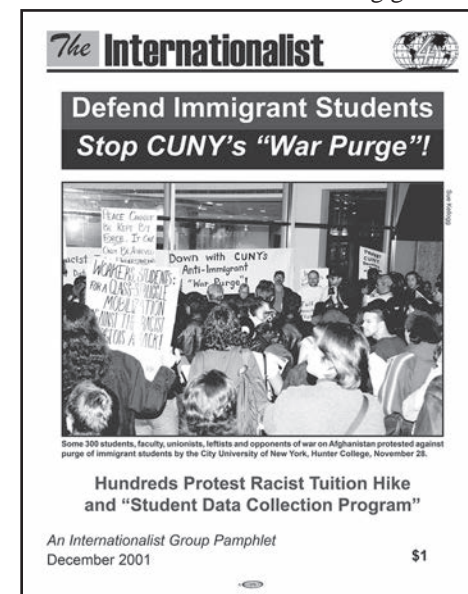
Swimming against the stream, Internationalist youth activists combated any support to the Democrats, the party of Hiroshima, the Bay of Pigs and the Vietnam war; and fought for the Leninist principle of defeat of "one's own" imperialist ruling class and defense of the semi-colonial countries oppressed by imperialism. This included promoting the IG's call for workers strikes against the war; dismissed by the opportunist left at the time, it proved key to the May Day 2008 longshore workers strike that shut down all 29 West Coast ports in protest against the Afghanistan and Iraq wars.

The fight to put the revolutionary-internationalist program into practice meant intensive political struggle against a panoply of social-patriotic and popular-front groups pushing class collaboration with hoped-for "antiwar" sectors of the bourgeoisie. This included the various "antiwar" fronts promoted by the International Socialist Orga-

nization (ISO), Workers World Party and its split the Party for Socialism and Liberation, Bob Avakian's cultish Maoist Revolutionary Communist Party, Socialist Action, and many others. Key to the development of Internationalist recruits in this period was the struggle against the rightward-moving centrist politics of the Spartacist League, which, demoralized by the destruction of the USSR, had abandoned Trotskyism and now raged hysterically against the Internationalist Group for upholding the call to defeat U.S. imperialism and carry out workers strikes against the war.

As Revolutionary Internationalist Youth comrades learned in our study of the history of Marxist youth organizations, from their inception the struggle against imperialist militarism has been a crucial part of their work. This was reflected in the formative years of the CUNY Internationalist Clubs, which waged a successful campaign to drive military recruiters out of Bronx Community College where they sought to prey on the predominantly immigrant, black and Latino student population. Our successful campaign to spike a sinister "Homeland Security" course at CUNY's Borough of Manhattan Community College further cemented the Clubs' reputation as effective Marxist organizers.

This accumulated experience proved invaluable when Internationalist youth activists faced the challenge of organizing protests against the CUNY administration's provocative political decision to hire former general David Petraeus, ex-commander of the Iraq/Afghanistan wars and former CIA chief, to teach an "honors" course (on ethics!) in the Fall of 2013. The Internationalist Clubs launched a campaign of protest and exposure that led to the establishment of the united-front Ad Hoc Committee Against the Militarization of CUNY, which carried out protests demanding "War Criminal Petraeus, Out of CUNY Now!" Throughout the course of this struggle, which faced brutal police repression, activists attracted to the Internationalist Clubs learned valuable lessons about state repression and the nature of academic institutions as training grounds



The story of the November 2001 united-front protest, initiated by the Internationalist Group, against the attempt to drive immigrant students out of CUNY as part of the "war effort" after 9/11. As a result of the mobilization, the exclusionary tuition increase was largely rolled back.

for future state and corporate functionaries.

CUNY's violent repression against Petraeus protests followed the notorious police attack on students protesting tuition hikes in 2011. Together with the administration's attempts to ram through an "expressive conduct" policy to stop student protest, this highlighted the importance of our demands to *abolish the administration and Board of Trustees* and establish democratically elected student-teacher-worker committees to run the schools, which are linked to our call for *open admissions with no tuition and living stipends* so students from working-class and poor families can afford to study. For these demands to be met, the power of the multiracial working class must be brought into the fight, together with massive mobilization by students, faculty and campus workers, and immigrant, African American and other key sectors with a vital interest in defending public education for their daughters and sons, from kindergarten through college. Public education is a crossroads of class and race in capitalist America; here too the fight to unchain workers power from all bourgeois parties, and build a revolutionary workers party that can champion the cause of all the oppressed, is key to the Trotskyist program.

Marxism vs. the Opportunist Left

Bernie Sanders' presidential campaign set off a frenzied race by the opportunist left to determine who would be the best at building illusions in this bourgeois politician, whom they claimed as a fellow "socialist," while hailing his "political revolution" to revitalize the Democratic Party. With a sliding scale of opportunism, Socialist Alternative (best known for its entirely reformist "socialist city councilperson" in Seattle) openly built the Sanders campaign; the ISO hailed Sanders as a "socialist" while urging him to run as an independent; and numerous smaller groups tailed along.

However, it was the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) that came out ahead, going from a marginal force to claiming 25,000 members as a result of the Sanders campaign and Trump's election. Having operated as part of the Democratic Party since its inception in the Max Shachtman-Michael Harrington "Realignment Caucus" of Norman Thomas' State Department Socialist Party, the DSA exemplifies the counterrevolutionary politics of social democracy, and exults in calling the cops on communists. Given the large number of raw youth drawn to the group, it is necessary to explain these long-established facts to those who mistakenly believe joining the DSA or its youth affiliate may have something to do with socialism.

Dwarfed by its brethren in the DSA but still a significant opponent of revolutionary Marxism is the ISO, whose lineage goes back to Tony Cliff's "state capitalist" tendency in Britain. This is a variant of the "Third Camp" social democracy pioneered by Max Shachtman, who renounced the Fourth International's defense of the gains of October and – despite its bureaucratic degeneration under Stalin – of the Soviet workers state, moving inexorably to openly embrace "democratic" imperialism.

In line with its "Third Camp" pro-imperialist heritage the ISO hailed the destruction of the USSR, claims the remaining bureaucratically deformed workers states (China, Cuba, North Korea, Vietnam) are capitalist, and complains that U.S.



CUNY Internationalist Clubs speak-out against racist police terror, 30 August 2016.

imperialism is not giving enough support to "democratic" forces in Syria (cut-throat jihadists) and Ukraine (outright fascists).

Proletarian Revolution and the Struggle Against Special Oppression

With the murder of Michael Brown and Eric Garner by police in the summer of 2014, a wave of protests, led primarily by the Black Lives Matter movement, swept the country. A series of militant speak-outs at Hunter College led by the Internationalist Clubs, together with vibrant Internationalist contingents in the demonstrations that fall and the following spring, attracted a new layer of activists, many of whom now form the founding membership of the RIY. Our slogan "Only Revolution Can Bring Justice" was often taken up by others during these demonstrations, and was sharply counterposed to pseudo-leftists' calls for "justice" through the bourgeois courts and illusory recipes to reform the armed first of the bourgeois state. Our forthright *communist* position on these burning questions attracted students who subjectively wanted to end racist oppression, but had up until that point only encountered the various



"Only Revolution Can Bring Justice!" CUNY Internationalist Clubs, Class Struggle Education Workers and Internationalist Group protest racist grand jury verdict letting off NYC cops who murdered Eric Garner, December 2014.

reformist outfits.

As radicalizing young people sought to identify the roots of racist repression, the Marxist program for black liberation through socialist revolution has been front and center in our work. Students attending their first demonstrations, seeing with their own eyes how the police were "serving and protecting" racist capitalism under the first African American president, would often go straight from the protests to our 16-session "Marxism and Black Liberation" study group. The

experiences of the day helped illustrate the Marxist program to mobilize workers power in the revolutionary fight to uproot the material basis of oppression. Our *revolutionary* working-class politics have contrasted sharply with *reformist* "identity politics" which serve as a glue for "unity" with Democratic Party politicians.

This form of bourgeois ideology feigns a fight against oppression through "check-your-privilege" liberal idealism and is systematically imbued among university students, including many of those who see themselves as radical. It is used to deepen the wedge between different sectors of the workers and oppressed, claiming to unite those who share a sectorally defined identity, including members of the exploiting class. The long-standing feminist slogan "Sisterhood is Powerful" is a classic example, as if Hillary Clinton or former First Lady Michelle Obama could be the "sisters" of women workers in the Clintons' Haitian sweatshops, immigrants deported by Barack Obama, mothers whose children were killed by his drones, or strikers targeted by the anti-labor laws the bourgeois politicians enforce. Ostensibly radical versions (including the phantasmagorical "proletarian feminism"

some Maoists go on about) give left cover to this bourgeois ideology rather than forthrightly explaining how it can never be a program for actually winning liberation.

The liberal/reformist program of class collaboration is manifested both in the form of "color-blind" Sanders-style populism and in the form that undercuts real struggle against oppression by presenting it as a matter of atomized identities. Both are diametrically opposed to the Marxist program, integral to proletarian revolution, to unite the exploited and oppressed in *revolutionary class struggle* to uproot every

form of "special" or double (and triple) oppression. As Lenin stressed in *What Is To be Done?* (1902), the workers party can be genuinely revolutionary only if it serves as the "tribune" or champion of all the oppressed, carrying out special work to combat special oppression, and making the fight against it the cause of the entire proletariat – the class whose "radical chains" can only be destroyed through emancipation of *all* the oppressed.

One of the strongest points of the Internationalist Clubs has been the development of a multiracial core of young communist women activists. This is partly the product of our many activities centered on the Marxist program for women's liberation, including intensive study group series and forums, presenting the historical materialist analysis of women's subjugation in the family. This can be overcome only by creating social institutions freeing women from age-old domestic servitude, a key aspect of the overall program of socialism going back even before Marx and Engels. To carry out this task requires overthrowing the capitalist system and building a society based on human needs, not profit.

As Trump sought to impose his vile anti-Muslim and anti-refugee ban, and anti-immigrant attacks multiplied, our youth comrades were heavily involved in the massive airport protests and street demonstrations, putting forward the Internationalist call to mobilize the working class while warning that "you can't fight Trump with Democrats." At CUNY and elsewhere this work included initiating committees in defense of immigrants and Muslims; holding speak-outs and organizing meetings on this issue; and helping build and publicize crucial mobilizations like Portland Labor Against the Fascists in June 2017 and class-struggle contingents in other protests against the escalating racist and white-supremacist provocations.

Revolutionary Class Independence Key

Both in the period leading up to, and after the 2016 election, the political experience we gained as young communists was crucial to our ability to expose the bourgeois politician Bernie Sanders and his opportunist cheerleaders. Sanders' presidential campaign cynically played on the desperation felt by many, channeling youth *back* into the Democratic Party in support of Hillary Clinton when he lost the nomination. The same youth who took part in Occupy Wall Street in 2011, demonstrated against the racist police murders of Michael Brown, Eric Garner and Freddie Gray, and again against the police occupation of Ferguson and Baltimore, were played by this capitalist politician spouting populist rhetoric about "the 99%." Throughout, the CUNY Internationalist Clubs unmasked "Bernie" as a capitalist politician shepherding people back into the Democratic Party, when *breaking with the Democrats* and all capitalist politicians and parties (including minor-league ones like the Greens) is the urgent task of the working class and oppressed.

Founding the RIY

The time to found the Revolutionary Internationalist Youth is now. On the basis of the struggles and experience of the preceding years, which cohered a nucleus of Marxist revolutionaries in training who are dedicated to fighting for socialist revolution, we began systematic preparations in

continued on page 22

Cops, Prison and Security Guards Out of the Labor Movement!

DSA Debacle Over Cop “Union” Organizer

In early August, the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) held a national convention in Chicago that caused a sensation among the reformist left and got oodles of favorable publicity in much of the mainstream bourgeois press. Long a staid and seemingly moribund pressure group on and in the Democratic Party, the DSA boasts of rising to 25,000 members and growing due to the combined impact of Bernie Sanders’ bid to win the Democratic nomination and the election of Donald Trump. The DSA has sought to give itself a more “progressive” makeover appealing to its new millennial base, even as these social democrats repeatedly called the cops on an Internationalist sales team for selling revolutionary literature outside the convention (see the introduction to “The ABCs of the DSA,” *The Internationalist*, August 2017).

Then came the Danny Fetonte scandal. A long-time leader of the DSA’s Austin, Texas branch, Fetonte was elected to the organization’s National Political Committee at this year’s convention. Endorsed by vice-chair Joseph Schwartz and other DSA leaders, Fetonte put particular emphasis on the growth of the Austin chapter and his role in “building the Bernie Campaign,” noting that “37 out of the 75 Bernie delegates to the Democratic National Convention from Texas were DSA members,” as well as touting his “years as a union organizer” (“NPC Candidates,” dsaconvention.org).

Less than a week after the DSA’s convention closed in a crescendo of self-congratulation, the group erupted in full-blown crisis over the “revelation” that Fetonte’s vaunted organizing career included working for a cop “union,” the Combined Law Enforcement Associations of Texas (CLEAT). In fact, Fetonte’s role as an organizer for CLEAT was far from a secret. Publicity about his activity in the Sanders campaign touted his CLEAT connection, as reflected in articles in the *Austin Villager* (11 December 2015) and *American-Statesman* (15 August 2016).

Yet for many new members, it came as a shock, particularly since the DSA convention had just passed a resolution for “abolition of the prisons and the police.” While such a call is completely illusory without socialist revolution, it reflected the widespread revulsion against racist police terror that led to mass protests after the cop murders of Eric Garner, Michael Brown and so many others. Many DSAers worried that Fetonte’s election would hurt work with “coalition partners” in Black Lives Matter.

Over the following weeks the Fetonte affair tied the DSA in knots, while also shedding an uncomfortable light on the crowd of opportunist leftists doggedly tailing them. Amidst the myriad statements and counter-statements by groupings within the DSA, a common theme was what a group of labor bureaucrats described, in a statement supporting Fetonte, as “DSA’s



Danny Fetonte (front left), together with Bernie Sanders. Fetonte, who was long-time leader of the Austin, Texas branch of the Democratic Socialists of America, was for years an organizer for a cop “union,” the Combined Law Enforcement Associations of Texas (CLEAT). Police are the enforcers of racist capitalist repression. Cops, prison and security guards out of the unions!

image as a ‘big tent’ that does not seek to impose stringent ideological litmus tests on its members.” In the anti-communist social-democratic milieu, this is contrasted to the supposed evils of Leninist “democratic centralism.”

As Rosa Luxemburg emphasized in *Reform or Revolution*, the counterposition between revolutionary Marxism and social-democratic reformism centers precisely on the question of the state. The idea that cops – the armed fist of the bourgeoisie – are “workers,” and that organizations devoted to representing their interests are “labor unions,” is characteristic of social democracy. It is the ideological reflection of social democrats’ role as real or would-be administrators of the capitalist state.

Cops of all kinds are not workers – they are professional enforcers of racist capitalist repression. Marxists fight for the elementary demand: Cops, prison and security guards out of the unions!

Post-Convention Turmoil

Many members of the DSA learned of the Fetonte scandal as they were traveling home from the Chicago convention. On August 8, the Interim Steering Committee elected by the new National Political Committee (NPC) issued a statement declaring that it would “investigate the facts of the matter” and was “moving towards a solution that emphasizes due process and transparency.” Some DSA members started an online petition opposing Fetonte; a number of local chapters and groupings within the organization submitted protests calling on Fetonte to resign or be removed from the NPC. Many of these calls focused on Fetonte’s failure to mention his CLEAT connection in his 2017 NPC campaign materials – though at a raucous Austin meeting on the scandal, his wife

reportedly stated he had done so when running for the NPC in 2015.

Fetonte lashed out with denunciations of the leadership for showing “no moral courage” in the face of these demands. This complicated things for the DSA tops. They knew that as a minimum to appease the membership they would need to “censure” Fetonte, and tried mightily to negotiate with Fetonte to get him to resign so that they would not have to vote on his removal from the NPC. The negotiations did not work, Fetonte refused to acknowledge any deception or “wrongdoing.” In fact, Fetonte wrote, “some NPC members were afraid that what

would come out is that they knew every bit of my history working for CLEAT,” as “there was ample evidence that my work history and my connections with law enforcement were widely known.” Moreover, he stated, “Texas DSA has at least a dozen members who organize or work with law enforcement” and “has a past NPC member” (whom he did not identify) who “organized police and correctional officers” while serving on the NPC.

Reflecting his links with much of the DSA’s old guard, Fetonte positioned himself as a defender of the organization’s mission of pressuring the Democrats: “I gained votes by a strong advocacy for a DSA strategy of working inside and outside the Democratic Party and opposed the position that DSA should only support socialist candidates. I gained support because I opposed DSA isolating ourselves from the millions of Bernie supporters” who are working together “with other progressive[s] in the Democratic Party.” Though just about everybody weighing in on the question swore fealty to the social-democratic framework of “big tent” reformism, Fetonte sought to portray his opponents as the sort of dreaded “sectarians” and “dogmatists” that DSAers are taught to revile, denouncing them as leftist “extremists.”

On August 27, the NPC issued a statement announcing that it had voted to censure Fetonte but that a vote to remove him from the body had failed by a vote of 8.5 to 7.5; 11 votes would have been needed to oust him. The statement censures Fetonte for “omitting what would likely have been relevant information in his campaign materials” but states that the NPC did not find him guilty of any “malfeasance” that would be grounds for removal. Strikingly, among those backing the decision were some key

figures of the DSA “left,” including two of the three members of the Momentum Caucus (which claims to be Marxist) on the NPC. Additionally, a “Statement by DSA Members of Color” cited the “pluralistic” nature of the DSA and the fact that “we are not a democratic centralist organization” as grounds for declaring that “we support the NPC’s decision not to remove [Fetonte] for malfeasance.”

A minority of the NPC issued a statement criticizing the decision as “a stunning failure of leadership on [the] part of those on the NPC who were unable to act decisively on an issue that gets to the core values of what it means to be a socialist and fight against racist oppression in our society. Those members chose to seat an unapologetic police association organizer – an institution of violence and terror against Black and Brown and working class people since its inception.” At the same time, the NPC minority’s declaration that “an unapologetic police association organizer cannot be anywhere near the leadership of a socialist organization” tacitly accepts that cop “union” members or promoters could be in the DSA so long as they’re not on leadership bodies.

In a sharply-worded description of the turmoil over Fetonte, a disgruntled New Mexico DSAer wrote:

“Finally, after some dawdling, the NPC voted to keep him. This isn’t surprising.... First, the DSA’s origins aren’t as far left as many believe. To be crude, Michael Harrington founded the organization in the 1970s to force the Democrats further left. Look at the Democratic Party. Teddy Roosevelt on horseback in the Spanish-American War is farther to the left than the Democratic Party. And having police collaborators on the NPC wouldn’t be a first for the DSA.”

–“How the DSA Screwed Up with Danny Fetonte,” pastemagazine.com (1 September)

True enough – as the history of Harrington, his “State Department Socialist” colleague and mentor Norman Thomas et al. amply demonstrates. But how many of those revolted by this episode, and this history, can make the necessary break from social democracy to embrace revolutionary Marxism remains to be seen.

As for Fetonte, the cop organizer evidently decided to cut his losses and try to have the last word. On September 8 he issued a letter of resignation from the DSA in which he petulantly portrays himself as the victim of “factionalists” and “DSA extremists” (sic!) with “less than one year” in the organization. Underscoring his pro-cop stand, he admonishes: “We should look to the examples of law enforcement organizations in Sweden and the law enforcement union in South Africa.” In Sweden, police snatch squads have been resisted as they go after youths in immigrant neighborhoods of Stockholm (most recently this past Feb-

ruary) and Malmö (on September 8). In South Africa, the POPCRU police “union” has defended the killer cops who gunned down dozens of striking mine workers in the 2012 Marikana massacre (see “Bloody South Africa Mine Massacre Unmasks ANC Neo-Apartheid Regime,” *The Internationalist*, August 2012).

While many in the DSA no doubt hope to return to patting themselves on the back for a “successful” convention, “stunning” growth and the like, the issues posed in the Fetonte affair will not go away. For starters, in New York City the DSA is proudly proclaiming its central role in the City Council election campaign of Khader El-Yateem, a DSA member running in the Democratic primaries in Brooklyn in what his campaign manager calls “a battle for the soul of the Democratic Party” (*Village Voice*, 5 September). El-Yateem is a *clergy liaison for the New York Police Department*. At a public forum on the election last spring, he “called on NYPD to allocate more police officers to the 68th Precinct in Bay Ridge, which he said was chronically understaffed, so that more cops could patrol the streets” (*Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 20 April).

In addition, DSA member Marc Flidner is running for District Attorney in Brooklyn (*Village Voice*, 8 September). Flidner has been an Assistant D.A. for almost 30 years and praised his former boss, D.A. Charles Hynes, notorious for numerous bogus convictions in which evidence was manufactured or withheld, and accusations of racist favoritism. District attorneys are linchpins of the police-prosecutor-prison system of capitalist state repression, and now a DSAer is trying to fill that slot.

Police “Unions”: Deadly Enemies of the Working Class

As the Class Struggle Education Workers (CSEW), which is fraternally allied with the Internationalist Group, stated in a 2014 pamphlet, police, prison guards and security guards:

“are not fellow workers but the bosses’ agents of repression – ‘producers’ only of repression for the owning class against the working class, poor and oppressed. Whether public or private, proprietary or contract, police and guards of all kinds seek ‘unionization’ to improve and strengthen their position to ‘do their job’ of repression, which in the racist USA, founded on slavery, falls most heavily on doubly and triply oppressed African American, Latino and immigrant poor and working people and youth.”

The pamphlet notes that the Patrolman’s Benevolent Association (PBA) filed suit even against the toothless “anti-profiling” law enacted in New York City in 2013, and that “for years, contracts negotiated by the PBA included the notorious ‘48-hour rule,’ which required the city to wait two full days before questioning officers involved in ‘police-related occurrences’ – like shooting down black and Latino youth” (*Campus Protest, Capitalist “Security” and the Program of Class Struggle*).

In contrast, liberals and social-democratic reformists routinely support the police. In August 2014, following the racist police murder of Eric Garner, the Movement of Rank-and-File Educators (MORE), an opposition caucus in the United Federation of Teachers (UFT), refused to support a protest march in Staten Island and issued a statement grotesquely calling for “the leaderships of the UFT and PBA to

find ways to work together and unite” with “our brother and sister officers.” In contrast, the CSEW marched with signs denouncing racist police terror and the threats of the fascistic PBA chief Pat Lynch to defend the cops who choked Garner to death (see “MORE Takes a Stand ... With the Police,” in *The Internationalist* No. 38, October-November 2014).

It comes as no surprise that in Texas, the CLEAT cop “union” boasts that “effective legal representation” for police is one of the main benefits it offers. The statement on Fetonte by the minority of the DSA NPC noted:

“Fetonte had a direct hand in building police association power which was used by killer cops to cover for their actions. Fetonte organized the Bexar County Sheriff Deputies and successfully bargained a contract that included terms allowing officers under investigation to see all evidence before making a statement. Officers in the department Fetonte organized used that contract he negotiated to view all evidence against them after they shot and killed a man. They then made statements which omitted the fact that the man they shot had his hands up. It wasn’t until another video was released later that the truth came out, but to no effect. That was police union power in action, power which Fetonte helped to organize.”

Moreover, “during the time Fetonte worked at CLEAT, an officer raped a handcuffed woman in the back of a squad car and the officer’s CLEAT local spent \$1 million dollars in a public campaign to prevent changes to the police union contract that would’ve held the rapist accountable....”

The statement notes that CLEAT opposes “even the most tepid of reform legislation, including the Sandra Bland Act which would’ve put limits on racial profiling by police” and “is currently supporting a bill which would limit the liability of motorists who hit protesters with their vehicles.” What this means is shown by the murder of Heather Heyer in Charlottesville by a Nazi who rammed his car into a crowd of anti-fascist protesters.

In “doing their job” of representing the interests of capitalism’s uniformed enforcers, police “unions” are, and can only be, deadly enemies of the most basic interests of the working class and oppressed. The “special bodies of armed men” that, as Friedrich Engels pointed out, are the core of the capitalist state, cannot be reformed, and the idea that police and prisons could be abolished under capitalism is the sort of feel-good reformist illusion that stands in the way of the struggle to actually smash the machinery of racist repression in the only way possible: through socialist revolution.

In Brazil, our comrades of the Liga Quarta-Internacionalista do Brasil led a struggle to oust *guardas* (police) from the Municipal Workers Union of Volta Redonda, the “Steel City” with a history of convulsive workers struggles. (See Internationalist pamphlet *Class Struggle and Repression in Volta Redonda Brazil – Cops, Courts Out of the Unions* [1997].) In Latin America, as in the U.S., reformists often claim that police are “workers in uniform,” going so far as to support “strikes” by the Military Police and military firemen in Brazil, police mutinies in Bolivia, etc. The same line is taken by social democrats in France, Sweden and other European countries, who have often taken the lead

in organizing “unions” of the police forces they administer when their capitalist masters let them take their turn in office.

Bolshevik revolutionary Leon Trotsky responded to similar arguments raised by the Social Democratic Party (SPD) in Germany, which took on the task of administering capitalism’s repressive forces when defeat in World War I faced the ruling class with the threat of red revolution. (It was then that SPD leaders Friedrich Ebert, Philipp Scheidemann and their “bloodhound” Gustav Noske ordered the murder of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht.) As the social democrats looked to the Prussian police, which included quite a few former social-democratic workers, to resist the rise of Hitler’s Nazis, Trotsky emphasized, “The worker who becomes a policeman in the service of the capitalist state is a bourgeois cop, not a worker” (*What Next? Vital Questions for the German Proletariat* [1932]).

Today, the Fetonte affair poses a bit of a dilemma for left groups seeking to ingratiate themselves with the DSA. All of them chimed in with the chorus of exaltation over the DSA conference, hailing the social democrats’ growth, “moves to the left,” etc., while mixing in a suggestion here, a bit of face-saving criticism there. In one way or another, they seek to avoid having the DSA monopolize the opportunist benefits of being “Sanders socialists,” hoping that cozying up to the DSA – while positioning themselves a wee bit to the left on the social-democratic spectrum – will help them get in on the action.

The most prominent of these outfits is Socialist Alternative (SAIt), best known for its thoroughly reformist “socialist city councilperson” in Seattle, Kshama Sawant. SAIt – which holds that cops are workers – puts forward a recipe for police “reform” in which “elected civilian review boards” would take responsibility for the “priorities” and budget of capitalism’s police apparatus. As we noted, in 2014 Sawant

“praised the process of hiring a new police chief, saying it was ‘positive ... that a woman will be at the head of what has been and still is a male-dominated bastion.’ She hailed the new top cop’s ‘openness’ and ‘commitment to build a relationship with the community,’ as well as her ‘tiered approach for policing protests,’ so that riot police will only be deployed ‘if absolutely necessary.’”

–“Black America Under the Gun,” *The Internationalist* No. 48, May-June 2017

The position of the Committee for a Workers International (CWI), to which SAIt is affiliated, that police are supposedly workers is shared by the International Marxist Tendency, which likewise has its origins in the Militant tendency of Ted Grant, which buried itself in the British Labour Party for four decades. Their position on cops is far from abstract: both the CWI and the IMT hark back to the days when Grant’s Militant Labour ran the Liverpool city council in the 1980s, when claiming the cops were “fellow workers” was all in a day’s work (see “Her Majesty’s Social



Brazilian Trotskyists waged hard struggle to oust police from municipal workers union in Volta Redonda, Brazil. At July 1996 rally, signs say: “Bourgeois courts, get out of our union,” “Bosses’ courts, military police and municipal guardas out of the union.”

Democrats in Bed with the Police,” *The Internationalist* No. 29, Summer 2009).

Even some groupings that have taken up the call for police out of the unions (like *Left Voice*, associated with the right-centrist Fracción Trotskista led by the Argentine Partido de Trabajadores por el Socialismo) evade the question of security guards, who are “unionized” by the Service Employees International Union, among others. For its part, while laudably issuing a call in 2015 for the AFL-CIO to break its affiliation to the International Union of Police Associations, United Auto Workers Local 2865 (which represents student employees at the University of California) did not call for removing security guards from the labor movement.

Yet as the Class Struggle Education Workers pamphlet demonstrates in detail, security guards are a key sector of the bourgeoisie’s repressive forces that works closely with the “regular” police. Moreover, the pamphlet notes, “in many circumstances, the ‘private’ basis of their authority enhances security guards’ legal powers”: among other things, they are not required to read Miranda rights to those they detain.

The Fetonte episode is a vivid illustration of a simple fact: the DSA is not, has never been and never will be a means to overthrow this capitalist system of racist police terror, war and exploitation. However much it seeks to accommodate its new millennial base, the DSA’s politics remain thoroughly reformist – in other words, a means for accommodating would-be radicals to the capitalist state, as it seeks endlessly to pressure the Democratic Party to the left. Illusions that an influx of new members would “transform” the DSA crashed into reality just days after its big-convention ever.

The flare-up over Fetonte should bring home to thoughtful activists the bankruptcy of groups that use “socialist” as a buzzword while disdaining the key questions of principle, program and history that have divided reformists from revolutionaries since the days of Marx and Engels’ Communist Manifesto. For those who actually do want to fight for socialism, it’s high time to ditch the DSA. ■



Revolution, the newspaper of the Revolutionary Internationalist Youth and the CUNY Internationalist Clubs. Comes with subscription to The Internationalist. (See subscription blank on page 23.)

RIY...

continued from page 19

Fall 2016. The founding comrades have carried out a systematic study of the history and important documents of past Marxist youth groups. This has included the pre-WWI international socialist youth movement and the emergence from it of the early Communist youth movement; how Stalinization turned youth groups attached to the Communist Party into popular-frontist auxiliaries to the Democratic Party; Trotskyist youth work in the 1930s; the origins and development in the late 1950s and early '60s of the Young Socialist Alliance, out of which the founding cadre of the once-revolutionary Spartacist League (SL) emerged; and key aspects of the SL's own youth work in the period when it still upheld the Trotskyist program.

The SL youth group, the Revolutionary Communist Youth (whose name was later changed to Spartacus Youth League), was established in 1970 as the break-up of the 1960s New Left led new layers to be won to Trotskyism, which the SL represented at that time. Codifying key aspects of the political tradition of Trotskyism, the RCY's founding documents, published in the pamphlet *Youth Class and Party* (1971), provide an important basis for the program and organizational practice of the RIY.

For nearly three decades, the Spartacist tendency upheld the legacy of revolutionary Trotskyism. This was expressed on a very wide range of burning issues. A key test came in the struggle against the capitalist reunification of Germany, in which it uniquely fought against the counterrevolutionary destruction of the DDR (East German deformed workers state), followed by the fight against capitalist counterrevolution in the USSR itself.

Having fought to put Trotsky's program into practice, the SL and the International Communist League it led were profoundly demoralized and disoriented when the imperialists succeeded in destroying the Soviet bloc, triumphantly proclaimed a "New World Order" and declared the "death of communism." Having lost faith in the working class's ability to make a revolution, the SL bought into the imperialists' propaganda offensive and has adapted itself to life under capitalism. They turned

their back on the historic work in Germany, adopting the Shachtman-like line that the Stalinist bureaucracy itself "led the counterrevolution"; vilely accused the IG of "anti-Americanism" for upholding the Leninist position to defeat U.S. imperialism; renounced the elementary Leninist call for the independence of Puerto Rico and all colonies; *supported* the U.S. imperialist invasion of Haiti in 2011 (later renouncing this as an admittedly social-patriotic betrayal while refusing to discuss its origins in their other capitulations to their "own" imperialist rulers); and now refuse to call for rights of asylum for Syrian refugees trying to enter Europe (or the U.S.). The Spartacist League is now a shadow of its former self, having abandoned the revolutionary perspective over two decades ago.

We recognize "the youth" do not form a distinct class, and therefore do not possess independent social power. The principal division of society is the *class* division, and young people may align with one of the two principal classes – proletarian or bourgeois. As Marxists, we understand that in capitalist society only the working class has the power to uproot the causes of exploitation and oppression by taking power through a socialist revolution, and such a revolution can only be led by the *revolutionary vanguard party* – the Leninist-Trotskyist party. As the U.S. section of the League for the Fourth International, the Internationalist Group (IG) seeks to build the nucleus of that party here in the "belly of the imperialist beast."

The organizationally independent but politically subordinate nature of the RIY means it will be organizationally distinct from the IG and other "transitional organizations" aligned with our common movement (such as the Class Struggle Education Workers, Class Struggle International Workers, etc.).

The founding of the Revolutionary Internationalist Youth is an exciting and important step forward at a time when capitalism's threat to humanity's very survival confronts millions of young people with the need to take their place in the fight for international socialist revolution. Our task of recruiting and training young people to be life-long revolutionary Marxist cadres is a vital part of this fight to win lasting victory over capitalist barbarism, for the working class and all the oppressed throughout the world to open the road to a society without war, oppression or poverty, the classless society of the communist future. ■

Acción obrera...

sigue de la página 24

ridades locales dicen típicamente que no responderán a los pedidos del ICE de mantener encarcelados a los inmigrantes indocumentados bajo arresto por otros cargos después de que deban supuestamente ser liberados. Pero incluso donde supuestamente se rechaza esta cooperación descaradamente anticonstitucional con el ICE, ésta de todas maneras se da con frecuencia. En Nueva York, el alcalde Bill de Blasio ha intentado calmar los temores de los inmigrantes diciendo que "Esta ciudad es de ustedes. Su ciudad los va a defender. Su ciudad los va a proteger" (*Daily News*, 21 de marzo). No es así. Lo que ocurre, como el *Daily News* (2 de abril) puso en sus titulares es que la "Policía de Nueva York alerta a los federales sobre las comparecencias ante los tribunales de los inmigrantes que enfrentan deportación a pesar de la promesa de 'santuario'". Además, hay unas 170 faltas por las cuales la ciudad

de Nueva York puede mantener encarcelados ilegalmente a los inmigrantes para entregarlos al ICE.

Buena parte de los fuegos de artificio en torno a las "ciudades santuario" se ha enfocado en dos estados: Texas y California. En Texas, la legislatura estatal y el gobernador republicanos, impusieron una ley la primavera pasada, la iniciativa del Senado no. 4 (SB 4), que ordena que las ciudades y los condados cooperen con el ICE, además de que autoriza que las policías locales y estatales puedan interrogar a cualquiera con respecto a su estatus migratorio. Esta ley de "enseñame tus papeles" (como en la Alemania nazi o en la Sudáfrica bajo el apartheid), igual que la infame y racista ley 1070 de Arizona, desembocará en el uso desenfrenado del "perfilaje racial" en las detenciones. Durante el debate sobre la SB 4, un legislador republicano, Matt Rinaldi, se enfureció porque había cientos de manifestantes, predominantemente latinos, gritando desde el balcón y llamó al ICE, asumiendo que muchos eran indocumentados. Rinaldi también amenazó en la tribuna con matar al representante demócrata Poncho Nevárez (*Texas Observer*, 29 de mayo).

La ley de Texas se encuentra actualmente suspendida porque un tribunal federal falló que sus disposiciones fundamentales violan la IV Enmienda. Esto, sin embargo, no ha detenido a la *migra*. Cuando el huracán Harvey se aproximaba en agosto pasado y se urgía a los residentes a salir de las áreas costeras, la Patrulla Fronteriza se rehusó a cerrar los retenes en las autopistas al norte del Valle del Río Grande, atrapando efectivamente a los residentes indocumentados en Brownsville, Harlingen y otras ciudades del sur de Texas. Luego, a finales de octubre, agentes de la Patrulla Fronteriza detuvieron una ambulancia a las 2 de la mañana en la que se transportaba a una niña de 10 años con parálisis cerebral cuando era transferida de un centro médico en Laredo a un hospital especializado en Corpus Christi para que se le practicara una operación de vesícula. Agentes armados esperaron afuera del cuarto hasta que fue dada de alta y la detuvieron, todo porque llegó a EE.UU. sin papeles cuando tenía 3 meses de edad.

Entretanto, California aprobó recientemente una ley "santuario" a escala estatal, causando gran molestia al director interino del ICE Homan, que anunció que "Como resultado, el ICE está obligado a dedicar más recursos para realizar arrestos callejeros en estas comunidades". En una redada a nivel nacional a finales de septiembre enfocada en las "ciudades santuario", durante la cual arrestó a casi 500 inmigrantes, el ICE informó que había detenido a 167 personas en Los Angeles y sus alrededores. Sin embargo,

la ley de "estado santuario" no se aplica a los que hayan sido condenados por una de 800 infracciones (!), y no impedirá que los agentes del ICE entren a las cárceles. Al firmar la ley, el gobernador de California, Jerry Brown, dijo que era "importante señalar qué es lo que la ley no hace", es decir, "no impide ni prohíbe" al ICE ni al DHS que "realicen su propio trabajo de cualquier forma" (*Los Angeles Times*, 6 de octubre). Exactamente.

Es importante señalar también que las mínimas restricciones en las "ciudades santuario" con respecto a la cooperación de las policías locales con la policía migratoria fueron implementadas *en contra del programa de "Comunidades Seguras" del gobierno de Obama*. Pese a toda su palabrería hueca sobre la "reforma migratoria", los demócratas en el gobierno transformaron esto de un pequeño proyecto piloto en una enorme red nacional para la captura de inmigrantes que llevó a la deportación de cientos de miles de personas que vivían en EE.UU. Al defender a las "ciudades santuario" en contra del ataque del régimen de Trump hemos denunciado en repetidas ocasiones la acción criminal de los gobiernos demócratas de las ciudades que día a día trabajan mano a mano con la *migra* para perseguir inmigrantes.

¡Movilización obrera/inmigrante para parar las redadas y las deportaciones!

Para defender a los jóvenes inmigrantes del programa DACA y oponerse a las deportaciones, una cuestión vital es cómo hacerlo.

La mayor parte de los socialdemócratas y de otros grupos que se autodenominan socialistas pero cuyo propósito es reformar al capitalismo, básicamente buscan presionar al gobierno. La International Socialist Organization (ISO) llama a "revitalizar el

League for the Fourth International

LFI, Box 3321, Church Street Station, New York, NY 10008, U.S.A. E-mail: internationalistgroup@msn.com

Liga Quarta-Internacionalista do Brasil

Brazil: write to Caixa Postal 084027, CEP 27251-740, Volta Redonda, RJ, Brazil

Rio de Janeiro: write to Caixa Postal 3982, CEP 20001-974, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil
E-mail: lqb1996@yahoo.com.br

Internationalistische Gruppe/Deutschland

Germany: write to Postfach 80 97 21, 21007 Hamburg, Germany
E-mail: permanentrevolution@posteo.de

Nucleo Internazionale d'Italia

Italy: write to Anna Chiaraluce, Casella Postale N. 6, 06070 Ellera Umbra (PG), Italy
E-mail: it_internazionalista@yahoo.com

Grupo Internacionalista/México

México: write to Apartado Postal 12-201, Admón. Postal Obrero Mundial, CP 03001, México D.F., México
E-mail: grupointernacionalista@yahoo.com.mx
Tel. Mexico City: 55-3154-7361; Guadalajara: 33-1752-6643; Oaxaca: 951-185-6815; Tijuana: 664-112-5423

Internationalist Group/U.S.

Internationalist Group, Box 3321, Church Street Station, New York, NY 10008, U.S.A.
E-mail: internationalistgroup@msn.com
New York Tel. (212) 460-0983 Fax: (212) 614-8711
Los Angeles Tel. (323) 984-8590
Portland Tel. (503) 303-8278

movimiento de lucha que con sus increíbles ‘megamarchas’ detuvo la criminalización en masa de los indocumentados en 2006, y que consiguió el DACA en 2012 al presionar sin descanso a políticos de ambos partidos, incluido Barack Obama, cuando hacía campaña para la reelección” (*Socialist Worker*, 7 de septiembre). Sin embargo, Obama ofreció el DACA para desviar las críticas por no haber podido implementar ninguna “reforma” migratoria, pese a sus promesas de campaña. Advertimos desde el principio que podría ser cancelado fácilmente por el siguiente presidente, mientras que los jóvenes indocumentados y sus padres hubieran entregado a los federales información detallada sobre su paradero.

La ISO siempre está a la búsqueda de uno u otro “movimiento de masas”, uniéndose a liberales, sobre la base de un programa de colaboración de clases con los demócratas o con algún otro partido o político capitalistas. ¿Pero presionar al racista Trump, cuya campaña fue construida sobre la base del vilipendio en contra de los inmigrantes? Esto sólo puede crear peligrosas ilusiones que lleven a la desmoralización cuando sean frustradas. Sin embargo, sembrar ilusiones es oficio de estos socialdemócratas. Un artículo subsecuente sobre el DACA llama por “Amparo para todos” —no por plenos derechos, sino simplemente por “amparo”. ¿Qué significa esto? Bajo los programas de amparo (protección temporal), los beneficiados no tienen realmente derechos democráticos, ni mucho menos un “camino hacia la ciudadanía”. Colocar a todos los inmigrantes indocumentados en el limbo que actualmente ocupan los beneficiados del DACA y TPS no es ninguna solución. Y, naturalmente, no mencionan el capitalismo, el socialismo o la revolución.

La centrista Spartacist League (SL), que se da aires “revolucionarios”, publicó recientemente un artículo de primera plana titulado “¡No a las deportaciones!” (*Workers Vanguard*, 22 de septiembre). Un sentimiento loable. Entonces, ¿cómo va esto a conseguirse? Aunque abogan por derechos de ciudadanía para los inmigrantes, más allá de sus llamados generales a favor de “lucha de clase combativa” y de la “revolución socialista mundial”, en ningún lugar presentan ningún programa concreto sobre lo que debería ser una lucha para que no haya deportaciones. La SL tampoco tiene nada que decir con respecto a los miles de manifestantes en Texas que protestaban en contra de la ley SB 4 que ilegaliza las ciudades santuario.

A principios del año, la SL publicó un artículo difamatorio contra el Grupo Internacionalista por llamar a defender las ciudades santuario, que son desestimadas como un mero “fraude”. El hecho de que estas limitaciones mínimas a la cooperación con la policía migratoria pueden ser enormemente importantes para los inmigrantes que enfrentan la embestida federal del ICE, el DHS y la Patrulla Fronteriza no les interesa. Para leer nuestra respuesta a esto, y a la calumnia de que no criticamos a los demócratas, además de la negativa de la SL a llamar por el asilo para los refugiados, desestimándolos como “personas desplazadas” sin derechos, véase “La Spartacist League vs. los refugiados” en *Revolución Permanente* No. 7, abril-mayo de 2017.

El Grupo Internacionalista ha llamado desde tiempo atrás a movilizar el poder de la clase obrera para poner alto a las redadas y deportaciones. El primer artículo que publicamos, distribuido en una manifesta-

ción por los derechos de los inmigrantes en octubre de 1996 en Washington, llamaba por “movilizaciones encabezadas por los sindicatos, sacando a la calle contingentes provenientes de los guetos negros y los barrios latinos en un sólido despliegue de fuerza la próxima vez que haya redadas del INS en las fábricas”. Señalamos como ejemplo la acción de choferes latinos que manejaron desde el puerto de Long Beach para cercar la alcaldía de Los Angeles con sus camiones para protestar contra la anti-inmigrante Proposición 187. (“¡Movilizar a la clase obrera para aplastar la ofensiva antiinmigrante!” *The Internationalist* No. 1, enero-febrero de 1997). Un día después de la elección de Trump en noviembre pasado, escribimos:

“Si el nuevo régimen pretende reiniciar las redadas en los centros urbanos, debe haber **movilizaciones obreras para impedir las deportaciones**, incluso bloqueándolos, inundando el área con defensores de los derechos de los inmigrantes”.

—“Shock electoral postraumático. Para derrotar a Trump ... y a los demócratas ¡Luchar por la revolución obrera!”, suplemento de *El Internacionalista*, noviembre de 2016.

Hoy, los inmigrantes se han movilizado en diversas ocasiones para oponerse a las redadas del ICE. No deben quedarse solos.

Más tarde, el 30 de mayo en Nueva York, cuando agentes del ICE intentaban arrestar a Hardat Sampat, un inmigrante de Guyana, en el barrio con fuerte presencia de inmigrantes guyaneses de Richmond Hill en Queens, decenas de vecinos salieron a la calle para bloquear el arresto. La esposa de Sampat estacionó su carro en frente de los vehículos del ICE para impedir que se movieran. Esta situación se mantuvo hasta que la policía de Nueva York llegó para ayudar al ICE, obligando a la esposa de Sampat a mover su coche y a la multitud a dispersarse. A pesar de la afirmación de que Nueva York es una “ciudad santuario” y de las palabras del alcalde de Blassio de que la policía no realiza tareas migratorias, en éste y otros casos los policías de Nueva York actúan como auxiliares del ICE.

Recientemente, el 11 de octubre, activistas a favor de los derechos de los inmigrantes, frente a la sede del ICE en Portland, Oregon, bloquearon una camioneta que transportaba a inmigrantes detenidos hacia el Centro de Detención del Noroeste en Tacoma, Washington. Lograron impedir que el transporte pudiera moverse durante varias horas, encadenándose los brazos con unos “dragones durmientes” (elaborados con tubos, plástico, rejas de alambre, cinta y cadenas). Al serrarlos, los policías de Portland pusieron capuchas a los manifestantes que recordaban las usadas en la tortura de detenidos en la tristemente célebre prisión de Abu-Ghraib en Irak. La valiente acción de los activistas arroja una luz reveladora sobre la abominación de las deportaciones en masa, realizadas ahora en camionetas blancas y camiones sin distintivos, en lugar de en vagones de tren, como hicieron los nazis con los judíos en la Segunda Guerra Mundial. No obstante, estas acciones son esencialmente simbólicas.

El régimen de Trump no será conmovido mediante simbolismos ni protestas. Lo que se necesita para frustrar las deportaciones es movilizar el poder del movimiento obrero en acciones de masas para inmovi-

lizar el sistema de “remoción de inmigrantes” y, a final de cuentas, paralizar el capitalismo. El Primero de Mayo de este año, trabajadores inmigrantes sindicalizados de la empresa especializada de video y fotografía B&H y sus partidarios se manifestaron afuera de la tienda de Manhattan con pancartas en inglés y español llamando a la “Huelga en contra de las deportaciones”, “desafiar al ICE”, “Huelga por las vidas de los negros y los morenos”, “Huelga por los derechos de los inmigrantes”, “Huelga por los derechos de la mujer” o, en palabras llanas, “chinga la migra”. Trabajadores de los dos almacenes de B&H que la patronal pretende cerrar pararon labores el Primero de Mayo. Antes, el 16 de febrero, trabajadores de toda B&H hicieron huelga en solidaridad con el “Día sin inmigrantes”.

Acciones como éstas envían un poderoso mensaje, uno que debe ser recogido por el movimiento obrero en su conjunto. El Grupo Internacionalista ha estado activamente involucrado en el apoyo de la lucha de los trabajadores de B&H desde el principio, y las organizaciones transicionales fraternalmente aliadas al GI —Class Struggle Education Workers, Trabajadores Internacionales clasistas y Class Struggle Workers — Portland— han emprendido iniciativas para apoyar a los trabajadores inmigrantes en contra de las deportaciones. En Nueva York, miembros del CSEW han luchado a favor, e iniciado la conformación, de comités de defensa de los inmigrantes en escuelas y hospitales, como también han hecho los Clubes Internacionalistas en la Universidad de la Ciudad de Nueva York. En Portland, el CSWP ha desencadenado la participación sindical en protestas afuera de las oficinas del ICE, así como en comunidades como Woodburn que han sido golpeadas por redadas del ICE en contra de trabajadores agrícolas.

Esto apenas representa un pequeño comienzo. Al acelerar la maquinaria racista de deportación, con redadas en fábricas y arrestos en calles en barrios de inmigrantes, existe un tremendo potencial para la acción de masas para poner alto a los raptos de cuerpos del ICE. Una exitosa acción en cualquier lugar del país podría despertar una enorme respuesta de los millones que

no sólo se oponen a Trump, lo odian, lo mismo que a sus policías del ICE. Pero es necesario publicitar y extender el ejemplo, organizarlo y, sobre todo, lo que es clave es que la clase obrera despliegue su fuerza en poderosas acciones *de clase* de latinos, afroamericanos, inmigrantes y estudiantes. Esto sólo podrá lograrse luchando simultáneamente en contra del dominio de los partidos capitalistas, especialmente los demócratas, que construyeron la siniestra fuerza policiaca de deportaciones y que ahora obstaculizan toda acción efectiva para pararla.

Los trabajadores inmigrantes son tratados como trabajadores desechables sin derechos, para ser contratados por millones como trabajadores de bajos salarios cuando la economía está en auge, para luego lanzarlos por la frontera cuando quiebra. Precisamente esto ocurrió en 1954, durante la recesión que siguió al fin de los combates de la Guerra de Corea, cuando más de un millón de trabajadores mexicanos fueron deportados en la “Operación Espaldas Mojadas”. En los años 1990, la masiva migración desde México fue resultado directo del Tratado de Libre Comercio de América del Norte (TLCAN), negociado por el demócrata Bill Clinton, que efectivamente destruyó la agricultura mexicana, obligando a millones de campesinos a emigrar al norte. Hoy, trabajadores con conciencia de clase en EE.UU., Canadá y México deben unirse para derribar el TLCAN por medio de una lucha de clases conjunta.

Cualquier victoria que logremos hoy será parcial y temporal. El efecto perdurable de la lucha debe ser elevar la conciencia y la voluntad de luchar de los trabajadores y los oprimidos en contra del monstruoso edificio capitalista, erigido sobre la base de la esclavitud asalariada, en particular la de los doblemente oprimidos trabajadores inmigrantes. Una exitosa lucha para poner alto a las deportaciones y lograr plenos derechos para todos —una simple cuestión democrática— requiere de la **construcción de un partido obrero revolucionario** sobre la base de un programa de combativa lucha clasista que desemboque en una **revolución socialista internacional**. Esta es nuestra tarea hoy en día. ■

The Internationalist



A Journal of Revolutionary Marxism for the Reforging of the Fourth International

Publication of the Internationalist Group, section of the League for the Fourth International

Annual subscription US\$10 for five issues.

Name _____

Address _____

_____ Apt. # _____ Tel. (____) _____

City _____ State/Province _____

Postal Code/Zip _____ Country _____

Make checks/money orders payable to Mundial Publications and mail to:

Mundial Publications
Box 3321, Church Street Station
New York, NY 10008 U.S.A.

Write the Internationalist Group at the above address, or contact:

Tel (212) 460-0983 Fax (212) 614-8711

E-mail: internationalistgroup@msn.com

¡Plenos derechos de ciudadanía para todos los inmigrantes!

Acción obrera para parar a las deportaciones

Desde el día uno, Donald Trump ha librado una incansable guerra en contra de los inmigrantes. Tras iniciar su campaña por la presidencia satanizando a los mexicanos como narcotraficantes, criminales y violadores, difamó a los musulmanes, tildándolos de terroristas. Al llegar al gobierno, su primera acción consistió en promulgar un veto en contra de refugiados, inmigrantes y visitantes provenientes de países de Medio Oriente. A pesar de las enormes protestas en los aeropuertos y de los fallos de los tribunales en contra de esta acción abiertamente discriminatoria, el racista de la Casa Blanca promulgó un nuevo veto a finales de septiembre. A principios del mismo mes, Trump decretó el fin del programa DACA (de “acción diferida para los llegados en la infancia”), levantando así el amparo contra la deportación de casi 800 mil jóvenes inmigrantes. En enero, el Department of Homeland Security (DHS, ministerio de seguridad de la patria) podría poner fin al Estatus de Protección Temporal (TPS) de casi 60 mil haitianos.

Entretanto, la policía del Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) aterroriza a las comunidades inmigrantes en todo el país. Durante los primeros siete meses del gobierno de Trump, ha detenido a casi 100 mil inmigrantes indocumentados, un 43 por ciento más de lo que hizo en el mismo período el año pasado. El DHS pretende “enfocarse en los criminales”, pero la cantidad de detenidos que carecen de cualquier antecedente criminal es casi el doble con respecto a 2016, esto es, unas 28 mil personas que han sido arrancadas de sus familias únicamente debido a su estatus migratorio. El director interino del ICE Thomas Homan ha declarado que la agencia planea incrementar las redadas en fábricas y restaurantes en un 400 ó 500 por ciento, y que seguirá con los arrestos migratorios en las cercanías de tribunales y escuelas (donde los agentes del ICE están al acecho, a pesar de que supuestamente no está autorizado realizar detenciones, como tampoco lo está en hospitales y centros de culto).

Los EE.UU. se han convertido en una nación deportadora. No únicamente desde que el cazamigrantes en jefe, el republicano Trump, asumiera la presidencia. El demócrata Barack Obama llegó a ser conocido como el deportador en jefe al expulsar un número récord de inmigrantes: más de ocho millones cuando se agregan los que fueron detenidos en la zona fronteriza. La “maquinaria deportadora perfeccionada” que entregó a su sucesor ahora acelera su velocidad. En virtud de los decretos de Trump, los 15 millones o más de inmigrantes indocumentados en EE.UU. se encuentran potencialmente en riesgo. A principios de octubre, la Casa Blanca envió un documento al Congreso en el que se delinean 39 medidas para intensificar la represión de inmigrantes dentro de EE.UU., incluida la



Trabajadores inmigrantes sindicalizados de B&H en Nueva York pararon labores el Primero de Mayo, llamando a huelga en contra de las deportaciones.

contratación de unos 15 mil agentes adicionales de la Patrulla Fronteriza y del ICE. De hecho, los demócratas en el Congreso votaron a favor de muchas de estas medidas como parte de la fallida iniciativa de “reforma” migratoria de Obama de 2013.

Pero, aunque las detenciones y las órdenes de detención se han incrementado considerablemente, las “remociones” efectivas han caído. Con más arrestos de inmigrantes se está multiplicando el número de personas atrapadas en el laberinto de los centros de detención (campos de concentración) del ICE, en su mayor parte cárceles privadas administradas por corporaciones como GEO. El gobierno planea un incremento considerable del número de cárceles migratorias, expandiendo el número de detenidos de 41 mil a 48 mil, en tanto que el ICE dice haber asegurado más de 33 mil lugares en las cárceles de ciudades y condados y en las prisiones estatales donde podrá almacenar inmigrantes. En esos casos, la agencia amenaza con romper familias, separando a las madres de sus hijos.

Cada día hay nuevas atrocidades. El gobierno hizo lo imposible para impedir que una mujer de 17 años detenida en Texas pudiera obtener un aborto. Únicamente una audiencia de emergencia del pleno de un tribunal federal pudo parar este acto de arbitraria crueldad. En Oregon, policías del ICE fueron captados en un video subido a Facebook cuando irrumpían en una casa en Beaverton, sin autorización judicial alguna, para arrestar a un pintor de casas que les “pareció” que era “ilegal”. (Al incrementarse la indignación popular, liberaron al trabajador.) Estar en el país sin autorización no es de por sí un delito, pero al incrementar el número de detenciones “colaterales” los agentes del ICE en Oregon y en el resto de EE.UU. están violando gravemente la IV Enmienda [de la Constitución de EE.UU.] que prohíbe las pesquisas y detenciones arbitrarias.

Una considerable mayoría de la población no apoya las medidas de mano dura de Trump en contra de los inmigrantes. Una encuesta reciente del *Washington Post* y de ABC News muestra que el 62 por ciento se opone a la propuesta de construir un muro a lo largo de la frontera con México. Apenas una tercera parte de la población apoyaba sus acérrimas políticas antiinmigrantes. Además, un abrumador 86 por ciento estaba a favor de dejar que los jóvenes inmigrantes indocumentados que cumplan con los requerimientos del DACA se queden en el país. Sin embargo, como parte de un supuesto acuerdo para extender el estatus legal del DACA (pero no una “vía hacia la ciudadanía”) para los llamados “Dreamers”, los líderes demócratas en el Congreso Chuck Schumer y Nancy Pelosi aceptaron en principio intensificar la “seguridad fronteriza” y hacer obligatorio el uso del programa e-Verify, empleado para despedir a trabajadores indocumentados. Pero entonces Trump incrementó sus exigencias.

Incluso antes de que se anunciara el fallido acuerdo, advertimos: “Los demócratas intentarán que los jóvenes inmigrantes acepten semejante acuerdo y arrojen a sus padres, familiares y amigos bajo el camión. Decimos ¡claro que no! **¡Exigimos plenos derechos de ciudadanía para todos los inmigrantes!** (volante de *Revolution*, fechado el 7 de septiembre). Muchos de los participantes en el programa DACA no cayeron en la trampa. En una conferencia que Nancy Pelosi realizó el 18 de septiembre en el Área de la Bahía, activistas de la California Immigrant Youth Justice Alliance la interrumpieron, coreando “No somos tu moneda de cambio”. Condenaron a la lideresa de la minoría en la Cámara de Representantes, diciendo: “Los demócratas crearon una maquinaria deportadora fuera de control y se la entregaron a Trump”. Añadieron: “los demócratas no representan la resistencia contra Trump. Nosotros sí” (Huffpost, 18 de septiembre).

Para los inmigrantes, Estados Unidos es ahora un estado policiaco. Detenidos arbitrariamente en sus casas, sus lugares de trabajo, afuera de los tribunales o en la calle, frecuentemente por policías del ICE vestidos de civil en automóviles sin identificación, los inmigrantes deben precaverse como si estuvieran en un régimen autoritario. Mientras Trump atiza la xenofobia (miedo y odio a los extranjeros), y especialmente en virtud de que los derechos constitucionales que se están pisoteando corresponden a todos los que se encuentran en EE.UU., no sólo a los ciudadanos, la amenaza que para todos representa este ejercicio desenfrenado del poder policiaco debería ser obvia. **Sin embargo, a pesar de que el miedo ronda en el país, también ha habido desafío.** Pero cuidado: lo que enfrentamos es un régimen que no tiene empacho en violar derechos. En consecuencia, las meras protestas no lo van a detener. **Lo que es crucial es recurrir a una fuerza capaz de detener la máquina deportadora: la de la clase obrera.**

Por sobre todo, la lucha por los derechos de los inmigrantes debe librarse políticamente, bajo el entendido de que los dos partidos capitalistas, el Demócrata y el Republicano, así como los políticos y partidos capitalistas de segundo rango como los Verdes, son enemigos de los inmigrantes, los oprimidos y los trabajadores. Hablar de una “reforma migratoria” en esta época imperialista de decadencia del capitalismo será siempre un fraude. Basta considerar dónde se han efectivamente conquistado plenos derechos de ciudadanía para todos: la Revolución Francesa de 1789, la Comuna de París de 1871 y, hace exactamente un siglo, la Revolución Rusa de octubre de 1917.

Escaramuzas en torno a las “ciudades santuario”

Un punto focal de las escaramuzas entre demócratas y republicanos con respecto a la inmigración lo han constituido las “ciudades santuario”. Se trata de alrededor de 400 localidades (condados en su mayor parte) con grados diversos de limitación en la cooperación de la policía local con la policía migratoria. El gobierno de Trump ha amenazado con cortar los fondos federales de las jurisdicciones “santuario”. La razón por la que tanto se debate esta cuestión es que el gobierno federal cuenta apenas con unos 6 mil agentes en sus escuadrones de secuestradores, que distan de ser suficientes para deportar a millones de inmigrantes indocumentados. De esta manera, Washington quiere apoyarse en las policías locales para que hagan los arrestos, por infracciones de tránsito, por ejemplo, para que luego el ICE sólo tenga que pasar a recoger a los supuestos “extranjeros criminales”.

En las “ciudades santuario” las auto-
sigue en la página 22