

Declaration of the International Communist League

Defeat Imperialism Through Workers Revolution— Defend Serbia!

The following April 21 statement by the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) is being issued in eight languages for distribution at May Day demonstrations and other events internationally.

The imperialist war against Serbia is already the biggest military conflagration in Europe since World War II.

Having pounded Serbia for weeks with bombs and cruise missiles, there is a growing crescendo among the Western imperialists for a full-scale invasion of the rump Serb-dominated Yugoslav

republic. Once again the Balkans have become the powder keg of Europe, bringing us a step closer to a new world war. As proletarian internationalists fighting to build a world party

of socialist revolution, the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) says: *Defeat imperialism through workers revolution! Defend Serbia against U.S./NATO attack! Down with the United Nations economic sanctions! All U.S./UN/NATO troops out of the Balkans!*

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All U.S./UN/NATO Troops Out of the Balkans! For a Workers Europe!

Down With U.S. Cops of the World!

American Capitalists Step Up Terror War Against Serbia



AP photos

APRIL 27—As the U.S./NATO war against Serbia enters its second month, the imperialist powers have sharply intensified their terror bombing against the Serbian people. Clinton has ordered hundreds of additional warplanes to the region and announced plans to call up as many as 33,000 reservists. According to

As Clinton hosts NATO summit in Washington, D.C., imperialist bombing increasingly strikes at factories, TV stations and other civilian targets in Serbia. Bombs destroyed passenger train on April 12, killing at least ten.

Belgrade, more than 500 civilians have already been killed and 4,000 wounded, as NATO missiles and bombs crash into factories, electrical power and water distribution systems, radio and television stations, bridges, passenger trains and even a convoy of Albanian refugees. The U.S./NATO capitalist rulers bombed the Zastava auto plant in Kragujevac knowing that workers were occupying it to pre-

vent its destruction. Now the imperialists are intent on further suffocating the Serbian population by cutting off all power, heat and transport, as NATO leaders meeting in Washington to celebrate the alliance's 50th anniversary authorized a military blockade of oil shipments to the country.

If enforced, the oil embargo would mark a dangerous escalation in this

already widening conflict. It would directly threaten Russia's fragile economy, which relies on oil exports—with Serbia being the main customer—for fully one-quarter of its hard currency revenues. All layers of the Russian population, including the military establishment, are already seething with anger over the U.S./NATO war on the edge of the country's southern flank. A French diplomat—whose country joined Italy and Greece in reportedly expressing "serious reservations" over the embargo—told the *New York Times* (26 April): "If we make the

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Mexico: IG Lies on “Cardenista Popular Front”

The following article is translated from *Espartaco* No. 12 (Spring-Summer 1999), published by the Grupo Espartaquista de México (GEM), section of the International Communist League. The article, which exposes the opportunist appetites behind the notion of a “Cardenista popular front” put forward by the Internationalist Group (IG) and refutes their lie that we “invented” a quote from the centrist paper *Alternativa Socialista* which has the same line, has already caused considerable trouble for the IG in Mexico.

The GEM confronted the IG with this article at a massive April 23 Mexico City protest by students and trade unionists against the imposition of fees at the National Autonomous University of Mexico. A report by the GEM describes the reaction of the leading IG supporter in Mexico: “We told him that this was our answer to their infamous article, ‘Another Invention of WV.’ He got red, then he hesitated for a second, then he yelled at us: ‘That was because you never lent me your collection of *Alternativa Socialista*!’”

As a large contingent from the STU-NAM campus workers union marched past, many of the workers asked the GEM what the heated debate was about. As the report describes:

“Comrades began to explain to them that we were having a fight with this organization because they had used the state courts in Brazil in order to get control of a union. We told them that we were exposing this organization for a class betrayal. Spontaneously, dozens of workers began to shout to the IG things like, ‘Get out of here!’ ‘It is a question of principle not to sue a union!’ or ‘If you want to control a union, you have to work with the workers, not ask for a little help from the state!’ (Other workers preferred to use some more explicit adjectives and curses)...

“The leading IG supporter aggressively tried to give some leaflets to the workers and began to speak aloud, trying to explain that we had ‘run away from the class struggle in Brazil.’ The workers took that as a provocation and began to shout again, ‘Get out! Get out!’”

When workers began to take a side against this IG supporter, the report continues, “his ‘comrade’ left him alone at

once.” Meanwhile, the GEM sold several papers to these workers, whose understanding of the class line literally put the IG frauds to shame.

ESPARTACO

We revolutionaries guide ourselves by a rule of the Fourth International: to speak the truth to the masses, no matter how bitter it is; to be precise in small things as well as in large ones. However, the so-called “Internationalist Group” of the renegade Jan Norden was born inverting this rule. Their principle is to lie, time after time, in large things as well as small ones. Ever since May 1997, when our organization, the ICL, discovered and exposed to the workers movement that the IG’s Brazilian partners (the LQB—Liga Quarta-Internacionalista do Brasil) had on various occasions brought a workers union into the bourgeois courts—thus breaking a basic principle of communism—the IG has tried to divert attention in whatever direction so as not to admit their class betrayal. Now our readers will be able to know the IG by another “small” maneuver to slander the ICL.

In August 1997, our organization made a public correction of our characterization of the bourgeois-nationalist PRD [Party of the Democratic Revolution] of Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas as a popular front (see *Workers Vanguard* No. 672, 8 August 1997 and “Mexico: For a Workers Revolution!” in *Espartaco* No. 10, Autumn-Winter 1997). This conclusion was the result of a thorough discussion aimed at Marxist clarity within our organization, to correctly define and struggle against the form of *class collaboration* that has historically existed in Mexico, in other words, the particular way that the Mexican bourgeoisie subordinates the workers movement and the oppressed.

We came to the conclusion that what was posed here was not a “popular front”—which is a precise Marxist category to characterize an anti-worker *bourgeois* formation, in times of social unrest, including parties of the bourgeoisie and reformist workers parties and organizations—but rather intense bourgeois-nationalist ideology which, going back to the Mexican Revolution of 1910-20 and consolidated since then, is the fundamental instrument for subordinating the workers movement to its capitalist exploiters. In that same article, we pointed out that one group which joined with the IG in invoking a “Cardenista popular front” was the centrist Liga de Trabajadores por el Socialismo (LTS), with the clear objective of orienting itself towards Cardenism in search of a supposed working-class sector of the PRD (see, for example, their “Open Letter to the Cardenista Workers”

in their paper *Alternativa Socialista* No. 5, December 1989). What’s more, the LTS, which emerged as a split from the reformist POS in 1988, was born whining that the PRD didn’t do much for the workers and suggesting to the PRD and Cárdenas that “they dedicate themselves to solidarity by calling mobilizations” for workers struggles such as the strike at Ford Cuautitlán (1989 LTS leaflet, “Long Live the Ford Strike!”).

Seeking to nullify our powerful argument against this centrist confusion—showing that Norden’s IG was at one with the LTS in regard to their mythical “Cardenista popular front,” which they use only to capitulate to the backward consciousness of the masses—the spiteful IG has published *on three different occasions*, in English and Spanish, an infamous little article titled “Another Invention by WV” where they maintain that our assertion is a “total invention.” The last time they reprinted this lie was in a pamphlet called *Cuadernos de El Internacionalista* (January 1999). “Any careful reader”—says the IG—will ask himself, “Where? When?” has the LTS said such a thing?

The IG cannot allege ignorance or amnesia. During one of our public classes of the Grupo Espartaquista at UNAM [National Autonomous University in Mexico City] in 1997, held a few weeks after they first published this lying article, the IG representative who intervened was only able to put on a face of stupidity and surprise when one of our comrades exhibited in front of the audience a huge collection of the LTS paper, *Alternativa Socialista*, with whole articles where they talk about a “Cardenista popular front.” But despite all this, the IG continued to reprint their lie and kept asking, “Where? When?”

But the LTS has indeed spoken of the existence of a popular front in Mexico, not once but on countless occasions. In Numbers 18 and 19 (January and March 1995) of *Alternativa Socialista* (whose name has now changed to *Estrategia Obrera*), in an article titled “Who Are We and What Are We Fighting For?” (in other words, something like their little declaration of principles) they say: “...we are for the principled refounding of Mexican Trotskyism, against its manifestations of electoralism and submission to the Cardenista Popular Front.” Numerous references, including entire articles on the “Cardenista popular front,” also exist throughout the LTS press, in issue numbers 5, 8, 9, 14, 15, 18, 19...at least—and the LTS has never published any correction on this line since. It’s tragicomic to see how Norden and Negrete’s IG, in their eagerness to be admitted into the circles of the Mexican nationalist left, do their best to perform circus pirouettes in order to sling mud at the ICL.

The IG lies. Any reader need only consult the LTS papers cited above to immediately realize that those who lie repeatedly and consciously in such “small questions” will find no embarrassment in covering up “one or two” class betrayals, such as the IG does to maintain its “section” of trade-union opportunists in Brazil. ■

For Socialist Revolution to End Imperialist War

As the U.S. and its NATO partners wage a war of domination against Serbia, the reformist and centrist left retails the bogus “human rights” war propaganda of the imperialist rulers. Simultaneously, these fake socialists promote the lie that the capitalist system which breeds war can be made more “humane” and “peaceful.” In fighting to forge the Fourth International in the years leading up to World War II, Bolshevik leader



TROTSKY

Leon Trotsky stressed that only proletarian revolution can put an end to imperialist war. Today, Trotskyists call for military defense of Serbia against U.S./NATO imperialism as part of our struggle to win the U.S. working class to the fight for socialist revolution to sweep away its “own” capitalist rulers.

The war danger, which is a life and death question for the people, is the supreme test for all the groupings and tendencies within the working class. “The struggle for peace,” “the struggles against war,” “war on war” and similar slogans are hollow and fraudulent phrases, if unaccompanied by the propaganda and the application of revolutionary methods of struggle. The only method to put an end to war is to overthrow the bourgeoisie. The only method to overthrow the bourgeoisie is by a revolutionary assault.

As against the reactionary lie of “national defense” it is necessary to advance the slogan of the revolutionary destruction of the national state. To the madhouse of capitalist Europe it is necessary to counterpose the program of *the Socialist United States of Europe*, as a stage toward the United States of the World.

Marxists irreconcilably reject the pacifist slogans of “disarmament,” “arbitration,” and “amity between peoples” (i.e., between capitalist governments), etc., as opium for the popular masses. The combinations between working class organizations and petty bourgeois pacifists (the Amsterdam-Pleyel Committee, and similar undertakings) render the best service to imperialism by distracting the attention of the working class from reality with its grave struggles, and beguiling them instead with impotent parades.

The struggle against war and imperialism cannot be the job of any sort of special “committees.” The struggle against war is the preparation for revolution, that is to say, the job of working class parties and of the International. The Marxists pose this great task before the proletarian vanguard, without any frills.

—“An Open Letter to All Revolutionary Proletarian Organizations and Groupings” (July 1935)



LENIN

WORKERS VANGUARD

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choice of a blockade, then we have to recognize we risk war with a third party.” But while the European Union (EU) voted yesterday to implement an embargo, the U.S. announced it had no plans to follow suit and stop oil shipments by American companies. The London *Daily Telegraph* (27 April) noted acerbically, “This means that while it is now illegal for any EU countries to export to Slobodan Milosevic, it remains perfectly legal for American companies to continue to fuel the Serb war machine.”

The NATO “summit” was also dominated by ever more explicit talk of a ground invasion of Serbia, promoted aggressively by British Labour prime minister Tony Blair, with a green light from Washington. Significant sectors of the American ruling class, in both the Democratic and Republican parties, now favor a ground war. In a clear move to prepare the U.S. population for an invasion of Kosovo, the Army recently announced that it was staging training exercises in a model Balkan village in the Colorado mountains. Clinton is sending 2,300 more American soldiers to Albania to reinforce the 3,000 now there, and the combined NATO troop strength in Albania and Macedonia has already mushroomed to 19,000. Germany, which occupied the region during World War II and butchered hundreds of thousands of Serbs and Jews, has moved up a *Bundeswehr* mechanized battalion from Greece, including tanks and armored personnel carriers.

The imperialists have cynically cloaked their war against the Serbian people in the “humanitarian” garb of saving Albanian refugees. But Pentagon spokesman Kenneth Bacon gave the game away when he frankly admitted that NATO commanders *favor* the complete expulsion of Albanians from Kosovo: “There would be Serb troops primarily left, and we would be able to attack them with more precision and more concentration” (*New York Times*, 15 April). This war is no more about defending the “human rights” of Kosovo Albanians than the 1992 intervention in Somalia was about ending famine or the military occupation of Haiti was about introducing “democracy.” Like the repeated bombing attacks on Iraq, what is behind the murderous assault on Serbia is Washington’s aim of riding roughshod over small, weak countries throughout the world and intimidating their populations through sheer terror, while maintaining the U.S. position as top dog against its imperialist rivals.

Washington’s war against Serbia is carried out by the same racist ruling class that has ruthlessly driven down the living standards of working people in the U.S., broken strikes and busted unions; that fiercely oppresses blacks, Hispanics, immigrants and others; that has condemned millions to homelessness, disease and starvation through the axing of welfare. This is a rich man’s government, which is perfectly willing to send the poor off to fight and die for it. The interests of U.S. workers lie not in saving the skins of this gang of strikebreakers, racists and warmongers, but rather in seeing them defeated. That means opposing the imperialist war aims of U.S. capitalism and standing in military defense of Serbia against U.S./NATO attack, demanding the withdrawal of all UN/NATO troops from the Balkans, and striving for the defeat of U.S. imperialism through workers revolution.

Despite the media barrage about Washington’s supposedly “humanitarian” aims, the bourgeoisie has had limited success in whipping up support for the war. While polls show a majority of Americans supporting the air strikes against Serbia, Clinton’s overall job approval rating has plunged since the war began, hitting its lowest level in nearly two years. Many black people, in particular, are skeptical of Washington’s professed “humanitarian” aims in the Balkans. In contrast, black Democratic leaders have

enthusiastically supported Clinton. Jesse Jackson proclaimed: “Some things are worth a fight” (University Wire, 14 April). Meanwhile, pro-Democratic black newspapers, such as the Chicago *Defender* and the New York *Amsterdam News*, have remained virtually silent about Clinton’s war against Serbia.

The hideous oppression of racial



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82nd Airborne paratroopers pour into Tirana, Albania as U.S. moves toward ground war against Serbia.

minorities in the U.S. gives the lie to Washington’s avowed concern about “ethnic cleansing” in the Balkans. In the calculations of the American bourgeoisie, the ghetto masses who used to provide a reservoir of unskilled labor for industry—a “reserve army” of the unemployed to be tapped when the economy needed them—are now deemed to be a “surplus” population. The racist “war on crime”—in reality, a war on black people—sweeps young men and women from the streets by the thousands and throws them into prison hellholes. One in seven black men are today disenfranchised because of felony convictions, effectively stripped of citizenship rights guaranteed under the 14th Amendment.

At the same time, the three-week-old strike by Newport News shipyard workers against a major military contractor in the midst of the bourgeoisie’s war against Serbia testifies to the revival of labor militancy signaled by the 1997 UPS Teamsters strike and underlines once again the fundamental irreconcilability of the interests of labor and capital. What is needed is class struggle against the capitalist exploiters at home and abroad. To start, that means mobilizing the multiracial working class in strike action to defeat the attacks on labor, to bring its weight to bear in political strikes and other powerful protest actions to demand freedom for death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal and abolition of the racist death penalty, to lead labor-centered mobilizations against rampant cop terror in the ghettos and barrios.

Only the multiracial U.S. proletariat has the social power to sweep away this rapacious imperialist ruling class. Mobilizing that social power requires a political break with the class collaborationism of the chauvinist AFL-CIO bureaucracy, which chains workers to the capitalist Democratic Party and subordinates their interests to the aims of the imperialist rulers.

The Sham of Imperialist “Democracy”

In order to generate support for its war drive, the Clinton administration demonizes Serbian nationalist leader Slobodan Milosevic as another Hitler and accuses him of carrying out “genocide” against the Albanian population of Kosovo. To equate Milosevic’s actions in Kosovo with the horrors of Nazi Germany’s cold-blooded and calculated extermination of six million Jews, millions of Slavs, hundreds of thousands of Gypsies, and others deemed to be *Untermenschen* (subhumans) amounts to whitewashing the Hol-

ocaust. The killings and expulsions of ethnic Albanians by Serb chauvinists is part of a nationalist war for territory, aimed not at annihilating the Albanians as a people but at terrorizing them into fleeing. In fact, far more Albanians have likely fled as a result of the massive NATO bombing. It is a continuation of the all-sided communalist fratricide in

ries was also a bloody, protracted process. But it was linked to the extension of trade, the development of the national market and the rise of the bourgeoisie. However, under imperialism, in relatively backward capitalist countries the development of the national economy and the emergence of a vigorous bourgeoisie are stifled by imperialist exploitation and domination. Thus national consolidation under capitalism has been reduced to its stark component of communal savagery to drive out or eliminate minority nationalities.”

The U.S. rulers’ claim to be fighting another Hitler in the Balkans is false on another count as well: World War II was *not* a war of democracy against fascism. This year’s academy awards ceremony, featuring *Saving Private Ryan* and *The Thin Red Line*, was practically a commemoration of U.S. military prowess in World War II. But, although the American ruling class tries to pretend otherwise, it was the Soviet Red Army which broke the back of Hitler’s war machine and crushed Nazi Germany—80 percent of German casualties were on the Russian front.

The war in Europe had nothing to do with fighting fascism. It was a conflict between competing blocs of the imperialist powers for redivision of the world’s markets and sources of raw materials and cheap labor. The U.S. fought to establish its domination in Europe, and against Japan for domination of the Pacific basin. Britain fought to keep hundreds of millions of dark-skinned people enslaved in its colonial empire. The imperialist “democracies” refused to open their doors to Jewish refugees from Nazi genocide, and then set up a “rat line” after the war to help hundreds of Nazi criminals escape to the West and set them to work in the global “crusade against Communism.” In the postwar period, the U.S. government trained and supported hideous torturers and mass butchers from South Africa to Central America, while killing millions of people in counterrevolutionary wars from Korea to Vietnam.

Trotskyists opposed the imperialist war on all sides and in each country were for the defeat of their “own” imperialist ruling classes by carrying forward the

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Spartacist Events

Defeat U.S. Imperialism Through Workers Revolution! Defend Serbia Against U.S./NATO Attack!

For a Socialist Federation of the Balkans!

BOSTON

Saturday, May 1, 7:30 p.m.
Harvard University
Harvard Hall, Room 103
(take Red Line to Harvard Square)
For more information: (617) 666-9453

NEW YORK

Thursday, April 29, 7:30 p.m.
NYU School of Law
Vanderbilt Hall, Room 214
(40 Washington Sq. South)
For more information: (212) 267-1025

Saturday, May 1, 2 p.m. Spartacist League office
123 Townsend St. (between 2nd and 3rd St., ring 826 downstairs)

SAN FRANCISCO

For more information: (415) 777-9367
or (510) 839-0851

Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste Forum

Ten Years After Tiananmen Square

Stop Capitalist Counterrevolution in China! For Proletarian Political Revolution!

Friday, May 14, 7 p.m.

Britannia Community Centre, Room L4, 1661 Napier Street (off Commercial)

VANCOUVER

For more information: (604) 687-0353

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fight for proletarian revolution. The policy of authentic revolutionaries was: The working people of other countries are not your enemy—The main enemy is at home! Despite bureaucratic degeneration under Stalin, the USSR was a workers state still possessing the fundamental gains of the Russian Revolution—a planned, collectivized economy and a state monopoly of foreign trade and banking. Therefore the position of the Trotskyists was unconditional military defense of the Soviet Union against imperialist attack from any quarter and against internal counterrevolution. Trotskyists called for proletarian political revolution to rid the Soviet workers of the parasitic Stalinist bureaucracy.

In contrast, the Stalinists and social democrats lined up in World War II in support of the U.S. and British-dominated “Allied” bloc of capitalists in the imperialist butchery. For their part, the Stalinist leaders of the working class were instrumental in heading off the explosions of class struggle that swept Europe at the close of the war, suppressing revolutionary opportunities in Italy, France and Greece. The Allied military occupation of Europe and these Stalinist betrayals allowed the bourgeoisie to reconstitute the capitalist order in Europe while, like the French in Indochina, launching new wars to reconquer their colonial empires.

The Soviet victory over Nazi Germany shaped the postwar world. The U.S., now the dominant imperialist power, confronted the military and economic might made possible by the planned economy of the USSR. Despite the constant appeasement of imperialism by Stalin and his heirs, the existence of the Soviet Union as a military power possessing nuclear weapons served as an impediment to the U.S. imperialists’ bloody ambitions and kept them from turning their nuclear arsenal on the peoples of the former colonial empires (as was proposed in both Korea and Indochina). The destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state in 1991-92 by the forces of capitalist restoration led by Boris Yeltsin and backed by Washington was hailed not only by the bourgeoisie—but shamefully by most of the fake left. We warned that it was a world historic defeat for the proletariat that would usher in a much more unstable and dangerous world. That is precisely what has occurred, as competition among the rival imperialists has sharply increased. The U.S. rulers feel free to use their military might to extend their economic dominance throughout the world, including in Europe. Where a small country refuses to buckle under to their dictates, they will bomb them into submission. That is the real meaning of the U.S./NATO war in the Balkans.

American Imperialist Arrogance and Russian Nationalism

Business Week (26 April) recently editorialized: “The growing tragedy of America’s intervention in Kosovo is that



Reuters

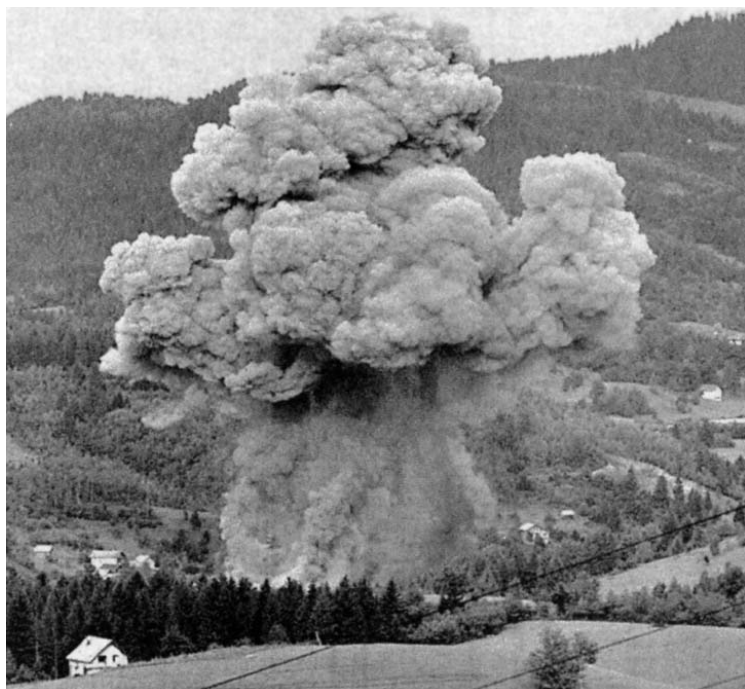
Tens of thousands of Serbs were driven out of Bosnia by Muslim and Croatian nationalist forces in 1995 as U.S./NATO warplanes bombed Bosnian Serb areas.

neither its military grammar nor its political logic makes much sense.” This is currently most apparent in the sharply increased tensions between the U.S. and capitalist Russia, which is seeking to establish itself as a regional power by playing the role of “protector” of the Serbs. As NATO planes bombed Serbia, Yeltsin warned of Russian “military action” in support of Belgrade and the danger of “a European war for sure, and possibly a world war.” Washington officials countered by warning Russia against military intervention.

The U.S. bourgeoisie fatuously dismissed Yeltsin’s threat with talk of Russia’s “weakness” and indebtedness to imperialist bankers. But the war against Serbia has provoked deep anti-American sentiment within Russia. The relatively pro-Western Yeltsin regime could well be displaced by more extreme nationalists, who see in the crisis over Kosovo the means to overcome the current social, economic and political disintegration of Russia. Right-wing former general Aleksandr Lebed said from the floor of the Russian Federation Council (Senate) that the war in Serbia “has allowed Russians to ‘get up off their knees’” and offered a “second wind” for the consolidation of a strong state.

For a number of years, Moscow has played the role of “soft cop” vis-à-vis the Serbs on behalf of the U.S. and Germany, while denouncing American bellicosity and “superpower arrogance.” Russian troops continue to participate in the Washington-directed “peacekeeping” force in Bosnia, and Moscow is still adhering to the UN-sanctioned arms embargo of Serbia. Germany and France have pushed for a Russian-brokered deal with Milosevic, and the U.S. maintains a posture of openness to some kind of negotiated settlement. But a proposal negotiated by former Russian prime minister Viktor Chernomyrdin was dismissed out of hand by the recent NATO summit. Washington is determined to forestall Russia’s re-emergence as a major European power with its own client states in the Balkans.

The sharp increase in hostility to the



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U.S. among Russia’s ruling elite has roots going back to Yeltsin’s capitalist counterrevolution. In 1992, Yeltsin’s foreign minister, Andrei Kozyrev, saw Russia and the U.S. “not merely as partners but as allies.” This view was in its own way just as *illusory* as the old Stalinist dogma of “peaceful coexistence” and building “socialism in one country.” Financial aid to the Yeltsin regime from Washington and West European capitals was piddling while foreign capital investment in post-Soviet Russia was practically nil.

By 1994, even the supposedly pro-Western Kozyrev was voicing the frustration of Russia’s new would-be imperialist rulers and their resentment of the United States. He denounced “the almost manic wish to see the USA as the only single leading power in the contemporary world” and spoke in favor of a “hard, even aggressive policy of defending one’s own national interests” (quoted in Alex Danchev, ed., *International Perspectives on the Yugoslav Conflict* [1996]). For its part, the American ruling class has treated post-Soviet Russia with increasing contempt bordering on hostility. With NATO’s admission of the former Warsaw Pact countries of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, bringing NATO right up to the borders of the former USSR, the war against Serbia has escalated tensions to a dangerous new level.

NATO plans for a ground war against Serbia—to be implemented “as early as the end of May,” according to the London *Observer* (18 April)—would involve positioning imperialist troops in Hungary and Romania. The *Observer* article elaborated:

“In Washington a senior US army officer said a ground assault was being planned on two levels: the invasion of Kosovo and the ‘securing’ of Serbia proper and the region around Belgrade....

“In preparation for the strike force of up to 80,000, some 8,000 troops have been earmarked to secure the border between Albania and Kosovo, and a further estimated 200,000 to secure Serbia’s borders with Bosnia, Hungary and Romania.”

If the U.S. ups the ante against Serbia, Yeltsin could be forced into certain half-hearted military responses, met in turn

with escalations by Washington, possibly leading to a wider war. The Russia of the tsars was not exactly strong when, after years of deepening tensions in Europe, it chose to mobilize against Austria (and therefore Germany) in World War I. None of the combatants indulged in such “rational” calculation, and they all expected the war to be over in a few short months. Imperialism is not rational, and neither are the men who rule over us in its interests. As Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky wrote five years before the outbreak of the second imperialist world war: “All governments fear war. But none of the governments has any freedom of choice. Without a proletarian revolution, a new world war is inevitable” (“War and the Fourth International,” June 1934).

“Humanitarian” Imperialism’s Left Camp Followers

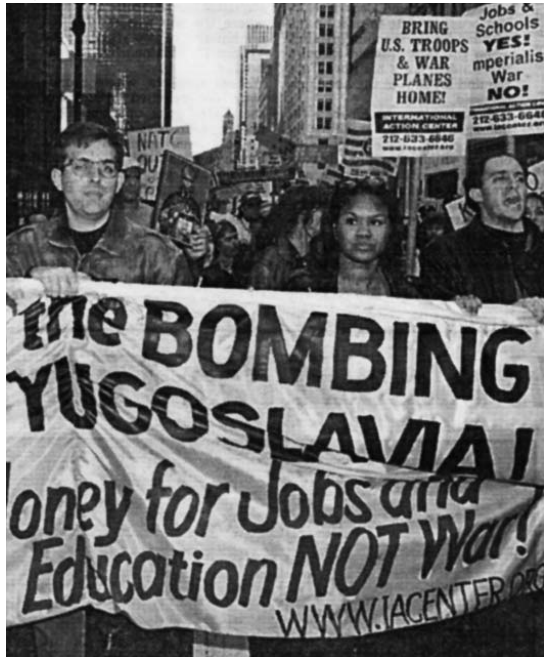
The U.S. bourgeoisie continues to be haunted by the “Vietnam syndrome,” its humiliating defeat at the hands of the Vietnamese workers and peasants in Washington’s counterrevolutionary war there in the 1960s and ’70s. A former U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union, Jack Matlock, recently expressed the fears of a section of the ruling class of “the tragic quagmire that looms ahead” in Serbia (*New York Times*, 20 April). It is the role of revolutionaries to seize on the bourgeoisie’s embarrassments and defeats to mobilize the proletariat in revolutionary class struggle against its “own” capitalist rulers.

The call for “no more Vietnams” by various elements of the American ruling class is intended to save the U.S. from another debacle. War criminal Nixon raised this demand. This same call is being echoed by the fake-left groups which hailed the capitalist counterrevolution in the former USSR and the East European deformed workers states as a victory for “democracy.” Thus a member of the International Socialist Organization (ISO) pleaded at their April 13 “Emergency Teach-In” at Columbia University for the bourgeoisie to end the bombing: “We are not learning from our mistakes. Why can we not expect our government to do something for the right reason once and for all?”

The ISO has been prominent among those on the left who buy into “human rights” imperialism, giving backhanded support to the U.S./NATO drive against Serbia in the name of defending the Kosovo Liberation Army (UCK) and the national rights of the Kosovar Albanians. Thus, at the beginning of the war the ISO’s *Socialist Worker* (26 March) criticized Washington for not wanting the UCK “to win its goal of independence for Kosovo.” Now the ISO moans that the UCK “is becoming an instrument of NATO” (*Socialist Worker*, 23 April). This belated “discovery” is a sham. The UCK has long been a NATO pawn.

We supported the right of independence of the Albanian majority in Kosovo as far back as the 1970s. But with the imperialist war buildup in the Balkans earlier this year, the question of self-determination for the Kosovo Albanians

Brigitte Stelzer



WV Photo



Meyers/NY Times

While black Democrats like Jesse Jackson stand behind Clinton’s Balkans slaughter, reformist WWP (far left) and ISO promote lie that imperialist government can serve interests of working people and minorities.

From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal

Serbian Demonstration Bombing

"[US Secretary of State, Robert] Lansing strongly objected to any introduction of the concept of 'laws of humanity' and to trials of foreign leaders before any foreign or international court. International law, he contended, regulated relations among nations; it had no jurisdiction over what a state chooses to do to its own people."

—Christopher Simpson, *The Splendid Blond Beast* (1995), p. 25

As a deadly rain of high-tech bombs fall on Serbia, a deadening rain of propaganda falls on Americans, media-manufactured lies designed to prime the populace into supporting harsher military measures against a sovereign nation, in the name of protecting human rights.

NATO is but a fig leaf for American "interests," and the bombing of the Serbian state is but a global demonstration of the ruthlessness of the American empire. A demonstration? The monstrous atomic bombing of Japan, after it was virtually beaten in WWII, was not a military necessity, but a political one, designed to demonstrate to the Russians that the U.S. was, and would ever be, boss. It was a massive, deadly demonstration.

So too, the Serbian bombing treats Serbs as the U.S. treated Japanese during the War—as props to demonstrate the power of the empire. Let us consider the claims that the U.S. is concerned about "human rights" or about the "rights of ethnic minorities" as the corporate press projects hourly: What of America's largest national minority—African-Americans? The world-respected Amnesty International group,

speaking through its Secretary General, Pierre Sané, announced just days before the bombing, "Human-rights violations in the United States of America are persistent, widespread and appear to disproportionately affect people of racial or ethnic minority backgrounds." Sané was critical of police violence and executions in the U.S.

Further, internationally, let's see how the U.S. responds to "liberation movements" of the oppressed. When fighters for Puerto Rican independence began to raise their voices the U.S. didn't support this "ethnic minority," they sought (and continue) to crush, incarcerate and silence them. Consider the case of the Palestinians, the Kurds, the Tamils, the East Timorese, the Colombian rebels—who has the U.S. consistently supported, the oppressed, or the U.S.-armed governments?

This isn't about "human rights." It isn't about "ethnic minorities." And it also isn't about "genocide." It's about establishing who's "boss" in the next century. It's about keeping Russia in its place. It's about keeping the EU under the thumb of Wall St. The bombing of Serbia is an echo of the bombing of three other countries in the past six months—of Iraq, Sudan and Afghanistan. And for precisely the same reason—to show that it can be done, no matter what so-called "international law" states. It is to instill terror throughout the world, in order for U.S. capital to institute what former president George Bush tried to do, but failed: to establish a New World Order.

Days before the bombing, NATO signed up Poland,



Hungary and the former Czechoslovakia (Czech Republic) as its newest members, thereby virtually isolating Russia. Only Serbia, and the Yugoslav states, have refused to join NATO—their bombing is their punishment.

Our brilliant, revered nationalist leader, Malcolm X, taught us to examine history. If we look at history, the bombing of Yugoslavia becomes clear.

Empires are maintained, not by reason, but by ruthless terror. It was so in Rome. It is so in the U.S. The brilliant revolutionary, Dr. Huey P. Newton, founder of the Black Panther Party, explained "the United States was no longer a nation... We called it an empire.... *An empire is a nation-state that has transformed itself into a power controlling all the world's lands and people*" (1973). Huey was right then, and our response then was to oppose the empire. We must do that now! *Down with Imperialism! Stop the Bombing! NATO/US out of Yugoslavia!*

8 April 1999

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Join the fight to free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Contact the Partisan Defense Committee. In New York: PDC, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013-0099; phone (212) 406-4252; E-mail: 75057.3201@compuserve.com. In Chicago: PDC, P.O. Box 802867, Chicago, IL 60680-2867; phone (312) 454-4931. In the Bay Area: PDC, P.O. Box 77462, San Francisco, CA 94107-0462; phone (510) 839-0852.

Urgently needed contributions for Mumia's legal defense, which are tax-deductible, should be made payable to the Bill of Rights Foundation, earmarked "Mumia Abu-Jamal Legal Defense," and sent to the Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal, 163 Amsterdam Ave., No. 115, New York, NY 10023-5001. If you wish to correspond with Jamal, you can write to: Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM8335, SCI Greene, 1040 E. Roy Furman Hwy., Waynesburg, PA 15370.

became subordinated to the need to defend Serbia against U.S./ NATO attack. The UCK openly brags that its officers are working with British and American special forces teams in Kosovo, spotting Serbian targets for NATO bombing raids. Its leaders recently announced that they are concluding a contract with Military and Professional Resources International, the Pentagon-sponsored outfit which advised the fascistic Croatian regime in 1995 as it "cleansed" the Krajina region of several hundred thousand Serbian inhabitants.

Like much of the rest of the fake left, the ISO has postured as opponents of NATO bombing while at the same time calling on Clinton to "really" help the Albanian refugees. Thus, the ISO not only lends credence to the imperialists' cynical justification for sending troops to the region but gives backhanded support to the bombing. Until recently, the ISO steadfastly refused to raise the call for UN/NATO troops out of the Balkans. Now, *Socialist Worker* (23 April) is calling for NATO to "get out of the Balkans." What they really mean is that the UN "international forces" should replace the U.S.-led NATO forces. Thus an article in the same issue of *Socialist Worker* deplores that "the U.S. and its NATO allies stood by" as the Hutu-dominated army and death squads massacred the Tutsi ethnic minority in Rwanda five years ago, complaining that "the UN Security Council refused to authorize forces to intervene in the conflict" because of U.S. opposition.

The idea that imperialist intervention in Rwanda, whether by the UN or NATO-led armed forces, could have done anything but make the hellish situation still worse expresses the same illusions in "humanitarian" imperialism that the ISO is propagating over Kosovo. As we wrote at the time: "We must urgently warn that the imperialists are no friends of the Rwandan and Burundian masses. A 'humanitarian' intervention by the UN—or under the auspices of the Organisation of African Unity, that cabal of neocolonial rulers—would produce a racist slaughter like in Somalia" ("The Rwanda Horror," WV No. 601, 27 May 1994).

A somewhat different appeal by self-

proclaimed leftists to bourgeois opinion can be found in a series of postings on the World Socialist Web Site of David North's "International Committee of the Fourth International" (ICFI). Offering the flimsiest Marxist veneer, North & Co. posture as critics of capitalism, referring to American imperialism "embarking on a policy of global domination" (26 March). But as NATO bombs fall on Belgrade, this article is entirely *silent* on the key question of defending Serbia from this brutal imperialist onslaught—never mind calling for workers revolution against U.S. imperialism. Having long ago dismissed the trade unions as organizations of the working class, for the Northites the question of proletarian opposition to the imperialist slaughter is not even posed.

What they offer instead are arguments for a virtually nonexistent pacifist wing of the bourgeoisie, echoing right-wing isolationists like Pat Buchanan. An April 6 ICFI editorial board statement mutters about costly American "blunders" in Korea and Vietnam. Their touching concern for the "blunders" of U.S. imperialism in its wars to suppress social revolutions in North Korea and Vietnam is no accident. While North now writes off the question of national oppression altogether (for example, declaring flatly that "Kosovo has long been recognized as part of Yugoslav territory" [26 March]), throughout the Cold War of the 1980s North & Co. cheered on every imperialist-sponsored nationalist movement dedicated to capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet bloc.

For Socialist Revolution to End Imperialist War!

The reformist "socialists" perpetuate the lie that imperialism is just a "bad policy" which can be changed through mass pressure, denying that imperialist wars for domination and spheres of influence are inherent to the capitalist system. Even bourgeois columnist Thomas Friedman comes closer to the truth, observing last year: "The hidden hand of the global market would never work without the hidden fist. And the hidden fist that keeps the world safe for Silicon Valley's technologies to flourish is called the United States Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine

Corps (with the help, incidentally, of global institutions like the U.N. and the International Monetary Fund)" (*New York Times*, 18 April 1998).

Behind the façade of NATO "unity," the U.S. and the various European powers are each frantically maneuvering to extend their own national influence in the Balkans and short-circuit their rivals. And it is far from clear that the NATO alliance could even survive in the whirlpool of forces that will be generated by a ground war against Serbia. In France, the Socialists' government coalition partners, the Communist Party and the bourgeois Movement of Citizens, are already openly denouncing the bombing. In Germany, the Social Democrats' government coalition partners, the Greens, are fissuring over the question of the war. And in Italy, the ruling coalition faces the threat of immediate dissolution if a ground war goes ahead, while 170 parliamentarians have signed a petition demanding an immediate truce.

Imperialism is an organic outgrowth of the profit system—the "highest stage of capitalism," as Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin described it. Imperialist war is the concentrated expression of the "normal" brutal workings of the capitalist system, which daily condemns countless millions of people around the world to death by malnutrition and lack of medical care. At the same time, capitalist exploitation creates its own gravedigger, the interna-

tional proletariat.

We have noted before that with the restoration of capitalism in the former Soviet Union, the world is increasingly coming to look like it did in the years before the outbreak of World War I in 1914. Writing of the Balkan Wars of 1912-13, which followed on the heels of growing conflicts of interests and shifting alliances among the major European powers, Trotsky noted: "European equilibrium, which was highly unstable already, has now been completely upset. It is hard to foresee whether those in charge of Europe's fate will decide this time to carry matters to the limit and start an all-European war." In 1914, they did start an all-European war, drawing much of humanity into a then-unparalleled slaughter that killed and maimed millions of proletarian and peasant soldiers on all sides. But as Lenin noted, war is also the mother of revolution. With Lenin and Trotsky at the helm, the Bolsheviks led the workers of Russia to power in the October Revolution of 1917, taking Russia out of the war and creating a beacon for the proletariat internationally.

If imperialist carnage is not to be the continuing fate of humanity, capitalism must be swept away through proletarian revolution. The International Communist League fights to reforge Trotsky's Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution, to lead the fight for new October Revolutions around the world. ■

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U.S./NATO Ministry of Disinformation

Big Lies for Imperialist War

In 1939, to manufacture a pretext for the Nazi invasion of Poland, Hitler had German troops dress up in Polish army uniforms and stage an “incursion” into Germany. In 1964, U.S. president Lyndon B. Johnson fabricated a North Vietnamese “attack” on American warships in the Gulf of Tonkin in order to send ground forces into Vietnam. During the 1990-91 Persian Gulf War, the Western press purveyed outlandish lies, like the one about Iraqi forces murdering 300 incubator babies in a Kuwaiti hospital, to justify the imperialist slaughter of tens of thousands of Iraqis.

The Big Lie is the handmaiden of imperialist war. Now the U.S./NATO rulers and their kept media are churning out a deafening drum beat of supposed “human rights atrocities” by the Serbian forces under Slobodan Milosevic with the aim of building popular support for NATO’s war of domination in the Balkans and for the concerted terror bombing of the people of Serbia and Kosovo. A London *Independent* (30 March) headline screamed, “Kosovo’s Men of Ideas Are Dragged from Homes and Shot,” retailing “confirmed” reports of “executions” of Albanian notables—who turned up alive and well a day or two later. There were the Yugoslav pilots supposedly captured in Bosnia whom NATO promised to parade before the media who were never produced; the story of the Pristina soccer stadium supposedly turned into a “concentration camp” for up to 100,000 ethnic Albanians but which in fact stands empty; the over-inflated refugee counts, “reports” of systematic rape and mass destruction, even “genocide” by Serbian forces—all without the slightest evidence.

While maintaining a blackout on hard information about NATO’s Balkans carnage, the imperialists have now begun bombing television stations, killing at least 18 people in one Belgrade attack alone. Spelling out the purpose of these attacks, the *New York Times* (23 April) reported: “State television has been the main source of immediate news and film footage for Western television correspondents.”

Had it not been for the Serbian media and a handful of Western reporters stationed in Kosovo, one of the biggest atrocities perpetrated by the NATO imperialists would not even have come to light. On April 14, NATO bombers pounded two convoys of Kosovo Albanian refugees on the road between Djakovica and Prizren, killing 82 people who were fleeing by tractor, van, cart and on foot. For the next six days, NATO spokesmen wiggled, squirmed and lied outright about this bloodbath of the Albanians whom they are allegedly there to protect.

When confronted with the story that morning, NATO Supreme Commander Wesley Clark, an American general, claimed to have “very strong evidence” that the Serbs had perpetrated the slaughter in retaliation for a NATO strike on “military” targets. Later that day, bow-tied Pentagon mouthpiece Kenneth Bacon claimed that NATO had “only hit military vehicles” and cited refugee accounts to United Nations officials that they had been bombed by Serbian planes—a claim denied by the UN officials themselves. And Clark’s assertion of “evidence” was revealed to be a total fabrication.

Only after a Reuters reporter filmed the body-strewn site did NATO spokesmen start making noises about a “tragic accident.” NATO spokesmen cynically accused the Serbian military of using Albanian refugees as “human shields”



Reuters

Big Lie “briefing” by NATO Supreme Commander, U.S. general Wesley Clark. April 14 U.S./NATO bombing of Albanian refugee convoy in Kosovo killed 82.



AP

and moaned about how difficult it was for pilots to distinguish between farm tractors and military vehicles from 15,000 feet up. They produced an audiotape of a U.S. F-16 pilot supposedly agonizing over whether to bomb what he “mistakenly” thought to be a Serb “ethnic cleansing” operation—a tape which later turned out to involve an unrelated incident.

Finally, slimy Labourite NATO flack “Jamie” Shea opened his April 19 daily “briefing” by exclaiming, “You want the facts, today you are going to get them.” The highlight of this “damage control” exercise was a flight-suited U.S. Air Force general moaning about a “very complicated scenario.” The “complication” was that the facts had already come out in numerous news accounts. NATO planes had dropped a total of *nine 500-pound laser-guided bombs* on the refugee convoys at three different sites over a 12-mile stretch of road and at a fourth site eight miles to the west, even though a British Harrier pilot had made it clear that the convoy contained civilian vehicles.

In an article in the London *Independent* (17 April), correspondent Robert Fisk wrote: “Mr Shea—or ‘Jamie’ as he enjoins us to call him—says he is still trying to find out what happened.... Well perhaps I can help Jamie.” Having visited three of the four sites along the convoy route bombed by NATO warplanes, Fisk described the “highway of death between Prizren and Djakovica,” the dismembered bodies of men, women and children there, and the bomb and missile fragments with American markings on them.

American correspondent Paul Watson, who likewise toured three of the sites, wrote in the *Los Angeles Times* (16 April): “None of the survivors interviewed confirmed NATO’s claim that military vehicles were trying to hide in their long convoy.” As for the purported mistakes made in bombing from an altitude of 15,000 feet, Watson reported: “The Kosovo Albanian survivors tell of jets divebombing, circling and then

bombing again as tractors and horses pulling wagonloads of terrified refugees tried to escape.” One survivor recalled, “They were coming very low and dived down.” In the *Independent*, Fisk confirmed “evidence of strafing as well as aerial bombing.”

For days after the bombing, every sort of lie was piled on to deflect attention from the ever more obvious fact that NATO bombs had blown away dozens of Albanian refugees in cold blood. On April 16, the *New York Times* ran a diversion headlined “U.S. Officials Suspect Deadly Chemical Weapons in Yugoslav Army Arsenal,” which went on to say that there is “no evidence that the Yugoslav army or the Serbian forces had used, or were planning to use lethal chemical agents.” Then State Department yuppie James Rubin announced that they had “developed [!] new evidence” of mass killings by Serb forces. NATO spokesmen dutifully produced high-altitude photos of mass graves which, they claimed, the Muslim Albanian victims themselves had been forced to dig—as evidenced by the fact that the graves supposedly pointed toward Mecca!

The truth is *NATO has been bombing civilians, including many Albanians, since the war began.* When two video-guided NATO bombs crashed into a Serbian passenger train crossing a bridge two days before the bombing of the refugee convoy, U.S. general Clark described it as an “uncanny accident.” Yet the pilot launched a *second* missile against the train after seeing that he had hit it once! This attack, too, was then buried in the Western press under a numbing stream of supposedly “new” Serb atrocities, including week-old unconfirmed reports of Albanian women being brutalized in Serbian military “rape camps.”

The Western press has hammered away at the supposed “genocide” being carried out by the Milosevic regime and Serb-chauvinist militias and talked of the “complicity” of the entire Serbian popu-

lation in order to justify the terror bombing of civilians. But what has been going on in the former Yugoslav deformed workers state since it was ripped apart by nationalist fratricide has been “ethnic cleansing” on all sides, aimed at compacting homogeneous capitalist nation-states, with the Croatian and Bosnian Muslim nationalists playing no less bloody a role than the Serb forces.

The Western “human rights” propaganda blitz about the Albanian refugees—many of whom have been forced from their homes by NATO bombing—is a flimsy cover for an *imperialist war of domination against Serbia*. The strategy of civilian terror bombing now being pursued by NATO has been employed by the bloodyhanded U.S. warmakers for decades, from the firebombing of Dresden and Tokyo in World War II to the “scorched earth” policy during the Korean War and the carpet bombing of Vietnam. In concert with the imperialists’ class hatred, this strategy is often used against industrial areas *especially targeting the proletariat*. During this war, dozens of bridges and factories have been destroyed, including the huge Zastava auto plant in Kragujevac, where in 1941 German Nazi occupation forces massacred 5,000 Serbs in a single day. Damage from NATO bombs has reached \$100 billion, throwing the Serbian economy back at least a decade. Hundreds of thousands of Serbian workers have been left without jobs and whole cities cut off without water, electricity or heat. These are not accidents but a deliberate effort to terrorize the population.

The point of the lies and the censorship is not to keep information from the Serbs, who know full well that they are being bombed, but from the workers of the U.S. and Europe who may recognize in the perpetrators of imperialist slaughter their own exploiters and oppressors. The arrogant ruling-class spokesmen who lie that their deliberate acts of mass murder in Serbia are “tragic accidents” also try to dismiss the horrendous cop killing of black African Amadou Diallo in New York as a “tragic accident.” They are the same types who gleefully point to the corporate bottom line in announcing mass layoffs, revel in union-busting and proclaim the “beneficial effects” of ripping minimal welfare benefits away from black women and children. Our job, as proletarian internationalists, is to bring to the working class the understanding that this profit-driven system of war, racism and immiseration will only be swept away when the capitalist rulers themselves are swept into the dustbin of history and the international working class is in power. ■

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Declaration...

(continued from page 1)

A 25 March statement of the Spartacist League/U.S. asserted:

"Every blow against U.S. imperialism in the Balkans will help to weaken the class enemy, providing an opening for the working class and oppressed here to fight against the torrent of attacks being leveled by Wall Street and its political agents, the Democratic and Republican parties. We fight to build the multiracial revolutionary workers party, forged in the crucible of class struggle, which is the necessary instrument to lead the working class to the overthrow of this entire system based on racism, exploitation and war through a socialist revolution which rips industry and power away from a small handful of filthy rich and creates an egalitarian socialist economy."

In Europe, the brutal imperialist attacks on Serbia are being carried out by capitalist governments headed by social democrats and ex-Stalinists. As the military historian Clausewitz once said, war is the continuation of politics by other means. Having demonstrated their loyalty to the bourgeoisie at home by enforcing racist capitalist austerity, today the social democrats are if anything more vigorous than their right-wing predecessors in doing the imperialists' dirty work abroad. The *Berliner Zeitung* (25 March) observed: "That a red-green government sent units of the Bundeswehr into a military intervention for the first time since the founding of the Federal Republic is saving the country from an unproductive ideological and political conflict." At the onset of the war, sections of the International Communist League immediately issued statements unmasking the imperialist war propaganda and seeking to mobilize the workers of the world against their "own" bourgeoisies.

The destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state ushered in a sharp rise in regional wars and imperialist military adventures, as a virulent new nationalism became the hammer of counterrevolution. Interimperialist strife, previously held in check by the need for a common anti-Soviet alliance, erupted anew. Just beneath the surface of the current unity of the NATO "allies" over the bombing of Serbia lie fundamental and escalating interimperialist rivalries expressed in the growing trade war between the U.S. and Europe, as well as Japan. The post-Soviet world increasingly resembles the pre-1914 world. It was imperialist machinations stoking nationalist hatreds in the Balkans which led directly to World War I.

Today, NATO bombing is a trip wire for a broader and even bloodier international conflagration, potentially drawing in Greece, Turkey and Russia. While acting as a soft cop for NATO, capitalist Russia's denunciation of the U.S./NATO military attack on Serbia is in line with its ambition to assert itself as a regional imperialist power. Both Russia and the U.S. have huge nuclear arsenals, and the U.S. has already demonstrated its readiness to use these weapons with the nuclear incineration of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. Who could believe that the French, the British or the Israelis would be any more restrained? Capitalism is an irrational system, and the mad drive for profit and power inherent in this system will inevitably lead to a nuclear third world war if it is not stopped through international proletarian revolution.

Imperialists Rain Terror on Yugoslavia

NATO's war against Serbia has nothing to do with "human rights" or defense of the Albanian population of Kosovo against "ethnic cleansing." This war is not about the Kosovo Albanians. It is a war of domination aimed at realizing longstanding American plans to insert a substantial U.S./NATO military presence in Serbia through subduing, or if necessary dislodging, Milosevic. Since when do the imperialists care about the oppressed peoples? Hundreds of thousands of immi-

Chicago: SL/SYC Protests Labourite Warmonger Blair

As British Labour prime minister Tony Blair addressed Chicago's elite Economics Club on April 22 to drum up support for a ground invasion of Serbia, the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Club protested outside against the U.S./NATO terror war. Calling to "Defend Serbia against imperialist attack," demonstrators chanted "Not one penny, not one man for the Clinton/Blair mass murder plan!" and "Down with U.S./British imperialism! Workers to power!" A Spartacist speaker declared:

"NATO's war in Serbia has nothing to do with 'human rights' or defense of the Albanians in Kosovo against 'ethnic cleansing.' The hypocrisy of the U.S. and its British partners' so-called 'humanitarianism' doesn't fool us. For starters, what about British army repression in Northern Ireland, or the police occupation of the inner cities in the U.S., the racist oppression of blacks, the gunning down of Mexican immigrants at the border.

"This weekend, NATO is plotting the intervention of over 100,000 ground troops as they 'celebrate' their 50th anniversary of imperialist horror over the workers of the world. This deepening conflict in the Balkans underscores the urgency of forging Leninist vanguard parties to lead the working class in socialist revolution to sweep away all the rapacious capitalist ruling classes."

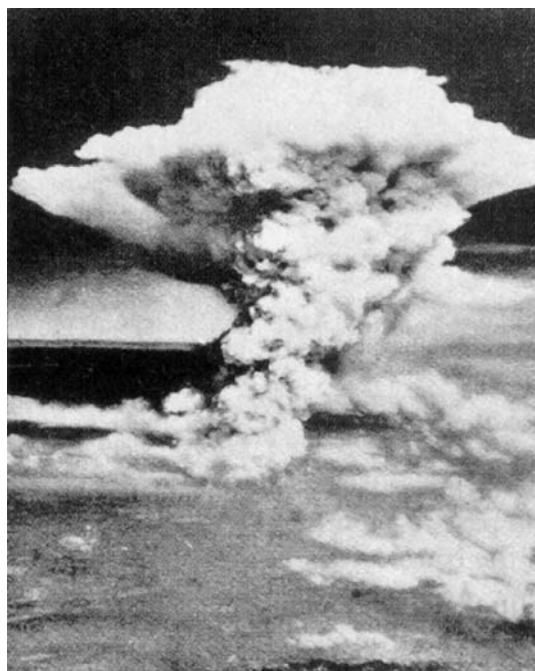


WV Photo

grants are deported every year by the European governments. Indeed, these same governments went into a virtual frenzy at the thought of having to open their borders to the refugees from Kosovo.

The ICL stands in the tradition of V.I. Lenin, whose "Socialism and War," a powerful handbook of revolutionary internationalism written in 1915 and circulated clandestinely to workers and sol-

state of Yugoslavia through capitalist counterrevolution. The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was born out of World War II, when Tito's Communist partisans battled the occupying Nazi German Wehrmacht as well as the Croatian fascist Ustasha and Serbian royalist Chetniks. Tito's partisans were the only force in Yugoslavia during the war that opposed communalism. But the socialist and democratic ideals to which the Tito



Asahi Shimbun



Novosti

Imperialist barbarism: U.S. nuclear incineration of Hiroshima, 1945; Nazi death camp at Auschwitz.

diers throughout Europe during the war, teaches:

"The standpoint of social-chauvinism is shared equally by both advocates of victory for their governments in the present war and by advocates of the slogan of 'neither victory nor defeat.' A revolutionary class cannot but wish for the defeat of its government in a reactionary war, and cannot fail to see that the latter's military reverses must facilitate its overthrow."

Lenin stressed that in the case of an imperialist war against a small nation or semicolonial people, it is the duty of the working class not only to fight for the defeat of one's "own" government but to defend the victims of imperialist aggression. In the present war, we are for the military defense of Serbia, without giving the Milosevic regime a shred of political support. We called for the right of self-determination for the Albanian population of Kosovo against the Serb-chauvinist regime in Belgrade until the Albanian separatists became simply a pawn of NATO's predatory designs. For Marxists, the democratic right of self-determination for the Kosovo Albanians is necessarily subordinated *now* to the struggle against the imperialist bombing and threatened invasion.

In fact, the all-sided nationalist bloodbath in the Balkans was directly instigated by the imperialists in their drive to destroy the former deformed workers

regime publicly appealed were undermined by the bureaucratic deformations and the inherent limitations of Stalinism, with its program of building socialism in one country. Tito introduced "market socialism," which opened Yugoslavia to imperialist economic penetration and reinforced disparities among the various regions, fueling resurgent nationalism.

After Tito's death the bureaucracy

began to fracture along national lines. Milosevic, who promoted "market reforms" as head of the central bank, launched his political career by appealing to "greater Serbia" chauvinism particularly against the Kosovo Albanians. In this, he embodied the link between capitalist restoration and nationalism. But Milosevic was not alone in this regard. His Croatian counterpart, Franjo Tudjman, idolizes the World War II fascist Ustasha—a puppet of the German Nazis—and Bosnian leader Alija Izetbegovic is a rabid nationalist and Islamic reactionary. Marxists oppose the poison of nationalism and fight for the class unity of the workers of Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Kosovo in overthrowing all the bloody nationalist regimes of the region, from Milosevic to Tudjman. For a socialist federation of the Balkans!

The terminal crisis of Titoist Yugoslavia came in early 1991, when newly elected right-wing nationalist governments in Croatia and Slovenia declared secession from the federated state. Germany moved in to steamroller its European allies into recognizing their independence. The U.S. then joined Germany in throwing its weight behind an independent Bosnia under the leadership of Muslim nationalist forces. In Croatia the U.S. and Germany provided the fascistic Tudjman regime with not only large quantities of modern weaponry but also high-level training and advisers. This enabled the Croatian army in mid-1995, in league with NATO's air assault, to rout the Bosnian Serb military forces. Hundreds of thousands of Serb civilians were expelled by Croatian forces in the largest single act of "ethnic cleansing" in the war. At the same time, the U.S. covertly funded and armed Islamic fundamentalist

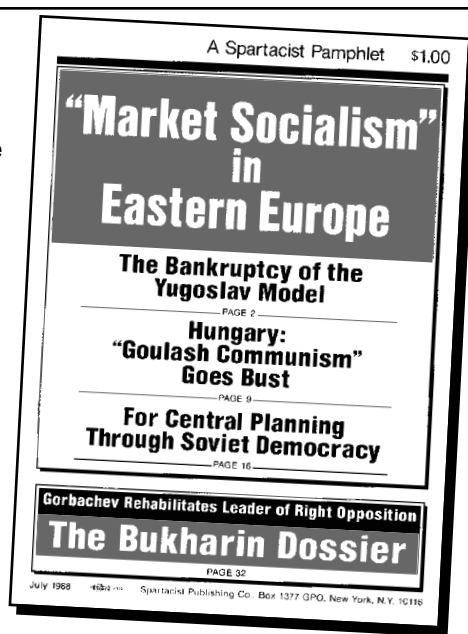
continued on page 8

Spartacist pamphlet

The counterrevolutionary destruction of the Yugoslav deformed workers state in 1991—instigated by the same imperialist powers now carrying out a war of terror against Serbia—was prepared by the former Stalinist regime's pro-capitalist market "reforms." This 1988 collection of *Workers Vanguard* articles analyzes how "market socialism" widened social inequalities and intensified ethnic and national divisions, enormously strengthening the internal forces of capitalist counterrevolution.

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(continued from page 7)

Euro “Socialists”

In its supposedly “antiwar” propaganda, the European “left” is simply acting as the spokesman for their own imperialist bourgeoisies, whose interests are by no means the same as those of the American imperialists. “The partnership with NATO in the Yugoslav crisis is simply a cloak, masking great differences between the United States and its European allies,” a former UN official told the San Francisco *Chronicle*. The same article (15 April) quoted a range of people running the gamut from left to right “who view the intervention in Kosovo as a thinly disguised effort to impose Washington’s will on Europe’s future.” In France, the *Chronicle* noted, “newspaper commentaries are so unremittingly hostile to the United States that a reader might well imagine Paris is at war with the Pentagon, rather than with the Yugoslav army,” while former German chancellor Helmut Schmidt complained about being “held on a leash by the Americans.”

Perhaps the most blatant of the *pro-war* “leftists” are the former Stalinist parties, exemplified by the French CP, which is of course in the government. Headlining, “Europe and France Must Participate in Building Peace,” a leaflet signed by the PCF along with the Ligue Communiste

A black and white photograph capturing a historic moment during the Battle of Stalingrad. In the foreground, a soldier is silhouetted against the sky as he hoists a large Soviet flag, featuring the hammer and sickle emblem and a star, from a rooftop. The flag is partially unfurled, showing its texture and the emblem clearly. In the background, the city of Stalingrad is visible, with its buildings heavily damaged and smoke rising from the ruins, creating a dramatic and somber atmosphere. The image is framed by a dark, jagged silhouette of a building's edge on the right side.

Yevgeni Khaldei

against the nationalist dictatorships and for the right of ethnic minorities.”

“NATO was not the only, and above all not the best, linchpin for an accord. The conditions for a multinational police force (particularly composed of Serbs and Albanians) could be found under the auspices of the OSCE to enforce a transitional accord.”

Alain Krivine's USec is acting as a mouthpiece for the interests of French imperialism, counterposing to the U.S.-dominated NATO intervention the call for a European imperialist expeditionary force in the Balkans. Rifondazione Comunista (RC) in Italy and the PDS in Germany (as well as some SPD members like ex-party chairman Oskar Lafontaine) push much the same brand of nationalist anti-Americanism. While the American government is the foremost

empire's history of pillage and murder in Ireland, the Indian subcontinent, Africa and the Middle East? And it was the Italian bourgeoisie which invented concentration camps in Libya, which first used poison gas against the Ethiopian population, and which carried out countless acts of butchery in the Balkans during World War II.

In the same vein, the minuscule International Bolshevik Tendency (IBT), which sneers at independence for Quebec and more generally is notorious for its indifference to the rights of oppressed peoples, such as the Catholics in Northern Ireland, today howls for “independence for Kosovo”—apparently they only champion independence for those who have imperialist sponsorship.

A four-page supplement issued 10 April by *Proposta*, the limp “left opposition” of RC, never calls for immediate withdrawal of Italian troops from the Balkans. *Proposta* supported the previous “Ulivo”/RC bourgeois government which invaded Albania.

As Lenin asserted: “Opportunism and social-chauvinism have the same politico-ideological content—class collaboration instead of the class struggle, renunciation of revolutionary methods of struggle, helping one’s ‘own’ government in its embarrassed situation, instead of taking advantage of these embarrassments so as to advance the revolution.” The reformist trade union leaders are bribed with the crumbs of imperialist profit. In France unions get more revenue from the state and the capitalists than from their own members. Fake left groups like LO and LCR emulate this political corruption by taking their own financial subsidies from the bourgeois state. But he who pays the bills calls the political tunes! We struggle for the *complete independence of the trade unions from the capitalist state!*

A statement distributed at a London public meeting of 30 March by WP's international, the League for a Revolutionary Communist International (LRCI), claimed to defend the Serbs against NATO attack—"though not in Kosovo which they have no right to occupy"! At the same time, WP urges the Albanian separatists "to take full military advantage of the imperialist bombing to drive out the 'Yugoslav' forces," adding: "If [Clinton and Blair's] primary concern were for the Kosovars they would recognise their statehood, and give the KLA the weapons to drive out the Serbian troops." This is an unvarnished appeal to the NATO imperialists.

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It could not be clearer that the fake lefts are social-chauvinists whose bottom line is support to imperialist war aims in the Balkans, despite the theoretical contortions they go through in trying to reconcile their lip-service opposition to NATO with their support to the separatist Kosovo Liberation Army, which is now simply a pawn of NATO. Against the social-chauvinists of his time, Lenin polemicized against Karl Kautsky, a central leader of the German SPD who during the first interimperialist war maintained “loyalty to Marxism in word, and subordination to opportunism in deed.” Lenin wrote that “Kautsky ‘reconciles’ in an unprincipled way the fundamental idea of social-chauvinism, recognition of defence of the fatherland in the present war, with a diplomatic sham concession to the Lefts—his abstention from voting for war credits, his verbal claim to be in the opposition, etc.” (Lenin, “Socialism and War,” 1915). But today’s “leftists” like Workers Power are indeed far to the right of a Karl Kautsky.

It took the opening of the first imperialist world war, World War I, and an orgy of chauvinism to shatter the Second International and for the “socialists” of that time to lead the working class to the slaughter. Today, as the first bombs were being dropped on the Balkan peoples, what passes for the “left” was already prostrate before its own imperialism. In the face of World War I, Lenin called on the workers to turn the interimperialist war into a civil war in all belligerent



Fake lefts march behind “human rights” imperialism: Labourite “Alliance for Workers Liberty” and centrist Workers Power (right) at April 10 “Workers Aid for Kosova” rally in London.



Workers Hammer photos

with some contradiction) all opposed the intervention of the Soviet Army into Afghanistan, the last objectively progressive act of the Kremlin bureaucracy. In the early 1980s they joined in fervent support to CIA/Vatican-sponsored Polish Solidarność, which was in the forefront of the drive for capitalist restoration in East Europe. A decade later, all these groups cheered on Yeltsin and his pro-imperialist “democrats” as they launched the counterrevolution which was to destroy the Soviet Union.

The SWP, who rejoiced when New Labour was elected, tails after Labour

ists, noting that “Britain still occupies part of Ireland.” However, Scargill’s statement that the bombing is being carried out “without even the fig-leaf of a United Nations Security Resolution” implies confidence in that institution of the imperialists. A more left-wing statement by the Normanton Constituency SLP is titled: “Defend Yugoslavia and Iraq—Fight Imperialism.” The statement correctly nails Blair’s New Labour Party as “anti-working class, pro-imperialist.” It says, “We firmly believe in the principle of the right of nations to self determination, and in the case of Yugoslavia that means the right of a sovereign nation to solve its own problems.” However, both SLP statements are uncritical of Milosevic’s virulent Serb-chauvinism.

Yet in the April/May issue of its *Socialist News*, the SLP says nothing about defeating imperialism, hints at a call for ground troops (“Neither Clinton nor Blair has any intention of putting their soldiers into Kosovo on the side of the Kosovar Liberation Army”) and calls on “UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, Russian Prime Minister Yevgeni Primakov and the Pope to devise a form of peace negotiations which would stop the bombing”! Talk about an unholy alliance—the Pope who was a key operative for Solidarność counterrevolution in Poland, the chief of the UN which invaded Haiti and Somalia and is starving Iraq, and the prime minister of capitalist “post-Soviet” Russia the SLP now beseeches to bring us peace! Scargill’s opposition to the Vatican-sponsored Solidarność was used by the Thatcher government as a union-busting spearhead against Scargill and the British miners before and during their 1984-85 strike.

Militants in the SLP who want to oppose British imperialism must understand that the “old Labour” political tradition which the SLP fondly harks back to is anything but anti-imperialist. The “little England” nationalists of the pre-Blair Labour Party “left” stood on the side of their own imperialism from India to Ireland to the “virginity testing” of Asian women seeking admittance into Britain. The line of Labourism is the so-called parliamentary road to socialism—

as though the ruling class would hand over state power to the proletariat after a democratic election; in the meantime, they seek to participate in the “humane” administration of the capitalist system. You can’t fight imperialist war without a revolutionary fight against the capitalist system which breeds war.

The Working Class Must Fight National and Racial Oppression

Under Lenin and Trotsky, the Bolsheviks led the Russian working masses to successfully smash the capitalist state in October 1917. The Bolsheviks took revolutionary Russia out of the imperialist carnage, and founded the Communist International for the purpose of spreading the revolution worldwide.

But unlike in Russia, the sharp revolutionary opportunity presented by the first World War did not lead to the proletariat overthrowing the bourgeoisie in Western Europe. The chief responsibility for this lies with the social democracy. These bloodhounds of counterrevolution served their bourgeois masters well, butchering revolutionaries like the German communists Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg. The pressure of imperialist encirclement on the economically backward Soviet state, the devastation of the Russian working class in the civil war that smashed the counterrevolutionary Russian and imperialist forces, and the failure of proletarian revolution abroad set the stage for a political counterrevolution in 1924 (Thermidor), in which political power was usurped by a nationalist, parasitic caste headed by Stalin and his heirs. Their false dogma of “building socialism in one country” meant in practice an accommodation to imperialism. The Stalinist program of class collaboration has led to the defeat of incipient workers revolutions from China in 1925-27 to Spain in 1936-39, Italy 1943-45 and France in May 1968. Having destroyed the revolutionary internationalist consciousness of the Soviet proletariat, the Stalinist bureaucracy finally devoured the workers state, ushering in the capitalist counter-revolution of 1991-92.

U.S. imperialist president Jimmy Carter
continued on page 10



Le Bolchevik

Ligue Trotskyste denounces racist Jospin government and imperialist war against Serbia at March 27 Paris protest against deportations of immigrants.

countries, demanding a split of authentic socialists from the Second International.

The fake left’s ideological prostration before imperialism reflects their many years support to Western imperialism against the Soviet Union in the name of “democracy” and “human rights.” As long as the Soviet Union and the deformed workers states of East Europe existed, as Trotskyists we called for their unconditional military defense against imperialism and internal counterrevolution. We fought for proletarian political revolution to oust the nationalist Stalinist bureaucracies. In contrast, the fake left supported all manner of pro-capitalist forces in the name of “anti-Stalinism.” The state-capitalist British Socialist Workers Party (SWP) of Tony Cliff along with its satellites and fake Trotskyists like the USec and Workers Power (the latter

“left” Tony Benn, saying, “Tony Benn has opposed the Falklands War, the Gulf War and this war” (SWP pamphlet, “Stop the War,” April 1999). Tony Benn is a “little England” nationalist who called for UN sanctions during the Gulf War and today complains the bombing doesn’t have UN authorization. Meanwhile, the press of the Socialist Party (formerly “Militant”) calls for “workers’ action to overthrow Milosevic” (*Socialist*, 16 April) while, needless to say, never calling for British workers to overthrow British capitalism.

Politically apart from the British “poor little Kosovo” crowd is the Socialist Labour Party (SLP), headed by mine-workers leader Arthur Scargill. An SLP press release of 24 March, quoting Scargill, forthrightly branded Labour Party prime minister Tony Blair a murderer. It pointed to the hypocrisy of the imperial-

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Lutte de Classe



French expeditionary forces in Macedonia. LO’s Arlette Laguiller and LCR’s Alain Krivine, “left” promoters of French imperialism.

Declaration...
(continued from page 9)

waged Cold War II under the rubric of "human rights." Today, "human rights" imperialism is the watchword of the imperialists and their hangers-on to justify their war aims. During World War I, Britain and France justified their war against Germany in the name of liberating Belgium while Germany claimed to be fighting for the liberation of Poland from Russia. Lenin savagely ridiculed this bourgeois deception. While strongly supporting Poland's right to self-determination, he argued that raising this slogan in the context of an imperialist war could only mean "stooping...to humble servitude to one of the imperialist monarchies" ("The Discussion on Self-Determination Summed Up," July 1916).

While the bourgeoisies today howl about "poor little Kosovo," they perpetuate numerous instances of national and racial oppression, including in western Europe. The French bourgeoisie oppresses and expels thousands of North Africans and other sans papiers from "la belle France." Germany has deported Kurds back to sure repression and possible death in Turkey, while Bosnian refugees were victims of mass deportations by the Fourth Reich. Italy sank a ship of Albanian refugees on the high seas. Roma and Sinti peoples are hideously tormented across "socialist" Europe.

The repression of the Basque people exposes what capitalist "European unity" is all about: trans-national police-state coordination of terror against oppressed peoples fighting for liberation. We demand freedom for the Basque nationalists in French and Spanish prisons, and call for the right of self-determination of the Basques, north as well as south of the Pyrenees!

The ICL fights for the immediate unconditional withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland as part of the fight for an Irish workers republic within a socialist federation of the British Isles. In this situation of interpenetrated peoples, in which the Catholic minority is currently oppressed within the sectarian Orange statelet, we recognize that there is no equitable solution to national oppression short of the mobilization of the proletariat throughout the British Isles for the revolutionary overthrow of British imperialism, smashing the Orange statelet in the North as well as the Catholic clericalist state in the South.

While screaming about Milosevic, the



Der Spiegel

"Human rights" imperialism: U.S. occupation forces terrorized Somalia, 1993; SPD-led German government unleashed cops against Kurds protesting arrest of PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan in February.

imperialists are silent about the oppression—including massive forced population transfers—of Kurds in Turkey. The government of Turkey, the southeast bastion of NATO, has carried out a 14-year war against the oppressed Kurdish population that has left some 30,000 dead, totally destroyed 3,500 villages and forced more than three million Kurds to flee their homes. It is notable that the leader of the petty-bourgeois nationalist Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), Abdullah Öcalan, was tracked down by the CIA and was denied asylum by every European country, while in Germany the PKK is banned. We say: Freedom for Öcalan! Down with the persecution of Kurdish militants! For a Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan!

The domestic face of bourgeois nationalism is the sharp increase in racism directed at Europe's dark-skinned and Eastern European immigrant communities, who face massive deportations and state and fascist violence. Immigrants who are no longer needed as "guest workers" for low-paid dirty work are being thrown out while second-generation youth in particular are viewed with contempt by the rulers: with no jobs and no future for these youth, the ruling class fears them as social tinder waiting to explode. Across Europe, capitalist regimes administered by supposed "socialists" unleash their cops to terrorize minority youth, while in Blair's Britain the oppression of blacks and Asians has become such an acute embarrassment that the government was forced to acknowledge "institutionalized racism" in the police.

Racist oppression is integrally linked to the mechanism of capitalist exploitation. Social-democratic regimes and popular-front governments (coalitions

which tie working-class parties to the bourgeoisie in government) have been put into office since the collapse of the Soviet Union, with the express purpose of destroying the "welfare state." The capitalist rulers no longer feel obligated to maintain a high standard of living for Western workers to compete with the social benefits of the planned economies of the East European deformed workers states resulting from the victory of the Red Army in World War II. As the bourgeoisie seeks to drive up the rate of exploitation, immigrants are not only targeted for deportation but are used as convenient scapegoats for unemployment and immiseration. Anti-immigrant racism

class forces capable of destroying the racist capitalist system. To mobilize the power of the integrated proletariat, however, requires a political struggle against the social-democratic parliamentary and union leaderships, which are transmission belts for racist poison into the working class and whose pro-capitalist policies have simply perpetuated the conditions of mass immiseration and despair which serve as the breeding ground for fascism. Only active engagement in the urgent social struggles against racial oppression and repression can lay the basis for the unity of the multiethnic proletariat against the bourgeoisie. But the labor "leaders" pursue the opposite policy, for



AFF

Fabian/Sygma

Pope of counterrevolution blessing Lech Walesa, leader of Polish Solidarność, which spearheaded drive for capitalist restoration in East Europe in 1980s.



is the cutting edge of attacks on the whole working class. The interests of the working class and minorities must advance together, or they will fall back separately. The workers movement must fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants and refugees from right-wing repression.

Along with the intensification of the bourgeoisies' war against their own working masses, the final undoing of the October Revolution has intensified social reaction, and as always women are among the chief targets. Capitalist counterrevolution in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe has pauperized women, driving them out of jobs and back to the tyranny of "Kinder, Kirche, Küche." Across Western Europe and North America, abortion rights are under concerted attack, while in the so-called "Third World" (but not only there), fundamentalist religious forces are on a rampage of anti-woman terror, seeking to buttress every kind of familial and social obstacle to the emancipation of women.

The fake left spreads the illusion that putting the social democrats into power is a means of "fighting the right" and the fascists. This is a bald-faced lie. These capitalist governments have relentlessly persecuted the immigrants, while protecting the fascist gangs who spread their murderous terror. Appealing to the racist bourgeois state to ban the fascists is simply suicidal and augments the arsenal of state repression, which will invariably be used against the left, not the right. We fight to mobilize the social power of the organized proletariat at the head of all the oppressed to smash fascist provocations!

West Europe's dark-skinned proletarians are not just defenseless victims but an important component of the working-

example by organizing the racist cops into the trade unions. Cops are not workers! We demand: Cops out of the unions!

To once and for all smash the fascists—the armed gangs which capital holds in reserve to use against the working class—requires socialist revolution. But the fake lefts who politically tail the larger social-democratic bourgeois workers parties are totally incapable of a bold assault on the capitalist system. It is instructive that the electoral platform of the LO-LCR lashup in the European parliamentary elections does not even mention "socialism," let alone "revolution." For these timid reformists the maximum program is to go back to the good old days of the "welfare state"—the program of social democracy! It is a measure of the retrogression of proletarian consciousness since the destruction of the Soviet Union that most of those who once paid lip service to the Fourth International, founded by Leon Trotsky and destroyed by revisionism, have become open mouthpieces for the politics of the Second International, which the heroic Rosa Luxemburg already aptly described as a "stinking corpse" at the time of the First World War! In sharp distinction to these pseudo-Trotskyists, who openly acquiesce to capitalist rule, we fight for new October Revolutions, which requires the reforging of the Fourth International as a world party of socialist revolution!

Down With Maastricht! For a Workers Europe!

Previously a diplomatic appendage to the anti-Soviet NATO alliance, today the European Union is an unstable adjunct to the economic, military and political priorities of the European capitalists, and is

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directed against the workers of Europe and non-European immigrants, as well as against Germany’s main imperialist rivals, the U.S. and Japan. With Germany as its strongest component, the European Union is also an arena in which the fundamentally conflicting interests of the major European bourgeois states are expressed.

Because capitalism is organized on the basis of particular nation states, itself the cause of repeated imperialist wars to redivide the world, it is impossible to cohere a stable pan-European bourgeois state. The perspective of a progressive European “superstate,” as preached by Jospin, Schröder et al. is a bald-faced lie. As Lenin noted long ago, a capitalist United States of Europe is either impossible or reactionary:

“Of course, *temporary* agreements are possible between capitalists and between states. In this sense a United States of Europe is possible as an agreement between the *European* capitalists...but to what end? Only for the purpose of jointly suppressing socialism in Europe, of jointly protecting colonial booty *against* Japan and America” (“On the Slogan for a United States of Europe,” August 1915).

In contrast, Workers Power actually maintains that the EU is progressive, or potentially so, arguing that “to some extent European workers will be better armed to fight back on a continental scale after the implementation of the terms of Maastricht” (*Workers Power*, June 1992). Thus WP becomes the mouthpiece for capitalist “united” Europe. As Trotsky wrote of the centrists of his time, “But it is a law that whoever is afraid of a break with the social patriots will inevitably become their agent” (“Lessons of October,” 4 November 1935). In a parody of parliamentary cretinism, WP even calls for a Europe-wide constituent assembly!

LO similarly had an abstentionist position on Maastricht. In reality, these groups act as left democrats, seeking to put a “democratic” face on capitalist reaction. We stand with Lenin. The “unity” of the EU has been directed against the proletariat and oppressed: raining bombs on Yugoslavia, policing the borders against “illegal” immigrants, turning over Öcalan to the torture chambers of Turkey.

A statement for the Europarlament issued by Scargill’s SLP calls for getting Britain out of the European Union. Titled “Vote Us In to Get Us Out,” the statement presents the EU and the Maastricht Treaty as the root cause of rising unemployment and the general worsening of economic conditions. This obscures the fact that, with or without the Maastricht Treaty, the main enemy of the workers of each country is their “own” bourgeoisie. Thatcher’s Britain pioneered the dismantling of the “welfare state” years before there was any serious talk of a common European currency. Our opposition to the EU is based on a proletarian internationalist perspective, not the nationalist protectionism of the SLP. Only the overthrow of capitalism through workers revolution and the establishment of a *Socialist United States of Europe*, as part of a worldwide socialist society, can lay the basis for the development of productive resources that will genuinely benefit mankind.

Reforge the Fourth International!

Sharply impacted by the Asian economic collapse, the Japanese economy has suffered its greatest crisis in 50 years. Japanese imperialism, for its part, has reacted with an aggressive attempt to refurbish bourgeois militarism. As the U.S. and its NATO allies began their barrage of cruise missiles and bombs against Serbia, the Japanese navy fired at two vessels suspected of being North Korean spy ships. This was only the second time in the postwar period that the navy has fired its weapons, the other time being in 1953 against the USSR off Hokkaido.

A statement by the Spartacist Group of Japan (SGJ) noted:

“While endorsing the U.S./NATO massacre of Serbs, the Japanese ruling class is well aware that American imperialism’s role as top world cop is also directed

War is the mother of revolution: Petrograd soldiers in June 1917 raise banner calling for Third International only months before Bolshevik-led October Revolution brought workers to power. ICL fights for new October Revolutions.

against them, America’s main imperialist rival in the Pacific. Since the destruction of the Soviet Union, the Japan-U.S. security treaty less and less suits the real interests of the Japanese bourgeoisie. Already the second biggest military spender in the world, Japanese imperialism is pushing the revised military guidelines to prepare its own battle-ready army and navy.”

Asserting “Not one man, not one yen for the imperialist military!” the SGJ emphasized that the struggle against imperialist war cannot be conducted separate and apart from the class struggle:

“Japanese workers must join with workers from Indonesia to the Philippines in the struggle for a socialist Asia, in the unconditional military defense of China, North Korea and Vietnam against imperialist attack and for proletarian political revolution. What is needed is an uncompromising proletarian party to lead the working class to state power.”

The sharp escalation of interimperialist rivalry, reflected in the growth of bourgeois militarism in the U.S., Europe and Japan, expresses a fundamental law of imperialism. Imperialism is not a policy that can be made more humane, as the liberals and reformists contend, but “the highest stage of capitalism,” as Lenin defined it: “Imperialism is capitalism at that stage of development at which the dominance of monopolies and finance capital is established; in which the export of capital has acquired pronounced importance; in which the division of the world among the international trusts has begun, in which the division of all territories of the globe among the biggest capitalist powers has been completed.”

Lenin sharply polemicized against Kautsky’s theory of “ultra-imperialism,” today resuscitated as “globalization,” which claimed that the great capitalist powers could peacefully agree on the joint exploitation of the world by internationally united finance capital. Lenin asserted, to the contrary, that “the only conceivable basis under capitalism for the division of spheres of influence, interest, colonies, etc., is a calculation of the *strength* of those participating, their general economic, financial, military strength, etc.” The small number of imperialist powers are engaged in a ruthless struggle to improve their relative competitive position by increasing the rate of exploitation of their domestic working class, by plundering the colonial and semicolonial world and by seizing markets at the expense of their rivals. Thus, the basis is laid for new wars to redivide the world in accord with the changing relative strengths of the imperialists. As Lenin asserted: “‘inter-imperialist’ or ‘ultra-imperialist’ alliances, no matter what form they may assume, whether of one imperialist coalition against another, or of a general alliance embracing *all* the imperialist powers, are *inevitably* nothing more than a ‘truce’ in periods between wars” (Lenin, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*).

The view held by fake leftists like



Workers Power that a European capitalist superstate can be constructed by peaceful means is simply a modern-day variant of Kautsky’s theory. Another variant is the view that the existence of nuclear weapons will restrain the capitalist imperialists—at least the “democratic” imperialists—from resorting to a new world war. In a polemic with Peter Taaffe’s Committee for a Workers International we pointed out that this demonstrated touching faith in the democratic imperialists, who gratuitously atom-bombed their already defeated enemy at the close of World War II. Today’s “leftists” who expect rationality and restraint from the imperialist rulers have deliberately

Newport News...

(continued from page 9)

strike. Newport News shipyard workers are proud to be an integrated beachhead of union power in the “open shop,” racist South—a picket line captain aptly calls strikers his “soldiers.” The attention of workers throughout the area is riveted on this strike. Teachers join retired shipyard workers on the picket lines. A black auto worker at the Volvo plant in the southwest Virginia town of Radford who used to work at the shipyard came to the picket line to express his solidarity. Go-go dancers from “The Katt” brought a thousand burgers and sodas to the picket line. A union leadership determined to win this strike would be raising a call for the thousands of Tidewater unionists—from other shipyard workers to ILA Longshoremen and Teamsters—to beef up the picket lines.

A victory in this strike could lay the groundwork for a drive to organize the South. It could be a concrete aid to the effort by the International Union of Operating Engineers to organize 2,100 workers at a Gateway 2000 computer plant in nearby Hampton. More directly, a victory at Newport News would have a huge effect on the years-long union recognition fight at Louisiana’s Avondale yard, which is slated for a merger with Newport News. That unionization drive has dragged through the courts because the labor tops have looked to the government’s pro-business National Labor Relations Board.

Unions are built on the picket lines, just as Local 8888 was during the bitter three-month-long strike in 1979. The fight to organize the South means taking on not only the capitalist owners of industry, who reap huge profits by exploiting low-paid labor but the cops and courts at their command and the Klan terrorists who are deadly enemies of integrated labor struggle.

Such a class-struggle perspective is far removed from the outlook of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP). An article on the strike in the SWP’s *Militant* (26 April)

short memories: the bloody-handed carpet bombers of Vietnam have little rationality and even less scruples.

There is an element of fatuousness in the presumption on the part of the American bourgeoisie that Russia’s weakness and indebtedness preclude it from military intervention. The Russia of the tsars was not strong when it chose to mobilize against Austria (and therefore Germany) in WWI. None of the combatants indulged in such “rational” calculation; they all expected the war to be over in a few short months. This is how wars start, and our centrist opponents are as foolish as the bourgeoisies they tail in this regard. We are not dealing with a rational social system, but rather with imperialism. *Only world socialist revolution can save mankind from a barbaric outcome.*

Writing on the aftermath of Hitler’s coming to power, the Russian revolutionary leader and founder of the Fourth International Leon Trotsky wrote: “The catastrophic commercial, industrial, agrarian and financial crisis, the break in international economic ties, the decline of the productive forces of humanity, the unbearable sharpening of class and international contradictions mark the twilight of capitalism and fully confirm the Leninist characterization of our epoch as one of *Wars and revolutions*.” He concluded “War and the Fourth International” (1934) by asserting: “It is indisputable at any rate that in our epoch only that organization that bases itself on international principles and enters into the ranks of the world party of the proletariat can root itself in the national soil. *The struggle against war means now the struggle for the Fourth International!*” We seek to carry forward the work begun by comrade Trotsky: *Reforge the Fourth International!* ■

sympathizes with scabs crossing the picket lines: “The shipyard employs thousands of non-union contract workers, many of whom face immediate termination if they do not go into work. A number of these workers give the striking unionists the thumbs up as they enter the yard.” We say: Picket lines mean don’t cross! The SWP’s scabherding line is part and parcel of a program counterposed to mobilizing the multiracial proletariat in class struggle against the capitalist system. The *Militant*’s coverage of the strike refuses to take on the pro-capitalist, flag-waving policies of the labor misleaders and says nothing about the burning need to combat racist oppression. And while opposing the U.S./NATO bombing of Serbia, the SWP puts front and center the call for “independence for Kosova,” echoing the “human rights” propaganda which the American capitalist rulers use to justify their war of terror.

The Spartacist League calls forthrightly for the *defeat* of racist U.S. imperialism through workers revolution and for defense of Serbia against the U.S./NATO terror war. A blow to the U.S. rulers’ drive for world domination would aid the struggles of workers and blacks here. We fight to forge a multiracial workers party committed to sweeping away this whole system of exploitation, racism and imperialist war and replacing it with a workers government. Those who labor must rule! ■

CORRECTIONS

In “Victory to Newport News Shipyard Workers!” (WV No. 711, 16 April), we wrote that Avondale Industries refused to accept a 1993 union recognition vote in its Gulfport, Mississippi shipyard. The Avondale shipyard is in Gulfport, Louisiana.

In the same issue, the article “Down With U.S./NATO Terror Bombing!” misdated the London “Workers Aid to Kosova” demonstration as February 10. The correct date is April 10.

WORKERS VANGUARD

Newport News Shipyard Shut It Down Tight With Mass Pickets!

Lobbying Congress—Dead End

APRIL 25—The strike by United Steelworkers (USWA) Local 8888 against Newport News Shipyard in the Virginia Tidewater area is now entering its fourth week. Newport News, where nuclear submarines and aircraft carriers are built and overhauled, is the country's largest private shipyard. The outcome of the Newport News strike will weigh heavily in the national steel contract negotiations coming up this summer. And a victory by Local 8888, one of the few integrated industrial unions in the South, can serve as a gateway for unionization of this low-wage, "open shop" region. Central to this strike and the organization of labor throughout the South is the need to combat racist discrimination on and off the job. **Victory to the Newport News strike!**

The anger against the arrogant shipyard bosses which fuels the strikers' resolve was clear to a *Workers Vanguard* team at the picket lines last week. One striker told WV how management tried to dump an injured 62-year-old worker by getting him a job as a K-mart "greeter." Another talked about how he would retire with a pension of \$300 a month after 26 grueling years in the yard. While workers' wages have been frozen since 1993 (as opposed to a 16.5 percent raise at the General Dynamics Electric Boat shipyard in Connecticut), Newport News chairman William Fricks' total compen-

sation package rose **256 percent** to over \$2 million.

force—sometimes outnumbering picketers—doing the bidding of the shipyard bosses, harassing strikers and arresting six on bogus "public drunkenness" charges.

In our last article, we stressed the need "to galvanize trade unionists and black people throughout the Tidewater area to join strikers in the mass pickets needed to win" (WV No. 711, 16 April). Though there is no production going on, the shipyard remains open. Contractors and Navy personnel are crossing the picket lines. Scab trucks continue to make deliveries. The workers rightly think their skills, involving exacting and highly dangerous work, cannot easily be replaced. But Fricks hopes to foster a scab "back to work" movement in the course of a protracted strike—that is the significance of keeping the yard open. The picketers' chant of "88, close the gate" must become a reality. The key to winning the strike is **mass, militant, disciplined picket lines that shut the yard down tight.**

The USWA International tops' strategy only weakens the picket lines. Their failure to provide adequate strike benefits is forcing many strikers to find part-time jobs to get by. More importantly, the union bureaucracy is channeling the strike into dead-end appeals to the capitalist government and Democratic Party politicians. We warned last issue that

Newport News strike is key battle for labor in racist, "open shop" South.

Congress to "show their appreciation for the contributions these workers make to our national defense." This lobby was a centerpiece of the "Blueprint for Victory" unveiled by the union tops at an April 14 mass meeting of some 7,000 workers. Standing on the Capitol steps, USWA International president George Becker and AFL-CIO chief John Sweeney were flanked by a host of Democratic Party politicians, including Virginia Senator Charles Robb. Becker kicked off the flag-waving hoopla with talk of how Newport News workers build the "finest fighting ships in the world" that "defend this country" throughout Asia, the Near East and Kosovo.

Robb, announcing that he had just returned from the Balkans, openly beat the drums for the U.S./NATO war of domination against tiny Serbia. Praising the "master shipbuilders" at Newport News for building the ships now being used for bombing defenseless civilians and destroying factories and homes in Serbia, Robb's punch line was to warn the strikers that it is not "in the U.S. interests to have a long, protracted disagreement" at Newport News. Only a few days earlier, Secretary of Defense William Cohen had made it amply clear that the "national interest" is the capitalists' *class* interests—i.e., profits—as he weighed in behind management attacks on the union. In reporting his veto of a proposed takeover of Newport News by General Dynamics, the Newport News-Hampton *Daily Press* (17 April) headlined: "Cohen Warns Shipyard: Cut Costs or Else." In addition to keeping wages down, the shipyard bosses are now threatening hundreds of layoffs. As the vast number of military bases in the South are mobilized for a ground war, the tempo of war propaganda will accelerate and put even more pressure on the strike.

In joining with capitalist politicians in pushing "stars and stripes" demagoguery, the union tops express their class-collaborationist lie of a "partnership" between labor and capital. This was clear as well in the protectionist tirades for steel import quotas voiced throughout the

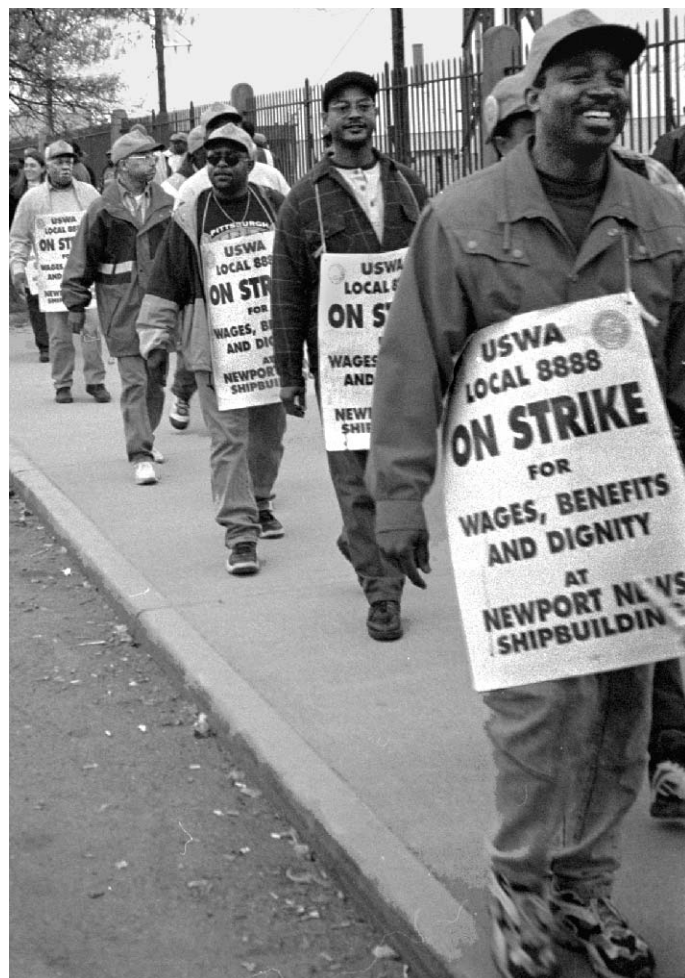
April 21 rally. Such trade-war measures are the prelude to another world war, in which the sons and daughters of working people will be dragged off to die for the interests of the corporate fat cats. At the rally, Hawaii Congressman Neil Abercrombie declared his state "the beachhead of American interests in the Asian Pacific area." *Those* interests are *counterposed* to the international class interests of the working class, which includes active solidarity with 6,000 shipyard workers in South Korea now on strike against the giant Daewoo conglomerate and the American-backed police-state regime there. In the U.S., "America first" chauvinism fuels attacks on immigrant workers and emboldens racist, anti-labor forces like the KKK lynchers.

Becker & Co. appealed to Congress to get the "parties back to the bargaining table." This is an invitation for government intervention—which will only be used to break the strike. The pro-capitalist union misleaders claim that the Democrats are "friends of labor," but the Democrats are no less than the Republicans a party of big business. The Clinton administration has overseen a broad assault on labor—including escalating attacks on the Teamsters in the wake of their 1997 victory over UPS—while massively augmenting the repressive forces of the racist, strikebreaking cops, axing welfare programs for the ghetto poor and forcing them into slave-labor, union-busting "workfare" schemes.

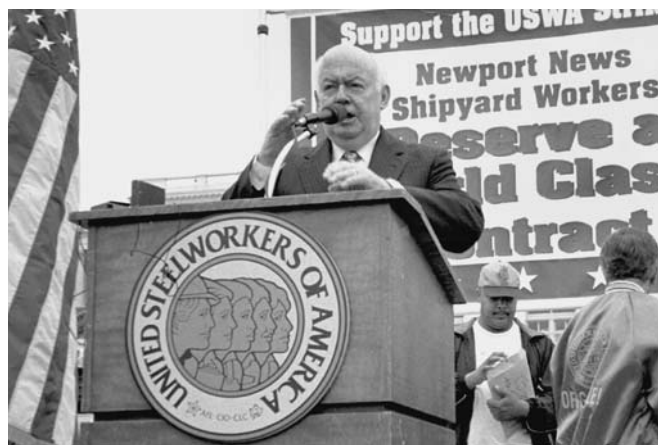
What is needed is a political fight inside the unions to oust the pro-capitalist bureaucracy and replace it with a class-struggle leadership—one which recognizes that the interests of labor are counterposed to those of the employers, their government and their political parties. Break with the Democrats! For a workers party that fights for a workers government!

Reliance on the racist capitalist government and its politicians is a blueprint for defeat, directly counterposed to the fight to mobilize the mass pickets needed to shut down Newport News and win the

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WV Photo



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April 21 USWA lobby of Congress featured AFL-CIO president John Sweeney and Democratic politicians. Labor tops' flag-waving appeals to "national defense" and reliance on capitalist government undermine fight against Newport News management.

Break with the Democrats—Forge a Workers Party!