

U.S. Nuclear Cowboys on the Loose

Defend Iraq

Against U.S. Attack!

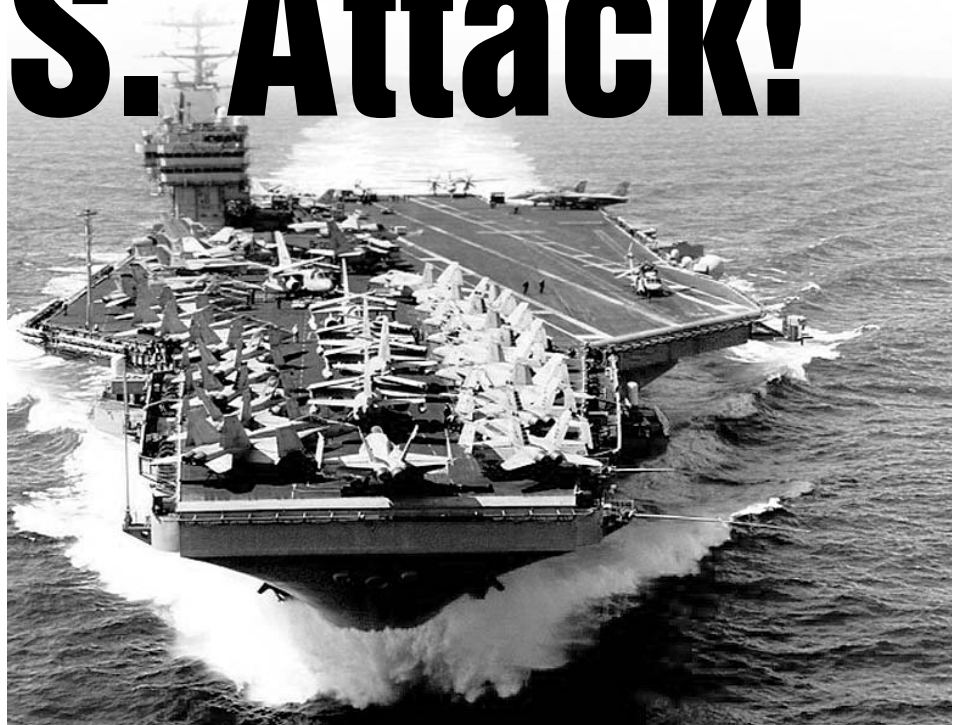
Down With UN Starvation Blockade!

OCTOBER 1—As the people of Iraq gird themselves for another round of mass slaughter at the hands of “democratic” America, the imperialists shamelessly trade in the commodities futures of blood, oil and votes. Despite the Senate Democrats’ being effectively labeled traitors by the president, Senate majority leader Tom Daschle corrals them to push through a war resolution for Bush, concerned that they’re being out-flanked by the Republicans for the upcoming Congressional elections. In the United Nations, the European powers and the Arab states look to the “world’s only superpower” to buy off their opposition to the impending war.

The U.S. and Tony Blair’s Britain have been engaged in a steady buildup of military deployments to the region and of deadly bombing sorties against Iraq. Notwithstanding all the diplomatic jockeying over UN weapons inspectors and the

wording of Security Council resolutions, the question is not whether but when the U.S. will launch its invasion. After the UN and Iraq reached an agreement over the return of weapons inspectors today, the U.S. responded by declaring that it will not accept inspections unless they are preceded by a new, “tougher” UN resolution demanding, among other things, the installation of foreign soldiers in Iraq to “guard” the inspectors. One administration official described the U.S. government’s response as going into “thwart mode.”

With little respite, the five million residents of Baghdad have lived under war or the shadow of war for 12 years, their homes destroyed by bombs and missiles, their children’s lives snuffed out by malnutrition and disease. Some one and a half million people have died as a result of the UN embargo, half the schools are now unfit for use, female adult liter-



U.S. Navy
USS George Washington aircraft carrier, currently in the Persian Gulf, part of U.S. armada being assembled for attack on Iraq.

acy has plummeted from 87 percent in the mid 1980s to 45 percent in 1995, and one in five children have had their growth permanently stunted.

Arab leaders throughout the Near East, fearing turmoil in their own countries, have warned Washington against a U.S. invasion of Iraq while the Zionists

continue to sow terror against the Palestinians. Israeli troops occupy the Ramallah compound of Yasir Arafat, having destroyed almost all of the buildings, where he has been imprisoned since December. Israeli troops have repeatedly fired into crowds of Palestinians who

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West Coast Shipping Bosses Lock Out Longshore Union

Defeat PMA/Government Union-Busting!

Victory to the ILWU!

OAKLAND, October 1—As of 6 p.m. Sunday, the Pacific Maritime Association (PMA), representing shippers and terminal operators, has indefinitely locked out members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) from all West Coast docks. Union members have no intention of sitting idle while the bosses attack them; over the weekend, union members in Oakland mobilized to stand “curbside to keep a 24-hour watch on behalf of the union, making sure the cranes stayed still during the lockout” (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 29 September). To prevent the PMA from using non-union labor to move cargo, the ILWU set up pickets outside the docks in ports up and down the coast.

The entire labor movement must mobilize in solidarity with the longshore workers to ensure that nothing moves in or out of West Coast docks.

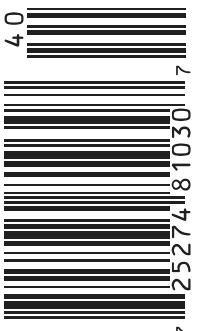
The International Longshoremen’s Association (ILA) has indicated that any picket lines set up by ILWU members at East and Gulf Coast ports to stop diverted ships would be honored. Especially given the interconnected character of “intermodal” shipping, the solidarity of transport workers—from Teamsters to railway workers to port truckers—is key. The International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF) has expressed its solidarity with the ILWU against “anti-union bullying,” while the Maritime Union of Australia reaffirmed an earlier pledge of “full financial, political and industrial support.” With dock workers under assault globally, workers in every country must come to the defense of the ILWU. This is particularly important in Canada, where ILWU members work under a separate contract.

A 36-hour lockout of the ILWU was first imposed last Friday, a provocative action which the PMA arrogantly called a “cooling-off period.” Then after workers had been back at work for only

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PMA Brings Armed Thugs to Federal Mediation Meeting

As we go to press, we have learned from a 1 October ILWU press release that ILWU officers walked out of talks with the PMA and federal mediators in Oakland when union representatives were “greeted by gun-toting security guards under the employment of the PMA.” As ILWU International president Jim Spinosa declared: “This is an outrageous action taken by [PMA head] Miniace and the PMA. This shows how they approach negotiations, hiding behind the government and armed thugs. PMA’s lockout is holding a gun to the head of the American economy and now they move to aim real guns at us. We will not be intimidated by these kinds of tactics and we will never reach an agreement as long as the PMA acts as if it can force a settlement at gun point rather than negotiate.”



“Anti-Terror” Hysteria in the Air

Since September 11, the U.S. government has carried out a racist dragnet targeting anyone perceived to be of South Asian or Arab descent. The wanton hysteria and government-stoked racist paranoia behind the “war on terror” was dramatically demonstrated over the past month against three people of Indian descent. None of these men committed any crimes, intended to commit any crimes or had any connection whatsoever to organizations deemed “terrorist” by the U.S. government.

The ordeal for Dr. Bob Rajcoomar, a former U.S. military doctor, began on August 31 when a white passenger, Steven Feuer, began behaving erratically in the coach section of the plane. Feuer was disoriented and refused to remain in his seat. This was a minor disturbance, but two U.S. marshals, Shawn B. McCullers and Samuel Mumma, on the plane as part of the security measures instituted after the September 11 attacks, jumped into

the action. One of them drew his gun and brandished it at the passengers. The marshals commanded the passengers to remain in their seats and began snapping orders. They refused to allow anyone to stand or use the bathroom or even stretch their legs.

With the marshals stomping about the plane, waving their guns about like demented desperadoes, passengers were terrified. “I was afraid there was going to be a gun battle in that pressurized cabin,” James A. Lineberger, a Philadelphia judge and military veteran, said. “I was afraid that I was going to die from the gunfire in a shootout” (*New York Times*, 23 September).

When the marshals seated Feuer next to Rajcoomar in first class, Rajcoomar asked to be reseated and a flight attendant obliged him, seating him elsewhere in first class. When the flight arrived in Philadelphia, not only was Feuer taken into custody, but, incredibly, Rajcoomar

was dragged off as well. The Transportation Security Administration, which employs the marshals who were on the flight, lamely asserted that Rajcoomar was swept up because he was watching the pandemonium around him “too closely”! “I had never been treated like that in my life,” he told *New York Times* columnist Bob Herbert. “I was afraid that I was about to be beaten up or killed.”

At least Rajcoomar was able to get out of custody with no charges against him. That cannot be said for Gurdeep Wander, a U.S. citizen of Indian descent, and Harinder Singh, a citizen of India. The two gas station employees flew out of New York’s La Guardia Airport for an Exxon/Mobil convention in Las Vegas. They left on September 10 in the hope of avoiding flying on September 11, fearing, quite reasonably, that they might face particular trouble because of their ethnicity. However, due to a plane delay, they missed their transfer in Minneapolis and had to spend the night at a hotel. The next morning, the two barely caught a flight to Memphis with a transfer to Vegas, dashing on board at the last moment.

As the plane was approaching its cruising altitude, Wander asked if he could go to the restroom despite the “fasten seatbelt” sign remaining on. Deborah Summers, a flight attendant, gave him permission. Upon reaching the bathroom, Wander began to shave, using a kit Northwest Airlines had issued to him. After about ten minutes, the flight attendant began knocking on the door, asking if he was okay and telling him to finish up. At one point Wander opened the door with shaving cream on his face and asked if he could finish up. He also allowed Summers to check his razor as she demanded.

Soon afterward, Carlos Nieves, a Latino man who did not know Wander or Singh but had boarded at the same time, went to use the bathroom. Immediately afterward, Singh also went to use the restroom. The flight attendants informed the captain of this “suspicious” activity. The pilot placed an emergency call to the Fort Smith airport in Arkansas and made an emergency landing there. Singh, Wander and Nieves were detained by the cops. Also detained was one Alaaeldin Abdelsalam, an Egyptian man who happened to be on the flight and had absolutely nothing to do with anything. As Wander’s lawyer, Matthew J. Ketcham, noted, “It’s no coincidence that these dark-skinned men were singled out” (*New York Times*, 20 September).



WV Photo

Brooklyn: Spartacist contingent at March protest against detention of immigrants.

Abdelsalam was arrested and his luggage blown open by water cannon after a bomb-sniffing dog noticed the smell of petroleum. He was only released after he explained that he was an oil worker and had his hard hat and boots in his luggage. Nieves was also released without charges. But Singh, hoping to end the ordeal to which he’d been subjected, was set free one week later after he paid a \$500 fine for the “crime” of using the bathroom. Wander, whom everyone admits did nothing more serious than shave his face, originally faced up to **20 years in prison** on charges of interfering with the flight and intimidating the flight crew. He was eventually released on September 19 with 12 months’ probation and a \$1,000 fine.

As with Rajcoomar, no one suspects any of the individuals swept up in Fort Smith of being “Islamic terrorists” (a giveaway might have been the fact that Wander was shaving his beard!). But in the context of the “war on terror,” it doesn’t matter one whit to the prosecutors, government agencies and police departments who feel they can sweep up dark-skinned people for any reason whatsoever—or no reason at all. In his 1998 treatise, *All the Laws but One: Civil Liberties in Wartime*, Chief Justice William Rehnquist favorably quotes Franklin Roosevelt’s attorney general, Francis Biddle, as saying: “The Constitution has not greatly bothered any wartime president.” With an endless “war on

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TROTSKY

War and the Struggle Against Imperialism

As U.S. imperialism gears up for war against Iraq, Leninists uphold the position of revolutionary defensism, defending semi-colonial Iraq against imperialism while giving no political support to the Hussein regime. In the Transitional Program, adopted on the eve of World War II, Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky advocated a position of revolutionary defeatism toward all the belligerent imperialist powers. At the same

time, he emphasized the necessity of supporting the colonial and semicolonial peoples in their struggles against imperialist subjugation and defending the Soviet degenerated workers state against imperialist attack and capitalist counterrevolution.

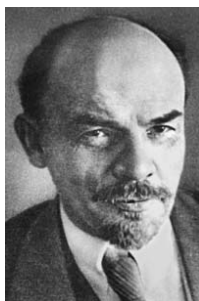
Imperialist war is the continuation and sharpening of the predatory politics of the bourgeoisie. The struggle of the proletariat against war is the continuation and sharpening of its class struggle. The beginning of war alters the situation and partially the means of struggle between the classes, but not the aim and basic course.

The imperialist bourgeoisie dominates the world. In its basic character the approaching war will therefore be an imperialist war. The fundamental content of the politics of the international proletariat will consequently be a struggle against imperialism and its war. In this struggle the basic principle is: “the chief enemy is in **your own** country,” or “the defeat of **your own** (imperialist) government is the lesser evil.”

But not all countries of the world are imperialist countries. On the contrary the majority are victims of imperialism. Some of the colonial or semicolonial countries will undoubtedly attempt to utilize the war in order to cast off the yoke of slavery. Their war will not be imperialist but liberating. It will be the duty of the international proletariat to aid the oppressed countries in their war against oppressors. The same duty applies in regard to aiding the USSR, or whatever other workers’ government might arise before the war or during the war. The defeat of **every** imperialist government in the struggle with the workers’ state or with a colonial country is the lesser evil....

In supporting the colonial country or the USSR in a war, the proletariat does not in the slightest degree solidarize either with the bourgeois government of the colonial country or with the Thermidorian bureaucracy of the USSR. On the contrary, it maintains full political independence from the one as from the other. Giving aid in a just and progressive war, the revolutionary proletariat wins the sympathy of the workers in the colonies and in the USSR, strengthens there the authority and influence of the Fourth International, and increases its ability to help overthrow the bourgeois government in the colonial country, the reactionary bureaucracy in the USSR.

—Leon Trotsky, “The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International” (1938)



LENIN

WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League of the U.S.



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EDITOR, YOUNG SPARTACUS PAGES: Michael Davisson

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4 October 2002

Spartacist Forums

Down With the UN Starvation Blockade! Defend Iraq Against U.S. Imperialism!

Saturday, October 12, 6:30 p.m.

Centro del Pueblo, 474 Valencia St., San Francisco
(One block from the 16th Street BART Station)

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The Map Room—
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CHICAGO

Northern Ireland

Catholic Minority Under Siege

The following article is reprinted from Spartacist Ireland (No. 2, Autumn/Winter 2002), published by the Spartacist Group Ireland, section of the International Communist League.

SPARTACIST IRELAND

This summer, violence in Northern Ireland reached the highest level since the signing of the 1998 Good Friday Agreement. An article about Belfast in the [London] *Guardian* (11 June) noted, “Almost incredibly for a city supposedly under ceasefire, the number of bombings and shootings in Belfast last year was the highest for 20 years.” In August the Catholic captain of the Northern Ireland team, Neil Lennon, was forced to retire from international soccer after [Protestant] Loyalists threatened to kill him. Particularly in working-class areas, the Catholic minority live under siege. In East Belfast’s Short Strand, Catholics are segregated within a ghetto and subjected to nightly terror by Loyalists, the army and police.

Tony Blair blithely asserted on 4 July that Northern Ireland is in the process of “transition from violence to democracy,” meaning his prized “peace” deal is working. The myth of British “democracy” was never much in evidence in Ireland, and the “peace process” is a fraud. We call for immediate, unconditional withdrawal of the British troops, and have consistently warned against illusions in any imperialist deal, which of necessity has been, is and will be at the expense of the oppressed Catholics, and does not serve the interests of the Protestant working class either.

Oppression of the Catholic minority is at the very foundation of the bourgeois order in Northern Ireland; it is reinforced by British imperialism and enshrined in the so-called “peace” deal which rests on the British Army presence. Sectarianism serves the interests of the capitalist exploiters by keeping the working class divided. To be effective, any fight against Loyalist terror must politically confront the capitalist system that breeds it as well as the state forces that back the Loyalists—the British Army and the renamed RUC [Royal Ulster Constabulary], the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI). Key to making workers

Trade Unions Act Against Sectarian Terror



News Letter

Belfast, August 2: Mass trade-union protest against sectarian violence following July murder of teenager by anti-Catholic gunmen.

conscious of this fact and to breaking them from illusions in the imperialist “peace” fraud is the intervention of a revolutionary internationalist party.

In the last 18 months teachers, postal workers, hospital staff and ambulance workers have been threatened by Loyalist paramilitaries and their union brothers and sisters have responded. The murder of a Catholic teenager, Gerard Lawlor, in Belfast in July by Loyalist gunmen sparked renewed fears among workers. On 1 August, following yet another death threat against a Catholic worker by a Loyalist death squad, Catholic and Protestant health workers staged a one-day strike. In January postal workers throughout the North struck for five days protesting the Loyalist murder of a Catholic union brother, Daniel McColgan. At the time, the Irish Council of Trade Unions (ICTU) organised a 15,000-strong protest rally in Belfast and smaller rallies in other cities while public sector workers staged a half-

day strike. Since then, postal workers in Derry have walked off the job a number of times in response to death threats from Loyalists.

Loyalist paramilitaries condemned the union protests—according to the Belfast *Telegraph* (15 February), the “Waterside Young Loyalists” issued threats not only to Catholic postmen in Derry but also against Protestant workers who had defended Catholics. Workers at three Belfast hospitals also protested last month when the “Catholic Reaction Force” threatened to kill three members of staff if they turned up to work. Although Loyalist violence far exceeds that of the [Catholic Republican] nationalists, on 1 August dissident Republicans placed a bomb in a lunchbox at a Territorial Army base in Derry which has been closed since July 2001, killing Protestant construction worker David Caldwell. This was criminal and can only help push Protestant workers towards the Loyalist reactionaries.

The union mobilisations demonstrate the social power of a united proletariat and present an opportunity to win Protestant and Catholic workers to a proletarian revolutionary perspective, to transcend the sectarian divide by understanding the need to get rid of the capitalist system.

However, the trade union tops undermine the social power of the unions by seeking to re-direct working-class anger into support for the imperialist “peace” deal. Under mounting pressure from their members to act in response to the murder of Gerard Lawlor, the ICTU pleaded with Belfast City Council to lead an “anti-sectarian” rally, which they did on 2 August. This brought howls of anti-Catholic venom from Ian Paisley’s DUP [the ultra-chauvinist Loyalist Democratic Unionist Party], enraged that the rally was led by Sinn Féin’s Alex Maskey, Lord Mayor of Belfast. The rally drew several thousand workers from many unions. But the spectacle on the speakers platform showed the utter political bankruptcy of the trade union bureaucracy—workers had to endure speeches from the CBI [Confederation of British Industry], the bosses’ organisation, the petty-bourgeois nationalists of Sinn Féin, and the leaders of four

Christian churches, who led the demonstrators in prayer!

Reformists Promoted Imperialist “Peace” Fraud

The Socialist Party (SP) [linked to Socialist Alternative in the U.S.] and Socialist Workers Party (SWP) [formerly affiliated with the U.S. International Socialist Organization] both claim to fight for “class unity against sectarianism” but this is bogus. Both organisations refuse to call in Britain for troops out of Northern Ireland and peddle illusions in British imperialism’s “peace deal,” which is premised on the presence of British troops. This makes them obstacles to the fight against Loyalist terror.

The Socialist Party correctly criticised the Belfast City Council-sponsored rally because of its leadership and called for “Independent workers action,” by which they meant the ICTU bureaucracy should lead it. According to their British paper, “unfortunately NIC-ICTU rejected the proposal for independent mass action” (*The Socialist*, 9 August 2002). Likewise the SWP says “it is up to the trade unions to take the lead. Leaving it to politicians to lead the call only blunts the message” (*Socialist Worker*, No. 180 [undated]). The Socialist Party and SWP act as left tails of the trade union misleaders by calling for “independent” trade union action without stating that even when the trade unions call their own actions, the union tops push class collaboration. In January, when the bureaucracy did lead a workers rally, they got endorsements from the CBI and the British government’s Northern Ireland secretary, John Reid. Class independence requires a struggle within the unions *against* the pro-capitalist bureaucracy.

The Socialist Party helped organise a separate rally of 400 workers in Belfast on 1 August, but their “anti-sectarian” posture is nothing but a cover for blindness to the oppression of Catholics. The need to combat the oppression of Catholics is a critical point that Protestant workers must understand in order to fight in their own *class* interests. The Socialist Party are known for defending the “right”

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British Troops Out Now!



AP

Catholic residents of Portadown, Northern Ireland under siege by British forces called out on behalf of Orange Order, July 1997.

Schröder's Defiance of Bush over Iraq Wins German Elections



Getty

On September 22 the ruling Social Democratic Party (SPD), in coalition with the bourgeois Green Party, was narrowly re-elected in a hotly contested election in Germany. Gerhard Schröder's SPD was trailing in the polls behind the conservative opposition led by the Christian Democrats (CDU) until only a few weeks prior to the balloting. But in August Schröder declared that Germany would not participate in a military intervention in Iraq, even if the United Nations endorsed it. Schröder's statement got a sympathetic response among the German electorate and turned the tide. The *New York Times* (24 September) observed: "This was the first time since World War II that a leader of a major ally won an election by campaigning against American policy." Schröder's victory also bucked a recent trend in Europe in which right-wing parties have defeated their social-democratic opponents, most recently in France where Jacques Chirac defeated Lionel Jospin's Socialist Party.

The election set off a sharp round of recriminations between German and American government officials. Bush refused to deliver the customary congratulatory phone call to Schröder upon his re-election. The Bush administration was particularly incensed by the remarks of SPD justice minister Herta and Paul Däubler-Gmelin. As reported by the German newspaper *Schwäbisches Tagblatt*, Däubler-Gmelin told a meeting of metal workers that "Bush wants to divert attention from his domestic problems. It's a classic tactic. It's one that Hitler also used." This not unfair observation prompted U.S. defense secretary Rumsfeld to declare that the German-American relationship had been "poisoned." Ronald Asmus, a former senior U.S. State Department official, opined: "For most of the last decade we thought that Germany was moving in the right direction, and becoming a more normal country prepared to assume more international responsibility. We thought Germany had overcome its history. But now there's a big question mark" (*New York Times*, 23 September).

Underlying the election results is a deep aversion to militarism among much of the population of Germany. This is not

surprising in a country that has lost two major inter-imperialist wars. Indeed, the strength of pacifism among the German masses makes the American "Vietnam syndrome" look rather tame in comparison. Thus, there was substantial opposition in the trade unions to German participation in both the U.S./NATO Kosovo war in 1999 and the war in Afghanistan more recently. In fact, Schröder, who enthusiastically signed up to support the American imperialists in both these ventures, pointedly denounced IG Metall, Germany's largest union, for calling for a halt to the bombing of Afghanistan. Schröder arrogantly warned the union to "keep your fingers out of foreign policy."

However, Schröder's opposition to an invasion of Iraq was not simply a ploy designed to flatter popular sentiment in a

will lead from trade and economic conflict to military conflict. As we noted at the time of the earlier Gulf War in 1989-90, Bush Sr.'s attack on Iraq was also a thinly disguised blow directed at America's chief rivals, Germany and Japan, and in particular an assertion on the part of the U.S. imperialists of their right to dispose of key oil resources. At the time, the German and Japanese governments grudgingly went along with the war and in fact ended up footing a good portion of the bill. According to the *New York Times* (30 July), out of a \$61.1 billion expenditure on that earlier war, an estimated \$48.4 billion was paid by America's "allies."

Now, with the world economy in a major downturn, economic tensions among the imperialists have climbed.



Spartakist

SpAD supporters at September 21 immigrant rights protest in Berlin call to defend the Palestinian people and for full citizenship rights for all immigrants. Sign in the middle reads: "Imperialist Hands Off Iraq!"

difficult election. The developing fissure between the American and German governments is not something that can easily be papered over. Bush's arrogant contempt for the opinions of his putative allies has certainly added fuel to the fire. But at bottom these frictions reflect the merciless competition among rival imperialist powers for larger shares of the world market—a system that ultimately

Bush's imposition of tariffs on steel products outraged governments around the world. Interestingly, it was the German government that struck a more conciliatory posture over this, heading off a major confrontation between the U.S. and the European Union. But the European bourgeoisies, which are more dependent on Near East oil than the Americans, are extremely nervous about the ramifications of a U.S. oil grab in Iraq, which could also destabilize the region. The German capitalists and their social-democratic agents are particularly unsettled over the impact this could have on the economy. The unemployment rate currently hovers around 10 percent nationally, and is much higher in more devastated areas like eastern Germany. This was deeply embarrassing to Schröder, who had promised to reduce joblessness substantially. His failure to do so almost cost him the election.

German Imperialism: No "Lesser Evil"

Should Schröder stand by his promise not to support an invasion of Iraq, this would not frustrate the plans of Bush, Rumsfeld & Co. but it would make them more difficult. No sensible Marxist would denounce a measure that would create an obstacle, albeit a modest one, for the war-crazed Bush gang. However, it is particularly incumbent on communists in Germany to maintain intransigent political opposition to German imperialism and its social-democratic agents. In particular, Marxists in Germany must combat the fatal illusion that the German bourgeoisie

SPD chancellor Gerhard Schröder and Green Party foreign minister Joschka Fischer.

and the social democracy in particular are a force for peace. The SPD went over definitively to the bourgeois order in August 1914, when it voted for war credits for the German government and lined up the proletariat as cannon fodder for World War I. A few years later, the SPD organized the fascistic Freikorps to carry out the murder of the revolutionary Marxists Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, who had opposed that inter-imperialist slaughter. The SPD has been a consistent opponent of revolution and has sought to throttle revolution wherever it has succeeded in sweeping away capitalism, as in the former Soviet Union.

In the post-Soviet world it has been the SPD that has spearheaded the deployment of German troops abroad. The dispatch of German troops to Kosovo and their intervention in Afghanistan represent the first significant deployment of military forces abroad since World War II. Significantly, the task of refurbishing the credentials of the German military was entrusted to the social democrats and the Green Party, which is headed by the ex-leftist Joschka Fischer, and not to the conservative right wing. By virtue of its ties to the trade unions and consequent authority with the working masses, the social democracy was the ideal tool for the bourgeoisie to use in an attempt to overcome the deep suspicion and hostility of much of the population toward the military and its officer corps. It is hardly surprising that today many Germans remain skeptical of Schröder's promise to stay clear of a military adventure in Iraq. A poll taken for German N-TV showed that 58 percent of those interviewed agreed with the statement: "The government's declaration that Germany will not take part in an expansion of the U.S. war against terrorism is not credible because it was made during the election campaign."

Since the election Schröder and Fischer have sought to mollify the Americans, with Fischer playing the role of chief conciliator. Schröder apologized for the reported remarks of Däubler-Gmelin and subsequently announced that she would not be reappointed in his new government. The SPD also removed parliamentary floor leader Ludwig Stiegler, who had compared Bush to Augustus, the Roman emperor who subdued the Germanic tribes. More substantively, Fischer pledged that Germany would continue to cooperate with the U.S. in the fight to round up Al Qaeda. Meanwhile, German defense minister Peter Struck said Berlin had offered to expand its military commitments in Afghanistan. At a meeting of NATO defense ministers, Struck said Germany and the Netherlands were considering taking over an international force in Kabul when Turkey relinquishes command at the end of the year. Germany has deployed over a thousand soldiers in Afghanistan while hundreds of German special forces took part in Operation Anaconda, fighting alongside British and American soldiers.

The SPD/Green government enthusiastically supported Bush's bloody foray into Afghanistan, not least because this gave it a pretext to crack down on the immigrant population at home under the pretext of "fighting terrorism." The

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newly instituted racist *Rasterfahndung*, a system of computerized “racial profiling,” targets millions of mainly Muslim immigrants. While Germany has a substantial immigrant population that forms a strategic component of the working class, very few of these immigrants have German citizenship because of chauvinist laws that discriminate in favor of ethnic Germans. In further cracking down on Turkish, Kurdish, Palestinian and other immigrants, the SPD government is simply doing the bidding of its bourgeois masters who find immigrant labor redundant in a period of economic downturn. This underlies the vital importance of the struggle for *full citizenship rights for all immigrants*. Moreover, the attacks on the more vulnerable immigrant population have served as the cutting edge of a broader attack on the workers movement. Thus the Security Check Law, modeled after Bush’s Maritime Security Act, authorized secret service background checks on airport, transport and other workers, including tracking down affiliation with socialist or communist organizations. Johann Hartshauser, a member of a factory council at the airport in Munich, was driven from his job because *18 years ago* he posted up placards for the small leftist Gruppe Internationaler Marxisten.

Schröder’s implementation of policies of war, racism, capitalist austerity and witchhunting leftists certainly *did* have a negative impact on the SPD’s working-class base. The trade unions, whose leadership is aligned with the social democracy, acted belatedly, if at all, to mobilize their membership to back the SPD. Despite the last minute spurt in support for Schröder, the SPD lost 5 percent of its working-class voting base. It was only a strong showing by its coalition partner, the Greens, that rescued the election for Schröder.

The enthusiasm of some bourgeois elements in Europe for Schröder’s victory was reflected in the Italian left-liberal newspaper *La Repubblica* (24 September), which crowed: “After Fischer and Schröder’s victory, the equation is pacifism equals electoral victory, where pacifism means no to Bush’s war against Iraq, thus no to Bush, thus no to Italian (and European) servile disposition toward the U.S.” This unvarnished call on the European capitalist ruling classes to adopt a more independent stance from their American counterpart was also encapsulated in a statement of the European Social Forum earlier this month endorsed by several reformist and centrist groups. The statement posited “the chance to influence European governments” and appealed to “all the European heads of state to publicly stand against this war” (see “Defend Iraq Against U.S. Attack!” on page 1). What the British Socialist Workers Party, Workers Power, the French Communist Party and Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire and Italian Rifondazione Comunista fake leftists are pushing is the thoroughly fraudulent idea that the European imperialists are more benevolent and progressive than their American rivals.

This is nothing but vile social-patriotism. Presumably then the German bourgeoisie of Auschwitz is morally better than the American rulers? And what about the dirty history of French colonialism in Algeria and Indochina, or the British empire’s history of pillage and murder in Ireland, the Indian subcontinent, Africa and the Middle East? Or the bloody occupation of the Congo by Belgian imperialism and Indonesia by the Dutch? It was the Italian bourgeoisie which invented concentration camps in Libya and which first used poison gas against the Ethiopian population. The argument that one’s own imperialist bourgeoisie is somehow less reactionary than an imperialist rival is exactly the argument used by the SPD in 1914 to line up the German proletariat for inter-imperialist slaughter. And while the SPD argued that “German civilization” had to be defended from Russian tsarist backwardness, the French social-patriots were



M. Matzel

SPD/Green government ordered German troops to Macedonia on eve of 1999 U.S./NATO war against Serbia. Germany now heads up imperialist occupation force in Macedonia.

arguing that the French workers had to defend France from the German Kaiser’s brutality.

The German reformist Linksruck group published a petition on its Web page demanding:

“We appeal to the German Federal Government with much concern: To do everything possible in the framework of the UN in response to the U.S.A., to avoid the threatened war! To refrain from any military, financial and political support to this war! To withdraw all German troops from the crisis area, especially the ABC tanks out of Kuwait and the Marine units out of the Gulf region and Africa!”

This statement by Linksruck goes far beyond demanding that Schröder keep his “hands off Iraq”; it openly accepts the framework of the United Nations, which is a tool of imperialist domination. In that regard it is to the *right* of the stated position of Schröder, who promises to withhold German military support regardless of what the UN does. Moreover, Linksruck’s bogus “anti-imperialism” is crafted so as not to conflict with the SPD government’s war policies. Thus, the petition omits any mention of Afghanistan or the Balkans, where the German imperialists are working in tandem with the Americans! But then this bootlicking for the social-democratic agents of German imperialism is hardly surprising coming from a group that published an article identifying the American state as the main war criminals of the 20th century. Needless to say, this displays touching amnesia about the crimes of the German ruling class, from Kaiser Wilhelm to Adolf Hitler.

In contrast, our comrades of the Spartakist Workers Party of Germany (SpAD), section of the International Communist League, demand: “Bundeswehr/NATO/UN—Out of the Balkans! Out of the Near East! Out of Afghanistan!” Our comrades forthrightly stand for military defense of Iraq against imperialist attack and oppose the lie that German imperialism is a lesser evil than its imperialist rivals. In the recent elections, the SpAD was unique on the German left in explaining that the SPD’s anti-immigrant, warmongering policies paved the way for the right-wing resurgence and calling for no vote to the SPD or the smaller but equally social-democratic Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS).

Interimperialist Rivalries Escalate

In an attempt to rebuke the German government for Däubler-Gmelin’s remarks, Bush’s national security adviser Condoleezza Rice complained, “How can you use the name of Hitler and the name of the president of the United States in the same sentence?... Particularly, how can a German, given the devotion of the U.S. in the liberation of Germany from Hitler?” The idea that the Allies liberated Germany from Nazism is a standard Western imperialist myth. In reality it was the Soviet Red Army that smashed Hitler’s Nazis. This Soviet victory was carried out at exceptional cost: well over 20 million dead. In eastern Germany, the DDR, a deformed workers state, was erected, where capitalism had been rooted out but

where the proletariat was deprived of political power. In West Germany, where capitalism was preserved, the victorious democratic imperialists willingly employed leading “former” Nazis to staff intelligence services, the courts continued to be run by the same judges who presided over Third Reich courts, etc.

In the postwar period there was indeed a shared ideological consensus among the imperialist powers, based on mutual hatred of the Soviet degenerated workers state and the deformed workers states which represented a part of the world that had been ripped out of the sphere of capitalist exploitation. West Germany, as a “front line” state of the Cold War, was closely allied with the U.S. imperialists. Indeed, the German social democracy for years acted as a regional paymaster, funneling CIA funds to various reactionary forces in Europe, which ranged from the social democrats in Portugal to counterrevolutionary Polish Solidarność (the favorite “union” of Ronald Reagan and the Pope). The SPD vigorously supported the drive of both U.S. and German imperialism to overthrow the collectivized property gains of the DDR and the Soviet Union.

In 1989, an incipient political revolution erupted in the DDR, posing the possibility of ousting the Stalinist bureaucracy, the SED, and replacing it with genuine workers democracy based on workers councils. Our international party, the ICL, intervened vigorously. We fought for proletarian political revolution in the DDR and for socialist revolution in western Germany. We strongly opposed capitalist reunification. But larger forces prevailed, namely the Kremlin bureaucracy and the decomposing Stalinist bureaucracy of the DDR, whose remnants became the PDS. Criminally, then-Soviet leader Gorbachev and the PDS opened the door to capitalist restoration in the DDR. This foreshadowed capitalist restoration in the USSR two years later. And it spelled catastrophe for the proletariat of the former workers states and the workers movement internationally. The former DDR became an industrial wasteland with the highest unemployment rates in Germany; its lumpenized population became a prime target for fascist recruitment.

The demise of the Soviet Union also removed the material basis for the anti-Soviet alliance of imperialist states that existed during the Cold War. Without the Soviet Union to serve as a common enemy, there was no “glue” to hold together the alliance. The particular imperialist powers began to act in accord with their conflicting national appetites. To the extent that there has been an apparent consensus since then, it does not reflect any ideological solidarity between the imperialists, but merely reflects the strength of the brute military superiority of the U.S. imperialists.

One of the legacies of the post-war military occupation of Germany is the proliferation of U.S. military bases in the country, which house some 70,000 American troops and include key air bases for a Near East operation. While Schröder has declared that Germany will not provide troops for a war against Iraq, it is highly unlikely that he will seek to interfere with these NATO operations. Nonetheless, U.S. bases have already been the targets of demonstrators, including some trade unionists, protesting the involvement of these bases in Near Eastern operations. Certainly those desiring to defend Iraq against imperialist incursion would have good reason to protest the use of these bases to launch attacks on Iraq. In Italy during the Balkans War, there were mass protests outside NATO bases, as well as proletarian struggle culminating in a million-strong general strike against the war. In Germany the question is posed: will such protests proceed along an axis of nationalism or of proletarian internationalism?

In the past, social democrats, nationalists and outright fascists have raised the call for foreign troops to quit Germany. In fact, this was first directed at *Soviet* troops in East Germany, when the demand “foreign troops out of Germany” was raised in the 1980s by social democrats and pacifists in West Germany. This nationalist “peace” movement remained ultimately directed against the USSR and DDR. In contrast, our comrades counterposed the call: “Defend the Soviet Union! Smash NATO through workers revolution!” When we demanded Pershing missiles out of Germany and defended the presence of the Soviet SS20s in the DDR, everyone knew exactly what that meant—unconditional military defense of the USSR against imperialism. In counterposition, many of those who cut their political teeth screaming “foreign troops out” are today running the bourgeois Greens, an ardent party of German imperialism. (See “Interimperialist Rivalry in the ‘New World Order’,” WV No. 667, 2 May 1997.) The problem with “U.S. military out of Germany!” is that it begs the question of how the U.S. military will leave Germany: as a consequence of moves of an increasingly assertive German imperialism or through proletarian revolution.

A central issue posed by the protests at the U.S. bases is the need to link the call to oppose imperialist incursions in Iraq with opposition to German imperialism. To only protest the depredations of *American* imperialism in the Near East would be a gross capitulation to

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Young Spartacus

From Labourite Reformism to Revolutionary Trotskyism

We reprint below an article from Workers Hammer No. 182 (Autumn 2002), newspaper of the Spartacist League/Britain. The article is an edited version of a talk given by comrade James Palmer at a public meeting of the SL/B held in London in July in conjunction with our internationalist intervention into the annual “Marxism” event of the reformist Socialist Workers Party (SWP). Comrade James was a leading member of the SWP’s Oxford branch before being won to the revolutionary Trotskyism of the International Communist League.

For most of its history, the International Socialist Organization (ISO) was the American affiliate of the international tendency founded by Tony Cliff and headed by the British SWP. Following Cliff’s death in spring 2000, a bitter factional struggle erupted between the ISO and the SWP, not over program but rather over expressions of competing opportunist appetites conditioned by their different national terrains. The formal organizational split consummated in March 2001 notwithstanding, the ISO shares the same reformist political program as the SWP. Foremost among the positions held in common by the ISO and the SWP is the bankrupt “theory” of state capitalism, which at bottom is a cover for having dumped the Trotskyist program of unconditional military defense of the degenerated and deformed workers states against imperialism.

WORKERS HAMMER

I was previously a member of the Socialist Workers Party of Tony Cliff. My purpose here today is to explain how it is that I came to understand that the SWP was not the sort of party that I had believed it was, and how I was won over to the Leninist/Trotskyist programme of the Spartacist League, British section of the International Communist League, by learning the principled political differences in programme that draw the real line between revolutionaries and reformists.



Cliffites peddle illusions in capitalist electoralism. In Britain, SWP’s Socialist Alliance seeks to corral youth, workers into “Old Labour” parliamentarism, while during U.S. 2000 election, the ISO hustled vote for capitalist politico Ralph Nader.

Why I Joined the Spartacist League/Britain

Something that concerns many young members in the SWP is the lack of internal democracy within the organisation. The reasons for this flow from the contradictions between their professions to be revolutionary and their actual programme of pressuring the Labour Party. This is reflected in the composition of the membership, where you have many young members who stay for a year or so until they become disillusioned, but you also have a layer of permanent, mainly older, “cadre” who are cynical Labourites in the leadership using the youth to do the leg work in the SWP’s many reformist campaigns.

How I Joined and Why I Left the SWP

At the end of 1999, I was amazed by news that the city of Seattle had been rocked by what were described as “anti-capitalist riots.” I was fascinated by the idea that it was possible to build any organised resistance to capitalism. From the way it was reported, this seemed more like an insurrection than a political demonstration or the CND [Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament] movement of the 1980s. So when I ran into some *Socialist Worker* sellers doing a petition of support, I signed it and bought the paper and also left my phone number. This was the first organised grouping on the left that I had met and it was not long before I was recruited by them. I had not read any communist literature at this point and was not able to tell the difference between reformist politics and revolutionary politics. I noticed that the SWP never said much about the former USSR or Cuba, merely classing them as “state capitalist.” I didn’t feel that this analysis did these states justice, but now that the Cold War

was over and it didn’t seem to be the main issue, I said nothing.

Being a campaigning member of the SWP, however, brought me into contact with other left groups (despite the SWP’s apolitical argument that other parties were all “tiny sectarian groups”). One of these groups was the Spartacist League, with



1990: Spartacist-initiated, 250,000-strong demonstration against fascist desecration of Soviet war memorial in Treptow Park, East Berlin. We fought against capitalist reunification, for a red soviet Germany in a socialist Europe.

the newspaper *Workers Hammer*. Trotskyist ideas had been denied to me in the SWP, none of his books were ever on sale at the SWP book stalls, but in *Workers Hammer* Trotsky’s position on defending the former USSR was explained and hit me as being a thousand times more convincing than Tony Cliff’s negative, defeatist concept of “state capitalism.” If all the revolutions so far had become state capitalist beyond repair, then the prospects for the working class were very bleak indeed; there hardly seemed any point in being a revolutionary!

In addition to this, the idea of voting for the Labour Party in the local elections where there weren’t any Socialist Alliance candidates didn’t seem like the way to develop the sort of revolutionary working-class movement needed to bring down the entire capitalist system, and I wanted to be able to discuss this with people who had politics that were not in some way tied to the Labour Party. This is what led me to more serious political discussions with the Spartacist League.

According to Lenin, in his pamphlet *What Is To Be Done?*, the task of a revolutionary party is to build revolutionary consciousness in the working class from the outside as the basis for revolution. It doesn’t come naturally, that’s why

Lenin talked of the need for a vanguard party. In Britain, the strategic goal is to split the working class politically from social democracy, historically, the Labour Party. Today, the Labour Party is so openly right-wing that it is hated by many working-class people and minorities. For a real Leninist revolutionary party, this presents an opportunity to win workers away from Labour and Labourite politics. The SWP acts as a barrier to this by offering the Socialist Alliance, a social-democratic grouping designed to play the same political role as the old Labour Party, that is to say, it is for reforming the capitalist state. One of the things that was said during the time I was

onboard the campaign was: “There is a massive political vacuum where the Labour Party used to be!”, i.e., the SWP intend the Socialist Alliance to fill that gap, rather than taking advantage of the huge divide to split the working class from Labourism. The final discrediting of the Labour Party during recent years in power represented a direct opportunity to intervene and utilise this split from parliamentary politics; instead the SWP chose to repair the credibility of social democracy by founding the Socialist Alliance to plug the gap. Once it had become clear to me that the SWP was another barrier to achieving a revolution, I resigned.

Being Won to the Trotskyist Programme

My point today is to explain the basic political differences and what they actually mean. Why did the SWP not defend the Soviet Union, what we Trotskyists understood to be a degenerated workers state, and the deformed workers states of China, Cuba, North Korea and Vietnam? And why do Trotskyists defend them? In Trotsky’s book *The Revolution Betrayed*, he explained that the Soviet Union, as the first workers state, was different not just because its government had been founded by workers councils called soviets and led

by the Bolshevik Party, but because of the new property forms that this society was based on, property forms resulting from the 1917 Russian Revolution. This was a society where there were no privately owned factories, no one owned shares and bonds, there was no stock exchange, no capitalists could get rich off the workers' backs by playing the stock market or live off the interest and consequently there was no economic cycle of boom and bust to cause misery and impoverishment to workers. This was a system that could in no way be described as capitalist. It was based on a system of collectively owned means of production, a planned economy.

Stalin's bureaucracy first ascended to power in 1924 in the aftermath of the defeat of the 1923 German Revolution and Lenin's death. Some months later, Stalin would preach the nationalist dogma of building "socialism in one country." Originally a recipe for utopian economic autarky, "socialism in one country" would become the justification for sacrificing socialist revolution internationally in the illusory belief that the imperialists would, in exchange, cease their drive to recapture for the capitalist market the one-sixth of the globe ripped from them by the October Revolution. Trotsky fought this betrayal of the Bolsheviks' internationalism down the line, and fought as the staunchest defender of the gains of the Bolshevik-led October Revolution. He understood that Stalin & Co. eventually were able to consolidate a *political* counterrevolution, but not a *social* one. For this reason, Trotsky considered the planned economy and collectivisation to be a massively progressive feature of the new society and, although workers no longer had control of the political apparatus any more than they did in the West, he knew that those remaining gains for workers needed to be defended from a return to capitalism. The USSR, a formerly backward country, was able to modernise itself even during the epoch of imperialism. From being a backward, largely agricultural nation in 1917, the USSR's planned economy enabled it to industrialise, to mobilise the Red Army to smash Hitlerite fascism throughout Eastern Europe and, at the end of the Second World War, to emerge as one of two superpowers.

Against the Stalinist bureaucracy, Trotsky called for *proletarian political revolution*, that is for workers to retake political control of the state, and return the Soviet Union as a beacon of international proletarian revolution against capitalism throughout the globe. Trotsky was a scientific socialist, and his conclusions are based on Marxist science. Thus, he was quite clear that the bureaucrats were not a capitalist class, but a new type of parasitic ruling *caste*; their social existence was dependent upon the collectivised property established by the Russian Revolution and therefore—and this is very important—they were based on a contradiction. That contradiction meant they



The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 abolished capitalism and created the world's first workers state. Unlike British SWP, ISO, Trotskyists defended the gains of the Russian Revolution against imperialist attack, domestic counterrevolution.

Above: Revolutionary soldiers march in Moscow under banner reading "Communism." Left: Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky with Red Army graduate commanders in 1924.

Novosti

YIVO Institute

were sometimes compelled to defend the Soviet Union against capitalism. Even though this ruling caste lived relatively privileged lives by comparison to the mass of the working people, even though they carried out often terrible repression—especially against the supporters of Trotsky's Left Opposition—to protect their existence, they had not destroyed the social basis of the Revolution.

In *The Revolution Betrayed*, written in 1937, Trotsky explained:

"As a conscious political force the bureaucracy has betrayed the revolution. But a victorious revolution is fortunately not only a program and a banner, not only political institutions, but also a system of social relations. To betray it is not enough. You have to overthrow it. The October revolution has been betrayed by the ruling stratum, but not yet overthrown."

You can draw a very simple analogy: imagine a trade union run by rotten leaders that was involved in a strike. No socialist in his right mind would call for the union to be smashed just because the union tops were corrupt, or because the struggle caused hardship, because this would be a huge defeat for the workers, too. The very existence of the union is a gain to defend.

Trotsky went on to outline two possible outcomes to the class struggle with regard to the USSR. One was that the workers would struggle, the Revolution would spread to the citadels of imperialism inter-

nationally and in the USSR the workers would make a proletarian political revolution against the Stalinists, returning their state to the revolutionary internationalist perspective on which it was founded. The other was that counterrevolution would triumph, which was always a danger due to hostile imperialist encirclement of the world's first workers state, the bureaucratic and vacillating policies of the Stalinist bureaucrats both domestically and internationally, i.e., Stalin & Co.'s conciliation of imperialism at the expense of revolution internationally. Unfortunately, Trotsky was later proved correct in the negative. I should mention that we found workers in the former East Germany were amazed to read this book for the first time, and many could not believe that it had been written 50 years before.

"State Capitalism"—A Capitulation

So why was it that Cliff's Socialist Review Group (the SWP's forerunner) came into existence on the basis of abandoning Trotskyism and refusing to defend the Soviet Union, the North Korean and Chinese deformed workers states during the Korean War? The SWP's leaders won't tell it to you. Under the fig-leaf of the United Nations, Britain (then ruled by a Labour government) and the U.S. were at war with North Korea, which was backed by China and the Soviet Union. Any support for the Communist forces meant coming head to head with the British ruling class and state at their most aggressive. This was unacceptable for the Cliff group, so they dropped it. They couldn't take the heat, so they got out of the kitchen, as they say. Rather than calling for unconditional military defence of China and North Korea, which meant calling for the military defeat of their "own" bourgeoisie, they refused to defend the workers states. In order to cover their capitulation, the Cliffites resorted to equating both sides as waging war for their own "imperialist" interests.

This line was also flavoured with a hefty dose of patriotism: "Why must our young lads fight and die in far-off Korea?" (*Socialist Review*, December 1952-January 1953). By reneging on revolutionary defensism and placing themselves in the so-called "Third Camp"—which was supposedly for neither Washington nor Moscow—in the reality of the interna-

tional class struggle they had crossed a clear class line and put themselves firmly in the camp of their own bourgeoisie, together with the Labour Party. They were rightly expelled from the Fourth International, founded by Trotsky in 1938.

In order to provide a theoretical justification for not defending the USSR, China and North Korea, Cliff & Co. promoted the "theory" of state capitalism. Tony Cliff is generally credited with the invention of this theory, but it was in fact first used by the infamous revisionist and apologist for the crimes of the Second International, Karl Kautsky, long before. "State capitalism" is not a serious Marxist theory, rather it is a way of rationalising defection from the essential task of defending the dictatorship of the proletariat. I can give you a quote from some years later in a paper called *The Leveller* in September 1979 where Cliff is caught in a moment of rare honesty. He says: "And I say no, no, we have nothing to do with bloody Russia, because it is not a source of strength." I think that makes it about as clear as it is going to be.

So this was how the SWP came to take the side of British imperialism, but I want to give you some other examples of enthusiastic support for the aims of its "own" ruling class. This wasn't some one-off failure based on a theoretical departure from Trotskyism; it was and is a fundamental part of the SWP's programme of class collaboration.

From Northern Ireland...

In 1969 the Labour government sent British troops to occupy Northern Ireland, and assist in the repression of the Catholic minority there. Revolutionaries in Britain have a particular responsibility to oppose British imperialism's oppression in Ireland which, for a start, means calling for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of British troops. Cliff, however, managed to find a rationale for supporting the British Army, encouraging faith in the supposedly democratic credentials of British imperialism. His argument was that it provided a "breathing space" needed for the Catholic population to avoid a pogrom. The pogrom did indeed occur: in Derry three years later when British paratroopers opened up into a crowd, killing 14 on "Bloody Sunday." This is the bloodsoaked reality of the SWP's unstinting support for the Labour Party.

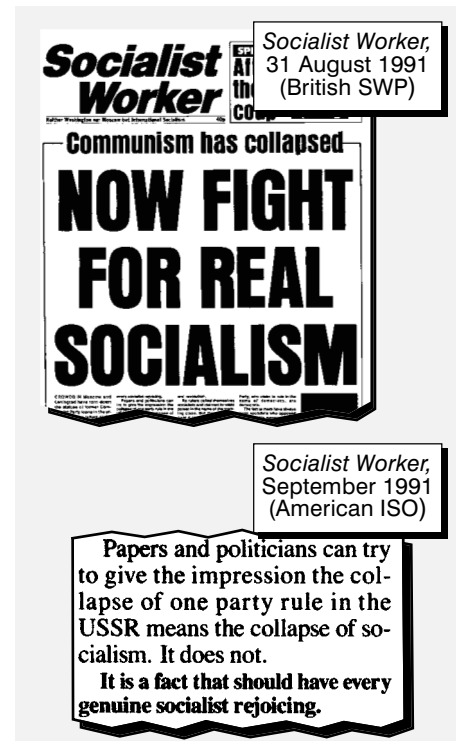
...To Afghanistan and Counterrevolution in the USSR

Let's look at the restoration of capitalism in Russia in 1991-1992. The SWP actively supported this. It is totally clear that this was a disaster for hundreds of millions of workers. The remaining gains

continued on page 8



Thousands of courageous Afghan women took up arms alongside Soviet Red Army in struggle to the death against Islamic fundamentalists. Cliffites sided with CIA-backed mujahedin cutthroats, cheered Soviet withdrawal.



British SWP, ISO hailed Yeltsin counterrevolution in Soviet Union which brought misery and hunger to workers, national and ethnic minorities.

Trotskyism...

(continued from page 7)

of the October Revolution were finally undone. But Chris Harman of the SWP characterised the return to capitalism as a “step sideways” from one form of capitalism to another. Unemployment, virtually unknown in the former USSR, now exists on a huge scale; life expectancy has plummeted and industrial productivity is down to about 50 per cent of what it was before. Reactionary forces are on the rise—Great Russian chauvinism, Islamic fundamentalism, anti-Semitism and appalling oppression for women. U.S. imperialism and its partners, such as Blair’s Labour government, feel unrestrained in their military adventures abroad. These are the concrete realities of Harman’s “step sideways.”

But the SWP grotesquely hailed Boris Yeltsin’s counterrevolutionary counter-coup as “The Russian Revolution of 1991,” and the *Socialist Worker* of 31 August that year proclaimed: “Communism has collapsed.... It is a fact that should have every socialist rejoicing.” For our part, the ICL actively fought to defend the gains of October, including within the Soviet Union, where our Moscow group distributed tens of thousands of leaflets headlined “Soviet Workers: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution.”

One of the crucial events leading to the destruction of the USSR was the withdrawal of the Red Army from Afghanistan. The SWP denounced the Soviet presence as Russian “imperialism.” Against the CIA-backed *mujahedin* forces waging bloody civil war against even modest improvement in the condition of women in Afghanistan—the reduction of the bride price, the lifting of the veil and education of girls and women—we Spartacists recognised the progressive role played by the Red Army forces in Afghanistan. Our slogan was: “Hail Red Army! Extend social gains of the October Revolution to Afghan peo-



U.S. Air Force photo

Left: U.S. bombing destroys warehouse at a North Korean port. Right: Korea’s largest city, Seoul, in ruins. Tony Cliff broke from Trotskyist Fourth International over his refusal to defend North Korean deformed workers state under attack by U.S., British imperialists during Korean War.



Captain C.W. Huff/National Archives

ples!” Workers in the West needed to be called on to stand against the sending of arms and money to the *mujahedin*, just as trade unions were mobilised to stop supplies of arms to the counterrevolutionary White forces during the Russian Civil War that followed the 1917 Revolution. We offered to recruit volunteers to fight for the Kabul government after the Kremlin had decided to withdraw. While our offer was refused, we took up the suggestion of the Afghan government to raise funds for the besieged fighters at Jalalabad and in fact were able to raise thousands of pounds internationally on their behalf.

As for the SWP, one of its leaders, Paul Foot, actually attacked Margaret Thatcher (who, along with the U.S. rulers, was in the forefront of backing the reactionary Islamic fundamentalists in Afghanistan) from the right in his column in the *Daily Mirror* (25 June 1980), complain-

ing that exports of EU [European Union] meat (“our beef”) may have been used in rations for the Red Army. When the Red Army was finally withdrawn, *Socialist Worker* (4 February 1989) said: “The repercussions of this defeat will echo way beyond the borders of Afghanistan. All socialists should welcome it.” I think this makes pretty clear the side which the SWP had taken in the wider struggle.

The SWP and Labourism

How can we explain these betrayals of the international working class by the SWP? They are based on a split from Trotskyism to join the camp of Labour, the party that serves to tie the working class to British imperialism. This is why they will not oppose them in elections. This has always been true, long before the SWP’s turn towards electoralism via the Socialist Alliance. The politics of the Socialist Alliance, meanwhile, are even to the right of the politics of “Old Labour.” Subordinated to the goal of getting New Labour re-elected, it is nothing more than a pressure group on Blair & Co. This was made clear when the SWP announced in the last general election: “Our approach in the coming election should be vote Socialist where you can, vote Labour where you must” (*International Socialism* No. 90, Spring 2001).

The historic role of the Labour Party in Britain can be seen in regard to the Russian Revolution. Labour vehemently opposed it. In the years immediately after the Russian Revolution, workers in the West knew that something historic had been achieved for their class, and they wanted it here, too. What they didn’t know was how to get it. To head off revolutionary explosions, Labour adopted measures like Clause IV in its constitution, which called for collective ownership of the means of production. At the time, the Labour Party had never been in power, and Lenin advocated tactics, such as critical electoral support, in order to expose its real purpose—to rule for the bourgeoisie—and thus to effect a split by the working-class base from the pro-capitalist tops of what Lenin called a bourgeois workers party. I think it is quite clear that this is a tactic which does not apply today to Blair’s “New Labour.” In the last general elections, we did apply the tactic of critical support for Arthur Scargill’s Socialist Labour Party (SLP). The SLP are based on Old Labour “Clause IV” socialism, and there is no way they can lead workers to revolution. Our critical support was based on their refusal to support Labour in any way and the fact that, unlike the Socialist Alliance, they advanced basic demands in the interest of the working class, including the demand for British troops out of Northern Ireland.

The SWP’s Labour-loyalism is the total antithesis to the whole concept

of building revolutionary consciousness, serving to tie workers to illusions in the “mother of parliaments,” as Labour leaders obsequiously worship institutions such as the monarchy, House of Lords and established churches. And this is what the SWP has always done: at each election the SWP says, “Vote Labour with no illusions,” and then four years later, “Vote Labour with no illusions,” ad nauseam. Today, there are a lot of youth and workers who are a million miles to the left of Tony Blair and would rather cut their own throats than vote for him. The huge gap between New Labour and workers and youth today is an opening we seek to utilise in order to build a revolutionary Leninist/Trotskyist party. The SWP, through its various coalitions, alliances and electoral campaigns, seek on the contrary to rope radical youth and advanced workers back into the Labourite fold.

The “Third Camp” vs. Revolutionary Internationalism

The position taken by the SWP over the Russian Question is not some irrelevant piece of history. It is their political credentials. It mattered then and it matters now because capitalism has not yet been restored in China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba. There have been major battles fought by millions of workers against the introduction of “market reforms” being introduced in China and elsewhere. How can you seriously fight against capitalism if you don’t fight against its return to these states where capitalism has been overthrown by mass insurgencies? Should, for instance, the proponents of capitalist counterrevolution prevail in China, another billion workers to exploit in China will only strengthen huge corporations and weaken the position of workers everywhere. This is not an abstract argument for internationalists.

There is no, and can be no, third camp because the third camp is merely the camp of imperialism. The Labourism inherent in the politics of the SWP reflects the basic capitulation to its “own” bourgeoisie codified by its abandonment of the Trotskyist programme for unconditional military defence of all those states where capitalism had been overthrown, not least in the homeland of the October Revolution.

Comrades of the Spartacist League fight for the international, proletarian and revolutionary communism of Lenin and Trotsky, for new Octobers. The SWP denounce us as “sectarians” for this. We are proud to do the groundwork needed to build a revolutionary party here in Britain, carrying out the necessary fights against social democracy and its hangers-on, fighting to win serious revolutionaries to the struggle to reforge the Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution. Join us! ■

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

BOSTON

Alternate Thursdays, 7 p.m.

October 10: **The State, the Family and Class Society—For Women’s Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!**

Boston University, CAS Room 237
725 Commonwealth Ave.

Information and readings: (617) 666-9453
or e-mail bostonsyc@yahoo.com

NEW YORK CITY

Alternate Tuesdays, 7 p.m.

October 8: **Black Oppression Is the Bedrock of Racist American Capitalism—For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!**

Columbia University
(116th and Broadway)

Meet at Hamilton Hall Lobby
Information and readings: (212) 267-1025
or e-mail nysl@compuserve.com

TORONTO

Thursday, 6:30 p.m.

October 17: **Down With U.S./Canada Terror War Against Afghanistan and Iraq! Only Socialist Revolution Can End Imperialist War**

University of Toronto
Sidney Smith Hall, Room 2116
100 St. George St. (north of College)
Information and readings: (416) 593-4138
or e-mail spartacan@on.aibn.com

BAY AREA

Alternate Tuesdays, 7 p.m.

October 8: **The Fight for Socialist Revolution—The Russian Revolution: How the Bolsheviks Came to Power**

UC Berkeley, 246 Dwinelle Hall
Information and readings: (510) 839-0851

CHICAGO

Alternate Tuesdays, 6 p.m.

October 15: **Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! No Illusions in the Racist, Capitalist State and Its Courts!**

University of Illinois at Chicago
Room 117 Lincoln Hall
707 S. Morgan St.

Information and readings: (312) 563-0441
or e-mail spartacist@iname.com

LOS ANGELES

Saturdays, 2 p.m.

October 5: **Introduction to Marxism: Historical Materialism**
October 12: **The Economics of Capitalism**

3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215
(Vermont/Beverly Red Line station)
Information and readings: (213) 380-8239
or e-mail slsycla@cs.com

VANCOUVER

Alternate Tuesdays, 6 p.m.

October 8: **Fight Anglo-Chauvinism: Independence for Quebec!**

University of British Columbia,
Student Union Building, Room 213
Information and readings: (604) 687-0353
or e-mail tlilt@look.ca

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Hysteria...

(continued from page 2)

terror” declared, such assertions are particularly ominous.

A clear example of the government’s assault on civil liberties is the prosecution of the alleged “Al Qaeda sleeper cell” in Lackawanna, New York. The suspects—Shafal A. Mosed, Yahya A. Goba, Sahim A. Alwan, Yasein A. Taher, Faysal H. Galab and Mukhtar al-Bakri (who was arrested in Bahrain)—are all American citizens of Yemeni background who grew up in the steel town in upstate New York. The government’s case states that these men, whom they have been monitoring for over a year, spent time in Pakistan in early 2001. According to the prosecutors, Alwan and al-Bakri went on to Afghanistan and spent time at an alleged Al Qaeda training camp. But even according to the government’s case, none of these men had actually *done* anything, nor did they *plan* to do anything. The FBI itself admitted that the men did not have “anything specific that they were planning that would jeopardize the health and safety of anybody in the United States or Western New York” (CNN, 15 September). In fact, Alwan faked an ankle injury during his ten-day stay at the camp in order to get out.

But as the U.S. gears up for an attack on Iraq, the Bush administration is des-

Buffalo: Protest at September 18 bail hearing for six U.S. citizens of Yemeni descent accused of being an Al Qaeda “sleeper cell.”



perate for anything it can point to as an intelligence victory in the “war on terror.” The prosecution of the Lackawanna men has been run from the highest level. Defense lawyers say that any plea bargains for individual defendants will have to be run through Attorney General John Ashcroft, if not Bush himself.

Not only have the Democrats marched in lockstep with Bush & Co. in the “war

on terror,” but it was Democratic president Bill Clinton’s 1996 “Anti-Terrorism” act—with its secret hearings, “preventive” detention and broad definition of “terrorism”—that laid the groundwork for the Bush administration’s USA-Patriot Act. The young men in Lackawanna are being charged under provisions of the 1996 law, which holds that “material support or resources” provided

to groups the U.S. government deems “terrorist” is the same as terrorism itself even if, as in this case, this means simply being in an Al Qaeda camp and apparently not enjoying it. The government is seeking to bolster its thought-crime conspiracy laws, whose victims are prosecuted on the basis of political views and association rather than any actions they’ve carried out. Historically, such laws have been used to imprison countless union militants, fighters for black rights, leftists and anyone the government perceives to be an “enemy.”

The Bush administration has been able to ram through its new repressive measures by pushing the illusion that they are intended for a specific small and vulnerable sector of the population—immigrants from Muslim countries. But as the arrests in Lackawanna and elsewhere demonstrate, the line between non-citizen and citizen is becoming increasingly blurred. The American populace is now expected to accept curtailment of their rights as the norm. But what the government can actually get away with will be determined by the level of social struggle. The working class in the U.S. has every stake in mobilizing against the truly frightening “war on terror,” which will ultimately be used to attack the labor movement. ***Down with the government’s “war on terror”! Defend immigrant rights! Defend democratic rights! ■***

Germany...

(continued from page 5)

German nationalism. Marxists in Germany must insist: Not one man, not one penny for the German bourgeois military! What about *German* military rampages in Afghanistan and the Balkans, the anti-“terror” witchhunt which targets immigrants and leftists at home, as well as the unemployment and immiseration that threatens working people? The struggle against war abroad must be linked to the fight against capitalism through a proletarian internationalist perspective; only in such a fashion can the struggle for socialist revolution go forward.

Pacifism vs. Marxism

Leon Trotsky, co-leader with Lenin of the 1917 Russian Revolution and founder of the Fourth International, distinguished between the pacifism of the masses and bourgeois pacifism. Writing in the 1938 Transitional Program, he asserted:

“In addition, it is necessary to differentiate strictly between the pacifism of the diplomat, professor, journalist, and the pacifism of the carpenter, agricultural worker, and charwoman. In one case, pacifism is a screen for imperialism; in the other, it is the confused expression of distrust in imperialism. When the small farmer or worker speaks about the defense of the fatherland, he means defense of his home, his family, and other similar families from invasion, bombs, and poisonous gas. The capitalist and his journalist understand by the defense of the fatherland the seizure of colonies and markets, the predatory increase of the ‘national’ share of world income. Bourgeois pacifism and patriotism are shot through with deceit.”

Bourgeois pacifism is indeed shot through with deceit. A clear if somewhat extreme example was Adolf Hitler. The first couple of years after taking power, Hitler swore high and low that his intentions were peaceful. Why? Under the Versailles Treaty that ended World War I, Germany had been effectively disarmed. Hitler lacked the means to wage war, so he talked peace. But all of this changed once he had assembled a sizable arsenal. If today the German imperialists clothe themselves in more pacific garb than their American counterparts, it does not at all mean that they are inherently more “peaceful.” It simply reflects the fact that at the present moment they lack the military means to challenge their American rivals. But if and when the relationship of forces changes on the international

arena, so will the methods of struggle.

The Greens are yet another example of a bourgeois party that began by proclaiming its “pacifism” but ended up participating in a government that bombed Serbia and invaded Afghanistan. The Greens play a particular role in the alliance with the social democrats. Unlike the SPD, the Green Party is not connected to the organized workers movement and is therefore the vehicle through which the German industrialists can push for the labor mar-

SPD in Berlin. The purpose of this was to give a “left face” to a government whose task has been to bail out a financially bankrupt city by means of cuts in social spending and attacks on the working class. The PDS’ direct complicity in enforcing capitalist belt-tightening in Berlin and elsewhere in eastern Germany was an important factor in its disastrous showing in the elections, where it lost everything but two parliamentary seats. As Winnie Wolf, a perennial loyal



Berlin, May 13: IG Metall strikers at DaimlerChrysler auto plant, one of a series of rolling strikes that shook SPD-led government.

ket “reforms” they clamor for, which in practice amount to attacks on the unions. Recently the SPD/Green government has drastically slashed unemployment benefits and instituted regulations that make it more difficult for unemployed workers to refuse jobs that offer low pay rates or require moving great distances.

In the past, the PDS has attracted some young people who regard it as a left alternative to the SPD. In the recent elections the Sozialistische Alternative Voran (SAV), affiliated to Peter Taaffe’s Socialist Party in Britain and Socialist Alternative in the U.S., supported a vote to the PDS. The SAV regards the PDS as being somehow a “peace party” and therefore qualitatively superior to the SPD. In actuality, having embraced the bourgeois order with its sellout of the DDR, the PDS is simply a second-rate version of the SPD. In all essential respects its program is the same, not least of all in its willingness to administer capitalist austerity. Last year the PDS formed a government coalition with the

left critic in the PDS, frankly acknowledged: “Its [PDS’] policies as a governmental party are scarcely distinguishable from those of the SPD and Greens. That’s why the losses in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern and Berlin are particularly high” (*Junge Welt*, 24 September).

In fact, since selling out the DDR in 1989-90, the PDS has never been an opponent of imperialism; it has simply quibbled over the means to achieve imperialist objectives. In the 1990-91 Gulf War, the PDS preferred to starve rather than to bomb the Iraqis into submission, advocating a UN embargo (a position which it later dropped). Sanctions are in fact a step toward war and in the case of Iraq, over the course of many years they have killed far more Iraqis than the imperialist armed forces. In the Balkans conflict three years ago, the PDS supported an occupation of Kosovo, differing in that they wanted it carried out by the UN or the European-controlled Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) rather

than the American-controlled NATO. The PDS’ line is no more motivated by opposition to imperialism than is Schröder today. They want German imperialism to be more independent of the American imperialists. Indeed the PDS (as well as some SPD dissidents like Oskar LaFontaine) has long advocated a closer alliance with capitalist Russia. Such a lash-up, which is not inconceivable, would provide Germany with what it has the technology for but does not yet possess: an arsenal of nuclear weapons.

Marxists are not pacifists. We do not have a position against “war in general.” Our line on particular wars is determined by our programmatic opposition to the imperialist order and our struggle in the interests of the working class internationally. In the event of an imperialist invasion of the Gulf, a war waged by Iraq would be a just, defensive war. We are therefore for military defense of Iraq, without giving one iota of political support to Saddam Hussein. Any other position would constitute a capitulation to the existing bourgeois order, in which a small number of rich imperialist states dominate and exploit the vast majority of working people and oppressed worldwide. Likewise we stand for the unconditional military defense of the remaining deformed workers states—China, Vietnam, North Korea and Cuba—against imperialist attack and internal counter-revolution. One cannot win new gains without defending what has already been ripped out of the sphere of capitalist exploitation.

There is no shortcut to genuine peace short of the overthrow of the capitalist order and its replacement with a world socialist order. As Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin emphasized:

“The temper of the masses in favour of peace often expresses the beginning of protest, anger and a realisation of the reactionary nature of the war. It is the duty of all Social-Democrats to utilise that temper. They will take a most ardent part in any movement and in any demonstration motivated by that sentiment, but they will not deceive the people with admitting the idea that a peace without annexations, without oppression of nations, without plunder, and without the embryo of new wars among the present governments and ruling classes, is possible in the absence of a revolutionary movement.”

—*Socialism and War* (1915)

It is to the forging of a proletarian internationalist party that can lead such a revolutionary movement to victory that we are dedicated. ■

Iraq...
(continued from page 1)

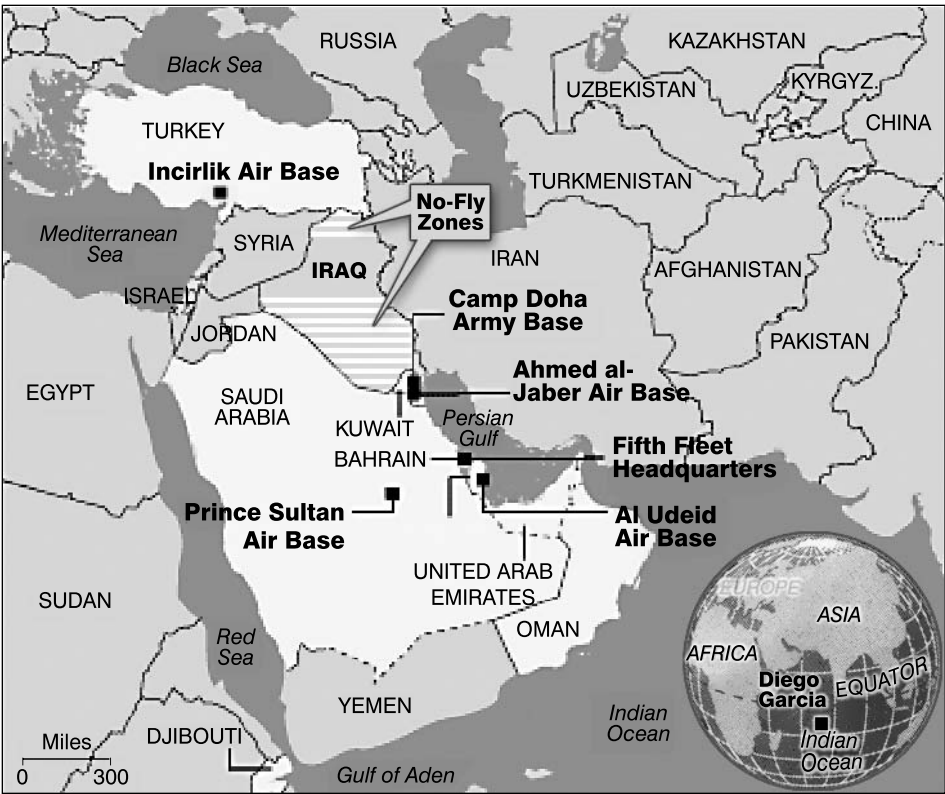
have defied curfews to come out on the streets and demonstrate. Almost the entirety of the West Bank is now again under the iron fist of Israeli military occupation, the oppressed Palestinian population confined to their villages and towns by a network of military check-points, barbed wire and trenches and imprisoned in their homes for days and weeks at a time by 24-hour curfews.

Around the globe, there is mounting fear and anger over Washington's war moves against Iraq, accentuated by the release of the "Bush doctrine" earlier this month threatening any perceived adversary with "pre-emptive" military strikes. On Saturday, over 400,000 people marched in London to oppose the Blair Labour government's support for war against Iraq. In Germany, Gerhard Schröder's Social Democratic (SPD)/Green coalition, which had been trailing in the polls, was re-elected on the basis of opposition to an American war. In Mexico City, one television poll elicited over 40,000 calls, with more than 80 percent opposed to any endorsement by the neocolonial Fox government of the coming U.S. onslaught.

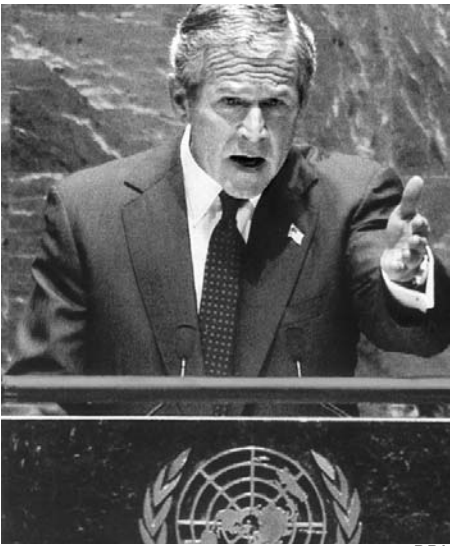
Our opposition to this war is based on our struggle in the interests of the working people and oppressed internationally against an imperialist order in which a handful of rich and powerful states dominate and exploit the world. A war between the U.S. and Iraq would be reactionary and predatory on the part of the U.S., but just and defensive on the part of Iraq. We stand for the military defense of Iraq against imperialist attack without giving one iota of political support to the bloody Saddam Hussein regime, which is run by a Sunni Arab minority oppressing the Shi'ite and Kurdish populations.

The defense of neocolonial Iraq against the American imperialist behemoth is in the interests of working people and the oppressed around the world, not least in the United States. A decade of imperialist attacks against defenseless peoples abroad has been accompanied in the U.S. by the loss of millions of jobs, the increasing erosion of any health care benefits for tens of millions of people, the virtual destruction of welfare and an unparalleled widening of the gap between rich and poor. The domestic "war on terror," directed overwhelmingly against Muslims and Arabs, is ultimately aimed at organized labor. This is most starkly demonstrated by government threats of military strikebreaking against the West Coast International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU).

Every unchallenged act of aggrandizement, every new easy win further emboldens America's capitalist rulers to lash out against their perceived enemies at home and abroad. Small, neocolonial Iraq is in no position to militarily prevail over the U.S. imperialist war machine. The Bush administration screams that Saddam Hussein has "weapons of mass



Current U.S. troop deployment in Near East.



Bush at the UN and Blair in the British Parliament beat the war drums for invasion of Iraq.

destruction." But the fact is that the one-sided slaughter carried out by the U.S.-led coalition in 1991 and 12 years of sanctions—as well as the loss of its overt Soviet and covert American military suppliers—have left the Iraqi military much weaker even than it was during the Gulf War, with the army barely one-third its former size and most of what equipment it has in need of spare parts.

Pursuit of the class struggle in the U.S. and other imperialist countries is the chief means of defending Iraq against imperialist attack. "Imperialist war is the continuation and sharpening of the predatory politics of the bourgeoisie. The struggle of the proletariat against war is the continuation and sharpening of the class struggle." These words from the 1938 Transitional Program, written by revolutionary fighter Leon Trotsky in the lead-up to the second interimperialist world war, must guide class-conscious workers and antiwar youth on the eve of this predatory war against Iraq. Every strike, every labor mobilization against the government's war plans and its attacks on workers and minorities, every mass protest in

defiance of the assaults on civil liberties is a blow against Bush's war drive.

For class struggle at home against the U.S. capitalist rulers! Down with the racist war on immigrants! Defend Iraq against imperialist attack! Down with the UN starvation blockade! Defend the Palestinians—Israel out of the Occupied Territories! U.S., UN and all imperialist forces out of the Near East, Central Asia and Afghanistan! Only workers revolution can end imperialist war!

The "Bush Doctrine": U.S. Imperialism Declares War on the World

In his speech to the UN on September 12, Bush made a grudging bow to "multilateralism" while delivering a U.S. ultimatum for war against Iraq. Coming only days later, the release of the Bush government's "National Security Strategy" document was something of a diplomatic bombshell. Affirming a general policy of "pre-emptive" war, the document states that the U.S. is militarily "strong enough to dissuade potential adversaries from pursuing a military buildup in hopes of

surpassing, or equaling, the power of the United States." Summarizing the administration's view, the New York Times (20 September) wrote that "the president has no intention of allowing any foreign power to catch up with the huge lead the United States has opened since the fall of the Soviet Union more than a decade ago."

This doctrine is the encapsulation of the arrogance and triumphalism of the U.S. imperialist rulers—whose military budget is greater than that of the next 19 countries combined—since capitalist counterrevolution destroyed the Soviet Union a decade ago. Our international tendency, the International Communist League, fought until the bitter end for the unconditional military defense of the Soviet Union against imperialism and capitalist counterrevolution and called on the Soviet proletariat to sweep away the Stalinist misrulers, whose bureaucratic mismanagement and futile attempts to conciliate imperialism paved the way for capitalist restoration. The destruction of the former Soviet Union ushered in a far more dangerous world. As the ICL's "Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program" (Spartacist [English-language edition] No. 54, Spring 1998) stressed:

"History speaks its verdicts loudly. The ascendancy of counterrevolution in the former USSR is an unparalleled defeat for working people all over the world, decisively altering the political landscape on this planet. No longer challenged by Soviet military might, U.S. imperialism has proclaimed a 'one-superpower world,' running roughshod over semicolonial peoples from the Persian Gulf to Haiti. No longer the unrivaled economic powerhouse of world imperialism, the United States still maintains the murderous advantage of its military might, while often preferring to camouflage its terror under the 'humanitarian' fig leaf of the United Nations' 'den of thieves'."

Virtually the entire "left" howled along with the imperialist wolves in backing the forces of counterrevolution that destroyed the Soviet Union and the deformed workers states of East Europe. Having done their bit to strengthen the rapacious might of U.S. imperialism, today these same groups, particularly in Europe, push the illusion that the European governments or the United Nations can and should be made to stop an American war against Iraq. The UN is simply a clearing-house for the rival imperialist powers, and the European bourgeoisies have neither the will nor the capacity to stop the U.S. Moreover, though constrained by Washington's overwhelming military superiority, they are no less predatory in their own national interests.

At any rate, in its war moves against Iraq, the Bush administration has overtly challenged the need for a UN fig leaf, "multilateralism" or any of the other "democratic" trappings that have historically been used to mobilize the population for war. It was the criminal September 11 attack on the World Trade Center that allowed this government, which came to office with an electoral minority, to embark on its designs for global conquest. A New York Review of Books (26 September) article titled "George Bush & the World" cites a February speech by

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Vice President Richard Cheney to the Council on Foreign Relations. Referring to the collapse of the Soviet Union, Cheney said: “When America’s great enemy suddenly disappeared, many wondered what new direction our foreign policy would take.... All of that changed five months ago. The threat is known and our role is clear now.” As the article added: “What Cheney was saying, in a slightly more articulate fashion, was that the main purpose of American foreign policy was to confront an enemy—and that a worthy successor to the Soviet Union had finally emerged, in the form of international terrorism.”

Indeed, in the name of the “war on terror,” this government declares that it can go after whoever it wants whenever it wants. It is this reckless “unilateralism” that has provoked concerns among sections of the U.S. ruling class, including within the Republican Party and the Pentagon. These critics recognize that international institutions like the UN have served American imperialism’s interests well. Moreover, despite a propaganda blitz by the administration, popular support for a war is shallow, with opinion poll majorities plunging if the U.S. has no allies or encounters significant American casualties. A number of labor organizations, including ILWU Local 10 in the San Francisco Bay Area, have adopted antiwar resolutions.

Unlike Afghanistan, an invasion and occupation of Iraq, with its built-up population centers, would not be carried out by a few thousand elite “Special Operations” units, but would have to draw on the proletarian and plebeian base of the military. An insightful article in the *London Times* (4 September) captured the seething racial and class contradictions in the U.S. military. Visiting the U.S. aircraft carrier *Kitty Hawk* in Japan, the *Times* correspondent reported:

“Boarding one is like entering a time warp back to the former Deep South. In the bowels of the carrier, where the crew are cooped up for six months at a time, manual workers sleep dozens to a room. Most are black or Puerto Rican, paid \$7,000 to \$10,000 a year to work in the broiling temperatures of the kitchens and engine rooms.

“As you move up the 11 segregated levels towards the pilots’ quarters beneath the deck, the living quarters become larger, the air cooler and the skin tones lighter. Officers exist in almost total ignorance of the teeming world beneath them, passing around second-hand tales of murders, gang-fights and drug abuse. Visitors are banned from venturing down to the lowest decks, which swelter next to the vast nuclearpowered engines.”

The military itself is a reflection of the class and racial contradictions of civil society. Any number of factors, including a military reversal or significant casualties for U.S. imperialism in its “war on terror,” could trigger an upsurge of struggle in the U.S. and ignite the social tinder that has accumulated over the years. The capitalist class enemy is well aware of this, too, as demonstrated by its heavy-handed threats against potential strike action by the ILWU, invoking “national security.” The recent increased rumblings within the Democratic Party over the Bush administration’s “go it alone” policy on Iraq also speak to fears of what a war could ignite on the home front.

A handful of prominent Democrats, from Al Gore to Ted Kennedy, argue that the government’s provocations are not the means to mobilize for war. Declaring that war “is hell” and also “dangerously unpredictable,” a full-page ad in the *New York Times* (1 October), signed by a number of prominent Democratic Party liberals, expressed concern that “a war against Iraq could destabilize more than just Saddam Hussein.” Worried that the nuclear cowboys in the White House are “reluctant to accept international dissent, even from our closest allies,” the ad opines that it is “incumbent upon domestic critics to make their voices heard.”

Such Democrats are positioning themselves to get out ahead of and contain any opposition and turmoil that the war against Iraq could generate among working people and minorities. In fact, because of its image as a “friend” of labor



London, September 28: Spartacist League/Britain contingent (below) at demonstration of nearly half a million to protest U.S./British war moves against Iraq.

Workers Hammer photos



and minorities, the Democratic Party has historically been the preferred party of war for the American bourgeoisie. Antiwar youth, labor militants and fighters for black and immigrant rights must understand that any genuine opposition to imperialist war must be based on class struggle and political protest independent of all the parties and agencies of imperialist rule. *Break with the Democratic Party of war and racism!*

Fake Lefts Appeal to Imperialism

Such is decidedly not the perspective of various organizations building antiwar coalitions. Among the most prominent of these is the International ANSWER coalition, politically dominated by the Workers World Party (WWP), which is building for protests on October 26 in Washington, D.C. and San Francisco under the slogan: “Stop the war on Iraq before it starts.” WWP has a long history of building coalitions aimed at roping in Democratic Party “doves” and bourgeois liberals. The longstanding central spokesman for its International Action Center (IAC) is former Democratic Party attorney general Ramsey Clark, who has now launched an appeal to UN secretary general Kofi Annan to stay the hand of the U.S. While a tiny article buried in the 26 September issue of *Workers World* is headlined: “UN Binds Countries to U.S. Interests,” Clark’s September 20 letter, which was circulated by the IAC, expressed the real line: “George Bush will invade Iraq unless restrained by the United Nations.... If the United Nations, above all, fails to oppose a U.S. invasion of Iraq, it will forfeit its honor, integrity and raison d’etre.”

The “raison d’etre” of the UN from its inception has been to serve as a tool of the imperialist powers, particularly and overwhelmingly at the dictate of the U.S. A partial list of UN-sponsored wars includes the 1950-53 “police action” against the North Korean deformed workers state, which took the lives of upwards of three million Koreans, the 1960 military intervention into the Congo under whose cover the CIA and Belgian imperialists assassinated nationalist leader Patrice Lumumba and the 1991 war against Iraq. The UN presided over the 1947 partition of Palestine and the ensuing Zionist expulsion of some 700,000 Palestinians from their homes. In the last 12 years, the UN starvation embargo and its weapons inspectors (who are in fact spies) have paved the way for the U.S.’s current war moves against Iraq.

For its part, the International Socialist Organization (ISO) has run a series of

articles protesting reliance on the UN. *Socialist Worker* (20 September) writes:

“During the lead-up to the Gulf War, many activists insisted that the antiwar movement should call for the UN to take action of some sort against Iraq—rather than the U.S. “These activists were disarmed when the UN, despite all the rhetoric about peace, did sanction a war run by Washington. “Likewise, the call to ‘let sanctions work’ against Iraq also undermined the fight against Bush Sr.’s war drive by conceding that the U.S. had the right to wage an economic war. “A decade later, sanctions have ‘worked’—by killing many more ordinary Iraqis, just as this newspaper and other opponents of the Gulf War always pointed out.”

This is truly shameless considering that in 1991 the ISO helped foster the very illusions it now decries, when it dropped its paper opposition to the UN embargo in order to endorse a January 1991 “Campaign for Peace” march that explicitly called for economic sanctions as a supposedly “peaceful” alternative to war.

For the ISO, such sellouts of their supposed principles always come dressed up in the garb of “unity.” As much as the WWP, the ISO’s purpose is to build “broad” coalitions that do not offend the political sensibilities of bourgeois liberals. They appeal to antiwar youth that “unity” is necessary in order to mobilize the largest number of people possible on the streets, peddling the illusion that the answer to imperialist war is mass protest on any political basis whatsoever.

To be sure, any dent in the bourgeoisie’s “national unity” is welcome. Thus it is not insignificant that in a climate where the “war on terror” is being used to target all manner of dissent and at a time when the Bush administration is using the anniversary of the criminal attack on the World Trade Center to beat

the drums for war, more than 4,000 people signed the “Not In Our Name” protest ad that appeared in the *New York Times* (19 September). But unlike the ISO and Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), which is the central force behind the “Not In Our Name” coalition, we do not cater to liberal appeals or moral-witness pacifism. Successful opposition to war must have a proletarian class axis and a revolutionary internationalist perspective, otherwise it will be used by the bourgeois liberals to confine protest within the bounds of the very capitalist system that breeds war. As Trotsky wrote: “To condemn war is easy; to overcome it is difficult. The struggle against war is a struggle against the classes which rule society and which hold in their hands both its productive forces and its destructive weapons. It is not possible to prevent war by moral indignation, by meetings, by resolutions, by newspaper articles, and by congresses. As long as the bourgeoisie has at its command the banks, the factories, the land, the press, and the state apparatus, it will always be able to drive the people to war when its interests demand it.”

—“Declaration to the Antiwar Congress at Amsterdam” (July 1932)

For Class Struggle Against the Imperialist Rulers!

The depth of opposition to war with Iraq among the working masses of Europe, Latin America and the Arab countries provides significant opportunities for international class struggle. In Britain, Washington’s *only* coalition partner, the Blair government, faces a volatile combination of massive opposition to the war and a revival of class struggle unseen in nearly two decades. At recent trade-union rallies, those speakers who attacked the Labour government have elicited the

continued on page 12



Alan Pogue

UN-imposed sanctions have killed over 1.5 million Iraqis.

Iraq...

(continued from page 11)

loudest applause. The annual Trades Union Congress conference held last month passed a motion opposing a war called without UN approval, narrowly defeating a resolution against a war under any conditions. London underground (subway) unions are engaged in a campaign of one-day strikes, including one staged the day after Blair issued his bogus “dossier” on Iraq. And the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) is currently balloting to authorize its first national strike in 25 years, with London underground workers threatening to stop work over safety and workers in the English Channel tunnel also saying they will not work without fire safety cover.

It was a Labour government that called out the troops against the 1977 FBU strike. Now the military is training 12,000 troops for strikebreaking, while the bourgeois press tries to whip up an anti-union frenzy over claims that the country would be without fire protection in the event of terrorist attacks. What is posed is the possibility of a major class confrontation with the hated New Labour government as it prepares for war. Joint strike action by firefighters and rail workers would deal a massive blow against the British imperialist state’s ability to pursue war against Iraq.

But workers actions in any country will immediately come up against the strikebreaking apparatus of the capitalist state—whether the particular government is for or against the U.S.-led war. The working class must be mobilized on the basis of decisive class independence from and opposition to its “own” bourgeoisie. And it is this which the European social democrats and their centrist and left-reformist helpmates act to prevent in trying to hitch the working class and radical youth to “antiwar” sections of the imperialist bourgeoisies.

In Britain, virtually every fake-left group, from the Socialist Party of Peter Taaffe (aligned with Socialist Alternative in the U.S.) to the barely centrist Workers Power (WP) group, has thrown itself into the Stop the War Coalition organized by the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), sponsors of the huge September 28 march in London. The effect of this coalition is to submerge working-class opposition to the war in a “broad”—i.e., class-collaborationist—unity with everything ranging from bishops and Muslim clerics to bourgeois parties like the Greens, “left” Labour parliamentarians and trade-union bureaucrats, including those who support the imperialist sanctions against Iraq. A major speaker at the protest was London mayor Ken Livingstone, who screamed for the U.S./British bombing of Serbia in 1999.

Warning against such class-collaborationist “antiwar” alliances, Trotsky wrote in his 1932 article: “Whoever attempts to put all the programs, all the parties, all the flags into one package in the name of pacifism, that is, of a superficial struggle against war in words, performs the greatest service for imperialism.” Today, the European fake lefts do not even deign to



WV Photo

Spartacist supporters at September 14 L.A. protest against war on Iraq.

hide their service for imperialism. From the SWP and WP to Rifondazione Comunista in Italy and Alain Krivine’s Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR) in France, a wide array of reformists and centrists joined in a call “To all citizens of Europe and to all their representatives” (reprinted in *Weekly Worker*, 12 September) which declaims:

“Those who show solidarity with the people of Iraq have no hearing in the White House. But we do have the chance to influence European governments—many of whom have opposed the war. We call on all the European heads of state to publicly stand against this war, whether it has UN backing or not, and to demand that George Bush abandon his war plans.”

This is a logical step for the LCR. After years of support to Lionel Jospin’s Socialist-led popular front of racist terror and anti-working-class austerity, the LCR moved on to pimping for rightist Jacques Chirac in the recent presidential election in the name of keeping out the fascist Le Pen. The centrist Workers Power, however, strikes a more left posture, proclaiming in a 23 September statement posted on its Web site: “When fighting breaks out we must call clearly and unequivocally for the total defeat of the imperialist invasion and victory for the Iraqi resistance to it.” Workers Power indulged in similar “red” rhetoric during the bombing of Afghanistan, but the real substance of its program was captured in its call to “LOBBY PARLIAMENT as it debates the war.” Today, WP openly appeals to the capitalist governments of Europe against the U.S.

In fact, the European imperialists had been the historic exploiters of the Near East. Iraq and other Near Eastern countries were creations of the British and French imperialists, who carved out their borders in the sand with the breakup of the Ottoman Empire. The current antiwar posture of the French and German governments is very much a reflection of the divergence of their interests from those of the U.S. These countries are reliant on Near East oil and have substantial investments in Iran and Iraq. Any tightening of U.S. control over the Near East oil spigot—and Iraq’s oil reserves are second only to those of Saudi Arabia—would mean not only higher fuel costs for European corporations but even greater reliance on Washington’s good graces.

At the same time that Germany ex-

pressed overt opposition to a major American military-strategic policy, a no less unprecedented, if less dramatic, move was made by Japanese prime minister Koizumi, who was elected on a platform of resurgent Japanese militarism. Without first getting American approval, Koizumi made the first visit ever by a Japanese head of state to North Korea, a bureaucratically deformed workers state included in Bush’s “axis of evil.” Meanwhile, Japan is forging ahead with the creation of a regional trade bloc to compete with the German-dominated European Union and the U.S.-controlled NAFTA. While the Japanese bourgeoisie is divided over whether to support a U.S. attack on Iraq, it is united on one thing. Like the Germans, they will not bankroll this war.

The conflicting interests of the rival imperialist powers, subordinated during the Cold War to a U.S.-led anti-Soviet alliance, have increasingly come to the fore since the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92. The Bush administration’s bellicose “unilateralism” drives home with a vengeance that the European (and Japanese) imperialists cannot pursue their own national ambitions when those come into conflict with U.S. interests anywhere in the world so long as they remain, relatively speaking, economically powerful but militarily weak.

For a Revolutionary Workers Party!

The Bush administration continues to ride high in the polls on support for the “war on terror,” shamelessly manipulating the 9/11 anniversary commemorations to hype its war aims. But this “national unity” bubble against a putative “axis of evil” can’t withstand the pinprick of any examination of the Bush gang’s relation to those they now declare the enemy. Bush, Cheney et al. have a long history of working in cahoots with the likes of the Taliban and Saddam Hussein. After U.S. intelligence agencies had for months denied any connection between the Baghdad regime and Al Qaeda, Rumsfeld and others now darkly allude to vague, indefinite and unsubstantiated “visits” by Al Qaeda to Baghdad (never mind that the secular Hussein regime and the fundamentalist Al Qaeda are historic enemies). What is definitely substantiated

is Rumsfeld’s own visits to Baghdad (and a quiet meeting with Saddam Hussein) as an emissary of the Reagan administration in 1983, during the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq War. “In the two years after Rumsfeld’s visits,” notes the *Los Angeles Times* (15 September), “the CIA began to secretly supply Iraq with intelligence on Iran. That operation soon blossomed into a larger military exchange,” continuing right through the 1988 chemical weapons attack on the Kurdish town of Halabja, now hypocritically decried by the imperialists as evidence of Saddam Hussein’s brutality. In fact, the CIA helped Hussein’s Ba’ath Party come to power in 1963—following the suppression of a revolutionary upheaval in 1958-59—providing lists of workers and leftists to be rounded up and slaughtered.

Now, Bush raises a hue and cry over Saddam Hussein’s *desire* for nuclear weapons. For weeks, there were murky reports of Iraq’s attempt to import aluminum tubes (which it did not get) supposedly designed (which they were not) for a centrifuge to make weapons-grade uranium (which by all accounts Iraq does not have). As an article in the London *Guardian* (20 September) aptly noted: “It is precisely because he is not now a real threat to the US, nor a real ally of al-Qaida, and nor, probably, in possession of usable weapons, that war is feasible.”

The government is trying to sell this war as one to “liberate” Iraq and install American-style “democracy,” while on the home front Attorney General John Ashcroft puts the Bill of Rights through a shredding machine. Non-citizens and citizens alike are being rounded up, incarcerated and denied any semblance of Constitutional protections; neighbors are encouraged to spy on neighbors; university presidents slander anyone who defends the right of a Palestinian man, woman or child to exist as “anti-Semitic.” More than 600 people were thrown behind bars for exercising their right to free speech and assembly at anti-globalization protests in Washington, D.C. last weekend. Cops were brought in to D.C. from distant states and deputized in order to enable them to gain experience working with federal authorities in suppressing protest.

But the picture is hardly one of seamless reaction and fear. Although the U.S. imperialists trumpet the “death of Communism” and sneer that Marxism has been proven to be a “failure,” the laws of the class struggle have not been annulled. Marx’s prediction of recurrent economic crises under capitalism is being borne out with a vengeance. The 1991 Gulf War led to a spike in oil prices and a recession, and that war was financed overwhelmingly by America’s coalition allies. The bill for this war will come due when a recession has already been underway for over a year. And then this avaricious ruling class—which has been squeezing every last ounce of profit out of the working class—will try to take the cost of Bush’s military adventure out of the hides of the workers in the U.S. (while threatening to force the Iraqi people to pay for their own “liberation”). The bourgeoisie’s incessant attacks on the working class will necessarily provoke proletarian class struggle.

The key to unlocking labor struggle in this country lies in breaking the class-collaborationist “national unity” pushed by the bourgeoisie and its labor lieutenants in the AFL-CIO bureaucracy. And that means, first and foremost, breaking the chains forged by the labor tops and the black politicians and preachers that bind the proletariat and the ghetto masses to the “lesser evil” Democratic Party of American imperialism. If there is to be an end to imperialist war, to racist oppression and all-sided, grinding misery, the multiracial U.S. working class must be won, through Marxist education and its own experience in struggle, to the fight to build a revolutionary workers party to lead the struggle for socialist revolution in the bastion of world imperialism. That is our perspective, and on its outcome hinges the fate of the whole world. ■



Crowley/NY Times



UNSCOM

September 18: Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld heckled by protesters chanting, “Inspections, not war!” UN inspections provide cover for imperialist attack. Right: Iraqi building leveled by UN inspectors, 1997.

Northern Ireland...

(continued from page 3)

of [reactionary Protestant] Orangemen to stage their anti-Catholic marches. They (and the SWP) have done their best to give “democratic” credentials within the workers movement to Billy Hutchinson, who is a spokesman for Loyalist death squads. (Here they are playing the same game as union bureaucrats like Mick O’Reilly who recruited Hutchinson into the ATGWU [transport workers union].) Not surprisingly, Hutchinson vehemently condemned workers’ struggles against Loyalist death threats, saying: “I am fed up of the unions taking decisions on a whim and which are for one side of the community” (*Irish News*, 2 August).

The SWP also buried all reference to the oppression of Catholics at the Belfast demo. Although the British *Socialist Worker* (10 August) states the 2 August Belfast rally was in response to the “murder of a young Catholic man, Gerard Lawlor, by Loyalist paramilitaries,” the Irish SWP distributed a leaflet entitled “Stand Together Against Sectarianism” at the demonstration which completely failed to mention the oppression of Catholics in the North and didn’t even use the word Loyalist. It is the hallmark of both the SP and SWP to patronisingly stoop to the lowest consciousness.

While the SWP now headlines “Peace Process Fuelling Sectarianism,” until recently they were gushing about the opportunities for “class politics” the imperialist “peace” deal would supposedly provide. Last year they heralded the “tremendous hopes for peace in Northern Ireland following the IRA’s announcement that it will destroy its weapons.” They claimed that the British Labour government’s imperialist “peace” process provides “space” for united working-class struggle:

“It can reproduce the sectarian division that is built into the Northern Ireland state. But it does provide a space for working class people, Catholic and Protestant, to fight for their interests and against sectarianism.”
—*Socialist Worker*,
3 November 2001

This is no great surprise coming from the SWP, who in 1969 supported British troops being sent to Northern Ireland (by another Labour government) and claimed they would provide a “breathing space” for Catholics. Less than three years later the British Army murdered 14 Catholics in Derry on Bloody Sunday.

For a Class-Struggle Fight Against Anti-Catholic Discrimination!

The London *Independent* (23 August) says: “Recent research suggests housing segregation has become more marked, and certainly the two sections of the working class in Belfast live almost entirely separately. Some, in fact, live behind peace lines to keep them apart.” An illustration of life for Catholics behind so-called “peace lines” is the Short Strand area of East Belfast. Three thousand Catholics live in an enclave half a mile by half a mile entirely ringed by a 15-foot high fence separating them from 60,000 Protestants. Almost every house inside the perimeter has had windows broken by pipe-bombings and stone throwing. According to the *Guardian* (11 June), there are no shops inside and no post office; residents are often afraid to venture outside to collect their benefits, or to get their drugs from the chemist. In one instance a community nurse volunteered to collect the medicines for everybody within, but the pharmacist refused to serve her, saying he had been threatened if he served Catholics. There are printed notices to be found in the area saying no Catholics are to be served. Nearby there’s a huge, freshly-painted mural that says, “No Short Strand T--- [Catholics] on Our Road. At your own risk.” This situation is not unique—a 1998 book about Catholics in Portadown

is aptly titled *Garvaghy—A Community Under Siege*.

The Socialist Party ran an article on the violence in the Short Strand (*Socialist Voice*, May 2002) and managed not to mention *any* discrimination against Catholics! They simply say: “The underlying reason for the violence is the lack of jobs, the decline of services and the lack of affordable housing for people in the inner city working class communities.” The lack of jobs and housing is a central issue in Northern Ireland, but communalism cannot be overcome simply by urging workers to “unite and fight” for purely economic demands. Class unity against sectarian terror must be linked to a fight against the discrimination and oppression of Catholics. A prevalent view in Northern Ireland is that this can only be achieved by making the situation worse for Protestants. Under capitalism this is true, which means there must be a fight for what the working class needs, not for what capitalism can afford. Revolutionaries would seek to unite workers around transitional demands—for a sliding scale of wages, work-sharing on full pay, jobs for all and good quality public housing—which transcend the framework of capitalism, as part of a programme for socialist revolution.



Spartacist Ireland

Dublin Spartacists protest Irish government's support to bombing of Afghanistan by U.S./British imperialists.

Southern Ireland is a clericalist Catholic state where the vast majority of the hospitals and national schools are controlled by the Catholic Church. Divorce, only legalised in 1997, remains prohibitively expensive and requires that the spouses have lived apart for four of the preceding five years. Conditions for women are little better in the North. The British 1967 Abortion Act does not apply in Northern Ireland, meaning that abortion is illegal in most cases. In fact, one of the few points on which the Pope and the Paisleyite fundamentalists agree is opposition to women’s rights and abortion in particular. We fight for separation of church and state, and for free abortion on demand, which are critical for advancing women’s rights North and South.

Not Orange Against Green but Class Against Class!

Some workers at recent Belfast demonstrations agreed with our comrades that the British Army must get out, but coupled this with the nationalist view that Ireland must be reunited before there can be any hope of workers unity. Withdrawal of British troops does not in itself automatically ensure advance in a revolutionary direction, but it is the necessary starting point for any just solution. As Leninists we uphold the right of self-determination for all nations, but we are implacably opposed to all nationalist ideology. In Northern Ireland both communities are geographically interpenetrated. Therefore “self-determination” for one can only be achieved by denying it to the other, which under capitalism leads to inter-communal slaughter.

We oppose the perspective of forcible imposition of a “united Ireland” upheld by Sinn Féin and other Irish nationalist forces. A united capitalist Ireland would reverse the terms of oppression against Protestants. Indeed Protestant fears of being forcibly incorporated into the southern state serve to compact Protestants behind the Loyalist bigots, making a polarisation along *class* lines all the

more difficult. Thus the struggle against Catholic clericalism in the South is essential to breaking down communalism in the North. As we wrote in our 1977 “Theses on Ireland”:

“We struggle for an Irish workers republic as part of a socialist federation of the British Isles. While the establishment of a united workers state on the whole island may be preferable, the above demand is algebraic, leaving open the question of where the Protestants fall. This recognises that the nature of the Protestant community has not yet been determined in history. As such, it is counterposed to calls for a ‘united workers republic’ or for a ‘united socialist Ireland’ (where this demand is not simply an expression for left/nationalist or Stalinist two-stage theories). Placing the demand in the context of a socialist federation has the additional advantage of highlighting the essential relationship of the proletarian revolution in the whole area and the virtual impossibility of the resolution of the Irish question on a working-class basis outside this framework.”

—*Spartacist* (English edition)
No. 24, Autumn 1977

Many Catholics feel betrayed by Sinn Féin’s active participation in the “peace” fraud, which put some Catholic faces in high places but did nothing to alleviate the situation of Catholics. Some now look to those nationalists who oppose the “peace” process, such as the “Real IRA.”

But, whether using the “Armalite” or the “ballot box,” Irish nationalism is a political dead-end which cannot further the interests of the Catholic minority. Marxists reject the strategy of individual terror because it runs counter to the necessary task of mobilising the proletariat against the imperialist and capitalist oppressors. Viewed from the standpoint of the proletariat, nationalist terror ranges from merely stupid—such as the 1972 Official IRA bombing of the Parachute Regiment headquarters in Aldershot which killed six civilian workers, five of them women, and the Catholic chaplain but no soldiers—to downright criminal, such as the 1998 Omagh bombing by the “Real IRA,” which killed and injured Protestant and Catholic civilians in a shopping area. This was in no way a blow against imperialism. When Irish nationalists strike a blow against the forces of British imperialism, the RUC/PSNI or Loyalist death squads, we defend the perpetrators of such acts against state retribution. Even when they do hit a military target, their actions are still carried out as part of a perspective that writes off the proletariat in Northern Ireland, both Protestant and Catholic, and also in Britain, which has a significant Irish component.

There is a felt need in Northern Ireland for some form of protection against sectarian attacks, and trade unionists have been acting instinctively in defence of their fellow workers whose lives are threatened. What’s needed are anti-sectarian workers militias to combat Loyalist terror as well as attacks by Green nationalists. Political consciousness is critical to organising such workers militias. To be effective, they would require the leadership of cadre with real authority among workers from both communities. That precludes their being led by nationalists, trade union bureaucrats, fake socialists who support the imperialist “peace” fraud, and in fact pretty much any leadership other than one based on the communist programme, including opposition to the imperialist

presence. Each militia unit must incorporate both Catholic and Protestant workers and should be based in the trade unions, necessarily requiring a hard struggle against the existing union leadership. Organising marshals at trade union rallies to repel any sectarian provocation could be a starting point for such militias. Under the direction of Leninist cadre, these could become the nucleus of an integrated anti-sectarian militia, which could for instance have made a difference by organising an integrated, trade union-based defence of the Holy Cross schoolgirls in Ardoyne who were confronted by a Loyalist mob last year.

With growing economic recession and redundancies [layoffs], for instance the hundreds projected at Shorts [aircraft components manufacturer], the capitalists will increasingly resort to sectarianism to divide the workers, which could lead to increased communalism. But it is important not to accept what exists at present as the inevitable outcome of history. A revolutionary party must be alert to opportunities that will arise in situations that are poisoned by communalism, especially since such opportunities may be transient. There is the potential for the current round of class struggle in Britain to extend to Northern Ireland, in particular a national strike by firefighters or other public sector workers chafing under Blair’s vicious austerity and drive towards privatisation.

The most significant example of united struggle by Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland was the Belfast engineering strike of 1919. One of the most significant class battles in Irish history, it was part of a wave of tumultuous strikes in engineering centres, including Glasgow. The British Army was deployed in Belfast and the trade unions, the majority of whose members were Protestant, shut down the city in a strike that was led by a socialist of Catholic background, Charles McKay. The strike was betrayed by Labour bureaucrats, in Britain and Ireland. A hideous wave of communalism followed in 1920 when 9,000 Catholics and 3,000 Protestants—mainly shop stewards and socialists—were driven out of their jobs. This communalism was the result of an enormous defeat in struggle and the subsequent “ethnic cleansing” laid the basis for partition [between North and South in 1921].

As internationalists, we seek the solution to the sectarian divide not purely within Ireland, but as part of a revolutionary solution of all the national oppression on these Isles—including that of the Scots and the Welsh—through the overthrow of British and Irish capitalism and the establishment of working-class rule. The Spartacist League/Britain and the Spartacist Group Ireland are dedicated to building parties to fight for an Irish workers republic within a voluntary federation of workers republics in the British Isles. ■



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Death Penalty...

(continued from page 16)

cop terror on the streets—is subject to any kind of challenge or review.

Over the past two decades the courts, Congress and state legislatures did all they could to open the sluice gates for executions, from gutting funding to public defenders for those accused of capital crimes to implementing procedures that make it virtually impossible to use evidence not known at the time of trial to challenge a death sentence conviction. In the infamous 1993 *Herrera* case, the Supreme Court proclaimed that executing an innocent man would not be unconstitutional.

But now there is substantial unease about the death penalty throughout the population, generated by the highly publicized exposure of the cases of **over 100 innocent people** who were falsely sentenced to death since capital punishment was reinstated in 1976. A July 2000 poll revealed that 99 percent of the population believed innocent people had been condemned to die, while 42 percent believed that 10 percent or more of those on death row were innocent. Significantly, support for the death penalty has not increased despite the “security” hysteria promoted by the government following last year’s attacks.

In the Supreme Court opinion outlawing execution of the mentally retarded, Justice John Paul Stevens wrote: “We cannot ignore the fact that in recent years a disturbing number of inmates on death row have been exonerated. As two recent high-profile cases demonstrate, these exonerations include mentally retarded persons who unwittingly confessed to crimes that they did not commit.” One of those two people, Anthony Porter, came within two days of being executed before he was finally freed in Illinois in 1999, ultimately prompting Republican governor George Ryan to impose a moratorium on executions in the state. As his term in office is about to expire, Ryan has ordered hearings for the state’s 158 death row inmates, at which he is expected to commute most of their sentences to life in prison. Governor Ryan’s order is currently being challenged in court by the state’s attorney general (and gubernatorial candidate), Jim Ryan. This May, following Illinois’ lead, Maryland also declared its own moratorium on executions.

As communists, we oppose the death penalty on principle—for the guilty as well as the innocent—because we do not accord the state the right to say who lives and who dies. We welcome any curtailment of state-sanctioned murder, just as we oppose all moves to expand and intensify the repressive powers of the capitalist state.

While some liberal death penalty opponents have speculated that the new decisions signal the outright abolition of capital punishment, the brutal reality is that the executions have not stopped, although their pace is down from the 1999 peak. Fifty people have already been “legally” lynched so far this year, including three black men executed in Texas for crimes they allegedly committed when they were juveniles—a particularly barbaric practice that is currently exercised in only four other countries: Iran, Nigeria, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

“Legal” Lynching—Legacy of Slavery and Jim Crow

In a third decision released in June, which did not get publicized, the Supreme Court *overruled* a Michigan federal court order that would have opened Justice Department files to enable a black defendant to show that the Feds overwhelmingly use the death penalty against black people. The Court declared that allowing criminal defendants access to the prosecutors’ decision-making process is not permissible because it “threatens the ‘performance of a core executive constitutional function’.” This harks back to the notorious 1987 *McCleskey v. Kemp*

Chicago, November 1998: Conference at Northwestern University Law School featured 30 people who had been released from death row after proving their innocence.



AP

case, where the Supreme Court acknowledged overwhelming evidence of the racist application of the death penalty, only to conclude this was “irrelevant” because such bias is an “inevitable part of our criminal justice system.” What they meant was that it was all too relevant to the workings of their injustice system. The court turned down McCleskey’s death sentence appeal, declaring its premise “throws into serious question the principles that underlie our entire criminal justice system”—the most sacred “principle” of all being “the validity of capital punishment in our multiracial society.”

Attorney General John Ashcroft has good reason for keeping his decision-making process under wraps. A recent study by the Federal Death Penalty Resource Counsel Project revealed that Ashcroft, who has the final say on when the Feds will seek the death penalty, is three times more likely to seek execution for black defendants accused of killing whites than blacks charged with killing blacks. Last year, Ashcroft declared that it was white defendants who were dispro-

were withdrawn from the South, brought to an end the tumultuous decade of Radical Reconstruction. The black freedmen were again disenfranchised under Jim Crow laws steeped in the spirit, and at times the letter, of the old Slave Codes. In the 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* case, the Supreme Court codified “separate but equal” segregation as the law of the land. At the heart of Jim Crow was lynch law terror. With the withdrawal of the last Union troops, KKK terror stalked the South unchallenged. In the 1890s blacks were lynched at a rate of one every other day. By the 1930s, the state carried out executions at a rate of over one every other day. The extralegal terror of the KKK was largely supplanted by the state’s “legal” lynching. Between 1930 and 1967 blacks composed more than two-thirds of those executed.

If you want to know what the death penalty is all about, look no further than the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal. America’s foremost political prisoner, today Mumia still languishes on Pennsylvania’s death row nine months after a federal judge

ple!” over ten years earlier showed that he always planned to kill a cop!

In late August, Jamal’s attorneys filed an appeal with the Pennsylvania Supreme Court seeking to reverse a court order barring the Beverly confession and rejecting Jamal’s second application to reverse his conviction under Pennsylvania’s Post-Conviction Relief Act. Central to the new appeal is the sworn account of court reporter Teri Maurer-Carter who overheard Sabo bragging in the courthouse where Mumia was tried: “I’m going to help them fry the n----r.” As Jamal’s papers state:

“Judge Sabo’s vile racist comment... meant that, in Judge Sabo’s courtroom, Mr. Jamal, like Dred Scott before him, was not a citizen with rights guaranteed to him by the Constitution, but rather an inferior being with ‘no rights which the white man was bound to respect’.”

Free Mumia Abu-Jamal now!

The Machinery of Death and the Ministry of God

The death penalty is a barbaric legacy of medieval torture, a system of legal murder that reinforces the brutalization of society in all respects. Over 150 years ago, Karl Marx explained how corporal and capital punishment express a fundamentally *religious* impulse to mete out vengeance:

“This is the Christian means—plucking out the eye if it offends or cutting off the hand if it offends, in *a* word, killing the body if the body gives offence; for the eye, the hand, the body are really only superfluous sinful appendages of man. Human nature must be killed in order to heal its ailments. Mass-type jurisprudence, too, in agreement here with the Critical, sees in *laming* and paralyzing of human strength the antidote to the objectionable manifestations of that strength.”
—*The Holy Family* (1845)

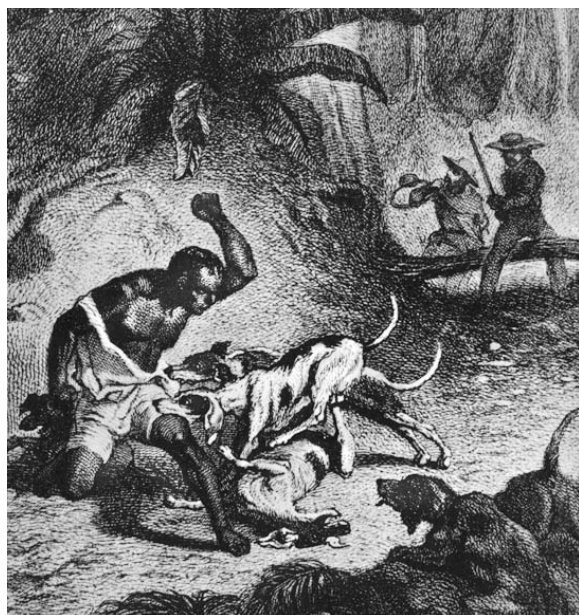
These points were brought home in an article published last May by Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia called “God’s Justice and Ours.” Citing no less a “constitutional authority” than St. Paul, Scalia argues that the death penalty is a sacred Christian institution to be defended against godless atheistic enlightenment:

“Abolition has taken its firmest hold in post-Christian Europe, and has least support in the church-going United States. I attribute that to the fact that, for the believing Christian, death is no big deal. Intentionally killing an innocent person is a big deal: it is a grave sin, which causes one to lose his soul. But losing this life, in exchange for the next? The Christian attitude is reflected in the words Robert Bolt’s play has Thomas More saying to the headsman: ‘Friend, be not afraid of your office. You send me to God.’ And when Cranmer asks whether he is sure of that, More replies, ‘He will not refuse one who is so blithe to go to Him.’ For the nonbeliever, on the other hand, to deprive a man of his life is to end his existence. What a horrible act!”

Claiming that America’s “institutions presuppose a Supreme Being,” Scalia concludes that “our people are more inclined to understand, as St. Paul did, that government carries the sword as ‘the minister of God,’ to ‘execute wrath’ upon the evildoer.”

As Marxists, we fight for the defense of the separation of church and state! “God and Country” has always been the rallying cry of political reactionaries. As we wrote in July after an appeals court struck the words “under God” from the “Pledge of Allegiance,” a decision we welcomed:

“Since the presidency of Democrat Jimmy Carter it has been the policy of



Hull Museums

Slaveholders’ dogs sicced on escaped slave. Racist death penalty in U.S. is direct legacy of black chattel slavery.

portionately targeted under the federal death penalty—at a time when blacks and Hispanics made up 18 of the 21 prisoners on the federal death row!

In the U.S., where the capitalist state enforces the racist oppression that lies at the core of the American profit system, it is overwhelmingly black people, Latinos and the poor that the racist courts put on death row. And it is no accident that the states of the former Confederacy lead the way in legal lynching. Capital punishment in the U.S. is the legacy of slavery, when black slaves were considered chattel, the private property of the slaveowner. Special “Negro Courts” were set up for slaves. The numerous “crimes” for which the Slave Codes prescribed torture and death included rebellion and attempted rebellion, hitting a white man in self-defense or any other act deemed “insolent” or a challenge to the slaveholders. In the 1857 Dred Scott decision, the Supreme Court decreed that the black man “had no rights which the white man was bound to respect,” asserting that freed blacks could not be citizens.

It took a bloody Civil War, in which 200,000 black troops helped turn the tide, to smash the Southern slave system. But the promise of black freedom was betrayed by the victorious Northern bourgeoisie. The Compromise of 1877, under which the last Union Army troops

threw out his death sentence—and fully 18 months after Arnold Beverly publicly confessed that he, not Jamal, committed the crime for which Jamal was convicted (see “Free Mumia Abu-Jamal Now!” WV No. 787, 20 September). Whether through lethal injection or by burying him alive in prison for life, the racist ruling class is determined to silence the voice of this former Black Panther Party member, MOVE supporter and award-winning black journalist. From his teenage days as a Black Panther Party spokesman in the late 1960s, Jamal was in the sights of the Philly police and the FBI’s deadly COINTELPRO conspiracy. They targeted Mumia because of his political views as a black radical.

In December 1981, the state went into high gear to frame up Mumia for the shooting death of a Philadelphia cop, buying off witnesses and coercing them to give false testimony, and manufacturing a phony claim that Jamal had confessed. The judge presiding over this kangaroo trial was Albert Sabo, notorious as a “prosecutor in robes” who sent more people to death row—almost exclusively non-white—than any other judge in recent American history. At the death sentencing hearing, the prosecutor argued that Mumia deserved to die because he was a former Black Panther whose use of the Panther slogan “All power to the peo-

ILWU...

(continued from page 1)

one shift, the PMA announced it was re-imposing the lockout until the union either agrees to extend the old contract, which expired on July 1, or accepts a new one. Negotiations which began in May have stalled over the PMA's determination to break the union by outsourcing jobs generated through new technology to non-union personnel. This is a direct attack on the union hiring hall which is key to defending working conditions.

The Bush administration has been threatening the ILWU for months with government strikebreaking, from invoking a Taft-Hartley anti-strike injunction to militarizing the docks. While the government has not yet intervened, White House spokesman Ari Fleischer warned that if the lockout "goes on for even a short period of time, it's a problem for the economy. We're monitoring it carefully." This is nothing but a thinly veiled threat against the ILWU. The government has also tried to strong-arm the ILWU to agree to federal mediation, another form of state intervention that would hamstring the union and effectively take away its power to struggle.

If the PMA and government are allowed to break the power of the ILWU, every reactionary attack on the working class—from assaults on blacks and working people at home to U.S. imperialism's increasingly aggressive foreign adventures—will be intensified. At the same time, the PMA's lockout, in attempting to punish the workers for their determination to defend themselves through the union, has graphically demonstrated the organized workers' potential power by bringing the ports to a grinding halt. The *Journal of Commerce* (30 September) reported that there were approximately 100 ships paralyzed in the ports or at anchor by Sunday night alone. Robin Lanier, executive director of the West Coast Waterfront Coalition, which represents importers and exporters, complained: "It's bad. In a word, it sucks" (*Oakland Tribune*, 1 October).

Blood and Profit

The initial lockout came the day after the ILWU Negotiating Committee passed a resolution which "calls on longshore workers to follow all safety procedures including speed limits, to refrain from working extended shifts, working through lunch hours, or doubling back" (ILWU Web site, 26 September Weekly Member Update). "Doubling back"—working two shifts in a 24-hour period—results in exhausted workers who are in grave danger of injury. The ten-mile-per-hour speed limit on the docks is critical with the huge equipment used to move containers in tight spaces.

PMA head Joseph Miniace called the ILWU's request that its members follow the employer-sanctioned Pacific Coast

Marine Safety Code a "strike with pay." This only underlines that the billions in profits the shipping bosses make are stained with the blood of workers maimed and killed on the job. As the Partisan Defense Committee said in a 30 September protest letter to the PMA: "Your claim that this constitutes a 'slow-down' merely reflects that the PMA-associated stevedoring and shipping companies normally drive the workers on the docks to work long hours, often in double shifts, operating container haulers and cranes at breakneck speeds in total violation of any concern for safety."

In fact, longshoremen have been moving *record levels* of cargo through West Coast ports. According to the *Journal of Commerce* (25 September), "The Port of

war moves. Navy crane operators are already stationed in San Diego and are ready to move into the ports as other U.S. troops are being prepared to unleash war against the Iraqi masses. Today, in the midst of an economic collapse brought about by the capitalist profit system itself, Wall Street and Washington aim to restore profits by driving down the living standards of the workers while they move to secure their domination around the globe. The so-called "war on terror" is in reality a war on the working class and the oppressed, both at home and abroad. Support to flag-waving patriotism only undermines the union's ability to struggle.

In answer to administration threats, the ILWU tops lobbied Democratic Party

Party in American bourgeois politics is to convince the working class and the oppressed black and Latino minorities that they, too, can benefit from the capitalist system with the right kind of government policies and regulations."

The ILWU can't both maintain the Democrats as "friends" and mobilize the union and its allies in the workers movement for class war against the capitalists.

Labor solidarity is key to the ILWU's struggle to defend its very existence. But that solidarity has been undercut by a jurisdictional dispute between the ILWU and the International Association of Machinists (IAM) over which union's members get mechanics jobs on the docks. According to the *Los Angeles Times* (14 September), in early September the IAM "threatened to cross ILWU picket lines if a strike were called unless the jurisdictional questions were resolved." The same article reports that the IAM and others "torpedoed a resolution of solidarity with the ILWU" at a California Labor Federation meeting in San Francisco this summer. The 1970s organizing battles of the United Farm Workers (UFW) in California, in which Teamsters joined gun-toting company goons to intimidate pro-UFW farm workers, were among the more well-known examples of how such jurisdictional disputes are fatal to the interests of the labor movement.

The PMA's lockout of the ILWU is also an attack on the livelihoods of the heavily immigrant port truckers, many of whom have their own trucks and are paid by the load. The government's "war on terror" was directed in the first instance at such workers, and they are targeted by the proposed "port security" acts which just passed Congress. So, too, are the members of the ILWU. Longshoremen must reject the attempts by the ILWU bureaucracy to set up the truckers for victimization as security risks and instead fight to unionize the truckers and for full citizenship rights for all immigrants.

Jurisdictional disputes and anti-immigrant bigotry reflect the outlook of the trade-union bureaucracy, which accepts the framework of capitalism with its craft divisions, pitting one group of workers against another in a struggle over a shrinking pool of jobs. What's needed instead is a labor fight to organize the unorganized and for a sliding scale of hours, reducing the workweek with no cut in pay to provide jobs for all.

A victory for the ILWU would be a victory for all the workers and oppressed. It could well spark the kind of class struggle that needs to be waged against the rulers of this country. The social power of labor that is evident in the current conflict on the docks must also be mobilized to fight for the broad social needs of the working masses—jobs, education, housing—and against the racial oppression of black people that is the bedrock of capitalism in this country. That calls for a leadership in the unions that stands independent of the bosses and their parties. To extend the fight beyond defensive trade-union actions requires the construction of a revolutionary workers party that will lead the working class to become, as Karl Marx called it, the gravediggers of capitalism. *Victory to the longshore workers!* ■



DaSilva/NY Times

September 30: ILWU pickets at Oakland docks after bosses declare lockout.

Los Angeles reported a 30 percent increase in loaded inbound containers in August, while imports through Tacoma increased 26 percent." As ILWU spokesman Steve Stallone stated, "The companies have instituted the biggest speedup that ever happened, and it's dangerous."

The ranks of the union have grown increasingly angry with the speedup and provocations of the employers on the docks. Just one week earlier, the PMA threatened to lock out the ILWU in the ports of Long Beach and L.A. over union action at the notoriously unsafe Stevedoring Services of America terminal in Long Beach, where a worker died on September 3 (ILWU statement, 18 September). As ILWU president Jim Spinosa wrote in a letter to the PMA, "The industry has seen five people die from industrial accidents since the start of these negotiations" (ILWU press release, 20 September). But the bosses are utterly indifferent to how many workers die; they want massive speedup, and the union is in the way.

The Need for a Workers Party

The attacks on the ILWU are integrally linked with the current U.S. imperialist

government officials to intercede with Bush, but Democratic Senators Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein have both "declined to take a stand" (*Oakland Tribune*, 1 October). The union's 26 September Weekly Member Update claims that a letter from the Bush Department of Labor "denied outright in writing that they have any intention of intervening in the ILWU/PMA labor negotiations." The exigencies of preparing the nation for war, including Washington's determination to keep up the flow of trade with Asia, may have temporarily shielded the union from an aggressive government intervention. But whether run by either capitalist party, Democrat or Republican, the government is not neutral—it administers a state machine of repression dedicated to defending capitalist property and profits.

A strategy of relying on Democratic Party "friends in high places" will cripple the union's fight to defend itself. Don't forget that the last invocation of Taft-Hartley against a striking union was Democrat Jimmy Carter's unsuccessful attempt to use the measure against the miners in 1978. As we wrote in "Capitalism USA: Pink Slips and Pension Theft" (WV No. 787, 20 September):

"The Republicans flaunt their close ties to Wall Street and the Fortune 500 corporations while touting the virtues of unfettered 'free market' capitalism. The Democrats are the 'soft cops' of American capitalism. They appeal to a different constituency, using a different rhetoric. The particular role of the Democratic

U.S. imperialism's rulers to erase the opposition to their wars and domestic repression that arose during the civil rights and anti-Vietnam War struggles of the 1950s and '60s by playing to right-wing religious fundamentalism. From then to now everything that makes life enjoyable or tolerable—from sex and drugs to welfare, day-care centers and a good job—has come under attack, replaced by the twin madnesses of the 'born again' and the 'recovered'....

"From Carter to Clinton, the Democrats, no less than the Republicans, have led the campaign to whitewash the machinations of American imperialism and portray as virtuous its attempts to dominate the world."

—"Hysteria Over Pledge of Allegiance," WV No. 784, 12 July

Even if the death penalty were eliminated, this wouldn't fundamentally alter the repressive nature of the bloody capitalist state. The death penalty is already outlawed in most advanced capitalist countries (with the exception of the U.S. and Japan), but immigrants and minorities still face brutal oppression and daily cop terror in these countries. Nor would

the outlawing of the death penalty guarantee its permanent abolition. In 1972, the Supreme Court declared the death penalty as practiced unconstitutional, only to authorize state-sanctioned murder four years later.

In fighting to mobilize the social power of the multiracial working class in the fight to free Mumia Abu-Jamal, we have always sought to emphasize the Marxist understanding that the capitalist state—the courts, the cops, the prisons—is not neutral, but exists to serve and protect the profits and class rule of the greedy capitalists. The struggle to mobilize labor to free Jamal is crucial to imbuing the working class with the understanding that it must champion the cause of black emancipation if labor itself is to be free. Out of such struggles will come the leading elements of a multiracial revolutionary workers party, armed with a program to eradicate the entire system of capitalist exploitation—and all its barbaric practices—through proletarian socialist revolution. ■

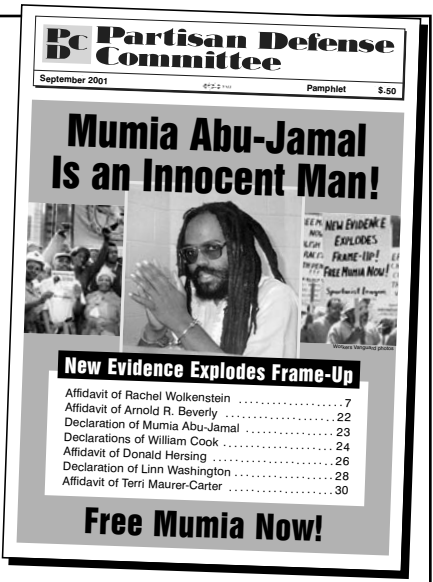
New Evidence Explodes Frame-Up: Declarations and affidavits of Mumia Abu-Jamal, Arnold R. Beverly, Rachel Wolkenstein and others prove that death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal is an innocent man.

Published September 2001

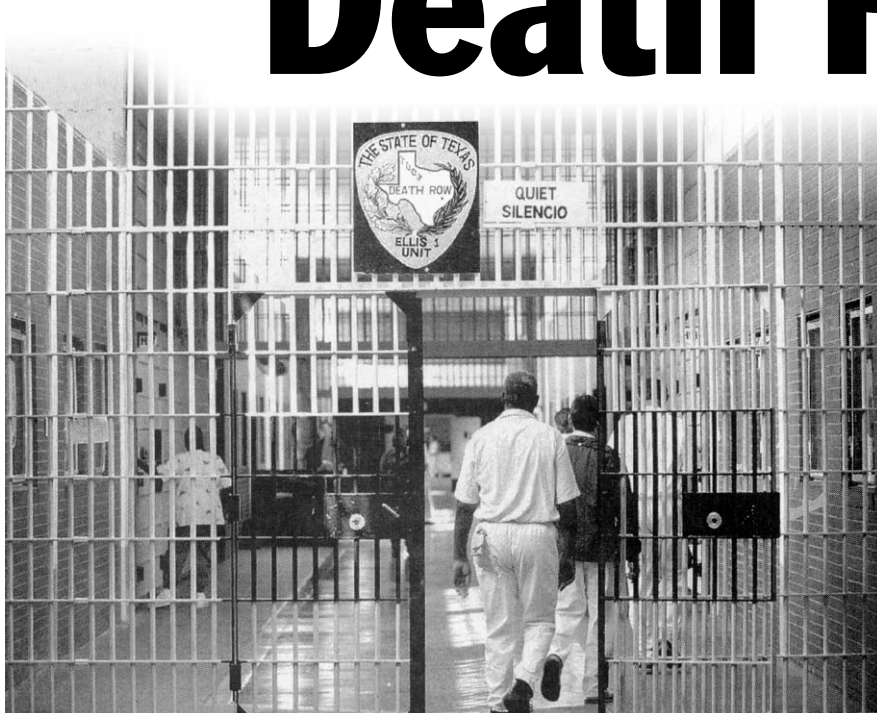
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Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!



Gerald Davis



WV Photo

Huntsville, Texas death row. San Francisco: Spartacist-initiated Revolutionary Contingent at May 2001 demonstration for Mumia Abu-Jamal.

This past summer, amid mounting public opposition to the death penalty, the U.S. Supreme Court handed down two decisions which mark the first judicial limitation on the capitalist state's killing machine in over a decade. On June 20, the court ruled in *Atkins v. Virginia* that the execution of mentally retarded people is "cruel and unusual punishment," reversing a 13-year-old decision that gave the green light for such state-sanctioned murders. In a second decision four days later, the court ruled that it is unconstitutional to allow a judge, rather than a jury, to make the final decision on whether to impose a sentence of death. Together,

these decisions call into question the cases of nearly 500 of the over 4,000 people on death row nationally.

Going much further than the "high court," on July 1 a federal District Court judge in New York, Jed Rakoff, declared the federal death penalty unconstitutional as a whole due to the "undue risk of executing innocent people." Two months later, on September 24, Judge William K. Sessions III, a federal court judge in Vermont, also struck down the death penalty provisions of the 1994 omnibus crime bill. Adopted under the Democratic Clinton administration, this law expanded the number of offenses punishable by death

and drastically curtailed the ability of death row inmates to challenge their convictions. Because it provides even fewer protections (such as the right to cross-examination of witnesses during the sentencing hearing) to those facing the death sentence than to defendants in ordinary criminal trials, Judge Sessions held the law to be an unconstitutional deprivation of due process. The government is appealing both rulings.

These decisions are remarkable not only because for 20 years the Supreme Court has led the charge in eviscerating the rights of death row prisoners, but because they come in the context of the

massive expansion of the repressive powers of the state in the name of the "war on terror." Exploiting the fear born of last year's attack on the World Trade Center, the government has rammed through legislation and issued executive orders gutting the core provisions of the Constitution's Bill of Rights—the right to a trial, the right to an attorney, protection from unlawful search and seizure, presumption of innocence and rights of assembly and speech. The reigning doctrine for Bush & Co. is that no government action—White House dikats, FBI agents climbing through your window,

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Hundreds Arrested at IMF/World Bank Demonstrations

Drop All Charges Against D.C. Protesters!

Between September 27 and 29, several thousand demonstrators converged on Washington, D.C. to protest during the annual meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank. These demonstrators met with brutal repression at the hands of the D.C. cops, who systematically rounded up hundreds of protesters and bystanders over the weekend in "pre-emptive arrests," i.e., arresting people on the supposition that they *might* violate city laws. On Friday, 649 were arrested, and more arrests occurred on Saturday. Mark Goldstone, a lawyer representing some of the demonstrators, captured the atmosphere in D.C. "Two windows get broken, and everyone in the city loses their rights," he said. "It's very clear these were a lot of pre-emptive arrests" (*Washington Post*, 29 September).

We print below a September 28 protest

letter from the Partisan Defense Committee to Mayor Anthony Williams and Chief Charles Ramsey of the Washington, D.C. police.

* * *

We demand the dropping of all charges and the release of all those arrested for protesting against the meetings by the "Group of Seven" ministers, the International Monetary Fund and World Bank in Washington, D.C. beginning on Friday, September 27. Among the at least 650 people caught up in the massive police sweep of the area were bystanders, commuters and reporters. Protesters attempting to exercise their democratic rights to free speech and assembly face charges including failure to obey a lawful order and participating in a riot. Police pepper-sprayed and beat protesters with batons. One woman hit in the face by police required hospitalization. Two *Washington*

D.C. police arresting anti-IMF protesters on September 27.



Reuters

Post reporters also arrested in the police sweep of Pershing Square have documented the brutal treatment by the police including throwing protesters to the ground without warning and dragging them down sidewalks.

These arrests take place in the context of a massive crackdown on civil liberties in the name of the "war on terror." The U.S. ruling class has cynically wielded the deaths of innocent people in the September 11 World Trade Center attack to

back up their lie that more cops and more restrictions on democratic rights are needed to "protect" the population. As the government now prepares for war against Iraq, the virtual state of siege in Washington, D.C. this week only underlines that the massive expansion of state powers under the guise of "anti-terrorism" is clearly a pretext for repression of anyone the government deems to be an opponent.

Free all the arrested anti-IMF protesters! Drop all charges! ■