



All U.S. Troops Out of the Near East Now! Defend Iraq!

Down With U.S. Imperialism! For Class Struggle Against U.S. Capitalist Rulers!

MARCH 11—Over the last two weeks, the U.S. drive to war against Iraq has suffered one diplomatic setback after another. Last week, the Turkish parliament rejected an American proposal to place 62,000 U.S. troops in the country as an invasion force for northern Iraq. This was followed by a raucous United Nations Security Council meeting where France and Russia said they would block the U.S./British resolution authorizing war. And yesterday they explicitly vowed to veto the resolution.

But regardless of the diplomatic wrangling, George Bush has made clear his intent to go to war. Current American deployment in the Persian Gulf region includes some 250,000 troops, five aircraft carriers, 100 warships, 1,000 fighter jets and 1,800 tanks and ground artillery

vehicles—all this against a depleted Iraqi army with barely the spare parts to maintain itself. Despite the Turkish vote, the U.S. is already moving troops and weaponry through Turkey to the Iraqi border, while otherwise laying the groundwork for a full-scale invasion. In a drastic escalation of air strikes in recent weeks, U.S. and British jets have been flying hundreds of sorties and destroying communications and other facilities. Now U.S. forces are tearing down the electrified fence in the “demilitarized zone” on the Kuwaiti/Iraqi border.

This will be a bloody, one-sided slaughter: The Pentagon is planning to slam 3,000 “smart bombs” into Iraq in the first 48 hours of war. Washington’s stated aim is a “shock and awe” offensive to shatter Iraq “physically, emotionally and

psychologically.” This is the policy of *Schrecklichkeit*, the deliberate terrorizing of the “enemy” population carried out by Hitler’s Third Reich in World War II—and by the “democratic” imperialists in the firebombing of Hamburg, Dresden and Tokyo and the A-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In the coming war, the U.S. is planning to use a new MOAB (Massive Ordnance Air Burst) bomb, which has the impact of a small nuclear bomb, and is also talking of using actual nuclear “bunker-buster” bombs.

The peoples of the Near East cannot but burn with bitterness at the hypocrisy of the Bush gang prattling on about Iraq’s supposed “weapons of mass destruction” while Israel maintains the largest arsenal of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons in the region. While Bush cynically

denounces the “human rights” violations of the Saddam Hussein regime, Israel continues to pound, starve, terrorize and slaughter Palestinians with impunity. Over 60 percent of the population of the Occupied Territories now subsists on less than \$2 a day and crippling malnutrition is rampant, especially among children.

Under the cover of an Iraq war, the government of Ariel Sharon, which includes parties openly committed to the forcible “transfer” of all Palestinians from the Occupied Territories, may well try to implement this genocidal policy. As a member of the “left” Zionist Meretz party wrote in a 7 March *Ha’aretz* piece: “We do not have gas chambers and crematoria, but there is no one fixed method for genocide.” Indeed Benny Alon, one of

continued on page 8

All U.S. Troops Out of Korea!

Defend North Korea’s Right to Nuclear Weapons!

When four North Korean MIG fighters intercepted a U.S. RC-135S spy plane over the Sea of Japan off the Korean coast on March 2, Washington predictably denounced it as a provocation. One can only imagine what the U.S. would do if North Korea were fly-

ing spy planes 150 miles off the American coast. The real provocation is the presence of 37,000 U.S. troops in South Korea, an occupation force established at the end of the 1950-53 Korean War in which U.S. imperialism devastated the peninsula and killed more than three million people. Now the Pentagon has ordered 24 B-1 and B-52 bombers to Guam, within easy striking distance of Pyongyang. And, on March 3, the U.S. began a month of military exercises in South Korea involving over 300,000 American and South Korean troops, a move described by the North’s official

news agency as “driving the situation to the brink of a war.”

In the face of U.S. imperialism’s threats, we call on the international proletariat to stand for the unconditional military defense of the North Korean deformed workers state against imperialism. This crucially includes the right of North Korea to develop nuclear weapons to defend itself against the U.S. nuclear cowboys.

Last year, Bush declared North Korea part of an “axis of evil,” and a few months later the Pentagon published a

continued on page 8



WV Photo

Spartacists at February 16 San Francisco protest against Iraq war.



Chicago Transit Unions: Defend Your Members!

Cop Rampage Against Black Bus Drivers

CHICAGO—At about 9:20 p.m. on February 7, black Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) bus driver Henry Walker, a member of Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 241, pulled his bus over at 39th and Cottage Grove for a routine stop. Minutes later, Walker found himself spread face down on the hood of a police car as a gang of white cops pummeled his back and neck, then dragged him off to jail and slapped him with bogus felony charges of aggravated assault and battery against a cop. Held for three days in custody, Walker now faces a possible prison sentence of five or more years. His “crime”? Having witnessed the cops brutally beating a black man as he lay handcuffed in the street. We demand: *Drop the charges against Henry Walker!*

When Walker first stopped his bus, a shaken black woman got on board and appealed to the passengers for help because the police were attacking her boyfriend. One of the cops demanded that Walker get off the bus. When he refused, citing CTA policy, the cops dragged him out of his seat, ripping off his uniform sweater. Walker was punched in the face, his arm was twisted behind his back as he was handcuffed, and he was then slammed down on the squad car. As they beat him, the cops snarled that he could “kiss this

job goodbye” and threatened: “Don’t you know who the f--k we are?” At the station, Walker heard his attackers laughing and joking in an adjoining room as they cooked up a story and concocted the charges against him.

In a February 22 letter to Cook County State’s Attorney Richard Devine demanding that the charges against Walker be dropped, the Partisan Defense Committee stated: “The current charges are an obvious fabrication designed to cover the cops’ dirty work and to punish Walker and intimidate him and the bus passengers from serving as witnesses.” The letter continued, “This vicious police attack against a black trade unionist is a threat to all working people, black people and minorities in Chicago. Bus operators, who have a grueling job providing a vital public service, have been the target of escalating racist cop attacks.”

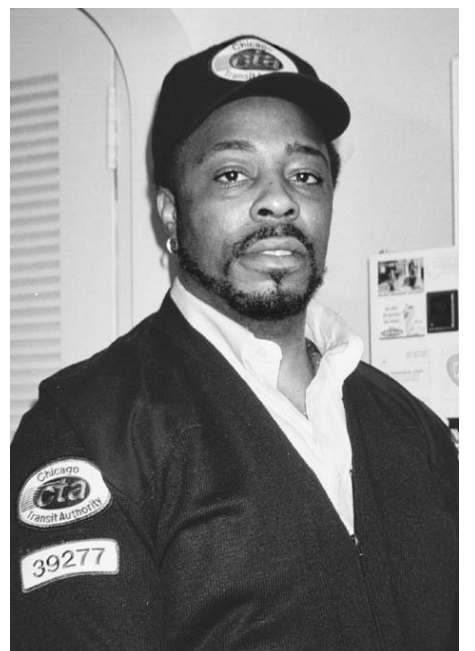
Last July, a white Chicago cop called bus operator Arlene Russell a “stupid black bitch,” and when she called the city’s Office of Professional Standards to protest this racist abuse, the cop tried to grab her cellphone, twisted her arm and arrested her on bogus battery charges (see “Chicago Transit Workers Rally to Defend Arlene Russell,” WV No. 789, 18 October 2002). Three months later, a white cop pressed felony battery charges

against Karen Kelly, another black bus driver, on the ludicrous claim that she had intentionally tried to run him down with her bus.

Racist cop terror is “business as usual” in Segregation City. But the increased assaults against unionized black bus drivers in recent months is *more* than usual. It is no coincidence that these police attacks come in the midst of the government’s “war on terror” and its preparations for war against Iraq. The domestic face of the “war on terror” is a war against immigrants, labor and minorities. As the Feds shred civil liberties in the name of “homeland security” and panic the population with incessant “terror alerts,” the racist cops feel they have the green light to run roughshod over working people, black people and immigrants.

Walker’s co-workers in Local 241 have risen to his defense, posting flyers in bus barns and mobilizing for his first court appearance on February 14, as they have also done for Arlene Russell and Karen Kelly. With its members being beaten by racist cops and hauled before the bosses’ courts, the ATU must bring its social power to bear to demand that the charges against these unionists be dropped now!

But the ATU bureaucracy undermines the defense of the union and its members against the capitalist state by supporting the USA-Patriot Act, under which striking transit workers could be slapped with federal “terrorism” charges for something as simple as defending their own picket lines. Along with the police attacks on its members, ATU Local 241 has faced the CTA’s union-busting assaults while working for three years without a contract. What is needed is to mobilize the labor movement in defense of immigrants, black people and all working people—at



WV Photo

Henry Walker, victim of cop attack.

home and abroad—against the all-sided attacks of the racist capitalist rulers.

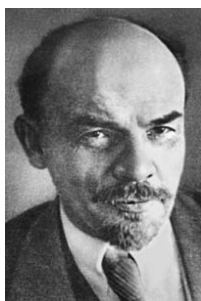
We urge all labor, minority rights, student and community organizations to demonstrate their solidarity by attending the next court dates for the three bus drivers. Henry Walker’s next court appearance will be on March 19 at 9 a.m. at Chicago’s Criminal Courts Building, 2600 S. California St., Room 101. Karen Kelly is due to appear on April 11 at 10 a.m. at the Skokie Civic Court, 5600 Old Orchard Road, Skokie. Arlene Russell is going to trial in Chicago on April 21 at 9 a.m. at 1340 S. Michigan Avenue, Room 501. We also urge that protest statements be sent to: Richard Devine, Cook County State’s Attorney, 500 Richard J. Daley Center, Chicago, IL 60602. Fax: (312) 603-3000. ■



TROTSKY

Capitalist Militarism and State Repression

Increasing military aggression by U.S. imperialism abroad is being accompanied at home by the wholesale shredding of democratic rights. At the dawn of the imperialist age, revolutionary Marxist Rosa Luxemburg pointed to this tendency in polemicizing against revisionist “socialists” whose perspective of transforming capitalism through parliamentary reforms was antithetical to the fight for proletarian revolution.



LENIN

On closer examination, the uninterrupted ascent of democracy, which to our revisionism, as well as to bourgeois liberalism, appears as a great fundamental law of human history and, at the very least, of modern history, is shown to be a phantom. No absolute and universal relation can be constructed between capitalist development and democracy. The political form is always the result of the whole sum of political factors, domestic as well as foreign. Within its boundaries it admits all variations of the scale, from absolute monarchy to the democratic republic....

Two factors completely dominate the political life of contemporary states: *world politics* and the labor movement. Each is only a different aspect of the present phase of capitalist development.

As a result of the development of the world economy and the aggravation and generalization of competition on the world market, militarism and marinism [naval militarism] as instruments of world politics have become a decisive factor in the internal as well as in the external life of the great states. If it is true that world politics and militarism represent a *rising* tendency in the present phase, then bourgeois democracy must logically move in a *descending* line.

—Rosa Luxemburg, “Social Reform or Revolution” (1899); reprinted in *Selected Political Writings of Rosa Luxemburg* (1971)

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14 March 2003

Spartacist League/TLC Forums

**Defend Iraq Against U.S. Imperialist Attack!
Down With UN Starvation Blockade!**

Iraq: Women’s Liberation and the Fight for Socialist Revolution

Speaker: Amy Rath, Spartacist League/U.S., former editor of *Women and Revolution*

Sat., March 15, 3 p.m.
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(off Commercial Drive)

For more information: (604) 687-0353

VANCOUVER

Sat., March 22, 3 p.m.
Cahuenga Branch Library
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For more information: (213) 380-8239

LOS ANGELES

Don’t Crawl for the Democrats— The Other Party of Racism and War U.S. Imperialism’s Legacy of Jim Crow

Saturday, March 15, 5 p.m.
University of Illinois—Chicago (UIC)
Circle Center (CCC) Room 613, 750 S. Halsted St.

CHICAGO

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Saturday, March 29, 7 p.m.
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
252 Bloor St. W., Room 2211
(above St. George Station)

For more information:
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TORONTO

France: Stop the Deportations!

Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!

The following statement was issued by the Ligue Trotskyste de France, section of the International Communist League.

PARIS, March 6—The racist war against immigrants in Europe quickens apace with the preparations for war against Iraq. On February 26, the French government deported 15 Chinese immigrants to Beijing on a commercial flight. Now the government has resumed the hated practice of mass deportations by charter flights. Deportations by charter were the hallmark of anti-immigrant racism of the Mitterrand government with [Interior Minister] Pasqua’s round-up and deportation of African immigrants to Mali in 1986—a racist atrocity which incited public outrage and protest. On March 3, a joint police-state operation by the French and German government deported 54 Senegalese and Ivoirians. One Senegalese was thrown on board in Germany, the others were taken from Paris, surrounded by overwhelming police force and packed off to Dakar and Abidjan. Yesterday, 17 Chinese were deported by charter to Hong Kong and [French top cop] Sarkozy promises more. *We say: Stop the deportations!*

These deportations take place from airports organized by powerful trade unions. The French proletariat has the power to stop these planes on the tarmac. Some Air France pilots refuse, as individuals, to carry out these deportations. On January 30, two Air France unions protested the murder of an Argentine immigrant, Ricardo Barrientos, who died while the French police expelled him from the country. Again in January, Mariame Getu Hagos, a Somali immigrant, died while being deported. Thousands of asylum-seekers face death if returned to their countries of origin, if they’re lucky to make it that far and aren’t killed by the French cops first! The French cops even attacked Air Africa workers in Abidjan who protested when the charter of expelled Africans arrived on March 3. The cops who attack immigrants are the same who harass youth of immigrant origin in the ghettos of France and Germany: last Sunday, a 17-year-old youth, Mourad, was killed by the gendarmes in Nîmes. These are also the same cops who harass unionists like Alain Hébert in Normandy or the truckers during their 2002 strike, or who laid siege to the building of the German union federation, the DGB, in February 2002 during a conference against the Afghanistan war. The cops are the guard dogs of the capitalist bosses and their government. *We say: Cops out of the unions!*

Today the government attacks immigrants because they think they can get away with it. They count on the time-worn “divide and conquer” scheme of racism. We better prove them wrong! The powerful unions of the French proletariat, the German proletariat and the trade union organizations across Europe should stand by their most vulnerable class brothers and sisters. Give every man and woman in the hellish detention centers and squats a union membership card and mobilize the power of the organized working class in their defense! The powerful unions like IG Metall in Germany and the CGT in France have many members of immigrant origin and have an interest in fighting against these attacks. Chirac, Sarkozy and Schröder will use the same repression against *all* the workers when they go on strike against layoffs and privatizations, in order to defend pensions in France and social benefits in Germany. What is necessary is equal rights for all. *Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!*

These mass expulsions of immigrants by Germany and France show the real face of imperialist “old Europe.” Far from representing the “peace camp” in Iraq,

Chirac Talks “Peace” and Wages War on Immigrants, Labor

France and Germany only want to preserve their economic interests in the Near East and a bigger share of the spoils. Their frictions with the United States reflect the increased inter-imperialist rivalries since the destruction of the Soviet Union through capitalist counter-revolution. In the framework of a worsening economic crisis and looming imperialist war against Iraq, France and Germany are escalating racist campaigns on the “home front,” from the *Rasterfahndung* (racial profiling of Arabs or Muslims) in Germany to Vigipirate police-state measures against immigrants in France. Their “war on terror” is designed to marginalize the most vulnerable workers, to weaken the working class by dividing it between European and immigrant,

workers state. The only “freedom” that capitalism can bring to China is the “freedom” to die of hunger and the “freedom” of the imperialists to exploit China as they exploit the rest of the globe. *We Trotskyists stand for the unconditional military defense of China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba against capitalist counterrevolution from within and imperialism without!*

The posture of the French and German capitalist governments as more rational and “humanitarian” than the war-crazed Bush gang in Washington is obscene. The aircraft carrier *Charles DeGaulle* steamed on “manuevers” to the eastern Mediterranean so that France could participate in the imperialist rape and plunder of Iraq. While the imperialists amass



November 2002: Paris protesters demand papers for all undocumented immigrants.

the better to carry out assaults on the *entire* workers movement and its gains wrested through decades of class struggles. With the new laws put into place since September 11, Germany is getting ready to deport the reactionary Islamic fundamentalist, Kaplan, to Turkey. This is an ominous prelude to massive deportations of Turkish and Kurdish leftists—deportations to death at the hands of the chauvinist Turkish bourgeoisie which is preparing a war against the Kurds in northern Iraq.

[French president] Chirac’s visit to Algeria was met by crowds chanting “Visas, visas!” at the same time that Sarkozy is making it more difficult to obtain a visa to even *visit* France. Immigrants from Africa flee the ravages of civil war, as in the Ivory Coast; bloody repression as in Kabylia [Berber region in Algeria]; and squalid living conditions under the oppressive yoke of French imperialism. At the same time that French imperialism is expelling Ivoirians, French troops are setting the stage for a bloodbath in the Ivory Coast, as they did in Rwanda in 1994. *French troops out of the Ivory Coast!* In Germany, Kurdish and Turkish refugees flee political repression and misery generated by the support of NATO and the German bourgeoisie to the murderous regime in Turkey. Chinese immigrants flee unemployment and misery generated by the incursions of the capitalist market which threaten the Chinese deformed

an enormous arsenal of destruction in the region and threaten to drop 3,000 bombs in the first 48 hours of war, France and Germany play the wolves in sheep’s clothing—insisting that UN inspectors be given more time to work. The “work” of the United Nations is the starvation sanctions and economic blockade which has killed more than 1.5 million Iraqi men, women and children—far more than were killed in the last Gulf War. France and Germany push UN weapons inspectors whose purpose is to render Iraq unarmed and defenseless to ensure an easy win for the imperialists.

Without giving the least political support to the murderer, Saddam Hussein, we in the International Communist League take a side: *Defend Iraq against imperialist attack! All U.S. and allied troops out of the Persian Gulf now!* As for the supposed “peace loving” nature of the German and French capitalist governments, any examination of their recent histories reveals mountains of human corpses! The German bourgeois state is the successor of the Nazi Third Reich that exterminated millions of Jews. During the Algerian War the French bourgeoisie killed over a million Algerians and tortured even more. This whole current campaign around the “French-German-Russian” plan is used in France to reinforce reactionary national unity behind Chirac, and in Germany to save the face of the SPD [Social Democratic Party]-Green government which is

increasingly unpopular because of its attacks on the labor movement.

The road to mass deportations in France today was paved by the policies of the French reformists from the PS [Socialist Party] to the PC [Communist Party], whose previous government vastly escalated anti-immigrant hysteria and repressive “security campaigns.” Even the LCR [Revolutionary Communist League] has to take some credit for this round of racist atrocities as they were the most energetic fake “socialists” who helped to put into place this reactionary government by voting for Chirac in the last presidential elections. Yesterday, March 5, two days after the mass deportations, the PC went into the streets during the demonstration against the war in Iraq to...“continue to demand the French authorities to remain firm, up to using the right of veto” in the UN, and the LCR had a similar call! Chevènement, ex-minister of the cops under [former prime minister] Jospin and particularly hated by the *sans-papiers* [undocumented immigrants] for the thousands of expulsions he carried out and the reinforcing of the anti-immigrant laws, tried to place himself at the head of the demonstration. We solidarize with the anarchist militants and the *sans-papiers* who chanted, “Throw out Chevènement, free the *sans-papiers*” in order to throw Chevènement out of the demonstration. But the LCR scandalously sent its goon squad to “protect” Chevènement (*Le Parisien*, 6 March)! This ignominious deed speaks volumes about the LCR’s commitment to defend the capitalist system and how low they are willing to go to demonstrate to capitalist politicians that the LCR will be loyal servants in the next capitalist popular-front government.

Immigrant workers have a significant amount of social power in the unions in France and Germany and they represent a living bridge between Europe, Africa and the Near East. But in order to fight here against war and racism, it is necessary to fight against the capitalist system which generates them. For that, class independence of the workers from their capitalist exploiters and from the bourgeois state is necessary. That demands a split with the opportunists in the workers movement who, like the LCR, tie workers to their own national bourgeoisie, thus dividing the workers internationally. What’s needed is an authentic Leninist-Trotskyist party, a revolutionary, multi-ethnic workers party dedicated to fighting for socialism and a world where those who labor will rule. The LTF is dedicated to this task. Join us! ■

LE BOLCHEVIK

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A Marxist Perspective on the Near East

We publish below a presentation by comrade Bruce André at a recent conference of the Ligue Trotskyiste de France, translated from *Le Bolchévik* No. 162 (Winter 2002-2003).

LE BOLCHEVIK

Comrades, this discussion raises questions which are fundamental to building a revolutionary party, especially in the Near East. But before dealing with programmatic questions, I want to clarify the difference between three things: the Jewish people, which has existed for centuries quite independently of the state of Israel or even Zionism; the Hebrew-speaking nation located in Palestine; and the Zionist state. I think there has been a tendency to confuse them, especially the latter two, the Hebrew-speaking nation and the Zionist state.

Let's start with the Jewish people. Our understanding has been framed by Abram Leon, in his book *The Jewish Question: A Marxist Interpretation*. This book does not exist in Arabic, and I hope that we will one day be able to rectify that failure. Leon was a Belgian Trotskyist, who was murdered by the Nazis at the Auschwitz death camp. He gave a materialist explanation for the continued existence over centuries of the Jewish people in Europe with their own language, culture and religion, and for their brutal oppression under capitalism. Leon explained that the Jews do not constitute a nation, that is, a culturally homogeneous population occupying a given territory with their own national economy. This is the definition of a nation according to Leninist criteria. Rather, Leon said that the Jews played a particular social role in feudal and pre-feudal society as merchants and money-lenders. He called them a "people class."

It was this particular social role, living in the pores of feudal society, that provides a materialist explanation for the Jews' continued existence in West and East Europe. With the rise of mercantile capitalism in Europe, the Jews' special commercial role came to an end. In West Europe, they either assimilated or were pushed to the more economically backward East. There, in East Europe, the crumbling of the feudal order at the end

of the 19th and early 20th centuries came at a time when capitalism was already decaying. There was widespread unemployment and periodic economic crises. As a result, the Jews were exposed to the hostility of the petty bourgeoisie and peasants, who were also rejected by decaying capitalism.

These petty-bourgeois layers sought to find a place for themselves at the expense of the Jews and launched pogroms, anti-Jewish riots. A wave of refugees fleeing these pogroms arrived in West Europe at a time when capitalism could not absorb them there either, thus creating a similar problem in the West. In France, there were pogroms at the end of the 19th century around the Dreyfus affair. In Algeria too, by the way. In Germany, of course, there was the ultimate pogrom, one of the greatest horrors in human history: the Holocaust. The Nazis used modern capitalist production methods to carry out the systematic, conscious extermination of an entire people. The so-called democratic countries like the United States and Britain closed their doors to desperate Jewish refugees fleeing the Nazis.

Now, Abram Leon does not deal with the question of Jews in Arab lands. It would be a good thing for our party to study and clarify the differences between the situation of the Jews in Europe and in Arab lands. But one important difference is that the development of capitalism in the Near East and North Africa did not proceed to a point where it provoked the kind of systematic, violent convulsions that took place in Europe. There were attacks against the Jews but not at the same level as in Europe. The condition of Jews in the Arab lands was markedly better than in Christian Europe.

This changed with the rise of Arab nationalism in the mid 20th century. Coming out of WWII, there was a wave of pogroms and terrorist attacks against synagogues and Jewish public places in almost all Arab countries. It reached a paroxysm during the 1948-49 war in Palestine. This triggered—with the active help of the Zionists, of course—a mass exodus of Jews from Arab countries, with most of them going to Israel. At the time of the formation of the state of Israel in 1947-48, there were as many Jews in the Arab countries speaking Arabic as their first language as there were in Israel

speaking (or learning) Hebrew. Not surprisingly, the Jews from Arab countries and their descendants, known as Oriental Jews, are typically among the most reactionary and anti-Arab layers of the Israeli population.

Birth of the Zionist State

So, the Jews in Europe—as well as in Arab countries—were not a nation. The Jews living in Palestine before the Holocaust were not a nation, either. In the

Arab revolt against British occupation. The Zionists played a key role in putting down the revolt, together with the British, through military terror directed against the Palestinians. By the time of the UN partition of 1947, a Hebrew-speaking nation had already been carved out of Palestine.

The 1947 partition set off a war in which the Zionists conquered what is today the state of Israel and drove out most of its Arab population through mass

**March 2002:
LTF banner at
Paris Palestinian
solidarity
demonstration:
"Defend the
Palestinian People!
French/UN/U.S.
Troops Hands Off
the Near East!"**



early 1930s, there were only slightly more than 100,000 Jews in Palestine, and many of them were not Zionists.

So how did a nation get formed out of these people? In Europe, before the Nazis came to power in 1933, Zionism was a tiny sect of petty-bourgeois intellectuals with no influence among the Jewish people. Those Jews in the ghettos of East Europe who were active in politics were primarily either communists or members of the Bund, a Jewish socialist movement close to the Mensheviks. What transformed Zionism into a mass movement was the world-historic defeat of the German working class in 1933 and the rise of Hitler to power. The rise of the Nazis in Germany also laid the basis for the creation of a nation of Hebrew-speaking people in Palestine by causing massive waves of Jewish emigration both before the Holocaust and again after WWII. The Zionists appealed directly to British imperialism, which controlled Palestine militarily, to sponsor a so-called "Jewish homeland." And the British rulers, anti-Semitic to the core, agreed because they saw it as a way to help divide and conquer in the Near East. There was the Balfour Declaration at the close of World War I in which the British promised the Zionists a homeland in Palestine. Today, of course, it is the U.S. imperialists who are the special patrons of the Zionist state.

Unlike many colonial settlers in history, the Zionists did not seek mainly to exploit Palestinians but rather to *displace* them and set up a closed economy of exclusively Jewish communities. And in this, through massive influx of Jewish labor and capital from Europe, they were ultimately successful. A major step in that direction occurred during the 1936-39

killings and terror. The Arab regimes intervened, not to defend the Palestinians against Zionist terror but to seize the land that had been allotted to them under the UN partition plan. Tens of thousands of Palestinian refugees who sought refuge in the surrounding Arab countries were forced to live in squalid refugee camps. In 1970, the Hashemite monarchy in Jordan launched a massive bloodbath against the Palestinians, with the implicit support of almost all the Arab regimes. This was called Black September. Yet despite the horrendous conditions in which they were forced to live, the Palestinian generation that grew up after 1948 was more highly educated than almost any other people in the Near East, including the Hebrew-speaking people of Israel.

At the time, the Palestinians played a role in the Near East similar in some ways to the Jews in East Europe. Cosmopolitan, politicized and educated, they played a disproportionate role in radical movements, including the Communist parties throughout the Near East. That fact gives a measure of the terrible consequences of Arab nationalism, as many Palestinians today, disillusioned by the total bankruptcy of Arafat's bourgeois-nationalist program have turned to the backward, anti-woman Islamic fundamentalists of Hamas.

The Palestinian Trotskyists took an essentially correct position on the 1948 war. They opposed the UN partition plan and were for the defeat of both sides through revolutionary working-class struggle. They correctly defended the national rights of the Hebrew-speaking nation to self-determination. As you know from the readings for this discussion, we initially took a position of



Gaza City homes demolished by Israeli troops in February as Zionist rulers ratchet up anti-Palestinian terror in lead-up to Iraq war.

AP

siding militarily with the forces led by the Zionists because our evaluation of the situation was that the war threatened the very existence of the Hebrew people. We corrected our appreciation of the facts and changed our position, but we did not modify our underlying method. We stated:

“Out of the destruction of European Jewry by Hitler (without whose aid the Zionists would have gone the way of the Shakers and other utopian sects) and at the expense of the Palestinian Arabs, a settler colony was transformed into a nation.

“This Hebrew nation came into existence through force and violence, through the suppression, forced expulsion and genocide of other peoples. Communists must oppose this brutal national oppression. Yet once this historical fact is accomplished, we must certainly recognize that nation’s right to self-determination, unless we prefer the alternative, namely national genocide....

“Marxists could give military support to neither side in the 1948 Palestine war. Our position for proletarian internationalism requires viewing that war from the necessity of revolutionary defeatism on both sides, counterposing to the victory of either side the perspective of united proletarian struggle, which offers the only possibility for the genuine fulfillment of the right of self-determination—through a socialist federation of the Near East.”

—“Birth of the Zionist State,” WV Nos. 33 and 45, 23 November 1973 and 24 May 1974

The Palestinian Trotskyists at the time were also sober about the enormous obstacles to united revolutionary struggle by Arab and Hebrew-speaking workers. The “Draft Theses on the Jewish Question” adopted by the International Secretariat of the Fourth International in 1947 pointed to some important joint strikes by Arab and Jewish workers, such as the big government workers strike in Haifa in 1946 and the oil refinery workers strike in 1947. But they also said:

“At the present stage, *large-scale* unity between the Jews and the Arabs in Palestine is unrealizable; only on a very limited scale and to the extent that a section of the Jewish workers is employed outside the ‘closed’ Jewish economy, has it been possible for Jewish-Arab strikes such as those of the past year to occur. But this does not mean that such unity is excluded for all time.”

This is a point we have often made. It will take convulsive historical events to cause even a significant fraction of the Hebrew-speaking proletariat to make common cause with their Arab class brothers, but it is historically possible and necessary.

The State Is Not the Same Thing as a Nation

Let’s be clear: When we speak of the Hebrew-speaking nation, this is not the same thing as the Zionist state that was set up following the 1947 UN partition. As I mentioned earlier, for Marxists, a nation is a people with its own language, culture and economy, occupying a given territory. A state is something very different. It is essentially an instrument of power through which a particular class maintains its class rule. It consists centrally of instruments of repression: the army, police, prison system, etc. Our attitude toward these two things is very dif-

ferent. We seek to smash the Zionist state, as we seek to smash all capitalist states, through socialist revolution. We particularly wish to smash the Zionist state because by its very nature it is inherently oppressive not only of the Hebrew-speaking working class but also and above all of the Palestinian people.

But what is our attitude toward the Hebrew-speaking nation? Our position on all nations is for their right to self-determination, that is, the right to form independent nation-states. We do not make a distinction on this point between oppressed nations which alone get the right to exist and oppressor nations which, according to some, do not. For us, it is simply a basic democratic right that Marxists recognize for all nations.

Marxist concepts like “class,” “nation,” “state,” etc. have precise definitions, which are based on material reality. We are materialists. The widely held position that Jews in Israel today represent an “occupation” strikes me as based on a kind of moralism—that is, idealism—rather than materialism. It reminds me of the idea, which is widespread on the left, that there are “good” people, that is, the oppressed—one could say the “occupied” people—and “bad” people who are the oppressors and do not even have the right to exist. To speak of an “occupation” seems to me to imply that the programmatic consequence is: “Get rid of them.” It is necessary to return to Marxist categories to avoid ending up in the trap of irredentist nationalism and to open the way to a revolutionary internationalist solution in which all peoples have a right *to exist*.

Interpenetrated Peoples

At the heart of the problem is the question of interpenetrated peoples. The process that led to the creation of the state of Israel was not unique. On the contrary, we have seen this many times in history. It is the policy of “divide and rule.” The British were past masters at this. They did basically the same thing in Ireland when they divided it between North and South, and in India with a partition between Muslim Pakistan and India containing both Hindus and Muslims. The French did the same thing by splitting Lebanon from Syria.

I strongly suspect that somewhere in London there is a recipe book, probably written by Churchill, and entitled “How to Make a Partition.” Here is the recipe. You take a region where there are two people with a long history of ethnic conflict, and you draw an artificial border according to the following criteria: on one side you have a country with a more or less homogeneous population, composed of the people that is the most numerous. But on the other side of the border, you have a country which is composed of two peoples, one of whom has a slight numerical advantage over the other. In that way, you get a people which lives constantly in fear that the other will one day be in the majority. This recipe works wonders for the imperialists and allows interventions and manipulations at will.

I think the French went to London to



Israeli public sector strike, 1997. Zionist garrison state must be destroyed from within through Arab-Hebrew workers revolution.

14 MARCH 2003



Baghdad, July 1958: Opportunity for proletarian revolution was derailed by Soviet Stalinist bureaucracy and Iraqi Communist leadership.

read that recipe book. They created this rump state, Lebanon, such that there was a slight majority of Christians, permanently terrified that one day the Muslims would have enough babies to become the majority. What finally happened is that the Palestinians driven out of Jordan by Black September ended up in Lebanon, and that tipped the balance. Lebanon exploded in civil war, which completely destroyed the country.

In Palestine, the partition plan was conceived according to the same recipe, but this time they showed the UN how to do it. They created a totally artificial state of Israel, which included much more than the territories occupied at the time by the Hebrew-speaking nation, drawing the borders in such a way as to have a Palestinian portion which was 100 percent Arab and a state of Israel where the Jews had a slight majority. But the Zionists were cooking according to a different recipe. They drove the Palestinians from the land that had been allotted to the Jews by the partition plan and also from much of the land that had been allotted to the Palestinians. And they populated it all with refugees pouring out of Europe following the Holocaust and with Oriental Jews driven out of the Arab countries with the rise of Arab nationalism.

By the end of this process, the territories occupied by the Hebrew-speaking nation had greatly expanded, and, importantly for the Zionists, they corresponded to the borders of the Zionist state. But, I repeat, these are not one and the same thing. We are for smashing the Zionist state, for the destruction of its army and the seizure of power by the proletariat. But we are not for the destruction of the nation that occupies that territory, with its own culture and its own economy. We defend its right to exist, its democratic right to self-determination, just as we defend these same rights for the Palestinian people.

Virtually all nations were forged through the forced expulsion and, in some cases, genocide of other peoples. It is not unique. Today it is called “ethnic cleansing.” The United States, for example, was forged through the systematic extermination of native peoples. This genocide is still celebrated in films and popular culture. Does that mean that the U.S. today is occupied territory? Turkey is a real “prison house of peoples” for minorities like the Kurds. Does that mean Turks do not have a right to exist? Should all the descendants of the *conquistadors* be expelled from Latin America?

But let’s be clear about this: the Left Bank and Gaza are today truly occupied territories. These are Palestinian territories which are being seized by the Zionists a little more each day. The settlers are the advance guard of that incursion. We are for stopping this incursion into Palestinian land and for this occupation to stop, even while recognizing that things have proceeded to a point where that is no simple task. There are now a large number of settlers, some 400,000 if we include East Jerusalem. These settlers are highly armed and closely linked with the Israeli army. They live largely in communities that are scattered across Palestinian territory like a string of fortresses. Thus, this is an extension into the Occupied Territories which is artificial and reversible. But that could change, particularly with the approaching war against Iraq. In our press we have warned that the Zionists may seize the opportunity to drive the Palestinians out of the Occupied Territories in a vast terror campaign.

The Example of Yugoslavia and the Russian Revolution

The problem for resolving the Palestinian question is that both peoples lay claim to essentially the same land. To set up an independent capitalist state for either the Palestinian Arabs or the Hebrew-speaking people can only mean denying that right for the other. These are geographically interpenetrated peoples. In such cases, a democratic solution to the national question can only come about through socialist revolution because only the proletariat in power has an interest in resolving national antagonisms and can begin to meet the material needs of all working people. This is not simply a case of wishful thinking. There are historical precedents that demonstrate that this program is realizable.

Look at Tito’s Yugoslavia, a deformed workers state that arose from the victory of the Stalinist-led Partisans against the Nazi occupation in WWII. The Balkans had for centuries been the scene of ethnic bloodshed that makes the Palestinian-Hebrew conflict pale by comparison. The 1912 Balkan Wars, which Trotsky wrote about as a war correspondent, were the occasion for immense forced population transfers throughout the Balkans. The state of Yugoslavia, an artificial creation put together by the imperialists after WWI—mainly by French imperialism, by the way—exploded in ethnic bloodshed almost from the day of its creation.

However, the common experience of

continued on page 11

Young Spartacus

Defend S.F. Anarchist Protesters!

We print below a letter sent by the Partisan Defense Committee to San Francisco district attorney Terence Hallinan on March 3 protesting the arrests of antiwar demonstrators during an anarchist-organized breakaway march on February 16. In the face of vicious violence-baiting from the state and the media, the organizers of the main February 16 demonstration, including the Workers World Party-led International ANSWER and Not In Our Name, have explicitly distanced themselves from the arrested activists. These groups wish to remain "respectable" in the eyes of the bourgeois liberals and Democratic Party politicians they seek to attract in the name of "unity." Those opposed to the aims of U.S. imperialism must demand unequivocally that all charges be dropped against all activists targeted for protesting the coming war.

The Partisan Defense Committee strongly protests the arrests of 46 antiwar demonstrators by the police on February 16. After over 200,000 people marched in opposition to the U.S. war against Iraq, a smaller march of around 1,500 gathered

**San Francisco
cop assaults
antiwar protester
on February 16
in police
crackdown on
breakaway march.**



Gonzalez/SF Chronicle

and was immediately surrounded by cops in riot gear. Once moving, the march was followed by mounted police officers who provocatively swung clubs at the demonstrators. At one intersection, police barricades boxed in protesters as cops on horseback charged the crowd. It was a day marked by police terror: protesters

were viciously beaten and attacked, and dozens were later arrested.

Out of the over 40 protesters who were arrested, six originally faced multiple felony charges, now reduced to misdemeanors. One protester, Broderick Harrison, still faces two felony vandalism counts and another, Jack Bay, remains in

county jail. With the spectre of the brutal "three strikes" initiative, these charges can only threaten a living death in prison if they dare protest again. The remaining protesters have only been "discharged," with the danger of having their charges refiled within a year. The cops and the courts are clearly using these charges as a precedent for prosecution against future antiwar protesters. We demand that all these charges be unconditionally dropped!

The repression against antiwar protesters is part of the government's "war on terror" aimed at criminalizing all those who oppose the rulers' bloody war against Iraq. In New York, the courts' attempt to ban the antiwar demonstration on February 15 shows how the U.S. government seeks to regiment the population into submission by outlawing *any* dissent. Despite these attempts, millions of people marched around the world expressing their opposition to the slaughter the U.S. government is planning in Iraq. **Drop all the charges against the demonstrators! Free all the protesters now!** ■

High School Students Take To the Streets Against War

Defying threats of suspension, expulsion and arrest, thousands of youth from some 400 colleges, high schools and middle schools across the country walked out on March 5 to protest the coming war on Iraq. The call for a student strike was taken up by youth in places like Avon, Indiana as well as in most major American cities and as far away as Spain and Australia. Organized around the demand "Books not bombs," the demonstrations were extremely youthful. At a New York rally, one sixth-grade speaker had to stand on a chair in order to be visible to the crowd; antiwar chants were adaptations of popular hip-hop songs and homemade signs read "Bush is dumb and so is war" and "Duct tape and plastic wrap for the administration." In Chicago, where Jesse Jackson Sr. was a featured speaker, our contingent chanted, "Remember Hiroshima, remember Vietnam, Democratic Party, we know which side you're on!", which elicited strong

reactions and was picked up by others in the crowd.

School administrations worked in cahoots with the cops to discipline protesters. Some high school students in New York were expelled immediately upon walking out; others in Brooklyn were locked into their school to prevent them from participating. In L.A., students from the UCLA-affiliated high school who walked out were followed by a truancy officer, rounded up and returned to school in a school bus. In the Bay Area, the UC Berkeley administration is threatening disciplinary action against the Berkeley Stop the War Coalition for "obstruction or disruption of teaching." The police mobilized heavily across the country and arrested some protesters; in Oakland, black and Latino high school kids were shoved and hit by cops on motorcycles. We demand: **Drop all charges now! Drop all disciplinary action against the students and student groups!** ■



Farjeon/L.A. Indymedia

Youth in Los Angeles demonstrating against war.

Contingents...

(continued from page 12)

Afghanistan. Otherwise, the movement will close itself off." What this means in practice is unity with bourgeois elements whose interests are *irreconcilably counterposed* to those of working people and the oppressed. Imperialist war should be met not with the abandonment of struggle against the capitalist rulers, but its *intensification*.

The Progressive Labor Party states that they aim to "shatter the illusions many have in liberal politicians and expose the opportunist 'left' serving the Democratic Party" (*Challenge*, 5 February). Yet these supposed fighters for communism not only steadfastly refuse to take a side in defense of Iraq, but cannot even bring themselves to defend the besieged Palestinian people! In the midst of the genocidal war of terror by the U.S.-backed Zionist rulers

against the Palestinians, *Challenge* (22 May 2002) declares: "This is a dogfight among gangsters. Backing the little ones against the big ones merely helps the little ones get bigger." PL's grotesque refusal to defend the Palestinian and Iraqi people should leave no doubt that despite its flaming red rhetoric, in practice PL *capitulates to the U.S. ruling class*. The right-wing Sharon regime could well be planning to expel Palestinians from the Occupied Territories under cover of an American war against Iraq. We say: **Defend the Palestinian people! Troops out of the Occupied Territories!**

We desperately need to build an internationalist revolutionary workers party like the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky that led the multinational working class of Russia to power. Our motto must be: unity of the workers in struggle against capitalism—break with the capitalist class enemy and their pseudo-socialist assistants! Fight for international socialist revolution—join us! ■

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

BOSTON

Alternate Mondays, 7 p.m.

March 17: **Defend Iraq Against U.S. Imperialist Attack!**

Socialism and the Struggle Against Imperialist War

BU School of Education, Room 212
605 Commonwealth Avenue
Information and readings: (617) 666-9453
or e-mail: bostonsyc@yahoo.com

CHICAGO

Alternate Tuesdays, 7 p.m.

April 8: **Socialism and War**

University of Chicago, Cobb Hall
5811 S. Ellis, Room TBA

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

LOS ANGELES

Saturday, 2 p.m.

March 29: **Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution**

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

NEW YORK CITY

Tuesday, 7:30 p.m.

April 1: **For Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!**

Columbia University
306 Hamilton Hall

Information and readings: (212) 267-1025
or e-mail: nysl@compuserve.com

OAKLAND

Saturday, 4 p.m.

March 22: **Only Socialist Revolution Can End Imperialist War—Lessons of the 1917 Russian Revolution**

1634 Telegraph Avenue, 3rd floor
Information and readings: (510) 839-0851
or e-mail: slbayarea@compuserve.com

TORONTO

Wednesday, 6:30 p.m.

March 19: **National Chauvinism Is Poison to Class Struggle—For Quebec Independence!**

University of Toronto
Sidney Smith, Room 1088
100 St. George Street
Information and readings: (416) 593-4138
or e-mail: spartacan@on.aibn.com

Down With Anti-Communist Censorship!

After the Chicago Spartacus Youth Club published and distributed a leaflet protesting their threatened exclusion, the International Socialist Organization-dominated Campus Antiwar Network backed down and allowed us entry into their national conference where we argued our revolutionary program. We reprint that leaflet of February 14 below.

In a blatant act of political cowardice, the Chicago Student Antiwar Network (CSAWN) has threatened the Spartacus Youth Club (SYC) with exclusion from the upcoming Campus Antiwar Network National Conference. We received an e-mail on February 11 responding to our request for a literature table that stated “Given your organization’s disruptive behavior at the CSAWN student teach-in on Feb. 1 at UIC, we will have to...decide if we would like your participation or not.” So what’s behind this threat of political censorship? The real author of this threatened exclusion is the International Socialist Organization (ISO), who everybody knows are the ones running CSAWN. And the “disruption” that has them so bent out of shape was simply that we put forward a revolutionary program as the only way to struggle against war, and exposed the ISO’s liberal reformism as an obstacle to this fight.

The aim of the ISO is to build “the broadest possible antiwar movement” to better pressure U.S. imperialism to “do the right thing.” That means unity with liberals, unity with the Democrats, unity with those who support the UN (sanctions and all), and virulent bureaucratic censorship of authentic Marxist politics that might get in their way. The ISO were the *real* disrupters at the UIC teach-in. At the workshop on military recruitment in high schools, a high school comrade of the SYC was shouted down by an ISO panelist who yelled “That’s it! Out!” when our comrade mentioned the ISO. The chair then told her “If anyone says anything

What Is the ISO Afraid of?

divisive, you will have to leave.” Our comrade was attempting to describe a protest we organized against NATO’s appearance at UIC while the bombs were raining on Afghanistan. The ISO boycotted our protest, preferring to go into the meeting of these butchers and ask “tough questions” like “What is the acceptable civilian body count in Afghanistan?” In other words, they seek to silence the communists but see fit to debate these criminals.

The ISO’s much-vaunted vision of “unity” means subservience to the liberal “more humane” wing of the ruling class, such as during the previous Gulf War in 1991 when they endorsed a demonstration called by the National Campaign for Peace in the Middle East, which explicitly included demands supporting UN sanctions, which have since killed 1.5 million Iraqis. Today the ISO is again ready to build a “movement” with the enemies of workers and minorities. Such a class-collaborationist “movement” is not only powerless to prevent war, but is actually an *obstacle* to real antiwar struggle because it serves in its own way to uphold the system which breeds war. War is a symptom of the irreconcilable interests and conflicts of capitalism, and it is ludicrous to believe that the fight against war can be divorced from the class struggle as a whole. To struggle against war it is necessary to fight against capitalism itself—for workers revolution! It is necessary to break the illusion of “national unity” and bring workers to understand that they share *no* interests with their capitalist bosses. The same imperialist rulers who are preparing to rain bombs on Iraq have been waging war on immigrants, black people and labor here at home. In the coming war, the

working class has a side to take with the semicolonial people of Iraq against the U.S. imperialists. Defend Iraq! For class struggle against U.S. imperialism!

The ISO’s pretense to “socialism” or “anti-imperialism,” is a total fraud considering that they capitulated to the imperialists down the line in their drive to destroy the Soviet Union. While bureaucratically degenerated, the USSR was a workers state, based on socialized property that represented real gains for

Defend the remaining deformed workers states—China, North Korea, Vietnam, and Cuba!

Anyone who knows the ISO knows that political censorship of leftists is nothing new for them. In one outrageous incident, back in March 1991 when Bush Sr. was waging the first Gulf War, they organized a conference of the National Network of Campuses Against the War. The ISO expelled the Revolutionary Workers League (RWL) for “disruption” when they simply tried to raise a list of radical-sounding demands for adoption by the conference. They then called the campus cops to remove the RWL, and “anyone

February 15 antiwar protest in New York. While ISO seeks to pressure imperialists to change priorities (sign at left), SYC fights for perspective of shattering imperialist order.



the working class internationally. But the ISO howled with the imperialist wolves in opposing the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan against the CIA-backed woman-hating *mujahedin* (who they even hailed as “freedom fighters”). And the ISO hailed the Yeltsin/Bush counterrevolution in the USSR, writing, “Communism has collapsed.... It is a fact that should have every socialist rejoicing” (*Socialist Worker*, 31 August 1991). The peoples of the decimated nations of Russia and Eastern Europe aren’t rejoicing today, but the imperialist bosses sure are.

who defends them,” including the SYC. Cops are the hired guns of the profit system, and “serve and protect” nothing but the racist capitalist status quo.

While the ISO wants to dress the blood-drenched imperialist wolves in sheep’s clothing, we have something different in mind. As the youth group of the Spartacist League, the SYC calls for breaking with the racist, war-mongering Democrats and Republicans. We seek to win youth to the perspective of building a workers party that fights for socialist revolution! ■

The following leaflet was issued on March 1 by the Spartacist League/Britain, section of the International Communist League.

The “Revolution 2003” teach-in at LSE [London School of Economics] organised by the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) this weekend featured self-appointed SWP thought police dispatching goon squads to harass the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Group and to impede the public from access to our revolutionary Marxist views. Inside the teach-in, the threats escalated after floor interventions by two young women supporters of the Spartacist League, who argued that opposition to the Iraq war and its domestic repercussions in the anti-Muslim witchhunt requires opposition to the Labour government, and exposed the SWP’s support to Islamic fundamentalism, as well as its earlier support to the dispatch of British troops to Northern Ireland under a Labour government. In response, SWP honcho Chris Bambery fumed that anyone who doesn’t politically support the Stop the War Coalition “*deserves a bullet in the head.*” This is the real face of the SWP’s “give peace a chance” coalition-building: you’ve got to silence the reds to get workers and youth to lie down like lambs with the wolves of the Labour Party whilst they wage war on Iraq and against working people at home!

Physical exclusion, political censorship and threats of violence are the despicable acts of political cowards who disdain to debate their views, preferring to substitute the fist for the brain. Today it’s the Spartacist League, but who’s next on the SWP’s hit list? *We call on all leftists, trade unionists and anti-war activists to*

British SWP Says: Join “Stop the War” or We’ll Shoot You!

condemn and protest this flagrant incitement to violence against revolutionary socialists!

What’s got Bambery’s knickers in a twist? The SWP must be undergoing uncomfortable contortions to present themselves as socialists while maintaining loyalty to Blair’s Labour Party (whose election sent the SWP “over the moon”). In our interventions and in discussions with young militants before the meeting our comrades also warned that by promoting politicians like George Galloway and Jeremy Corbyn—who are actively campaigning for antiwar activists to join the Labour Party—the SWP and the Stop the War Coalition are helping channel the growing anger against Blair’s government and its war back into the reformist confines of the Labour Party. As Lenin wrote in *Socialism and War*, “*unity* with the opportunists *actually* means subordinating the working class to their ‘own’ national bourgeoisie....it means *splitting* the revolutionary proletariat of all countries.” We Spartacists fly under our own banners and argue that what working peo-

ple, youth and minorities in Britain today need is not a swivel chair “regime change” of Gordon Brown for Tony Blair, but the construction of a multiethnic revolutionary workers party to sweep away the capitalist system which breeds racism, war and unemployment. Anything less, anything other, is nothing but a reformist balm on the raw rubs of the capitalist order.

Political debate is vital to clarify what programme and leadership the working class needs to fight for its interests. This is not the first time that the SWP has resorted to political exclusionism or thugery against the Spartacist League or other tendencies in the workers movement. In July 1980 they went berserk and assaulted SL supporters shortly after the Soviet Red Army went into Afghanistan because we exposed the SWP for attacking Margaret Thatcher *from the right* for selling British beef to Soviet troops in Kabul. We said, “Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!” and later denounced Gorbachev’s treacherous withdrawal from that country. Had the Soviets stayed and

won, there wouldn’t be a Gulf War today!

We say that workers and minorities in Britain and the toiling masses of neocolonial Iraq have a common enemy in the war-crazed gangs running the White House and 10 Downing Street and a common interest in defending Iraq against U.S./British attack without giving one iota of political support to Saddam Hussein’s anti-worker capitalist regime. Imperialist wars such as the threatened slaughter of thousands of Iraqis are inherent to the system of capitalism, and to put an end to them what is needed is an international succession of socialist revolutions. For that purpose we say workers in this country need not a “reclaimed” Labour Party, but a multiethnic revolutionary workers party modelled on the Russian Bolshevik Party. It was the Bolshevik Party that, by successfully tearing the working class away from the pro-capitalist Corbys, Galloways and Bamberys of the time, led the working class to power and took Russia out of the massacre of World War I through the 1917 October Revolution.

Like the Bolsheviks, we seek to win the working class and the oppressed to the revolutionary socialist programme through the open clash of opposing political programmes; be it at mobilisations such as the massive demonstration held in London on 15 February, in the trade unions, through electoral campaigns, through united-front actions in defence of the interests of workers and the oppressed, or at political meetings such as today’s “Revolution 2003” teach-in. *Protest SWP political exclusionism and threats of violence! For open political debate!* ■

Defend Iraq...

(continued from page 1)

Sharon’s cabinet ministers, recently ranted of the Palestinians: “Make their life so bitter that they will transfer themselves willingly.” And this is exactly what the Zionist rulers have been trying to do with the daily massacres of Palestinians and escalating destruction of homes and entire neighborhoods. Antiwar protesters must take up the call to *defend the Palestinian people* and demand: *All Israeli troops, settlers out of the Occupied Territories!*

In the U.S. war against Iraq, we take a side. We call on the international proletariat to stand for the military defense of Iraq without giving any political support to the bloody Saddam Hussein regime. Every class-conscious worker, every fighter against capitalist exploitation and imperialist subjugation cannot but wish to see U.S. imperialism humiliated in Iraq. The colossal military advantage of the United States against semicolonial Iraq underscores the importance of *class struggle*, particularly in the imperialist centers, as the chief means to give content to the call to defend Iraq. We look to an extension and deepening of the sorts of labor actions, including blockades of military goods destined for the Gulf, taken by workers in Italy.

The U.S. drive for war has generated huge waves of worldwide protests, including the mobilization of millions of demonstrators on the weekend of February 15, and further large-scale protest actions are planned for the weekend of March 15. The Spartacist League, Spartacus Youth Clubs and Labor Black Leagues are organizing Revolutionary Internationalist contingents in Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, San Francisco and Chicago based on the demands: *All U.S. troops out of the Near East now! Down with U.S. imperialism! Defend Iraq! For class struggle against U.S. capitalist rulers!*

The Workers World Party, which politically dominates the International ANSWER coalition that has organized many of the antiwar protests, has been redbaited by



DPA

Left: Kurds slaughtered by Turkish troops. Right: Kurdish demonstrators in northern Iraq burn Turkish flag last month to protest threatened Turkish invasion as part of U.S. war.



Lee/NY Times

liberals for its statements against imperialism, particularly its solidarity with North Korea. These anti-Communist attacks notwithstanding, Workers World are hardly reds. Through ANSWER, Workers World peddles a program of liberal pacifism that never challenges the capitalist system that breeds war, the better to draw in “antiwar” Democratic Party politicians like Jesse Jackson, Al Sharpton and Cynthia McKinney. To build an antiwar movement with bourgeois politicians is to build an antiwar movement with the very forces in whose interest imperialist war is waged. Indeed, even those Democrats who for now oppose a war against Iraq attack Bush from the right when it comes to North Korea, demanding a more aggressive line against that country.

In motivating antiwar activists to join our contingents, our mobilizing leaflet (see page 12) declares: “March with the proletarian internationalist revolutionists who tell the truth to the masses: that only social-ist revolution can end imperialist war.”

A New World Disorder

The sharp clash between the U.S. and Britain on one side and France, Germany and Russia on the other signals the undoing of the post-World War II imperialist order, which was premised on American

hegemony and opposition to the Soviet Union. With the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92, the U.S. has asserted its overwhelming military superiority in a “one-super-power world.”

This was made manifest last year. Months after the Pentagon released its “Nuclear Posture Review” explicitly allowing for a U.S. nuclear first strike, the Bush administration came out with its “National Security Strategy,” affirming a general policy of “pre-emptive” war and asserting that the U.S. is “strong enough to dissuade potential adversaries from pursuing a military buildup in hopes of surpassing, or equaling, the power of the United States.” Such threats are directed not only against small “rogue” states but ultimately at the Chinese deformed workers state and the U.S.’s imperialist rivals.

While the Bush administration is particularly bellicose in both its rhetoric and actions, U.S. imperialism has been moving toward such unilateralist policies since the end of the Cold War. As it launched a “pre-emptive” war against Serbia in 1999, the Democratic Clinton White House explicitly refused to seek UN approval. Yet all the European Union powers endorsed that war. A big difference today is that where Clinton invoked

the facade of multilateralism and “human rights,” the Bush administration has dispensed with these diplomatic niceties, arrogantly and provocatively flaunting American military muscle.

During its existence, the USSR acted as a counterweight to U.S. imperialism, including through its large nuclear arsenal. It was the planned, collectivized economy issuing out of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution which, despite the subsequent Stalinist degeneration of the workers state, allowed once-backward Russia to become the second most powerful state on the planet. In fighting to the bitter end against capitalist counterrevolution, we warned that the demise of the USSR would lead to a far more dangerous world.

Capitalist restoration has led Russia to a catastrophic economic and social decline unprecedented in the history of any modern, industrialized country. By every measure of human progress—infant mortality, life expectancy, income, literacy—the diverse peoples of the former Soviet Union have been brutally hurled back. Nonetheless, Russia’s new capitalist rulers inherited from the USSR a powerful nuclear arsenal and strong conventional armed forces. An alliance between the economic and technological resources of Germany—the dominant power in

North Korea...

(continued from page 1)

“Nuclear Posture Review” that openly targets that country along with China, Iraq and others for a potential nuclear first strike. The North Koreans are well aware that following a U.S. devastation of Iraq, they could be next on Washington’s hit list. In today’s world, where the nuclear madmen in Washington declare their “right” to carry out “pre-emptive” strikes against anyone at any time, the only real measure of sovereignty left is possession of nukes. Indeed, we regret that North Korea’s current facilities for nuclear development are so modest.

It is telling that while the Bush administration is gearing up to devastate Iraq, those Democrats who claim to oppose the Iraq war are pointing to North Korea as the real “threat.” While the organizers

of the antiwar protests have sought to appeal to these Democrats, as revolutionary opponents of our “own” imperialist ruling class—Republicans and Democrats alike—we have raised the necessity of defense of North Korea in our interventions into the antiwar protests.

The American military presence in the Korean peninsula is not only aimed at the North Korean and Chinese deformed workers states, but is an assertion of U.S. interests in the region against potential rivals, chiefly Japan. It also serves as a warning to South Korea’s combat-ive union movement, threatening to drown in blood any challenge to the capitalist order. Indeed, in South Korea, popular fear and hatred of the U.S. occupation forces is escalating, with huge protests in the South against U.S. troops and bases.

Meanwhile, in China, the Stalinist bureaucracy has repeatedly emphasized its agreement with the imperialists’

demands for a “non-nuclear Korean peninsula.” Such criminal appeasement simply emboldens the rapacious U.S. imperialists to foment counterrevolution in China itself.

Despite the rule of a nationalist Stalinist bureaucracy, the overthrow of capitalism in North Korea was a historic defeat for imperialism and a victory for the working people of Asia and the world. Following the Korean War, U.S. imperialism has not only militarily encircled the North but has also sought to starve the country through an economic embargo. The collapse in 1991-92 of the Soviet Union, which provided the bulk of military and technical aid to North Korea, created a dire situation, made worse by a series of natural disasters producing a famine of historic proportions. These desperate conditions have been compounded by the extreme autarky pushed by the North Korean bureaucracy under the

rubric of *Juche* (self-reliance). Today, North Korea is ruled by a particularly cultish, nepotistic and bizarre Stalinist regime centered on “Dear Leader” Kim Jong Il.

The only road forward for the beleaguered masses of the North is through the perspective of international socialist revolution. As we wrote in “U.S. Imperialism Hands Off North Korea!” (WV No. 795, 17 January):

“What is desperately needed is the forging of a Leninist-Trotskyist party to lead the struggle for the *revolutionary reunification of Korea*—for socialist revolution in the South and workers political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucrats in the North. The fight for revolutionary reunification must be linked to the struggle for proletarian political revolution in China and the extension of proletarian power to Japan, the industrial heartland of Asia.”

Defend North Korea! All U.S. troops out of Korea now! ■

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Homeless tent city in Moscow's Red Square.

For Socialist Revolution to Sweep Away Yeltsin Counterrevolution!

August 1993

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Europe—and Russia’s military potential would create a formidable challenge to American global dominance.

Many antiwar activists have looked to the UN as a potential force to rein in the U.S. Don’t be fooled! Today, growing sections of the American ruling class, particularly as represented in the Bush administration, see no further use for the UN. But the UN has been a creature of the imperialist powers, centrally the U.S., since its formation at the end of World War II. It has always served as a fig leaf for imperialist wars and interventions. It is enough to recall that the sanctions that have killed 1.5 million Iraqis and devastated one of the most advanced infrastructures in the Near East were carried out under UN aegis. Today, it is the UN that is vindictively disarming Iraq on the eve of an American invasion, as seen by the weapons inspections and the order to destroy Iraq’s Al Samoud missiles, which can barely reach 100 miles.

For Proletarian Internationalism!

Throughout Europe, the mass antiwar protests against the U.S. war are being channeled in the national-chauvinist direction of getting one’s “own” rulers to stand up to American imperialism. But as we explained in a 23 October 2002 International Communist League statement, which has been translated into eight languages and distributed internationally: “What’s essential is to draw a

Shipments,” WV No. 798, 28 February). Such labor actions have continued on a near-daily basis, including blockades of barracks and NATO bases by public sector workers. Three days ago, over 50,000 protesters, with trade-union contingents at their head, surrounded Camp Darby and broke through the perimeter fence at least twice. Now, port workers in Livorno are threatening to go on strike against the loading of military supplies on American vessels bound for the Gulf.

The centrist British Workers Power group—whose radical phrasemongering in cyberspace is matched by its craven opportunism in reality—has seized on increasing labor opposition to the war in Europe to raise the call for a “Global General Strike.” When the centrist Independent Labour Party (ILP) called for a general strike against war in 1935, Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky replied in “The ILP and the Fourth International”: “It is comparatively easy to take a ‘revolutionary’ position on the question of war; but it is extremely difficult to draw from this position *all the necessary theoretical and practical conclusions.*” Trotsky went on to note: “A general strike can be put on the agenda as a method of struggle against mobilization and war only in the event that the entire preceding developments in the country have placed revolution and armed insurrection on the agenda,” and added: “A general strike without a victorious insurrection cannot ‘stop war’.”



Dario Orlandi/Indymedia

Demonstrators in Italy occupy train tracks to stop transport of war matériel. Banner reads, “Against the Capitalist War: General Strike.”

is to seek to chain left-wing youth and workers to “left” Labour Members of Parliament (MPs) like Jeremy Corbyn and George Galloway, who are currently campaigning to “reclaim” the Labour Party from Blair and turn it into a “party for peace.” In the same article that calls for a “Global General Strike,” Workers Power declares: “We can, and must, march alongside the reformist left MPs and union leaders when they mobilise their organisations for action but we do not have to trim our strategy to what they will tolerate. If we did that, then the militant left wing of this movement would not grow and the compromising right wing would not lose its influence over it, which is just what is needed” (*Workers Power Global Week*, 23 February). For Workers Power, which is a member of the “Stop the War” coalition, this means in practice unity with the likes of Corbyn and Galloway. Such unity amounts to keeping the working class subordinated to racist, pro-imperialist Labourism and thus to its “own” national bourgeoisie; it means *splitting* the international workers movement along national lines.

In fact, only a few months earlier, Workers Power joined in an explicit appeal to the very European governments against which labor strikes would be directed. Last fall, Workers Power co-signed a call with RC, the SWP, the French Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire and others appealing to the European bourgeois rulers to oppose U.S. imperialism: “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” (reprinted in *Weekly Worker*, 12 September 2002).

Unlike Workers Power, which issues meaningless proclamations for a “Global General Strike,” Marxists seek to intervene into labor actions against the impending war to raise the consciousness of the proletariat to the understanding that it has the power to get rid of the system of capitalist exploitation and imperialist plunder through socialist revolution.

Militants engaged in actions against the war should broaden this into a struggle against capitalism itself.

For a Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan!

Bush proclaims that U.S. imperialism plans to go into Iraq as “liberators.” Such arrogant claims are not new. When the British army marched into Baghdad in 1917, the commanding general declared: “Our armies do not come into your cities and lands as conquerors or enemies but as liberators.” The British imperialists, in league with France, then proceeded to draw artificial boundaries in the former lands of the Ottoman Empire in the Near East, forcibly amalgamating disparate ethnic populations while carving up others, notably the Kurds who are divided among Iraq, Iran, Syria and Turkey. As a result of this criminal imperialist legacy, the Kurds continue to be the largest nation in the world without a state of their own.

The American bourgeois media has trumpeted the supposed “liberation” of Kurds in the “autonomous” region of northern Iraq, created after the 1991 Gulf War. But as noted by Dilip Hiro in *Iraq: In the Eye of the Storm* (2002), the U.S. “refused to help the quasi-independent Kurdistan graduate to an independent state while vetoing the region’s return to Baghdad’s jurisdiction. All it wanted was to deploy the Kurds as a lever to keep Saddam down.”

The chief benefactors of the imperialist carve-up of Iraq have been smugglers and black marketeers, working in cahoots with either the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) or the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), each of which took control of sections of Iraqi Kurdistan. For decades, these two nationalist formations have engaged in bloody internecine feuding, alternately lining up with one or another imperialist or regional power, including the U.S., Israel, Iran, Iraq and Turkey. Until reaching a truce some years ago, the PUK and KDP fought a civil war following the Gulf War—killing some 7,000 people—with the latter appealing for and receiving arms from none other than Saddam Hussein himself.

Now the U.S. war is being seized on by the regional oppressors of the Kurds to move into oil-rich northern Iraq and smash any semblance of Kurdish autonomy. An American occupation of Iraq—with its ethnically diverse population and long-established civil society—would set the stage for further internecine conflicts and brutal imperialist repression, and could turn the whole region into a hornet’s nest. The U.S. has already made it clear that its forces will take control of the oil fields around Kirkuk. The Turkish army—infamous for its brutal suppression of Kurds in Turkey—already has some 1,200 troops in northern Iraq and is planning on deploying thousands more. Tens of thousands of Iraqi Kurds have demonstrated against and vowed to militarily resist a Turkish incursion. For its part, Iran has already sent hundreds of

continued on page 10



AP

March 4: Protesters at Turkey’s Istanbul University carry banner reading “Stop the Attack on Iraq.”

class line and unshackle the working people and anti-imperialist youth from bourgeois politicians, their agents in the trade unions and their left servants, who seek to channel justified hatred of war into illusory calls for parliamentary reforms of the profit-driven system that breeds war and, in West Europe, into support for their own national bourgeoisie against the Americans.”

In Britain, this reformist strategy takes the form of the “Stop the War” coalition, dominated by the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), which is supported by virtually every reformist and centrist outfit as well as oppositional sections of the Labour Party and trade-union bureaucrats. In Italy, where the right-wing Berlusconi regime is backing the U.S., Rifondazione Comunista (RC) has latched onto the French/German opposition to the war to paint the European bourgeoisies as more “humanitarian” than the Americans, declaring in a headline: “Paris-Berlin, the Axis of Peace” (*Liberazione*, 23 January).

As opposition to the war has deepened at the base of European society, there have been a growing number of actions carried out by trade unionists. In January, Scottish train drivers refused to drive a trainload of munitions destined for a large NATO base. In Italy, on February 21 trade unionists and antiwar activists blocked railway lines being used to transport 26 military convoys from the Camp Ederle NATO base in Vicenza to the Camp Darby NATO logistics depot in Livorno, one of the largest ammunition depots in Europe (see “Italian Workers Block Arms

Workers Power spews hot air about a general strike encompassing every country on the planet. But a general strike poses the question of which class shall rule. And for that to be resolved in favor of the proletariat, what’s needed is a Leninist-Trotskyist party that fights for the class independence of the working class. Such a party can only be built by splitting Labour’s working-class base away from the social-democratic tops, including and particularly those who pose as “left.” And this is precisely what Workers Power rejects.

Workers Power’s practical conclusion



AP

Paris, March 5: Foreign ministers Ivanov of Russia, de Villepin of France and Fischer of Germany announce intent to block UN resolution authorizing war.

New York TWU: Fight MTA Attacks on Muslim Women Workers!

As the U.S. rulers continue their anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim repression under the rubric of the “war on terror,” the racist bosses who run New York City’s Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) have victimized three black women bus drivers for wearing the Islamic headscarf. These workers, all of whom work out of the Flatbush depot in Brooklyn, have been subjected to company discipline and are threatened with losing their jobs merely for refusing to cover their head-dresses with official MTA caps.

The MTA’s outrageous trampling of these workers’ rights began last summer, when a probationary bus driver, Malika Alkebulan, was written up for refusing to cover up her scarf, known as a *khimar* or *hijab*. Management then went after veteran bus drivers Stephanie Lewis and Deirdre Small, who have worn such headscarves at work for 14 and 6 years respectively. All three women have been pulled from passenger service and punitively reassigned to garage duty and face continual company harassment for defending their rights.

These women are not helpless victims but are members of a powerful union, Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local

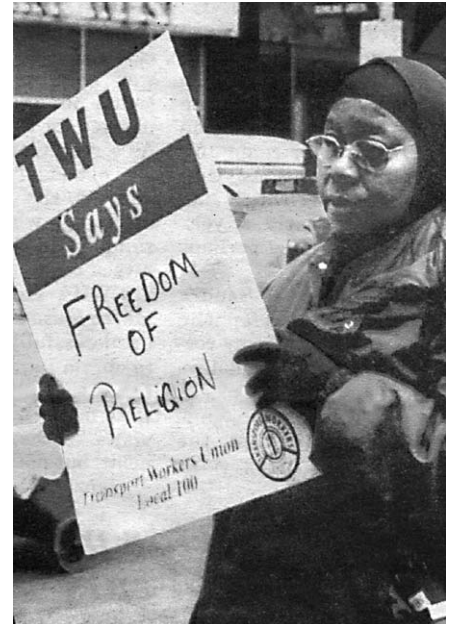
100, which has the ability to mobilize its many thousands of members in their defense. This attack on union workers is an attack on the whole labor movement—an injury to one is an injury to all! *TWU Local 100 must mobilize to put a stop to this racist and anti-Muslim bigotry and demand that all three women be immediately restored to passenger service with their records wiped clean!*

It is scandalous that the Local 100 leadership is only now publicizing this case. Having filed grievances on behalf of the women, which were denied, the TWU then submitted the case for arbitration on February 28 and held a small “arbitration rally” outside, with a ruling due March 30. The union tops kept this case quiet during contract negotiations late last year, when transit workers voted overwhelmingly to authorize a strike that could have shut down the whole city. Local 100 president Roger Toussaint averted such a showdown by pushing through a deeply unpopular contract deal with a series of concessions. Among these are “reformed” disciplinary procedures which, far from helping workers ensnared in the company’s draconian disciplinary process, in fact streamline the MTA’s ability to

victimize and fire workers.

In a leaflet on the case that did not receive wide circulation, the Local 100 bureaucracy claims that the discrimination the women face is “un-American.” In fact, bigotry and discrimination against Muslims and other minorities are facts of life in racist capitalist America. We defend the right to freedom of religious beliefs. At the same time, as Marxists, we recognize that the headscarf prescribed by the Koran—most obviously in its extreme forms, like the head-to-toe *chador* in Iran and the *burqa* in Afghanistan—is an expression of the subjugation of women, who are oppressed by *all* religions. But in post-9/11 America, it’s the capitalists and their government that are making life hell for all Muslims, including women.

The domestic “war on terror” that in the first instance targets immigrants and Muslims will be used against just about everyone perceived as an opponent by the capitalist rulers—from those who oppose U.S. imperialist wars abroad to those who speak out against racist oppression. The ultimate target of laws such as the USA-Patriot and Homeland Security Acts is the labor movement, the real “enemy within” in



Amsterdam News

February 28: Stephanie Lewis, one of three NYC bus drivers victimized for wearing Islamic headscarf, at union protest at arbitration hearing.

the eyes of the capitalist rulers. It is crucial for the unions to use their social power in defense of immigrants and all those facing racist discrimination.

Defend Iraq...

(continued from page 9)

troops into both the southern Shi’ite region of Iraq as well as the Kurdish north. What all the regional bourgeoisies, as well as all the imperialist powers, do not want to see is the creation of any independent Kurdish state, which would challenge the stability of the bourgeois order in the Near East.

This underscores that any struggle for Kurdish national liberation must be based on implacable opposition to imperialism. In channeling Kurdish hostility to the regime in Baghdad into the arms of the American imperialist invaders, the Kurdish nationalist parties are preparing yet another bloody betrayal of this long-suffering people. It is only through the overthrow of capitalist rule in Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey—establishing a Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan—that the Kurdish people can finally realize national self-determination. As we wrote in our greetings to a 1984 conference of Kurdish militants in Europe

(reprinted in WV No. 362, 14 September 1984):

“The Kurdish masses must look to an alliance with the Arab, Persian and Turkish proletariats, who in turn must be made to become determined champions of the Kurdish right of self-determination against the great power chauvinism of their own bourgeoisies. The Bolsheviks led the Russian labouring masses to realise that they could never become free without resolute struggle against Great Russian chauvinism. Such a revolutionary party must be built in each state and become the weapon for leading the proletarian and peasant masses to victory and in consequence to encourage such victory elsewhere.”

This struggle must be linked to the fight for socialist revolution in the advanced capitalist countries. In Germany, for example, Kurdish and Turkish workers form a strategic component of the proletariat and face the same racist and anti-immigrant measures at the hands of the governments of “Fortress Europe.”

Only Socialist Revolution Can End Imperialist War!

When Iraq had a mass Communist party in the 1950s, there was a real opportunity for the liberation of the Kurds as well as the other exploited and oppressed peoples of Iraq. But that was ruthlessly suppressed with the connivance of U.S. imperialism. Today, the U.S. denounces Saddam Hussein as a “tyrant” and a “Hitler,” but when he and his Ba’athist predecessors were butchering Communists, Kurds and others, Washington fully supported him. In 1958, as the British-backed monarchy was overthrown in a military coup, the powerful Iraqi Communist Party (ICP) could have seized power at the head of the millions of workers, Kurds and other minorities that supported it. That opportunity was derailed as the ICP’s patrons in the Soviet Stalinist bureaucracy cut a deal with the American imperialists and the ICP leadership lent its support to the bourgeois-nationalist officers. This prepared the way for a counterrevolutionary bloodbath in 1963, when the Ba’ath party briefly came to power for the first time and rounded up and murdered some 5,000 leftists and trade unionists on the basis of lists supplied by the CIA.

Saddam Hussein’s bloody history as a butcher of Iraqi leftists and minorities in the service of the imperialists underlines

why our military defense of Iraq must be based on the sharpest political opposition to the bourgeois order in Iraq. It is the task of the Iraqi proletariat to sweep away this brutal capitalist regime. The key lesson of the 1958-59 uprising is the need for a Marxist party based on the complete class independence of the proletariat from all manner of bourgeois nationalism.


The Bush administration is making it amply clear that American imperialism is the deadliest enemy of all the peoples of the world. An easy win for the U.S. in Iraq will only embolden this war-crazed government to embark on even bloodier military adventures elsewhere. The Bush administration is already ominously talking about a supposed nuclear “threat” from Iran, another member of Bush’s “axis of evil.”

But contrary to those reformists who look to French and German imperialism, there are no “benign” imperialist powers. Striving for domination, for new markets, resources and cheap labor inevitably leads to war. France and Germany—whose interests by no means always coincide—are less powerful than the U.S., but hardly less bloody. Following the capital-

ist reunification of Germany in 1990, an increasingly assertive German imperialism precipitated the breakup of Yugoslavia by backing Croatian secession in 1991, leading to a series of ethnic civil wars and imperialist attacks that claimed hundreds of thousands of lives and drove millions from their homes. French imperialism today has an occupation force in its Ivory Coast neocolony in West Africa and in the early ’90s actively backed the Hutu-based regime in Rwanda, which carried out a genocidal massacre of over 800,000 ethnic Tutsis in 1994.

Only a series of socialist revolutions can prevent the world from being thrown into the barbarism of interimperialist wars. The new generation of fighters today being mobilized against imperialist war must understand that any genuine opposition to war must be based on independent struggle of the working class against the capitalist system that breeds racism and war. A struggle against war and against national and racial oppression requires a proletarian revolutionary internationalist party to fight for socialist revolution. ■

**Programmatic Statement
of the Spartacist League/U.S.**



**For a Workers Party
That Fights for a Workers Government!**

**For Socialist Revolution
in the Bastion
of World Imperialism!**

SEE PAGE 2

**Organizational Rules and Guidelines
of the Spartacist League/U.S.**

SEE PAGE 30

**Opponents of the Revolutionary
Internationalist Workers Movement**

SEE PAGE 37

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(continued from page 5)

The other historic example is, of course, the Russian Revolution of 1917. To take just one example: the Caucasus, like the Balkans, had been for centuries a region of inter-ethnic conflicts. The Bolsheviks not only granted nations the right to self-determination, to create independent states in the region, but they developed a whole range of organizational solutions so that even tiny proto-national groupings, sometimes consisting of only a few villages, could have a measure of local autonomy. I once saw a map of the Caucasus in the early years of Bolshevik rule showing all the administrative organs. It was covered with little circles of various sizes. There too, the revolution put a stop to ethnic warfare and essentially took the national question off the agenda. These two examples are dramatic proof of how murderous national conflicts that seem unresolvable under capitalism can be equitably addressed under the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Our strategy for the Near East is the seizure of state power by proletarian revolution. That is not going to happen unless the Hebrew-speaking working class is in large part won over or at least neutralized. Think about it for a minute. Israel is by far the most advanced and powerful country in the region. The Zionists have the technology, the arms; they have nuclear weapons. How are you going to make a revolution in the region if you don't crack the Zionist citadel from within? You have to be realistic about this. And you are definitely not going to win Hebrew-speaking workers if you don't recognize their right to national existence. In addition, if you don't have this perspective, you are inevitably going to end up looking to the Arab bourgeoisies. Who else could even pretend to be a useful ally of the Palestinians against the Zionists? The European Union? Or maybe "la belle France" of the Algerian War and of Vigipirate anti-immigrant repression?

A black and white photograph of a busy street scene in Shanghai, China. In the foreground, several people are walking, including a man in a long coat and hat. To the left, a large, ornate street lamp stands near a building with a sign that reads "SIM". In the background, a large, multi-story building with a traditional Chinese roof is visible, surrounded by trees and other structures.



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Semitic themes are not only a dominating world domination, but the embodiment of all evil. I probably saw reports of the first series in Egypt based on the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, a forgery cooked up by the British to incite pogroms. It was everywhere in the Near East, even endorsed and even used by Jewish leaders, from Nasser to the Ba'ath in Iraq and Syria to the PLO in Arabia. Denying that it was a forgery, it was, in fact, a theme also borrowed by European fascists, is now being used by Arab houses and among the Arab intelligentsia. Even the age-old Jewish accusation that Jews are killing Christians to drink their blood is being used by Arab leaders and academics in the Arab East.

But if you go back to the 1940s and '50s, you had large Communist parties in many Arab countries. Most of these CPs were either formed by, or were based heavily on, minorities in those countries. The various Egyptian communist groups were all formed by Egyptian Jews. The Iraqi CP had Kurds and Jews in its leadership. This is a tradition that we can hark back to. But how are we going to win Arab workers to communism? Only by directly confronting the false consciousness that binds them to their oppressors.

And it is *rampant*. Usually the word “Zionist” is used instead of “Jew,” but the



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We insist on this not because we hope to recruit a lot of Jews in Arab countries—there are almost none left. It's because anti-Semitism propagated by Arab rulers is one of the main things poisoning the class consciousness of Arab workers. Similarly in Poland, we repeatedly published articles against anti-Semitism. In Poland there aren't many Jews left either. They were all driven out or exterminated. But anti-Semitism was key to the reactionary Polish nationalists of *Solidarność* who stood at the head of the working class.

SPARTACIST 4!

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For New October Revolutions!

Third International Conference of the ICL

SEE PAGE 2

Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program

International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)

SEE PAGE 9

On the Origins and Development of Leninist Organizational Practices

SEE PAGE 24

Organizational Rules and Guidelines

International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)

SEE PAGE 31

Women and Permanent Revolution in South Africa

SEE PAGE 48

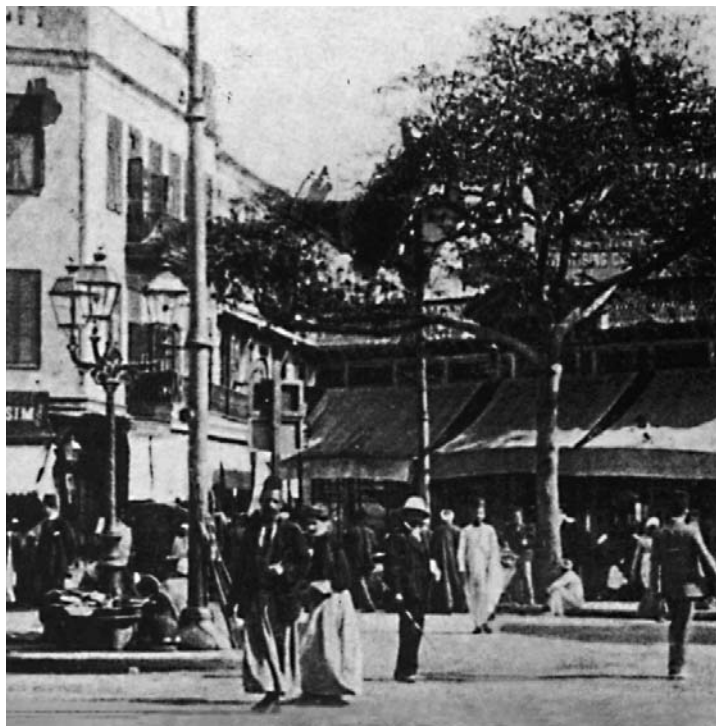
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For a Socialist Federation of the Near East!

Isaac Deutscher, the historian and biographer of Trotsky, wrote: "Most western observers on the spot agreed that Kassem [the nationalist in power who had the support of the Stalinist Communist Party] could hardly hold his ground against an all-out communist offensive." But the Moscow Stalinists sold out the revolution in the interests of maintaining "peaceful coexistence" with the U.S. And the Iraqi CP, being a Stalinist party, went along, putting the brakes on the movement. This was the fruit of the Stalinist program of "two-stage revolution." While riding the crest of the revolutionary wave, the Iraqi CP continued to subordinate itself to the left-nationalist officer Kassem, in a supposedly "anti-imperialist" revolution. Of course the promised second stage of socialist revolution never came. Instead Kassem turned on the Iraqi CP. In 1963, the reactionary, nationalist Ba'ath party, which included Saddam Hussein (who was not yet a national leader), came to power and carried out a bloodbath of thousands of leftist workers using lists supplied by the CIA.



University of California Press

14 MARCH 2003

WORKERS VANGUARD

March 15 Protests:

Join the Revolutionary Internationalist Contingents!

The following call was issued on March 7.

The U.S. imperialist rulers are about to unleash mass murder and destruction on Iraq followed by a direct colonial occupation of that country. The U.S. government aims to add tens of thousands of Iraqi

Young Spartacus

corpses to the more than a million already produced by the last Gulf War and the deadly UN sanctions. This is intended as a bloody warning to the whole world, and particularly to Wall Street's most powerful economic and political rivals in Berlin and Tokyo: stand in the way of the U.S. capitalists and you will be crushed! This war is predatory and imperialist on the part of the U.S. but just and defensive on the part of Iraq. Working people and opponents of U.S. imperialism must take a side in defense of Iraq, without giving any political support to the bloody Saddam Hussein regime —*Defend Iraq!*

The Spartacist League, Spartacus Youth Clubs and Labor Black Leagues call on those who oppose U.S. imperialism to join our revolutionary internationalist contingents in Washington, D.C., Los Angeles and San Francisco on March 15, based on the demands: *All U.S. troops out of the Near East now! Down with U.S. imperialism! Defend Iraq! For class struggle against U.S. capitalist rulers!* March with the proletarian internationalist revolutionists who tell the truth to the masses: that only socialist revolution can end imperialist war!

Any blow against the U.S. imperialist military is a blow against the common enemy of the world's working class and oppressed. Especially given the overwhelming military superiority of U.S. forces, the chief means of defending Iraq is *working-class struggle against the U.S. capitalists at home.*

Imperialist war demands class peace. Workers, blacks and immigrants face an all-sided attack under the "war on terror," which is backed by the Republicans and Democrats alike. The fight against imperialist war abroad is part and parcel of the fight against the war on working people at home. It is necessary to struggle against the capitalist system of production for profit which is the root cause of war, exploitation and oppression. But the organizers of the mass antiwar protests are proceeding in *the exact opposite direction*—turning these protests into platforms to garner votes and political support for a wing of the capitalist Democratic Party.



San Francisco, February 16: Spartacist/SYC-organized contingent at 200,000-strong antiwar rally stood out sharply from pro-Democratic Party politics of protest organizers.

We are marching in counterposition to this program of "unity" with the upholders of the capitalist system, who oppose the war for now because they don't think it best serves the interests of rapacious U.S. imperialism. Such Democrats, along with the capitalist Green Party, posture as friends of the oppressed in order to better channel the discontent with this racist capitalist system back into dead-end electoral politics. We say: Break with the Democratic Party of racism and war! For a workers party that fights for socialist revolution!

The organizers of the demonstrations, such as the Workers World Party's ANSWER, the Revolutionary Communist Party's Not In Our Name (NION) and the United for Peace and Justice coalitions raise such calls as "No war on Iraq" and refuse to take a side in defense of Iraq. To do so would mean siding with the "enemy," a position that would preclude the participation of any purportedly antiwar wing of the bourgeoisie.

Leon Trotsky, co-leader with V.I. Lenin of the 1917 Russian Revolution, argued against this class-collaborationist orientation in his "Declaration to the Antiwar Congress at Amsterdam" (July 1932):

"To condemn war is easy; to overcome it is difficult. The struggle against war is a struggle against the classes which rule society and which hold in their hands both its productive forces and its destructive weapons. It is not possible to prevent war by moral indignation, by meetings, by resolutions, by newspaper articles, and by congresses. As long as

the bourgeoisie has at its command the banks, the factories, the land, the press, and the state apparatus, it will always be able to drive the people to war when its interests demand it."

"Antiwar" bourgeois politicians push UN weapons inspections, and even the murderous UN sanctions which are themselves acts of war, as a supposed "alternative" to war. The UN is nothing other than a fig leaf for imperialist slaughter, from the 1950-53 Korean War which killed over three million people to the first Gulf War. Even with UN backing, this would be a predatory war by U.S. imperialism.

As a result of the destruction of the Soviet Union by capitalist counterrevolution in 1991-92, the U.S. imperialists now feel free to run roughshod over the planet. The Soviet Union was a degenerated workers state which, despite the rule of a nationalist bureaucracy, embodied enormous gains for the working people, women and national minorities as a result of the planned, collectivized economy. The USSR was the military and industrial powerhouse for every state that had overthrown capitalism, from Vietnam to Cuba. We fought for the unconditional military defense of the Soviet Union against imperialist attack and capitalist counterrevolution, and for a workers political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy. Today we wage the same fight in defense of the remaining deformed workers states: *Defend North Korea's right to nuclear weapons! Defend China, Cuba and Vietnam!*

Most of today's pseudo-socialists *cheered* the destruction of the Soviet Union, after having supported just about every counterrevolutionary movement in the Soviet Bloc, from Polish Solidarność to Boris Yeltsin. The International Socialist Organization (ISO), Progressive Labor (PL), Revolutionary Communist Party and Socialist Action, who today refuse to take on their "own" bourgeoisie in defense of Iraq, sided with U.S. imperialism in its drive to destroy the homeland of the Bolshevik Revolution.

Just as the capitalists are driven to maximize profit by squeezing more from the workers for less, the most industrially advanced nations are driven to compete with each other over markets, raw materials and spheres of investment. This struggle leads to economic wars, which ultimately lead to shooting wars. And the destruction of the USSR has brought on increased interimperialist rivalries.

The *only* way that a future inter-imperialist war—like World War I and World War II—can be prevented is through *socialist revolutions* that seize control of society's productive resources from the capitalists and

reorganize society based on economic planning for social need rather than profit. Only the working class, whose collective labor produces all profit, has both the power and the objective interests to accomplish this task. The important actions already carried out by Scottish and Italian rail workers, blocking munitions shipments destined for U.S. and allied forces in the Near East, point the way forward for U.S. workers, who must take up the struggle here in the belly of the imperialist beast.

But it is impossible to mobilize such a struggle if opposition to the war is subordinated to a wing of the capitalist class. In the 1930s, then-Trotskyist James Burnham (John West) pointed out in *War and the Workers*:

"To suppose...that revolutionists can work out a common 'program against war' with non-revolutionists is a fatal illusion. Any organization based upon such a program is not merely powerless to prevent war; in practice it acts to promote war, both because it serves in its own way to uphold the system that breeds war, and because it diverts the attention of its members from the real fight against war."

We say: for class struggle against the U.S. capitalist rulers! In contrast, the ISO publication *Socialist Worker Online* (22 November 2002) declares that "antiwar groups have to be open to anyone who opposes the Bush war drive," including people who might agree with "UN weapons inspections or even the U.S. war on

continued on page 6