

From Northern Ireland to Iraq — Labour government, imperialist butchers

All US/British troops out of Iraq now!



British imperialist troops terrorise Iraqis in Basra (left), enforce oppression of Catholics in Northern Ireland (right). Stop the War Coalition bleats against occupation of Iraq as a violation of “our democracy”, is silent on occupation of Northern Ireland.

Addressing US Congress in July, Tony Blair, solemnly intoned “history will forgive” US imperialism and its Labour toadies at 10 Downing Street for their war against Iraq, even should weapons of mass destruction never be found. “If we are wrong, we will have destroyed a threat that, at its least, is responsible for inhuman carnage and suffering”, the good “Christian socialist” Labour prime minister pontificated to the rapturous applause of Bush’s Republican Party and the Democratic Party “opposition” alike.

Blair is only the second British prime minister to be accorded the “honour” of addressing Congress. The first was Winston Churchill, who played his own role in the mass killing and brutalisation of the myriad peoples of what is now Iraq, ordering massive air bombardment and poison gas attacks in 1919-20 to put down revolts by Kurds and Arabs against the then-British colonial overlords. But Blair’s triumph was cut short a couple of days later when the dead body of Dr David Kelly was found in the woods near Oxford. A British expert on chemical and biological weapons who had previously served on UN inspection teams in Iraq, Kelly had come under fire as the source of a BBC story that the claim that Iraq could launch strategic weapons in 45 minutes was a fantasy. His alleged suicide came immediately after a Star Chamber-style grilling at the hands of a select committee dominated by New

Break with Labour — New and Old! Forge a revolutionary workers party!

Labour politicians.

With a Commission of Inquiry convened — headed by Lord Hutton, a former prosecutor and judge in Northern Ireland enforcing the British occupation there — the media is awash with stories of the fabrications of the Blair government and its spin doctors to try to rally the population behind the war. The incredulous cries now coming from the likes of Clare Short and other Labour MPs that they were duped into supporting the war are breathtaking in their hypocrisy. Bringing up their rear is the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) with headlines calling for Blair to be put on trial for lying. (By this logic what if he were telling the truth?)

Of course no weapons of mass destruction will ever be found for the simple reason that none were there. Once that was ascertained by the UN weapons inspectors, who served as nothing other than the advance guard for the one-sided slaughter of Iraq, the US and British imperialists felt free to launch their war against a weak and essentially defenceless country. The alleged Al Qaeda link, the Niger uranium scam and everything else were all transparent lies and you didn’t need to have insider information to know it. We

communists knew it and we exposed it from the get-go in our press, both here and in *Workers Vanguard*, the fortnightly newspaper of the Spartacist League/US. While the organisers of the Stop the War Coalition (StWC) bleated that Blair was violating “our democracy” in the war against Iraq, the Spartacist League/Britain and the Spartacus Youth Group intervened into the mass anti-war demonstrations with revolutionary internationalist contingents behind the banner: “Defend Iraq against US/British attack! Labour government means racism, union-bashing and war! For a multiethnic revolutionary workers party!”

Our interventions also highlighted the defence of the Palestinians against the Zionist rulers who took full advantage of the war and the massive US military presence to intensify their murderous war of annihilation. Such defence is ever more urgently posed today as the Israeli government openly calls for the assassination of Arafat. Yet as we noted in the last issue of *Workers Hammer* (“Down with the colonial occupation of Iraq!” no 184, Spring 2003) during the anti-war demonstrations the StWC dropped the call for freedom for the Palestinians “for fear of offending the

sensibilities of bourgeois pacifists who abhor all ‘violence’ particularly that which may be used by the oppressed against their oppressors”. Now with protests against the occupation of Iraq being called internationally for 27 September, to coincide with the anniversary of the beginning of the second *intifada*, the demand “freedom for Palestine” has been resurrected. We demand: *All US/British troops out of Iraq, now! Down with the United Nations, den of imperialist thieves and their victims! Israel out of the Occupied Territories! Defend the Palestinians! For the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland! For class struggle at home against the capitalist class enemy!*

Big liars and revolting “little Englanders”

Feeling the heat, Blair has flipped the spin dial to the “human rights and democracy” channel with his sanctimonious pronouncements that the war was meant to eradicate “inhuman carnage and suffering”. In fact the latter is a benign description of what things look like in “liberated” Iraq today. In an article titled “Secret slaughter by night, lies and blind eyes by day” (*Independent*, 14 September) Robert Fisk provides the following vivid picture: “In Baghdad, up to 70 corpses — of Iraqis killed by gunfire — are brought to the mortuaries each day. In Najaf, for example, the cemetery authorities record the arrival of

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the bodies of up to 20 victims of violence a day. Some of the dead were killed in family feuds, in looting, or revenge killings. Others have been gunned down by US troops at checkpoints or in the increasingly vicious 'raids' carried out by American forces in the suburbs of Baghdad and the Sunni cities to the north....

"But if you count the Najaf dead as typical of just two or three other major cities and if you add on the daily Baghdad death toll and multiply by seven, almost 1,000 Iraqi civilians are being killed every week—and that may well be a conservative figure...."

"What is becoming apparent is that we don't really care about the Iraqis. We may think we want to bring them democracy but, on an individual level, we don't care very much about them or their lives. We liberated them. They should be grateful to us. If they die now, well, no one said democracy was easy."

Indeed the number of Iraqis killed is not something the colonial occupation forces even bother to record. "We don't do body counts", declared US General Tommy Franks in a bald statement of the sheer racist arrogance of the US/British occupation. The widespread looting on the streets of Baghdad and cities throughout Iraq is nothing compared to the organised looting by the US imperialists as Bush administration cronies like Halliburton and Bechtel are

handed out contracts to "rebuild" Iraq and take over the oil riches of the country. Here is the real face of the entire ignoble purpose of the war and subsequent occupation—to plant the American flag in the oil-rich Near East as an assertion of US dominance over all semi-colonial countries and imperialist rivals. And that is provoking a howl of wounded national pride against Blair for going along with the war and occupation to little evident benefit for Britain.

A column in the *Guardian* (17 July) headlined "We are now a client state", bemoaned that Blair has ceded "British sovereignty" to the US. This is echoed by Tony Benn, the elder statesman of the Labour Party "left", who makes the grotesque, not to mention deranged, claim that "Britain, like Iraq, is now a US colony" (*RMT News*, June 2003). But the only part of these isles that is occupied by rampaging imperialist troops is Northern Ireland. And those troops are British not American, dispatched to suppress the oppressed Catholic minority by the Labour Party government of Harold Wilson of which Benn was a prominent cabinet minister. Notably today, opposition to this occupation doesn't feature among the demands of Benn's "left" camp-followers in the Stop the War Coalition. Instead all of their fire is directed against "Bush's war" and denouncing Blair as "Bush's poodle".

It is hardly news for British imperial-

ism to be playing a junior-partner role to its former American colony, now the unchallenged imperialist military power on the face of the planet. That Blair threw his lot in with the Bush administration is simply a continuation of the "special rela-



Stop the War Coalition is latest ploy by SWP to corral anger at Labour into parliamentary reformism.

tionship" between British and US imperialism that has existed for decades. Britain did once hold the world in its grip with plundered gold and gunboats. But as the "sun" of the British Empire began to sink, going completely beneath the waves following World War II, Britain was no longer able to police the colonies and handed over the "white man's burden" to its American cousins. Britain and the US had particular ties financially in the Near East, quintessentially embodied in the Seven Sisters Oil Cartel launched by British Petroleum and the five largest American oil companies as well as Royal Dutch/Shell in the late 1920s.

Of course that is not to say that there haven't been bumps, to put it mildly, along the road. When the British, together with France and Israel, went to war against Nasser's Egypt following his nationalisation of the Suez Canal in 1956 the Americans slapped them down (demanding that Britain abide by the rulings of none other than the...United Nations). A humiliated Britain immediately pulled out. Now in an article titled "War and Resistance: Within Political Inches" (*Socialist Review*, September 2003) the two top leaders of the StWC, Andrew Murray and Lindsey German, boast that the anti-war movement "marshalled organised labour against a war involving British participation for the first time since Suez". This was echoed as well by maverick Labour MP George Galloway, who is being viciously witch-

hunted out of the Labour Party by the Blair leadership. Yet Labour's opposition to the Suez War was headed by the Gaitskell wing of the Labour Party who, like Blair today, had thrown their lot in with US imperialism. At that time, the alliance of Labour leaders with the US was rooted in Cold War anti-Sovietism.

The Labour Party was stamped into shape in the fight against "godless Communism". Leaders like Henderson and MacDonald supported British imperialism's military intervention to crush the fledgling Soviet workers state in the Civil War of 1918-21. For their part the Labour "lefts" like the Fabians concocted Clause IV to fool workers into believing they could achieve "common ownership" of the means of production through parliament. By the late 1940s, the British Labour Party was established as the bulwark of anti-Soviet Cold War "socialism" in the Western European labour movement. In the early 1980s, Tony Benn and others who came to populate the Labour Party "left" placed themselves at the head of a mass popular campaign for unilateral nuclear disarmament in opposition to NATO, bringing the Labour Party to the verge of the biggest split it had faced in 50 years. But the Bennites never split with the pro-CIA/NATO wing of the party, and never intended to.

The founders of today's SWP richly imbibed from the well of Labourite anti-Communism and were expelled from the Trotskyist movement for refusing to defend the Chinese and North Korean workers states against US and British imperialism in the Korean War. In the 1980s when the winds of anti-Soviet Cold War blew hot again, other putative Trotskyist organisations in Britain would similarly renege on the Trotskyist position of unconditional military defence of the Soviet Union which, despite its Stalinist degeneration, continued to embody the central gains won as a result of the 1917 Revolution. This accommodation to the bourgeois order by fake Trotskyists was mediated through "little England" social democracy.

In contrast, we fought to the end in defence of the Soviet Union and the deformed workers states of Eastern Europe against imperialist attack and the forces of capitalist counterrevolution. Today US imperialism is gunning for the North Korean deformed workers state, threatening a full-scale naval blockade, again in the name of eliminating "weapons of mass destruction". We stand for the unconditional military defence of North Korea against imperialism, including its urgent right to develop and possess nuclear weapons! The Korean peninsula has always been seen by the imperialists

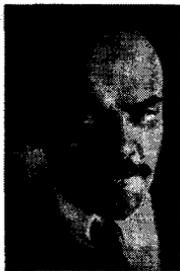
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Labour and British imperialism

In 1922 Trotsky scathingly polemicised against Labour leader Arthur Henderson who led an international hue and cry against the Soviet workers state for introducing Soviet power to Georgia. Labour refused to fight for British imperialism to get out of India or Egypt, and Henderson's concern for "democracy" in Georgia in the midst of the civil war stemmed from the fact it was a military base for British troops and counterrevolutionary White



TROTSKY



LENIN

guards fighting to overthrow the Soviet workers state. Today the "feeble socialism" of Henderson et al that Trotsky indicted so sharply is carried forward by the likes of the Stop the War Coalition and Socialist Alliance. While calling for an end to the US/British occupation of Iraq, these Labourite reformists pointedly refuse to oppose British troops in Northern Ireland.

Not so long ago, Henderson was a Minister in one of the democracies, viz., of his own—the British democracy.... Why has he not demanded the evacuation of India and Egypt? Why did he not, at the right time, support the demands of the Irish for their complete liberation from the yoke of Britain?

We are aware that Henderson, as well as MacDonald, does protest, on certain appointed days, by means of mournful resolutions against the excesses of British imperialism. But these feeble and irresolute protests have never imperilled, and do not now imperil, the interests of British capitalism, and have never led, nor are they leading, to courageous and decisive action. They are only intended to salve the conscience of the 'socialist' citizens of the ruling nation, and to serve as an outlet for the dissatisfaction of the British workers. They will not help to break the chains of the colonial slaves. The Hendersons regard British domination over the colonies not as political questions, but as a fact in natural history.

—*Social Democracy and the Wars of Intervention, Russia 1918-1921* (1975)

WORKERS HAMMER

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For a federation of workers republics in the British Isles!
For a Socialist United States of Europe!

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Con artists get conned

Chickens come home to roost in Kiev

A couple of years ago, a plethora of opportunist “internationals” proclaimed their new Ukrainian sections on the Internet. We smelled a rat. Now, a new round of announcements has appeared on the Internet by many of these groups complaining they’d been hoodwinked. Typical was the following admission by the Bolshevik Tendency (BT) in a 21 August statement titled “IBT Conned in Kiev”:

“The International Bolshevik Tendency (IBT) is one of a number of left-wing organizations fooled by a gang of con artists in Kiev, who fraudulently posed as supporters of different international political tendencies....

“We have established, beyond any doubt, that the same collection of people presented themselves as multiple groups, each with an international affiliation.”

On the same day, the League for the Revolutionary Party (LRP) website confessed that they also had been conned, writing that “a group of purported ‘revolutionaries’ in Ukraine has perpetrated a fraud upon at least ten far left organizations internationally, and probably far more”. An earlier admission was posted by the Socialist Party of Great Britain.

A “Cast List” on the BT’s website names five of their Ukrainian “comrades” as simultaneously belonging to the putative Ukrainian section of Jan Norden’s Internationalist Group/League for the Fourth International. By various accounts, other international patrons of the Ukrainian Potemkin village included the British Workers Power and Alliance for Workers’ Liberty groups and the News & Letters group and DeLeonist Socialist Labor Party in the US. One thing that all accounts seem to agree on is that Oleg Vernik, long the leader of the Taaffeite Committee for a Workers’ International (CWI) group in Ukraine, is a central figure in the scandal. Since early August, a statement has been circulating on various Internet sites, purportedly in the name of the Committee for a Workers’ International, claiming that their Ukrainian section has been suspended, pending an investigation.

We are not privy to the sleazy details, and we have no confidence in anybody’s account of what happened. But by their own words these so-called “victims” stand condemned as utter frauds and co-conspirators with their Kiev con men! Now they scream, “We wuz robbed!” But they were more than happy to perpetrate their con on the left public by trumpeting their fraudulent Ukrainian sections. Proclaiming the Ukrainian “fusion” as the centrepiece of its “Third International Conference” two years ago, the BT sang the praises of its supposed comrades for their “grasp of the complexities of the national question” and for “seriously studying the issues confronted by revolutionaries during the past six decades”.

For its part, the LRP loudly crowed

that “joining forces with a large group of young revolutionary workers from the former Soviet Union, the land of the Russian Revolution, is an inspiring step. It confirms our confidence in the correctness of our struggle” (“RWO-Ukraine Joins COFI,” *Proletarian Revolution* no 67, Spring 2003). The LRP boasted:

“The RWO is now, after the CWI and LRCI [Workers Power’s international], the third-largest left group in Ukraine (outside of the open Stalinists). The RWO consists of several dozen workers not only in the center in Kiev, but also with groups of several workers each in no less than half-a-dozen other key cities.”

It all brings to mind the movie *Billion Dollar Brain*, where a group of Baltic hustlers sucker a Texas billionaire into a plot to invade the Soviet Union. These cyberspace internationals who conduct fusions in virtual reality didn’t care what their “sections” were actually doing in Ukraine—what they wanted was a new Internet address to impress unwary people far away from the scene of the crime. The BT still hasn’t even bothered to remove documents from their Ukrainian and Russian web pages that they now denounce as fraudulent!

W.C. Fields once observed that “You can’t cheat an honest man.” Con men prey on desperate people and those who want something for nothing. These phoney “internationals” obviously never so much as bothered to ask if any-

able”. The LRP lamely adds, “Its ‘members’ and ‘leaders’, some of whom we had met more than once [!], were part of the overall scam.”

Perhaps we should congratulate the Ukrainian con artists for having the perspicacity to see that these disparate groups belong together. All these renegades unite around the rejection of Trotskyism on the Russian question and they unite in slanders and hatred for the Spartacists. We follow James P Cannon’s injunction in his 1939 “Speech on the Russian Question” (*The Struggle for a Proletarian Party*): “‘Who touches the Russian question, touches a revolution.’ Therefore, be serious about it. Don’t play with it.”

In contrast to the Potemkin village bargain hunters, we fought to the last barricades against Yeltsin-Bush capitalist counterrevolution and fought to build a real organisation in the USSR. And we paid the price. The Kremlin bureaucracy and then the capitalist regimes that replaced it knew the ICL was for real and witch-hunted us with a vengeance. Our comrades were arrested, terrorised, attacked and hounded by the fascists and Stalinists alike. In 1992 the senior leader of the ICL’s Moscow Station, Martha Phillips, was murdered at her post; the authorities stonewalled while we tried in vain to find out who killed her. In 1995, we were repressed and officially banned from Ukraine.

Ukraine for sale. Make your financial offers to the following email address. P. certainly was keen on getting money and I wonder whether he’s the Ukrainian section of WP, ITO [International Trotskyist Organization], IG and BT at once.”

The ICL sent an e-mail dated 31 August 2001 to Oleg Vernik in Kiev to see if he could provide any information on the sudden emergence of numerous new “Trotskyist” groups in Ukraine. Vernik apparently knew who were likely customers for what he was selling and who weren’t; he never replied to our letter.

For all their protestations of being “shocked, shocked”, this is hardly the first time the anti-Spartacist opportunists have knowingly bought tainted goods. In March 1990, the German section of the ICL issued a public warning about a couple of ex-DDR hustlers who had left our organisation, taking with them various assets, including a car and money. The BT’s German allies, the GIVI, rushed to embrace these bandits, even issuing a joint May Day statement with them. A few weeks later, the GIVI announced a break in relations, complaining that “principles of the revolution were sold for a contemptible petty-bourgeois project” in which “a lot of party money is involved”. What made these hustlers irresistible to the BT in the first place was their shared anti-Spartacism. At the 1990 Lutte ouvrière Fête in Paris, the GIVI circulated a let-

Spartacists distribute communist literature to striking miners, Ukraine 1993. Unlike fake left, ICL fought to the last to forge Leninist-Trotskyist party to lead fight against Yeltsin-Bush counterrevolution.

Spartacist



body in Ukraine or Russia had ever heard or seen their Ukrainian “section”. The BT now says it noticed its Ukrainian group’s “failure to produce any substantial original propaganda, and the marked absence of internal political and perspectives documents”, moaning that “we certainly could have moved sooner to tighten up what appeared to be a largely dysfunctional organization”. And the LRP now meekly confesses that “reports and articles that we have published by or about the RWO of Ukraine, as well as its affiliate, the RWO of Russia, are at best unreli-

Precisely because we are serious about the question of revolution and forging a truly democratic-centralist International on a solid programmatic basis, we suspected something was up when this “Cambrian explosion” in Kiev first emerged two years ago. On 20 August 2001, an ICL comrade from the former East German (DDR) deformed workers state with extensive political experience in Ukraine noted in a letter:

“I wonder whether P. and his lieutenant got access to the internet and posted on EBay something like ‘Trotskyist group in

ter that makes clear what attracted them to these elements:

“The stand taken for workers democracy against the bureaucratic Robertson regime, your subsequent rightful actions against the ICL slanders—these were your only connection to Trotskyism.”

Today the BT complains that their Kiev partners in crime “are so thoroughly corrupted and cynical that they can only serve as an instrument for the enemies of the workers movement.” Well, they should know!

Adapted from *Workers Vanguard* no 808, 29 August 2003.

Iraq...

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as a highway to launch a military attack to overthrow the gains of the 1949 Chinese Revolution. Reconquering China for capitalist exploitation is seen as the big prize for the imperialist rulers today.

Millions around the world burn with rage at the sight of Iraq reduced to rubble and humiliated by old-style colonial pillage at the hands of the "world's only superpower". This just outrage must be raised to a political understanding that the enslavement of Iraq is yet another price that the international working class and the oppressed peoples of the "Third World" are paying for the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92. Today's imperialist global rampage was impossible when the USSR still existed.

To abandon defence of the workers states is to abandon the historic purpose of proletarian revolution, ie socialism. The unconditional military defence of the remaining deformed workers states in China, Cuba, Vietnam and North Korea is a cornerstone of the programme of the International Communist League, as it must be for any who fight for world socialist revolution. Central to the defence of the gains won through the overturn and expropriation of capitalism is the fight for workers to seize political power from the anti-revolutionary Stalinist bureaucracies.

The fraud of parliamentary democracy

Today, the Bush administration has surely shown little gratitude for the role played by its British junior partners in Iraq, barely letting them get the tips of their snouts into the trough of the spoils of war and occupation. In the face of such insult, Galloway pronounces that the issue posed is "whether Britain is a European country or Airstrip One of the United States of America" (*Labour Left Briefing*, March 2003). It is something of a statement that "little Englanders" would even allow that Britain was part of Europe. What is reflected in Galloway's remarks are the sentiments of the leaders of the anti-war movement who, both here and throughout Europe, saluted the imperialist rulers of France, and secondarily Germany, as "peace-loving" opponents of American imperialism.

But the complaints of these governments, including Russia, were merely the squeals of the less powerful imperialist states who want to be treated with more respect by the nuclear cowboys in the White House and above all to get their own cut of the colonial booty. Now they see the opportunity to try to cash in. US imperialism's military forces are stretched to the wire in Iraq. More soldiers have been killed since the declared end of the war than during it and wives of soldiers drove an army colonel off the platform at Fort Stewart, Georgia, with their boos and curses. The costs of the occupation continue to mount (now projected to run to \$4 billion a month, over double the amount originally projected) amidst rising job losses and misery for the American working class and oppressed. With its fortunes fading in electoral polls, the rabidly "unilateralist" Bush administration has been driven to courting the despised UN and appealing to "old" Europe and other countries to solicit assistance. Much manoeuvring and horse-trading is going on in the back-rooms of the hallowed halls of the UN, as the French and German imperialists try to hold the Bush administration's

feet to the fire in order to get their own take in the rule and colonial exploitation of Iraq.

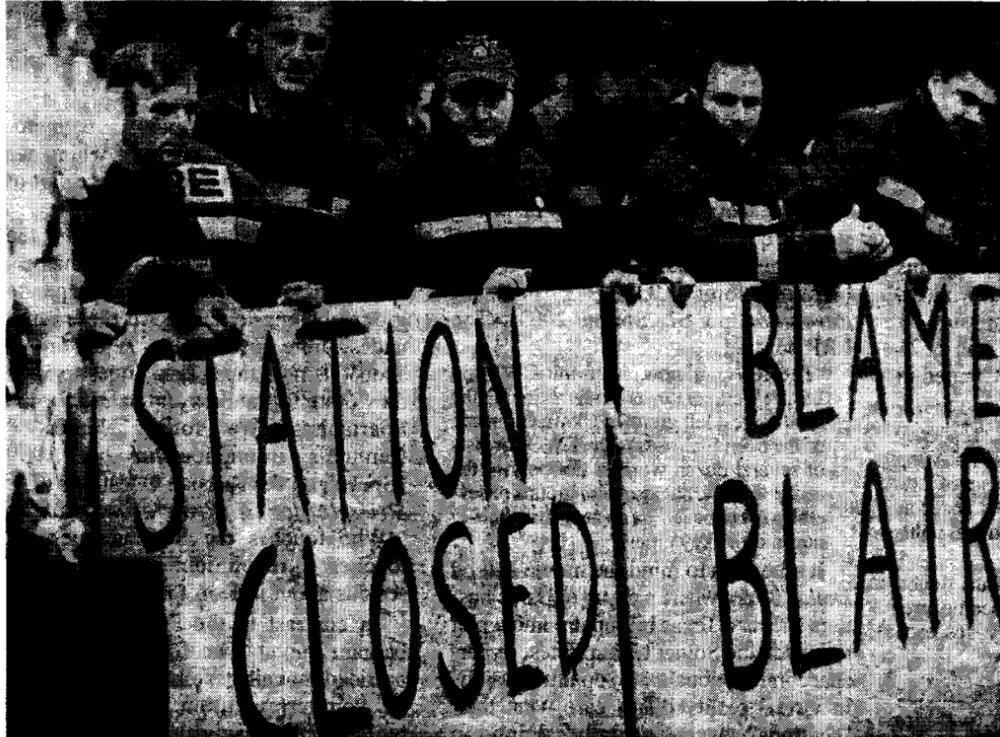
In the build-up to the war, sundry centrist and reformist organisations including Workers Power and the SWP signed a declaration calling "on all the European heads of state to publicly stand against this war". Now a motion from the 30 August People's Assembly calls on "the states of the UN to honour their pledge made in Article 26 of the UN Charter 'to promote the establish-

ists unleashed *their* weapons of mass destruction against the overwhelmingly defenceless Iraqi people, we issued a statement "Defend Iraq! All US/British troops out of the Near East now!" Here we wrote:

"Every setback for these imperialist forces abroad is a blow in defence of the interests of the working class and oppressed masses around the world. It is the job of the working people of Iraq, and throughout the Near East, to get rid of the bloody regime of Saddam Hussein and all the colonels, sheiks and dictators, including the Zionist

jobs continues at a staggering rate of 10,000 a month; and augmented state repression in the name of the racist "war on terror".

Tens of thousands of workers have left the Labour Party over the past few years. Muslim communities, which historically voted Labour, are organising "vote out Labour" campaigns as in last May's Scottish parliament elections. Disaffected youth no longer buy the notion that you need to vote Labour to "keep out the Tories". These massive discontents pro-



Last autumn's FBU strike posed potential for challenge to Labour government on eve of war. FBU leader Andy Gilchrist (top) and the RMT's Bob Crow (bottom) squelched such class-struggle opposition.

ment and maintenance of international peace and security". And there in sum is the pusillanimous opposition to war of the StWC — embracing the "decent" imperialists who for their own interests were opposed to *this* war, the "good offices" of the United Nations whose starvation sanctions killed more than a million Iraqis and above all the "democratic traditions" of British parliament in whose name some of the most brutal colonial slaughters have been prosecuted.

The lie that war can be stopped by appealing to the agencies and institutions of the very system of capitalist imperialism, whose drive for profit through conquering new markets and spheres of influence breeds war, was sold in the name of building the broadest possible "unity" against the war. In contrast, the Spartacist League/Britain and Spartacus Youth Group fought for a different kind of unity — *the unity of the proletariat in struggle against the capitalist class enemy at home!* On 21 March, as the US and British imperial-

butchers who are using the cover of this war to ratchet up their daily killing of Palestinians with the aim of forcible expulsion. It is our job here to build the revolutionary leadership that can mobilise the only force with the social power and class interest to challenge the rule of capitalist imperialism: the multiethnic working class."

There is much potential social dynamite building at the bottom of this society. The massive outpouring against the war reflected the increasing hatred among the working class, youth and minorities for the Blair Labour government. Such anger has only increased amidst the exposures of the government's lies and its arrogant declarations that it will not be swayed by any opinion polls from pursuing its agenda on the home front. This includes: £3000 top-up fees for youth wanting to go to university; the gutting of the increasingly miserable national health care system through "foundation hospitals"; continuing to build a "flexible labour market" based on union-busting privatisation schemes as the loss of manufacturing

vide an important lever for breaking the proletariat and oppressed from Labourite parliamentary reformism, which is critical to building a party that genuinely represents the interests of the working class and fights as a "tribune of the people" against every manifestation of capitalist oppression and tyranny. The best example of such a workers party is the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky that led the great October Revolution of 1917.

The left in this country on occasion makes ritual genuflections to the Russian Revolution. But the real altar they worship at is that of bourgeois "democracy". In fact and in practice they have repeatedly demonstrated their hostility to the dictatorship of the proletariat. It was this that underlay their unmitigated hostility to the Soviet Union, which was an expression of proletarian class rule, albeit deformed by the bureaucratic rule of the Kremlin Stalinists. Following in the footsteps of Labour "lefts" like Galloway and Benn, their "socialist" hangers-on regard the existence of a mass parliamentary

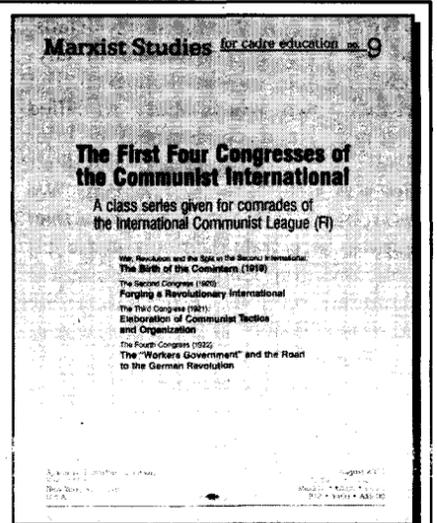
Just out! Marxist Studies no 9

This volume of Marxist Studies, a series of bulletins for the education of Marxist cadres, contains the transcripts of four classes given in 1998-99 throughout the International Communist League dealing with the first four (1919-1922) Congresses of the Communist International. Also included are the list of related readings and a general chronology (1912-1924) of relevant events.

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reformist party as some kind of historic birthright, something that must ever exist. Their opposition to the Blair government is premised simply on trying to invent some new version of Old Labour. The idea of a disciplined vanguard party of the proletariat dedicated to the conquest of state power is viewed as alien to the “democratic traditions” of Britain.

In an article titled “The Stop the War Coalition is now entering a new phase of its evolution” (*Socialist Review*, May 2003), SWP leader John Rees opines

that Islamic fundamentalism is the enemy of “Western civilisation”, their real concern was that an alliance with the mosques would get in the way of building a “new” workers party based on “left” Labour MPs and trade union bureaucrats.

A *Workers Power* (September 2003) editorial statement, “In Britain as in Iraq: imperialists detest democracy” tries to cloak their perspective of reviving Old Labour in the language of Marxism. They argue: “We need a party of our own, an alternative to New

While much is made about the Blair government’s lies, the biggest lie of all is that “the people” have any control over this society. Over 80 years ago, Lenin neatly skewered the fraud of bourgeois democracy in his book *State and Revolution*: “To decide once every few years which member of the ruling class is to repress and crush the people through parliament—this is the real essence of bourgeois parliamentarism, not only in parliamentary-constitutional monarchies, but also in the most democratic republics.” The fraud of parliamentary democracy is simply designed to obscure the fact that the capitalist state is an instrument of organised force and violence—consisting at its core of the police, army, courts and prisons—for maintaining capitalist property and profits through the suppression of the working class and the oppressed and fending off foreign challengers.

For class struggle at home against the capitalist class!

In the early twentieth century, the social chauvinists of the Second International argued that democracy would come to the colonial masses through the intervention of the “civilised” West. Today, *Workers Power* opines that the “reconstruction of Iraq” under the puppet government of the imperialist occupiers “is also the reconstruction of the Iraqi working class” (*Workers Power*, July/August 2003). They argue that “to rebuild its independent work place organisations”, the Iraqi working class will need “the help of the trade unions of Europe especially”, stating that:

“Along with Burger King and McDonalds the US will want to export ready-made US loyal bureaucratic prison-houses courtesy of the AFL-CIO, primed with state department money and headed up by corrupt pro-IMF officials.

“This is why it is so important that the Stop the War Coalition is campaigning for unions to send delegations and offer money to help build class struggle trade unions committed to fighting privatisation, corporate globalisation and of course, the military occupation.”

But the unions in the US are no less workers defence organisations than in Britain, and neither are the trade union bureaucrats here any less the labour lieutenants of capital than in the US. That the role of the labour bureaucracy is more overt in America is due to the absence of

any mass reformist party to dupe the proletariat that its interests are represented in parliament. The fact that the AFL-CIO is commonly referred to, and not for no reason, as the “AFL-CIA”, is due to the fact that the imperialist power these bureaucrats serve has dominated the world since the end of World War II. But that does not diminish the service provided by the British labour leaders to their “own” imperialist rulers.

The Iraqi working class is hardly going to be assisted in building “class struggle trade unions” by these trade union bureaucrats who have done nothing to fight privatisation here much less to mobilise against the war or the occupation of Iraq except to blow a lot of hot air. At this September’s TUC conference, Tony Woodley, the incoming general secretary of the TGWU, called for Blair’s resignation over the war in Iraq. Woodley also called for import tariffs on goods manufactured by British firms such as Dyson who have moved their operations abroad. This protectionism, based on the idea of supporting British industry against competition by foreign companies, is poison to the working class. But it is second nature to Tony Woodley and integral to Labourite reformism. In April 2000 Woodley was instrumental in organising a massive demonstration in Birmingham to “save” jobs in Rover when the German owners BMW pulled out. Workers anger was channelled into an outpouring of obscene jingoism and anti-German chauvinism that served as a cover for the bureaucracy’s refusal to organise class struggle in defence of jobs. This would have meant a class confrontation against the Labour government, which is the last thing these union bureaucrats want.

At the TUC conference, speaker after speaker condemned foundation hospitals, top-up fees, attacks on pensions and the devastation of manufacturing jobs. But for all the rhetoric against the Blair government coming from the trade union tops their real complaint is that New Labour has cut them out from having a seat at the table, collaborating in the decisions of what the workers need to “sacrifice” for the good of maintaining “the party” in power.

This was aptly captured in a *BBC News Online* (11 September) report which

continued on page 11



18 April demonstration in Iraq against imperialist occupation.

that “another issue that needs to be addressed if the ‘social democratic deficit’ is to be overcome... is the issue of the Labour Party and its monopoly on the political representation of the working class”. But the SWP’s purpose is not to politically break the grip of Labourism. Rather they aim to channel hatred for the Blair government into reintegrating workers, youth and minorities into a new version of Old Labour. This summer, the SWP floated the idea of building a “peace and justice” alliance with the mosques to run in the 2004 European elections. Although this now appears to be a still-born initiative, the SWP obviously sees an opportunity to translate the seething hatred for the racist Blair government among British Asians into a bargaining chip in the shell game of parliamentary reformism.

The SWP’s proposed alliance with local imams got the centrist *Workers Power* so incensed that it actually quit Socialist Alliance in which it has been deeply ensconced as the loyal opposition. In its resignation statement *Workers Power* declared that it would not tolerate such class-collaborationism and demanded that its members not “waste another minute on sterile manoeuvres and opportunist blocs”. The latter statement gives a measure of the “principles” of this outfit. In the context of the imperialist hue and cry

Labour that can really fight for the interests of working people: the defeat of the occupation, the downfall of Blair, the dismantling of the dictatorship of capital and a socialist society free from the bloody priorities of profit.” But in the words of Lenin’s savage 1918 polemic *Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, for *Workers Power*, “Marxism is stripped of its revolutionary living spirits; everything is recognized in Marxism except the revolutionary methods of struggle, the propaganda and preparation of those methods, and the education of the masses in this direction.”

Indeed *Workers Power*’s call for “dismantling the dictatorship of capital” comes at the tail-end of an article that is nothing other than a paean to that dictatorship in the form of “bourgeois democracy”. The killing of some 1000 people a week in occupied Iraq—where there is no clean water, no electricity, few hospitals and little food—is described by *Workers Power* as “curtailing democratic rights”! They go on to describe the “war at home” in Britain—where the working class is being reduced to increased misery and desperate minorities are hounded under the racist “war on terror”—as “a war against the truth, and a war against the right of the working class majority to exert its will over the course our society will take”.

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Bill Logan: sick and twisted

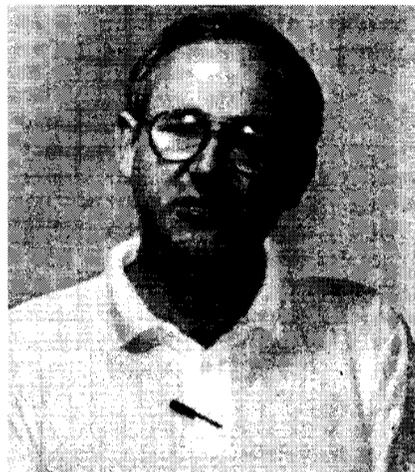
BT: a walking provocation

We reprint below an article from *Workers Vanguard* (no 808, 29 August) responding to the most recent slanders and provocations against our organisation by the so-called International Bolshevik Tendency (BT). Founded by a handful of people who individually quit our international tendency with the onset of anti-Soviet Cold War II in the early 1980s, the BT has throughout its existence pursued an unnatural obsession with our organisation. This includes a rather consistent history of staging provocations against us just when other forces, ranging from the reformists straight up to the agencies of the bourgeois state, are gunning for us. The addition of Bill Logan—a twisted sociopath who was expelled from our organisation in 1979 by the unanimous vote of the delegates to our first international conference for crimes “against communist morality and its substrate elementary human decency”—added a whole new dimension to the BT’s obsession with getting us by any means necessary.

This year the BT offered its services to the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) at its “Marxism” conference in London, appearing with a leaflet smearing Jim Robertson, one of the founding leaders of our international tendency, with the charge of “vulgar chauvinism”. And no less than that, an American whose supposed “self-satisfied great-power chauvinism” is aimed at peoples from the Near East, specifically the Kurds. This was a real gift to goons and censors of the SWP which seeks to salvage the “good name” of British imperialism (and above all its “honourable” Labour Party representatives) by denouncing “Bush’s war” against Iraq.

Last February when two young women comrades of our organisation took to the floor at an anti-war teach-in in London to point out that opposition to the impending war on Iraq meant opposition to the very Labour government that was prosecuting it, Chris Bambery, a lead honcho of the SWP,

threatened that anyone who didn’t politically support the Stop the War Coalition “deserves a bullet in the head”. As we wrote in our statement of protest (see “SWP’s Chris Bambery: Join ‘Stop the War’ or we’ll shoot you!” *Workers Hammer* no 184, Spring 2003): “This is the real face of the SWP’s ‘give peace a chance’ coalition-building: you’ve got



Workers Vanguard

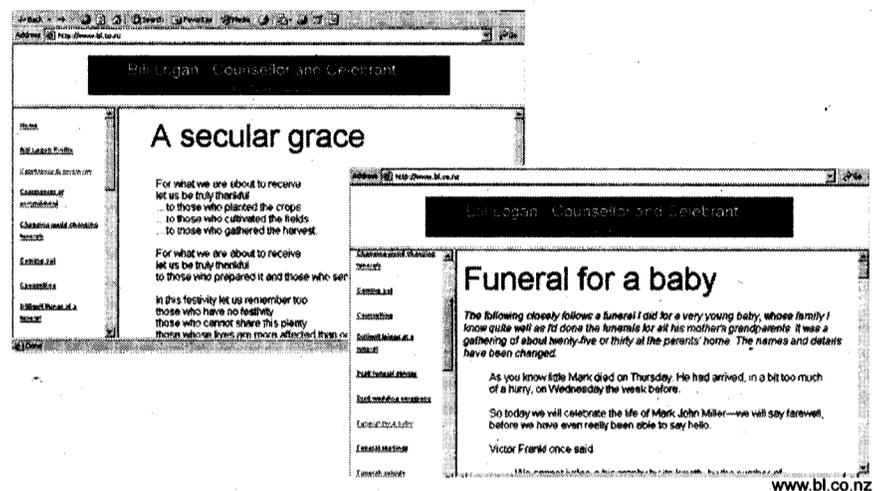
Sociopathic leader of anti-Spartacist BT, Bill Logan (left), advertises grotesque “services” on his private website (right).

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!” At Marxism, the BT leaflet was an incitement for the SWP’s goons who proceeded to surround our table, trying to block our salespeople and threatening that if any of our people got into one of their putatively public forums we would be “dealt with”. And they were as good as their word. Some of our comrades who were inadvertently called on to speak had their tickets ripped up and others were barred from getting in altogether.

This is hardly the first time the BT has provided such services. In January 1999, at a demonstration commemorating the 1972 Bloody Sunday massacre in Derry, an Irish woman comrade from the SL/B was punched in the face by

one Ian Donovan. A former member of the BT, Donovan was enraged when challenged to explain the support given to the Royal Ulster Constabulary by his then Socialist Alliance cohorts in the Socialist Party. This violent assault, which was witnessed by many, was widely condemned on the left. An exception was the Communist Party of

“Only in the minds of those genuinely inspired by chauvinism could ‘turds’ be seen as referring to Kurds! And that is the BT. Insofar as this organization has taken any note of the national oppression of myriad peoples around the globe, and that isn’t much, the BT has been strident in declaring its opposition to the exercise of their right to self-determination—with the exception of Kosovo just at the time when



Great Britain (CPGB) which organised a fraudulent “inquiry” to cover for Donovan’s attack by retailing anti-Spartacist diatribes provided by none other than...the BT.

Only some months earlier the BT had been trying to woo the CPGB into discussions for “political regroupment”. And speaking of adaptation to “great power chauvinism” the BT was not the least bothered by CPGB statements pronouncing that “Racism, like anti-Semitism and anti-Catholicism, no longer serves the interests of the state” and that “the greater danger comes from institutionalised anti-racism” (*Weekly Worker*, 22 October 1998)!!

As *Workers Vanguard* (no 807, 1 August) wrote in our first response to the BT’s despicable claim that comrade Robertson had characterised Kurds as “turds”:

Kosovo Albanian separatists were acting as bomb-splotters for the 1999 U.S./NATO war against Serbia. For the BT, the Kurds number among those whose demands for independence get in the way of the ‘struggles of the workers and peasants against the existing oppressor states.’”

In “BT: Renegades for Hire” (*Workers Vanguard* no 807, 1 August), we documented the Bolshevik Tendency’s role as a walking provocation against the Spartacist League and exposed the manipulative sociopath it embraces as its leader, Bill Logan. Defending its “chauvinism” slanders against our party, the BT replied with a letter posted on the Internet titled “The Truth Hurts” (8 August). It sure hurts them. Despite being at the centre of the events they distorted to spin their lies, Logan, the *lider maximo* of the BT

The following statement was published in *Workers Vanguard* no 807, 1 August 2003.

In publishing the exchange with the International Bolshevik Tendency (BT) in *WV* No. 806 (4 July), the editor and other comrades centrally responsible for the production of the paper did not inform comrade James Robertson of the BT’s scurrilous, lying smear of him as a “chauvinist” in a “P.S.” to a letter ostensibly on the Kurds. Instead we unilaterally decided to excise the “P.S.” On July 4, the BT surfaced with the “P.S.” in the form of a leaflet at the Socialist Workers Party’s “Marxism” event in London, sneering that *WV* “implicitly accepts” their vile accusations. No we don’t! We excised the “P.S.” because it was a contemptible lie, but in so doing fell into the BT’s trap and implied guilt with our evasive silence. Behind this lay a bloodless conception of politics taking as good

Workers Vanguard editorial statement

coin the BT’s screed on the Kurds, which was nothing other than a wrapper for a poison pill.

The BT’s 4 July leaflet proves that their provocative “P.S.” was the whole point of their letter. We should have known. The BT could not care less about the Kurds or any other oppressed people. From its inception, the BT has been a dubious outfit with a hostile obsession for the Spartacist League and in particular its founding co-leader, Jim Robertson.

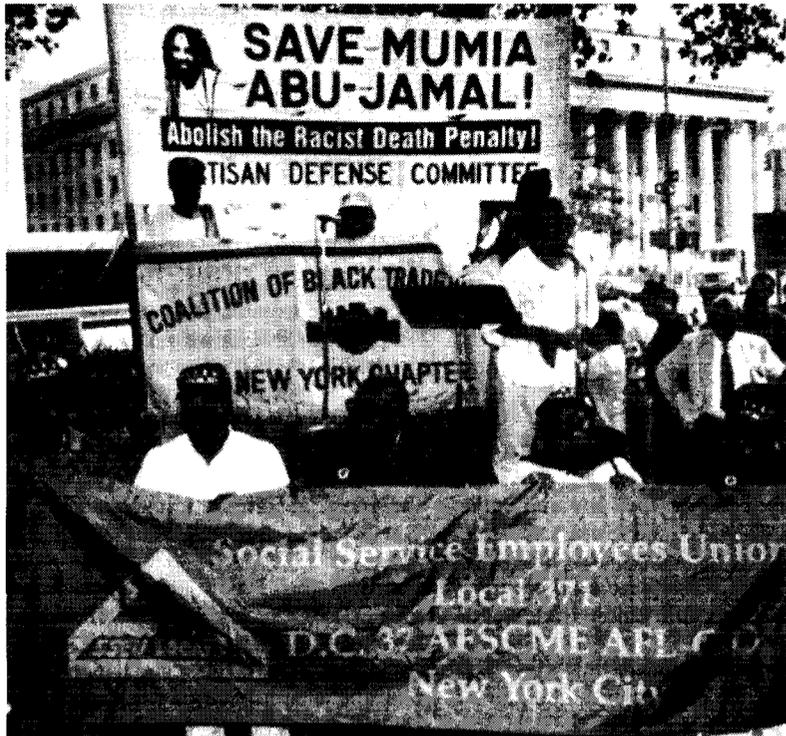
Slanders against leaders of the communist movement are nothing new. They are the stock in trade of opponents of revolutionary Marxism to set

up entire organizations for hostile attack and state repression. The method is: kill an organization by chopping off its head.

The Editorial Board’s actions flouted the democratic-centralist norms on which the Spartacist League and International Communist League operate. Comrade Robertson is a member of the Editorial Board and Spartacist League National Chairman, and was personally the target of the BT slander. Yet he was never sent a copy of the BT letter including the “P.S.” Beyond stupid, arrogant and uncomradely, this break in collaboration was an attack on our own revolutionary continuity. The

Spartacist League is, and has been from its inception, an organization that says what is, without bowing to petty-bourgeois sensibilities. The actions of the Editorial Board could be borrowed from the practices of centrism, i.e., a divergence between what we stand for and what we do.

Our Declaration of Principles adopted at the 1966 founding conference of the Spartacist League/U.S. cites Trotsky’s injunction: “To face reality squarely; not to seek the line of least resistance; to call things by their right names; to speak the truth to the masses, no matter how bitter it may be; not to fear obstacles; to be true in little things as in big ones; to base one’s program on the logic of the class struggle; to be bold when the hour for action arrives—these are the rules of the Fourth International.” Consistent with this purpose, we publicly acknowledge the disservice we have done to our party, to comrade Robertson, and to our readers.



Workers Vanguard

As SL/PDC spearheaded worldwide protest campaign to stop execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal in 1995, US capitalists' house organ picked up BT's slanders to smear Mumia's supporters.

since 1990, still remains the black hole in their latest "reply".

As detailed in our last article, in a "postscript" to its 12 June letter nominally on the Kurdish question, the BT presented a short quote dragged out of context from a presentation the SL's national chairman, Jim Robertson, made 25 years ago to our New York local. Reporting on the party's fight to remove the brutal and nasty regime Logan had been running as leader of our British section and the manifold ways in which Logan manipulated the internalised oppression of particularly young women and minority comrades, Robertson raised a criticism of a leading comrade, Reuben Samuels, for absenting himself from this fight:

"Criticism of Reuben: the whole time, where was Reuben? He was off in the library, studying about the Turds for his class. Right? He wasn't playing any role. George and I looked at each other and we said, 'We don't think it's going to be exactly the kind of educational weekend that we had in mind...'. We're going back next month to have the educational. Good educational."

As we wrote in our last article, "Only in the minds of those genuinely inspired by chauvinism could 'turds' be seen as referring to Kurds!" For all its oh-so-indignant and consummately disingenuous charges of "vulgar chauvinism", the BT introduces this quote by saying, "Robert-

son teased Samuels for having been left out of the loop and missing the excitement." Far from teasing, this was a serious indictment of a senior leader of our international for having his head in the toilet when what was posed was a fight to save our British section from Logan. Now the BT opines that the proof that we are covering for "vulgar chauvinism" is demonstrated by the fact that our last article didn't mention that Samuels "had been flown in from Toronto specifically to give his talk on the Kurds". The latter is absolutely correct. Robertson and the rest of the international leadership saw to it that our best-informed comrade on the question, Samuels, flew to London, not once but twice, in order to give a "good educational" on the struggle against Kurdish oppression—a need particularly posed by the recent recruitment of Turkish comrades to our British section. And that's what the BT calls "chauvinism".

More than a hundred opinionated, argumentative young communists of many different ethnic backgrounds heard Robertson's presentation. They understood it for what it was: a powerful indictment of the all-sided oppression of capitalist class society, and a record of the struggle against a sick character who tried to destroy comrades. Those who were in the room recall being elated at the end of the report, because we had won a fight to save our British section and prevented a

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL
16 June 1995

**Not Much Left:
'The Movement' Is
Pretty Still Nowadays**

Despite the GOP Revolution,
Radical Groups Can't Win
Converts to Their Brand

By Angela Davis
Communist Party USA member

The Spartacists are led by a man named James Robertson, prompting the International Bolshevik Tendency, a group of former Spartacists, to deride their old party as "Jimstown," a takeoff on Jonestown in Guyana, the jungle site of mass suicide.

serious setback in our struggle to build an international. To assert that a hundred communists would not have reacted with hostility and indignation to a chauvinist slur is a slander of all of our comrades. To believe the BT, the members of the International Communist League to whom it makes its unctuous appeals to break with the ICL are worthless as any kind of communists but are rather merely obedient tools, fools and perhaps racists themselves. But then what does that make the BT's own "founder-leaders", who were around at the time of Robertson's New York presentation and said not a peep? They indict themselves on the charges they falsely fling at us.

For the 20 years of its existence, the BT has specialised in lying diatribes against our organisation. The bulletin containing Robertson's presentation was made publicly available by us over two decades ago. Yet only now has the BT surfaced its "recovered memory" that the fight against Logan was really a cover for anti-Kurdish chauvinism.

In our article last issue, we noted that the BT had omitted any mention of Logan either in its "PS" or in a 4 July leaflet titled "Robertson's Vulgar Chauvinism" distributed for the benefit of Stalinophobic thugs and Spartacist-haters at the British Socialist Workers Party's "Marxism" event in London. The BT couldn't even manage to give the main title of the *Inter-*

national Discussion Bulletin it quoted from, "On the Logan Regime Part I". "Why has Logan become the equivalent of that empty space on retouched photos?" we asked. "What is the BT hiding?"

The BT's latest letter mentions Logan's name a few times in passing, including the enigmatic statement that Robertson "had decided to topple the Logan regime". Why was Logan "toppled"? Not a word. The BT is also silent on the monstrous crimes that were reported by comrades in our Australian section, where Logan had previously been national chairman, once the lid had been pried open by the fight in Britain. Logan wilfully broke up couples and pressured comrades into sexual relationships. He pressured a young comrade to have an abortion, and when she refused, he made her put the child in a foster home, ultimately driving her to an attempted suicide. We convoked a trial body at our first international conference in the summer of 1979. Logan was expelled by a unanimous vote of the membership (including, again, those who would later form the BT). We made our bulletins on the Logan regime public in order to warn the rest of the workers movement about this sociopath.

The BT did not respond to our exposure of Logan's current vocation as a New Age snake oil salesman who peddles his grotesque services—as a "celebrant" and "counsellor" for baby funerals and "partnership break-up" among other things—on his website (bl.co.nz), which also features a link to a "Folksong Index" where you can listen to such "folk" classics as "Deutschland Über Alles", "The Swastika Song" and "Come All Ye that Hold True Communion with Southern Confederates Bold"! Here is a leader of a putative "Bolshevik" organisation whose Web site speaks not of the influences of Marx, Lenin or Trotsky but of the "Anglican and Presbyterian influences of my childhood".

Now, as part of its escalating provocations, the BT claims that our last polemic "recalls the 1973 pronouncements of Lyndon LaRouche (then known as Lynn Marcus) when he was winding up his devotees for their 'Operation Mop Up' vendetta against the Communist Party." "Operation Mop-Up" was a campaign of murderous violence against Communist Party supporters by the LaRouchites as the latter exited the workers movement on their way to the fascistic right and links with various state agencies. So the BT is insinuating that we're crazed thugs and on our way out of the workers

continued on page 11



Workers Hammer

Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth Group contingent on September 2002 London anti-war demonstration.

Special ICL Bulletins

On the Logan Regime

(Three parts)

In 1979, Bill Logan was expelled from the international Spartacist tendency for crimes "against communist morality and its substrate elementary human decency". Logan is now the leader of the "International Bolshevik Tendency". As a service to the workers movement we have made our international bulletins documenting Logan's crimes publicly available.

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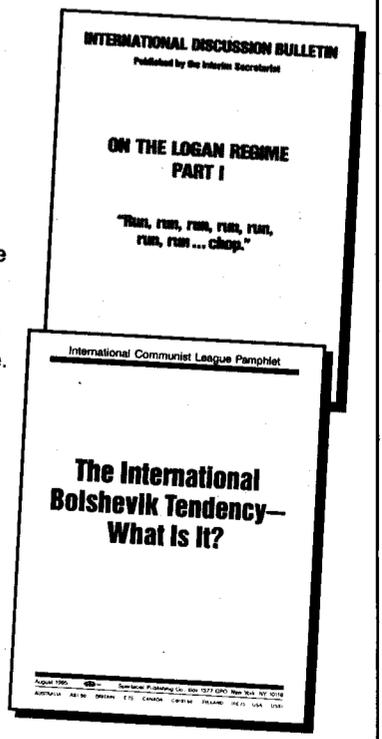
The International Bolshevik Tendency — What Is It?

International Communist League pamphlet, August 1995

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Witch hunt...

(Continued from page 12)

hands of the multiethnic working class in this country, for there lies the potential for a real challenge to the class rule of the capitalist exploiters.

First they came for the immigrants...

Coming down the parliamentary pipes is yet another law, the Civil Contingencies Bill, which the *Guardian*

defending helpless victims of the government's racist witch hunt but of the unity and integrity of the working class as a whole. As we state in the International Communist League's "Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program" (*Spartacist* [English edition] no 54, Spring 1998):

"Modern capitalism, i.e., imperialism, reaching into all areas of the planet, in the course of the class struggle and as economic need demands, brings into the proletariat at its bottom new sources of cheaper labor, principally immigrants from poorer and less-developed regions of

racist and fascist attacks!

The motto of the labour movement must be *class struggle*—joining forces against our common enemy, the capitalist ruling class. The obstacle to this course is the present leadership of the unions, including of the so-called "awkward squad". Bob Crow, leader of the RMT, cuts a figure as a union "radical" and was heralded by the Stop the War Coalition for his opposition to the war on Iraq. Yet Crow did nothing to mobilise the power of his union in class-struggle opposition to the war. Meanwhile hundreds of immigrant cleaners in London Underground slave in the lowliest jobs at the lowliest wages. They are hired by private companies as part of the government's scheme to privatise the Tube and bust the power of the union. But little has been done to bring these workers into the union, with full union wages and rights.

Minorities numbered in the first ranks of those demonstrating their solidarity with the striking Fire Brigades Union (FBU) last autumn. But FBU leader Andy Gilchrist called off the strikes and gagged his own sometimes left-sounding rhetoric to salute the flag on the eve of the war declaring that he was a "patriot". Patriotism is the glue that binds the working class to the defence not of their class interests but of the interests of the capitalist rulers. And patriotism is the oil that greases the skids of chauvinist and racist reaction against "foreigners". Tony Woodley, new head of the TGWU, who now finds himself in the unlikely position of being considered some kind of militant, is better known for trumpeting racist protectionism in Union Jack rallies in defence of jobs for "British" workers at the time of the jobs massacre at Rover in the West Midlands in 2000.

The militant rhetoric of the "awkward squad" is a measure of the increasingly massive discontent and hatred for Blair's Labour Party among the proletariat, besieged minorities and youth. But for these discontents to be translated into some effective struggle in defence of all those at the bottom of this society, the working class must be broken from their illusions in Labourite parliamentary reformism peddled by the trade union bureaucrats of all stripes. Our perspective is to forge a multiethnic revolutionary workers party

—built in the course of class struggle and education in the lessons of these struggles present and past—that can lead the proletariat in a genuinely socialist struggle against decaying British imperialism whose depredations against the masses of the "colonies" have been so amply carried out by successive Labour governments.

The "war on terror" fraud

As the launch of the one-sided slaughter of Iraq drew closer, the Blair government cranked up the gears of its domestic "terrorism" scare in a transparent attempt to drum up support for the war from an overwhelmingly sceptical and hostile population. A series of the most absurd "terror" plots were concocted, all alleging the involvement of asylum seekers. In January and February lurid newspaper headlines told first of a plot to poison Londoners by releasing cyanide on the Tube. Then Heathrow airport was surrounded by tanks in an unspecified "terror alert". Most ludicrous of all was the so-called "ricin poison plot" for which a number of Algerians were arrested when police claimed to have found tiny traces of the poison "ricin" at a flat in Wood Green, North London.

In a perceptive piece titled "Ricin in the wind", published in a Sussex University-based anti-war review, Susil Gupta pointed out that since ricin occurs naturally in castor beans and "oil of ricin" (as castor oil is known in Arabic) is used as a purgative throughout the undeveloped world, many Arab and Asian households would test positive for "ricin residues". Gupta cuts through the government and police lies by noting that the Wood Green address was well-known to police as the address of Algerian asylum seekers and therefore "a most unlikely venue for terrorists to set up a chemical warfare laboratory". He asks an obvious question: "Why would terrorists go to all the trouble of producing obscure substances, so notoriously difficult to produce and use, when old-fashioned guns and explosives have proved so effective?" He adds that: "During the last four years hundreds of Algerians had been arrested in dozens of raids. Although Britain is awash with guns, not a single firearm has ever been found on an Algerian. Not even an imitation firearm. Not a single bullet. Not a



Newport, Wales: 1839 uprising by Chartists, revolutionary movement which fought for right to vote, right of citizens to bear arms.

(20 June) describes as "potentially the greatest threat to civil liberty that any parliament is ever likely to consider". Under this legislation the government will be given sweeping authority to do virtually anything it wants in a situation it deems to be an "emergency" which is defined to include "serious disruption to the political, administrative and economic stability" of the country. This new Act would replace the 1948 Civil Defence Act, passed by the Labour government of Clement Attlee in order to mobilise the population for war against the Soviet Union. It also replaces the 1920 Emergency Powers Act, which was introduced to break strikes in response to massive working-class upheavals in the aftermath of World War I which were inspired by the great October Revolution of 1917 in Russia. Now the rulers fan the flames of anti-immigrant racism, further dividing and weakening the working class, in order to vastly increase the repressive power of their state to preserve the rule of capital which is based on the increasingly brutal exploitation of labour. But what they can actually get away with will be determined by the class struggle of the proletariat in opposition.

A fundamental starting point for such a class-struggle opposition must be the defence of immigrants, minorities and asylum seekers who are first in the firing line of the so-called "war against terror". This is not simply a question of

the world—workers with few rights who are deemed more disposable in times of economic contraction. Thus capitalism in an ongoing fashion creates different strata among the workers, while simultaneously amalgamating the workers of many different lands. Everywhere, the capitalists, abetted by aristocracy-of-labor opportunists, try to poison class consciousness and solidarity among the workers by fomenting religious, national and ethnic divisions. The struggle for the unity and integrity of the working class against chauvinism and racism is thus a vital task for the proletarian vanguard."

Up and down this country—in hospitals, schools, universities, railways and local government—immigrant labour employed by privatised companies is used as a bludgeon against the unions. At the same time immigrants and minorities are a vital and fighting part of the organised labour movement, and even those who are not have more than once demonstrated their commitment to the proletariat's fight. There were no better allies of the coal miners during their heroic battle against the Thatcher government in 1984-85. It is long overdue that the unions actively champion the rights of immigrants and minorities in this country. We fight for: *Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! No deportations! Free the detainees! Shut down the detention centres! Unionise the unorganised! For a shorter working week at no loss in pay to spread the available work! For trade union/minority mobilisations against*



Labour's racist laws lead to thousands of deportations of immigrants.

smidgen of explosive substance. No detonators. No electronic circuitry. No phone tappings that reveal a conspiracy. No informant revealing a plot" (*Eclipse*, 14 February 2003).

Yet while the government was whipping up a racist "terror" scare to try to line up the population for war, this was barely mentioned much less opposed by the Stop the War Coalition (StWC). This is hardly surprising given that the leading lights of the anti-war movement included open supporters of the "war on terrorism". A case in point is Labour MP Alice Mahon, head of the parliamentary "No War on Iraq" committee to which the StWC was affiliated. Mahon urged Blair not to go to war on Iraq because this would *distract* from the "war on terror", saying: "I welcome the Prime Minister's statement earlier today, calling for total vigilance against terrorism" adding that "Tony should learn the lessons of Bali and marshal the government's resources on fighting terrorism, not backing George Bush's war on Iraq" (No War on Iraq website, 14 October 2002).

Here is the real face of the "unity" promoted by the StWC in the name of building the "broadest possible movement against the war". Based on a programme of bourgeois pacifism in abhorrence of all "violence" (particularly that which may be deployed by the working class and oppressed against their oppressors), the StWC sought to boost the "anti-war" credentials of so-called Labour Party rebels. With their cries that Blair was violating "our democracy" they sowed illusions in the very capitalist state prosecuting the war against Iraq and against immigrants at home. The myth of parliamentary democracy is the velvet glove behind which stands the mailed fist of the cops, the courts, the army and the prisons that are at the core of the capitalist state, which is nothing other than the instrument for the violent suppression of one class, the proletariat, by another, the bourgeoisie.

Far from advancing a struggle for "peace", their cries against Blair for joining "Bush's war" promoted the little England chauvinism of the capitalist rulers used to rally the population against "foreign" enemies both abroad and at home. This was scathingly captured by Susil Gupta in his "Ricin in the wind" article:

"The anti-war movement has done little to counter the atmosphere of public alarm generated by terrorism hoaxes. Perhaps

more disgracefully, while it is prepared to vent its anti-Americanism by denouncing the treatment of prisoners in Camp X-Ray, it has done nothing to oppose the plight of hundreds of Algerians who are now being demonised and hunted down like anonymous vermin in this country, with scant regard for their basic civil rights. It ignores these issues at its peril. Despite the hundreds of thousands of people who will be on the streets on 15th February, the anti-war movement is weak and vulnerable. Though fronted by dedicated activists, it is

crime that these men could possibly be charged with in Britain. But such considerations certainly haven't got in the way of Labour's own prosecution of the "war on terror" at home. Under the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act some 15 men have been locked up 22 hours a day in a special unit at the Belmarsh top-security prison and HMP Woodhill, on no charges whatsoever, just the government's declaration that

London information bureau of the Turkish leftist group DHKC and arrested several supporters, some of whom were taken from their homes.

The present witch hunt, drawing an equal sign between "Muslim" and "terrorist" echoes the treatment of Irish immigrants in Britain, who for decades were branded as "terrorists" to promote a chauvinist backlash against Irish workers who have historically been a



March 2002: Spartacus Youth Group initiated united front protest against "anti-terror" laws at London's School of Oriental and African Studies. Socialist Labour Party Youth member arrested under Terrorism Act endorsed rally.

mostly built on the flimsy and vague pacifist sentiments of the people with no larger commitment in life than avoiding fear and exposure to nastiness. 'Not in my name' really means 'not in my sight'... 'not in my name' really means 'not in our interest'."

—*Eclipse*, 14 February 2003

Shredding your rights, parliamentary style

In the past few months British MPs and the press have highlighted the plight of British nationals Moazzam Begg and Feroz Abbasi, who are among the prisoners of the "war on terror" caged like animals by US authorities in Guantanamo Bay. Declared to be "unlawful combatants" in a non-existent war, they face trial before a military tribunal and possibly execution. Labour MP Geraint Davies pressed the Blair government to arrange for the repatriation of British detainees to face "a fair trial in Britain". Blair's allies in the Bush White House have refused any such requests, arguing that there is no

they are "suspected international terrorists".

Moreover the Blair government hardly takes a second seat to the Bush administration when it comes to "anti-terror" laws. More than a year before the attack on the World Trade Center, which the crazed right-wing Republicans in the White House used to launch their wholesale evisceration of democratic rights, the Labour government here had already enacted its Terrorism Act 2000. This law banned 21 political organisations, largely those involved in the defence of refugees. The list of proscribed groups under this act is virtually a roll-call of peoples who have ever been subjected to the tender mercies of British imperialism, from Irish Republican splinter groups to Sikh, Kashmiri, Kurdish, Palestinian and Tamil organisations, as well as Islamic groups. As we wrote when the Terrorism Act came into force:

"The Terrorism Act targets immigrant organisations in the first instance but this is the thin end of the wedge. Ultimately it is aimed at all opponents of British imperialism, the entire workers movement and the left. In a specific attack on political organisations, it redefines 'terrorism' to mean not the actions of a group but its ideology. It is an offence to belong to a proscribed organisation, to provide it with money or property, to display its emblems, to speak from the same platform or to be present at a meeting with a member of a banned organisation."

—*Workers Hammer* no 176, Spring 2001

To be branded as a "terrorist" in capitalist society is to be considered an outlaw, providing the state with a licence to suspend democratic rights, criminalise political activity and ultimately for legal murder at the hands of the cops. More than 400 arrests have been carried out under this law—virtually all immigrants, especially Algerians and Muslims. Only around 50 of those arrested under the Terrorism Act 2000 have actually been charged, mostly with immigration offences. The tiny number of convictions that have been obtained have been not for any acts committed but for *membership* in one of the banned organisations. In December 2002, police staged dawn raids on the

large component of the proletariat. As Faisal Bodi noted in the *Guardian* on 21 January, one day after armed cops smashed their way into the Finsbury Park mosque in North London:

"For all the hysterical headlines warning of a Bin Laden in our backyard, the reality is a picture of political repression of Muslims that is starting to resemble the experience of Northern Ireland's Catholics throughout the Troubles. While they were in force, two laws—the Emergency Provisions Act of 1973, and the Prevention of Terrorism Act 1974—were used to drag an estimated 60,000 overwhelmingly innocent people from their beds."

The PTA led to massive round-ups of Irish immigrants in Britain and of oppressed Catholics in Northern Ireland under the Labour government of the time. Among the most well-known victims of Labour's anti-Irish dragnet are the Guildford Four and the Birmingham Six. Following bombings in Britain in 1974, these innocent Irish people were rounded up, framed up as "terrorists" and locked away until the late 1980s when the convictions against them were quashed amid a wave of scandals exposing the state, its cops and prosecutors.

While opposing the war on Iraq and now calling for an end to the imperialist occupation the StWC has had little to nothing to say in opposition to the ongoing British Army occupation of Northern Ireland. This was doubtless for fear of offending their Labour Party allies, like Tony Benn. Benn was a cabinet minister in the Wilson government which dispatched these troops in 1969 with the fulsome backing of groups like the Socialist Workers Party. The SWP, which called for a vote to Blair's Labour Party in 1997 and again in 2001 (under the slogan "vote Labour where you must")—has its own responsibility for the racist onslaught being waged against immigrants by this government. In the face of the racist filth emanating from the halls of Parliament, the SWP can only respond with liberal bleatings that "refugees are welcome here" and revolting fact sheets purporting to "prove" that immigrants are not the source of unemployment, disease, lack

continued on page 10

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CLASS-STRUGGLE DEFENSE NOTES

Number 31 90c Summer 2003

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AND PARTISAN DEFENSE COMMITTEE
ON BEHALF OF JOSE PADILLA
AND GRANTING HIS WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS

IN THE
UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS

JOSE PADILLA, Donna R. Newman,
as Next Friend of Jose Padilla,
Petitioner-Appellee cross-Appellant,
v.
DONALD RUMSFELD,
Respondent-Appellee cross-Appellee.

On Appeal from the United States District Court
for the Southern District of New York.

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Free All MOVE Prisoners! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!
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"Anti-Terror" Dragnet Threatens 13,000 with Expulsions
Stop the Deportations! 22

Witch hunt...

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of housing, *ad nauseam*.

While the fascist BNP feeds off the all-sided climate of anti-immigrant reaction, gaining in the polls and winning seats in local governments, the fake left lamely cry "Don't vote Nazi!" Here again the purpose is to build support for the Labour Party whose racist witch hunt has fuelled votes to the BNP. Today the successes of the BNP are mainly electoral but fascism is not a question of seats in parliament. Rather it is one of paramilitary gangs whose purpose is to smash the working class, destroy its organisations and squelch all political liberties when the capitalists find themselves no longer able to maintain their class rule through the means of parliamentary democracy. Stopping them is a matter of mobilising in action the social power of the working class standing at the head of all the potential victims of fascist terror.

Throughout this country, immigrants seeking asylum are "dispersed" to poverty-stricken, all-white areas where they are often the target of attacks by racist terror gangs. Firsat Dag, a Kurdish youth from Turkey was murdered by racists in Glasgow's Sighthill in August 2001. In June this year in Wrexham, north Wales, a group of Iraqi Kurdish refugees were forced to flee from their homes on the Caia Park estate by a 200-strong racist mob, while in Hull at the end of July around 300 asylum seekers, mainly Iraqi Kurds, protested against racist attacks in the city by organised gangs armed with baseball bats and lead pipes (IRR [Independent race and refugee news network] News, 30 July). In July 2001 when the Asian population of Oldham was attacked by BNP fascists and subsequently besieged by police who swamped the neighbourhood, we issued a statement which said:

"Urgently needed is trade union-centered protest against the police occupation of the Asian community. This means drawing in the power of the urban working class of the Manchester area so that besieged minority youth in this enclave of Oldham, a run-down former mill town, are not left to go it alone against the organised violence of the state, its cops, courts and prisons."

—reprinted in *Workers Hammer* no 177, Summer 2001

The latest measure announced by

home secretary David Blunkett is that if an immigrant actually reaches the point of applying for citizenship, he or she must pass a "citizenship" test requiring them to answer questions about "democracy and parliament", something called "etiquette"; as well as the monarchy and British history. The monarchy? How about the fact that "citizens" in Britain have never had the formal protection of a constitution and are not really citizens but "subjects" of the monarch (to whom Labour politicians kowtow). As far as immigrants are concerned, there is a whole history demonstrating that the right to citizenship can be revoked by the bourgeoisie at the stroke of a pen.

Citizenship rights — the right to have rights

During the labour shortages after World War II, immigrants from India and the Caribbean were recruited to come to Britain to do the lowest paid and dirtiest jobs, as is the norm for immigrant labour under capitalism. Residents of Britain's former colonies held British passports, and those who managed to make their way to Britain were granted citizenship in 1948. Even then those immigrants who arrived that year on the ship the *Empire Windrush* faced a racist furor. The Labour government of the day, led by Clement Attlee, published a "Warning to Intending Migrants from Jamaica to the U.K." Around this time Labour repatriated Caribbean workers, who were British citizens, and who had worked as skilled technicians in the factories of north west England during the war, but were now deemed "surplus to requirements".

In the late 1950s there were large, organised race riots against immigrants, most notably in Nottingham and in London's Notting Hill. By 1962, the then Tory government rode the back of this wave of racist terror and introduced the Commonwealth Immigrants Act. This landmark legislation took away the British citizenship rights of all peoples from the former colonies. The holders of "British" passports that were issued in India, Pakistan or the West Indies, became subject to immigration controls. Ten years later, all primary immigration from the Old Commonwealth countries was halted. The Labour government introduced "virginity tests" for Asian women entering Britain and throughout the 1970s and since, the right of workers to be joined by their families has been severely curtailed.

Today Blair's Labour government is

ploughing ahead with legislation permitting the government to revoke the citizenship of anyone holding dual nationality that it perceives as an opponent. The first test case for the application of this proposed legislation is Muslim cleric Abu Hamza. For Marxists democratic rights are indivisible. However much we oppose the reactionary Islamic fundamentalism promoted by Hamza, we recognise that his case is being used by the government in order to strengthen its arsenal of state repression and violence against the working class, immigrants and all those at the bottom of this society.

In the United States, the Spartacist League/US and the Partisan Defense Committee, a legal and social defence organisation whose views are in accordance with those of the Spartacist League, recently filed an *Amici Curiae* brief on behalf of Jose Padilla. A US citizen, Padilla was pronounced by the Bush administration to be an "enemy combatant". With no evidence whatsoever of having committed any offence, Padilla was locked away in a military prison, deprived of any and all constitutional rights of citizenship such as the right to an attorney or the right to trial. From the time he was first detained in May 2002, Padilla has not been charged with any crime. The introduction to our legal brief notes that the "Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee file this *Amici Curiae* brief in support of Jose Padilla because they are tenacious defenders of their own legality and of those democratic rights won through bourgeois revolutions and revolutionary wars — the parliamentary partisans in the English Civil War, the U.S. Revolutionary War, the French Revolution and the American Civil War." It goes on to argue:

"The entirety of the Executive's legal justification for the denial of constitutional protections attendant to a criminal prosecution of Padilla are the emergency, preventive, national security needs of a putative ongoing 'war against terrorism' being waged throughout the globe and on U.S. territory. It is a 'war' without a defined enemy, a war without end. There is no war by any military definition. There is no shooting war and no battle between state powers. The 'war against terrorism' is a fiction, a political construct, not a military reality. It is a political crusade conducted in the name of ridding society of a perceived evil. It is no more a 'war' in a military sense than 'war against cancer,' 'war against obesity' or a 'war against immorality.' Like the 'war against communism' and the 'war against drugs,' this 'war' is a

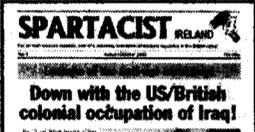
pretext to increase the state's police powers and repressive apparatus, constricting the democratic rights of the population. The Executive's declaration that its 'war against terrorism' forfeits constitutional protections for designated individuals echoes the regimes of shahs and colonels and presidents 'for life' from the Near East to Africa to Latin America, to justify the mass imprisonment and unmarked graves of political dissidents. Like them, the Executive is proclaiming the *right to disappear* citizens of its choosing."

The only rights sacred to the bourgeoisie are *their* rights to property and to exploit labour. The rights cherished by the working class and oppressed were never freely granted, but were won through hard and often bloody struggle. The most fundamental democratic rights were in fact secured by *revolutionary* struggle, both at home and abroad. It took the victory by Oliver Cromwell's New Model Army in the English Revolution to abolish the Star Chamber courts, in the course of overthrowing, and beheading, Charles I and establishing a bourgeois republic, although the monarchy was restored in 1660. The British working class, brought into being by the upheaval of the Industrial Revolution, forged the first mass, independent workers movement, the Chartists. Unlike its successors — the Independent Labour Party, the Labour Representation Committee and the Labour Party — the Chartists did not bow their heads before the monarch, and were not filled with awed respect for the state and the civilised barbarians who run this country. Mass processions of Chartist workers paraded with pikes and muskets in hand, asserting the right of the people to bear arms that the ruling classes fear so much.

The powerful left wing of Chartism was republican, internationalist and revolutionary minded. Like the anti-royalist determination of Cromwell's New Model Army, the revolutionary spirit of Chartism inspires us today in our purpose of building a revolutionary workers party capable of leading the proletariat to victory in the final conflict against the decrepit rule of British imperialism. Such a party will be multiethnic, and among its best fighters will be the black, Asian and other minority workers whose hard-fought struggles brought them into the ranks of the unions and who have been among the foremost champions of those fighting against state repression. To end racist oppression requires the dispossession of the ruling class and the establishment of workers republics! ■

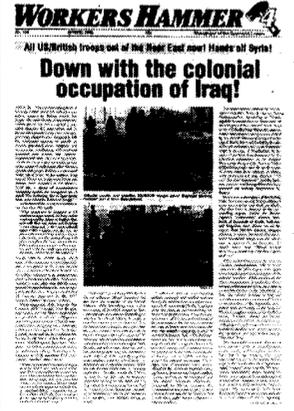
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Iraq...

(Continued from page 5)

noted: "If there was one phrase that sticks out from this year's TUC conference it is 'listen to us'". Blair had the measure of this "opposition". In a speech published for his audience with the TUC tops Blair declared that the idea they could influence government policy was pure "delusion".

The chorus of calls to "reclaim Labour" is led by the so-called "awkward squad". RMT leader Bob Crow got much applause from the floor when he challenged the presence of a representative of the bosses' Confederation of British Industry at the TUC conference, denouncing "people on the TUC general council who talk about partnership with employers". But Crow himself sits on the board of Transport for London which manages the Tube. Most recently he welcomed the new boss of the Tube, London mayor Ken Livingstone, as "the start of a new era of more positive industrial relations". For his part, Livingstone announced his intention to introduce this "new era" with a four-year pay deal in order to end the "fiasco" of yearly strikes by RMT members!

While much is made of Crow's opposition to the war from platforms at anti-war demonstrations, last autumn in a deal with Livingstone he called off strikes in the Tube. This came exactly at the time when the FBU was poised to walk out amidst a union-hating, pro-war barrage from the government and the media, pillorying firefighters as "Saddam's stooges". Thus for all his talk of trade union action against the war, Crow effectively squelched the very real opportunity for joint class struggle of these two powerful unions which would have thrown a real spanner into the imperialists' war preparations. His fellow "awkward squad" member, FBU leader Andy Gilchrist, later called off the firefighters' strikes, saluting the flag as a "patriot".

In a recent interview in the *Daily Telegraph* (4 September), Gilchrist opined: "The third term has gone from being a near certainty to something we will have to work for. What I'm not is Arthur Scargill and what our lot is about is not preparing another Winter of Discontent." That's for sure. Blair's Labour government is haunted by the memory of the strikes against the last Labour government in the winter of 1978-79. This is matched by its hatred for Scargill who led the heroic 1984-85 British miners strike and later mounted an electoral challenge to Blair's Labour Party.

The miners strike was the most important class battle for decades in this country, drawing support not only from minorities and oppressed here but also internationally. It was knifed by the Labour Party and TUC tops, especially the "lefts". Anti-Communism was a big

part of the bosses' arsenal as the Fleet Street press waged a witch-hunting campaign against the miners following Scargill's completely correct characterisation of Polish Solidarność as "anti-socialist". While he pushed the limits of trade union militancy, politically Scargill never transcended the limits of Labourism.



BBC Hulton Picture Library

Korean city of Incheon under US/British occupation in 1950-53 Korean War. Attlee Labour government joined US imperialism in counterrevolutionary war against North Korea, China, which left upwards of three million people dead.

The web of anti-strike laws brought in by Thatcher and the mass devastation of jobs from the mines to shipbuilding to steel are the price the working class as a whole is paying for this treachery. But it could have been different. As we wrote: "Had there existed even a modest-sized revolutionary party, rooted in the trade unions, it could have won a sizable chunk of Labour's working-class base away from the reformist misleaders in the course of waging a class-struggle fight during the miners strike" ("1984-85: what it would have taken for the miners to win", *Workers Hammer* no 145, April/May 1995). Pointing to the solidarity behind the miners by the Asian and black communities, women in the coalfields, gays and lesbians and others we noted: "What existed here in support of the miners was the potential core of a revolutionary party, which would act as a Leninist tribune of the people, championing the struggles of all the oppressed."

In 1997 Scargill's Socialist Labour Party challenged Blair's New Labour Party in the general election. Although based on a programme of Clause IV Old Labour reformism, the SLP's opposition to the Blairites' manifest hostility to the working class and oppressed represented an important crack in the Labour monolith. We gave critical support to the SLP, actively campaigning for its candidates, while intervening with our own propaganda to argue for

the need for an authentic workers party. As we wrote at the time:

"Critical support is an application of the tactic of the united front developed by the Communist International in the early 1920s. By proposing urgent united action around concrete issues in defence of the working class, the young Communist Parties sought to win the mass of workers who retained allegiance to the reformist

gle for power; whether or not we should assume power. This alone is ample proof that we were not then dealing with a mere episodic divergence of opinions but with two tendencies of the utmost principled significance. The first and principal tendency was proletarian and led to the road of world revolution. The other was 'democratic', i.e. petty bourgeois, and led, in the last analysis, to the subordination of proletarian policies to the requirements of bourgeois society in the process of reform. These two tendencies came into hostile conflict over every essential question that arose throughout the year 1917."

The Bolshevik Party was steeled through a rapid succession of very different forms of struggle over the course of 15 years. This included parliamentary and extra-parliamentary work such as the mass strike waves leading up to the 1905 Revolution in which soviets (workers councils) were formed. Although this revolution was crushed, soviets became the organs of working-class power in the lead-up to the 1917 Revolution. An open break with the social chauvinists of the Second International, who allied with their "own" imperialist rulers in World War I, was critical to winning over the working-class and peasant base of the army. Committed to fighting every manifestation of capitalist oppression, the Bolsheviks inscribed on their banner the defence of the rights of myriad nationalities and peoples of the Tsarist empire.

The "broad church" conception of the Labour Party and other social-democratic organisations submerges the most advanced workers among the most backward layers of the proletariat and necessarily reproduces all the chauvinism and prejudice purveyed by the ruling class. The Labourite model uses bloc affiliation of the unions where a blank cheque of union money is regularly supplied for funding the party. In contrast, the Bolshevik Party was a party of the vanguard of the proletariat based on political commitment and conviction.

As a section of the International Communist League, the Spartacist League/Britain fights to complete the task begun by Lenin and Trotsky's Bolshevik Party in 1917—to pursue the class struggle to a victorious conclusion, with state power embodied in workers councils around the world. In a period conditioned by the colossal defeats arising from the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union, the disproportion between our purpose and the current political consciousness of the working class, youth and the left internationally is great. Unlike those self-proclaimed leftists who disparage Leninism and the lessons of the Russian Revolution, we hold on to the dearly bought lessons of the past as part of our fight to forge the revolutionary leadership that can rearm the proletariat with the consciousness of its historic interests in the struggle for new October Revolutions. ■

social-democratic parties proving in struggle the superiority of the communist programme and leadership. Likewise in Britain today, we seek to exacerbate the contradictions between the aspirations and interests of the working-class base of the Labour Party and its pro-capitalist leaders."

—"Break with Labourism, 'old' and 'new'—for a revolutionary workers party!", *Workers Hammer* no 149, February/March 1996

Now the split in the Labour Party is going in a different way. Rather than the working-class base of Labour splitting with the leadership in the course of class struggle, the Blair leadership is looking to sever its ties to the unions, remodelling Labour into an outright capitalist party in the image of the US Democratic Party. Nonetheless the increasing hatred for this Labour government offers the possibility for winning the working class to a revolutionary alternative. The question posed point-blank in Britain today is: what kind of party does the working class need to genuinely represent its interests. As fighters for new October Revolutions our model is Lenin and Trotsky's Bolshevik Party.

In his book *Lessons of October* Trotsky summarised what distinguished Bolshevism from Menshevik reformism:

"The fundamental controversial question around which everything else centred was this: whether or not we should strug-

BT...

(continued from page 7)

movement altogether.

We wrote in the 1987 SL/US national conference document:

"The tiny Bolshevik Tendency (formerly External Tendency) composed largely of embittered Reagan-years quitters from the SL is not so much an opponent as a sinister threat of provocation. The Bolshevik Tendency (BT) exhibits an apparent disinterest in questions of importance to the working class except to go after the SL.... "Mainly the BT is a highly dubious and potentially extremely dangerous pest of the COINTELPRO type."

In the Editorial Statement we published last issue, we acknowledged our mistake in excising the BT's "P.S." rather than exposing it for the contemptible lie it is when we published the exchange "BT Doth Whine Too Much" (*WV* no 806, 4 July). In this statement, the BT can see only a "mea culpa" and a "public slap-down of the editorial board". The idea of basic communist honesty and integrity, the fundamental concept of speaking the truth and openly admitting a mistake to the working-class public, is something wholly alien to the BT charlatans. For them, it is simply evidence of "Obedience Training in the SL", as they called it in their luridly anti-communist 1985

account of the supposed Spartacist gulag, "The Road to Jimstown", a reference to Jonestown, Guyana, where a religious cult under Reverend Jim Jones carried out a mass suicide in 1978. In their latest letter, they write that the SL is a cult whose "central organizing principle is that founder/leader Robertson can never be wrong (unless he says so)". This is beyond stupid—since when do cult leaders admit to being wrong?

The BT acknowledges that the ICL preserved "the thread of revolutionary continuity after the degeneration of Cannon's party", i.e. the US Socialist Workers Party, but claims that we in turn have degenerated. Well, we wrote in "From

Cream Puffs to Food Poisoning" (*WV* no 349, 2 March 1984): "Yes, comrades of the ET, sooner or later and if we do not take state power first, a revolutionary Marxist organization outlives the effective political lifetime of its founding cadre; the defense of the party's original purpose and intent characteristically involves organizational discontinuity (ie, split on behalf of the new revolutionary generation). But not yet for us, ETs, and in any case you stand in no relationship to that process." That was in 1984; today you stand among the enemies of revolutionary Marxism and of working-class victory. Reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* no 808, 29 August 2003.

WORKERS HAMMER 4

“Anti-terror” laws target immigrants, workers

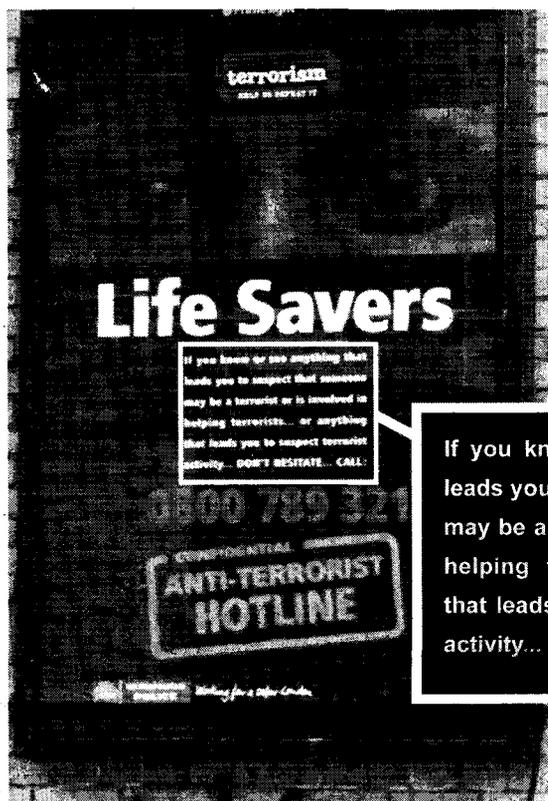
Down with Labour’s racist witch hunt!

As their high-tech bombs and missiles rained down on the overwhelmingly defenceless people of devastated Iraq, killing and maiming tens of thousands, the US and British imperialists declared that their purpose was to disarm Iraq of its “weapons of mass destruction”. Now that there is barely a soul alive prepared to swallow this monumental fraud, the imperialist big liars in the White House and at 10 Downing Street are peddling the opium pipe-dream that their purpose is to build a democratic, secular Iraq as a beacon of “freedom” in the Near East. While the Iraqi people live in the hell of imperialist occupation — with no electricity or clean drinking water, little food much less hospitals or jobs and where one wrong move can get you blown away by the imperialist occupation forces — Blair sanctimoniously pronounces that what is being constructed in Iraq is a “huge advertisement” for “the values of democracy and human rights”!

At home, an equal fraud continues to be perpetrated. In the name of defending the population against “terrorism”, the government is shredding any and all known civil liberties with a barrage of legislation that would be the envy of any dictator or despot from the Near East to Latin America. Taking first aim against immigrants, particularly those of Near Eastern or Muslim background, these laws are aimed at anyone the gov-

ernment perceives as an opponent of the ruling class — from anti-war and “anti-globalisation” activists to those who would speak out against racist oppression or fight to defend their unions and livelihoods against mounting attacks by the employers and the government.

Around the globe the imperialist rulers seized on the criminal September 11 attack on the World Trade Center, which killed thousands of innocent civilians, to launch a global “war against terrorism”. In the two years since, the Labour government has cut a wide swath through democratic rights which have been won over centuries of social struggle against the rulers of this country going back to the English Civil War. The pre-Civil War Star Chamber court, which sat in secret without a jury, has been resurrected under the Kafkaesque conditions of the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001 rammed through in the immediate aftermath of September 11. Asylum seekers and other immigrants who are deemed “terror suspects” can now be held in indefinite detention, with no presumption of innocence, no right to trial by jury, no automatic right to legal counsel. Even those who are not considered to be such “suspects”, whole families and their children, are imprisoned in brutal detention centres such as that at Yarl’s Wood where firefighters were denied access for over an hour after this prison,



Government poster fuels hysteria over “terrorism”; massive attacks on civil liberties target minorities, workers.

If you know or see anything that leads you to suspect that someone may be a terrorist or is involved in helping terrorists... or anything that leads you to suspect terrorist activity... DON'T HESITATE... CALL:



Dungavel, Scotland, 6 September: Protesters demand closure of immigrant detention centre, where families, including children are locked up awaiting deportation.

which had no sprinkler system, was ignited following an attack on a Nigerian woman by prison guards.

Now plans are afoot to introduce a compulsory identity card, the avowed aim of which is to track and persecute “illegal immigrants”. But it doesn’t stop with the racist harassment and cop persecution of desperate immigrants and asylum seekers. This is proposed to be a national identity card, carrying a chip that will be linked to a national database enabling the government to track and snoop on the entire adult population. To add insult to injury, the government proposes to charge everyone £40 for the privilege! At the same time, Blair’s Labour government is pushing to get rid of any legal restrictions which hamper the state’s ability to monitor phone calls, e-mail logs, Internet usage as well as financial and medical records.

There have been twelve new “Criminal Justice” bills since Labour came to power in 1997, under which around 700 new offences have been added to the list of crimes punishable by incarceration. The latest instalment of these bills takes aim at the right to trial by jury as well as opening the door to allowing retrial for the same offence. Otherwise known as “double jeopardy”, this would effectively give legal sanction to ongoing police persecution of anyone they don’t like. The number of

police Special Branch officers has more than doubled. An article in the *Guardian* (2 September) noted that this increase in the state’s secret police makes it “two and a half times as big as it was at the height of the cold war or the worst part of the Northern Ireland conflict”.

The editor of *Stewatch*, a civil liberties bulletin, underlined the direct and immediate connection between the government’s racist witch hunt against immigrants in the name of the “war on terror” and attacks on anyone the powers-that-be perceive as a potential opponent:

“The combination of the ‘war on terrorism’ and demands to combat EU-wide protests on a range of issues — peace and the environment, racism and globalisation — means that domestically the political police — special branch and MI5 — are more intrusive in everyday political activity than at any other point in British history.”

— *Guardian*, 2 September

The intent of these augmented police powers is to regiment the population, to accustom people to the restriction of democratic rights, to accept ID checks and surveillance as “normal”, to create a climate of fear aimed at quashing in advance any social and political struggle. And what the government fears above all is the power that lies in the

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Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!