

Imperialist Crimes in Rwanda and Sudan



Annahar

Khartoum, 2004: Sudanese Trade Union Federation banner opposing U.S. intervention at 100,000-strong demonstration against threatened UN sanctions.

The following article is based on a talk by Young Spartacus pages editor Jon Seville to a well-attended Toronto public meeting on February 12.

Over the course of three months in 1994, some 800,000 Rwandan Tutsis and tens of thousands of moderate Hutu were systematically murdered in a meticulously prepared genocide organized by forces within the Rwandan government and military. The details overwhelm the imagination. *Interahamwe* death squads hacked village after village to death with machetes. Neighbours executed neighbours, husbands butchered wives, or were themselves shot by government troops. Sometimes the torture continued over days. Fetuses were cut from the stomachs of their mothers and then hacked apart as the women watched and bled to death.

As the violence began, the United Nations Security Council ordered the bulk of the multinational “peacekeeping”

force stationed in the country to withdraw. Imperialist politicians like U.S. president Bill Clinton and French president François Mitterrand repeatedly denied that a genocide was in process, tossing off racist explanations like “tribal resentments” to cover their profound indifference. When the French military finally intervened, it created a *cordon sanitaire* that allowed the authors of the genocide—longtime French collaborators—to flee into the Congo. The war now engulfing that country is in no small part a result of this intervention.

Fast forward to April 2003. In Darfur, a western region of Sudan, a coalition of secular and Muslim groups launched armed attacks against Sudanese government troops in response to decades of economic privation, repression and political corruption. In retaliation, government-armed militias have carried out a scorched-earth policy of crop destruction,

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No UN/U.S./Canadian Intervention in Africa!

Support Redfern Aboriginal Militants!

The following article is reprinted from Australasian Spartacist No. 189, Summer 2004/05, newspaper of the Spartacist League of Australia, section of the International Communist League.

DECEMBER 7: In angry meetings in Queensland over the racist cop terror in Palm Island [where an Aboriginal man was killed in police custody last November], Aboriginal activists have been drawing parallels to the explosive February [2004] events in Redfern, Sydney. On the night of 15 February, residents in the area known as The Block defiantly defended their community from racist cop terror after a 17-year-old Kamilaroi youth was killed at the hands of police. With great courage and acumen, Aboriginal youth and their supporters waged a nine-hour pitched battle against marauding cops. Since then, a police operation ordered by the [Premier Bob] Carr NSW [New South Wales] state Labor government has rounded up some 35 militants who are now facing charges. *We say there should be united-front protests and actions to defend the heroic Redfern and Palm Island militants. Trade unions, Aboriginal activists, leftists and immigrant youth must be brought together in struggle to demand: Drop all the charges!* On 24 August, a Spartacist League leaflet broadcast a call by the Partisan Defence Committee (a class-struggle defence organisation associated with the SL) for protest statements to be sent to the NSW Attorney-General demanding the dropping of the charges.

Since then, support for the Redfern defendants has broadened. Protest statements include those by well-known Aboriginal activists, by the prisoners' rights group Justice Action, and by the Freedom Socialist Party (FSP). A 7 December statement by longtime black activist, Jenny Munro, noted that "the local Aboriginal community do support those people arrested" and added her "voice to that of my husband Lyall's to say to those charged 'they are brave young people we are immensely proud of'." In a speech at a 24 September Sydney rally in defence of jailed trade-union leader Craig Johnston, Justice Action leader Brett Collins raised the case of the Redfern militants. An SL supporter was met with applause when he called for the dropping of

charges against the black defendants at a 31 July refugee rights rally outside Sydney's Villawood immigrant detention centre. And earlier, in a small but important victory for all who solidarise with the Redfern struggles, the Police Association was defeated in its manoeuvres to stop a 31 March SL public forum in Melbourne "Defend Redfern Aborigines—Mobilise Union Power!", after unionists and leftists joined



The Australian

February 2004: Riot cops lay siege to Aboriginal community in Redfern, Sydney following death of Aboriginal youth Thomas "TJ" Hickey.

in a campaign of exposure initiated by the SL.

In a protest letter in defence of the Redfern militants, Sam Watson, in his capacity as a longtime prominent figure in the Brisbane Aboriginal community, stated that the killing "of TJ Hickey on the streets of Redfern on the 15th of February and the subsequent brutal repression of the Redfern indigenous community by the state Police, is a clear and terrifying statement that nothing has changed within this racist land and that indeed—the colonial genocide goes on!" Noting the killing of black children by the police and prison guards, Watson's 15 October letter pointedly stated that "the courts and the parliaments have been parties to each and every attack on our people."

But while Sam Watson was a Socialist Alliance (SA) senate candidate in the recent federal elections and the FSP is a component of SA, SA has, to date, failed to in its own name publicly call for the dropping of charges against the Redfern defendants. Those groups and individuals that have taken up the defence of the Aboriginal militants must now redouble their efforts to publicise this case and broaden support for the defendants. A struggle to defend the Redfern and Palm Island militants is not only a way of solidarising with their struggles but a way to push back the tide of racist attacks being faced by Aboriginal people and non-white immigrants. While state Labor governments throughout the country administer brutal and daily racist cop terror, the bigoted federal Howard government is planning to make welfare payments for Aboriginal people conditional on their "behaviour." Under this openly racist, apartheid-style policy, payment cards may be used to set limits on what Aboriginal

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Russell Stoker (Production Manager)

Circulation Manager: C. Galarneau

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Thousands Raised for Class-War Prisoners



Partisan Defense Committee Annual Holiday Appeal

The Partisan Defense Committee's annual Holiday Appeal for Class-War Prisoners, held this past December in seven cities in Canada and the U.S., raised over \$10,000 (U.S.). The PDC in the U.S. addressed trade-union locals across the country, receiving pledges of over \$1,600 earmarked for the defense of Mumia Abu-Jamal. In Toronto, the Canadian PDC's first public Holiday Appeal was held at the Steelworkers Hall, drawing 65 participants. PDC supporters in Vancouver also held an event, making a promising start for the PDC's work in Canada this year.

In terms of publicity, attendance and amounts raised, this was a very successful year—but the urgent need for expanded class-struggle defense efforts is growing. North America's foremost political prisoner, former Black Panther Party member and MOVE supporter Mumia Abu-Jamal, remains on Pennsylvania's death row, with his legal appeals entering a crucial phase. Many other class-war prisoners have already served decades behind bars; others face decades more.

The PDC provides monthly stipends to 16 such prisoners—union militants, fighters for black freedom and opponents of imperialist and capitalist militarism. In addition to Mumia, they include: United Mine Workers union militant Jerry Dale Lowe, who was recently released from a halfway house; leftist activist Jaan Laaman of the New Left Ohio 7; Hugo Pinell, the last of the San Quentin 6 still in prison; Ed Poindexter and Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa, former Black Panther supporters victimized by the FBI COINTELPRO operation; Jamal Hart, Mumia Abu-Jamal's son, framed up by Philadelphia cops; Jamal Holiday, a young black man still in jail after the Republican National Convention protests; and eight MOVE members imprisoned since the Philadelphia cops' siege of their home in 1978: Chuck Africa, Michael Davis Africa, Debbie Sims Africa, Janet Holloway Africa, Janine Africa, Delbert Orr Africa, Edward Goodman Africa and William Phillips Africa.



SC photo



Workers Vanguard

Radio host, former League of Revolutionary Black Workers member Norm Richmond at Toronto benefit (top). Bern Nix Trio and friends in NYC.

Under the Industrial Workers of the World watchword "An injury to one is an injury to all," PDC audiences across North America heard the words of former political prisoners, activists representing unions, minorities, women, immigrants, communists and other fighters for the oppressed. The fundraisers were a real "tribune of the people," where black, white, Asian and other activists, veterans of the '60s and young students, gay activists and trade unionists, came together to hear about and fight for both old and new cases of urgent importance to the workers movement.

Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!

This year's Appeals focused on Mumia Abu-Jamal, the eloquent "voice of the voiceless." His frame-up and death sentence are what the racist death penalty in the U.S. is all

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Japan: For Trade-Union Mobilizations to Stop Deportations!

Close All Detention Centers!

On January 18 the Japanese government deported Ahmet Kazankiran and his son Ramazan, two Kurdish-Turkish refugees, to Turkey. There they were immediately detained in one of the torture hells that are Turkish prisons for Kurds and leftists. The Japanese government has signed deportation orders against the whole Kazankiran family as well as another Kurdish family, the Dogans. While some members of the two families have now been granted a one-month extension of their temporary residence permits, the government continues to threaten them with deportation.

The Spartacist Group Japan participated in two emergency protests called on the mornings of January 21 and 24. *We demand that the two families be granted immediately refugee status in Japan! Down with all deportations!* In the spirit of Lenin's tribune of the people, we struggle to forge a revolutionary workers party that takes up the defense of all the oppressed. In contrast, other left organizations were virtually absent from the protest rallies, a condemning statement of their capitulation before the racist government.

The Kazankiran and Dogan families jointly carried out a courageous 72-day sit-in protest in the summer of 2004 in order to achieve recognition as refugees. The deportation of Ahmet and Ramazan Kazankiran was carried out despite their recognition by the UNHCR as "mandate refugees." This recognition was an outcome of the struggle last summer, not the result of the "benevolent" character of the UN whose 12 years of economic sanctions killed 1.5 million Iraqi civilians. No illusions in the UN! The deportation of two prominent participants of this struggle—along with the 60,000 people every year who are deported—is a statement to all refugees and their supporters, that those who dare protest the racist treatment by the Japanese government



Robichon/EPA

Kurdish-Turkish refugee Ahmet Kazankiran demonstrates outside the Tokyo Regional Immigration Bureau in September. Ahmet and his son were deported to Turkey on January 18.

will be targeted for repression and deportation.

The Partisan Defense Committee/Japan wrote in its 5 October 2004 open letter to trade unions encouraging them to send their own protest letter in defense of the Kazankirans and Dogans: "In order to defend the conditions of their own members, the labour unions must take up the cause of all workers in Japan. This includes Japanese, minority and immigrant workers, Burakumin and Ainu, men and women, and especially those who are the most vulnerable or isolated, who are targeted first in order to prepare further attacks on the livelihoods and rights of all working people. We call for industrial unions which organize all workers into common unions, regardless of sex, ethnic background or nationality."

An injury to one is an injury to all. It is the elementary duty of the workers movement to join in defense of those victimized by the state, its police and its courts. What is needed is the independent mobilization of the working class in class struggle action. Mobilizations of trade unionists at the next deportation hearing would be an immensely powerful statement of class solidarity and of the proletariat's resolve to fight the further racist segregation of immigrant labour here in Japan. *For trade union mobilizations to stop the deportations!*

We fight for full citizenship rights for everyone who lives in this country—for equal access to medical care, housing, education and jobs, the right to run for political office and the right to vote. As proletarian internationalists, the defense of immigrant rights and the fight to overcome racial and ethnic divisions is strategic to forging the working-class unity to bring down the entire racist capitalist system.

—Japanese *Spartacist* supplement, 4 February

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Labour Must Defend Undocumented Workers Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!



Coallier/Gazette

Montreal Peerless strike, 1996: unity of proletariat across national, ethnic lines is key to successful class struggle.

Under the rubric “Immigration Ministry Week of Shame,” Toronto activists held a series of actions in mid-February in defense of undocumented immigrants. Trotskyist League supporters joined several of the protests, which were initiated by No One Is Illegal (NOII) and joined by Arab, immigrant and Native youth. The largest, a February 19 march on immigration minister Joe Volpe’s constituency office, was menaced by cops who singled out minority youth for harassment.

Our comrades distributed a leaflet, reprinted below, to the demonstrators. As it states, the demands of the NOII-led “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” campaign—centrally, that undocumented immigrants be able to access city services without revealing their immigration status—are very much in the interest of working people. At the same time, we differ with the campaign’s focus on lobbying the city government to “take leadership and initiative” by implementing such reforms.

Our call for the *organized labour movement* to take up the defense of “illegal” immigrants sparked interest and debate among protesters. Some argued that looking to the unions to take a lead was utopian, because today’s labour leadership wouldn’t lift a finger for immigrant rights. We argued that what is really utopian is the idea that the capitalist city government would lead a struggle on behalf of the oppressed.

What is needed is a struggle within the union movement in defense of immigrant rights. Key unions like the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) Toronto District have endorsed the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” demands on the city government. But the city workers unions themselves should refuse to ask about status, and bring the full weight of the union behind any member victimized for providing services to undocumented workers. In so doing, the unions would make a powerful statement of internationalist solidarity with their oppressed brothers and sisters from other countries, many of whom toil in low-paid “illegal” jobs and have no

connections with the organized labour movement. Fighting for the working class to take up the defense of undocumented immigrants is a crucial component of the fight for proletarian unity against the capitalist system as a whole.

TL Leaflet on “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” Campaign

To be an undocumented immigrant in Canada is to live an underground existence of fear, insecurity and deprivation. If you are “illegal” in the eyes of the state you cannot register your children in school, get subsidized housing, medical insurance or even see a doctor without running the risk of being reported to Immigration Canada. You cannot drive a car for fear of being picked up by the racist cops and turned over to immigration authorities. If you’re in trouble or danger, a call to the cops could get you a one-way ticket back to the poverty or political repression of the country you left behind.

In opposition to this, the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty and No One Is Illegal have been campaigning to urge Toronto’s city council to adopt a “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” (DADT) policy. Their demands would bar city agencies from inquiring about immigration status before granting access to services and from reporting non-status people to Citizenship and Immigration. Municipal funds, city resources and workers would not be used to enforce federal or provincial immigration laws.

The Trotskyist League has endorsed these demands and we are actively seeking to bring this struggle into the union movement. These are basic reforms in the interests of undocumented immigrants and all working people. As communists our strategy is to mobilize the working class, which uniquely has both the social power and objective class interest to defend immigrant rights. This is crucial to forging working-class unity in

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Young Spartacus

Cops/York Administration Attack Student Protesters Cops off Campus!

Across North America, the “war on terror” has spawned a neo-McCarthyite campaign against left-wing academics and political activists, particularly those who defend the Palestinian people against Zionist state terror. Cynically branding its targets as “anti-Semites,” this witchhunt is the cutting edge of a drive to stamp out dissent on college campuses. Its ultimate targets? Antiwar protesters, immigrants, gay student groups, and anyone else dissatisfied with the reigning status quo of colonial wars abroad and grinding poverty here. The purpose of the “war on terror” is to give cover to sweeping attacks on immigrants, minorities, labour and the democratic rights of everyone.

On January 20, the York University administration in Toronto unleashed the city cops on students protesting Bush’s inauguration. Organized by the Grass Roots Anti-Imperialist Network (GRAIN), activists at the demo also distributed literature exposing the university’s intimate ties with Canadian and U.S. corporations involved in Iraq and Afghanistan, like Lockheed Martin, Exxon Mobil and Newmont Mining Corporation. As we describe in the leaflet reprinted below, a number of students were arrested and one was beaten so badly he was hospitalized. The Spartacus Youth Club (SYC) participated in this demonstration, and filmed the vicious police assault. Shown



SYC video

January 20: Cops doing the dirty work of the York administration. “War on terror” crackdown on student dissent is sweeping North America.



Autonomy & Solidarity

January 21: A thousand York students gather in Vari Hall protesting the previous day’s police assault.

widely, our video exposed the university administration’s lie that these attacks were somehow provoked.

In the following weeks, protests condemning this attack drew important support from the student body. However, many of those involved intentionally buried the polarizing questions of the Iraq War and defense of the Palestinians in order to focus narrowly on the liberal and more “respectable” issue of free speech. This included a number of housebroken “socialist” academics, like New Socialist Group guru David McNally who sermonized to students about protecting the hallowed *Charter of Rights*.

We oppose all university administration attacks on the freedom of expression. But burying the Palestinian question in the face of the administration and right-wing forces cedes the ground to those who would silence anti-imperialist activists, inviting further attacks. Expect more campaigns like the one against Professor David Noble. In November 2004, the administration ominously accused him of distributing hate literature “targeting Jewish members of the York community” for exposing the York University Foundation’s connections with pro-Zionist lobbyists and business interests.

The role of the campus administration as the on-site representatives of the capitalist class is captured in a statement by the organizers of the January 20 demonstration:

"The administration is seeking to repress us in various ways because we are challenging structures of wealth, privilege and domination which they themselves represent. As we defend our right to organize, we cannot lose sight of the primary importance of struggle against those structures."

—"A Political Statement from GRAIN," undated

GRAIN makes clear that it opposes racist capitalism and expresses solidarity with liberation struggles "locally and across the world." But what do they offer as a perspective for students who want to fight against the capitalist system? GRAIN promises more "popular education, organization, and direct action/civil disobedience"... a lot of activity, but toward what end? The SYCs have organized and participated in protests and actions on campuses across North America. But we know that student activists lack the social power necessary to effectively fight the depredations of the capitalist system.

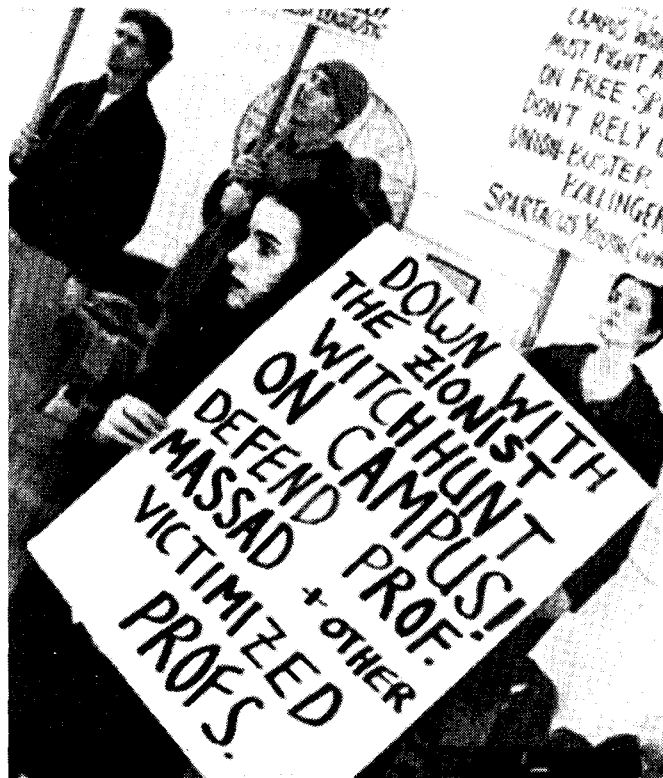
The SYCs understand that it is necessary to win left-wing students away from a political outlook limited solely to protest, however militant, to a perspective of revolutionary struggle to get rid of imperialist capitalism. We must link the battles on campus to broader fights, particularly those of the workers movement and trade unions. This requires more than simply supporting workers in their current struggles. It requires building an organization—a revolutionary political party—to mobilize the fighting power of labour in defense of all the oppressed. Only then will radical activists transcend the politics of moral outrage and deliver some real blows against the powers that be.

On January 20, 2005, George W. Bush threw a 40 million dollar party to officially kick off another four years of bloody imperialist rampage. As the world's biggest imperialist warlord was sipping on champagne and watching marching bands, thousands worldwide protested in opposition.

The Spartacus Youth Club attended an on-campus speak-out, organized by the Grass Roots Anti-Imperialist Network that brought out dozens of students including members of OPIRG [Ontario Public Interest Research Group] and CUPE [Canadian Union of Public Employees] 3903. On directions of the York University administration, the Toronto police, along with York security, viciously attacked the demonstration without provocation. Several students and members of CUPE Local 3903 were thrown to the ground and beaten by crazed baton-wielding cops. Five students were arrested and later brought up on the bogus charges of assaulting and obstructing police. One student was hospitalized after the beating he received at the hands of the police. We stand in solidarity with those arrested. Anyone who witnessed this incident, or saw the video, will know that this was a politically motivated attack against campus activists. **We demand: Drop all charges! No academic reprisals!**

The next day, on Friday, almost 1,000 students filled Vari Hall in protest. This is a big defeat for the administration and campus security's attempts at intimidation and isolation of campus activists. Thursday's cop attack was no isolated event. This attack follows a pattern of repression at York University and other campuses across North America against leftists, antiwar demonstrators, pro-Palestine activists and anyone who dares speak out in opposition to the "war on terror."

Despite the supposed restriction on campus security, which prevents them from physically intervening into situations, a York Security guard was observed participating in



Akira Hakuta/Columbia Spectator

SYC defends victims of Zionist witchhunt at Columbia University press conference, December 2004.

the brutal assault on students! Articles in the student newspaper, *Excalibur*, have been bemoaning the so-called restrictions on campus security all year. What is the real role of security guards and cops on campus? Their purpose isn't to make sure that women get home safe at night, they're here to protect the property rights of corporations and interests of their lackeys like Lorna Marsden [York's president and vice-chancellor] that use the university to develop military research, and train the next generation of the elite ruling class. An increase in campus security, as we have already seen, will be used against leftist, minority, gay and immigrant students. **Cops off campus! For student/teacher/worker control of universities!**

At Thursday's demo, the SYC raised the slogan "Cops off Campus!" as opposed to yelling "Shame," which is an empty expression of moral witness. This is because, as a revolutionary Marxist organization, the SYC understands that the police exist to defend the interests of the ruling class against workers, the oppressed and all those that stand in political opposition to its rule. Just as the capitalist state cannot be reformed to serve the interests of workers and the oppressed masses, the police cannot be "shamed" into submission when they lash out. It is their job to maintain the stability of the ruling class and guarantee its ability to exploit workers and plunder the world. To overcome the racist war and exploitation inherent under capitalism, it will take a social revolution based upon the working class, who collectively produce the wealth throughout this society and have the social power to change it. The Spartacus Youth Club fights to raise the consciousness of students, workers, and all the oppressed of the need to sweep this system into the dustbin of history.

—22 January 2005

Redfern...

(continued from page 2)

people can buy using government benefits! Meanwhile new details have emerged of the NSW state government's latest sinister plans to drive Aboriginal tenants off The Block in order to boost property prices in the Redfern-Waterloo area.

Key to defending the Redfern militants is the struggle to win union support for this cause. It is the organised working class—through its ability to shut down capitalist profit by withdrawing its labour—that has the social power to defeat campaigns of state repression. And the proletariat must champion the rights of the Aboriginal people in order to achieve the fighting unity necessary to confront an increasingly confident capitalist ruling class. Many of the most politically conscious Maori, Asian, Arab and Turkish workers living in racist White Australia identify with the struggles of Aboriginal people. Meanwhile leftist and worker militants in the neocolonial countries of Asia and the Pacific see in the brutal oppression of Aboriginal people a mirror of their own subjugation under U.S., Japanese and Australian imperialism. To unite across race lines in this country and to win the trust of, and hence a crucial fighting alliance with, the workers of the Asia-Pacific region, the proletariat must show determined opposition to the racist campaigns of the White Australia capitalist rulers.

No Illusions in the Capitalist State!

In response to incessant cop brutality, some left groups and Aboriginal leaders have raised calls for some form of "civilian review" of the police or for governments to "empower" and resource policing of areas like The Block by elders in the black community. For example, a 25 August letter to the *Koori Mail* by the FSP proposes "the establishment of independent elected civilian review boards" as a "mechanism of accountability" of the police. But the police, along with the military, courts and prisons are at the core of the capitalist



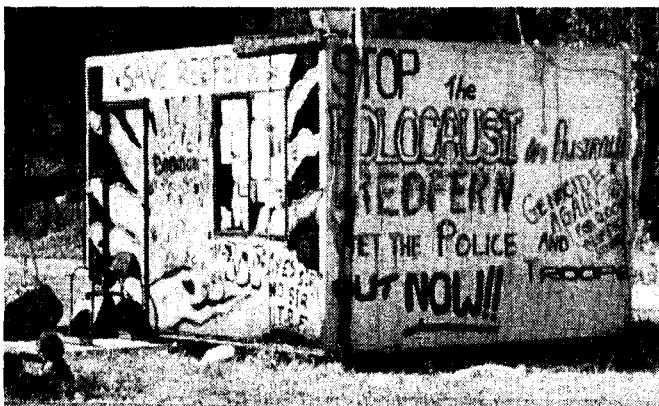
Australasian Spartacist

Spartacist supporters join Redfern march in memory of TJ Hickey.

state which was created, exists, and is replenished for the very purpose of enforcing the rule of the racist exploiting class over the workers and dispossessed. While it is possible, through social struggle, to win temporary concessions from the capitalists such as wage increases or greater access to social services, the bourgeoisie are no more going to cede control of their armed thugs, the police, than they are going to hand over power to the toiling masses. Any pretence of "civilian review" of the cops invariably serves to simply legitimise the police by propagating the deadly illusion that they are serving and being directed by the whole community.

Similarly, any "community policing" of areas like The Block that is set up and financed by the ruling class will be used by it to legitimise racist repression and make complicit some Aborigines in the oppression of their own people. And the only elders whom the bourgeoisie would "empower" to police their communities would be those that the capitalists seek to buy off or those who have already shown themselves willing to be allies of the racist rulers—like the people who have accepted invitations to join Howard's hand-picked Aboriginal "advisory" council or Mick Mundine, who has welcomed racist cop raids targeting The Block.

What is needed is a program of union/black/minority action against racist terror as part of a class-struggle fight-back against the all-sided capitalist attacks on the unions, the poor, women, Aborigines and immigrants. To realise this perspective requires a political struggle to break (in the first instance, the most class-conscious) workers from illusions in the potential reformability of the capitalist state and to expose the Laborite misleaders who tie the working class to the bosses' state. We need an authentic Leninist-Trotskyist party to lead the proletariat and its allies in a socialist revolution to sweep the racist capitalist system into the dustbin of history. On the way to this goal we need to defend all those who have courageously stood against the atrocities of racist capitalism: *Drop the charges against the Redfern and Palm Island black militants!*



Australasian Spartacist

Opposition to racist cop presence in Redfern emblazoned on part of the Aboriginal Tent Embassy in Canberra, Australia's capital. Aborigines set up Tent Embassy in 1972 as a protest against Australian government's denial of land and other rights.

Fax protest statements demanding the dropping of charges against the Redfern defendants to the NSW Attorney-General, Robert Debus on 011-612-9228-3166. Fax copies to the Partisan Defence Committee on 011-612-9281-2185. ■

Holiday Appeal...

(continued from page 3)

about. Despite the formal overturning of his death sentence, despite the sworn confession of the real killer, the recantation of prosecution witnesses, irrefutable proof of the trial judge's racist bias and the prosecution's racist jury-rigging, coercion of witnesses, doctoring and concealing evidence, Jamal remains in the shadow of Pennsylvania's death chamber.

The PDC has also vigorously championed the defense of Arab and Muslim immigrants caught in the cross-hairs of capitalism's phony "war on terror." Greetings were read to the Toronto gathering from Sophie Harkat, the wife of Mohamed Harkat, one of five detainees held without rights by the Canadian government under draconian "security certificates," which allow the indefinite detention of any refugee or immigrant whom the government considers a national security threat. She pointed out, "These men are detained on only allegations and without any access to the evidence. Their legal teams are kept in the dark.... If the Security Certificate hearing is found reasonable...then these men will be deported without any chance to appeal the decision. They will be returned to jail, torture or death. The last person deported to Algeria on a Security Certificate has disappeared."

The Toronto Holiday Appeal was built widely at labour events, on the shop floor, at immigrant defense rallies and during sales of our communist press around the city. In one black neighbourhood, a local barber, wearing a Mumia Abu-Jamal pin, invited organizers to give a rap to the customers. Autonomy & Solidarity, a well-known leftist website, posted an article promoting the Appeal, and a local anarchist bookstore took a stack of leaflets.

Before the formal presentations, participants at the Toronto meeting viewed the PDC's video on Mumia's case, "Live from Death Row." Radio host Norman Otis Richmond spoke about Jamal and his own experiences as a member of the Detroit-based League of Revolutionary Black Workers. Speakers for the PDC and the Trotskyist League cited other cases that we have taken up. These include our defense of Ontario Coalition Against Poverty militants who have been repeatedly targeted by the Toronto cops, and the struggle to free Mohamed Cherfi, a prominent activist in Montreal's Algerian community who was seized by the cops from his church sanctuary and deported to the U.S., where he now languishes in jail under threat of removal back to Algeria. A Spartacus Youth Club speaker described how the "war on terror" is being waged on the campuses as a means to stifle leftist dissent and witchhunt anyone who defends the Palestinians against Zionist terror.

As in other cities, the Toronto benefit drew a diverse crowd, including many youth. In the crowd were trade unionists from the Amalgamated Transit Union, Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW), as well as auto workers and teachers. In his written greetings, CUPW representative Dave Bleakney noted that CUPW has supported the defense of Mumia Abu-Jamal for years:

"Our union has sent letters, passed resolutions and participated in demonstrations. It is no secret to us that this is an eloquent class warrior who finds himself caged for telling the truth in a system that cannot afford the truth.

"Postal workers know this truth well. Our former national



Workers Vanguard

Lynne Stewart at NYC Holiday Appeal. Overturn the convictions of Stewart, Yousry and Sattar!

President once went to jail for several months for mistakenly assuming that the right to strike and negotiate actually existed in Canada."

Labour must practice class solidarity, he wrote: it must "forget living in a dream world that it is business as usual. Business as usual has meant genocidal policies against indigenous people. It has meant slavery and death for millions. It has meant unions are on the defensive. And it means that yet another one of ours is languishing on death row."

Speaking at the New York City event, which drew several hundred participants, veteran leftist attorney Lynne Stewart linked Mumia's case to her own—the U.S. government's terrorism smear and prosecution of herself, her translator Mohammed Yousry and paralegal Ahmed Abdel Sattar for their legal defense of their client, Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman, following the 1993 World Trade Center bombing. In February, a U.S. federal court outrageously convicted Stewart, Yousry and Sattar of "terrorism conspiracy" (see *Workers Vanguard* No. 842, 18 February). At stake in this case, now under appeal, is the very right of those facing government "anti-terrorism" charges to a robust legal defense. **Overturn the convictions of Lynne Stewart, Mohammed Yousry and Ahmed Abdel Sattar!**

As Lynne told the PDC gathering:

"I'm thinking about what I said about the judge in Mumia's case, the judge who said, 'Well, innocence is no defense.' No? So then we have to say, 'Well, what is a defense in this country, if innocence is not a defense?' The people in this room well know. What is a defense? If you come from the upper classes, that's a defense. If your skin is the right color, that's a defense. If you have a lot of money, regardless of what class you come from, that's a defense [applause]. It's not a defense to be innocent....

"But you know, it's still about Mumia. Mumia is the point person. His is the most egregious case. He is the one that speaks. And when he speaks, it's all of us speaking, with his words and his wisdom, just as were read here tonight."

International Class-Struggle Defense

"For those who came to the Holiday Appeal for the first time, I'm sure this was a unique experience: black and
(continued on page 10)

Free Vancouver Activist Justin Goodman!

We print below a February 23 letter from the Partisan Defense Committee to the support group for jailed Vancouver activist Justin Goodman.

Dear Friends,

The Partisan Defense Committee adds its voice to those protesting the imprisonment of Justin Goodman. On December 8 Goodman, a militant anti-poverty activist, was sentenced to 90 days in jail for his January 2003 attempt to stop the deportation of two Iranian refugees, Kobra Natghi and her son Hassan Esmat, from the Vancouver International Airport. We stand in solidarity with Goodman's courageous actions, for which he deserves the support of all fighters against anti-immigrant racism, not incarceration in the capitalists' prisons!

Goodman is one of many leftist militants who have faced state persecution for their actions to defend immi-

grants and the oppressed from deportations and detentions, especially in the context of the so-called "war on terror." The capitalist ruling class has used the pretext of the "anti-terror" campaign to vastly increase its state powers and attack the rights of immigrants as well as leftists, workers and anyone else who protests the deeply unjust status quo. We seek to mobilize the social power of organized labour against these attacks, and call for full citizenship rights for all immigrants.

We say: Free Justin Goodman! Free all class war prisoners! We are forwarding a contribution of \$100 which can be used to defray legal costs or to assist Justin while he is in jail.

To contact the Justin Goodman Support Fund, write c/o Purple Thistle, 975 Vernon Drive, Vancouver, BC V6A 3P2. ■

Holiday Appeal...

(continued from page 9)

white, young and old, all participating in a political meeting on an equal basis," commented a veteran PDC organizer in Chicago, where the social at the United Electrical Hall drew some 85 people, drawing strongly on the integrated unions in the city and surrounding area. Also speaking at the Chicago benefit was a young anarchist, Jeremy Hammond, whose case the PDC took up following his arrest, with two others, at the 27 June 2004 Gay Pride Parade for defending the march from attack by anti-gay bigots.

In the San Francisco Bay Area, it was standing room only, with many youth and trade unionists attending. A spokeswoman for the Mordechai Vanunu defense committee gave a vivid speech describing Vanunu's release from an Israeli

prison after serving his 18-year sentence and his re-arrest. Last November 11, over 30 armed police seized this brave whistleblower who exposed Israel's nuclear arsenal, and today he is under surveillance and barred from leaving the country.

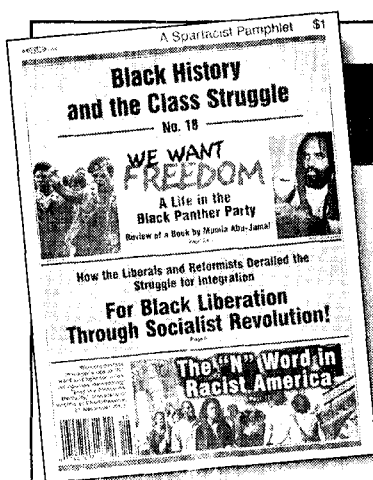
The New York social received greetings from the courageous antiwar activist Mary Kelly in Ireland, who struck a U.S. military aircraft at Shannon Airport through which nearly 350,000 U.S. troops have been transported in the past three years. In her defense, Kelly wrote, "By chopping up this warplane with an axe, I acted to save lives and prevent crime, and my defence of justification was firmly based in Irish and International Law, including the Nuremberg Principle which calls for determined action to prevent crimes against peace and humanity from occurring." Though convicted, which she will appeal, she wrote, in a piece of good news: "Due to a vigorous and relentless campaign and the unapologetic legal challenge presented in the Court, I have walked from this a free woman—the judge finally had to admit that my motivation was upright and my beliefs sincere: on December 1st he passed sentence—2 years suspended."

Become a PDC Sustainer!

We urge SC readers to support the work of the PDC. The Partisan Defense Committee seeks to build a class-struggle legal defense organization that all workers, all class-war prisoners and victims of racist persecution and brutality look to as their own. We need your help to sustain and expand this ever more urgent work on both sides of the border and around the world. Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the racist death penalty!

Become a sustaining contributor to help drive the work of the PDC forward! Contributions can be sent to: PDC, Box 314, Station B, Toronto, ON M5T 2W1.

—Adapted from *Workers Vanguard* No. 840, 21 January



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Rwanda...

(continued from page 1)

banditry and murder. An estimated 70,000 people have died, and 2.3 million have been displaced. One observer, Alex de Waal, stated that “predictions of up to 300,000 famine deaths must be taken seriously” (*London Review of Books*, 5 August 2004). A series of “peace agreements” have collapsed as the Sudanese government mouths hollow diplomatic promises while prosecuting the war.

This is the latest episode in a series of military conflicts that have raged in the country for the last 22 years, largely between a northern Islamist government and the historically oppressed south. An estimated two million people have died in a war waged primarily against civilians, many as a result of government-manufactured starvation. I emphasize *estimated* because there are no truly reliable statistics given the near-complete absence of modern infrastructure and health facilities. At every level, this conflict has been compounded by the effects of British colonial policy, Cold War rivalries and the predations of foreign corporations.

My talk tonight is going to focus on the role of imperialism in Rwanda and Sudan. There is profound anger and desperation over these tragedies, *but this anger is being manipulated in defense of forces who are profoundly culpable*. The tenth anniversary of the Rwandan genocide has seen a torrent of newspaper articles, movies, documentaries and books: a concerted international propaganda campaign whose principal message is that UN intervention could have stopped the Rwandan genocide, and that the Western imperialist powers should send troops to Darfur. A chorus of voices has perversely argued that Rwanda represents a failure of Western “conscience,” thus transforming the genocide into the symbol of a new UN-led “civilizing mission” on the African continent.

The Canadian lieutenant-general responsible for the 1994 Rwandan mission, Roméo Dallaire, has written a best-selling critique of the UN and Western powers’ complicity, arguing for a greater role for “humanitarian” military intervention. The social-democratic NDP echoes these calls, pushing the Canadian nationalist myth that this is a “peacekeeping” nation. Many youth and working people, even when suspicious of Western foreign policy, see UN intervention as the only way to stop the horrific violence, however temporarily.

The ideological drive to paint the capitalist rulers of the U.S., Canada or Europe as potential allies of the impoverished and persecuted is based on a web of myths and lies. It is also profoundly dangerous. The International Communist League categorically opposes UN “peacekeeping missions,” which are in reality imperialist forces of occupation. The United Nations does *not* rise above the competing interests of its member states, as U.S. sidelining of the UN in the lead-up to the Iraq war vividly showed. UN intervention has always provided a “humanitarian” cover for the crimes of the imperialist powers, from the 1961 assassination of Congolese nationalist Patrice Lumumba to the murder and torture of Somali youth by Canadian special forces in 1993. The nightmare that Africa confronts is inextricably linked to the international capitalist system. Looking to the UN only strengthens agencies whose express purpose is to guard the current world order.

Today’s call for greater Western intervention into Africa



Grant/UN

Roméo Dallaire, prominent spokesman for “humanitarian” imperialist military actions, at 1994 UN press conference.

occurs in an extremely sinister context. No longer constrained by the military counterweight of the Soviet Union, the first workers state in history, U.S. imperialism has rampaged across the globe for the last 15 years, spreading death in Iraq, Afghanistan, Serbia, Colombia, Haiti and elsewhere. This has led to increasing tensions between the imperialist powers, who have moved to expand their spheres of neo-colonial influence and protect key mineral resources. In particular, France has scrambled to preserve its influence, in part through strengthening its global military infrastructure and securing its role in multilateral economic and defense agreements. A second-rate power, whose fading claim to imperial glory rests in large part on suzerainty over its former African colonies, France sees the greater economic role played by Nigeria and South Africa—both closely tied to U.S. and British capitalism—as a threat.

Since September 11, the Bush gang has extended the “war on terror” to Africa, opening a military base in Djibouti and “anti-terrorist command centers” in Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda. U.S. forces have assisted military operations in the Sahel, the buffer zone between the oil fields in North Africa and the Gulf of Guinea. Over the next ten years, Africa is projected to become the U.S.’ second largest supplier of oil after the Near East. France has responded by strengthening ties with oil rich countries in North and West Africa, undercutting American policies in the UN, and aggressively intervening in its “spheres of influence,” for example the Ivory Coast.

Imperialist Lies, Colonial Guilt: Causes of the Rwandan Genocide

The cause of the Rwandan genocide has been the subject of enormous, deliberate obfuscation. The most vulgar example is the mantra of “age-old tribal rivalries.” The Hutu and Tutsi are not tribes—a word applied to Africa with careless indiscretion—but share a common language, territory and, in parts of Rwanda, culture. Journalists often refer to the “Hutu genocide of the Tutsi,” in a tropical rendition of the Goldhagen thesis that Germans bear “collective guilt” for the Holocaust. This distortion has provided a cover for mass reprisals against the Hutu. The driving force behind the genocide was

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Rwanda...

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fundamentally political. This was a systematic plan of eradication targeting Hutu opponents of the regime and the entire Tutsi civilian population—the potential base of support for an invading Tutsi-led army from Uganda. But it would not have occurred without the legacy of German and Belgian colonialism, without the role of the UN and without the direct military support of French imperialism.

Two myths circulate about the Hutu and Tutsi. The first is that the division has its origins in an invasion of Rwanda by iron-working, pastoral peoples from North East Africa who conquered and then subjugated the indigenous inhabitants. No archeological or linguistic evidence exists to support such claims: metallurgy first appeared in the region around the sixth century B.C.; pastoral peoples have existed in this part of Central Africa for at least 2,000 years. This myth was first used by the colonial powers to justify fortifying the rule of a “Caucasoid Hamatic” Tutsi over the “Bantu” Hutu. Africans were supposedly so primitive and savage that the complex civilization of pre-colonial Rwanda must have been imported.

The second myth is that the Hutu/Tutsi division was completely fabricated by colonialism. The main promoter of this African nationalist fairytale is the current Tutsi-dominated government in Kigali, the Rwandan capital, and its foreign defenders. By asserting that these social divisions were imposed entirely from outside, the current Kigali regime can pose as an opponent of ethnic chauvinism while continuing to viciously persecute its Hutu adversaries.

Following the German conquest of Rwanda in the late 19th century, a complex set of social relationships involving clientage, kinship and clan ties that had developed over several centuries was reduced to bipolar Tutsi-Hutu terms of racial dominance. German and then Belgian colonialism greatly strengthened the power of the Tutsi chiefs, eliminated all Hutu office holders and assisted the Tutsi monarchy in conquering the north of the country. Redefining the pre-existing divisions in racial terms, the Belgian colonialists and Catholic Church limited access to education, administrative positions and most jobs to the Tutsi “master race.” Collective labour for the state became a Hutu obligation.

The resulting system of “dual colonialism” was a hybrid of

direct and indirect rule, where the colonial state employed the Tutsi aristocracy to extract taxes and labour from the Hutu peasantry. Following independence from Belgium in 1962, a Hutu-chauvinist political party came to power that had fully assimilated the racial outlook of their colonial masters. This avowedly “Hutu Power” state instituted systematic discrimination against the Tutsi and launched repeated pogroms.

Like everywhere else in the colonial world, the various ploys of the imperialist rulers served to twist and distort social relations. The imperialist partition of Africa undermined the formation of indigenous property-owning classes while integrating tribal structures and chieftainships into the state apparatus. Following independence, the new African states inherited societies composed of numerous linguistic and cultural groups, often pitted against each other by the divide-and-rule strategy of colonialism. Maintaining and strengthening tribal institutions, these African nationalist regimes were locked into the politics of ethnic dominance and its murderous consequences.

The Rwandan Civil War: Setting the Stage

Political repression in Rwanda and neighbouring Burundi during the 1960s and '70s produced several waves of exiles into Tanzania, the Congo and Uganda. By the late 1980s, there was a large Rwandan diaspora throughout central Africa. Many survived for decades by scraping out an existence in permanent “resettlement” camps. Often denied citizenship and access to farm land, Rwandan refugees were the target of xenophobic attacks. In Uganda, Rwandan Tutsi exiles played a central role in the guerrilla army that brought Yoweri Museveni, a key American ally, to power in the mid-1980s.

In 1990, the Tutsi-led Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) invaded Rwanda from Uganda in order to overthrow the existing regime and forcibly repatriate tens of thousands of refugees. While the RPF's first advances ended disastrously, by 1993 Rwandan government forces were facing defeat. As the RPF moved into the country, they killed civilians, looted and impressed youth into forced labour. By the beginning of 1993, some 950,000 people had fled its advance—roughly one in seven Rwandans—creating massive social dislocation. On both sides of the civil war, access to and control of land was a driving issue.

Internally, the Rwandan government faced mounting pressure for democratic reform. Rwanda had been in a protracted economic crisis since the late 1980s, largely due to the plummeting of coffee prices on the world market. One of the ten poorest countries in the world, 90 percent of its population engaged in agriculture. In August of 1993, the government, the RPF and the opposition signed a “power sharing” agreement, the Arusha Accord, which temporarily put an end to the fighting. Elements around Rwandan president Juvénal Habyarimana then stalled on the implementation of a coalition government with the RPF, insisting on the inclusion of rabidly anti-Tutsi politicians from the fascist CDR (Coalition for the Defense of the Republic). Hutu-extremist radio was



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Theoneste Bagosora, key figure in the akazu faction, widely viewed as having masterminded the April-June 1994 genocide in Rwanda.

urging a “final solution” to crush all of the Tutsi “cockroaches.” The situation further deteriorated in October 1993, when Melchior Ndadaye, the first Hutu president of Burundi, was assassinated. Following a wave of ethnic violence in Burundi, 200,000 desperate Hutu refugees fled across the Rwandan border. The stage was set.

The Rwandan Genocide Begins

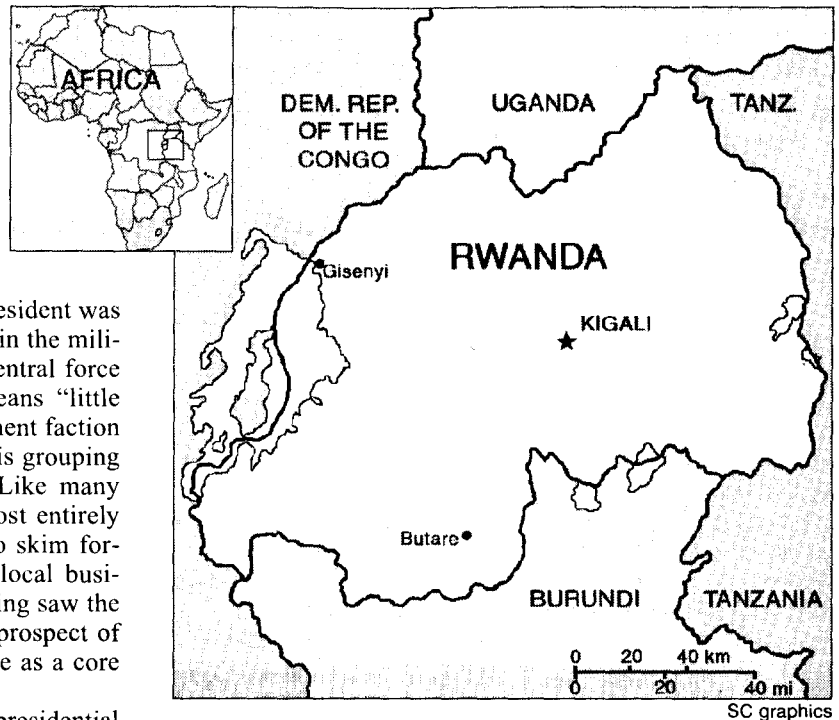
On April 6, 1994, the plane of the Rwandan president was shot down, most likely by Hutu-extremist forces in the military. This signaled the start of the killing. The central force behind the genocide was the *akazu*, which means “little house” in Kinyarwanda. A military and government faction centered on the family of the president’s wife, this grouping had long enjoyed substantial French backing. Like many African ruling groups, its privilege derived almost entirely from control of state power, which allowed it to skim foreign aid, tax agricultural exports, shake down local businesses and run smuggling operations. This grouping saw the power-sharing agreement with the RPF and the prospect of an open election as a direct threat to its existence as a core element of the state apparatus.

During the first stage of the genocide, the elite presidential guard assassinated opposition figures, especially moderate Hutu from the south of the country. Then the death squads of the *Interahamwe* (“those who attack together”) moved through the countryside, often mobilizing landless peasants and refugees. The *Interahamwe* had originally been established as the youth group of the main government party. The orders were given by the *akazu*. Catholic clergy and schoolteachers played a key role in identifying Tutsi victims. Hundreds of thousands of Rwandans, maybe more, took part in this minutely choreographed savagery. There was scattered resistance, especially in the south. Some Hutu refused to participate, hiding Tutsi. But these instances were exceptional. Others saved friends or colleagues and then joined the mass pogroms.

It torments the intellect that so many Hutu killed their neighbours, friends, lovers, families. In a country plummeting into anarchy, torn apart by four years of civil war, untold numbers faced starvation. Desperate and driven out of their homes by the RPF advance, many killed for land and cattle. With a gun to their head, some killed in order to save their own lives. Others feared that the return of the Tutsi armed forces would lead to the reestablishment of the monarchy and the loss of what little land they had left. Decades of pogroms, chauvinist propaganda and interethnic murder have created societies in central Africa where social conflict plays itself out in the grim dialectic of racial slaughter. This is the ultimate legacy of colonial rule.

Genocide and the Marxist View of History

In a letter to a Russian leftist, Marx’s life-long collaborator Friedrich Engels wrote: “But history is about the most cruel of all goddesses, and she leads her triumphal car over heaps of corpses, not only in war, but also in ‘peaceful’ economic development” (Letter to Nikolai Danielson, 24 February 1893). Engels is *not* writing about genocide. He is explaining how the material, scientific and cultural gains that humanity has made under class society—from the Egyptian pyramids to modern industry—have come at terrific cost, consuming



the lives of untold numbers of the toiling classes. Every monument to bourgeois civilization is a monument to barbarism—no wonder Africans sometimes speak of capitalism as a form of cannibalism. But Marx and Engels’ great insight was that with the advent of science and modern industry, this terrific suffering is no longer historically necessary.

By exponentially increasing the productivity of human labour, industrialization has the potential to eliminate want and scarcity—the struggle over the basic means of survival—which is the origin of man’s oppression of other humans. A centralized, rationally planned economy could address the unequal distribution of wealth internationally and draw the billions of poor and desperately impoverished around the world into the economic, scientific, cultural and artistic work of creating a fundamentally new society. However, this potential is crippled by the capitalist system, where the application of technology is enslaved to the pursuit of profits, and where competition between capitalists produces economic anarchy. The industrial working class, whose labour creates almost all wealth, has both the power and historic responsibility to rip the means of production out of the bourgeoisie’s hands. This is why Marxists see the working class as the fundamental force for progressive social change.

The genocide in Rwanda had nothing to do with the costs of historic progress, but was ultimately the consequence of a decaying system turning in on itself. Rwanda had no working class to speak of and modern industry scarcely existed. The social power Marxists look to, the proletariat, whose material interests *transcend* racial and ethnic divisions, was simply absent.

In the age of the great mercantile empires, European capitalism tore over 12 million people out of the African continent in the hellish “Middle Passage” to the American slave plantations. During the late 19th century, it conquered the continent with the assistance of the Gatling gun, plundering Africa’s resources and impressing millions of Africans into forced labour. Reinforcing the most reactionary and oppressive

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Rwanda...

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aspects of pre-colonial societies, colonialism opened the continent to imperialist capitalism, while failing to extend the benefits of the industrial revolution—paid for in significant measure with African blood—beyond a few enclaves. The fate of Africa was chained to the world market and foreign capital.

The modest economic growth and social development that occurred in many countries following independence was devastated during the global economic crisis of the 1970s and the catastrophic economic collapse throughout Africa in the 1980s. To the imperialists, Africa is a “failed” continent, its population a write-off in the blue books of world finance. The explosive alloy of mass desperation and racial chauvinism is not unique to Rwanda. It can and *will* happen again. The end of Engels’ letter which I quoted above reads: “And we men and women are unfortunately so stupid that we never can pluck up courage to a real progress unless urged to it by sufferings that seem almost out of proportion.” Without socialism, we face the continuing descent into barbarism.

Imperialist Complicity at Every Step

The great lie surrounding the Rwandan genocide is that foreign intervention would have prevented this catastrophe. In fact, foreign intervention did occur—again, and again, and again. Viewing the Tutsi RPF as tools of the “Anglo-Americans,” the French ruling class backed the Habyarimana regime to the hilt. Shortly after the beginning of the war, the government of François Mitterrand sent in 600 troops who assisted in interrogating prisoners, transported massive military aid and managed roadblocks, demanding “*Vous êtes Tutsi ou Hutu?*” The French underwrote the financial risk of weapons deliveries from Egypt and bro-



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Rwandan refugees in Tanzania, 1994. Racist colonial rule and neocolonial capitalism in Africa have produced continuing wars and destitution.

kered an arms deal with South Africa. At one point, French officers took complete control of counterinsurgency operations. Throughout this period, hundreds of Hutu opponents of the regime were arrested, and thousands of Tutsi civilians were murdered by the Rwandan army.

The IMF, the World Bank and foreign governments actually *increased* foreign aid to the Hutu regime during the war. (Rwanda was the number one per capita recipient of Canadian aid.) The UN-brokered Arusha Accord—which like all such agreements was incapable of addressing the fundamental causes of the conflict—in the end only provided breathing space for the *génocidaires* to organize.

In his book *Shake Hands with the Devil* (2004), Roméo Dallaire meticulously describes the cynical indifference of the imperialist powers towards the fate of the Rwandan people. In detailed memoranda to the UN headquarters in New York, Dallaire warned that death squads were being organized and described the progress of the genocide. The UN *stopped* him from intervening. Every suggestion aimed at arresting the progress of the killing was deliberately obstructed. His indictment of the UN’s role is worth quoting. He writes of the

“...suffering, mutilation, rape, and murder of 800,000 Rwandans, with the help of the member nations of the only supposedly impartial world body. Ultimately, led by the United States, France and the United Kingdom, this world body aided and abetted genocide in Rwanda. No amount in cash and aid will ever wash its hands clean of Rwandan blood.”

Dallaire is an imperialist officer who loyally served Ottawa for decades, including in the occupation of Quebec during the 1970 October Crisis. He is far from our idea of a hero. But he was honestly driven to the edge of madness by the staggering reality of the genocide and Western racism. His book contains moments of furious honesty, like the description of Belgian troops sitting in a local bar, bragging that they know what to do with African “n-----s” and about how many hundreds of people they killed during the UN’s “peacekeeping” mission in Somalia. Yet Dallaire dedicates

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1993 Toronto protest against U.S./UN attack on Mogadishu. Canadian "peacekeepers" tortured and murdered Somalis.

his book to these same soldiers.

His story is populated by complacent, silk-tied UN diplomats who live in palatial mansions and drive black Mercedes while refugees starve near their doorsteps. After the genocide, someone from the Clinton administration told Dallaire that it would take the deaths of 85,000 Rwandans to justify risking the life of a *single* U.S. soldier, expressing the imperialists' racism to the fifth decimal place. These are the same imperialists Dallaire appeals to, pleading with them to abandon "national self-interest" and adopt a humanist approach to foreign policy. Dallaire's book is an argument for how imperialist militarism, if properly deployed, could have saved the day. It is because he passionately believes his case, and because he writes about Rwandans as human beings whose lives have value, that this account is the most dangerous piece of propaganda in the new "humanitarian imperialism" crusade.

Three months into the genocide, the French government launched "Opération Turquoise" when it became clear that its Rwandan clients faced defeat by the RPF. Authorized by a resolution of the Security Council, the French intervention was in part commanded by officers who had recently acted as military advisers for the Hutu-power government. The *Interahamwe* cheered French troops, while waving the French flag. The French military often stood by in nearby towns while killing went on unabated in the hills a few kilometers away. Since 1994, France has continued its maneuvers, backing various forces in the Congo and the government of Zimbabwe in opposition to the U.S.' new ally in the region, RPF head Paul Kagame.

In Africa, where the imperialists created artificial states containing a multitude of peoples, the rule of a formerly oppressed people like the Tutsis in Rwanda will inevitably entail brutal methods of forced assimilation, expulsion or genocide. As the RPF took power in Kigali, a million refugees flooded into the Congo, spreading the civil war into that country. When the Hutu military began to use refugee camps to regroup, the RPF and its local proxies killed tens of thousands of Hutu refugees in the Eastern Congo. In 1996, the new Tutsi-led Rwandan army, Uganda, Burundi and

Eritrea invaded the Congo (then Zaire) with full U.S. backing to overthrow the regime of Mobutu Sese Seko. Canadian corporations like Barrick Gold and Tenke Mining underwrote this effort in order to obtain rights to the country's vast mineral wealth. One Canadian mining executive later told an African employee: "You Congolese must know that this country and all its minerals are not yours but ours."

Rwanda and Uganda invaded the Congo again in 1998, exacerbating a multi-sided regional war that plunged the Eastern Congo into chaos. The plunder has been so systematic that Rwanda has become an exporter of diamonds. There is not a single diamond mine in all Rwanda. In Rwanda, disappearances and summary executions are now common. A wave of Hutu *and* Tutsi government politicians has fled the country, fearing imprisonment or murder at the hands of the RPF. All of this has occurred with the knowledge, complicity and direct aid of the same imperialist powers that people like NDP stalwart Stephen Lewis and Roméo Dallaire are now calling on to intervene in Darfur.

Sudan: Colonialism, the Cold War and the "War on Terror"

Sudan is the largest country in Africa, roughly the size of the United States east of the Mississippi, with a population of nearly 30 million people. Over a hundred languages and dialects are spoken, the most common being Arabic in the north and Dinka in the south. Islam was probably introduced to the north in the same fashion as the rest of sub-Saharan Africa, first through commercial networks and later the adoption of Islam and elements of Arabic culture by the indigenous ruling class. Fictional Arab genealogies became markers of elite status.

Northern and southern Sudan were first drawn into a single political economy in the 1820s, when the Egyptian army led by Muhammad Ali invaded the country in search of slaves and gold. As Douglas Johnson writes: "The incorporation of the whole of the south as the state's exploitable hinterland, the intensification of racial stratification and the widespread identification of people from the south with low status were thus consequences of the economic and political system of Turco-Egyptian colonialism" (*The Root Causes of Sudan's Civil Wars*, 2003). After an Islamic uprising drove Egypt out in the 1880s, Britain conquered the Sudan, instituting a policy to keep the south segregated, welcoming Christian missionaries while banning Islamic proselytizers.

The "Southern Policy" kept the area economically primitive, as the British concentrated economic resources, roads and schools in the north. While giving lip service to the abolition of slavery, the British colonial administration looked the other way while the northern Arab elite kept their slaves. In 1956, under pressure from newly independent Egypt, Britain handed over political power to the northern ruling class. In anticipation of this perfidy, an army battalion in the south rebelled, presaging the first of two civil wars that have continued until today.

The bourgeois press repeats simplistic clichés about "Arab versus African" or "Muslim versus Christian," feeding into the anti-Arab racism of the "war on terror." But the Sudanese war has been driven by a combination of the historic exploitation of the south, imperialist Cold War geopolitics and the conflict over resources, especially oil. During the early 1980s, Sudan was the third largest recipient of U.S.

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Rwanda...

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foreign aid (massively in the form of military assistance and modern weaponry), and was cultivated by the Reagan White House as a regional counterweight to Libya and Soviet-backed Ethiopia. The Islamic fundamentalists and military officers who took power in 1989 through a coup d'état were once considered CIA "assets" because of their vehement anti-Communism and alliance with the *mujahedin* fighting the Soviets in Afghanistan. Islam has long been the militant ideology of the northern rulers. Far from being the product of a "clash of civilizations," the south's struggle has been driven by resistance to economic, cultural and political oppression.

The second civil war began in 1983 when the Khartoum government, seeking to maintain control over newly discovered oil reserves in the Upper Nile province, unilaterally abrogated the south's regional status and imposed Islamic *sharia* law over the entire country. The northern government has frequently pursued this war by arming local Arabic-speaking groups displaced by economic privations and encouraging them to prey on their neighbours. The Sudanese conflict provoked an international outcry in the mid-1990s, after it had come to light that government-backed militias had kidnapped and enslaved more than 15,000 women and children from the south. We have denounced the flagrant role that foreign oil corporations, such as Canada's Talisman (which withdrew in 2003), played in perpetuating this conflict and collaborating with the militias in massacres and forced displacements (see "Why Marxists Oppose UN/Canadian 'Peacekeepers'," *SC* No. 134, Fall 2002). France's repeated military interventions into neighbouring Chad are part of the broader struggle among the imperialists for control of this region.

No Imperialist/African Union Intervention into Darfur!

Darfur is not part of the south, but consists of three separate provinces in the west of the country. Populated by both agricultural and Bedouin peoples devoted to herding cattle, Darfur's entire population is Muslim. The most marginalized province of Sudan, Darfur has received less in social services, economic aid and government posts than any other region of the country. Alex de Waal explains that in the wake of famine in the mid-1980s, which killed over 100,000 people, conflict over diminishing land and resources exploded into battles between agricultural and nomadic peoples. Resentment against the Khartoum government deepened after the Islamic fundamentalist regime of Hassan al-Turabi took power in 1989. A wave of repression swept the county, including the banning of workers' unions and the total cloistering of women in the cities. In Darfur, the bankrupt local administration attempted to rule through public executions and terror, while the laws regarding access to land were revised. Returning Islamic militants from Libya, exiled under the previous regime, further polarized Darfur along racial lines.

But Turabi also extended his hand to Islamic groupings long despised by the northern Arab elite, like the Sufi and West African Fellata. When Turabi was sidelined by the officer corps in the late 1990s, many of his supporters went into opposition against the government, producing a "Black Book" documenting the ongoing marginalization of Darfur. In April 2003, a coalition of secular and Muslim organizations



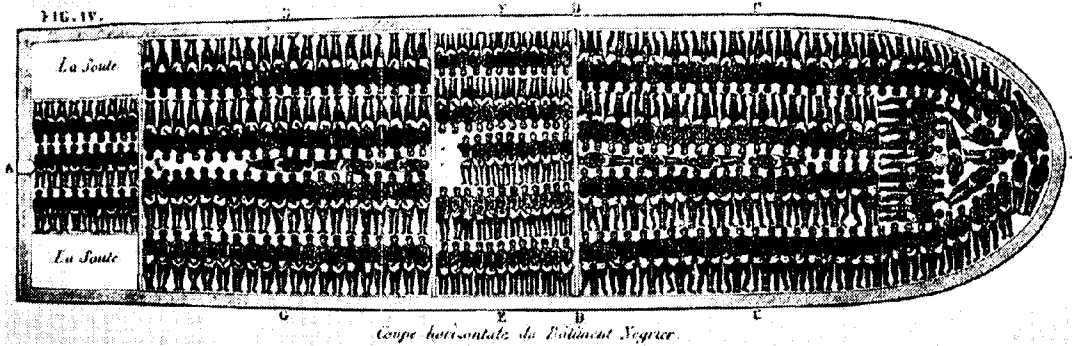
launched an audacious assault against a government military installation, taking an Air Force general hostage. The government responded by supplying arms to Arab militias, called the *janjaweed*. The militias have murdered, raped and physically branded speakers of Fur, Tunjur, Masalit and Zaghawa, while uprooting their fruit trees and destroying irrigation systems.

Marxists denounce these crimes in the strongest possible terms. But the UN's plan to send over 10,000 "peacekeeping" troops to Sudan, based overwhelmingly in the south, has absolutely nothing to do with "humanitarian" concerns over this carnage. The imperialist powers want to shore up the unstable peace agreement between the north and the south, although they would prefer to subcontract out as much of the work as possible to the states of the African Union, particularly South Africa and Nigeria.

Dominated by the U.S.' South African junior partner, the African Union is otherwise composed of neocolonial satraps and client regimes of the imperialist powers. African Union intervention, pushed throughout Africa as a nationalist alternative to the UN, is simply imperialist occupation at one remove. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan has repeatedly called to implement starvation sanctions against Sudan. Unlike Rwanda, U.S. imperialism has pressing strategic concerns in Sudan, especially the control of oil reserves in the south and the political stabilization of a country long infamous as a refuge for Islamic fundamentalist groups like Al Qaeda. This is UN "peacekeeping" as a cover for the "war on terror." We demand: No U.S./UN/African Union intervention! All occupying troops out! No to UN sanctions!

Africa and the Collapse of the Soviet Union

The Soviet Union, the first workers state in history, provided a crucial military counterweight to U.S. imperialism. Despite its political degeneration under the Stalin bureaucracy, we fought to defend the Soviet Union. We recognized that its destruction would deliver a staggering blow to working and oppressed peoples across the globe. At the same



Deck of slave ship. European capitalism tore millions from Africa in hellish "Middle Passage" to American slave plantations.

Library of Congress

time, we sought to build Trotskyist parties in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe to remove the Stalinist bureaucrats and return these countries to the path of socialism.

For millions of working people around the world, the Soviet Union represented the possibility for a radically different kind of society, one with no unemployment or homelessness, with universal health care and free education for all. That the USSR went from an overwhelmingly peasant country suffocated by the archaic institutions of tsarist absolutism to the second most powerful military and industrial state in the world had enormous significance in Africa. Even pro-capitalist African nationalists looked to countries like Yugoslavia, whose multiethnic population lived together in peace under Tito's bureaucratically deformed workers state. The USSR gave military assistance to the South African ANC in the struggle against apartheid, while Cuba sent troops to Angola, routing the U.S.-backed South African army and its puppets. The Soviet Union took dock workers from Senegal, like the world famous novelist and director Ousmane Sembene, and trained them in how to make films.

As Soviet leader Gorbachev moved to conciliate U.S. imperialism in the mid-1980s, Soviet aid to Africa began to dry up. The U.S. made clear that with the end of the Cold War, it would no longer bother to prop up its former African puppets. Since the Soviet Union's destruction in 1991-92, a quarter of Africa's countries have been plunged into war and social disintegration, while the rest of the continent is in the grip of an intractable economic and political crisis. The aftermath has been apocalyptic: a rise in witchcraft accusations and the murder of young women; the spread of fundamentalist Islam and Christianity, often intermixed with reactionary practices such as the bride price and female genital mutilation; the complete devastation of the small urban labour forces; forced labour; land shortages and rural conflict. Starting in the late 1970s-early '80s, IMF structural adjustment programs have devastated the meager social services. Famine and the AIDS pandemic threaten the eradication of tens of millions of people across the continent.

Especially since the collapse of the Soviet Union, it has become common for leftists to call on the imperialist powers to play a "humanitarian role." Feminists like the recently deceased Susan Sontag cheered the NATO bombing of Serbia. The self-professed anarchist professor Noam Chomsky called for sanctions against Iraq and he regularly appeals to the supposed principles of "international law." In a recent article, the Canadian International Socialists lamely recite the liberal line that "the Great Powers stood by and did nothing" during the Rwandan genocide (*Socialist Worker*, 5 January). In France, the fake-Trotskyist Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire and the supposedly anti-state anarchists of

the CNT have provided a cover for imperialist machinations in Africa, signing a statement that calls on the African Union to supplant French troops now occupying the Ivory Coast. Their excuse for lobbying on behalf of these imperialist-backed thugs and dictators? Foreign troops are necessary to avoid another Rwanda. All of these people have fed into the lie that imperialism can come to the aid of the downtrodden.

Imperialism and Permanent Revolution

For revolutionary Marxists, "imperialism" is not simply an evocative characterization of Western foreign policy or the acts of individual corporations—grotesque as they may be. In Toronto, we have gone on protests to denounce the participation of Canadian security firms in the Iraq occupation in order to draw attention to the role of our "own" bourgeoisie. But we do not believe that altering individual company or government policies is a strategy for defending oppressed and subjugated peoples. Imperialism is—in Lenin's words—the highest stage of capitalism. In the late 19th century monopolies, banks and finance capital came to play a predominant role in the functioning of the international economy. Since then, the world has been divided into spheres of influence manipulated and controlled by the main capitalist powers and their junior allies, like Canada. There is no hope of reforming imperialism. It must be overthrown.

(continued on page 18)

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Rwanda...

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As Russian Marxist Leon Trotsky argued in his theory of permanent revolution, the venal despots who run the colonial and neocolonial world are incapable of raising the economic development of their countries to the level of the advanced industrial world. Contrary to the NGOs and "development" agencies, lack of democracy in underdeveloped countries does not derive from the absence of "civil society." Caught between the seething masses and the dictates of their imperialist paymasters, democracy is a luxury the rulers of Africa can hardly afford.

Drawing on the experience of the 1917 October Revolution, Trotsky argued that the fight for national emancipation from imperialism and the struggle for democracy falls to the industrial working class in countries of belated capitalist development. And once the working class has seized power, it cannot stop at these tasks, but must move to destroy private property and establish a workers state. To survive and flourish, a socialist revolution in such a country must be extended to the imperialist heartlands.

But what about countries like Rwanda or Sudan where the working class is weak or non-existent? As Trotsky wrote in *The Permanent Revolution* (1930): "Then the struggle for national liberation will produce only very partial results, results directed entirely against the working masses.... A backward colonial or semi-colonial country, the proletariat of which is insufficiently prepared to unite the peasantry and take power, is thereby incapable of bringing the democratic revolution to its conclusion." In such cases, there is no purely internal solution. The destiny of these countries is directly tied to the international class struggle, in the first instance to those countries in the region that *do* have important proletarian concentrations.

In South Africa there exists a powerful labour movement, whose ranks contain many adherents of a socialist vision of society. Since it came to power in 1994, we have characterized the ANC government as "neo-apartheid," underlining

that the ANC serves as black frontmen for the same white capitalist rulers. The fundamental contours of South African capitalism are unchanged, while black unemployment, now 50 percent, and poverty have worsened. An estimated 5.3 million South Africans are HIV positive and the death rates are so high that the cemeteries are overflowing. But the ANC government has pursued a deadly policy of denying that HIV causes AIDS and obstructing access to treatment. In a country that produces over 50 percent of sub-Saharan Africa's economic output, instead of science and medicine, government ministers recommend the *sangomas*—traditional "healers"—whose treatments for AIDS are often lethal.

There is searing anger at the base of South African society. But working-class struggle is blocked by the false leaders of the working class, especially the South African Communist Party and the COSATU trade-union tops who sit in the government administering capitalist austerity. Socialist revolution in South Africa would reverberate around the world, especially among black workers and in the impoverished ghettos of the U.S.

The last two decades have witnessed the near devastation of the limited industrial growth once achieved by many African countries. But small concentrations of industrial workers still exist throughout the continent. An international revolutionary party would link their struggles with the social power of the workers movement north of the Sahara and throughout the Near East. The hundreds of thousands of African immigrants who are a major component of the working class in France and elsewhere in Europe are a critical bridge for the international extension of the revolution, wherever it begins.

The final liberation of the Third World will require the destruction of capitalism in the imperialist countries. The workers of North America, Europe and Japan owe a tremendous historical debt to the oppressed masses of Africa, Latin America and Asia. Only after the working class in the imperialist countries has taken power will the social resources, technology and scientific expertise finally become available to begin addressing the plight of the African masses.

Today, solidarity with the struggles of those targeted by imperialism must begin with opposition to our "own" capitalist rulers. The Trotskyist League fights for defense of the Palestinians, opposes the murderous U.S. occupation of Iraq and exposes the crimes of the Canadian bourgeoisie whose troops are participating in the occupation of Haiti and Afghanistan. We denounce those on the left and in the labour movement who push the lie that Canadian imperialism or the UN can play any kind of progressive role, a lie whose purpose is to reconcile Canadian workers with their exploiters. We fight to build the revolutionary internationalist workers party that will bring the fighting power of labour to bear in the struggle against every manifestation of oppression and state tyranny. We demand: *No imperialist/African Union intervention into Sudan! All UN/U.S./Canadian troops out of Africa!* ■

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Full Citizenship Rights...

(continued from page 5)

the face of the racism the bosses use to poison and divide workers' struggles. The TL believes the working class should take up the DADT demands as part of the fight for full citizenship rights for all.

There are well over 100,000 so-called "illegal" workers in Canada. In Toronto's construction industry alone, over ten thousand such workers toil at substandard wages, with no benefits and scant union protection. Like foreign-born farm workers and sweatshop garment workers, they are here because the capitalists want to exploit their labour. In order to generate greater profits, the bosses are always looking for cheaper labour sources. They do this through "outsourcing" to workers paid a pittance in superexploited countries of the Third World or by using low-wage immigrant labour, including "illegal" workers, here at home.

Non-status immigrants would breathe easier if they knew they could get basic city services without fear of deportation. NDP mayor David Miller says the general policy in his administration is that unless "legally obliged" city workers do not ask about immigration status. This is vague enough to be meaningless, and it's a loophole you could drive a truck through. Yet NOII-Toronto writes: "We demand that the City of Toronto take leadership and initiative on this issue by setting an example to other Canadian cities" (www.dadtontoronto.org, March 2004). This is an appeal to Miller and the city council, who (as NOII knows perfectly well) just outlawed the homeless sleeping in City Hall square. Looking to this NDP mayor and the Toronto city council is to sow illusions that this capitalist government—or any other—can be made to act on behalf of immigrants and the oppressed. It's a losing proposition.

Reforms that improve conditions for immigrants are important, but it is necessary to realize they are transitory and can be legislated away as easily as they are granted. Reforms are won from the capitalist rulers through social and centrally working-class *struggle*, not through any benevolence of the exploiters. U.S. activists are now recognizing that even in cities where these reforms have been approved, they are not always implemented. Even if reforms like DADT go through, life under capitalism will remain hellish for most immigrants, documented or not.

And in the repressive climate following September 11, 2001, status and even citizenship afford little protection from the racist "war on terror." Five Muslim men, who all have immigration status, have been held behind bars under Security Certificates for periods from twenty months to over four years without charges even being laid. Subject to secret trials based on secret evidence that neither they nor their lawyers may see, they face deportation to torture and death. This sinister racist witchhunt of Muslims and people of Near Eastern origin is a direct attack on the rights of everyone. The Trotskyist League demands immediate freedom for all the detainees!

Regardless of what Miller and his cronies have to say, the struggle to defend immigrants must be brought to the multi-racial unions themselves, in order to make the workers conscious of their interests and their power. CUPE Toronto District council has endorsed the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" campaign. Yet union leaders, who backed the pro-capitalist mayor David Miller, have shown themselves to be an obstacle to mobilizing the workers in their own class interests.



SC photo

November 5 Toronto protest defends Algerian refugee Mohamed Cherfi, targeted for leading struggles on behalf of North African refugees.

They push divisive Canadian nationalism and protectionism. Under the slogan "Canadian jobs for Canadian workers," they promote the idea that Canadian workers have interests counterposed to immigrants and workers in other countries. This undercuts class struggle.

We need a new leadership of the working class and oppressed that can fight to expose the poison of racism and nationalism, and struggle for class unity at home and abroad. That crucially means a fight to organize the unorganized with full union benefits. A mass union-led organizing drive in defiance of government laws would strike a real blow against union busting and anti-immigrant attacks, as would a push for hiring halls and affirmative action programs, run by the unions, for training minorities and women.

At a February 5 Toronto No One Is Illegal community action forum, Nandita Sharma of the No Borders Campaign spoke powerfully on the plight of immigrants and refugees under capitalism and noted the overwhelming power and violence of the ruling class. But she ended her presentation with no solution, and merely called on the audience to challenge "the borders within ourselves." She said we needed new ways of seeing ourselves and reshaping ourselves into those who can live in a world without borders. While this might sound empowering to some, as Marxists who look to changing material reality, we know one cannot will the world to change because we change ourselves.

Contrary to Sharma, nothing is won by utopian, wishful thinking or soul searching. We need a socialist revolution to wrest the wealth of society away from the capitalist minority that now owns it and abolish private property, placing the immense resources of society in the hands of the working people. Short of that we will continue to live in a world of national borders with the superexploitation of the underdeveloped world and the oppression of working people, minorities, immigrants and the poor in the advanced capitalist countries. We need a revolutionary workers party to fight for the overthrow of the capitalist system, laying the basis for a world without classes and without the division of peoples into national states. *They made it here—let them stay!* **Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! ■**

Antiwar Movement...

(continued from page 24)

lines from being used to transport military convoys. The longshore union in Saint John, New Brunswick pledged to boycott military cargo destined for the Persian Gulf. Such class-struggle actions gave a small taste of the enormous potential social power of the working class. By having their hands directly on the means of production—the factories, mines, transportation and other industries that make society run—workers have the power to cut off the flow of profits and services to the capitalists by withholding their labour. It is uniquely the working class that can rip power from the grasp of the capitalists and, through international socialist revolution, establish a truly egalitarian society.

To unleash labour's power against the drive to war required a struggle against the pro-capitalist leadership of the working class and the reformist-pacifist politics of the antiwar movement. These misleaders channeled mass opposition to the war into politics acceptable to the imperialist rulers at home. The reformist left groups who built the various antiwar coalitions—the International Socialists (I.S.), Communist Party (CP) et al.—deliberately obscured the class nature of war and pushed the illusion that imperialism, especially Canadian imperialism, could be pressured to be humane.

They joined with pro-capitalist NDP and even Liberal Party politicians to campaign for “peace”—i.e., the maintenance of the deeply unjust status quo. They pushed “Canadian values,” preaching that capitalist Canada is a “progressive” counterweight to the U.S. They refused to call for defense of Iraq because that would mean calling for the defeat of U.S. imperialism and its Canadian junior partner, which was covertly aiding the war in multiple ways. These nationalist, class-collaborationist coalitions were an obstacle to the fight against imperialist war. What was required was a political break with these leaderships and the advancement of a policy of *class struggle* opposition to imperialist war—the independent mobilization of the social power of the working class against its “own” capitalist rulers.

Revolutionary Internationalism vs. Maple Leaf Nationalism

From the start of the military build-up against Iraq, we Trotskyists insisted that this was a war of imperial plunder on the part of the U.S. and its allies, and a just war of national defense on the Iraqi side. Against the calls for “unity” of all those against the war, we explained that capitalist society is divided into classes: the working class which produces the wealth on one side, and its enemy—the capitalist class which appropriates this wealth—on the other. We sharply opposed the calls for the workers and oppressed to make common cause with members of the capitalist class or their political representatives who, for their own reasons, opposed this particular war.

Throughout, we exposed the myth of “Canada the good” and the United Nations as “peaceful” alternatives to the U.S. We intervened on demonstrations with Revolutionary Internationalist Contingents built around the slogans: *For class struggle against the U.S./Canadian capitalist rulers! Defend Iraq against imperialist attack! Down with the UN starvation blockade!* At campus speakouts, antiwar rallies and among the organized labour movement, we exposed the pernicious role of the NDP and its “left” tails in derailing anti-



SC photo

Toronto, November 2002: TL fought pro-capitalist politics of antiwar coalitions. Class struggle against imperialist war!

war activists into the dead end of pro-capitalist politics.

Canadian nationalism was pushed to keep the movement “safe” for the bourgeoisie. The mobilizing leaflet for a November 2002 Vancouver antiwar protest, endorsed by the I.S. and CP, sported a big red Maple Leaf. The whole strategy of the reformist left was to pressure the Liberal government to “stand up” to the U.S. “Just say ‘no,’ Jean!” pleaded the I.S.’s *Socialist Worker*, adding, “Hold Chrétien’s feet to the anti-war fire.” To promote capitalist Canada—the oppressor of the Québécois, Native people and immigrants—as a potential ally against a U.S. war is *social chauvinism*: “socialist” in words, chauvinist in deeds.

The I.S. and others painted the NDP as a “party of peace.” Yet in the build-up to the first Gulf War of 1991, the NDP demanded UN sanctions against Iraq as an “alternative” to war. These sanctions ended up killing more than a million and a half Iraqis. As Gulf War II was being prepared, the NDP openly backed the disarmament of Iraq by UN “weapons inspectors.” And after the war, Jack Layton called for Canadian “peacekeepers” to be sent to Iraq under UN command—an imperialist occupation under a different flag.

Many of the speakers at antiwar demos portrayed France and Germany as counterweights to the U.S. But the opposition to the U.S. invasion of Iraq from these smaller imperialist powers had nothing to do with concerns for “human rights” or “upholding the UN charter.” Germany and France compete economically with U.S. imperialism, not least in the Muslim and Arab world, and seek to protect their own fields of exploitation.

To this day, reformists like the I.S. claim the antiwar movement in Canada was a success because it supposedly kept Canada out of the war. This is a whitewash of the criminal Chrétien/Martin gang. Canada gave military backing to the U.S. before, during and after the attack on Iraq. It already had 1,000 troops in the region, with 3,000 about to land in Afghanistan. Canadian warships were in the Arabian Sea while maritime patrol aircraft were attached to U.S. carrier groups. Canadian officers connected to the U.S. Central Command in Qatar were directly involved in planning the assault on Iraq. Canadian companies producing military goods have made millions through contracts with the U.S.



Emily Wood

November 2004 Ottawa demo against war criminal Bush. Canadian nationalism alibis racist rulers at home.

military. If the Liberal government took a fraudulent stance of “opposition” to this very unpopular war, it was due to base electoral calculations. In particular, they feared that in Quebec, where antiwar protests were enormous, an open embrace of the war would fuel a new surge in pro-independence sentiment.

Splits in the Antiwar Movement

What did unity with “antiwar” capitalists, social democrats, labour fakery and preachers bring? As soon as the bombs started dropping, the antiwar “movement” mostly evaporated. The war went ahead as planned, and thousands upon thousands of protesters became demobilized and demoralized.

In reaction, a split has developed among anti-occupation activists, as a layer of left-wing youth seek to counterpose themselves to Canadian nationalism and impotent “moral witness” handwringing. Early on, several thousand Toronto activists, frustrated with begging the powers-that-be to “give peace a chance,” broke away from a mainstream march and staged their own demonstration through the downtown streets. Despicably, the I.S.’s *Socialist Worker* (16 April 2003) printed a violence-baiting diatribe against these leftists, while the cops rounded up and arrested protesters.

A year later, the divide deepened with the formation of the June 30th Organizing Committee (J30). On the day of the fraudulent “handover” of power in Iraq, the I.S.-dominated Toronto Coalition to Stop the War (TCSW) and J30 held what became two separate protests. As a TCSW spokesman called for peace in Iraq “like in Canada,” J30 called on protesters to march through the Bay Street financial district to denounce Canadian corporations profiting from the war and occupation.

Marching behind a banner calling “For class struggle against Canadian capitalism,” the Trotskyist League and Spartacus Youth Club joined with the J30 protesters who sought to oppose the capitalist rulers here at home. Protesting outside Canadian corporations provides an opportunity to raise the consciousness of workers and youth on the role of Canadian imperialism. But absent from J30’s leaflets and often impassioned speeches in defense of the Iraqi people, the Palestinians and immigrants, is any understanding of the

necessity to mobilize the working class as the motor force for revolutionary change. As we noted, “None of the components of the direct action milieu have the perspective to construct an alternative leadership of the working class in political competition with the open reformists, as we do” (“What Way Forward for Antiwar Activists?” *SC* No. 142, Fall 2004).

Simply combining left-sounding rhetoric with greater militancy on the streets provides no way forward. A struggle for political clarification is vital, leading to the understanding that opposing imperialist wars means fighting to get rid of the capitalist system that breeds such wars. That requires a fight for a revolutionary program and a new leadership of the working class, forged in struggle against the existing reformist, nationalist leadership. Absent that, today’s left-wing activists will be no more able to transform this exploitative imperialist order than the I.S. reformists they often despise.

People’s Global Action: Direct Action Liberalism

Underscoring the very partial nature of this split, the J30 Coalition has adopted the five hallmarks of People’s Global Action (PGA), an international left-wing “anti-globalization” umbrella group. The Montreal-based anarchist group CLAC has done likewise. The PGA hallmarks “reject” capitalism and imperialism, but don’t even mention the working class or the need to *get rid of* the capitalist system. They call for “direct action and civil disobedience,” but without a perspective of mobilizing the social power of the working class such protests end up as gestures of defiance without any teeth.

PGA rejects “all forms and systems of domination and discrimination” and opposes “patriarchy, racism and religious fundamentalism of all creeds.” At the same time, they “embrace the full dignity of all human beings.” Not us! We do not embrace the “dignity” of the bloody butchers of Iraq nor of the capitalist exploiters of the working class at home. More than 150 years ago, Karl Marx rejected the slogan, “All Men Are Brothers” in favour of the concluding words of the *Communist Manifesto*, “Workers of the World, Unite!”

PGA’s call for “local alternatives to global capitalism” boils down to an accommodation to the continued existence of the capitalist system, leaving the ruling class and its repressive state machine intact. Without the *expropriation* of the bourgeoisie, small “decentralized” and “autonomous” cooperatives or collectives will inevitably be economically marginalized or destroyed, just as the handicraft workshops of early 19th century Europe gave way through the process of competition to the kinds of corporate monopolies that dominate the world today. This “small is beautiful” program is reactionary, in no way addressing society’s abiding problem, which is that people don’t have *enough*: enough houses, food, medicine, education, transportation. This poverty for the billions can only be solved by destroying the capitalist system worldwide and reorganizing society through a global planned economy.

PGA is for an “organisational philosophy based on decentralisation and autonomy.” This anarchist dogma—that somehow “decentralisation and autonomy” will magically prevent political betrayal and bureaucratism—has gained renewed credence following the capitalist counterrevolution that destroyed the Soviet Union in 1991-92. As the imperialists worldwide proclaim the “death of communism,” a new

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Antiwar Movement...

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generation of activists accepts this lie as good coin. Their related rejection of the need for a centralized and disciplined revolutionary vanguard party leaves workers and the oppressed fragmented and dispersed in the face of a violent, highly organized ruling class that will attempt to bloodily suppress all who get in their way.

The dead end of these ultimately liberal politics can be seen in the call for a "PGA bloc" on the March 19 Toronto antiwar demonstration. Calling to "Take down SNC Lavalin," a major Canadian military producer, PGA's leaflet has not a hint of even rhetorical "anti-capitalism." Instead it tells antiwar activists to "Contact your MP and protest Canadian taxpayer subsidies of SNC Lavalin" and "Learn whether your mutual funds invest in SNC Lavalin, and urge divestment." So PGA's call, "No to profiteering, war and occupation!" comes down to lobbying MPs and shuffling Bay Street's investment portfolios!

What Policy Toward the Iraqi "Resistance"?

In the build-up to the war, we had an exchange with a Toronto anarchist group which, while highly critical of the antiwar movement's reformism, rejected the call to defend Iraq, allegedly because this would mean supporting the Saddam Hussein regime. As we explained:

"The distinction between military defense and political support—whether of workers' organizations in the capitalists' gunsights, or of whole peoples and countries being trampled by imperialism—is crucial for advancing the interests of the proletariat and oppressed....

"[T]he crushing of neocolonial Iraq at the hands of the U.S. and its allies would strengthen the imperialists and embolden them to further rampage and bloody conquest."

—"Defend Iraq!" SC No. 136, Spring 2003

While not giving an iota of political support to the butcher and former imperialist lackey Saddam Hussein, we pointed out that a military defeat of the U.S. in Iraq would have emboldened the international working class *and* the Iraqi peoples.

This distinction between military defense and political support is just as relevant in dealing with the issue of the Iraqi "resistance," a subject of debate within the left today. Our starting point is the call to end the colonial occupation. Every military blow against the U.S. and British occupiers, their allies and mercenaries is a blow against imperialist aggression. But we denounce criminal terror against innocent civilians and take no side in the inter-ethnic and communal warfare among Sunnis and Shi'ites, Arabs and Kurds. This deadly communal violence is often carried out by the *very same forces* that are fighting the occupation armies.

In the absence of working-class struggle against the occupation in Iraq and internationally, the victory of any of the reactionary Islamic or Ba'athist forces who apparently compose today's resistance is more likely to come about through an alliance with U.S. imperialism than against it. We make it clear that a revolutionary party in Iraq would mobilize against the U.S. occupation first and foremost, but also against the reimposition of anti-woman *sharia* laws and sectarian, communalist attacks. Such a party would mobilize the workers movement and unemployed in strikes and demonstrations against the occupiers, the parasitic clerics and nationalist demagogues.

This perspective is far removed from that of pseudo-leftists like the I.S., who combine pandering to the NDP at home with vicarious, largely uncritical cheerleading for the Iraqi resistance. *Socialist Worker* (19 January) makes the breathtaking claim that, "This resistance is no different in kind from that in Algeria in the 1950s or Vietnam in the 1960s...." To equate murderous Ba'athists and Muslim fundamentalists with the Algerian national liberation fighters who defeated the French, and especially with the Vietnamese workers and peasants who drove out U.S. imperialism and smashed capitalist rule, is beyond obscene.

Fire This Time: Cheerleaders for Third World Nationalism

The refrain of hailing the Iraqi resistance is also taken up by Fire This Time (FTT) in Vancouver. In the build-up to the war, FTT gave a left cover to Stopwar.ca, the local antiwar coalition that embraced everyone from a Liberal cabinet minister to the city mayor whose cops regularly brutalize Native people on the Downtown Eastside. FTT claimed that Stopwar.ca's peace crawls "effectively influenced imperialist politics" (*Fire This Time*, May 2003), and championed the call to "bring the troops home"—a social-patriotic demand that covers up the murderous role of the imperialist military. At the same time, they tried to offset some of the most right-wing positions of the Stopwar.ca organizers, which included refusing to take up defense of the Palestinians at antiwar rallies. In the end, this got them expelled, leading FTT to form a competing coalition, Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO).

FTT/MAWO's calling card is solidarity with struggles against imperialism in the neocolonial world. But their refusal to politically oppose Third World nationalism and reactionary forces like Islamic fundamentalism can only disorient youth and workers motivated by hatred for imperialism and oppression. For example, FTT hails the 1979 Iranian "revolution" that brought the bloodsoaked, anti-woman ayatollahs to power. Today it cheers the Iraqi resistance without a word of criticism. This is not "solidarity," but *political support* to the butchers of working people, women and the oppressed within the neocolonial world.

FTT reduces its political stance everywhere to the call for "self-determination," by which they mean that the countries of the Third World should govern themselves free of imperialist subjugation. But that *cannot happen* without socialist revolution to sweep away not only the Third World satraps who are tied to the imperialist order, but ultimately and decisively the rulers in the imperialist centers.

Imperialism is not simply a reactionary policy of right-wing governments, but a global system rooted in the capitalist drive for profit. Capitalism is based on economic scarcity

Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste

Toronto:	Box 7198, Station A Toronto, ON M5W 1X8 (416) 593-4138
Vancouver:	Box 2717, Main P.O. Vancouver, BC V6B 3X2 (604) 687-0353
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Serge Jangué

Montreal port workers picket, December 2003. Anti-Quebec “national unity” poisons class struggle.

and competition to generate the highest rate of profit by exploiting wage labour. A handful of bourgeois parasites in rich countries export capital (“investments”) to the colonial and semicolonial world in order to plunder raw materials and cheap labour. Ultimately, they will defend this capital with their own armies, but they prefer local rulers as the first line of defense. Thus most Third World countries are formally independent yet economically subjugated by imperialism, their rulers tied by a thousand threads to the bourgeois masters of North America, West Europe and Japan. The struggle against the national oppression of the neocolonial world is entirely tied up with the overthrow of the capitalist system and the abolition of private property.

Self-Determination—What About Quebec?

It is revealing that while misusing the call for “self-determination” in the Third World, FTT cannot bring itself to call for self-determination for Quebec, a nation directly oppressed by the Canadian capitalist rulers. This indifference to the national subjugation of Quebec is shared by much of the “anti-capitalist” left in Canada, who are blind, at best, to the impact of anti-Quebec chauvinism among the working class.

Throughout the Iraq war, the biggest antiwar demos in Canada were in Quebec. For the last century, the national oppression of the Québécois—including the Canadian rulers’ denial of their democratic right to self-determination—has fueled opposition to Canada’s military adventures, including both world wars. The army has repeatedly been used against social struggle in Quebec, from the murder of anti-conscription protesters in 1917 to the military occupation under the War Measures Act in 1970. Chrétien was prepared to use the army to stop secession in the event of a winning referendum in 1995.

Our understanding of the centrality of the working class is at the nexus of our differences on the national question with most of the “anti-capitalist” new left. Outright Quebec-bashing combined with the flag-waving “national unity” chauvinism pushed by the NDP and labour bureaucrats is used to tie workers to their bosses in English Canada. Intransigent opposition to such Anglo chauvinism and support to

the national rights of the Québécois is crucial to winning the English Canadian working class to an understanding that its interests are counterposed to those of the Canadian rulers. This in turn will help make clear to workers in Quebec that *their* oppressor and class enemy is the Québécois bourgeoisie. Quebec’s francophone bosses are masters at using Quebec’s national oppression within Canada to impose class peace on “their” workers in the name of “national solidarity” against Anglo oppression. Independence for Quebec will remove a major obstacle to anti-capitalist class struggle in both Quebec and English Canada.

The Fight for Revolutionary Leadership

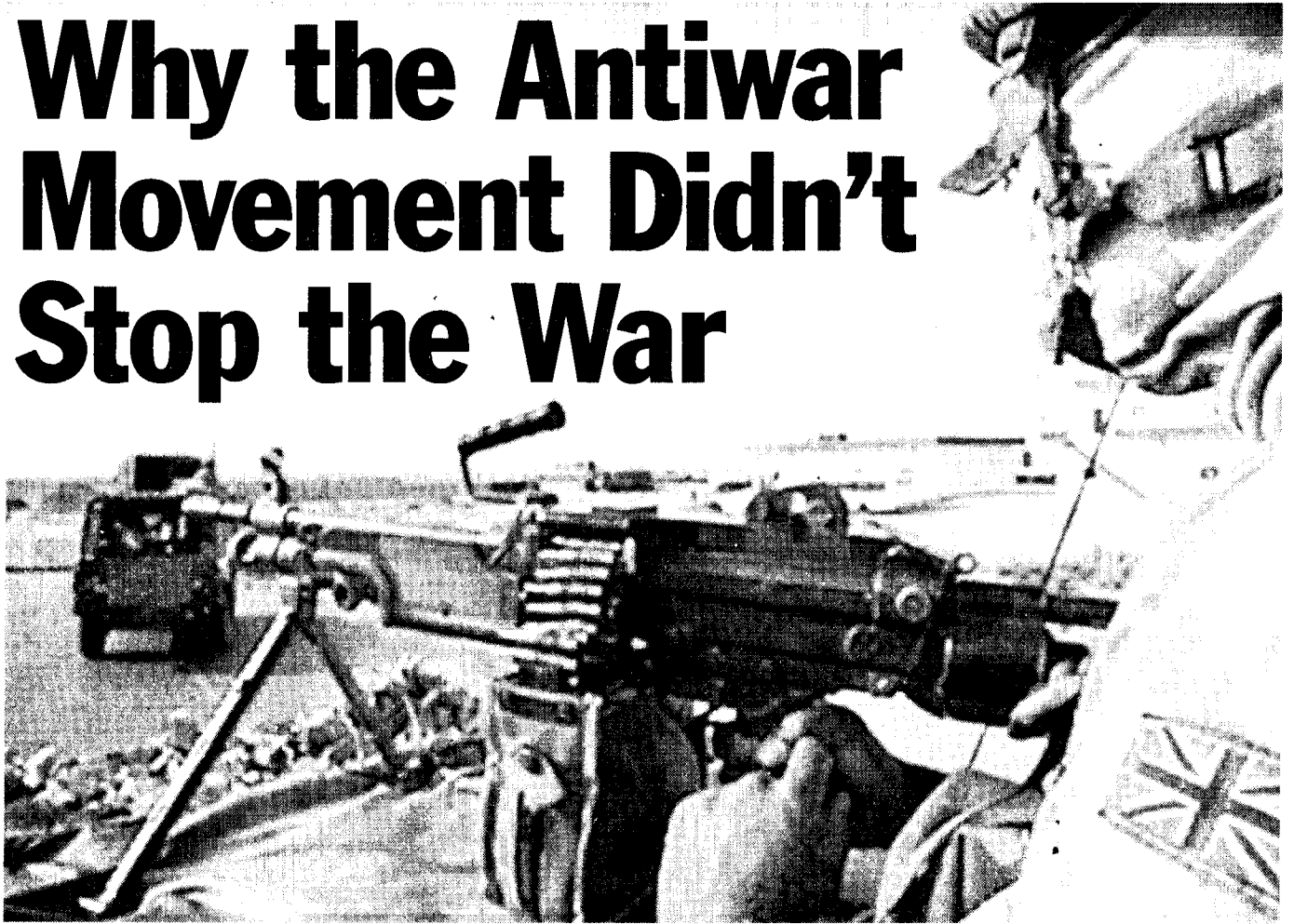
The only successful antiwar movement in history was the 1917 Russian workers revolution, which took the long-suffering masses of the former tsarist empire out of World War I. The greatly increased oppression of the world’s peoples which drives today’s young radicals to protest is a direct outcome of the capitalist counterrevolution that destroyed the Soviet Union in the early 1990s. This was a huge defeat for the working class and victory for the imperialists, one that has fundamentally reshaped the globe.

We Trotskyists remained until the end on the side of the Soviet working class in opposing capitalist counterrevolution, fighting for proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist betrayers. Today we call for defense of the remaining bureaucratically deformed workers states in China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba. Without the counterweight of Soviet military might, and with the perception among the workers of the world that communism is no longer an alternative, the U.S. and other imperialist powers have run roughshod over the planet. Indeed, in the wake of the Soviet counterrevolution, the consciousness of working people worldwide has been greatly thrown back. Today it is less commonly recognized that the working class even *has* interests counterposed to those of the capitalist ruling class, much less that it *must fight* for these interests against the capitalists. This is reflected on the left in the renewed currency of anarchism and similar radical-idealist trends whose inability to point a way forward for working people and the oppressed has been painfully and amply shown by history.

Throughout the antiwar demonstrations of the past two years, we have intervened to counterpose our revolutionary program to that of the reformist organizers. At issue is which class, in this class-divided society, one looks to in order to end war, racism and poverty. The reformist organizers of the antiwar movement did everything in their power to help bourgeois and social-democratic politicians spread the lie that the capitalist system can do otherwise than breed imperialist war. The more radically-minded activists, utterly lacking a class axis and understanding, can provide no alternative. We Trotskyists take up the fight to forge Marxist parties to lead the struggles for workers rule internationally as the only road to combat the rapacious capitalist class.

A serious fight to end this violent imperialist world order demands drawing the lessons of past struggles to avoid forever being caught in a revolving door of defeats and demoralization. The Trotskyist League and Spartacus Youth Clubs are committed to bringing this understanding to a new generation of leftist radicals. Our task, as a small internationalist Marxist organization, is to fight to reestablish the understanding that the road to human freedom lies through working-class socialist revolution. Join us! ■

Why the Antiwar Movement Didn't Stop the War



AFP

British troops near Basra, part of colonial occupation of Iraq. Only socialist revolution can put an end to imperialist war.

Down With Colonial Occupation of Iraq! Canada Out of Afghanistan!

Thousands are expected to protest in Canada, the U.S. and around the world on the weekend of March 19-20, the second anniversary of the invasion of Iraq. The war and occupation have brought untold horror to the Iraqi masses. U.S. and British imperialist forces continue to arbitrarily terrorize the population. Revelations of the systematic torture of prisoners keep emerging, including in Afghanistan where Canadian troops are helping that colonial occupation.

The entire region is more oppressive and dangerous than ever. The sham January 30 Iraq elections, held under the U.S. jackboot, look set to usher in a regime as repugnant as, but no less tied to the occupiers than, the previous American puppet Allawi. The daily oppression of the Palestinians by the brutal Israeli rulers continues. Now the nuclear-armed maniacs in Washington are threatening Iran and Syria. This sabre-rattling is part of U.S. imperialism's drive to redraw the map of the Near East in its own interests and those of its Israeli allies.

The organizers of the March 19-20 protests bill them as an

opportunity for the antiwar movement to get back on its feet and display some of the vigour of its early days. It is necessary for those seeking an end to the bloody occupation of Iraq to review the history of this movement, and there's one big point you have to start with: *it didn't work*. Internationally, people took to the streets in 2003 in the largest protests since, at least, the Vietnam antiwar movement. Cities across Canada saw demonstrations of up to a quarter million people. These protests were an important expression of opposition to the relentless drive to war. But the stark fact is that they didn't delay the attack on Iraq for a single day.

The crucial lesson is that the capitalist system cannot be pressured or reformed to work in the interests of human needs. The relentless drive for profits and spheres of influence by the rulers of the U.S. and other big capitalist powers necessarily results in wars and neocolonial pillage. Imperialist aggression and war are not "policies" that can be ended within the framework of capitalism—the entire system must be overturned.

It is possible to strike blows against imperialist war; the question is, how? In early 2003, Scottish train drivers refused to haul munitions destined for a large NATO base. In Italy, trade unionists and antiwar activists blocked railway

(continued on page 20)