

U.S. Troops Out of Iraq!

Down With the Colonial Occupation!



U.S. Imperialists: Looters and Murderers

JULY 1—A few weeks ago, the Seventh Armored Cavalry, deploying tanks, Bradley fighting vehicles and Apache helicopters, launched a major attack in the small village of Al Hir 30 miles north of Baghdad. The stated aim was to wipe out a group of anti-American resistance fighters reportedly operating there. When the assault ended, a 70-year-old farmer, three of his sons and a grandchild lay dead in a field near his house. These villagers were Shi'ite Muslims deeply hostile to the Saddam Hussein regime that had persecuted them.

An aunt of the three slain brothers cried out in anguish that before the attack her attitude had been "Long live Bush." But now she said, "I will never forgive him.... He has leveled our family."

"Operation Iraqi Freedom" has been replaced by "Operation Desert Scorpion,"

Baghdad, June 18: Demonstration by former Iraqi soldiers demanding back pay and pensions. Two were killed by U.S. troops.

as thousands of U.S. troops storm through villages to root out alleged "terrorist" remnants of the old regime, which is how virtually the whole of the disgruntled population is being viewed by the occupation forces. "Victims of the Peace Decide Americans Are Worse than Saddam," headlined the *London Times* (23 May). Baghdad "has become a virtual parking lot for American armor," reports a columnist in the *New York Times* (1 June). After 4,000 troops of the Third and Fourth Infantry Divisions rampaged through the town of Dhuluiya, its inhabitants reported that U.S. soldiers handcuffed women and children, beat one man to death and allowed another to die of a

heart attack. In Samarra, U.S. soldiers killed four members of a wedding party when they mistook a caravan of horn-toting, gun-firing revelers for attackers.

Scenes from U.S.-occupied Iraq increasingly resemble those of the murderous Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. U.S. occupation chief Paul Bremer has peremptorily canceled local elections and outlawed any "gatherings, pronouncements or publications" that call for opposition to the occupation. "Saddam's tyrannical regime is being rapidly replaced by a tyranny of the occupation forces, who are killing Iraqi civilians and unleashing Vietnam-style 'search and destroy' raids on Iraqi people's homes,"

observed Sami Ramadani in the *London Guardian* (26 June). He continued:

"Massive and increasingly angry marches have been taking place throughout Iraq—including the British-occupied south—often triggered by local issues, such as the imposition of mayors. Figureheads appointed by the US and British in Basra, Karbala and Najaf have been assassinated. Fury has been mounting at the hundreds of Iraqis killed by the occupation forces since the fall of Baghdad—on top of the thousands killed in the war itself. The massacre of 18 civilian demonstrators in Falluja at the end of April was, for example, the trigger for the resistance there. And last week, the US 3rd Infantry Division forces began punitive demolitions, Sharon-style, of the family houses of those allegedly fighting against the occupation forces."

Initially, many Iraqis no doubt hoped that their basic conditions of life would
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"Anti-Terror" Dragnet Threatens 13,000 with Expulsions

Stop the Deportations!

These are some of the targets of the "war on terrorism" following September 11: Refugees as young as seven, held for months in U.S. detention centers before appearing in court wearing shackles, leg irons and belly chains. A Sudanese woman who applied for asylum in the U.S. to escape 14 years of slavery in Kenya, and who upon arrival in November 2001 was handcuffed, placed in leg shackles and paraded through the Newark International Airport to a cold New Jersey detention center. A group of nine Muslim men in Evansville, Indiana, who as the result of a bogus "anti-terror" tip were rounded up, shackled, put on display for a newspaper

photographer and jailed for a week.

In a stark escalation of state repression aimed at criminalizing particularly immigrants from the Near East, beginning last December all males from 24 Arab and Muslim countries who were neither citizens nor permanent residents and were over the age of 16 were mandated to appear at an immigration office to undergo humiliating interviews and to be photographed and fingerprinted. There, hundreds of the men were summarily herded into detention centers and held without charges for days, sparking protests across the country by Iranian Americans and others (see "Hundreds Arrested in Racist INS Roundup in Los Angeles," *WV* No. 794, 3 January).

Now, of the approximately 82,000 who registered as ordered by the government, more than 13,000 may face expulsion in the largest wave of deportations since September 11—not for anything ostensibly related to "terrorism," but for alleged visa violations caused in many

cases by the tardiness of the INS in completing its paperwork or by being unable to attend school or work due to being jailed on phony "anti-terror" charges. Already the threat of deportation has provoked a desperate exodus: hundreds of Pakistanis and others, fearing that registration would end in their deportations, fled to Canada where they were handed over to American immigration, jailed and placed in deportation proceedings. Under

the rubric of the "war on terror," the Feds have set up a racist dragnet targeting ever wider layers, uprooting families and destroying lives. *The deportations must be stopped!* Those who made it here have the right to stay—*full citizenship rights for all immigrants!*

If Bush and Ashcroft have their way, however, citizenship would provide little protection. A case in point is 34-year-old
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SARS: Capitalism, Racism and Public Health

See Page 6



BT Doth Whine Too Much

We reprint below excerpts of a letter to us that can be found in full on the "Bolshevik Tendency" Web site.

Toronto, Canada
12 June 2003

To the Editor:

The 6 June issue of *Workers Vanguard* (WV) features two polemics against the International Bolshevik Tendency (IBT), both based on gross misrepresentations of our politics. In the account of your 10 May debate with the League for the Revolutionary Party (LRP), you quote Jon Brule's claim that in the late 1980s: "The BT retrospectively dumped our slogan of 'Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!' in order to be at one with the anti-Communist left in this country." As Comrade Brule is well aware, we proposed instead "Military Victory to the Soviet Army!," a slogan the reformists found no less objectionable. We recall that in the 1960s, the then-revolutionary Spartacist League (SL) called for "military victory" to the Viet Cong. In the early 1980s the SL also called for "military victory" to the leftist insurgents in El Salvador....

The second polemic is contained in a speech on the Kurdish question by Comrade Bruce André who claimed to have been left almost "speechless" by

our observation that:

"In the present circumstances an independent Kurdish state would find itself in very great difficulty. The situation would be even worse if such a state were limited to a fragment of Kurdish territory—for example Turkish Kurdistan. Not only would such a mini-state be entirely landlocked and surrounded by its historic oppressors, but it would be a society characterized by backward, pre-capitalist social structures. Because of its underdevelopment, an independent Kurdistan would find itself at the mercy of the regional as well as imperialist powers."

—1917 No. 12, 1993

While not disputing our analysis, André asserts that this amounts to "pos[ing] preconditions" and "demanding that, before the Kurds can be independent they must be free of 'backward' social structures and not be at the 'mercy' of imperialist powers." We have never and would never raise such absurd preconditions. To do so would be to reject the right of oppressed nations to self-determination. There is no question that the Kurdish people have an inalienable right to self-determination; the question is how it can be achieved. After pointing out the difficulties involved in any attempt to create an independent capitalist state, our article concluded that the road to national liberation for Kurdistan lies

through revolutionary struggle against the neo-colonial regimes of the region:

"The Kurdish bourgeoisie is so weak that it does not even pretend to be leading a struggle for Kurdish freedom. This task falls to the Kurdish working class, at the



Aral/Sipa

Kurdish refugees trapped and dying in mountain passes following 1991 U.S. imperialist war against Iraq.

head of the peasants and other oppressed layers. Those militants who are committed to winning equal national rights for Kurds must embrace a strategy of common struggle with the working class of the nations that oppress them. In Turkey, Syria, Iran and Iraq the struggle against the oppression of the Kurds is closely connected with the overthrow of the bourgeois dictatorships. It is extremely unlikely that the dismembered Kurdish nation can be reunited on any road other than that of the struggle for a socialist federation of the Near East."

—*Ibid.*

...We never opposed independence for Kurdistan. We simply pointed out that Kurdish national liberation will require revolutionary struggle, a conclusion André echoes....

Bolshevik Greetings,
Tom Riley
for the International
Bolshevik Tendency

WV Replies:

Riley and his cohorts defected from our organization in the early 1980s because they could not stomach our hard Soviet-defensist line in the context of Cold War II. Their explicit repudiation of our "Hail Red Army" slogan in 1988 came as no surprise. As we replied the first time they kvetched about our supposed misrepresentation of their line: "What does it mean to call for 'military victory' now, precisely when [Soviet president] Gorbachev & Co. are pulling the Soviet troops out? It's an empty statement to try to cover the fact that you're openly renouncing the Spartacist slogan, 'Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!'" ("BT Protests Too Much," WV No. 453, 20 May 1988). We explained, "They're paying the admission price to crawl into the all-Canada popular front: no 'soft-on-Russia' pinkos allowed."

As for the Kurdish question, the difference between us is not over how—but *whether*—the Kurds should achieve national self-determination. Nowhere in its 1993 article, including the passage cited by Riley, does the IBT raise the call for an *independent Kurdish state*, even under proletarian rule. In fact, as we asserted, the IBT is *against* the call for an independent Kurdistan, as they make very clear in a 1999 article on the arrest of Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) leader Abdullah Öcalan headlined "Permanent Revolution and Kurdistan: Free Öcalan! Defend the PKK!" There they say:

"We unconditionally defend the right of the Kurdish nation to self-determination, that is, to establish a separate state, but we do not currently advocate that the Kurds attempt to exercise this right."

This statement is immediately followed by the quote from their 1993 article quoted by Riley above and cited by our comrade. So by their own terms this isn't just a factual "observation" but an argument *against* the establishment of a separate Kurdish state.

To defend the Kurdish right to self-determination while opposing an "attempt to exercise this right" simply means acceptance of the existing state boundaries. In

the context of a polemic against the PKK, the IBT writes in its 1993 article:

"As Leninists, we of course support the right of national self-determination. We are not opposed in principle [!] to raising this as a demand. But pushing for an independent capitalist Kurdistan against the wishes of the feeble Kurdish bourgeoisie, and with the bulk of the Kurdish people indifferent, makes no sense at all. Moreover, such a perspective could turn Kurdish revolutionaries away from the necessity to participate in, and, if possible, initiate struggles of the workers and peasants against the existing oppressor states."

In "The Right of Nations to Self-Determination" (1914), Lenin explained that recognition "of the right of nations to secede in no way precludes agitation against secession by Marxists of a particular *oppressed* nation, just as the recognition of the right to divorce does not preclude agitation against divorce in a particular case" (emphasis in original). For Leninists, assessing whether or not to advocate independence for a subjugated nation does indeed require concrete analysis. But there could hardly be a clearer case than that of the Kurds, who have struggled for national liberation against overwhelming odds for nearly a century. Calls for "joint struggle" without unambiguous support for the national aspirations of the oppressed are worse than empty. They can only be a cover for the chauvinist status quo, as is the case as well with the IBT's opposition to our call for independence for Quebec. There will be no joint revolutionary struggle in the Near East if the Arab, Persian and Turkish working masses are not won to the cause of Kurdish independence.

Our starting point and programmatic conclusion are very different from theirs. As comrade André stated: "To win independence for the entire Kurdish nation would require the revolutionary destruction of at least four capitalist regimes—and accompanying imperialist domination—right across this strategically important region. That's what we mean by the slogan of a Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan." That is the revolutionary perspective we fight for, and what Riley & Co. "do not currently advocate." ■

NOTICE

Workers Vanguard skips alternate issues in June, July and August.

Our next issue will be dated August 1.



TROTSKY

Honor the Heroic Rosenbergs!

June 19 marked the 50th anniversary of the execution of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg in an anti-Communist, anti-Semitic witch-hunt at the height of the McCarthy era. Framed up in a mockery of a trial on charges of conspiring to pass nuclear secrets to the Soviet Union, the Rosenbergs were sent to their deaths for courageously refusing to bargain with their executioners and "name names." The Rosenbergs upheld their innocence to the very end. From the standpoint of

the working class, in any case, those who aided in the defense of the Soviet degenerated workers state did a great service for humanity. We print below excerpts from a 1952 editorial in the *Militant*, newspaper of the then-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party.

The refusal of the Supreme Court to review the conviction of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, sentenced to death for atomic espionage, marks a new stage in the witch-hunt, and it is calculated to add new fury to the anti-communist war hysteria....

The Rosenberg decision above all else was an act of ruling-class terror by a state that is preparing a war of world conquest, a war directed primarily against the Soviet Union....

There is no other way to explain why the Rosenbergs, who were charged with playing the least important role of all those involved in the atomic espionage, should alone have been given the ultimate sentence.

The Rosenbergs continue to insist upon their innocence, and they are entirely justified in demanding a new trial in view of the circumstances under which their conviction occurred. But whatever the facts, they were not convicted of the alleged crimes with which they were charged; and the death sentence was handed down not as a punishment for the alleged crimes but as a terror demonstration in the "cold war," and as a go-ahead signal to the witch-hunters at home.

—"The Rosenberg Case," *Militant* (27 October 1952)



LENIN

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4 July 2003

Black Population Erupts over Cop Terror

Police-State Siege of Benton Harbor

CHICAGO—The overwhelmingly black town of Benton Harbor, Michigan, exploded on Monday, June 16 after the death of a 27-year-old black man, Terrance Shurn, whose motorcycle crashed during a police chase in the early morning hours. Witnesses reported that the white cop pursuing Shurn bumped his Honda 900 bike, sending it slamming into an abandoned house. Dozens came out to protest at a City Commission meeting the evening after Shurn's death. But the last straw came later that night when a number of neighborhood residents went to the crash site with candles to grieve, only to be met by police in squad cars demanding that the mourners stop their prayers and go home!

With that, the long-simmering anger of Benton Harbor's black youth erupted. Several hundred took to the streets to battle police, who fired with live ammunition at youth hurling rocks and bricks. "We're sick of them killing us," said one black woman. By the next night, several buildings were burned. By Wednesday, the Michigan State Police had declared Benton Harbor a "war zone" and flooded the town with hundreds of cops in riot gear and armored vehicles, imposing virtual martial law. (St. Joseph-Benton Harbor *Herald-Palladium*, 18 June.)

"This isn't because of what happened Monday," said Shurn's cousin Ashley Black. "This is because of everything that has been happening in Benton Harbor for years" (Chicago *Sun-Times*, 19 June). Just two months earlier, one black youth, Arthur Partee, was strangled to death by police. A few years before, seven-year-old Trent Patterson was struck and killed during a police chase. In 1991, the body of black Benton Harbor teenager Eric McGinnis was found in a river with what looked to be rope marks on his neck.

With a population of 11,000 that is 92 percent black, Benton Harbor is a testament to the hardcore segregation of the

Armored vehicle patrols Benton Harbor, part of police occupation after black population exploded in anger over racist cop killings.



Midwest Rust Belt. The auto plants and foundries that drew black workers to the town in the 1930s and 1940s have long closed and white residents have fled. What's left behind are boarded-up storefronts, pothole-pitted streets, vacant lots and staggering unemployment. A third of Benton Harbor's families earn below \$10,000 per year. "What did they leave in Benton Harbor?" asked Shurn's uncle, Ralph Crenshaw. "They left poor people and no jobs" (Chicago *Tribune*, 19 June).

But just across the river lies St. Joseph, a posh Lake Michigan resort town with a population that is 90 percent white, full of trendy restaurants and boutiques catering to Chicago's rich and powerful. The rigid segregation between these "Twin Cities" was the subject of Alex Kotlowitz's *The Other Side of the River: A Story of Two Towns, a Death, and America's Dilemma* [1998]. In the mid 1990s, the Ku Klux Klan saw St. Joseph as fertile ground for a recruitment rally for racist murder. The raw racial divide is enforced by the iron fist of cop terror, especially from the predominately white cops from towns surrounding Benton Harbor. "As a black man in Benton Har-

bor, I don't like going to St. Joseph at night," one resident told reporters. "I would hate to be pulled over in the dark without witnesses" (Herald-Palladium, 29 June).

The convulsions in Benton Harbor puncture the myth of "national unity," which the American capitalist ruling class has fostered in pushing its "war against terror" at home and abroad. Domestically, the bosses' patriotic jingoism has accompanied an increase in brutal state repression, initially targeting Arab and Muslim immigrants but increasingly aimed at the black population and the entire working class. In New York City, which has had a spate of killings by cops in recent months, an editorial in the black newspaper *Amsterdam News* (19-25 June) noted: "Ever since the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, there has been a quiet anger and tension in the Black community.... This [Benton Harbor] is the kind of incident that can set a city on fire—or a state or a nation."

Predictably, liberal black leaders responded to the outrage in Benton Harbor by preaching "peace" and "order," fostering the illusion that the oppressed ghetto

masses have interests in common with the racist rulers. With the town exploding in anger, black preachers formed a yellow-shirted "God Squad" to police the streets side by side with state cops. Then Jesse Jackson Sr. swooped in vowing to "stop the violence and turn people to the process of reconstruction" (Chicago *Sun-Times*, 28 June). What this capitalist politician means by "reconstruction" was spelled out in a 6 May column grotesquely titled "Baghdad Plan Can Work Here, Too," in which Jackson called on the Bush administration to bring the colonial occupation of Iraq home and flood the ghettos with cops!

Racist police brutality is an integral part of the American capitalist profit system, and it will not be ended until the system it serves is uprooted through socialist revolution. Benton Harbor is dilapidated and located in a part of the Midwest with a long history of KKK terror. But it is also close to Chicago, Detroit and other industrial cities, where black workers form a crucial part of the labor movement. This is the power that must be mobilized in the fight against racist police terror. But that requires politically breaking from the Democratic Party, whose role is to chain black people and trade unionists to the racist capitalist system. As we wrote when Cincinnati was rocked by a ghetto rebellion against cop brutality ("Cincinnati: Racist Hellhole Boils Over," WV No. 757, 27 April 2001):

"Black workers still constitute a strategic component of the multiracial proletariat, more heavily unionized than white workers. Under the leadership of a revolutionary workers party, black workers can provide a living link to join the fuming anger of the ghettos to the social power of the proletariat and will play a vanguard role in the fight for socialist revolution which will eliminate the whole system of class exploitation and racist repression which the cops 'serve and protect'." ■

Join the Labor Black Leagues!

The first Labor Black Leagues were formed as a result of the Spartacist League-initiated, 5,000-strong labor/black mobilization that stopped the Ku Klux Klan from marching in Washington, D.C. in November 1982. We stand for mobilizing the masses of minority and working people in militant integrated struggle against the brutal

system of racist oppression that is capitalist America. Initiated by and fraternally allied with the Spartacist League, a multiracial revolutionary Marxist organization, the Labor Black Leagues are part of the revolutionary movement of the workers and oppressed against the bosses and for socialism.

If You Stand For—

1 Full rights for black people and for everyone else in jobs, housing and schools! Defeat the racist assault on affirmative action! For union-run minority job recruitment and training programs! For union hiring halls! Open up the universities to all—for open admissions, free tuition and a full living stipend for all students. Free, quality, integrated public education for all!

2 A fighting labor movement—picket lines mean don't cross! Defeat police scabberding and strikebreaking through mass pickets and union defense guards! For sit-down strikes against mass layoffs! Fight union-busting, keep the capitalist courts out of the unions! Organize the unorganized, unionize the South! Jobs for all—for a shorter workweek at no loss in pay with full cost-of-living escalator clause! Cops and prison guards out of the unions!

3 Fight for women's rights! Defend abortion clinics! Free abortion on demand; free, quality 24-hour childcare! Equal pay for equal work! For free, quality health care for all!

4 Full citizenship rights for all immigrants; everyone who made it into this

country has the right to stay and live decently! Stop deportations! No to racist "English only" laws! Down with anti-Hispanic, anti-Semitic, anti-Arab and anti-Asian bigotry!

5 Down with anti-gay laws! Full democratic rights for homosexuals! Government out of the bedroom!

6 Mass labor/black/Hispanic mobilizations drawing on the power of the unions against the racist terrorists. Stop the Nazis! Stop the KKK!

7 Abolish the racist death penalty! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Free all victims of racist capitalist repression! No faith in the capitalist courts! No to gun control! Defend victims of cop terror and racist police frame-up! For class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense; support the work of the Partisan Defense Committee!

8 Unconditional opposition to every attempt to abolish welfare! Down with slave-labor, union-busting "workfare" schemes! Fight any and every attempt of the government to take away or cut back even more social programs such as Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, public health and aid to education and housing! For a massive program of public works—high-quality integrated hous-

ing, schools, libraries, hospitals for the working people and the poor!

9 Down with the chauvinist poison of protectionism! For international working-class solidarity! Support revolutionary struggles of working people abroad! Defend Cuba, Vietnam, China and North Korea against capitalist restoration and imperialist attack! For labor action against U.S. imperialist war moves and military adventures! For the right of independence for Puerto Rico! U.S. troops out of Puerto Rico and the Caribbean!

10 Down with the Democrats and Republicans! For a revolutionary workers party that champions the cause of all the oppressed! Finish the Civil War! Those who labor must rule! For a workers government to take industry away from its racist, incompetent and corrupt

owners! Rebuild America on a socialist planned economy!

—Join the Labor Black Leagues!

Membership pledge is \$3/year unemployed; \$10/year employed. For more information, write:

CHICAGO (312) 563-0441
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Labor Black League Discussion

Defend the Gains of the Cuban Revolution!

A Workers Vanguard readers circle discussion on WV No. 805, front page article

Saturday, July 12, 4 p.m.
299 Broadway, Suite 318
(1-1/2 blocks north of Chambers St.)

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NEW YORK CITY

The Brazilian LBI: Centrism of Fools

We reprint below an article translated from *Espartaco* No. 20 (Spring-Summer 2003), newspaper of the *Grupo Espartaquista de México (GEM)*, section of the *International Communist League*.

ESPARTACO

German Marxist August Bebel referred to anti-Semitism as “the socialism of fools” because it idiotically blames the depredations of capitalism on the Jews, seeking to derail discontent among workers and the ruined petty bourgeoisie. Centrism is a tendency on the left that tries to hide its reformism with occasional “revolutionary” phrasemongering. The politics of the Liga Bolchevique Internacionalista (LBI) of Brazil are an original combination of both. The LBI’s most recent anti-Semitic diatribe is titled “Sweep the ICL [International Communist League] and the IG [Internationalist Group], Agents of Zionism Disguised as Trotskyists, Out of the Ranks of the Workers Movement!” (*Jornal Luta Operária [JLO]*, September 2002). This is a slandering provocation and a call for physical violence which should have no place in the workers movement. Calling anyone who stands for the right of the Israeli people to have a piece of land to live on an “agent of Zionism” is simply anti-Semitic. The LBI indeed borrows from the ideology of anti-Semites and the Zionists themselves by branding, in deeds, entire peoples as reactionary.

Last spring, the Zionist butchers carried out, with Washington’s consent, the massacre at the refugee camp in Jenin. At the time of that Zionist bloodbath, the ICL declared internationally: “*Defend the Palestinian people!*” Barely a few weeks ago, Israeli army bulldozers destroyed many Palestinian shops in the West Bank and continue to escalate their offensive. The Israeli rulers want to get rid of the Palestinian masses once and for all. We Spartacists fight vigorously to defend the

Palestinian people against Zionist terror and call on the world proletariat to demand: Israeli troops and settlers out of the Occupied Territories! Down with the Zionist terror machine! All imperialist forces out of the Near East! The ICL fights against the bankrupt policies of reliance on either the murderous Arab regimes or the “democratic” imperialism of the UN (which partitioned Palestine to begin with). We stand for the class-struggle solution of destroying the Zionist state from within through workers revolution and resolving the national rights of all peoples in the Near East through the struggle for a socialist federation of the region, which requires sweeping away all the sheiks, colonels, monarchs and Zionist butchers.

Anti-Semitism: The Socialism of Fools

The struggle against every manifestation of oppression and backwardness in the consciousness of the masses is crucial to the forging of Leninist vanguard parties capable of leading the proletariat to the final destruction of the world imperialist system through workers revolutions. The Bolsheviks insisted over and over on the necessity of combatting anti-Semitism. One day after the seizure of power, the Congress of Soviets ordered “immediate and most energetic measures for the prevention of counterrevolutionary outbursts, ‘anti-Jewish’ or other pogroms.” In March of 1919, in the middle of the Civil War, Lenin said in one of his few phonographically recorded speeches:

“Hatred towards the Jews persists only in those countries where slavery to the landlords and capitalists has created abysmal ignorance among the workers and peasants. Only the most ignorant and downtrodden people can believe the lies and slanders that are spread about the Jews....”

Modern anti-Semitism is linked to the rise of capitalism. The heroic young Belgian Trotskyist Abram Leon removed the

veil of metaphysical mythology around the history of Jews in his book *The Jewish Question: A Marxist Interpretation*, finished in 1941 as he organized underground resistance against the Nazis. Leon was captured by the Nazis in 1944 and sent to death in the gas chambers of Auschwitz. In his incisive analysis, Leon situated the continued existence of Jews as a distinct people in Europe during the

Jewish people in comparison not only to the horrors of the tsarist autocracy but even to the most advanced “democratic” countries of the West.

Latin American anti-Semitism is also an inheritance of the barbarism of the Inquisition, which murdered thousands of Jews in the colonial epoch, perpetuated by the hegemonic Catholic church, itself a remnant of the Middle Ages.



Spartacist-initiated speakout at Mexico City’s UNAM campus, April 2002. *Espartaco* placards include: “Defend the Palestinian People! For a Socialist Federation of the Near East!”

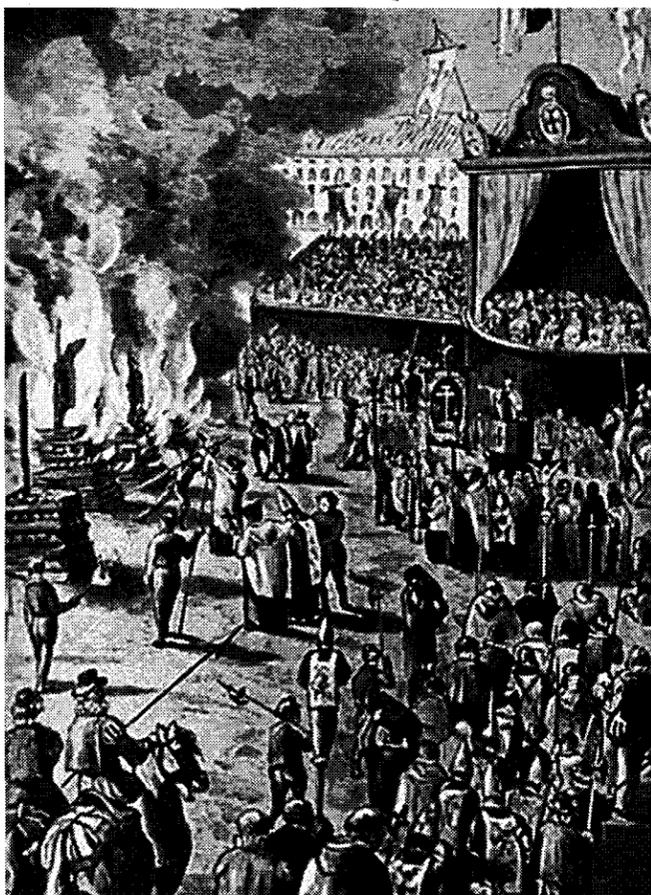
Middle Ages, and their brutal oppression under capitalism, in the social role they played as a commercial “people-class” in feudal and prefeudal society. This role could only be played by those not indigenous to the medieval feudal structure, whose ecclesiastic authorities formalized the need for an “outside” commercial sector by banning Christians from participating in usury. With the rise of mercantile capitalism, this role came to an end, and the Jews of West Europe were driven out of one country after another. As Leon wrote:

“The Jews lived within the pores of feudal society. When the feudal structure started to crumble, it began expelling elements which were, at one and the same time, foreign to it and indispensable to it. Even before the peasant had left the village for the industrial center, the Jew had abandoned the small medieval town in order to emigrate to the great cities of the world. The destruction of the secular function of Judaism within feudal society is accompanied by its passive penetration into capitalist society.... “The highly tragic situation of Judaism in our epoch is explained by the extreme precariousness of its social and economic position. The first to be eliminated by decaying feudalism, the Jews were also the first to be rejected by the convulsions of dying capitalism. The Jewish masses find themselves wedged between the anvil of decaying feudalism and the hammer of rotting capitalism.”

The October Revolution gave flesh and blood to the promise of Marxism for the Jewish people: that the answer to their persecution lay in socialism. The large number of Jews in the leadership of the revolution and of the early Soviet state (such as Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Joffe, Sverdlov, Uritsky, Sokolnikov—all members of the Bolshevik Central Committee—among many others) is itself evidence of the dramatic leap made by the

Anti-Semitism meant that only a few Jews migrated to Mexico (or New Spain) throughout its history. This prejudice has been reinforced by the xenophobic bourgeois nationalism that prevails in this part of the world; in the 1930s anti-Semitic bigotry grew together with the exaltation of “Mexicanity.” It is common in this country for anti-Semitic epithets to be hurled against capitalist rulers, university directors, etc. Brazil—the largest Catholic country in the world—presents a similar picture. In the late 1930s, the fascistic government of Getúlio Vargas refused to grant visas to Jewish refugees from the Nazi Holocaust, condemning thousands to death in the concentration camps. In those years, elements in the Alianza Nacional Libertadora, created by the Brazilian Communist Party, often associated imperialism with Judaism (Jeffrey Lesser, *Welcoming the Undesirables: Brazil & the Jewish Question*). Oswaldo Aranha, former adviser to Getúlio Vargas and in 1947 General Secretary of the UN, together with Brazil’s representative to that den of thieves, João Carlos Muniz, actively supported the resolution that created Israel. The reason: “the Rio de Janeiro neighborhood of Copacabana would be returned to the Brazilians” (ibid.). Not coincidentally, loads of Nazis made their way to Latin America via the CIA/Vatican “rat line.” These Nazi criminals trained the official and unofficial torture experts from the Chilean junta to the Nicaraguan contras.

The nationalist Latin American left has a whole history of reflecting the anti-Semitism of the ruling class, but the LBI seems determined to leave its competitors behind. In 1997, it published a revolting polemic accusing as a “new Christian” a former Stalinist who had



Jews burned at stake during Spanish Inquisition around 1492.

recently joined the pseudo-Trotskyist Brazilian PSTU. As we explained in 1998: "New Christian" is the epithet with which the bloody Inquisition branded for life the Jews who, under penalty of being burnt alive or, if they were lucky, being deported, converted to Christianity.... The LBI, by repeating that disgusting anti-Semitic slander, shows its adaptation to the most repulsive prejudices of bourgeois society and the pestilence of its true program" ("El Centrisimo a la Torquemada," *Espartaco* No. 11, Spring-Summer 1998). With disgusting cynicism, the LBI recently republished its anti-Semitic article as part of a pamphlet!

Trotskyism vs. Bourgeois Nationalism

In "Sweep the ICL....," the LBI also accuses us of being "pro-imperialist" for having refused to support Galtieri's bloody Argentine *gorillas* against Britain in the war—reactionary on both sides—over the Malvinas/Falklands islands, which was nothing other than a trick to derail toward "defense of the fatherland" the working-class discontent rocking the dictatorship (see "Trotskyism vs. Nationalism in Latin America," *Spartacist* [Spanish-language edition] No. 28, January 1998). They further whine because we refused to give any support whatsoever to the anti-communist, anti-woman murderer Ayatollah Khomeini in the misnamed "Iranian revolution" of 1979 (see "¡Defender al Pueblo Palestino!" *Espartaco* No. 15, Spring-Summer 2001). In reality, what they cannot stand is our consistent record of internationalist struggle for the political independence of the proletariat—and, in the case of Iran, for the very existence of the workers movement.

They go on to slander us as having acted as "spokesmen" for the White House and having become "a left appendix of American 'democracy'" for having declared unambiguously that the attack on the World Trade Center of 11 September 2001 "was an indefensible act of criminal terror" (*Espartaco* No. 16, Fall-Winter 2001; WV No. 764, 14 September 2001). Instead, the LBI held that the attack on the WTC was a legitimate act "by the Islamic militants who responded militarily to the permanent war that imperialism imposes on the peoples and oppressed nations of the Near East, by means of the unconventional 'military' resources they had available." The "unconventional 'military' resources" to which the LBI refers were civilian airliners full of passengers! The attack on



Editions La Brèche

Abram Leon, author of *The Jewish Question: A Marxist Analysis*.

the WTC was designed to massacre as many people—ordinary working people from dozens of countries—as possible. It was a *gift* to the imperialists, who used it as an excuse to unleash their murderous war machine under the mantle of the "war on terrorism" while attacking immigrants and workers at home. When the American rulers bombed Afghanistan, we called for the defense of Afghanistan without giving any political support to the reactionary anti-woman Taliban cutthroats (see "Defend Afghanistan Against Imperialist Attack!" WV No. 766, 12 October 2001; *Espartaco* No. 17, Winter 2001-2002). In contrast, the LBI asserted that the workers killed in the attack on the WTC

were a "minority" among "CIA agents"! (*Marxismo Revolucionario*, December 2001). By putting an equal sign between the working masses and their exploiters and oppressors, the LBI adopts the mentality both of the fanatics who perpetrated the attack *and* of the racist American rulers. The LBI's vicarious bloodthirstiness is the result of their nationalist outlook, discarding any possibility of *internationalist class struggle* and the revolutionary destruction of the American imperialist beast from within through workers revolution.

The LBI asserts: "For the ICL, the headquarters of the Pentagon are an innocent civilian 'institution,' inhabited by 'innocent lives'" (*Marxismo Revolucionario*, December 2001). They can only resort to outright lies in order to attack revolutionary Marxists. This is what we said:

"Unlike the World Trade Center, which was simply a complex of buildings housing various businesses employing tens of thousands of working people, the Pentagon is the command and administrative center of the U.S. imperialist military, and rather quintessentially represents the military might of U.S. imperialism, the main enemy of the working people and oppressed of the world....

"The Pentagon is a genuine military target, representing the brutal attacks of U.S. imperialism on the world's working class and oppressed."

—WV No. 766, 12 October 2001

Defend the Palestinian People! For a Socialist Federation of the Near East!

In "Sweep the ICL....," the LBI criticizes the newspaper of our American comrades, *Workers Vanguard* (No. 744, 20 October 2000), lying that the ICL "openly upholds the existence side by side of the Zionist state and a Palestinian state" (*JLO*, November-December 2000). The LBI has a lot of cynicism, but very little wit. This is what our comrades actually wrote:

"We call for the right of national self-determination for both the Palestinian Arab *and* the Hebrew-speaking peoples. In such a situation of *interpenetrated peoples*—of two nations laying claim to the same land—there can be no equitable and democratic resolution to these conflicting national rights within the framework of capitalism. As we first elaborated in 'Birth of the Zionist State Part 2: The 1948 War' (WV No. 45, 24 May 1974):

"It was clear that the establishment of an independent nation-state, either by Palestinian Arabs or the Jews, would occur in Palestine only at the expense of the other nation. When national populations are geographically interpenetrated, as they were in Palestine, an independent nation-state can be created only by their forcible separation (forced population transfers, etc.). Thus the democratic right of self-determination becomes abstract, as it can be exercised only by the stronger national grouping driving out or destroying the weaker one.

"In such cases the only possibility of a democratic solution lies in a social transformation."

The Zionist state of Israel is not the same as the Hebrew-speaking people. The imperialist-sponsored partition of Palestine in 1947 and the creation of the state of Israel came on the heels of the Nazi Holocaust—the greatest catastrophe ever suffered by Jewish people and one of the greatest atrocities ever inflicted on humanity. As a result of the influx of several hundred thousand refugees—who were not allowed into other countries like the U.S. or Britain—from Nazi Germany and the concentration camps, what had previously been a small colony of Zionist settlers in Palestine was transformed into a nation. The point at which this occurred can be placed at the defeat of the general strike and Arab uprising of 1936-39, after which the Palestinian Jews had a functioning closed economy, essentially independent of the Arab communities. This separation laid the basis for the development of the Jewish economy during the Second World War, when the isolation of Palestine compelled the development of entire new industries. The Hebrew nation came into existence through force and violence, through the suppression, forced expulsion and genocide of other peoples. The same is true

for most nations, including those of Latin America. Communists must oppose this brutal national oppression, but once this historical fact is accomplished, we must certainly recognize that nation's right to self-determination, unless we prefer the alternative: national genocide.

There can be no democratic, secular *capitalist* Palestine. But there can be no genuine expression of Palestinian self-determination without the destruction of the Zionist state, which is inherently oppressive to the Palestinian people. Every "solution" to the Palestinian national question under capitalism either perpetuates the oppression of the Palestinian Arab people or envisions a reversal of

seeking to lead the Palestinian Arab and Hebrew-speaking workers in *internationalist class struggle* together with the workers of the rest of the Near East. Such a party can be forged only in defense of the Palestinian people against Zionist terror, without giving an iota of political support to the petty-bourgeois nationalism of Arafat's PLO, in sharp struggle against the reactionary outlook of anti-communist, woman-hating Islamic fundamentalists of the Hamas type, and in opposition to any confidence in the reactionary Arab regimes and all the imperialist agencies.

The Zionist state, led by genocidal reactionaries who long for "holy war" against



Reuters

1994 bombing of Jewish Center in Buenos Aires, Argentina left 86 dead and 300 wounded.

the terms of oppression, denying the legitimate national rights of the Hebrew-speaking people. Both Palestinian Arabs and Hebrew-speaking Israelis live in and lay claim to a small sliver of land in the Near East. Under capitalism, the exercise of national self-determination by either people will necessarily be at the expense of the other. The national emancipation of the Palestinians—including the right of all refugees and their descendants to return to their homeland—necessarily entails workers revolutions to sweep away the Hashemite kingdom of Jordan and the bloody Ba'athist bonapartists in Syria, to bring down the capitalist rulers of Lebanon and to shatter the Zionist state, establishing a socialist federation of the Near East. Thus, socialist revolution will provide the only just and equitable solution to the national aspirations of *both* Palestinian Arabs *and* the Hebrew-speaking people. The resources of the region can be shared between these nations only by means of *workers power* that sweeps away the Zionist butchers, the bonapartist colonels and the feudalist sheiks throughout the Near East. A binational Trotskyist party is required,

their 200 million Arab neighbors, *is also a death trap for Jews*. As Trotsky wrote in 1940, on the eve of the Holocaust:

"The future development of military events may well transform Palestine into a bloody trap for several hundred thousand Jews. Never was it so clear as it is today that the salvation of the Jewish people is bound up inseparably with the overthrow of the capitalist system."

—Leon Trotsky on the Jewish Question" (Pathfinder, 1970)

And so it remains. The Zionist "dream" has revealed itself to be a hideous nightmare. During World War II Western Zionists not only accepted—and fostered—the racist closed-door policy of the imperialist "democracies" toward Jewish refugees but even collaborated with the Nazis in order to secure handfuls of emigrants for Palestine to carve a reactionary nation-state out of the living body of the Palestinian Arab people. In the early '90s the Zionists adopted a similar "commonality of interests" with the likes of the Russian fascist anti-Semites of Pamyat. Indeed, the Israeli bourgeoisie would *prefer* to see persecution of Jews rage throughout the world in order to bolster their lie that only

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SARS: Capitalism, Racism and Public Health

The following article is reprinted from Spartacist Canada No. 137 (Summer 2003), newspaper of the Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyste, Canadian section of the International Communist League.

In six months the SARS epidemic has infected more than 8,000 people worldwide, killing over 750. In Toronto, the



epicenter of the disease outside East Asia, SARS has killed 30 people and infected more than 300, and is still spreading. This virulent disease is wreaking havoc in China where the dismantling of the planned economy has left hundreds of millions without health care. In Canada SARS put a spotlight on the wreckage of Ontario's public health care system after over a decade of brutal budget-slashing, layoffs and hospital closures by NDP [social democratic New Democratic Party] and Tory governments alike.

SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) is thought to have been transmitted from animals to humans in the markets of the Guangdong region of China last November. On February 21, a sick

Free, Quality Health Care for All!

racism in a poisonous cocktail. Asians were shunned on Toronto subways, restaurants openly segregated people of Asian appearance and schoolchildren were taunted with calls of "Chinese, go away." A woman who lost two family members to SARS said bitterly, "People treat us like monsters. They say we eat like rats and live like pigs" ([Toronto] *Globe and Mail*, 8 April). In the Maritimes, Acadia University told students from China, though *not* Toronto, to stay away. The University of California in Berkeley threatened to ban all students from China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore (but again not Toronto). While it eventually allowed some 80 of these students to enroll, 500 were still kept out.

Alongside the hysteria and bigotry has been a widespread and quite rational belief that the ruling class was royally screwing this up. Lives depend on rapid containment of SARS, but Canada's capitalist rulers have responded with chauvinism, incompetence and above all an indifference born of capitalist greed to the well-being of the population. Toronto's

SARS is also being used by the airline bosses to further slash their unionized workforces. Internationally, airline officials say SARS has hit them harder than the combined effects of 9/11 and the imperialist war on Iraq. But bankrupt Air Canada is invoking SARS to demand an immediate 10 percent pay cut and another 10,000 layoffs, part of its drive to gut the unions and slash wages and jobs. Airline union leaders have rolled over before these attacks, agreeing to mass layoffs and other givebacks.

SARS directly cost 27,000 jobs in Ontario in April, 12,000 in hotels and restaurants alone. Many of these workers are part-time and will be lucky to get a dime under the draconian employment insurance rules. The fact that 14,000 of these jobs were lost in the health sector amid a medical emergency is stunning. These workers are SARS "collateral damage," the result of shutting down outpatient facilities and stopping treatment of any but the most critical cases, even seriously ill cardiac patients. Already cancer patients had to endure a life-

talkshop. But it was Bob Rae's NDP government in the early 1990s that paved the way for this onslaught. They slashed billions from social services, education and health care, closing hospitals and eliminating free prescriptions for the poor and elderly. In a vindictive racist act, they withdrew medical coverage for refugee claimants. The union-busting "social contract" slashed public sector workers' paychecks. The Conservatives brutally escalated these attacks in tandem with sweeping cuts to health care and other social services by the Chrétien Liberals in Ottawa.

The irrational destruction of health care and basic infrastructure has hit virtually every aspect of public life in Canada. It has also taken lives. Three years ago, after Ontario's water testing facilities were privatized, seven people in the town of Walkerton died from the *E. coli* bacterium, and more than 2,300 became ill. A year later the Tories got rid of Ontario's top five microbiologists, blithely and stupidly declaring that "It would be highly unlikely that we would find a new organism in Ontario"! Faced with a new and dangerous mosquito-borne virus, West Nile, the chief scientist researching it was fired. In Alberta, it took five months to perform tests on the carcass of a cow now known to have had cow disease, significantly increasing the danger that the disease entered the food chain. Willfully destroying the technical facilities needed to respond to infectious diseases, the capitalist rulers cannot even guarantee the most basic public health measures to ensure water that's safe to drink and food that's safe to eat.

The ripping up of what was known as the "welfare state" is a global phenomenon. The decade since the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union has seen brutal and unremitting attacks on the workers and oppressed everywhere. The Soviet Union, a bureaucratically degenerated workers state, acted as a counterweight to global imperialist domination and undercut the capitalists' ability to carry out wholesale attacks on the working class. But since its destruction the capitalists no longer feel the need to fend off the "threat of Communism" by means of reforms, health services and welfare provision, which were designed to buy off working-class resistance.

Savage attacks on the unions and social programs have ripped through the living conditions and basic rights of the working class as the capitalists drive to maximize profits and compete internationally. At every level—from the devastation brought to the people of the former Soviet Union, to the wreckage of social programs in West Europe and North America, to the sharp increase in bloody imperialist wars from the Balkans to Iraq—capitalist restoration in the former USSR has been an unmitigated disaster for working people everywhere.

Nurses on the Frontlines

On every front the heroic efforts of nurses, doctors and others to contain SARS and protect themselves have run up against an increasingly decrepit Canadian public health system. There has been little coordination of services, information and resources, all crucial to controlling an infectious disease. Infection control procedures in Toronto hospitals are substandard: some single-use medical devices such as EMG needles and catheters are used more than 20 times. Even the masks used to prevent infection have been considered obsolete in the U.S. for 30 years!



Spartacist Canada



Ananova

Toronto: May 10 protest against health care privatization (left). Paramedics move SARS patient.

doctor from China visited Hong Kong, unwittingly infecting travelers from Hanoi, Toronto and Singapore who infected others when they got home. At that point little was known about SARS, though it was known that a serious atypical pneumonia had killed people in China. These first patients were not isolated and many hospital workers became ill. On March 14, the World Health Organization (WHO) issued a worldwide alert about SARS.

While the numbers affected by SARS are minute beside the millions killed by AIDS and malaria, the death rate from the disease is very high—put at 7-10 percent by the WHO and almost 20 percent in Hong Kong according to a new *Lancet* study. With no effective treatment or vaccine, SARS has spawned enormous panic and social and economic dislocations through Asia and Canada. The hysteria accompanying the SARS outbreak in Toronto has far outstripped the virus itself, which so far is largely confined to hospitals. For many weeks, restaurants, stores, churches and sports arenas were deserted. Subway ridership fell by 50,000 a day. Schools canceled field trips, big corporations kept their executives out of Toronto, and major conventions canceled one after another. U.S. tabloids blared that Toronto was a "Pariah City."

Hysteria mixed with anti-Chinese

first announcements on SARS were not even translated into Chinese. Told by the WHO to implement screening at airports, Health Canada [the federal department of health] arrogantly refused, whining about cost. Vietnam and Singapore quickly installed the thermal-imaging sensors to detect the high fever that is a symptom of SARS, but not Canada even though Vancouver is one of the few places these machines are made! After a couple of suspected Canadian SARS cases turned up in other countries, and a woman from Canada died of SARS in the Philippines, the WHO issued a travel advisory on Canada because SARS was not properly contained here. There were howls of injured national outrage, but if SARS spreads to poverty-stricken countries in Africa and Asia it could kill millions.

The impact of SARS has hit the working class hard. Up to 10,000 people were quarantined in Toronto at the height of the outbreak. In a new outbreak, by late May some 7,000 more were in quarantine. The "lucky" ones in union jobs have been forced to use up sick time or holidays, but others had nothing to fall back on. The Ontario government's initial categorical refusal to provide any compensation for these workers undermined this basic public health measure, as some people broke their quarantine, fearing they would not otherwise survive economically.

threatening two-month wait for surgery. With SARS this has now grown to more than three months.

Capitalist Austerity Shreds Health Care

Effective treatment of SARS requires great medical resources—respirators, antibiotics, isolation wards, diagnostic equipment, protective gear and many nurses and doctors—things poverty-stricken countries in Asia and Africa lack. But in wealthy imperialist Canada, health care has been deliberately eviscerated by capitalist austerity. When SARS hit Toronto, there were not enough nurses, doctors, hospital beds, laboratories and diagnostic services to handle "regular" needs, let alone this medical emergency.

Since 1995, when the Conservatives under Mike Harris came to power, billions have been slashed from health care and other vital social services. After mass layoffs and dozens of hospital closures, there are 25,000 fewer health care workers than in 1995. Medicare covers less and less and people pay huge sums—\$1,072 per person this year—for procedures no longer covered. An astounding 900,000 Ontarians do not have a family doctor.

The New Democrats have complained loudly about the cuts to health care, demanding a debate in the parliamentary

Little wonder so many health care workers have been infected.

The huge layoffs starting ten years ago saw thousands of nurses laid off. Only 54 percent of Ontario nurses now work at full-time jobs. Many are casuals working on call from hospital to hospital. Because of the SARS risk, thousands of these nurses have been thrown out of work, with others forced to work massive overtime.

Hundreds of nurses have been quarantined. Even with the added punishing conditions imposed by SARS—the double gowns and masks, the tension and fear—nurses have still had to work brutal 12-hour shifts. Nurses and doctors are the heroes of the SARS outbreak, but they have also borne the brunt of the disease. Fully two-thirds of SARS cases are health care workers and their families. Grotesquely, some nurses who became ill with SARS were not “officially” diagnosed with it, thus denying them Workers Compensation. Nurses have endured wage freezes, rollbacks and repeated strikebreaking back-to-work laws whenever they have fought back. Small wonder SARS was the last straw for many and some simply quit.

Public Health, Capitalism and Racism

When epidemics strike, public health measures are required which are sometimes drastic and intrusive but necessary to save lives. There is always tension between public health and individual rights, but which has more weight at a given moment can only be decided by examining the particular health threat posed. With no vaccine or reliable treatment for SARS, quarantine is the only way to isolate and contain it. Similarly, screening international travelers at airports to detect potentially symptomatic people could reduce SARS’ spread and save lives. Yet such public health measures are indelibly stamped by the race and class biases of this capitalist society.

The most powerful contemporary example of this is AIDS. From the outset AIDS, intersecting disease and sex, has been manipulated in the service of bigotry and reaction. In 1982, public health authorities knew that it could be transmitted sexually, and that the risk of contracting AIDS was maximized by promiscuity. Studies had shown that the people who frequented the San Francisco bathhouses were getting sick at a very high rate. The logical thing would be to slow the already exponential spread of the disease. Closing the baths, an extraordinary public health measure, could have helped to alert gay men most at risk, who were either uninformed or dismissive of the facts, that they were at risk for contracting a fatal disease. But, as we wrote in *Women and Revolution*:

“Could a government of Anita Bryants and Jerry Falwells have convinced gay people about anything? It was not so unreasonable that in 1981 and 1982 many gays reacted to the rumors of a new killer disease spread through sex as if it were a lie to create anti-gay hysteria. This is a classic Catch-22. In fact, this vicious anti-gay bigotry is precisely why the bathhouses were not closed down.”

—“The Agony of AIDS,” No. 35 (Summer 1988)

Every approach to AIDS—research, prevention, medical care, education—has been treated with criminal neglect. The Canadian government and Red Cross knowingly distributed potentially deadly blood and blood products during the 1980s, infecting more than 1,200 people with AIDS, including 800 hemophiliacs, because the capitalist ghouls running this state deemed it too costly to test the blood. Even after this, thousands more people were infected with Hepatitis C after receiving contaminated blood.

Underscoring the absolute indifference of the bosses to the lives of working people, when the anthrax scare hit in the wake of 9/11, the U.S. Postal Service let unknown numbers of postal workers get infected. Yet nothing was overlooked to protect a handful of U.S. Senators—even Capitol Hill police dogs got tested for anthrax before postal workers did.

The anti-Asian racism that accompa-



SARS isolation hospital under construction on outskirts of Beijing (above). Beijing sign boasts that Communist Party will conquer SARS. Stalinists’ own “market reforms” undermine such efforts.

Michael Reynolds



nied SARS is deeply rooted in this country. Marked by explosive pogromist violence such as the 1907 Vancouver riots, anti-immigrant racism has always been entwined with hysteria about disease. Fifteen thousand Chinese workers came here in the 19th century to build the railroads, 2,000 of whom died from the cruel and dangerous conditions under which they toiled. A few caught leprosy (Hansen’s Disease) in the overcrowded camps. Even then it was known that leprosy was not highly contagious, yet the Chinese who got this disease were treated with great brutality. In 1882 a Chinese man with leprosy was lynched. Others ended up in Canada’s own leper colony for Chinese people on D’Arcy Island near Victoria, a prison visited a few times a year by ships carrying food, drugs and opium. In Calgary during an 1892 smallpox outbreak, a racist mob rampaged through Chinatown after a Chinese man was released from quarantine.

Such venomous racism is not dusty old history. When four boats carrying desperate would-be immigrants from Fujian, China washed up on the B.C. [British Columbia] coast in 1999, the hysteria against them was replete with all the inflammatory racist saws of 100 years earlier about Asian immigrants spreading syphilis, malaria and other diseases.

It is breathtaking that the North American capitalist rulers and their mouthpieces attack immigrants as bearers of disease, be it SARS, AIDS or anything else. Europeans brought such pestilence and death to North and South America that 90 percent of the original inhabitants, lacking the immunities of their English, Spanish and French conquerors, were simply wiped out by smallpox, cholera and other diseases. And some of it was deliberate, as in distributing blankets infested with smallpox to the Native peoples.

Vietnamese Workers State Contains SARS

The Canadian capitalist rulers were furious when the WHO lumped them in with countries like China. More galling was to be unfavorably contrasted with economically weak Vietnam, the first country to contain SARS. In 1975 the Vietnamese workers and peasants dealt the U.S. imperialists a stunning battlefield defeat, smashing capitalist rule in the South and ending almost 30 years of bloody imperialist war in which

two million Vietnamese people were killed. Today, especially after the capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union, Vietnam’s economy is in dire straits. Here, as in China, the bureaucrats at the head of the Vietnamese deformed workers state are moving toward so-called “market reforms,” a deadly danger to the gains of the Vietnamese Revolution. Yet even now, Vietnam’s ability to deal with SARS speaks to the capacities and potentials of a workers state organized on lines other than capitalist profit.

Vietnam threw enormous social resources into combating SARS. As soon as a patient at the Hanoi French Hospital appeared with an unusual and serious flu-like virus, the hospital notified the WHO. When medical staff started to fall ill, the government quickly organized to combat the outbreak. Patients were isolated and sent to two designated Hanoi hospitals. Contacts of the infected were assiduously traced and visited daily, while infrared machines were set up at airport and border crossings to detect people with high temperatures. An infectious disease specialist with Médecins sans Frontières, Carlo Urbani, who went to Vietnam to assist this work, later died of SARS. Vietnam had only 63 cases of SARS, more than half health care workers, and five deaths, four of whom were nurses and doctors.

China: The Deadly Mix of “Market Reforms” and SARS

SARS is sending shock waves through the Chinese deformed workers state. Fueled by bureaucratic venality, lies and cover-ups and, more than anything, by the destruction of public health in the service of the accelerating drive to capitalist restoration, SARS has infected well over 5,000 people and killed over 300. The Chinese bureaucracy criminally hid the nature and extent of this disease, issuing nostrums to soothe their capitalist investors while doing little to inform the Chinese people. The disease has now spread to rural areas and distant regions like Inner Mongolia.

Months late, the Chinese bureaucracy is now aggressively trying to deal with the SARS epidemic, even constructing an entire hospital in a few days. Because China is still based on a nationalized economy, the country is able to marshal resources to combat the disease. But this is highly contradictory and at times stupidly brutal, invoking, for example,

the death penalty for those who break quarantine.

As part of its anti-SARS campaign, the Chinese government is resurrecting the memory of Norman Bethune, the courageous Canadian Communist doctor who died on the Long March in 1939 while serving with the Chinese Red Army. Yet this same Stalinist bureaucracy is destroying the enormous gains of the 1949 Revolution, not least the health care system that was a signal achievement of the planned economy. In contrast to capitalist India or other “Third World” countries where the masses have long lived in abject misery reinforced by imperialist subjugation, in China even the most remote villages received basic care from “barefoot doctors,” medical personnel with minimal training. Health campaigns aimed at improving sanitation and providing clean drinking water helped control diseases like TB and neonatal tetanus. But the “market reforms” initiated by Deng Xiaoping, who came to power in 1978, have changed all this, disastrously.

An *Asia Times Online* (19 April) article notes there are now “hundreds of millions of peasants in the Chinese countryside without even basic preventative care.” Along with factory closures and layoffs, public health services, preventative care, disease surveillance and medical control have collapsed, a perfect culture medium for an epidemic. China has inadequate respirators, drugs and isolation facilities to respond to the crisis. In the countryside, where many of the clinics and hospitals have closed down, the situation is grimmer. In a vast country that once had free health care, SARS patients are being turned away if they cannot make hefty cash down payments for their care. As a farmer in Qingxu near Beijing said, “A peasant’s life in China has never been worth anything. I made \$300 last year, and I’m rich compared with some of my neighbors. But it costs \$250 to go to the hospital.”

Recent years have seen massive explosions of proletarian anger as the bureaucracy dismantles the planned economy that was the legacy of the 1949 Chinese Revolution. The ravages of privatization and closure of state-owned industries have left millions of workers without the guaranteed housing, education, medical and retirement benefits that came with those jobs.

Distrust of the authorities has fuelled SARS’ spread and ignited pre-existing social tinder. Students and migrant workers have fled Beijing back to their home towns, some bringing SARS with them. SARS patients are fleeing hospitals to die at home and in one village, angry and frightened peasants rioted, destroying a facility meant to hold SARS patients. In some rural areas, oracles and prayers are filling the void left by the destruction of medical care.

Even the *Wall Street Journal* (19 May), continued on page 11

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Germany: Apologists for Zionist Terror Attack Spartakist Youth Meeting

On June 23, our comrades of the Spartakist Jugend, youth group of the Spartakist Workers Party of Germany (SpAD), held a speakout at Berlin's Humboldt University to protest an attack by the anti-Palestinian "anti-nationals" on one of our classes a few days before. Our comrades mobilized with a bullhorn to loudly denounce this attempt to shut down a leftist meeting and to let the "anti-national" thugs know we wouldn't be intimidated. Many of those who watched our demonstration appreciated our forthright defense of the Palestinians. This included three Palestinian construction workers who were working nearby. Discussions with them ranged from defense of the Palestinians to the need to combat Arab nationalism and to draw a clear line against anti-Semitism. These workers each bought a copy of *Spartakist*, newspaper of the SpAD, and gave a small donation to the party. Some of the students who supported us also wanted to help defend our next public class at Humboldt, titled "Defend the Palestinians!", which the "anti-national" goons have threatened to attack.

We reprint below a 23 June leaflet issued by the Spartakist Jugend and distributed at the speakout.

* * *

On June 19, a gang of so-called "anti-nationals" tried to break up a public class of the Spartakist Jugend on "The Holocaust, German Imperialism and Zionism: How the Anti-Semitic German Bourgeoisie Aids the State of Israel." Acting like Hitlerite stormtroopers on the campuses in the early 1930s, three of these apologists for Zionist terror against the Palestinians burst into the room, with one of them ripping up a copy of our newspaper and screaming that we deserved "a punch in the mouth." When those who had come to attend the class defended the meeting against this anti-communist provocateur

and put him out the door, he and his two accomplices threatened that they would attack our next class.

All those who cherish the right to free speech, all defenders of the besieged Palestinian people should rally in opposition to this violent attempt to shut down a leftist meeting. This attack, like repeated previous attempts to disrupt pro-Palestinian left-wing meetings, is a frontal assault on the rights of *all* at Humboldt University to express their political views. We welcome the open clash of different views, because such is critical to raising the political consciousness of radical youth, working people and others who seek to fight against exploitation and oppression. Indeed, two "anti-nationals" who did not join in trying to disrupt the meeting were allowed to stay and take part in the discussion. Come to our next class on July 3 to stand up against any further attempt at anti-communist thuggery and political censorship!

The "anti-nationals" are a conglomeration of ex-leftists who came together in 1990, following the counterrevolutionary annexation of the East German deformed workers state by the Fourth Reich of German imperialism. They have embraced many forces, including U.S. imperialism. Thus, they took a side with U.S. imperialism against Iraq in the first Gulf War of 1991 and supported the Russian colonial war against Chechnya in 1994. Today, their spectrum extends from those like *Jungle World* who supported the antiwar movement to those like the Berlin Anti-German Communists who hailed the imperialist bloodbath against the Iraqis: "It is comforting that the Americans will once again have the better weapons." The day the attack on Iraq began, they yelled at the tens of thousands of militant students who took to the streets that they should "shut up." The Open Communist Forum South hailed the occupation of Iraq: "And

today is a good day for Israel. The conditions for the creation of a new democracy in the Near East have been won" ("Free! Free Baghdad!—Rejoice Over the Ruin



June 23: Spartakist youth speak out against attack by "anti-national" thugs at Humboldt University.

of the Regime," 9 April). What all wings of the "anti-nationals" have in common is their denunciation of any who defend the Palestinians against Zionist state terror.

The "anti-nationals" who attack defenders of the Palestinians as "anti-Semites," a charge they hurled against us in attacking our meeting, are apologists for the racist German imperialist bourgeoisie. Their call for "solidarity with Israel" is nothing other than support for the genocidal war of terror being perpetrated by the Zionist state against the Palestinians. Waving the banner of "collective guilt," they simultaneously amnesty the bourgeoisie of Auschwitz and the Zionist rulers who today ape the Nazis.

"Collective guilt" is used to whitewash those who are really guilty of the mass murder of millions of Jews, Communists, Roma [Gypsies], homosexuals and countless others, shifting the blame for the horrors of the Nazi Holocaust from the German capitalist rulers to the German people as a whole. As Israeli liberal Amos Alon put it, "Ritualized lip service to guilt serves to give the new nationalism and the new xenophobia a good conscience." The cynical cry of "no more Holocausts" is used to justify the renewed march of German militarism, including the first deployment of German combat units since the end of World War II in the Balkans in 1999.

Taking their cue, the "anti-nationals" try to silence the voice of those who denounce the crimes of German imperialism past and present. The Zionist rulers with whom they solidarize were themselves guilty of collaboration with Hitler's Nazis, reflecting their stated "commonality of interests": the fascists wanted the Jews out of Europe, so did the Zionists. German imperialism has been one of the biggest backers, militarily and financially, of the Zionist state from its inception.

There *has* been a rise in anti-Semitic attacks in Germany, and this is the direct product of capitalist reunification in 1990, which we Spartakists fought against down the line. In October 1999, when the Jewish cemetery in Berlin Weissensee was desecrated on the night that German reunification is celebrated, we immediately organized a protest at Humboldt University and argued for worker/immigrant mobilizations to stop the fascists. Those who argue that anti-Zionism equals anti-Semitism echo the German bourgeoisie, which wields the "war on terror" to persecute Arabs and those of Turkish and Kurdish origin in Germany.

The "anti-nationals" hate us for our proletarian *internationalist* championing of the national rights of the oppressed Palestinian people. It is only from such an internationalist standpoint that one can fight against all national oppression without giving quarter to any manifestation of racism or chauvinism, be it anti-Semitism, Zionism or Arab nationalism. Only through the proletarian overthrow of both the Israeli bourgeoisie and all the Arab ruling classes can the conflicting national claims of the Palestinian Arab and Hebrew-speaking peoples be equitably resolved in a socialist federation of the Near East.

We seek to win leftist youth and workers who oppose anti-Semitism, anti-immigrant racism and all forms of oppression to the fight to forge a multiethnic revolutionary workers party that can lead the proletariat in sweeping away the bourgeoisie of Auschwitz. Join us! ■

Spartacus Youth Club Classes & Events

BAY AREA

Alternate Saturdays, 6 p.m.

July 12: **Defend the Gains of the Chinese, Cuban, Vietnamese and North Korean Revolutions!**

July 26: **Black Oppression Is the Bedrock of U.S. Capitalism—For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!**

1634 Telegraph Avenue, 3rd floor
Downtown Oakland
(near the 19th St. BART)

Information and readings: (510) 839-0851
or e-mail: slbayarea@compuserve.com

CHICAGO

Alternate Saturdays, 5 p.m.

July 12: **The Leninist Struggle Against Imperialism**

July 26: **The Russian Revolution of 1917**

222 S. Morgan, ring buzzer #23
(Blue Line, UIC-Halsted stop)

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

LOS ANGELES

Alternate Saturdays, 2 p.m.

July 12: **The Workers Revolution vs. The Guerrilla Road**

July 26: **Defend China, North Korea, Cuba and Vietnam Against Imperialist Attack and Counterrevolution!**

3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215
(Vermont/Beverly Red Line station)

Information and readings: (213) 380-8239
or e-mail: slsycla@cs.com

TORONTO

Alternate Saturdays, 2 p.m.

July 19: **Defend China, North Korea Against Imperialist Attack and Counterrevolution!**

August 2: **Marxism vs. Anarchism—For a Revolutionary Workers Party!**

Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Room 8201
252 Bloor St. West
(above St. George Station)

Information and readings: (416) 593-4138
or e-mail: spartcan@on.aibn.com

BOSTON

Alternate Saturdays, 3:30 p.m.

July 12: **The Leninist Fight Against Imperialist War**

July 26: **For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!**

Harvard University, Loker Common
Information and readings: (617) 666-9453
or e-mail: bostonsyc@yahoo.com

NEW YORK CITY

Alternate Saturdays, 1 p.m.

July 12: **Capitalist Rulers Wage War on Blacks—For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!**

July 26: **Down With Colonial Occupation of Iraq—U.S. Imperialism Hands Off the World!**

299 Broadway, Suite 318
(between Reade and Duane Streets)

Meet the Marxists

Tuesday, July 8, 7 p.m.

Columbia University
607 Hamilton Hall

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

Visit the ICL web site: www.icl-fi.org

Students Interrogated for Dissing Bush

Secret Service Says: That Joke Isn't Funny Anymore

Wouldn't it suck if you lived in a country where you couldn't tell a joke in class without ending up in handcuffs? Well, guess what, you do! On April 23, the Secret Service dragged two 16-year-old Southeast Asian Oakland High School (OHS) students out of class for cracking an anti-Bush joke. It's no accident OHS students were targeted, as they were some of the most militant antiwar protesters during the bloody U.S. onslaught against Iraq. As the Feds interrogated the suspected "terrorist" youth, it was clear that the real terrorists were the racist, anti-immigrant cops!

During a classroom discussion about the imperialist mass murder of Iraqis, one of the students said, "Bush is wacked," and the other, "Someone should take care of him (Bush)" (*Oakland Tribune*, 4 May). The students' teacher, acting as one of Bush's "good citizen informants," called the San Francisco office of the Secret Service to report the comments. The next day, the Feds arrived and hauled the two youth out of their sixth-period classes for "questioning." Neither lawyers nor the students' parents were present during the interrogation, only the school's principal, Clement Mok, who sat back and let the agents "do their jobs."

Over the course of the interrogation, the youth were reduced to tears when the agents threatened to deport their parents. One of the students found the courage to insist that he be allowed to remain silent until he had contacted a lawyer. The agents replied, "We own you, if you don't talk to us now, and we find out you haven't told us everything, we'll put you in federal prison. This is the beginning of the end for you" (Indymedia.org).

On June 6, outraged Oakland students, teachers and parents held a rally protesting this grotesque assault on student civil rights. It is popular to demand the ouster

of Mok, who has earned the hatred of many for confiscating leaflets and threatening to suspend students who were passing out flyers for an antiwar walkout on March 5. In an attempt to stop students from carrying out their protest, Mok even went so

far as to lock and run barbed wire along the gates surrounding the school, after which a small fire broke out with students trapped on campus.

Although we wouldn't shed a tear if Mok did get the boot, the fundamental

problems with a lousy, racist, class-biased school system will not be resolved by appointing a new administrator in Mok's place. A new face will do nothing to change an underfunded, understaffed, overcrowded school swarming with racist cops. The prerequisite to achieving education for the masses is the revolutionary transformation of society brought about by the destruction of the capitalist order and the creation of a workers America.

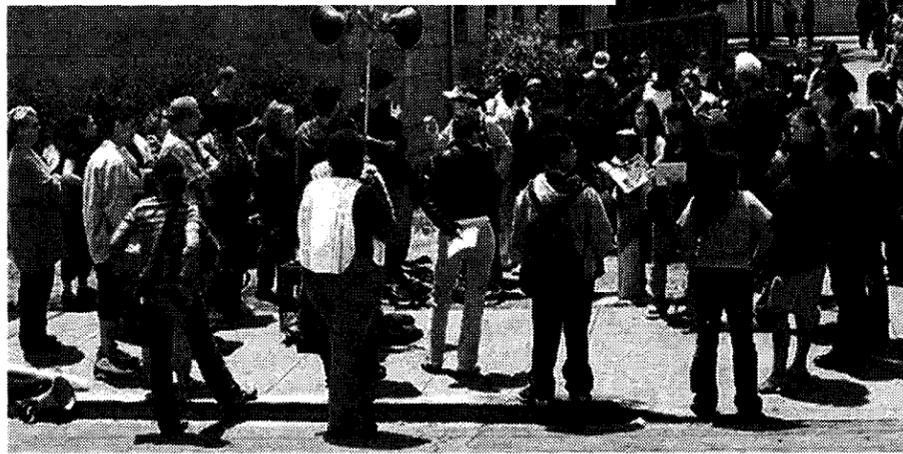
This most recent incident at Oakland High, just as with the April 7 police rampage against protesters at the Port of Oakland, showcases the escalating state crackdown on those who don't march in step with U.S. imperialism's drive for total world domination. Bush's bigoted anti-immigrant top cop, John Ashcroft, has stated that the Patriot Act has too many weak spots and needs strengthening; in other words, the "war on terror" is not repressive enough! But don't be fooled into thinking that the Democrats are friends of the exploited and oppressed. De facto Democrat, "Independent" Oakland mayor Jerry Brown supported the police blitzkrieg on the docks and is mum on the Secret Service terrorizing OHS students. The Democrats have supported Bush's "war on terror," which is really a thinly veiled way of waging war on immigrants, blacks, leftists and labor. To its credit, the teachers union, the Oakland Education Association, has issued a statement condemning the Secret Service's interrogation of the two students.

While teachers are being laid off in the thousands and schools crumble, police repression in the schools is on the rise. The SYC stands in solidarity with Oakland High students against this outrageous cop intimidation. We say: *All cops out of the schools! For free, quality, integrated public education for all!* ■

Jeff Paterson/Not In Our Name photos



Oakland High School students protest campus repression on June 6.



New Charges Filed Against Antiwar Activists

Hands Off Oakland Port Protesters!

OAKLAND, June 28—Misdemeanor charges were filed this week against 25 antiwar protesters arrested at the Port of Oakland on April 7 during a brutal cop attack in which police used so-called "less lethal" weapons that left over 50 people injured. Most of the protesters were charged with "interfering with a business"; some were also hit with "disturbing the peace" and "failure to disperse." International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) business agent Jack Heyman was further charged with "failure to comply with the order of a police officer" for trying to protect his union members who were attempting to report to work.

In the run-up to and during the first days of the war, police arrested thousands of protesters in the Bay Area in the hope of quelling the substantial opposition to the U.S. war on Iraq here at home. Charges against the 2,300 arrested in San Francisco were initially reduced from misdemeanors to traffic infractions. On June 20, following a traffic commissioner's threatened dis-

missal of the cases, District Attorney Terence Hallinan filed new charges against 350 of those originally arrested and announced that he'd soon charge the rest. The purely vindictive nature of these prosecutions was underscored when the charges were dropped yesterday because the police confessed, according to Assistant D.A. Mike Menesini, that "they are unable to establish the facts necessary to convict any of these individuals" (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 28 June)!

In Oakland, charges against the port protesters had been put on hold on May 7 but not dismissed—an obvious intimidation tactic. The filing of charges now, coming at a time marked by stepped-up Iraqi resistance to the occupation of their country and the murderous response by American armed forces, is intended to stifle possible protest as the depredations of U.S. imperialism in Iraq are increasingly revealed for what they are: a bloody war of colonial conquest. We demand: Drop the charges against all antiwar protesters now!

It is perhaps not coincidental that the charges were filed just days before attorneys announced a class-action lawsuit against the City of Oakland and the police department. The case is being brought by 40 of those injured at the port, including nine longshoremen, and ILWU Local 10. The complaint lays out the malicious and wanton actions by the police and details the injuries suffered by each defendant. At a June 26 press conference called to announce the suit, three of the plaintiffs described what happened to them at the docks; one, Willow Rosenthal, said the wound to her calf caused by a wooden projectile necessitated a ten-day hospital stay and multiple surgeries. The civil suit asks for monetary damages and for an injunction to restrain the police from use of "excessive, indiscriminate and/or arbitrary force" against future demonstrations.

The Spartacist League stands in solidarity with those who have brought this suit, but we warn against illusions that it can result in police reform. The cops

are the armed fist of the state, which exists to administer and protect the capitalist system of exploitation and oppression. Like the investigation into the April 7 events by an "independent" panel—set up by the same government that runs the police force—schemes for civilian oversight are only put in place to make the cops appear more credible, sometimes by sacrificing a cop or two as "aberrations" or agreeing to toothless consent decrees. The settlement in the Oakland "Riders" suit against police brutality is a case in point: the 72-page agreement specifying "the best available practices and procedures for police management" was signed not three months before the April 7 action at the port, showing that the police regard it as nothing more than scrap paper. A statement by John Burris, one of the attorneys involved in both the Riders and the Oakland port lawsuits, was revealing. In a 26 June ACLU press release, he is quoted as saying that the class-action suit is an "opportunity

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Australian Imperialism Hands Off!

Aceh: Indonesian Troops Out Now!

The following is reprinted from Australasian Spartacist No. 183 (Winter 2003), newspaper of the Spartacist League of Australia.

MAY 24—Under orders of President Megawati Sukarnoputri, the Indonesian military (TNI) have launched a massive operation against separatists in the Suma-

Australasian
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tran province of Aceh. In Indonesia's largest military operation since the 1975 invasion of East Timor, more than 45,000 Indonesian troops are on an offensive in Aceh and outlying islands against the Islamic separatist Free Aceh Movement (GAM). The Indonesian offensive in Aceh follows the failure of "peace" talks in Tokyo between the central government and GAM, aborted when five GAM leaders were provocatively arrested and denied participation in the talks. In a chilling expression of TNI intent, General Endriartono Sutarto urged his officers to "hunt them down and exterminate them" (*Australian*, 21 May).

For more than a century, the Acehnese have fought tenaciously against both Dutch and Indonesian attempts to impose outside rule. News out of Aceh indicates a vicious campaign of terror against the



Suara Merdeka

Indonesian troops torment alleged GAM guerrilla fighter arrested in East Aceh.

planes and rocket-equipped OV-10 Broncos counter-insurgency aircraft against Acehnese villagers. Meanwhile the Australian government continues to fund "peacekeeping" operations in the province and has begun rebuilding links with Indonesia's military under the guise of

the U.S., the Australian rulers are furiously acting to enforce capitalist rule throughout East Asia to ensure the smooth flow of profits from their superexploited neocolonies.

Moreover the U.S. and Australian rulers see "stability" of the capitalist order in Indonesia as key to their goal of encircling China. With U.S. bases in Afghanistan and Central Asia, the intended entrenchment in the Philippines and existing bases in Japan and South Korea, an American presence in Indonesia would lock the chain around China. The imperialists seek the overturn of the social gains of the 1949 anti-capitalist revolution in China through a combination of military pressure and capitalist economic penetration. For unconditional military defence of the Chinese, North Korean, Cuban and Vietnamese deformed workers states against imperialist attack and internal capitalist counterrevolution!

Indonesia is a dependent neocolony of the imperialists. For years the Javanese-chauvinist bourgeoisie has ruled over this prison house of peoples through bloody military terror. Following sometimes huge demonstrations supporting separation of Aceh and continual unrest in West Papua, in 2001 the Indonesian regime—following suggestions from the Australian and U.S. imperialist overlords—offered "autonomy" deals within the confines of a unitary Indonesian state. These were rejected by the Acehnese separatists. Since 1976, more than twelve thousand people have been killed and tens of thousands disappeared. At the height of the butcher Suharto's crackdown—between 1989 and 1992—at least 2,000 Acehnese were killed and many were tortured, raped and abducted by the Indonesian army. Mobil

Oil's role in these atrocities is well-documented. According to survivors of a death camp and other investigators, Mobil supplied the Indonesian army with heavy earth-moving equipment to dig mass graves (see "Mobil Oil and the Indonesian Death Camp," WV No. 705, 22 January 1999).

For a Trotskyist Party in Indonesia

Their victory in the war against Iraq has emboldened the imperialists for more brutal subjugation against other semi-colonial and colonial countries and encourages their servile bourgeois allies in these countries to carry out more despotic terror. With the U.S. imperialists backing a murderous military campaign by the Arroyo regime in the south of the Philippines against the Moro Muslim minority, Megawati has been depicting the GAM as similar to Al Qaeda and Jemaah Islamiyah, whose members are currently on trial over the indefensible acts of terror bombing in Bali last October. As an article in the *Australian Financial Review* (20 May) stated, "Indonesia is unlikely to be criticised by major powers such as the United States for attempting to crack down on an Islamic separatist group in the current global climate."

In Indonesia and other countries of belated capitalist development strangled by imperialism, religious fundamentalism as a mass movement has spread in the absence of revolutionary leadership and as an illusory means to relieve the poverty and immiseration of the masses. In Indonesia, religious fundamentalism and nationalism are often intertwined and act to particularly target women and the largely Christian Chinese minority. While we stand firmly in defence of the Acehnese against the chauvinism of the Javanese rulers, we equally fight the reactionary designs of the Muslim GAM and the religious leaders who stand behind them. The anti-woman Islamic fundamentalist forces, feeding off the frustration and anger at military atrocities and the desperate conditions of capitalist rule, already impose their reactionary writ on the streets of Aceh. Women have been forced into strict Islamic dress codes and alleged prostitutes and petty thieves humiliated and paraded through the streets of the capital. Meanwhile some pro-independence forces have called themselves "Taliban" after the savage anti-woman fanatics in Afghanistan.

Brought together in huge modern industries, it is workers who uniquely possess the class interest to overcome the communal, national, religious and other divisions which are manipulated by the capitalists to "divide and rule." A revolutionary Trotskyist party in Indonesia, in fighting for proletarian unity, would champion the struggles of all the



Australasian Spartacist

Sydney University, August 2002: Spartacist-initiated protest demands Australian/UN troops out of East Timor.

Acehnese population. Scores have been killed, including children, and some 287 schools have been torched. The Indonesian government is preparing to round up 200,000 people and put them into tented camps guarded by soldiers. A similar technique was used by the British in Malaya in the 1950s to deny guerrilla forces access to food and information.

Military Terror Aids Imperialist Stability, Exploitation

Of great import to the imperialist powers, Aceh is at the western point of the strategically important Strait of Malacca, through which most of Japan's oil and gas imports and much of Australia's trade are transported. With one of the world's largest oil and gas and substantial timber and gold reserves, Aceh is a place of brutal imperialist superexploitation. While the blood-soaked Indonesian capitalists, corrupt governmental bodies and TNI get their cut of fabulous profits, the imperialist conglomerates such as Exxon-Mobil take the lion's share, raping and plundering the resources under protection of the imperialist-funded Indonesian military who act to suppress any opposition.

The Indonesian military are currently using U.S.-supplied weaponry and combat aircraft such as C-130 Hercules transport

combating "terrorism." These efforts include military cooperation with the Indonesian army to work with Kopassus Special Forces, notorious for torture and killing in Aceh and throughout the archipelago. **All Indonesian troops out of Aceh now! Australian imperialism bloody hands off!**

In ordering the military assault in Aceh, the Javanese-chauvinist Megawati declared with cold equanimity, "Indonesia will not lose anything if we lose some of them. It is better to protect 220 million other Indonesians." Facing presidential elections next year, her whipping up of crude nationalism against the Acehnese also serves to deflect seething anger among the masses away from her government as it oversees vicious blood-sucking IMF-imposed austerity.

The Australian imperialists are particularly keen to see the separatist movement in Aceh quelled as they worry that the breakup of Indonesia could lead to the separation of West Papua and instability in their deeply oppressed Papua New Guinea (PNG) neocolony, itself chafing under IMF-imposed debt bondage. Particularly concerned about Indonesia, reportedly the U.S. is now seeking to station Marines and F-16 fighter jets in bases in Australia's Northern Territory. Alongside

Available in Indonesian

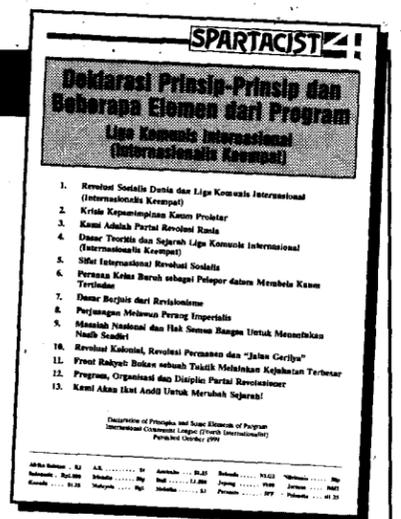
Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program

International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)

Adopted in 1998 at the Third International Conference of the ICL.

\$1 (16 pages)

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oppressed, including the minority peoples of Aceh and West Papua. Such a party would be based on the program of permanent revolution which teaches that in dependent countries like Indonesia, where all wings of the local capitalist rulers are bound together with their imperialist masters, only the revolutionary dictatorship of the workers, leaning on the poor peasantry, can satisfy the most basic needs of the masses: freedom from imperialist subjugation, liberation from the myriad oppressed minority peoples, social equality for women and alleviation of the terrible poverty of the hungry masses. If it is not to be strangled by backwardness or imperialist intervention, this struggle for proletarian revolution in Indonesia must be linked to the fight for workers rule in Japan and Australia and the advanced capitalist countries in Europe and North America.

Such an understanding is anathema to the reformists and centrists of the Socialist Alliance, which includes the International Socialist Organisation (ISO) and Workers Power (WP). Socialist Alliance endorsed the call by Democratic Socialist Party (DSP) front group Action in Solidarity with Asia and the Pacific, for the Australian government to "initiate a special humanitarian assistance program directed to the people of Aceh." The Australian bourgeoisie, which at home brutally oppresses the indigenous Aboriginal population and carries out racist scapegoating of Asian immigrants, is not about to provide "humanitarian assistance" to the people of Aceh. In 1965, Australia and the U.S. "aided" the Indonesian rulers in their anti-Communist slaughter of up

to one million workers and peasants that brought the military dictator Suharto to power. For the next 30 years, Australian Liberal/National Coalition and Labor governments backed Suharto's brutal military rule, including the 1975 invasion of East Timor. Now the Australian capitalist rulers have a military occupation force in East Timor to guard the profit-gouging of White Australian imperialism in East Timor and beyond.

East Timor, the "Left" and Big Lies

The call by fake-left groups for imperialist "assistance" to Aceh is but a stepping-stone for open appeals for Australian military intervention. The program of reformist left groups is based on seeking to pressure "democratic" imperialism to play a progressive role. Indeed in September 1999 the fake-socialist groups from the DSP to the ISO, Socialist Alternative (SA), the Taaffeite Socialist Party (SP) and WP all marched in lockstep with the Labor Party in demonstrations that screamed for Australian imperialist troops to go to East Timor and "save" the Timorese from brutal Indonesian-backed forces. The Australian/UN occupation of East Timor has meant racist state terror, the massacre of unarmed high school student protesters last December, an unemployment rate of up to 90 percent in urban areas and open imperialist theft. The racist Australian bully-boys used the buildup to the attack on Iraq to strong-arm leaders of their East Timorese neo-colony into signing away some *U.S.\$30 billion* in royalties from East Timor's seabed gas and oil fields. As we have

from the very start, we stand forthrightly opposed to the Australian-led colonial occupation of East Timor. **Australian troops out of East Timor, PNG and Solomon Islands!**

As the reality of the occupation of East Timor becomes increasingly apparent, the centrist and reformist left have been trying to rewrite their sordid history of support for the Australian imperialist invasion. A prime example is the SP, who now claim that "almost alone at the time, the Socialist Party opposed the Australian intervention and warned that East Timor would eventually pay a price for it" (*The Socialist*, March/April). In fact in 1999 the SP, then called the Militant Socialist Organisation, repeatedly hailed the chauvinist rallies calling for Australian and UN troops to East Timor as the "magnificent response of the Australian people." They even claimed, "If it wasn't for the pressure of the Australian people, Canberra and 'our' armed forces would be once again putting the 'national interest' (i.e. protecting the interests of Australian bosses in Indonesia) before the massacres of the people of East Timor" (*Militant*, October 1999). According to these reformists, Australian imperialism was really acting against itself—by invading East Timor!

For their part, the centrist WP not only lie about their own actions in 1999 but go out of their way to cover for the reformists. In an 8 May statement WP says "the socialist left in Australia, took very different roads" over East Timor:

"One side supporting the occupation of East Timor by the Australian imperialist military, the other opposing their occu-

pation of this land.... One side including the DSP, ALP and the Greens; the other the ISO, Socialist Alternative, Workers Power, FSP and others."

This is rubbish. While Socialist Alternative made mealy-mouthed noises like "peacekeepers are not the answer" and WP, in words, even called for Australian troops out, the fact is that these groups along with the ISO and SP not only marched in the "Troops In Now" demonstrations but they wildly hailed them. They also cheered the racist pro-imperialist bans on Indonesia enacted by the Laborite trade-union misleaders and designed *solely* and *explicitly* to speed up the entry of Australian troops. The Laborite trade-union bureaucracy's and fake left's support for "Troops In Now" rallies over East Timor aided the Australian imperialists, garnering support for the murderous military that has since gone to Afghanistan and Iraq.

Unlike our reformist and centrist opponents who capitulate to bourgeois nationalism and promote the lie that the capitalist rulers can somehow act on behalf of the oppressed, we seek to build a revolutionary internationalist proletarian party which stands in implacable opposition to capitalist class rule and chauvinist poison. Solidarity with the toiling masses of the region, not least in Indonesia, means class-struggle opposition to racist Australian imperialism. As part of our struggle for a workers republic of Australia, part of a socialist Asia, we stand in revolutionary opposition to the Australian capitalist rulers and every attempt by them to impose racist imperialist domination throughout the region. ■

SARS...

(continued from page 7)

right-wing mouthpiece for the U.S. financiers, was compelled to note the dire consequences of "free market" health care in China. The *Journal* notes that in the early years after the Revolution, "China nearly accomplished the utopian goal of full medical coverage in the countryside. In 1975, about 85% of rural residents had community-financed health care, under a commune system. Today, about 10% do." The article continues:

"Today, China has the second-highest number of people in the world suffering from tuberculosis, after India, with the disease killing 130,000 Chinese every year. In addition, China has an estimated 1.5 million people with HIV/AIDS. Last year, the United Nations predicted the number of such cases in China would climb to 10 million by 2010."

The condemnations of China's handling of SARS by the capitalist press are rank hypocrisy. This catastrophe is driven by the very "free market reforms" they have cried out for. Their concerns are not for Chinese people, but for the danger SARS poses to the supply of extremely cheap, well-educated labor on whose exploitation their investments depend. Truly, as Karl Marx said of the capitalist, "his soul is the soul of capital."

The imperialists are bent on re-enslaving China and reducing it again to semi-colonial subjugation. The unprecedented economic and social collapse in the ex-Soviet Union following capitalist restoration gives a measure of the stakes in China today. Fully 75 percent of the population in Russia and the other former Soviet states lives below or barely above subsistence level. Fifteen million are actually starving. Life expectancy has fallen to 57 years for men, below what it was a century ago. Malnutrition is the norm among schoolchildren and diseases like TB are rampant as a country that was once a major industrial power has been turned into a pauperized wasteland.

Just as we fought to the end against counterrevolution in the Soviet Union, today we Trotskyists stand for the unconditional military defense of the gains of the Chinese deformed workers state against imperialism and capitalist counterrevolution. It is the urgent task of the Chinese proletariat to sweep away

through political revolution the Stalinist bureaucracy which has gravely undermined the system of nationalized property that resulted from the 1949 Revolution.

Expropriate the Capitalist Rulers Through Socialist Revolution!

The Canadian ruling class responded to SARS about as badly as they possibly could, but they did respond. When the capitalists want to do something about an illness, especially if they think *their* class might be at risk, they do act. In the early days of the AIDS epidemic, the rulers of North America saw it as a disease of blacks and gays and therefore simply didn't give a damn. Then they discovered otherwise, and more money was spent on research and treatment. But even the drugs available to treat the disease today are very expensive—which means they are not made available to the masses of black Africa, where AIDS is killing millions. Under capitalism, medicine like everything else is ultimately run on the basis of profit.

There is an irrational component to this as well. The capitalist rulers, especially in the U.S., have long waged a "war on drugs" as a pretext to beef up police powers against minorities and the poor. So they block perfectly rational public health measures like needle exchange programs, which could significantly reduce the spread of AIDS among HIV users. We also note with bitterness that an entirely preventable and curable disease, TB, has been allowed to become epidemic in Native communities and in the homeless shelters in Toronto.

In the mid-1990s there were huge protests and one-day strikes against the Ontario Tories' vicious destruction of social services and jobs. Hundreds of thousands of workers hit the streets repeatedly, aiming to beat back the bosses' frontal assault on the working people. But these struggles were channeled into backing the same NDP that had already delivered its own blows against the working class. Now, as the ruling Tories ready for elections, they are planning another installment in their side of the class struggle, opening the door to private medical facilities, making all teachers' job actions illegal, while handing piles of financial goodies to their friends.

The NDP, whose antiwar posturing has

helped to refurbish its tattered credentials, is gearing up to corral workers into the dead-end of parliamentary politics, which can achieve nothing of lasting significance for the proletariat. The New Democrats have a working-class base but their politics and program are thoroughly bourgeois, and in power they are driven by the same imperatives as the parties of capital. There is plenty of anger at the Tories' gutting of social services. But an NDP government would only mean a knife in the back, as opposed to the more frontal attacks of the open bosses' parties.

A hundred years ago SARS would not have moved so far and so fast. But air travel ensured its rapid spread outside of China. With its technological development, capitalism has knit all of the globe together by creating a world market. Yet this system, based on competition and production for profit, produces war, poverty and massive inequality, especially in the countries subjugated by imperialism. Even eminently practicable public health measures such as vaccines and clean water are unavailable to hundreds of millions.

An international planned economy would take immediate steps to direct the necessary resources to areas affected by dangerous viruses like SARS, not to mention AIDS, which is killing tens of millions. Free, quality health care for all is within the bounds of material possibility, but not under capitalism, where the availability and quality of health care for

the masses of working people is subordinate to the drive for profit. Even now, with no treatment for SARS in sight, there is an obscene scramble to patent the virus. At the same time, the big drug companies are not rushing to invest in SARS research because the small numbers affected thus far do not make it profitable.

Leon Trotsky, with V.I. Lenin leader of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, noted how:

"...world capitalism has drunk its progressive mission to the last drop. The development of the productive powers comes to rest against two reactionary barriers: private ownership of the means of production and the frontiers of the national state. Unless these two barriers are swept away, that is to say, unless the means of production are concentrated in the hands of the community, and unless there is an organized planned economy which can gradually enfold the whole world, the economic and cultural collapse of mankind is foredoomed."

—January 1935 introduction to *Terrorism and Communism*

Out of the coming political struggles, the goal of we revolutionary Marxists of the Trotskyist League is to organize the growing social anger against the capitalists' incessant attacks into a revolutionary struggle to overthrow this entire system of exploitation. Poverty, homelessness and starvation will be eradicated from the earth and the modern gains of science put fully at the service of humanity when world socialist revolution sweeps away capitalist rule. ■

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LBI...

(continued from page 5)

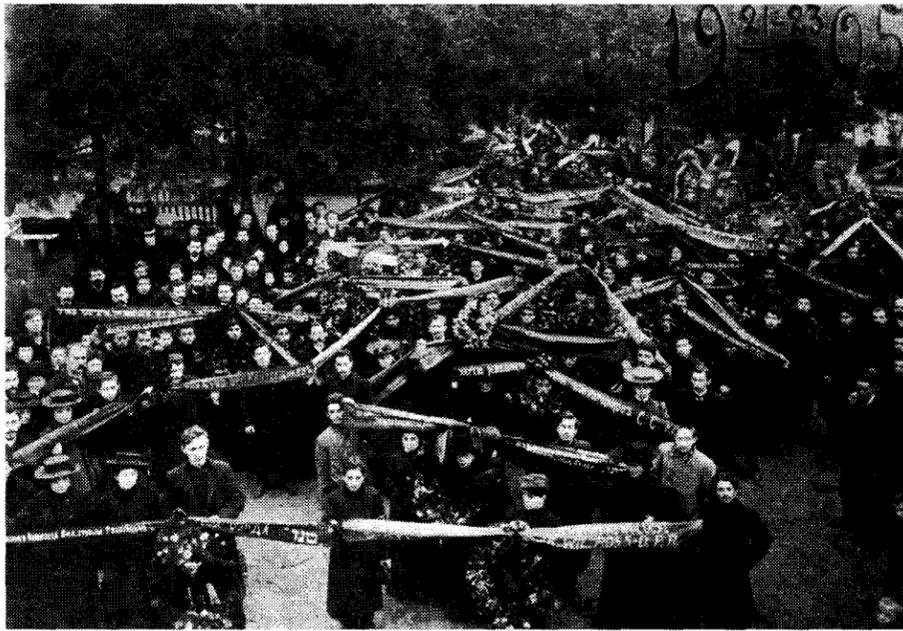
through a "Jewish state" can this people find salvation. Against this, Abram Leon wrote:

"The conditions of the decline of capitalism which have posed so sharply the Jewish question make its solution equally impossible along the Zionist road. And there is nothing astonishing in that. An evil cannot be suppressed without destroying its causes. But Zionism wishes to resolve the Jewish question without destroying capitalism, which is the principal source of the suffering of the Jews."

The LBI stands for "the right to constitute a Palestinian state over all its original territory, a demand abandoned by the PLO via the agreements with imperialism. But we make it clear that only the Palestinian and Arab working masses will be able to resolve the democratic demands of their people in the face of imperialist oppression and Zionism, by means of a struggle that is anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist in nature" (*JLO*, November-December 2000). Similarly, they occasionally call for a "soviet Palestinian fatherland" including the territory that presently constitutes Israel. This perspective denies the Hebrew-speaking people the right to self-determination. Normally, the right of self-determination of an oppressor nation is not in question. But in this case of geographically interpenetrated peoples, the only solution to the national question lies in the revolutionary destruction of the Israeli garrison-state from within through workers revolution. We cannot project the particular national configuration that would best express the democratic aspirations of both peoples under the conditions of proletarian power in the region. This might take the form of a bi-national workers state or two or more workers states. But the LBI's talk about a "soviet" Palestine cannot be taken seriously. The LBI and its cronies call for "the victory of the Arab guerrillas (Hezbollah, Hamas)" (*El Bolchevique* No. 1, March 2001, newspaper of the Organización Comunista Internacionalista, the LBI's Argentine satellite). This would mean the formation of a *theocratic* Palestinian state, forged over the corpses of Israeli workers and Palestinian women and communists alike.

Indeed, the LBI seems to want to become some sort of "left" adviser to reactionary Islamic cutthroats. Thus, while hailing the Taliban as "anti-imperialist militants" (!) (*JLO*, March 2002), the LBI ludicrously holds that "The absence of political and programmatic homogeneity inside the Taliban is leading it to a humiliating defeat, without struggle or resistance, systematically capitulating to the pressures of the Pakistani bourgeoisie, a puppet of Yankee and European imperialism" (*Marxismo Revolucionario*, Decem-

ber 2001). The LBI wants to pressure the Taliban to adopt a "revolutionary" program! The Taliban are not leftist guerrillas like the Nicaraguan Sandinistas with illusions in a Menshevik scheme of a "democratic" revolution, but a very politically homogenous militia of *rabidly anti-communist, woman-hating Islamic reactionaries*, originally financed and trained by the CIA and forged in their struggle against every elementary right of women and against the Soviet Red Army!



photos: YIVO Institute
Polish and Russian Social Democrats and Bundists honor victims of October 1905 pogrom in Vilna, Poland (above). Trotsky seated (center) with young Red Army men and women, 1924. Significant number of early Soviet military cadre were Jewish.



The LBI also asserts that sympathy toward fundamentalist groups in Palestine such as Hamas "reflects, in a deformed way, the growing revolutionary tendency among the Palestinians" (*JLO*, September-October 2001). This is ridiculous. Under the continuous genocidal Zionist state offensive, the growth of religious groups like Hamas reflects the

growing *desperation* of the Palestinian masses before the dead end of Arafat's PLO's petty-bourgeois nationalism.

Hamas is a wing of the Muslim Brotherhood, a clerical-fascist movement founded in Egypt in 1928. The Brotherhood extended to the Gaza Strip, under Israeli occupation since 1967. In 1986, the Israeli military governor of Gaza, General Segev, openly admitted that Israel funneled support to the Brotherhood "in order to help create a force that would

are directed against the military forces of the oppressive Zionist occupation. In contrast, the suicide bombings against Israeli civilians in shopping malls and discotheques are criminal from the standpoint of the proletariat. This indiscriminate terror, which regards all Jews as enemies, echoes the anti-Arab chauvinism of the far more murderous Zionist rulers and serves to drive the Hebrew workers into the arms of their exploiters.

While the Palestinian attacks on the Israeli army have helped fuel the sentiment for a withdrawal (as in the case of the "refuseniks"), the Palestinians cannot prevail in a military conflict with the Zionist war machine. The armed struggle of Palestinian nationalists is aimed at putting pressure on the imperialists and the Arab bourgeoisies. And the LBI is not alien to this perspective: "It is necessary to go from words to action and build brigades of armed struggle in defense of the Palestinian Intifada, demanding arms from the Arab governments to confront the Zionist genocidal offensive" (*JLO*, April 2002).

This is a suicidal reformist strategy. From the 1970 Black September massacre of some 10,000 Palestinians by the Jordanian monarchy to the expulsion of 200,000 Palestinians from the Kuwaiti emirate in 1991, the Arab rulers—from whom the LBI demands arms—are deadly enemies of the Palestinians, responsible for the massacre of some 50,000 Palestinians between 1967 and 1977! Marxists seek to shift the axis of struggle from Jew against Arab to class against class. We have no illusion that a deep rupture in the chauvinist consensus presently tying the Hebrew proletariat to its capitalist exploiters will be easy to achieve. To reach this goal, in all likelihood great historical events will be necessary, such as a victorious workers revolution in one of the Arab countries. And the politics of the LBI are an *obstacle* to this perspective.

Only anti-Semites write off the entire Hebrew-speaking people as inherently reactionary, and that is what the LBI does in deeds. In "Sweep the ICL...", the LBI also spews its venom at the Internationalist Group—a handful of renegades from Trotskyism bound together solely by their hatred of the Spartacists—for having defended Israeli army reservists who in January of last year refused to serve in the Occupied Territories. The defiant statement of the so-called "refuseniks," signed by hundreds of reservists, rocked the Zionist garrison, arguing that "We shall not continue to fight beyond the 1967 borders in order to dominate, expel, starve and humiliate an entire people." But the disgusting LBI referred to these reservists as "murderous Zionist rats." In February of the same year, 14,000 people marched in Tel Aviv to demand: "Get out of the territories, get back to negotiations!" As we explained in March last year, the fissures in the Zionist bunker pose opportunities for revolutionaries to drive a wedge between the Hebrew-speaking proletariat and its chauvinist exploiters. But this would make no sense to anti-Semites.

In July 1996, half a million Israeli workers carried out a ten-hour general strike—the first one in 20 years—against Likud's attacks on social programs and its plans to privatize nationalized industry. The LBI rejected this strike as reactionary, saying that "the Zionist state is infested not with workers who sell their labor power, but by members of the various cliques into which Zionism is divided" (*JLO*, June 1998). In a different article in the same paper, the LBI tries to mask its anti-Semitism by saying that not all Israeli workers are simply members of Zionist cliques, only to uphold their condemnation of the strike because "a great portion" of these workers "beyond their work relations, assume an open role as political militants in defense of Zionism"! Truly revolting. In the face of these arguments, one can only assume that the anti-Semitic garbage of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* has replaced *The Communist Manifesto* in the LBI's library. ■

stand against the leftist forces which support the PLO" (quoted in Graham Usher, "What Kind of Nation? The Rise of Hamas in the Occupied Territories," *Race & Class*, October-December 1995). Fearing a loss of influence after the *Intifada* broke out in December 1987, the Brotherhood announced the formation of Hamas as its "national liberation" movement. While thousands of members of secular Palestinian organizations were arrested, Hamas was allowed to function openly, with its spokesmen appearing on Israeli TV. Hamas was banned only when they started to attack Israeli soldiers, nearly two years into the *Intifada*. Even then, Hamas' main activity "was less a national struggle than a vicious social offensive against all manifestations of 'un-Islamic behaviour,' especially in Gaza where women were forced to wear the headscarf" (ibid.).

The hypocritical LBI calls for an "internationalist revolutionary party of the Palestinian, Arab and Jewish proletariat" (*JLO*, September-October 2001). But they also assert that the attacks by the fundamentalist terrorists of Hamas, mostly targeting civilians, "constitute a legitimate military response of the oppressed peoples and their organizations to the state terrorism carried out by Israel" (*JLO*, April 2002). The LBI is for an "internationalist" party in which the murder of its Israeli members by Islamic fundamentalists would be "legitimized" beforehand! The attacks on Israel's garrisons and military bases, as well as on its heavily armed settler auxiliaries,

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Palestinians...

(continued from page 16)

Today these extreme positions are common not only in the Zionist ruling establishment but also in sections of the American ruling establishment, as indicated by the fact that the *New York Times* (18 May) recently published a major article on the growing support for "transfer" in Washington. These views are exemplified by the unholy alliance of Christian evangelicals and Zionist neocons like Pentagon heavies Paul Wolfowitz and Richard Perle. Perle and Wolfowitz served as advisers to Sharon predecessor Benjamin Netanyahu in the 1996 Israeli elections, where they urged him to abandon Oslo and wage war on the Palestinians. House majority leader Tom DeLay, an evangelical Christian, refers to the West Bank as Judea and Samaria.

As the *Times* article points out, the Christian evangelical base of the Bush administration today espouses the genocidal line that "Jordan is Palestine"—i.e., the expulsion of all Palestinians from Israel and the Occupied Territories. The demented mindset of these messianic fanatics is captured by the following statements by Bush and Sharon cabinet minister Benjamin Elon. According to Abbas, Bush declaimed at Aqaba: "God told me to strike at al Qaida and I struck them, and then he instructed me to strike at Saddam, which I did, and now I am determined to solve the problem in the Middle East. If you help me I will act, and if not, the elections will come and I will have to focus on them" (*Ha'aretz*, 24 June). Elon rants: "The Christians with the leadership of Bush, and the Jews with the existence of the state of Israel, have a window of opportunity to make clear to the Islamic world that we have power, and we are here." The *Times* article reported that when Elon addressed the Christian Coalition in the U.S., "he was cheered by thousands of evangelical Christians waving Israeli flags when he called for the 'relocation' of Palestinians to Jordan."

The epithet "self-hater" that the Zionists ritually hurl at anti-Zionist Jews truly applies to the Zionists; in their pursuit of Israeli expansionism they embrace the worst enemies of the Jewish people. Speaking of Elon, the *Times* wrote, "The Bible, he says, is where Christians and Jews meet; their debate begins only with the New Testament"—never mind that Elon's "New Testament allies" accuse the Jews of crucifying Jesus! In fact, the Christian fundamentalists support Jewish control of Israel only because in their mythology it will usher in the "second coming" of Christ—after which the Jews (and other infidels) are to be consigned to hell!

For Arab/Hebrew Workers Revolution!

The sense of frustration and despair over the prospects for Palestinian national



Jenin, West Bank, May 27.

liberation among many who solidarize with the Palestinian cause was evident at an international conference of Al-Awda (the Palestine Right to Return Coalition) in Toronto over the June 20-22 weekend. A number of participants were with the International Solidarity Movement, whose activists have courageously put their lives on the line in standing alongside besieged Palestinians against Israeli troops and settlers in the Occupied Territories. A *WV* reporter at the conference observed of many of the participants: "They think the PLO has thoroughly betrayed the Palestinian cause by abandoning the right of return for refugees and accepting the existence of an exclusionist Zionist state. They also despair at the rise of fundamentalist forces like Hamas and Islamic Jihad and at least formally oppose anti-Jewish racism."

There was widespread hostility at the conference toward the Arab bourgeois regimes. A conference session was devoted to the conditions of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, Jordan and Syria, while the conference call posted on Al-Awda's Web site also addressed the treatment of Palestinians in U.S.-occupied Iraq: "Thousands of Palestinians living in Baghdad and other Iraqi cities have been abused and evicted from their homes and apartments by forces supported and financed by the occupiers. Meanwhile, a group of Lebanese officials are spearheading an attempt to strip thousands of naturalized Palestinian refugees of their Lebanese citizenship, thereby depriving them of basic civil and social rights."

Various speakers in the plenary session on "PLO: Past, Present and Future" tried to identify the moment at which the PLO went wrong. One speaker pointed to the 1993 Oslo accords as the PLO's key betrayal. Another went back further, focusing on the PLO's acceptance of the idea

at the Oakland docks." Dozens were injured, including nine longshoremen. This wanton and gratuitous police attack was entirely premeditated. It was coordinated and planned days in advance in collusion with the shipping companies, APL and Stevedoring Services of America, and with the assistance of the California Anti-Terrorism Information Center (CATIC), who falsely label antiwar protest and union action "terrorist."

This brutal attack, now followed by the filing of these sham criminal charges, can only be intended to intimidate those who oppose the U.S. imperialist colonial war, and now occupation, in Iraq and to chill any dissent. The direct link between the war against Iraq and the war on labor in the U.S. was brought home with a vengeance in Oakland on April 7. Members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union got a taste of the "security" that the Maritime Security Act was designed to enforce—keeping the ports working for capitalist profit and the imperialist military machine. We demand that all the charges against the 25 protesters be dropped immediately! ■

Oakland...

(continued from page 9)

to enhance the quality of policing in this city." As communists, we're not in the business of making the capitalist police more effective but of mobilizing the social power of the working class to sweep away this system and the police brutality that comes along with it.

Continuing our work to defend all those arrested for their opposition to the U.S. imperialist rape of Iraq, the Partisan Defense Committee on June 25 sent a letter of protest to Alameda County D.A. Thomas Orloff, which we reprint below.

* * *

The Partisan Defense Committee protests Monday's filing of criminal charges against 25 people—including ILWU business agent Jack Heyman—who were arrested during the April 7 antiwar protest at the Port of Oakland. At the port protest, riot-equipped police wearing gas masks opened fire with wooden bullets, pellet-firing "sting bag" and concussion grenades on picketers protesting the "war merchants

of a Palestinian "mini-state" in the 1970s. Yet another concentrated on 1970, when the PLO refused to fight to overthrow the regime of Jordan's King Hussein, who slaughtered more than 10,000 PLO fighters in the infamous "Black September" massacre: "Holding talks with King Hussein as an 'Arab brother' was a betrayal of all we stood for.... Israel was not the only one to use phosphorous bombs against us, King Hussein did as well."

(As an expression of disgust at the current PLO leadership, one speaker retailed the following joke: There's a bathhouse that charges clients depending on how much soap they will need. Sharon comes up and asks, "How much?" "100 shekels," replies the attendant. "You are quite big and I'm not even sure we have enough soap." Then Abu Mazen comes up and asks for soap. "For you, 200 shekels," says the attendant. "What? Sharon only paid 100 shekels and he is way fatter than me," says Abu Mazen. The attendant replies: "Yes, but you are much filthier.")

One speaker at the session on the PLO said, "When you stop representing your people and your national liberation program, then there is not much left of the PLO." But the petty-bourgeois nationalist program of the PLO, even in the left-wing variants espoused by the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), never represented the aspirations of the Palestinian masses but rather those of the would-be Palestinian bourgeoisie. In 1970, DFLP leader Nayef Hawatmeh declared: "We intend to build a democratic and socialist state where Israelis and Arabs will enjoy the same rights; a state where there will be no form of oppression; a state, finally, where the power, and all the power, will be exercised by workers' and peasants' soviets" (Pathfinder Press, *Documents of the Palestinian Resistance Movement*, 1971). But despite such leftist rhetoric, in practice the DFLP remained wedded to the perspective of Arab nationalism and never broke from the more mainstream nationalists represented by Arafat's Fatah. Even after denouncing the Oslo accords, the DFLP (as well as the PFLP) made their peace with the Palestinian Authority and remained within the PLO.

Like all nationalism, Arab nationalism preaches the unity of the downtrodden and exploited with their "own" exploiters and would-be exploiters. In this view, the allies of the Palestinian people in their struggle for liberation are to be sought not among the proletariat of the region—including the Hebrew-speaking working class in Israel—but rather among the Arab rulers. Even the most militant Palestinian nationalists recognized that they did not have the power to defeat the Zionist state militarily. Rather, the strategy of "armed struggle" pursued by the PLO in the 1960s and '70s was aimed at pressuring the Arab regimes to take up the cause of "Arab unity" against Israel. That is

why the PLO pledged "non-interference" in the Arab states, including Jordan, which was majority Palestinian and where the PLO had its main base.

This eventually was supplanted by direct appeals to the imperialists, centrally U.S. imperialism, particularly following the destruction of the USSR. With the counterrevolutionary collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991-92, the PLO was deprived of crucial diplomatic and financial support, paving the way for the ignominious U.S.-sponsored Oslo "peace" accords establishing the PLO as the Zionists' police auxiliaries in the Occupied Territories.

It is this betrayal which paved the way for the rise of Islamic fundamentalists like Hamas and Islamic Jihad, vile anti-Semitic and anti-Christian religious bigots who seek to enslave women and extirpate any manifestations of social progress. At a workshop on Palestinian women, relegated to the end of the conference, one speaker contrasted the current condition of women in the Occupied Territories to that following the outbreak of the first *Intifada* in 1987, which spurred women into struggle and gave rise to a plethora of women's organizations which challenged traditional values. But, she noted, such hopes were dashed with the Oslo accords.

During the discussion, a comrade of the Trotskyist League of Canada laid out our perspective for a socialist federation of the Near East as the only road to liberate women, the Palestinian people and the oppressed masses throughout the region, stressing the need to crack the Zionist monolith along class lines. In reply, one of the panelists dismissed class struggle in Israel as a myth and asserted that all Israelis benefit from the oppression of the Palestinians.

The nationalist view of Israel as a seamless society of predatory colonialists was given the lie by the strike of 700,000 Israeli public sector workers this spring, protesting government cutbacks, that brought the country to a grinding halt for several days. The cutbacks are, in large part, the price of the huge funds expended to maintain the settlements and the military occupation. Thus, on a purely economic level (and only on that level), the strike was a challenge to Israel's intent to militarily suppress the Palestinians of the Occupied Territories.

While many speakers at the conference put forward the vision of a democratic and secular state where both Palestinians and Israeli Jews could live together, not a single speaker put forward a program of how to get there. The reason is simple. They reject the only *realistic* program for social and national liberation in the Near East: the mobilization of the proletariat on the basis of revolutionary internationalism to sweep away all the oppressive capitalist regimes in the region.

Breaking the Hebrew proletariat from Zionist chauvinism will be a difficult and arduous task, likely requiring the victory of socialist revolution in one of the other Near Eastern states. But if the Hebrew working class is to fight for its own liberation from capitalist exploitation, it must champion the national rights of the Palestinian people. In turn, the Arab working masses will not be won to a perspective of proletarian revolution if they are not broken from Arab nationalism and anti-Semitism. And that will not happen unless the Arab proletariat upholds the right of the Hebrew-speaking people—as well as the Kurds and other peoples—to a national existence.

The current grim situation underlines that there is no easy road to the liberation of the Palestinian people—including the right of refugees to return to their homeland—which will require the overthrow not only of the Zionist state but also of bourgeois rule in Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. This perspective demands the forging of revolutionary Marxist parties tempered through the most uncompromising struggle not only against fundamentalist reaction but even the most secular or "progressive" brand of nationalism. There is no other way. ■

Iraq...

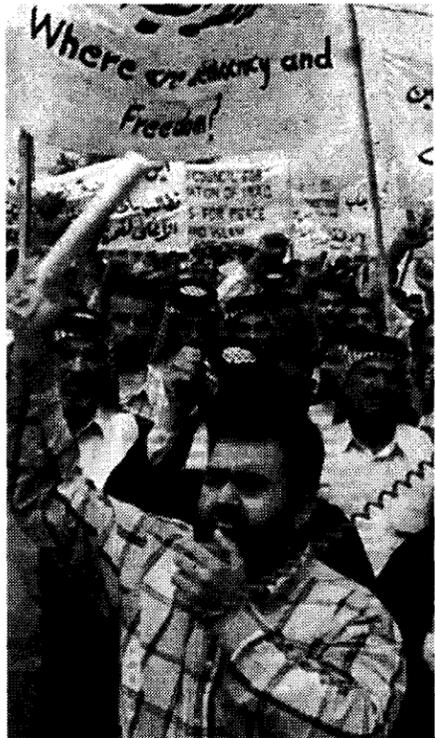
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improve under the American occupation. The U.S.-imposed economic sanctions, carried out under the authority of the United Nations, would be lifted. America, the wealthiest country in the world, would quickly rebuild Iraq's devastated economy. Instead, conditions have gotten far worse.

The massive U.S. bombing, followed by widespread looting, has shattered the fragile economic infrastructure of Baghdad, Basra and the other cities. Factories, hospitals and schools have electric power intermittently if at all. The water supply is broken down. Sewage-treatment plants are not operating. Young children and the elderly especially are dying from drinking polluted water.

In every respect, what was once among the most modern and literate countries in the Near East has been thrown back decades. This is not the result simply of incompetence or overweening imperialist arrogance which, to be sure, Bush & Co. possess aplenty. While turning a blind eye to the looting of the country's cultural treasures, hospitals, universities and government offices, the occupation forces rushed to secure oil facilities and sift through bomb wreckage in a ghoulish and futile search for DNA evidence of Saddam Hussein's remains.

The widespread looting throughout Iraq is nothing compared to the organized looting the American imperialists have in mind for this oil-rich country.



AP
Demonstrators in Najaf protest closing of newspaper by American occupation regime.

Bush administration cronies like Halliburton and Bechtel have already been brought in to "rebuild" and take charge of the oil industry. In turn, oil pipelines and other facilities have increasingly become a target for sabotage by enraged Iraqis. Bremer has now declared that more than 40 government-owned companies will be privatized by fiat, leading to widespread closures and massive layoffs. The aim, explained the *New York Times* (23 June), is to turn "Iraq into a Middle East model of free trade and deregulation." In reversing the nationalizations that gave this country one of the highest standards of living in the Near East, the U.S. is about to roll Iraq back to the days before the overthrow of the British-backed monarchy in 1958.

Whatever opposition France, Germany and Russia expressed to the U.S./British invasion, they are now bending over backward to smooth over relations and get a small share of Iraq's oil wealth. The U.S., in turn, needs European money to help finance its occupation of Iraq (while depending on Germany in particular to police an increasingly rebellious Afghanistan). A day after the United Nations Security Council gave its imprimatur to the Anglo-American occupation, as Tariq



WV Photo
SL/SYC Revolutionary Internationalist Contingent at massive antiwar demonstration in New York City, March 22.

Ali reported in the London *Guardian* (24 May), "Senior executives from more than 1,000 companies gathered in London to bask in the sunshine of the re-established consensus under the giant umbrella of Bechtel, the American empire's most favoured construction company. A tiny proportion of the loot will be shared."

In Iraq, the American occupation has encouraged the re-emergence of every reactionary force, from fundamentalists demanding an "Islamic republic" to monarchists to corrupt "democrats" on the CIA payroll. Liquor shops and cinemas are being shut down, while the Christian minority is being terrorized. In northern Iraq, Kurds and Arabs are carrying out pogromist attacks against each other. The motley collection of Kurdish nationalist warlords, Shi'ite clerics and Iraqi "oppositionists" assembled by Washington to support the U.S. invasion are just as viscerally hostile to one another as they were to Saddam Hussein. That is one reason why, in an attempt to keep Iraq together, Bush & Co. canceled any plans for an "interim government" and opted for a naked colonial occupation without the facade of Iraqi collaborators.

Reporting from Basra, *New York Times* (24 June) columnist Nicholas Kristof wrote: "An iron curtain of fundamentalism risks falling over Iraq, with particularly grievous implications for girls and women." Women who have always worn Western dress are now being forced into the Islamic headscarf and veil. Female students are being driven out of the universities. Fear of rape is now widespread. Even under the oppressive Ba'athist regime, women had the right to vote, choose their own husbands and maintain custody of their children after divorce and the right to equal inheritance with their brothers. In short, as the *Los Angeles Times* (26 May) captured it in an article headlined "Baghdad Women Shrouded in Fear": "In one of the most secular capitals in the Arab world, where women were until recently a visible and integrated part of public life, females have all but disappeared."

A Leninist-Trotskyist party would combine the struggle for national liberation against American imperialism with a social revolution to expropriate the Iraqi capitalists and landlords. Such a party would champion women's emancipation and Kurdish independence, striving to unite the working class and rural toilers across the national and ethnic/religious divisions which are now being exploited and aggravated by the American imperialist occupation.

All U.S./British Forces Out of Iraq!

Escalating imperialist terror has in turn provoked escalating and widespread resistance from a population which is widely armed. Even deputy defense secretary Paul Wolfowitz, who crowed that the occupation of Iraq would be a "cakewalk," now speaks of a "guerrilla war" in the country. In recent weeks, barely a day has

gone by without at least one or two American soldiers being killed in Iraqi attacks. When a 23-year-old woman in the village of Baquba died in a hail of bullets after throwing a grenade at U.S. troops, she became a heroine and a "role model" to the local population. On June 24, six British Royal Military Police were killed in the southern Shi'ite town of Majar al Kabir by an angry crowd after the troops fired at demonstrators protesting the invasions of their homes, killing five and wounding over a dozen. These were the first combat casualties suffered by the British since the war ended. (Most British casualties during the war were inflicted by their American allies in "friendly fire.")

A few months before the U.S. invasion, we noted:

"In the current conflict, the U.S. is likely to win against Iraq rather easily. But occupation of that country, with its conflicting ethnic groupings and well-developed civil society, could spark massive resistance. And regardless of how bloody, brutal or barbaric that resistance is in its methods, it would be just and defensive. Any move by Iraq to defeat or kick out the imperialist invaders is something any revolutionary would welcome wholeheartedly."

—"Marxism, War and the Fight for Socialist Revolution,"
WV No. 795, 17 January

The mounting armed resistance bolstered by a rising tide of popular anti-Americanism is beginning to affect the morale of the U.S. soldiers stationed in Iraq. They were told that Iraqis would greet them as "liberators." They were told that once Saddam Hussein was overthrown they would soon be shipped home. Instead their tour of duty is being extended to put down the burgeoning anti-American guerrilla forces.

A soldier stationed in Baghdad openly baited the Pentagon chief: "You call Donald Rumsfeld and tell him our sorry asses are ready to go home. Tell him to come spend a night in our building." An army sergeant stationed near the Iraqi capital exclaimed: "The war is supposed to be over, but every day we hear of another soldier getting killed.... The locals want us to leave. Why are we still here?" (*Washington Post*, 20 June). A headline in the *New York Times* (2 June) read: "As the Fighting Continues, Some Back Home Wonder, 'Why Are People Dying?'" U.S. soldiers are dying in Iraq because they have been sent there by the capitalist rulers of this country, represented by both the Democratic and Republican parties, to oppress and exploit the people of that oil-rich country.

Over two months into this bloody colonial occupation there has been barely a peep of protest from the reformist-led antiwar movement that mobilized millions against the war. At a Palestinian Al-Awda conference in Toronto in late June, a spokesman for Workers World Party's International ANSWER coalition belatedly, "We're not going to go for just singing the word 'peace' over and over, we have to be an anti-imperialist movement." But in the buildup to the war, ANSWER ensured that its rally platforms

were not so "anti-imperialist" that pro-imperialist Democratic Party politicians wouldn't feel welcome. Workers World Party sought to hoodwink young activists into thinking that the war could have been prevented if only the movement became "broad" enough so that a sufficient number of Democratic politicians found it expedient to beat "No to Bush's war."

As soon as the invasion started, even the handful of Democrats who spoke out against the war immediately rallied in support of "our troops." By this they meant support for their imperialist army of occupation. And the reformists and pacifists who looked to these Democratic politicians simply abandoned the field.

Against the pacifists and reformists, we declared in a 19 March statement issued the day the rape of Iraq began (WV No. 800, 28 March):

"It is in the class interest of the international proletariat to clearly take a side in defense of Iraq without giving any political support to the bloody Saddam Hussein regime. Every victory for the U.S. imperialists can only encourage further military adventures. In turn, every humiliation, every setback, every defeat they suffer will serve to assist the struggles of working people and the oppressed around the globe...."

"The question facing antiwar activists and workers is not merely one of more militant tactics. If there is one lesson to be drawn, it is the absolute necessity of fighting to get rid of this deeply inhumane system through workers revolution. *Only socialist revolution can put an end to imperialist war!*"

That was the program on which the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Clubs intervened into the massive antiwar mobilizations that preceded the war. Our revolutionary internationalist contingents provided a pole of Marxist politics counterposed to the pro-Democratic Party liberal pacifism of the protest organizers. As we warned in a call building for our contingent in an antiwar demonstration in D.C. last October: "Unless the struggle against imperialist war is based on opposition to all parties and agencies of capitalist class rule, it will be used by the bourgeois liberals to channel discontent back into the very capitalist system that breeds war. *Break with the Democratic Party of war and racism! Build a workers party to fight for socialist revolution!*"

"Weapons of Mass Destruction" Big Lie

The Bush White House, supported by significant sections of the Democratic Party leadership, conducted a massive propaganda campaign that Saddam Hussein had large hidden caches of biological and chemical weapons which could fall into the hands of Arab terrorists operating in the U.S. (Biological weapons were originally mainly provided to the Baghdad Ba'athist regime by the U.S. itself during the Iran-Iraq War of the 1980s.) Vice President Cheney even asserted that Saddam "has, in fact, reconstituted nuclear weapons."

If Iraq actually had possessed nuclear weapons, America's rulers would not have risked war against that Near Eastern country. After scouring Iraq for almost three months, U.S. and British forces have found no evidence of biological, chemical or nuclear weapons. Now, Wolfowitz cynically admits what should have been obvious to all, that the "weapons of mass destruction" lie was simply a convenient justification for war: "For bureaucratic reasons we settled on one issue, weapons of mass destruction, because it was the one reason everyone could agree on" (*Sunday Herald [Scotland]*, 1 June).

That Bush & Co. lied has not to date done them serious political damage. But it has caused an uproar in Britain, where popular opposition to the war was far greater than in the U.S. and, moreover, was concentrated among the working-class base of the ruling Labour Party. British prime minister Tony Blair, Bush's main international ally, had to argue much more strongly than Bush that Saddam Hussein's Iraq posed a real military danger to Britain. Clare Short, one of two cabinet members who resigned after the war began, now lamely charges

that Blair "duped us all along."

But in the U.S., aside from a handful, most Congressional Democrats have effectively given Bush a free ride on his Big Lie campaign, fearful of being labeled "soft on terrorism." No less so than the Bush gang, the Democrats legitimize America's self-proclaimed role as "policeman of the world." Liberal Democrats and right-wing Republicans both assert that the American state can and should use whatever means necessary to disarm any and every country deemed a potential threat. For example, before the war some liberal Democratic "doves"—black California Congresswoman Barbara Lee, for example—criticized Bush for being obsessed with Iraq while contending that the North Korean deformed workers state posed a far greater danger to the U.S. Now, the Democrats are harping that Bush is not devoting enough resources to the domestic "war on terror."

There is also a bipartisan consensus behind the administration's threats against Syria and Iran. Despite intense efforts by Syrian leader Bashar al-Assad to conciliate the Americans, U.S. troops last week carried out an attack at the Syrian border, wounding five Syrian soldiers who were held by U.S. forces for over a week. This was followed by an attack on the nearby Iraqi village of Muger Addib, which has since been ominously sealed off to Western reporters and other outside observers. This is reminiscent of how Israel sealed off the town of Jenin in the West Bank following a massacre of Palestinians there in the spring of last year.

Meanwhile, amid ongoing and massive student-led protests against the oppressive and theocratic regime in Iran, the U.S. has drastically escalated its rhetoric against Tehran. Flinging charges that Iran has "weapons of mass destruction" and is developing a nuclear arsenal, Bush is now demanding "regime change" in

Iran, threatening that Washington "will not tolerate the construction of a nuclear weapon" there. This latest vendetta has garnered international support. While France has rounded up nearly 200 supporters of the opposition People's Mujahedin—a move welcomed by the Tehran regime—it has also joined with the U.S. in a Group of Eight declaration that they would not "ignore the proliferation implications of Iran's nuclear program."

With a French-led United Nations expeditionary force currently in the war-torn and diamond-rich Congo and French troops scattered throughout its former colonial possessions in West Africa, Washington is now itself mootting military intervention on that continent, which would inevitably impinge on French interests there. Under the headline "Into Africa," an editorial in the *New York Times* (28 June) exulted: "To the delight of its liberal critics, the Bush administration has taken a constructive interest in the problems of Africa." These "white man's burden" liberals demand "more effective intervention" by U.S. imperialism in Liberia, Sudan and the Congo and endorse the Bush administration's ultimatums for "regime change" in Liberia and Zimbabwe.

Defeat U.S. Imperialism Through Workers Revolution!

Writing as U.S. bombs were falling on Baghdad, black Democrat Jesse Jackson proclaimed in a piece in the *Chicago Sun-Times* (25 March): "Even as we celebrate the victory in Iraq, we should seek to revive global cooperation and mutual respect." A few weeks later, Jackson called on the White House to bring this "victory" home. "The Iraq plan would make good sense in Oakland or in Chicago or in many of our cities," declared Jackson as he called for stiffer gun control and a greater police presence in the ghettos. "Finally, under the Iraq model

we'd invest in hope—rebuild collapsing sewer and water systems, clean up brownfields, give incentives to urban entrepreneurs who create jobs, and build new schools and affordable housing, day care centers and public clinics" (*Chicago Sun-Times*, 6 May).

This despicable apologist for the racist American ruling class at home and abroad represents the "progressive" wing of the Democratic Party, no less! What the U.S. military victory in Iraq has brought working people, blacks and immigrants here is more cop terror, more layoffs and more tax cuts for the rich. The "war on terror" has meant the imprisonment of hundreds of immigrants and the deportation of thousands more. It has meant the military-style occupation of the dilapidated black town of Benton Harbor, Michigan. It has meant a string of police killings in New York City's ghettos and barrios: 57-year-old Alberta Spruill in Harlem on May 16; 35-year-old black African Ousmane Zongo in Harlem on May 22; 22-year-old Jose Mateo in Washington Heights on June 4; 41-year-old Calvin Washington in Bedford-Stuyvesant on June 28. Such is the "victory" that Jackson exults over; and these atrocities have elicited barely a peep of protest from the black Democrats, including presidential hopeful Al Sharpton.

From the immiseration of the ghettos to the attacks on health benefits for unionized workers and the elderly, there is plenty of anger and hatred of this government and how this system works. But in the absence of organized class struggle, this anger and hatred only fuels cynicism and frustration. The AFL-CIO bureaucracy under John Sweeney has signed on to the "war on terror" and derailed class struggle in the service of "national unity." Now, with the 2004 presidential elections approaching, *Business Week* (30 June) reports that "labor leaders warn...that

Democrats must be seen as strong on defense and terrorism."

Sweeney and Jackson to the contrary, the struggles of working people and oppressed minorities here can only move forward in opposition to the imperialist depredations of the U.S. ruling class abroad. We fight to link the struggles of working people in the imperialist and semicolonial countries through the building of sections of a reformed Fourth International to fight for workers power around the world.

For America's capitalist rulers, workers are merely fodder for profit at home and war abroad. The understanding that the interests of capital and labor are fundamentally counterposed is the beginning of wisdom if the working people are to struggle successfully against this system of exploitation and war. While the Republicans unabashedly enforce the interests of big business, the Democrats lie and do the same thing. As we note in the Spartacist League/U.S. Programmatic Statement:

"The shell game through which the Democratic Party—the historic party of the Confederate slavocracy—is portrayed as the 'friend' of blacks and labor has been essential to preserving the rule of racist American capitalism. Our principle task in the U.S. is to break the power of the pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucracy over the labor movement. It is this bureaucracy—itsself a component part of the Democratic Party—which politically chains the proletariat to the bourgeoisie and is the major obstacle to revolutionary class consciousness, to the forging of a revolutionary workers party."

Our task in the bastion of world imperialism is to build the multiracial workers party that will lead the proletariat in the overthrow of the American capitalist order, the expropriation of the bourgeoisie as a class and the establishment of a planned socialist economy. **Down with the colonial occupation of Iraq! All U.S. troops out of the Near East now!** ■

Deportations...

(continued from page 1)

truck driver Iyman Faris (Mohammad Rauf), a naturalized American citizen from Kashmir who sometime in March was arrested by the FBI and thrown into a cell without a trace—no phone calls or letters, no mention in any newspaper, no lawyer. In June, three months after he disappeared, the Feds announced that in May he had pled guilty, in a sealed Virginia federal courtroom, to allegedly having participated in a bizarre Al Qaeda plot to destroy the Brooklyn Bridge using blowtorches. Apparently, in its pursuit of "fighting terrorism," nothing is too fantastical for this government. Faris' case sets another sinister precedent by which a U.S. citizen, having been covertly seized and tried in a courtroom resembling the Star Chamber of the Middle Ages, faces 20 years in prison for a "plot" that only an idiot could find plausible.

That the government has the "right" to enjoy total secrecy over how it treats its victims has been affirmed in recent months by various courts from the Supreme Court on down. On June 17, for example, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia issued a ruling that the Justice Department was within its rights when it kept the identities of the 762 immigrants detained immediately after September 11 shrouded in secrecy. And when any restrictions are imposed, the Bush administration openly defies them: After his own inspector general issued a report finding that many of the same detainees were horribly mistreated even by the government's standards, Ashcroft responded that he and his aides "make no apologies."

On March 11, a federal court ruled that the approximately 680 detainees at the American base in Guantánamo, Cuba, who have never been charged with any crime, are outside the protections of constitutional law. A 17 June *New York Times* article cited recurring suicide attempts by desperate Guantánamo inmates who have been thrown into tiny open-air cages for all but a few minutes a week and denied



Mendez/Newsday

access to attorneys. Many have been deprived of the opportunity to speak with others who speak their language, and all have been made to believe that they will never be released. In short, they have been tortured. **Free all the detainees now! U.S. out of Guantánamo!**

Not content with all the other powers given it by the courts and the USA-Patriot Act, the Bush administration has just used yet another means of depriving an individual of any semblance of legal rights. Ali Saleh Kahlah al-Marri, a Qatari student, had been held in the criminal justice system since late 2001, first as a "material witness" in connection with the September 11 attacks, but eventually on charges of lying to the FBI and credit card fraud. He was facing trial next month and, his attorney said, "We thought he had a powerful defense." Facing the possibility that al-Marri would be acquitted, the government on June 23 declared him an "enemy combatant." He was yanked from the criminal justice system and hurled into an even more terrible nightmare in which he can be detained indefinitely, without access

to a lawyer until, if ever, the military decides to bring charges against him.

This sets a precedent that could be used against Zacarias Moussaoui, a French citizen of Moroccan descent, who faces the death penalty on charges of conspiring with the September 11 hijackers. Frank W. Dunham Jr., a standby attorney for Moussaoui, aptly characterized the Bush administration's motives: "If you don't plead guilty to this charge or that charge, we're going to declare you an enemy combatant and lock you up forever." Indeed, Yasser Esam Hamdi and Abdullah al-Muhajir (Jose Padilla), both American citizens, were last year declared to be "enemy combatants" and have been effectively "disappeared" in military prisons.

The Bush administration is a vicious and racist regime—drunk on its own power, gloating over its bloody victory in Iraq and yearning to win another four years in the White House. Liberals and many ostensible socialists have already begun the refrain to "win back the White House," i.e., put the Democrats back in

office. But the Patriot Act now being wielded against ever wider layers of the U.S. population was passed with the near-unanimous support of both parties of the ruling class, Democratic and Republican. And the last Democratic president, Clinton, whose reign is now portrayed as some kind of utopia, was responsible, among other things, for ramming through the draconian Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996 which opened the door to the Patriot Act. And in fact, most of the immigrants held by the government are detained not under the Patriot Act but under Clinton's 1996 Immigration Act.

The new laws and directives that target immigrants are also aimed at black people and the whole working class. The recent spate of cop killings in New York City and elsewhere was accompanied by last month's occupation by state police of the overwhelmingly black town of Benton Harbor, Michigan. It is in the context of increasingly glaring social inequality—and the potential for an upsurge in social struggle—that the bourgeois state is reinforcing its arsenal of repression.

It will require the mobilization of vast social power to defeat the ruling class in its attacks on immigrants, blacks and labor. This social power exists within the integrated, organized labor movement of this country. It is this social power which was tapped by the Labor Black League for Social Defense and Partisan Defense Committee in organizing a labor-centered, united-front mobilization in Oakland on 9 February 2002 that demanded: "Down With the Anti-Immigrant Witch-hunt! Anti-Terrorist Laws Target Immigrants, Blacks, Labor—No to the USA-Patriot Act and the Maritime Security Act!" The demonstration illustrated on a small scale what a revolutionary workers party would do. It is necessary to forge such a party, independent of the parties of the ruling class, which will mobilize against racist repression and in defense of immigrants as part of the struggle for a workers America. **Defend immigrant rights! Down with the government's "war on terror"!** ■



U.S. "Road Map" Means Slaughter of Palestinians

JUNE 30—Following a "cease-fire" agreement brokered by Washington with three Palestinian groups, Israel has begun pulling its troops out of a handful of areas in the Gaza Strip. But when Israel and its U.S. patrons talk of "peace," you can be sure there is going to be another massacre of Palestinians. While the Palestinian Authority has agreed to carry out joint patrols with Israeli troops, Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon is demanding nothing less than a civil war against opponents of the Zionist occupation—"a comprehensive, on-going war by the new Palestinian government," as he put it.

On June 4, President Bush, at a meeting with Sharon and Palestinian prime minister Mahmoud Abbas (a/k/a Abu Mazen) in Aqaba, Jordan, launched his "road map" for the (eventual) creation of a rump Palestinian "state" in (part of) the Occupied Territories. The announcement was followed by a series of Israeli military assaults, including missile strikes into densely populated Gaza City, that left 24 Palestinians dead in a single week. Supposedly aimed at heading off terror attacks by assassinating Hamas militants, the Zionist atrocities were in fact designed to provoke *more* suicide bombings. The Islamic fundamentalists of Hamas responded by killing 21 Israelis in the same week of bloodshed, most of them civilians criminally cut down simply because they were Israeli.

It was a similar Zionist provocation that triggered the current cycle of Israeli terror and Palestinian resistance in the fall of 2000, when Sharon marched through the Muslim holy shrine of Al Aksa in Jerusalem with more than a thousand heavily armed soldiers. When U.S. president Clinton met Yasir Arafat in November 2000, Israel responded by blowing up an activist of Arafat's Fatah organization—also killing random pedestrians. Similarly, Colin Powell's announcement of a "peace" initiative in June 2001 was met with an Israeli missile strike in the West Bank. When Arafat declared a cease-fire in December 2001, Israel again responded by assassinating a Fatah leader, touching off the biggest wave of suicide bombings yet seen. That led in March 2002 to Zionist troops reoccupying Palestinian territories throughout the West Bank, where they remain today.

Through every Zionist campaign of slaughter of Palestinians, Israel has been backed to the hilt by the U.S. imperialists—Democrats and Republicans—with arms, supplies and billions in cash. When Bush mildly chided Sharon for a recent helicopter gunship attack, this provoked

cries of outrage from liberal Democrats and right-wing Republicans alike.

Renewed assertions of U.S. power in the Near East in the wake of its invasion and occupation of Iraq will inevitably mean more slaughter of Palestinians. As part of the latest deal, the U.S. will literally be dealing in Palestinian blood: so-called "targeted assassinations" of Palestinian militants will now be explicitly approved by U.S. monitors!

The agreement for a partial Israeli pullout from Gaza and Bethlehem is a grotesque caricature of the "Gaza-Jericho first" deal that was the first step of the 1993 Oslo "peace" accords, which created the Palestinian Authority. In an article headlined, "Israel-PLO Deal for Palestinian Ghetto," we wrote that this deal "does not offer even the most deformed expression of self-determination" and instead "would place the PLO's seal on the national oppression of the long-suffering Palestinian Arab masses" (WV No. 583, 10 September 1993).

Ten years later, much of the West Bank resembles a wasteland of destroyed buildings, wrecked infrastructure and abandoned villages. Every town of any sig-

nificance is surrounded by military checkpoints, cement blocks, barbed wire or trenches. The number of ultra-chauvinist settlers, who freely rampage throughout the Occupied Territories, stealing land and terrorizing Palestinians, has doubled since 1993 to total some 400,000 today, including in East Jerusalem. The entire West Bank is dotted with military outposts and fortified settlements, crisscrossed by "bypass roads" that are off-limits to Palestinians. Defense of the Palestinians must begin with the demand for *the immediate removal of all anti-Arab fortifications in the Occupied Territories—the troops, the settlements and the apartheid highway network.*

To add the finishing touches to what will resemble a concentration camp or ghetto more than a state, the Zionists are constructing a concrete wall around the entire West Bank, replete with barbed wire and guard towers every thousand feet, to go with the electrified fence that already surrounds Gaza. According to a report by Jonathan Cook in the *International Herald Tribune* (27 May), Sharon recently said that the wall will be at least 625 miles long, nearly three times the

length of the Green Line, the border between Israel and the West Bank. Why so long? Cook explained:

"Palestinian research based on land expropriation orders issued by the Israeli Army produces a map that shows the wall winding its way deep into the heart of the Palestinian state, twisting and turning in an elaborate route designed to keep a large number of the settlers on 'Israel's side' of the wall and minimize the amount of territory left to the Palestinians. Israel is also preparing a second, similarly tortuous wall near the eastern border of the West Bank, which it shares with Jordan, that will steal even more land from the Palestinians and offers no obvious security benefits. After the wall is finished, at a cost of more than \$2 billion, the Palestinians will live in two minuscule states behind concrete and electrified fencing, restricted to their main population centers."

This is the "unilateral separation" that the Zionist "peace camp," represented by the likes of Meretz spokesman Yossi Sarid, has clamored for.

According to *Le Monde Diplomatique* (November 2002), an estimated 290,000 Palestinians will find themselves on the Israeli side of the wall—as will all of East Jerusalem and surrounding suburbs. Many of them will be cut off from their fields or other means of subsistence. Some 70,000 of these Palestinians "do not officially have the right to reside in Israel" and therefore "are extremely vulnerable and will probably be forced to leave." Indeed, the resulting Palestinian "state" may well become a dumping ground for Israel to expel its Palestinian "citizens," who make up over 20 percent of the population.

Bush: "God Instructs Me..."

The 1993 Oslo accords, far from ushering in an independent Palestinian state, paved the way for the current immiseration and ghettoization of the Palestinian people. Today, Israel would not even countenance withdrawal from all of the West Bank and Gaza. Following a 1998 agreement engineered by Clinton, historian Norman G. Finkelstein aptly commented: "Apart from 'extremists,' no one any longer speaks about full withdrawal. Indeed, the call for full withdrawal is now equated with the call for zero withdrawal, as pundits condemn the 'extremists on both sides.'"

Just a few years ago, calls for forced expulsion of the Palestinians—euphemistically called "transfer"—and the labeling of the West Bank by their biblical names of Judea and Samaria were publicly voiced only by the fringe elements (like Sharon) on the ultraright of Israeli society.

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Bush flanked by Palestinian prime minister Abbas and Israeli prime minister Sharon at Aqaba, Jordan on June 4. "Peace summit" was followed by June 10 Israeli missile attack on Gaza.

photo credits: Castelnovo/NY Times, AFP