



For a Multiracial Revolutionary Workers Party! “White Australia” Elections: Racism, Austerity, Repression

We Said: No Vote to Labor! No Vote to Bourgeois Greens!

SEPTEMBER 7—After less than three years in office the ALP ignominiously lost its huge parliamentary majority at the 21 August federal elections and has only just managed to cobble together a minority government. With the elections resulting in a “hung” parliament (the first in seventy years), the usual charade of parliamentary democracy was reduced to the spectacle of the next government being decided by and beholden to three rural, ex-National Party “independents,” Rob Oakeshott, Tony Windsor and Bob Katter —aptly described by the British *Guardian* as “kooky kingmakers.” After two weeks of “negotiations,” they finally announced their decision with two of the three backing Labor.

Labor had already worked to shore up their prospects by securing a deal with the bourgeois Greens, who gained seats after disenchanting Labor voters turned to their climate change policies and chimera of a kinder, gentler capitalism. The Greens’ guarantee not to block supply means they will ensure funding for myriad reactionary actions of the incoming Gillard government. Labor also bought the support of Tasmanian “independent,” and former intelligence analyst and military officer, Andrew Wilkie with the offer of \$350 million for the Royal Hobart Hospital and two extra personal staff. Regardless of all the horse-trading, the one certainty over the last two weeks was that whether the Labor Party under Gillard or the Liberals led by royalist, Catholic Abbott formed government, they would enforce racist reaction and anti-working-class austerity.

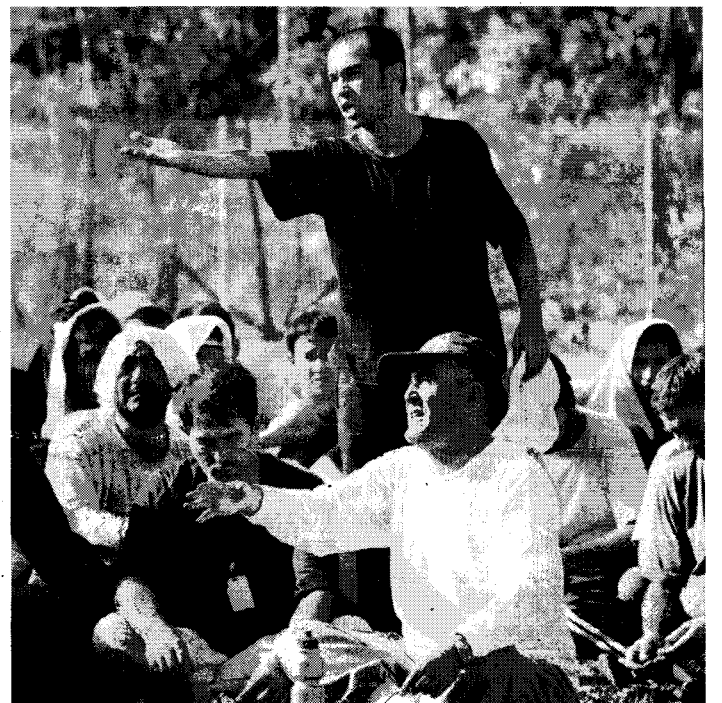
The recent elections showed significant alienation from the bourgeois parliamentary hoopla. Almost six percent of voters turned in informal ballots, the highest percentage in 26 years; a further eight percent of those registered did not even bother to vote—despite the threat of fines under Australia’s deeply anti-democratic compulsory voting laws. This disaffection occurs alongside worries over the economy. With a burgeoning financial crisis in Europe, and the U.S. economy poised to slip back into recession, the bourgeoisie is nervous that Australia’s “two-speed” economy could quickly unravel. While the mining sector continues to boom, doubling its profits in the June quarter (largely on the back of mineral sales to the Chinese bureaucratically deformed workers state), this is not the case in the rest of the economy.

With significant debt already accrued under the global crisis, the capitalists are concerned over the uncertain economic future. This is what underlies all the talk



Glenn Campbell photos

Above: Prime Minister Julia Gillard aboard HMAS Broome during election campaign. Right: Afghan asylum-seekers, many facing deportation, protest following their September break-out from Darwin detention centre. ALP targets refugees, enforces racist “border security.”



about the need for “stability” in government and “budget responsibility,” code for enforcing capitalist austerity through union-busting attacks, sackings in the public sector and the slashing of welfare. A 23 August *Australian Financial Review* editorial bluntly stated, “this [a minority government] is the worst possible outcome for stable government and the unpopular economic reforms required to reinforce the Australian economy against another global recession.”

Far from waging the necessary class-struggle fight in defence of the unions and jobs, against capitalist decay of public hospitals and transport, and for the rights of Aborigines and immigrants facing savage racism, the union tops either got out the vote for Labor to deliver more of the same or, as in the case of some disgruntled “left” elements, supported the capitalist Greens. The Victorian branches of the Electrical Trades Union (ETU) and CFMEU construction union both backed the Greens. The protectionist ETU also

supported “independents” such as the notorious redneck Katter, who has called for a 15 percent tariff wall and a ban on banana imports from the Philippines! In turn, Katter, along with Oakeshott and Windsor, publicly backed a recent ETU report opposing a free-trade agreement with China and calling for greater protection of local industries. It is precisely around such economic nationalism that the “left” union tops and the reformists join hands with the bourgeois Greens and right-wing yahoos like Katter. The Communist Party (CP) described the three bourgeois “independents” as “conservative on some issues and progressive on others” going on to favourably report that Katter “opposes competition policy, ‘free markets’ and cuts to trade protection” (*Guardian*, 1 September).

The protectionist poison spewed forth by the likes of the ETU is based on the lie that Australian workers have a common interest with their bosses in opposing “foreign” competition. This targets

workers in other countries as the enemy instead of the Australian capitalist rulers. It also serves to divide the working class at home in the face of the bosses’ attacks, while simultaneously fuelling the bipartisan war on immigrants and refugees. While major sections of the bourgeoisie worry that overt protectionism is bad for business, protectionism in fact dovetails with the historic fear and hatred of the Australian imperialist rulers towards the revolutionary potential of the super-exploited Asian masses. The Laborite trade-union misleaders are the active proponents of protectionist views within the workers movement, including when it intersects deep-seated anti-Communism by targeting China. In this they are supported by the rabidly anti-Communist bourgeois Greens leader, Bob Brown.

The vile chauvinism of the Laborites underscores the necessity of forging an internationalist class-struggle leadership within the unions, linked to a revolutionary

continued on page 4

India: Down With Government War on Maoists, Tribal Peoples!

Only Workers Revolution Can Liberate the Indian Masses page 6



Wotton Paroled—Down With Political Gag Order!

On 19 July imprisoned Palm Island Aboriginal community leader, Lex Wotton, was released on parole after serving some two years of an outrageous six-year sentence. Lex was jailed over the November 2004 Palm Island protest that erupted in response to a coroner's whitewash report into the brutal death of Mulrunji Doomadgee in the police lockup. The Queensland state Labor government aggressively targeted Wotton as a "ringleader" of the protest not least because he is an articulate and resolute Aboriginal man, not afraid of speaking out against racist injustice. Now they are trying to silence him by enforcing draconian parole conditions, including a ban on speaking to the media and addressing public meetings without prior

approval. His parole period does not end until July 2014. Lex Wotton should never have spent a day in prison! Quash the conviction! Lift the political gag order now!

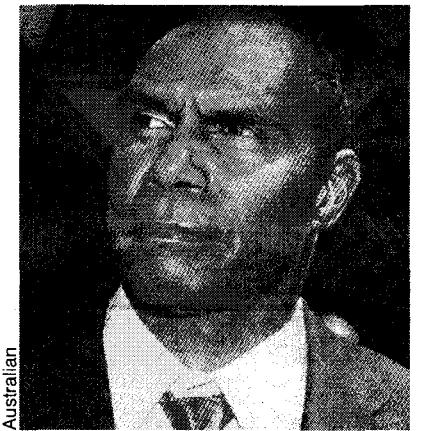
The severe parole conditions are based in part on archaic 19th century provisions of the Queensland criminal code. They include a vindictive ban on Wotton, a Baha'i, from gambling or being in places where gambling occurs. They are also a reminder of the punitive control orders placed on former "terror suspect" Jack Thomas in 2006. The Labor state premier, Anna Bligh, defended Wotton's gag order blithely declaring that such conditions are common for prisoners on parole. This was belied by comments from Socialist Alliance (SA) member and long time Queens-

land Aboriginal activist, Sam Watson, who noted "In my 40 years' experience dealing with the criminal justice system in this state, I have never encountered any other prisoner placed on similar conditions of parole" (*Green Left Weekly*, 24 July).

Wotton's case demonstrates that workers and the oppressed face a system of capitalist *injustice*. Arrested in the wake of the 2004 protest, which saw the Palm Island police station and watch house razed by angry residents, Wotton had his home surrounded by more than 50 police with dogs as the state conducted terror raids across the island. When he refused to kneel before the cops he was tasered with 50,000 volts as his partner and children watched in horror. He was subsequently convicted by an all-white Townsville jury in a trial that saw key evidence disallowed and witnesses intimidated.

In stark contrast, the cop Chris Hurley, who admitted in court that he must have caused Mulrunji Doomadgee's fatal injuries, was acquitted of manslaughter and later secretly awarded \$100,000 for alleged losses in the fires. "Bravery" awards for cops stationed on the island at the time of the protest were also provocatively announced following Wotton's conviction. With the police "investigation" into Mulrunji's death widely recognised as a brazen cover up by the cops and their "union," the Queensland Crime and Misconduct Commission (CMC) felt the need to recently push for the police commissioner, Bob Atkinson, to take disciplinary action against the cops involved in order to restore a semblance of justice.

Falling into line behind this are the social-democratic left such as SA. Quoted in *Green Left Weekly* (7 July), SAer Sam Watson demanded "Atkinson should be sacked and a new administration put in



Australian

place, with the integrity and courage to take on the power of the Police Union." He went on to declare "There should be a standing Royal Commission to investigate cases of discrimination, and to bring criminal charges where appropriate."

Royal commissions, along with state bodies such as the CMC, are designed to buttress "confidence" in the institutions of the capitalist state. The 1991 findings of the Royal Commission into Black Deaths in Custody exonerated the police and prison screws involved in all 99 cases it investigated; its recommendations whitewash the racism endemic to the capitalist system. Yet the reformist left continues to futilely demand the implementation of these recommendations, for example in response to the heinous torture and death in 2008 of Aboriginal elder Ian Ward. Picked up for a driving offence, Ward literally cooked to death in the back of an unventilated prison van while being transported 360 km in searing heat to Kalgoorlie, Western Australia.

The brutal oppression of Aboriginal people is starkly demonstrated from Palm

continued on page 5



Honour the Memory of Leon Trotsky!

This August 20 marks the 70th anniversary of the assassination of Leon Trotsky, co-leader with V.I. Lenin of the October 1917 proletarian Russian Revolution. We reprint below excerpts from a speech by James P. Cannon, the founder of American Trotskyism, at a memorial meeting held in New York City eight days after Trotsky was murdered by a Stalinist agent in Mexico.



LENIN

TROTSKY

Comrade Trotsky's entire conscious life, from the time he entered the workers' move-

ment in the provincial Russian town of Nikolayev at the age of eighteen up till the moment of his death in Mexico City forty-two years later, was completely dedicated to work and struggle for one central idea. He stood for the emancipation of the workers and all the oppressed people of the world, and the transformation of society from capitalism to socialism by means of a social revolution. In his conception, this liberating social revolution requires for success the leadership of a revolutionary political party of the workers' vanguard....

Trotsky himself believed that ideas are the greatest power in the world. Their authors may be killed, but ideas, once promulgated, live their own life. If they are correct ideas, they make their way through all obstacles. This was the central, dominating concept of Comrade Trotsky's philosophy. He explained it to us many, many times. He once wrote: "It is not the party that makes the program [the idea]; it is the program that makes the party." In a personal letter to me, he once wrote: "We work with the most correct and powerful ideas in the world, with inadequate numerical forces and material means. But correct ideas, in the long run, always conquer and make available for themselves the necessary material means and forces."

Trotsky, a disciple of Marx, believed with Marx that "an idea, when it permeates the mass, becomes a material force." Believing that, Comrade Trotsky never doubted that his work would live after him. Believing that, he could proclaim on his deathbed his confidence in the future victory of the Fourth International which embodies his ideas. Those who doubt it do not know Trotsky.

Trotsky himself believed that his greatest significance, his greatest value, consisted not in his physical life, not in his epic deeds, which overshadow those of all heroic figures in history in their sweep and their grandeur—but in what he would leave behind him after the assassins had done their work. He knew that his doom was sealed, and he worked against time in order to leave everything possible to us, and through us to mankind. Throughout the eleven years of his last exile he chained himself to his desk like a galley slave and labored, as none of us knows how to labor, with such energy, such persistence and self-discipline, as only men of genius can labor. He worked against time to pour out through his pen the whole rich content of his mighty brain and preserve it in permanent written form for us, and for those who will come after us....

He was also a great man of action, to be sure. His deeds are incorporated in the greatest revolution in the history of mankind. But, unlike the opportunists and leaders of a day, his deeds were inspired by great ideas, and these ideas still live. He not only made a revolution; he wrote its history and explained the basic laws which govern all revolutions. In his *History of the Russian Revolution*, which he considered his masterpiece, he gave us a guide for the making of new revolutions, or rather, for extending throughout the world the revolution that began in October 1917.

—"To the Memory of the Old Man," *Socialist Appeal*, 7 September 1940

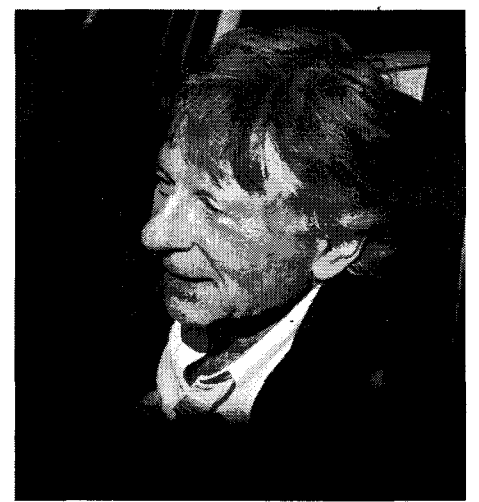
Polanski Wins, Witchhunters Lose

The following is reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* (No. 962, 30 July), newspaper of the Spartacist League/U.S.

In a victory against the forces of social reaction, on July 12 the Swiss government declared renowned film director Roman Polanski a free man, rejecting a U.S. request to extradite him. Polanski, a French citizen, fled the U.S. for Paris in 1978, having faced multiple felony charges for having had consensual sex with Samantha Geimer, a sexually experienced 13-year-old. After pleading guilty to "unlawful sexual intercourse" with a minor, Polanski served six weeks in prison for "diagnostic testing" and was then threatened with more prison time before he fled. For more than three decades, he has been the target of a vicious, puritanical vendetta whose agents range from U.S. police forces to many liberals and bourgeois feminists. Arrested in Zurich last September, the 76-year-old Polanski spent two months in jail and seven more under house arrest before the ruling by the Swiss Justice Ministry.

In a July 17 Swiss TV interview, Polanski thanked the many people "who kept sending me messages of support during those nine long months." From the beginning, the Spartacist League has been virtually alone on the U.S. left in defending Polanski. We wrote in "Stop the Puritan Witchhunt Against Roman Polanski!" (*WV* No. 192, 10 February 1978; reprinted in *WV* No. 944, 9 October 2009) that what was "genuinely 'tawdry' and sordid about the Polanski case is not the actual incident itself, but the vile official persecution and the hideous hypocrisy of it all." The article went on:

"As communists we oppose attempts to



Reuters

July 17: Roman Polanski arrives at Montreux Jazz Festival after being freed from house arrest.

fit human sexuality into legislated or decreed 'norms.' The guiding principle for sexual relations between people should be that of effective consent—that is, nothing more than mutual agreement and understanding as opposed to coercion. We hold that any and all consensual relations between individuals are purely their own concern, and the state has no business interfering in human sexual activity."

As much as we are cheered by this brilliant director and Holocaust survivor's victory over his persecutors, we note that Polanski still faces an Interpol warrant in effect for 188 countries. A Los Angeles Superior Court spokesman has warned that Polanski could be arrested and sent back to the U.S. if he travels to another country that has an extradition deal with the U.S. *Witchhunters: Keep your hands off Roman Polanski!* ■

AUSTRALASIAN SPARTACIST

Australasian

SPARTACIST



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Militant Strike Wave in China



Reuters

Left: Striking Honda workers in Foshan confront thugs (wearing caps) from official ACFTU union federation, 31 May. Right: Workers demonstrate outside Honda factory in Zhongshan, 11 June.



Lindquist/NY Times

For Class-Struggle Leadership! Defend the Chinese Bureaucratically Deformed Workers State! For Proletarian Political Revolution!

The following article is reprinted from Workers Vanguard (No. 961, 2 July), newspaper of the Spartacist League/U.S.

The wave of strikes for higher wages and better working conditions that has swept through China in recent weeks must be supported by class-conscious workers around the world. The strikes began on May 17 at a Honda transmission plant in Foshan in the southern province of Guangdong, which workers shut down for nearly three weeks. With the flow of parts from the factory choked off, production was halted at all the company's assembly plants in China.

After the Foshan workers won wage increases of about 30 percent, strikes spread to other factories in the booming Guangdong industrial area and beyond. Most have been at plants owned by foreign corporations, notably the Japanese auto companies. Workers have also struck several Taiwanese-owned factories, including a rubber products plant near Shanghai where around 50 were injured in clashes with police, as well as facilities owned by mainland Chinese capitalists.

The foreign and domestic capitalists operating in China have amassed huge profits by exploiting a workforce largely composed of migrant workers from the countryside. Many workers are forced to work 60 to 70 hours a week at wages barely above subsistence levels. The conditions they face were made vivid in the widely reported wave of suicides at Foxconn's massive electronics facility in Shenzhen, also in Guangdong. At least ten workers have killed themselves this year at this Taiwanese-owned factory complex, where more than 300,000 workers toil long hours under harsh discipline assembling computers and phones for Apple, Dell, Sony and other major American and Japanese corporations. At the same time, the enormous concentration of workers at Foxconn points to the immense potential power of the Chinese working class.

With its vast economic development over the last several decades, China now has by far the largest industrial working class in the world. Thus the struggles waged by workers there are of major significance. As a result of the 1949 Revolution, capitalism was overthrown in China and a collectivized economy was established. Although deformed from its inception by

the rule of the Stalinist Chinese Communist Party (CCP) bureaucracy, the revolutionary overturn was a huge victory for working people everywhere. Despite the capitalist inroads created by the CCP regime's "market reforms," China's core economy is still based on nationalized property (see "China's 'Market Reforms'—A Trotskyist Analysis," WV Nos. 874 and 875, 4 August and 1 September 2006).

In contrast to the major capitalist countries, which have been mired in deep recessions with tens of millions of job cuts, China's economy has continued to expand over the last two years, even though the export-oriented sector of its economy was buffeted somewhat by the global downturn. It was the ability to marshal resources in the core collectivized sector that prevented China from being dragged into the kind of deep economic crisis that is intrinsic to the capitalist system of production for profit. China's economy is now again growing rapidly, producing significant labor shortages. State investment in cities in China's interior has absorbed much of the labor that had been migrating to the factories of the eastern coastal areas.

The big imperialist powers—the U.S., Japan, Germany et al.—remain determined to restore capitalist rule and fully open up China to capitalist exploitation. Just as workers in capitalist countries must defend their unions against the bosses despite the present sellout labor leadership, so they must defend China against capitalist counterrevolution despite the Stalinist bureaucracy's repressive rule and its many accommodations to capitalism.

In offering up low-wage migrant workers for exploitation by foreign corporations, the CCP bureaucracy effectively acts as a labor contractor for the imperialists and offshore Chinese capitalists. The bureaucracy itself now includes substantial elements with family or other ties to capitalist entrepreneurs, and several years ago the rubber-stamp National People's Congress enacted a law strengthening private property rights. Nonetheless, the CCP bureaucratic caste still rests on the material base of the collectivized economy, from which its power and privileges are derived.

The Chinese working class must sweep away the parasitic Stalinist bureaucracy, which has gravely weakened the system of nationalized property internally while conciliating imperialism at the international level. A proletarian political revolution is needed to defend and extend the gains of the workers state and place power directly in the hands of elected workers and peasants councils. This could inspire proletarian socialist revolution throughout capitalist Asia, including in the industrial powerhouse of Japan, and elsewhere. The emergence of a China ruled by workers and peasants councils would also help spur the workers of Taiwan to overthrow their capitalist ruling class, leading to the revolutionary reunification of China.

The Chinese Tinderbox

Faced with growing discontent at the base of society, Hu Jintao's CCP regime has been slowing down some "free market" measures in the name of building a "harmonious society." The CCP bureaucrats have increased their "pro-worker" rhetoric, while authorities in many provinces and major cities have felt compelled to substantially raise the minimum wage. The bureau-

cratic CCP regime defends the gains embodied in the Chinese deformed workers state only

to the extent that it fears the working class.

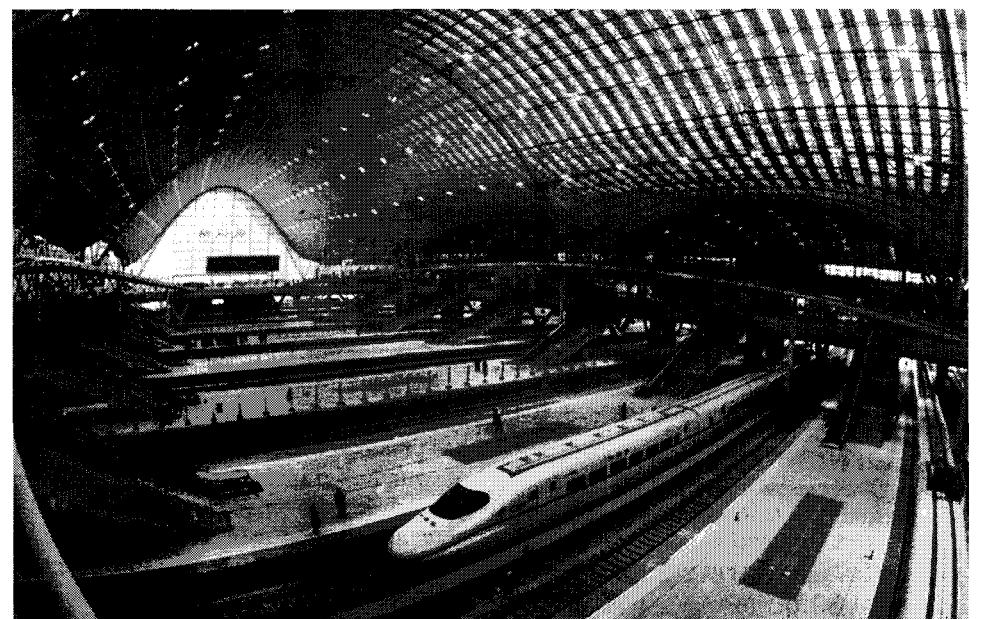
Unusually, the CCP rulers initially allowed extensive domestic media coverage of the strikes, especially those at Japanese-owned factories. This was accompanied by an equally unusual candor about China's increasing social inequalities. Citing a leader of the All China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU), *China Daily* (13 May) reported that the portion of the country's gross domestic product going to workers' wages fell from 57 percent to 37 percent from 1983 to 2005. An editorial in *Global Times* (2 June), a *China Daily* spin-off, stated:

"Admittedly, in the three decades of opening-up, ordinary workers are among those who have received the smallest share of economic prosperity.... The temporary stoppage of production lines in the four Honda plants, at a time of increasing market demand for Japanese-brand cars, highlights the necessity of organized labor protection in Chinese factories."

Doubtless concerned by the spread of the strikes, the bureaucracy has since sharply curtailed such media coverage.

Most of the strike leaders appear to be young migrant workers, notably including

continued on page 9



Xinhua

High-speed railway in Wuhan, December 2009. Collectivised core of China's economy has spurred economic growth and development while capitalist world has been mired in crisis.

Elections...

(continued from page 1)

Marxist party. As part of the broader struggle against the exploitative capitalist system such a leadership would fight to mobilise the social power of the working class, including its strategic immigrant component, in the struggle for jobs for all and full union rights. It would stand in defence of oppressed minorities, such as the Indonesian fishermen and Afghan asylum-seekers who protested their outrageous months-long incarceration in the Darwin internment camp last week, and those from the Kurdish Association who were targeted in a racist "anti-terror" dragnet in the lead-up to the elections.

The reformist left are elated by the swing to the bourgeois Greens. Socialist Alternative (SAIt) gushed "the Greens have seen a massive boost to their vote—a clear indication that significant numbers of people are looking for a left-wing alternative" (*Socialist Alternative*, September 2010). Not to be outdone, the CP simply grovelled that "The Greens are to be congratulated on their excellent campaign, and on their principled approach and progressive platform" (*Guardian*, 1 September). This is only trumped by Socialist Alliance (SA) who breathlessly announced "'Greenslide' a shift to the left" and underscored their parliamentary cretinism by calling for "a grassroots campaign for democratic reform of the electoral system" (Socialist Alliance website, 24 August).

Predictably SA's drivel ends up back on the doorstep of the Labor Party as they advised the Greens to "make an offer to support a minority ALP government... because clearly a Liberal-National government would be a greater evil." Their unprincipled call for a vote to the capitalist Greens in the election in order to pressure Labor, who they hoped above all to have in government, was in fact the line of most of the Laborite fake left. Post the election, the staunchly Labor-loyal SAIt could hardly hide their dismay at "Labor's devastating election result." Lamenting "Labor's right-wing policies to blame for this debacle" and fearing Labor might be thrown from office, SAIt offered only more empty "fightback" rhetoric that does not so much as mention the need for socialist revolution.

Marxists understand that bourgeois parliamentary elections are a charade to trick the working class and oppressed into thinking they have a say in running the country. In fact they merely decide which party will oppress them in the interests of the bourgeois order. For decades, under

both Labor and Liberal parties, working people have been savagely ground down to fill the coffers of the profit-gouging financiers and industrialists. Unlike the reformist left who perpetuate the parliamentary circus that masks this reality, we communists fight to bring to the working class the understanding that it must expropriate the oppressive capitalist exploiters through victorious workers revolution.

Only the overthrow of capitalism on a world scale and the creation of an internationally planned socialist economy, leading to a tremendous leap in the productive forces, can provide the material basis, including decent housing, free quality healthcare and education, to enable all to reach their full potential. To achieve this goal requires the reforging of a communist Fourth International, built of authentic communist parties around the globe, to render the proletariat conscious of its historic revolutionary task in the struggle against the capitalist exploiters. This is the task to which the International Communist League is committed.

The following leaflet was issued on 5 August in the lead-up to the federal elections.

For the working class and oppressed, the only thing on offer in the upcoming Australian federal election is more capitalist austerity and reaction. Julia Gillard's Labor Party (ALP) and Tony Abbott's reactionary Liberal/National Coalition race to sell themselves to the bosses in a farcical campaign where even the bourgeoisie bemoans the lack of differences. The run-up to the election has been marked by a xenophobic anti-immigrant "population debate" as each party strives to outdo the other in demonising refugees. Both support hardline "border security," as part of "anti-terror" repression at home, and the blood-drenched imperialist occupation of Afghanistan. Above all, both parties are committed to anti-union attacks and to fleecing workers and the poor to pay for the deficit racked up by the ALP government as it worked overtime to save capitalism in the wake of the 2008 financial meltdown.

In 2007 working people voted in droves for the ALP against the then-Howard government and its hated *WorkChoices*. While many hoped Labor would ameliorate living and working conditions, we Marxists told the truth that the ALP was just as committed to serving the bosses' interests. The Rudd/Gillard ALP government retained the core of Howard's anti-union laws while expanding the use of the witch-hunting Australian Building and Construction Commission (ABCC). Under Labor, there has been a massive redistribution of wealth from the working class to the capitalists alongside rising homelessness, double-digit youth unemployment, escalating living costs and a nightmarish health system. Labor has overseen the unrelenting oppression of Aborigines, including the cop/military occupation of communities in the Northern Territory, imposing "quarantining" of welfare payments which they now seek to extend across the country; it has enforced mandatory detention of "illegal" immigrants and deported hundreds. This has fomented all manner of bigotry and racist and fascist reaction on the streets. Australian cops/military out of Aboriginal communities now! Close the detention camps! No deportations! Full citizenship rights for all!

As for Gillard being the first woman PM, she has helped lead a government that has presided over the grinding oppression of women, graphically expressed in the fact that women on average earn almost 18 percent less than men and lack access to decent paid maternity leave and affordable childcare. From allowing a "conscience" vote on abortion issues, to upholding the outrageous ban on gay marriage, the capitalist Labor government is clearly an enemy of women and the oppressed.

Fighting for women's liberation through socialist revolution, Marxists stand for free abortion and contraception on demand linked to a program of free, quality health care for all. These are vital necessities for working women and the working class as a whole, along with fully paid maternity and paternity leave and free 24-hour childcare at work and in the community.

One of Julia Gillard's first priorities as prime minister was to pledge her full support to the imperialist occupation of Afghanistan and her commitment to the U.S. alliance. Under the umbrella of this alliance the ALP has maintained the neo-colonial military occupations of East Timor and the Solomon Islands. These occupations are designed to shore up U.S./Australia military control in the region and ensure a smooth flow of profits for the Australian imperialists from fabulously resource-rich areas such as Papua New Guinea and the Timor Sea. Not least, the U.S./Australia alliance militarily targets the Chinese bureaucratically deformed workers state as the imperialists seek to promote capitalist counterrevolution and a return to the untrammelled imperialist exploitation which existed prior to the 1949

19 July). Responding to the demands of the profit-gouging mining bosses, and plummeting opinion polls generated by their campaign, ALP powerbrokers (including union leaders) rolled Rudd, installing Julia Gillard in his place on 24 June. Duly sworn in as the new PM, Gillard quickly junked Rudd's RSPT and struck a new reduced tax deal with BHP-Billiton, Rio Tinto and Xstrata.

Promising vicious union-busting for those who don't toe the line, Gillard was soon painting her government as a latter-day Hawke regime of "consultation" and "consensus." The ALP under Bob Hawke came to power in 1983 as U.S. imperialism's loyal ally in anti-Soviet Cold War II while pledging to use its "special relationship" with the unions to bolster the bosses' profits by holding down wages. Hawke backed every imperialist provocation against the Soviet degenerated workers state and smashed any union that stepped outside the straitjacket of the class-collaborationist ALP/ACTU Accord.

The toadying Laborite trade-union tops rushed to endorse Gillard's accession despite the fact that, as minister for Employment and Workplace Relations and



Andrew Taylor/AAP

Canberra, 25 August: ALP prime minister Gillard and treasurer Wayne Swan kowtowed to right-wing yahoo Bob Katter and other "independents" during scramble to form a minority government.

Revolution. We stand for the unconditional military defence of the Chinese, North Korean, Vietnamese and Cuban deformed workers states and fight for proletarian political revolutions to oust the Stalinist misleaders whose bureaucratic mismanagement and appeasement of imperialism paves the way for capitalist restoration. We Trotskyists say: Down with the U.S./Australia alliance! Australian, UN, all imperialist troops get out of Afghanistan! U.S. military bases out of Australia! Australian troops and cops get out of East Timor and the Solomons!

As implacable opponents of Australian capitalism we say: *No vote to the racist anti-working-class ALP!* It stands openly committed to more anti-union attacks and strong state repression at home and bloody imperialist militarism abroad. The working masses need a party that fights in its own class interests; a party dedicated to the task of fighting for international socialist revolution to overthrow the bankrupt capitalist order.

Labor Lieutenants of Capital

Nothing better illustrates who really calls the shots in capitalist Australia, and the utter subservience of the ALP to the masters of industry and finance, than the backroom coup that ousted the former prime minister, Kevin Rudd. Failing to consult with the mining magnates on his Resource Super Profits Tax (RSPT), Rudd's days were numbered when he refused to back down in the face of their multi-million dollar campaign against it. Already elements of the bourgeoisie were expressing frustration with his failure to deliver on promised "productivity and infrastructure developments needed to lock in the China boom" (*Australian*,

architect of the "Fair Work" system, she went out of her way to denounce union "thuggery" and threaten unions, including promising strikebreaking against the teachers unions and backing the ABCC and its ASIO-style powers against the CFMEU construction union. The ACTU is pulling out all stops to re-elect Labor just as they did in 2007. Then, the union tops pumped millions of dollars in union dues into an anti-*WorkChoices* campaign that diverted potential class-struggle opposition, which could have trashed Howard's anti-union laws, into the "safe" channels of bourgeois parliamentarism and loyalty to the state.

With the onset of the global economic crisis, these same pro-capitalist misleaders colluded with the bosses, telling

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workers to sacrifice in the “national interest” (i.e., for the bosses’ profits) while pushing reactionary protectionist poison in the vile tradition of White Australia (see “Recession Australia: Unemployment, Racism, Militarism,” *Australasian Spartacist* No. 205, Winter 2009). In lining workers up behind the bosses, whether supporting tariff-protected industry or aiding the government’s war on immigrants and refugees, the Laborite bureaucrats undermine the class unity of the multiracial Australian working class and divide them from their class brothers and sisters in Asia.

“White Australia” racism and protectionism, along with subordinating unions to the capitalist state, have always been the bedrock of the ALP and the Laborite reformism pushed by the union misleaders. The ALP is a *bourgeois workers party*—thoroughly pro-capitalist in its leadership and program while having organic ties to the working class through the trade unions. While the union bureaucrats do their best to keep a clamp on class struggle, pressure from the base, for example against the bosses’ speedups and layoffs, forces them at times to call strikes and other actions. Witness the 24-hour stoppage by maritime workers in July following the crushing to death on Melbourne’s Appleton Dock of yet another wharfie, and the large protests in defence of CFMEU building worker, Ark Tribe, facing a jail term for refusing to attend a compulsory ABCC interrogation. Drop the charges against Ark Tribe! Down with the ABCC and all union-busting!

A precondition for successful struggle is mobilising the working class independently of all wings of the capitalist class and its state. Contrary to the myth pushed by the union tops, there is no common interest between the working class and the bosses, whose profits are derived from the exploitation of labour. An internationalist revolutionary workers party will be built by splitting the working-class base of the ALP from the pro-capitalist leadership centrally through the fight to replace the social-democratic union misleaders with a class-struggle, revolutionary leadership of the unions. This means a fight to break workers politically from Laborism to a class-struggle perspective, championing the rights of immigrants, Aborigines, women and all the oppressed.

Pseudo-Socialists Champion Capitalist Greens

While most union misleaders are pushing for a Labor victory, some union tops, such as in the Victorian branch of the Electrical Trades Union, channel workers’ disgruntlement with the ALP into support for the capitalist Greens. In unison with them, many self-described socialist groups are also championing the Greens while at the same time giving shamefaced support to the ALP. Socialist Alliance (SA) call to “Vote Socialist and Greens” while directing preferences to the ALP. While Socialist Alternative (SAIt) headline a 9 July statement, “Federal election 2010: this is no choice!” these Laborite anti-communists nonetheless *choose* to advocate “giving a first preference vote to



Melbourne, 1 September 2009: Unionists march for equal pay for women and over work safety. On average women earn almost 18 percent less than men. Over 2,000 workers die each year from work-related accidents and illnesses.

either Labor, the Greens or others who are genuinely left-wing, like socialist candidates, and putting the Liberals last.”

While SAIt at times can be critical of the Greens, nevertheless, like all the reformists, they prettify the program and bury the class character of this party. Unlike the ALP, a bourgeois workers party, the Greens are simply a *capitalist* party. They give unalloyed backing to the Australian capitalist state and have long pushed for a “sustainable population,” code words used to whip up anti-immigrant hysteria. Based on small-“i” liberal elements of the petty bourgeoisie, the Greens sometimes pose as friends of workers, minorities and the oppressed. As such they play a role in preserving illusions in parliamentary capitalism. For socialists to call for a vote to a capitalist party is *unprincipled* and *outright class betrayal*. **No vote to the capitalist Greens! No vote to candidates, such as SA, who promote the Greens and the ALP!**

We say there is (to our knowledge) no party standing in these elections that offers workers the opportunity to vote in their own class interests, however crudely, against the capitalist rulers. This includes the Socialist Equality Party (SEP), who are standing multiple candidates and claim to be “in opposition to the entire official political establishment—Labor, Liberal and the Greens” (SEP 2010 Election Statement). We warn that for years the dubious SEP acted as paid press agents of bloody Middle Eastern regimes, and despicably fingered Iraqi Communists to the brutal Ba’athist regime of Saddam Hussein (see “On Baghdad, and Bagmen,” *Australasian Spartacist* No. 138, September/October 1990).

Today these political bandits label the trade unions “reactionary” and call for workers to rebel “against and break with these corrupt organisations,” declaring they “in no way represent the working class” (Statement of Principles, January 2010). In wilfully conflating the trade unions—the economic defence organisations of the working class—with their misleaders, the SEP line up behind the bosses’ anti-union attacks while providing a ready-made apologia for strike-

replaced by a workers state. The cops, prison screws and security guards are in no way “workers in uniform,” as groups such as the Socialist Party claim, but part of the armed fist of the state that serves to defend the profits, property and rule of the capitalist class against the workers and oppressed. They should be expelled from the trade unions! We seek to mobilise the multiracial proletariat in a class-struggle fight for Aboriginal rights. It is in the direct interest of the organised working class to take up the fight in the defence of Lex Wotton against his continuing persecution. ■

breaking. Scabbing on workers’ struggles is not new for these “socialists.” In 1986 as the Builders Labourers Federation (BLF) was being targeted for destruction by the Hawke Labor government, a supporter of the Socialist Labour League (precursor of the SEP) daily crossed BLF picket lines at the Footscray pool in Melbourne while another signed the scab contract to bust the BLF!

For International Workers Revolution!

The fake socialists like SAIt and SA push the lie that, with enough pressure from the masses, the capitalist state can be reformed to serve the interests of the oppressed. Thus groups like Socialist Alternative blather about “building fighting movements in the workplaces, on campuses and on the streets,” while their overriding concern is for a Labor government and the Greens winning the balance of power in the Senate.

Whichever party is in power under capitalism, it serves to administer capitalism on behalf of the capitalist class. In the words of Russian revolutionary leader V.I. Lenin: “To decide once every few years which member of the ruling class is to repress and crush the people through parliament—such is the real essence of bourgeois parliamentarism...” (*State and Revolution*, 1917). This does not mean that Marxists oppose participating in elections. Communists may at times offer *critical* support to parties *within the workers movement*—for example when such a party draws a class line against the bourgeoisie—in order to show workers who have illusions in them that, once in power, they will defend the interests of the capitalists and not the workers. Communists may also themselves stand candidates and, if elected, participate in bourgeois parliaments in order to use this institution as a

rostrum for revolutionary agitation.

However just as it is unprincipled for socialists to give political support to any capitalist party or politician, it is completely *unprincipled* to stand for and assume *executive* office or gain control of a bourgeois legislature or municipal council, either independently or in coalition. To assume such a position necessarily means enforcing the bourgeois order against the struggles of working people and the oppressed. (See “Marxist Principles and Electoral Tactics,” *Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 61, Spring 2009.) As Lenin explained, the capitalist state, which consists at its core of armed bodies of men—the police, military and their auxiliaries, exists to defend the private property and rule of the capitalist class. Workers and the oppressed cannot simply lay hold of the state machinery and wield it for their own purpose. It must be smashed through socialist revolution and replaced by a workers state.

The current world economic crisis is further powerful confirmation of the Marxist analysis of capitalist society and the need for socialist revolution to do away with the boom-bust cycle of capitalism, itself the root cause of exploitation and oppression. With millions already thrown out of work, the burden of today’s crisis is being heaped onto the working class, with vicious government austerity measures sparking large protests across Europe. What is necessary is socialist revolution to lay the basis for rationally planned economies based on production for need, not profit for a handful of super-rich exploiters, and for a qualitative development of the productive forces, opening the way to eliminating poverty, scarcity and want and to the creation of an egalitarian socialist society.

The destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92 has led to a deep, though uneven, retrogression in proletarian consciousness internationally, with most politically conscious workers by and large no longer identifying their struggles with the goal of socialism. In contrast to the opponents of revolutionary Marxism, who have imbibed the capitalist myth of the “death of communism,” we seek to build an internationalist revolutionary workers party modelled on the Bolshevik party of Lenin and Trotsky, which led the working class to power in the 1917 Russian Revolution. Such a party will be committed to organising the working class independently of the capitalist rulers and for internationalist class-struggle solidarity with the working masses of the Asia-Pacific region. It will act as tribune of all the people and take up the fight against every expression of capitalist injustice and tyranny in the struggle to sweep away the capitalist system through victorious workers revolution. **For a workers republic of Australia, part of a socialist Asia!** ■

Wotton...

(continued from page 2)

Island to Western Australia. The federal ALP government’s strengthening and extension of the police and military-enforced takeover of Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory exposes the hypocrisy of Rudd’s apology to the Stolen Generations. The capitalist state is a repressive apparatus consisting at its core of the cops, army, courts and prison. It cannot be reformed but must be smashed through socialist revolution and

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India

Down With Government War on Maoists, Tribal Peoples!



Indian Vanguard



AFP

Left: Mass rally of Maoist supporters in Hyderabad, September 2004. Right: In crackdown on Maoists, paramilitary troops arrest villagers in West Midnapore district, West Bengal, June 2009.

The following article is adapted from Workers Vanguard (No. 962, 30 July), newspaper of the Spartacist League/U.S.

In a military offensive that began late last year, the government of India has mobilized up to 100,000 heavily armed police backed by the army in an attempt to crush Maoist guerrilla forces in the country's eastern and central interior. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh of the Congress Party, which leads the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) coalition regime, has called the insurgency led by the Communist Party of India (Maoist)—hereafter referred to as CPI (Maoist)—“the single biggest internal security challenge ever faced by our country.” Government sources state that the Maoists are active in nearly a third of India's administrative districts, stretching from the northern border with Nepal south to Andhra Pradesh.

The offensive, dubbed Operation Green Hunt, has brought a bloody campaign of terror. One report described how:

“Early one morning last October police forces surrounded the residents of Gompad, a remote village in the state of Chhattisgarh in eastern India, and attacked. Sixteen people were killed, including an older couple and their 25-year-old daughter, who was stabbed in the head with a knife and had her breasts sliced off. Her 2-year-old son survived, but three of his fingers were chopped off.... The cops suspected the villagers of sympathizing with Maoist insurgents, believing that some were informants.”

—Megha Bahree, “India's Dirty War,” *forbes.com*, 10 May

For all the hype about India becoming an economic superpower, the intense poverty suffered by most of the population has been made worse by the neoliberal reforms instituted by the country's rulers starting in 1991. While a small layer of capitalists has accrued immense profits, the working class and urban and rural poor have been hit by savage cuts to public spending and the dismantling of price supports for agricultural products.

Only Workers Revolution Can Liberate the Indian Masses

Land dispossession and debt peonage led to at least 183,000 peasant suicides from 1997 to 2007—one every 30 minutes. Tens of millions of displaced peasants have migrated to the cities where most live in fetid slums. Poverty is so entrenched that more than 40 percent of India's children under the age of five suffer from malnutrition.

The Maoists' base of support is among the roughly 80 million adivasi (tribal) people, the poorest and most dispossessed population in all of India. Tribal villages in the forests and jungles have almost no schools or hospitals, or access to modern sanitation. The literacy rate is less than 25 percent, and only 14 percent for women, while malnutrition is rampant. The CPI (Maoist) has a record of defending the adivasi population against rapacious landlords and brutal police incursions. On April 6, they successfully ambushed a heavily armed patrol, killing 76 paramilitary cops.

Five years ago, the state government in Chhattisgarh set up a vigilante outfit called the Salwa Judum (“peace hunt”) to forcibly depopulate hundreds of tribal villages, claiming this was for economic development. Salwa Judum mobs financed by the Tata and Essar industrial conglomerates, who seek to grab huge swaths of the area's land and resources, burned down homes and interned tens of thousands in squalid detention camps. Such actions only produced deeper revulsion toward the authorities and increased support for the Maoists. Now the Indian rulers are expanding their attacks into an all-out war. Their goal is to bring the tribal districts back under central control, which would

allow for the forcible seizure of land and the handing over of vast mineral riches to Indian and international corporations.

This area has immense untapped resources including rich reserves of iron ore, coal and limestone as well as bauxite deposits worth an estimated \$4 trillion—more than three times India's entire annual gross domestic product. As prominent Indian author Arundhati Roy commented in an insightful article in *Outlook India* (9 November 2009):

“Right now in central India, the Maoists' guerrilla army is made up almost entirely of desperately poor tribal people living in conditions of such chronic hunger that it verges on famine of the kind we only associate with sub-Saharan Africa....

“If the tribals have taken up arms, they have done so because a government which has given them nothing but violence and neglect now wants to snatch away the last thing they have—their land. Clearly, they do not believe the government when it says it only wants to ‘develop’ their region. Clearly, they do not believe that the roads as wide and flat as aircraft runways that are being built through their forests in Dantewada by the National Mineral Development Corporation are being built for them to walk their children to school on. They believe that if they do not fight for their land, they will be annihilated.”

Soon after its reelection in May 2009, the UPA government banned the CPI (Maoist) under draconian “anti-terrorist” laws. Others have been targeted merely for speaking out against state repression. Arundhati Roy herself has been investigated for prosecution under the Special Public Security Act following another *Outlook India* article reporting on her visit to a Maoist-controlled area. Meanwhile left-wing activists are gunned down by

police in extrajudicial “encounter killings.” Protest the state witchhunt! Down with Operation Green Hunt!

Permanent Revolution vs. Stalinist Class Collaboration

The International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) denounces the Indian government's war against the CPI (Maoist) and adivasi villagers, which is being waged at the behest of the venal Indian bourgeoisie and the international mining magnates. The working class in India and internationally must take up the defense of the Maoists and tribal peoples against the bloody state offensive.

But the political strategy of the CPI (Maoist) provides no way forward for India's oppressed masses. Like all the many variants of Indian Stalinism, the Maoists seek an alliance with a mythical “progressive” wing of the capitalist class in the “first stage” of a “two-stage” revolution. Party general secretary Ganapathy made this explicit in an interview:

“We have a clear-cut understanding to unify all revolutionary, democratic, progressive, patriotic forces and all oppressed social communities including oppressed nationalities against imperialism, feudalism and comprador-bureaucratic capitalism. Our New Democratic United Front (UF) consists of four democratic classes, i.e. workers, peasants, urban petty-bourgeoisie and national bourgeoisie.”

—*Sanhati*, January 2010

The strategy of allying with a wing of the bourgeois exploiters—whether dubbed “national,” “patriotic” or “progressive”—has produced defeat after defeat for the workers and oppressed, in India and around the world. All wings of the Indian capitalist class are tied by a thousand threads to the imperialist powers of Europe, North America and Japan; none are in any sense potential allies of the working class and oppressed. In *The State and Revolution* and many other works, V.I. Lenin, leader of the October 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, savaged the idea that the class interests of the bourgeoisie

and proletariat are anything other than irreconcilable.

The Russian workers were able to take power in 1917 thanks to the Bolsheviks' intransigent struggle for class independence from the capitalists. The result was a workers state, a revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat supported by the peasantry. Key to cementing the workers' alliance with the peasants was the Bolsheviks' support for peasant seizures of the landed estates and the division of the land among those who worked it. The Bolsheviks also won widespread support among the peasantry through their revolutionary opposition to the first inter-imperialist war, in which countless hundreds of thousands were killed among the working-class and peasant base of the army.

The perspective of permanent revolution, first developed by Leon Trotsky during the 1905 Russian Revolution and vindicated by the October 1917 proletarian seizure of power, outlines most clearly the road to liberation for the Indian masses. Like tsarist Russia, present-day India is marked by combined and uneven development, with stark contrasts of wealth and poverty, modern industries directly abutting unspeakable squalor. Myriad forms of special oppression—based on sex, caste, nationality, religion—are among the heritages of a pre-industrial past that were reinforced and deepened by nearly two centuries of brutal British colonial rule. This culminated with the British partition of the Indian subcontinent into India and Pakistan, which unleashed communalist slaughter and the forced migration of millions of Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus. Since independence, and mainly under the rule of the nominally secular Congress Party, the Indian bourgeoisie has continued to fan the flames of every kind of murderous division.

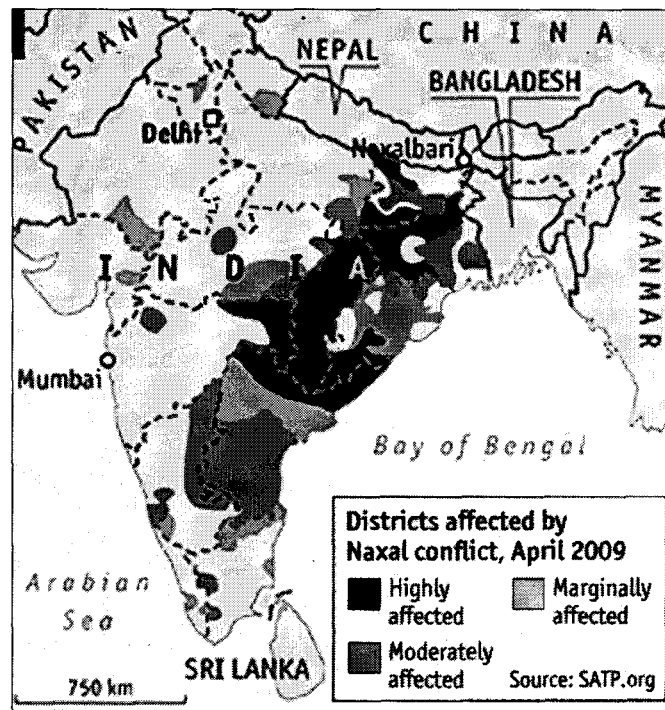
National and social liberation for the masses cannot be carried out by, or in alliance with, India's capitalist exploiters. What is required is the smashing of capitalist class rule and the creation of a workers and peasants government. The Indian proletariat is the only social force that can lead such a struggle. Due to its central role in production—where its collective labor in the factories, mines, transport systems and other industries is exploited by the capitalists for profit—the working class has vast potential power.

The essential instrument for victory is an internationalist Leninist vanguard party of the working class. Rejecting the centrality of the working class, the CPI (Maoist) bases itself on the rural peasantry. But the peasant masses, highly stratified and dispersed in small villages all over India, are incapable of cohering an independent social policy. There are only two decisive classes in capitalist society: the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The peasants are part of a heterogeneous intermediate layer, the petty bourgeoisie. Their immediate felt interests are centrally proprietary, for the defense or acquisition of land. Thus



Jeremy Veverka

Maoist Naxalite guerrillas (above) are active in one-third of India's administrative districts. Map at right shows India's "red corridor" in the eastern and central regions of the country.



Adapted from Economist map

peasant parties are at bottom pro-bourgeois or bourgeois, even though sections of some of such parties may be won to the side of the revolutionary proletariat.

Especially in countries like India where the working class is numerically smaller than the peasantry, the question of agrarian revolution is a key component of the program for proletarian state power. The working class must win the support of the masses of poor and/or landless peasants,

task of an Indian workers state supported by the peasantry would be to generate the material basis to end poverty and hunger, including through the collectivization and modernization of agriculture. Success in this endeavor hinges on the resources that would be made available by socialist revolution in the imperialist heartlands.

A revolutionary workers party in India would champion the cause of all the down-trodden, including the rural and urban

Today the urban-based Maoist groups are in considerable decline and disarray. The largest remaining rural-based groups united in 2004 to form the CPI (Maoist), setting the stage for the present expanded insurgency.

Indian Stalinism has a long and sordid history of class collaboration. As early as 1926, under the guidance of the Indian pseudo-Marxist adventurer M. N. Roy (then a close ally of Stalin and Nikolai Bukharin in the leadership of the Communist International), the CPI began building a cross-class "Peasants' and Workers' Party" in Bengal. This party in turn operated as a pressure group on the bourgeois Indian National Congress of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. Roy urged the CPI to go even further and create "a loyal nationalist party with a radical republican programme (Peoples' Party)" (cited in *History of the Communist Movement in India*, Volume 1, Communist Party of India [Marxist], 2005).

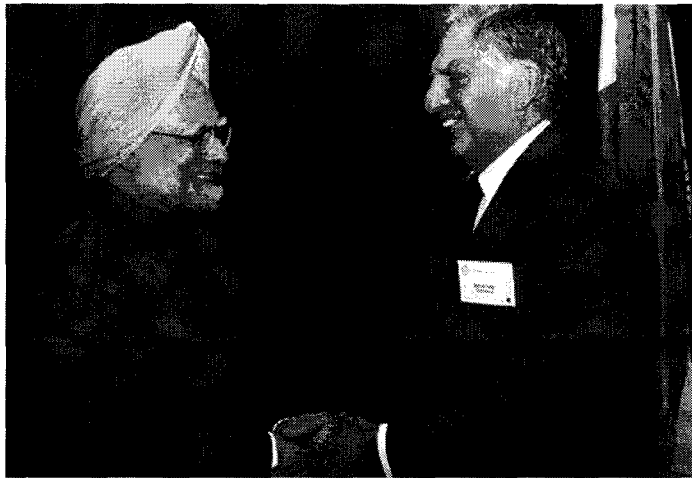
From the mid 1930s on, the CPI time and again gave political support to the bourgeois-nationalist Congress. For a period during World War II, they even renounced the struggle for Indian independence in favor of an alliance with the "democratic" British imperialist oppressors. (For more detail, see "The 'Quit India' Movement 50 Years On—Stalinist Alliance with Churchill Betrayed Indian Revolution," *Workers Hammer* Nos. 131 and 132, September/October and November/December 1992.)

Today the CPI and CPI (Marxist) act as overt supporters of Indian capitalism. Since 1977, these Stalinists have controlled the state government in West Bengal, wielding its repressive powers in defense of private property and profit against the poor and oppressed. In recent years, the "Left Front" regime headed by the CPI (Marxist) has repeatedly seized land from the peasants at the behest of Indian and international capitalist corporations, provoking widespread popular resistance.

In December 2006 the West Bengal government expropriated land in the Singur district on behalf of Tata Motors, one of India's largest capitalist conglomerates. Those who resisted were severely beaten and arrested while a young woman activist was brutally raped and murdered. The following March, thousands of police and armed CPI (Marxist) cadre assaulted peasants resisting a forced expropriation in Nandigram. At least 14 were killed and over 200 injured. (See "India: The Nandigram Massacre," *Spartacist Canada* No. 159, Winter 2008/2009, reprinted in *WV* No. 929, 30 January 2009.)

More recently, the West Bengal regime has mobilized police to attack adivasi villagers protesting expropriations in Lalgarh on behalf of the Jindal Steel and Power conglomerate. And today the CPI

continued on page 8



Office of the Prime Minister

Indian prime minister Manmohan Singh (left) greets Ratan Tata, chairman of Tata industrial conglomerate, during U.S.-India Business Council meeting in Washington, D.C., November 2009.

including through demands for expropriation of the landlords and land to the tiller, while seeking as much as possible to neutralize the middle and upper strata of the peasantry.

Freedom from the imperialist yoke, the destruction of all forms of oppression, economic development in the interests of the vast majority—these urgent tasks require proletarian revolution and its extension to the advanced capitalist countries of North America, West Europe and Japan. A socialist revolution in India would reverberate throughout South Asia and the world over, finding powerful allies in the proletariat of the imperialist centers as well as that of the Chinese bureaucratically deformed workers state. A crucial

poor, oppressed castes and tribal peoples. It would intransigently fight for the liberation of India's hideously oppressed women and defend persecuted national and religious minorities, notably Muslims targeted by Hindu chauvinism. Such a party can only be forged through political struggle against the class-collaborationist programs of the various Stalinist organizations. The political outlook of the petty-bourgeois CPI (Maoist)—a species of "reformism with guns"—provides no alternative to the overt parliamentary reformism of the longstanding mass Stalinist parties, the Communist Party of India and Communist Party of India (Marxist).

Indian Stalinism's History of Betrayal

The CPI (Maoist) is the largest of India's remaining Naxalite organizations, named for the Naxalbari district of West Bengal, the site of a major peasant revolt in 1967. Formed largely through splits from the CPI (Marxist)—which itself issued from the unitary CPI a few years earlier—the Naxalite movement attracted thousands of educated urban youth misled by the "revolutionary" rhetoric of Mao's China during the late 1960s. In opposing the crass parliamentarism of the CPI and CPI (Marxist), these youth abandoned the cities for the countryside and upheld a perspective of peasant-based "people's war."

The initial peasant uprisings were largely defeated by the early 1970s and China later renounced the Naxalites. The Indian Maoists soon fractured into dozens of competing outfits, some of which ended up centering their activities in urban slum districts rather than the countryside.



Reuters

September 2009: Labourers in village near southern city of Hyderabad break coal to be used for steel production.

India...

(continued from page 7)

and CPI (Marxist) support the central UPA government's bloody offensive against the Maoists. Such is the political logic of the program of "revolution by stages": the masses remain brutally oppressed by capitalism, and the second, supposedly socialist, stage never comes.

From the beginning, the Naxalite forces have upheld a variant of the same Stalinist class collaborationism. Calling for a "People's Democratic Revolution," founding leader Charu Mazumdar wrote in 1970 that "the majority of the business community will come with us. They are a large part of the national bourgeoisie" (quoted in Sumanta Banerjee, *India's Simmering Revolution: The Naxalite Uprising*, 1980).

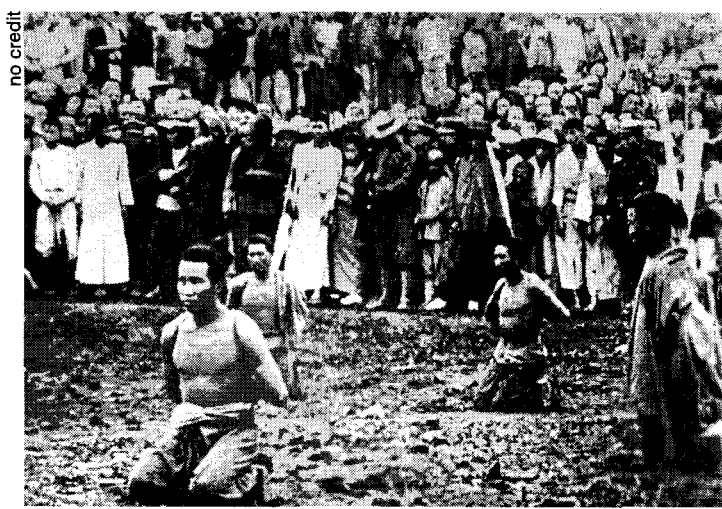
While talking of "worker-peasant unity," in retreating to the countryside the Naxalites turned away from the working class and transformed themselves into a petty-bourgeois, peasant-based movement both in composition and political outlook. Their model is the "people's war" waged by Mao's Chinese Communist Party in the 1930s and '40s. Mao's retreat from

a certain stage it can become hostile to the workers and sustain that hostility already equipped with arms. He who forgets about the dual nature of the peasantry is not a Marxist. The advanced workers must be taught to distinguish from among 'communist' labels and banners the actual social processes."

—"Peasant War in China and the Proletariat" (September 1932)

It was only under the highly exceptional circumstances of the immediate post-WWII period that Mao's peasant-based People's Liberation Army was able to take the cities and smash capitalist class rule in 1949. These included the collapse of the corrupt Guomindang forces, the absence of the working class as an immediate contender for power and, crucially, the existence of the Soviet Union, a bureaucratically degenerated workers state, as an economic and military lifeline. From the outset Maoist China was not a "New Democracy" based on a "bloc of four classes"—the standard parlance of the Stalinists—but a form of the dictatorship of the proletariat. But the Chinese workers state was bureaucratically deformed from its inception, ruled by a nationalist bureaucracy hostile to the independent struggles of the working class

1927 Shanghai massacre, marking defeat of Second Chinese Revolution, was prepared by liquidation of Communist Party into bourgeois-nationalist Guomindang, a policy ordered by Stalin and his henchmen.



political revolution to oust the nationalist, Stalinist ruling caste in Beijing and create a regime based on workers democracy and revolutionary internationalism.

The Revolutionary Potential of the Indian Working Class

As we wrote in the 1998 ICL "Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program":

"The partial character of the anti-capitalist revolutions in the colonial world leads us to reaffirm the Marxist-Leninist concept of the proletariat as the only social force capable of making the socialist revolution. The ICL fundamentally opposes the Maoist doctrine, rooted in Menshevism and Stalinist reformism, which rejects the vanguard role of the working class and substitutes peasant-based guerrilla warfare as the road to socialism."

—Spartacist (English-language edition) No. 54, Spring 1998

The Naxalite movement misdirected a generation of leftist Indian youth, who abandoned the struggles of the urban working class in favor of the chimera of rural guerrillism. The bankruptcy of this perspective is even more evident today with the substantial growth of the Indian proletariat.

While over two-thirds of the population still lives in rural areas and slightly over half the workforce is engaged in agriculture, both the urban population and manufacturing output have grown rapidly over recent decades. Some 14 percent of the overall workforce toils in industries ranging from textiles, chemicals and food processing to steel, transportation equipment, machinery production and more. There are thousands of large factories and major industrial concentrations throughout the country.

Despite the misleadership of the CPI and the CPI (Marxist), as well as the influence of the bourgeois Congress Party and various regional and caste-based parties, the Indian working class has repeatedly demonstrated its social power. An article titled "Deadly Labor Wars Hinder India's Rise" in the *Wall Street Journal* (24 November 2009) described how recent strikes and occupations have been "fueled by the discontent of workers, many of whom say they haven't partaken of the past decade's prosperity." Last year alone, major strikes hit companies from the domestic automaker Mahindra & Mahindra to plants owned by Finland's Nokia, South Korea's Hyundai and the Nestlé food conglomerate.

In September 2009, a six-week strike by over 2,000 workers at an Indian-owned auto supplier in the Gurgaon-Manesar industrial belt near Delhi left the U.S. auto giant Ford without transmission parts, leading to production shutdowns at plants in Canada and the U.S. More than 100,000 workers at upwards of 70 plants in the Gurgaon-Manesar area joined a one-day walkout to protest the murder of a striker by company thugs. The direct impact of the strike on Ford's North American operations underlines the need for active solidarity by U.S. and Canadian workers with their class brothers and sisters in India.

In the first few months of this year, hundreds of thousands of telecommunica-

tions workers and coal miners struck against privatization and job cuts, while unions staged a countrywide one-day general strike on April 27 against soaring price rises for essential goods. An even larger general strike on July 5, organized by a tacit alliance of the Stalinist Left Front parties and the Hindu-chauvinist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), was called to protest rising fuel prices.

The Maoists *at best* confine the restive urban working class to the role of passive spectator of their rural "people's war," leaving the workers in the clutches of the overtly pro-capitalist Left Front parties and bourgeois forces like Congress and the BJP. Meanwhile, the CPI (Maoist) has extended the Naxalite policy of "annihilation of class enemies"—the executions of individual landlords and state agents—to the kidnapping and killing of cadres of rival Stalinist parties, including union leaders, whom they label "social fascists." Such murderous violence against other left and working-class parties, so typical of Stalinism, is repugnant and must be condemned.

The Maoists also regularly seek alliances with one or another openly capitalist party. During the protests against the Singur and Nandigram atrocities, they made a scarcely concealed alliance with the right-wing Trinamool (Grassroots) Congress of Mamata Banerjee, the main parliamentary rival of the Left Front in West Bengal. Having joined the UPA government in New Delhi, Banerjee & Co. have now endorsed the armed offensive against the Maoists.

Mass Plebeian Revolt in Nepal

The logic of Maoist class collaboration has played out clearly just to the north in the Himalayan country of Nepal. Over the past two decades, Nepal has been wracked by a deepgoing revolt centered on the oppressed peasantry and again led by Maoist forces. A major impetus for this struggle was opposition to the monarchy. By 2006, Maoist forces, which significantly include a large number of women, controlled up to 80 percent of the countryside, where they enacted significant social reforms including legal equality for women, incursions into the caste system, the establishment of schools and road construction. Following a period of mass demonstrations including a prolonged general strike in 2006, they were able to entrench themselves in the capital, Kathmandu.

The Maoists then entered a bourgeois coalition government, and in 2008 emerged as the largest party in parliamentary elections that led to the end of the monarchy. After leaving the government a year later following a standoff over the dismissal of the army chief, this May the Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)—UCPN (Maoist)—launched an "indefinite general strike" for a new "national unity government." The strike was soon abandoned, and the Maoists then signed a deal to continue negotiations toward a new government, while a rival Stalinist-derived outfit, the Unified Marxist-Leninists, remained in the interim regime. Maoist

continued on page 11



October 2009: Auto workers protest in Gurgaon, outside New Delhi, after worker was killed in clash with strikebreakers.

the cities to the countryside followed the defeat of the 1925-27 Chinese Revolution, during which Stalin and his henchmen—prominently including M. N. Roy—ordered the Chinese Communists to subordinate the workers to the bourgeois-nationalist Guomindang. The result was a bloodbath of tens of thousands of Communist-led workers in Shanghai and other cities.

In polemicizing against the peasant-based perspective of the Chinese Stalinists in the 1930s and upholding the independent class mobilization of the urban proletariat, Leon Trotsky wrote:

"The peasant movement is a mighty revolutionary factor insofar as it is directed against the large landowners, militarists, feudalists, and usurers. But in the peasant movement itself are very powerful proprietary and reactionary tendencies, and at

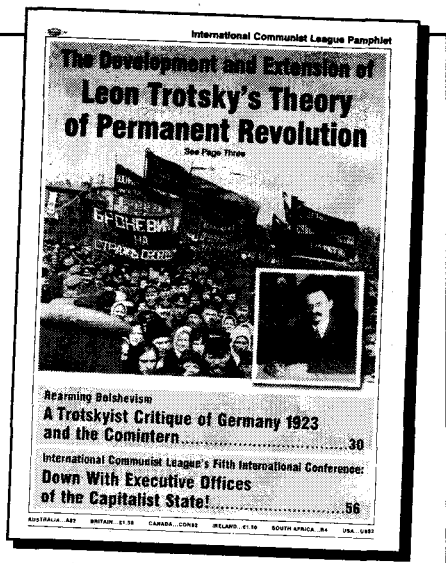
and the necessary perspective of international socialist revolution. This was shown clearly in China's counterrevolutionary alliance with U.S. imperialism against the Soviet Union during the 1970s and '80s.

Despite the bureaucratic rule of Mao and his successors, the Chinese Revolution was a beacon for millions of oppressed toilers in Asia. China's collectivized economy has brought immense gains for workers, peasants and women, not least an end to centuries of chronic starvation in the countryside. This stands in stark contrast to developments in capitalist India. Today, U.S. imperialism sees India as a strategic ally in its drive to overturn the gains of the Chinese Revolution. The ICL stands for the unconditional military defense of China against imperialism and counterrevolution. At the same time, we call for a proletarian

International Communist League pamphlet comprising three articles from ICL press: "The Development and Extension of Leon Trotsky's Theory of Permanent Revolution," "A Trotskyist Critique of Germany 1923 and the Comintern" and "Down With Executive Offices of the Capitalist State!" These articles together constitute an introduction to the historically founded principles and program of Trotskyism (i.e., genuine Marxism).

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China...

(continued from page 3)

women workers. They have shown impressive militancy and organizational skills, including the use of the internet and text messaging to rally the workers and follow developments elsewhere. Significantly, workers in Foshan and at another Honda plant in Zhongshan decided to elect their own strike leaders and negotiating committees independent of the ACFTU, the official union federation tied to the ruling CCP. In a number of cases, ACFTU bureaucrats have openly colluded with management to try and force a return to work. Thugs organized by the union bureaucracy physically attacked Foshan Honda strikers on May 31, causing several injuries. The next day the same ACFTU bureaucrats issued a public apology, while trying to play down their role in the assault.

Among the demands raised by the Foshan strikers was "a reorganization of the local trade union; re-elections should be held for union chairman and other representatives." Strikers in Zhongshan held a protest march on June 11 that similarly demanded the right to choose their own union leaders. While the Stalinist rulers removed the right to strike from China's constitution in 1982, various reforms to labor laws in 2008 have made it easier for workers to organize to defend their interests. Many strikers have made clear to reporters that they believe they have the right to take strike action, citing the legal reforms.

An open letter issued on behalf of the Foshan strikers' negotiating committee by Li Xiaojuan, a young woman worker, declared:

"We must maintain a high degree of unity and not let the representatives of Capital divide us.... This factory's profits are the fruits of our bitter toil.... This struggle is not just about the interests of our 1,800 workers. We also care about the rights and interests of all Chinese workers."

—quoted in *Financial Times* (London), 10 June

Chinese workers need a class-struggle leadership to advance their struggle to wrest as much as possible from the capitalist companies that are exploiting them, fight the ravages of inflation and improve their working and living conditions. Workers in state-owned industry also need such a leadership to protect and advance their living standards and to fight against bureaucratic abuse. Integral to the fight to replace the parasitic CCP regime with the rule of workers and peasants councils is building trade unions free from bureaucratic control. Even in a workers state ruled by genuine workers democracy, unions are necessary to protect against possible encroachments and abuses, and to



August 2001: Workers protest layoffs and official plundering at factory in Beijing. Banner reads: "Where Has 150 Million Yuan of State Property Gone?"

help plan production and work methods. Addressing the question of trade unions in the early Soviet workers state, V.I. Lenin insisted that communists should fight for leadership of the unions based on their program and practice on behalf of the workers state. They must be selected by the workers and not appointed by the state.

The fight for unions free of bureaucratic control must take as its starting point defense of the social gains of the 1949 Revolution against imperialism and capitalist restoration. This is especially important given the maneuvers of pro-capitalist forces like the Hong Kong-based *China Labour Bulletin* (CLB), which promotes Western-style "democracy," i.e., the rule of the capitalist exploiters with a parliamentary facade. Formerly a partisan of so-called "independent unions," the CLB now calls to work inside the ACFTU in order to break it from CCP control. While masquerading as a workers organization, the CLB is a counterrevolutionary group with direct ties to U.S. imperialism. Its leader, Han Dongfang, is also vice-chair of the World Movement for Democracy, an outfit founded and run by the National Endowment for Democracy, a notorious CIA front.

In covering the Chinese strikes, the Western bourgeois media raise the spectre of Polish Solidarność, the anti-Communist "trade union" that spearheaded the drive for capitalist counterrevolution in East Europe and the Soviet Union in the 1980s. The media's line, stated or otherwise, is that Chinese workers must strike out against the Communist Party regime and embrace the "free market." For its part, the CCP regime also raises the spectre of Solidarność, falsely claiming that any organized opposition to its rule must be pro-capitalist and counterrevolutionary. An article by Willy Lam, a professor at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, in the

Wall Street Journal (14 June) reported: "In unpublicized, closed-door talks on the labor situation, Mr. Hu and other Politburo members have cited late patriarch Deng Xiaoping's warnings about how Poland's Solidarity Movement undermined Communist Parties throughout the former Eastern Bloc."

Unlike the bulk of the world's ostensible socialists, the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) opposed Solidarność and fought to the end against capitalist counterrevolution in East Europe and the Soviet Union. But a Solidarność-type development is *not* what is happening in China today. The growth of Solidarność as a counterrevolutionary movement was shaped by factors that have no parallel in China, including the deep roots of the Catholic church in Poland and the role of Polish nationalism, which was wielded against the Soviet Union. Moreover, the strikes in China today are protesting brutal exploitation in large, privately owned capitalist enterprises, which did not exist in Poland circa 1980. Any illusions in capitalist "democracy" among Chinese workers must be vigorously fought. But there is no reason to think that what is developing in China today is a mass pro-capitalist workers movement.

For a Government of Workers and Peasants Councils!

The strikes led by migrant workers, which are in the interest of all Chinese working people, underline the need to abolish the CCP rulers' discriminatory *hukou* household registration system. Legal urban residency, education and health care for migrants from the countryside and their children are severely restricted under this system, making their tenure in the city transitory and insecure. Jobs in state-owned industry, with their associated benefits, have largely remained the preserve of workers with an urban *hukou*.

The migrant workers' insecure status has been a boon to the capitalist exploiters in the foreign-owned sector, who have had a ready labor pool to exploit at very low wages. While many young workers who now toil in the factories grew up in the cities with migrant parents, they too are not considered urban residents under the bureaucracy's outrageous *hukou* restrictions. Migrant workers must have the same rights and access to benefits as legally recognized urban residents!

A government of elected workers and

peasants councils would represent *all* sectors of the proletariat and the rural toilers. Crucial questions facing the workers state can be resolved effectively only when those who labor decide. As the Marxist leader Leon Trotsky explained in his searing indictment of the Soviet Stalinist bureaucracy, *The Revolution Betrayed* (1936): "It is not a question of substituting one ruling clique for another, but of changing the very methods of administering the economy and guiding the culture of the country. Bureaucratic autocracy must give place to Soviet democracy."

The CCP bureaucracy's pro-market policies have strengthened the forces of counterrevolution inside China. At the same time, the social power of the industrial working class has been greatly augmented by economic development. The inclusion of at least 150 million rural migrant workers in China's urban economy is a factor of enormous potential significance. A Leninist-Trotskyist party is needed to provide a revolutionary, proletarian and internationalist road forward. As we wrote in "Women Workers and the Contradictions of China Today" (*Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 61, Spring 2009):

"At some point, likely when bourgeois elements in and around the bureaucracy move to eliminate CCP political power, the explosive social tensions building up in Chinese society will shatter the political structure of the ruling bureaucratic caste. When that happens, China's fate will be starkly posed. Either the workers will sweep away the parasitic ruling elite through a proletarian political revolution that defends and extends the gains of the 1949 Revolution and makes China a bastion of the struggle for world socialism, or capitalist counterrevolution will triumph, bringing back devastating imperialist subjugation and exploitation."

A revolutionary workers and peasants government would put an end to bureaucratic arbitrariness and corruption. It would expropriate the new class of domestic capitalist entrepreneurs and renegotiate the terms of foreign investment in the interests of the working people. It would create a centrally planned and managed economy under conditions of workers democracy—not the autarkic, bureaucratic commandism of the Mao years. While struggling to provide at least a basic level of economic security for the whole population, a genuine communist leadership would understand that achieving material prosperity for all hinges on the struggle for socialist revolution in the centers of world capitalism. This perspective is vehemently opposed by the nationalist CCP regime, whose policies derive from the Stalinist dogma of "building socialism in one country." The fact that workers in China's capitalist zones are being exploited by some of the same corporations that exploit workers in Japan, the U.S. and elsewhere creates the potential for international solidarity and points to workers' common interest in the fight for a socialist world.

The survival and advancement of China's revolutionary gains and the all-round modernization of society in the interest of the toiling masses requires an internationally planned socialist economy, which will open the road to a global communist future. That is the goal of the International Communist League, which fights to reforge Trotsky's Fourth International as the world party of proletarian revolution. ■

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Palestinians...

(continued from page 12)

pressure from “democratic” imperialist powers such as the U.S. and Britain. In fact, it was not disinvestment, but the mass social struggles of the black and other non-white toilers, centred on the working class, which brought an end to direct white-supremacist rule in South Africa. The significant wage gains won by black class struggle and the instability caused by a growing strike movement deterred investment in South Africa.

At the time, our organisation uniquely told the truth: that disinvestment was *at best* an empty moral gesture; that if foreign companies did withdraw substantial productive assets this would hurt black workers and weaken the powerful black union movement; and, most crucially, that it was obscene to look to U.S. imperialism and its British junior partner as a force for “democracy” anywhere in the world. The disinvestment that did occur largely took the form of overseas corporations signing over their interests to local subsidiaries, which often treated their workers even more brutally. Indeed, 1989 saw strikes by black oil and rubber workers in South Africa against such disinvestment schemes. As we wrote in “Black Workers Strike Against ‘Divestment’ Union-Busting” (*Workers Vanguard* No. 486, 29 September 1989), “The only kind of ‘divestment’ that will benefit the exploited and oppressed will be proletarian revolution, and the expropriation of these riches by a black-centered workers government as part of a socialist federation of southern Africa.” That remains no less true today, as ANC leaders like Jacob Zuma continue to serve as black front men for a *neo-apartheid* capitalist system whose fundamental character, including enormous disparities between racial groups, has remained intact.

For a Socialist Federation of the Near East!

The Spartacist League and other sections of the International Communist League intervened into the recent protests against the Zionist attacks on the flotilla to express our solidarity with the Palestinian masses and to put forward the only perspective—international socialist revolution—that can put an end to Palestinian national oppression. The myriad peoples of the Near East will not know peace, justice or prosperity until bourgeois rule in the region is overthrown through a series of socialist revolutions. As revolutionaries in Britain, solidarity with the oppressed in neocolonial countries means first and foremost opposing our own ruling class and fighting to bring down British imperialism through socialist revolution at home.

The hideous oppression of the Palestinians today, including the siege of Gaza, is an expression of the barbaric rule of capitalist imperialism and Zionist nationalism. For more than 60 years, Palestinians have suffered under the jackboot of Zionist Israel—an oppression that has intensified



Asa photo

June 5: Sydney protest against Zionist massacre. Against reformist appeals to imperialist rulers, Spartacists warn that the capitalist rulers “at home” are the enemy of all workers and the oppressed.

since the 1991-92 counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union. The collapse of the USSR, which acted as a counterweight to U.S. imperialism internationally, deprived the late Yasir Arafat’s Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) of crucial diplomatic and financial support, paving the way for the ignominious 1993 U.S. imperialism-sponsored Oslo “peace” accords, establishing the Palestinian Authority as the Zionists’ police auxiliaries in the Occupied Territories. In an article headlined “Israel-PLO Deal for



Peters/NY Times

South African gold miners at union rally, 1983. Black workers’ struggles against apartheid regime showed potential for proletarian revolution.

Palestinian Ghetto” we wrote that this deal “does not offer even the most deformed expression of self-determination” and “would place the PLO’s seal on the national oppression of the long-suffering Palestinian Arab masses” (*Workers Hammer* No. 137, September/October 1993 [reprinted from *WV* No. 583, 10 September 1993]). It was this betrayal by the secular-nationalist PLO that paved the way for the rise of reactionary Islamic groups like Hamas and Islamic Jihad among the Palestinians.

Since Oslo, one “peace” accord after another has been heralded as opening the door to Palestinian national emancipation. In reality, Zionist oppression of the Palestinians has only intensified, leading to ever deadlier cycles of terror against the Palestinian population. Israel’s rulers have increasingly driven the Palestinians into bantustan-like enclaves demarcated by a heavily guarded wall and sliced up by Zionist settlements, checkpoints and bypass highways. Gaza is little more than a concentration camp: an impoverished, devastated strip where 1.5 million Palestinians are trapped, surrounded by the sea, an electrified fence and a wall sealing its border with Egypt. *All Zionist troops and settlers out of the West Bank and East Jerusalem!*

Both the Palestinian and Hebrew-speaking nations have the right to self-determination, but because the two nations are geographically interpenetrated, self-determination for one can only be achieved by denying it to the other. Under capitalism, every “solution” to the Palestinian national

question either perpetuates the oppression of the Palestinian Arab people or envisions a reversal of the terms of oppression, denying the legitimate national rights of the Hebrew-speaking people. In situations of interpenetrated peoples, a democratic solution to the national question can be achieved only through socialist revolution, because only the proletariat in power has an interest in resolving national antagonisms and can begin to meet the material needs of all working people.

We make a distinction between the Hebrew-speaking nation living in Israel and the Zionist state. This is counterposed to the view of the Zionists, and indeed of the Islamic fundamentalists, who equate the Zionist state with the Hebrew-speaking people. The Zionist state is not only a catastrophe for Palestinians—it is also a *deathtrap for Jews*. Some 25 per cent of citizens live in poverty and income disparities are higher than in Egypt and Jordan. Sephardic Jews, though overwhelmingly under the sway of right-wing and religious parties, suffer widespread discrimination and poverty. The Palestinian Arabs, nominally “citizens” who constitute 20 per cent of Israel’s population, are consigned to segregated, impoverished areas and low-paid, unskilled jobs.

Israeli society is not a seamless reactionary mass. Despite widespread support in Israel for the Gaza blockade, there have been demonstrations against the brutal killings on the flotilla, including a 6,000-strong rally in Tel Aviv on 5 June. It is the false consciousness of religion and Zionist nationalism and racism—in the face of pervasive anti-Semitism—that is the glue binding the Hebrew-speaking proletariat to its Israeli ruling-class enemy. As long as Zionist oppression of Palestinians continues, Israeli Jews will continue to be a target of hatred and outrage by the more than 100 million Arabs who surround them. It is only the working class of Israel—Hebrew and Arab—that has the capacity to destroy the Zionist citadel from within.

As Marxists, we fight to bring the class question to the fore. The only road to social and national liberation for the Palestinians—including the right of all refugees and their descendants to return to their homeland—and all the other peoples of the Near East lies through common class struggle by the Arab, Hebrew-speaking and other working classes of the region. For the Palestinians, this means recognising the right of the Hebrew-speaking people to national self-determination. In turn, breaking the Hebrew-speaking workers from their Zionist rulers requires that they champion the national rights of the Palestinians. We have no illusions that winning the Hebrew-speaking proletariat to this perspective will be an easy task. Indeed, it will likely require the victory of socialist revolution in one of the other Near Eastern states to break the Hebrew-speaking proletariat from Zionist chauvinism. This task is not made easier by the criminal indiscriminate terror bombings carried out by Islamic forces against Israeli civilians, which drive the Hebrew-speaking population further into the arms of the Zionist rulers.

At the same time, the solidarity of the Arab masses with the oppressed Palestinian

people must be directed towards proletarian revolution against their own Arab rulers, who, whether bourgeois nationalists or Islamic traditionalists, are fundamentally the political agents of Western imperialism. If this does not happen, the intense and justifiable hostility against Israel and its American protector will serve to further strengthen the forces of Islamic fundamentalism, which posture as the “radical” opposition to the mainly pro-Western Arab regimes. We look to the proletariat of the region more widely, such as in Egypt, which has been a centre of working-class strikes and protests over the past several years. With some 50 per cent of the Palestinian population living outside the Occupied Territories—in Jordan, Lebanon, Israel—the national liberation of the Palestinians demands a perspective of socialist revolution throughout the Near East, including within Israel, the most powerful and economically advanced country in the region. It is vital to forge revolutionary Marxist parties throughout the Near East to unite the proletariat—Arab, Persian, Kurdish and Hebrew, Sunni and Shi’ite, Muslim and Christian—in struggle against imperialism and to smash the Zionist garrison state from within and sweep away the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Syrian Ba’athist bonapartists and the capitalist rulers of Lebanon through socialist revolution. *For a socialist federation of the Near East!*

Our proletarian internationalist perspective is counterposed to those reformists who tail Islamic fundamentalism, such as the SWP. *Socialist Worker* (10 January 2009) ran an article titled “Hamas’s History of Resistance,” enthusing over Hamas as the “bearer of a tradition of Palestinian resistance.” Islamic fundamentalists like Hamas and Islamic Jihad are vile anti-Jewish and anti-Christian religious bigots who seek to enslave women and extirpate any manifestations of social progress. Hamas is descended from the clerical-fascist Muslim Brotherhood, which became particularly prominent in Egypt in the late 1940s. Under the slogan “communism = atheism = liberation of women,” the Muslim Brotherhood mobilised a terror campaign against Communists and other secular forces. Hamas preaches the social segregation of women, the wearing of the *hijab* (Islamic headscarf) and anti-woman *sharia* law. Far from embodying a “history of resistance,” Hamas was initially supported by Israel as a counterweight to the secular-nationalist PLO. Carrying out attacks on secularists and Communists, the Islamists engaged in neither political nor military struggle against Israel.

With the beginning of the first *Intifada* in 1987, the Islamists feared that if they stood aside they would lose their following. Hamas was founded in the spring of 1988 as an Islamist political movement with an armed wing. Hamas sought to fuse the national struggle, previously a secular movement containing a leftist component, with reactionary Islamic fundamentalism. It was only in the autumn of 1989, after discovering that Hamas had killed two Israeli soldiers, that Israel broke relations with the group.

The Arab bourgeois regimes have always been enemies of Palestinian national liberation. When the Arab armies went to war with Israel in 1948, it was not

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India...

(continued from page 8)

guerrillas are confined to camps, nominally under United Nations control, while their leaders seek their integration into the bourgeois armed forces.

The organization now known as the UCPN (Maoist) has always had close links to India's Naxalites and upholds a similar dogma of "revolution by stages." Its 2001 "Common Minimum Policy and Programme" demanded a "people's democratic dictatorship with the participation of all the progressive classes including the national bourgeoisie." While running the government in 2008-09, the Maoists explicitly upheld capitalism and supported legislation to ban strikes. Reporting that "the government is planning to restrict bandhs [street protests] and strikes in industries and essential commodities," the *Himalayan Times* online (10 April 2009) quoted Maoist finance minister Baburam Bhattarai: "We are in a new political set-up and it demands a new outlook in business and industries also."

Unlike India, Nepal has very little in the way of an industrial proletariat. Three quarters of the workforce is involved in agriculture and 90 percent of the urban labor force works in the "informal" sector, largely small family workshops. While trade unions organized by various parties claim hundreds of thousands of members, what industrial activity there is mainly involves the processing of agricultural



Soviet government issued "Decree on Land" expropriating landed estates one day after proletarian seizure of power in October 1917 Revolution. Right: Uzbekistan peasant receives land and livestock certificate.



products like pulses (e.g., lentils), jute, sugar cane, tobacco and grain. The garment industry, largely based on primitive handicraft technology, once employed as many as 300,000 workers but has now almost entirely collapsed. About three million Nepalese—over 10 percent of the population—have moved abroad to seek work, including important concentrations in India and elsewhere in Asia.

The oppressed masses of Nepal need a *Marxist-internationalist* perspective that links the struggle for social modernization and liberation to the class struggles of the proletariat in more advanced countries beyond the country's borders. A workers

revolution in neighboring India would have a massive immediate effect on Nepal, posing a struggle for a socialist federation of the subcontinent. Conversely, a huge plebeian upheaval in Nepal drawing in its small working class could help to spark a proletarian upsurge in India.

Sharply opposing such a perspective, the petty-bourgeois UCPN (Maoist) pushes retrograde Nepalese nationalism, including against so-called "cultural pollution" from India. The Maoists' "40 Point Demands," issued in 1996 on the eve of their armed insurgency, includes calls for the Nepal-India border to be "controlled and systematized," for cars with Indian license plates to be banned, and for the suppression of Hindi-language films, videos, magazines and newspapers. In a series of recent pronouncements, the Indian Maoists have criticized their erstwhile comrades in Nepal for their "dangerous reformist positions." But the Nepalese Maoists are only carrying out the logic of Mao-Stalinist nationalism and class collaboration.

Forge a Leninist-Trotskyist Party!

India's vaunted development over the past two decades has benefited only a small section of the population: the filthy rich bourgeoisie and a petty-bourgeois technocratic/managerial stratum in the cities. The working class faces horrific working and living conditions and poverty-level wages, while squalid slums expand everywhere as displaced peasants descend on the cities to seek work. Caste, religion, language and other divides are fostered by the rulers to maintain their oppressive hold.

The situation cries out for the kind of perspective fought for by Lenin and Trotsky in the 1917 October Revolution: the workers seizing power at the head of the oppressed masses, agrarian revolution to liberate the peasantry, the socialization and rational reorganization of the economy in the interests of human needs not profit, and the fight to extend socialist revolution internationally, especially to the imperialist heartlands. In India, such a perspective alone can lay the basis for planned economic development that benefits, rather than destroys the lives of, impoverished populations like the adivasis.

Social liberation in South Asia will not come through isolated struggles in the forests and jungles, but requires the mobilization of the urban proletariat under revolutionary leadership. In the fight to forge such a leadership, crucial lessons can be drawn from the work of the Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India (BLPI), Indian section of the Trotskyist Fourth International, during World War II. While the Stalinists backed British imperialism and opposed the struggle for Indian independence, and later returned to subordinating the workers to the bourgeois Congress, the BLPI fought heroically for a Marxist proletarian perspective.

This proud history was later squandered, starting with the dissolution of

the BLPI in 1948 to pursue a liquidationist entry into the thoroughly reformist Socialist Party of J. P. Narayan. Over the following years, the remnants of the once powerful Indian Trotskyist cadre were assimilated into social democracy. Thus when a new wave of youthful radicalism appeared in India in the late 1960s it was led into the dead end of Naxalite Maoism. The small ostensibly Trotskyist groups that operated from the 1970s on, generally associated with the revisionist "United Secretariat" (USec) of the late Ernest Mandel, continued to push abject accommodation to non-revolutionary forces. By the mid 2000s, the Indian USec section collapsed and disappeared.

The ICL fights to reforge the Fourth International as the world party of socialist revolution. Militants in India seeking the road to revolutionary Marxism must examine the program of Trotskyism and the record of the early BLPI, which uniquely chart a path to the Indian workers revolution and a socialist federation of South Asia. As the BLPI wrote in its founding program, issued in 1942:

"The peasantry, the largest numerically and the most atomized, backward and oppressed class, is capable of local uprisings and partisan warfare, but requires the leadership of a more advanced class for this struggle to be elevated to an all-national level. Without such leadership the peasantry alone cannot make a revolution. The task of such leadership falls in the nature of things on the Indian proletariat, which is the only class capable of leading the toiling masses in the onslaught against Imperialism, landlordism and the Native Princes...."

"But the leadership of the working class in the bourgeois-democratic revolution poses before the working class the prospect of seizing the power and in addition to accomplishing the long overdue bourgeois-democratic tasks of proceeding with its own socialist tasks. And thus the bourgeois-democratic revolution develops uninterruptedly into the proletarian revolution and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat as the only state-form capable of supplanting the dictatorship of the imperialist bourgeoisie in India...."

"The ultimate fate of the revolution in India, as in Russia, will be determined in the arena of the international revolution. Nor will India by its own forces be able to accomplish the task of making the transition to Socialism. Not only the backwardness of the country, but also the international division of labor and the interdependence produced by capitalism itself—of the different parts of the world economy, demand that this task of the establishment of Socialism can be accomplished only on a world scale. The Indian proletariat will, of course, proceed with the socialist transformation of society to the extent that this is possible in the concrete circumstances, but the establishment of the socialist society will depend on the course of international revolution. The victorious revolution in India, however, dealing a mortal blow to the oldest and most widespread Imperialism in the world, will, on the one hand, produce the most profound crisis in the entire capitalist world and shake World Capitalism to its foundations. On the other hand, it will inspire and galvanize into action millions of proletarians and colonial slaves the world over and blaze the trail of World Revolution." ■



Kathmandu, 6 May: Maoists in Nepal rally during general strike demanding ouster of prime minister.

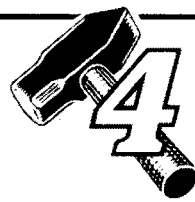
to "liberate" Palestine but to carve it up among themselves. Between 1948 and the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, the West Bank and Gaza were occupied by Jordan and Egypt respectively. And the Palestinians there remained politically dispossessed and subject to brutal repression. In the decade following the 1967 war, nearly 50,000 Palestinians were slaughtered by Arab governments, including some 10,000 militants killed by the Jordanian monarchy in the 1970 Black September massacre.

The 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, which laid the basis for the liberation of the tsarist empire's many subjugated peoples, was a beacon of liberation for the oppressed throughout the world, inspiring anti-colonial revolts throughout the Near East. This legacy continued despite the Stalinist degeneration of the USSR. In 1958, Iraqi workers led by the multinational Iraqi Communist Party—which included Muslims, Jews and Christians, Arabs and Kurds—fought to make a revolution and came to the brink of power. However, this and other revolutionary opportunities were betrayed by the Kremlin and the Stalinist-led Communist parties, subordinating the proletariat to an alliance with "progressive" bourgeois nationalists, who, once in power, launched

a blood-bath against the Communist-led workers.

What is necessary is the forging of revolutionary Marxist parties throughout the Near East, built in opposition to all forms of nationalism and religious fundamentalism, and committed to the struggle for socialist revolution, which, on an international scale, can finally open the door to human equality and liberation. The conquest of power by the proletariat in the Near East does not complete the socialist revolution, but only opens it by changing the direction of social development. But that social development can be consolidated only through the international extension of the revolution, particularly to the advanced, industrialised imperialist countries.

Defence of those subjugated by the imperialists around the globe demands the pursuit of class struggle in Britain, the U.S. and other imperialist centres, pointing towards a proletarian struggle for power. The Spartacist League/Britain, section of the International Communist League, is committed to the fight to forge a multi-ethnic revolutionary workers party to lead the proletariat in the struggle to sweep away British imperialism through socialist revolution. ■



**For Proletarian Internationalism,
Not Appeals to Imperialism!**

Defend the Palestinians Against Zionist State Terror!

The following article is reprinted from *Workers Hammer* (No. 211, Summer 2010), newspaper of the Spartacist League/Britain. The Socialist Workers Party, referred to in the article, is the British parent group of Socialist Alternative and Solidarity, the latter being formally affiliated.

WORKERS HAMMER

Particularly since the Zionist rulers' massacre on the Gaza aid flotilla, many defenders of the oppressed Palestinians have renewed their calls for "boycotts, disinvestment and sanctions" (BDS) against Israel. As revolutionary internationalists, we support time-limited trade union actions against the Israeli state. An example is the Swedish dock workers' action boycotting Israeli ships and goods coming from or destined for Israel from 22 to 29 June in protest against Israel's attack on the "Freedom Flotilla." In general, we are in favour of the trade unions refusing to handle *military* goods being shipped to Israel, which would be a blow not only against the Zionist rulers but also against the British, U.S. and other imperialist ruling classes.

But while we support the proposed action of the Swedish dockers, we oppose the political strategy of the reformist union bureaucracies that initiated it. While raising the supportable demand for lifting the blockade of Gaza, the call for the Swedish workers action also demands that "Israel pays respect to international law" and calls for "a general blockade of Israeli goods until the rights of the Palestinian people are guaranteed and the blockade of Gaza is lifted." In a similar vein, a recent statement signed by British union leaders Tony Woodley, Dave Prentis, Billy Hayes, Bob Crow and Mark Serwotka says: "We call on the British government and the European Union to suspend the EU-Israel association agreement and to end their support for the blockade and collective punishment of the men, women and children of Gaza. We call for support for a policy of boycott of Israeli products, disinvestment from Israeli companies and sanctions against Israel until justice for the Palestinian people has been achieved" (*Guardian*, 5 June).

We are politically opposed to standing boycotts and to campaigns for disinvestment and sanctions against Israel, which are counterposed to the international working-class struggle on which the liberation of the Palestinians is premised. BDS campaigns serve to promote illusions in the benign nature of other capitalist powers—not least British imperialism—relative to Israel. If successful, boycott



London, 5 June: Thousands protest Zionist massacre on *Mavi Marmara*, demand end to blockade of Gaza.

On Boycotts, Disinvestment and Sanctions

campaigns would hurt the working class of Israel, both Hebrew-speaking and Arab, causing mass layoffs and weakening its social power, which can and must be mobilised to smash the Zionist state from within through socialist revolution.

The reformist Socialist Workers Party (SWP) supports the strategy of BDS and explains its broad aims in an article titled "The Fight Against Israeli Apartheid" in *Socialist Worker* (19 June) which says:

"The BDS strategy is to seek international support and solidarity until Israel complies with international law: that means Israel must end the occupation of the West Bank and the blockade of Gaza and apply its own laws equitably and universally to Jew and to Arab alike.

"BDS is about building an international movement to isolate Israel economically, culturally and academically. It is about persuading artists, writers, and performers not to work in Israel—following the examples of Gil Scott-Heron, Elvis Costello and others. It is about identifying Israeli products that are imported into Britain—not just those produced by settlements on illegally confiscated Palestinian resources—and pressing importers

and outlets not to stock them. It is about gathering from supermarket shelves all products illegally produced in the West Bank and presenting them to the managers to help them avoid prosecution for selling stolen goods."

The article notes that "BDS is NOT about boycotting individual Israeli scholars or academics," but is an "institutional boycott." In the face of a vicious Zionist outcry against British unions which had called for academic boycotts of Israel in 2006 we wrote: "The Spartacist League and the Spartacus Youth Group call for the defence of the UCU [University and College Union] and other unions and organisations against the Zionist backlash and recognise that the boycott campaign is motivated out of solidarity with the oppressed Palestinians" (*Workers Hammer* No. 196, Autumn 2006). At the same time, we noted that:

"The university unions' boycott, which is part of the wider divestment campaign against Israel, represents an appeal to the supposed morality of British and European academic institutions and funding

bodies to sever any links with the brutally oppressive and murderous Israeli regime. The problem with this is that the universities in Britain are no less attached to the British state than they are to the Israeli state in Israel. And the British imperialist state is no less bloody than the Israeli state."

From India to Kenya, Iraq, Afghanistan and Northern Ireland, British imperialism has left a trail of carnage around the globe throughout its history. The present bloody mess in the Near East is itself the legacy of the "divide-and-rule" machinations of British imperialism when it was the dominant world power.

Appealing to the blood-soaked British imperialists, *Socialist Worker* (5 June) put forward a call that "We must force Britain to break all links with Israel, including shutting down its embassy." The notion that the British government, corporations or campus administrations (or for that matter, the EU or the UN) can be "persuaded" to promote economic and social justice is ludicrous. But the programme of the SWP rests on the myth that British imperialism can be pressured into acting on behalf of the oppressed and perpetuates the very illusions in imperialist "democracy" that Marxists seek to destroy. As we said in "Zionist Backlash over 'Boycott Israel'" (*Workers Hammer* No. 196, Autumn 2006):

"Why not call for a boycott of all British consumer goods, protesting the British rulers' brutality against the oppressed Catholic minority in Northern Ireland, not to mention British imperialism's role in the subjugation of Iraq and Afghanistan? Not only does this promote illusions in the 'democratic' and 'civilised' nature of other capitalist powers and corporations which the campaign seeks to dissuade from doing business with Israel, such a campaign is actually anti-working class."

Boycotts and Apartheid South Africa

The "boycott, disinvestment and sanctions" campaign is consciously modelled on the campaign for disinvestment from and sanctions against apartheid South Africa in the 1980s. Writing in the *Guardian* (10 January 2009), Naomi Klein argued that "The best strategy to end the increasingly bloody occupation is for Israel to become the target of the kind of global movement that put an end to apartheid in South Africa." The disinvestment campaign against South Africa in Europe and North America was centrally promoted by the bourgeois-nationalist African National Congress (ANC). It was based on a claim that South African capitalism could be fundamentally reformed through

continued on page 10