



## Lebanon

# Down with UN intervention! Israel out now!

The following article is adapted from Workers Vanguard no 875, 1 September.

For over a month, Lebanon was a place of carnage, destruction and horror inflicted by relentless Israeli bombardment backed up by some 30,000 invading troops, all with the full support of US and British imperialism. Over 1000 men, women and children were slaughtered, nearly a quarter of the population was displaced, and the infrastructure of the country was devastated. The Zionist regime of Ehud Olmert and Amir Peretz declared that their intent was the annihilation of Hezbollah. But Hezbollah not only survived the onslaught, it inflicted significant casualties on the Israeli military as well as damage to tanks and other vehicles. Israel's setback in Lebanon has touched off a crisis for the Olmert regime, while Hezbollah is now idolised by much of the region's Arab population.

The failure of Israel's campaign in Lebanon is really what is behind the United Nations-sponsored ceasefire agreement, which Israel has repeatedly violated. Having opposed a ceasefire for weeks, the Bush administration suddenly switched track when it became clear that Israel was running into trouble in pursuing its military objectives. The crux of the agreement is a plan to deploy some 15,000 UN troops in southern Lebanon, although no foreign power was exactly jumping to place its forces between Hezbollah and Israel and get caught in a potential quagmire. But after initially offering only 200 troops, the French imperialists, Lebanon's former colonial overlords, have now committed 2000 troops and the Italians up to 3000.

The purpose of this imperialist UN force is to try to accomplish what the Israeli military could not—the neutral-

**US/Britain out of Iraq, Afghanistan! Hands off Iran!**

**For a socialist federation of the Near East!**



Southern suburb of Beirut devastated by Israeli bombardment, 20 July. Inset: Lebanese man carrying dead child in Southern town of Qana, where 30 July Israeli airstrike killed some 60 people, including numerous children.

isation of Hezbollah and its fighters. It is a set-up for more repression against the peoples of Lebanon. It was US, French and Italian "peacekeepers" in Lebanon who disarmed Palestine Liberation Organisation fighters in 1982, laying the basis for the massacre of some 2000 Palestinians in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps at the hands of fascist Christian forces organised by the Israeli military. At protests in London and elsewhere, our comrades carried signs reading: "Remember Sabra and Shatila—No reliance on the UN!" In the recent conflict, we called for the military defence of Hezbollah

while maintaining our political opposition to that reactionary Islamic fundamentalist outfit. Today, we demand the full and immediate withdrawal of all Israeli forces from Lebanon and say: **UN troops out of Lebanon now!**

Unlike Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982, which touched off massive protests in the Zionist garrison state, there was widespread popular support for the recent campaign. Nonetheless, there were courageous protests against the assault on Lebanon, including a demonstration of 5000 in Tel Aviv on 22 July. Notably, 150 demonstrated against the war on 25 July in Haifa, a city that

had been hit by Hezbollah missiles and where eight maintenance workers at a train depot died in a single barrage. The US and British press has given wide coverage to Hezbollah's rocket attacks, which have hit innocent civilians, while grossly playing down the infinitely greater terrorism carried out by Israeli forces in Lebanon.

By standing up to the Israeli assault, Hezbollah has won widespread support among the Arab masses, including among Sunni Muslims. Even the Sunni-dominated regimes of Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, which initially

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## Airport "terror" scare and government repression

The "war on terror" has been ratcheted up yet again. On 10 August, British authorities claimed they had foiled a spectacular "terror plot" to blow up airplanes flying from Britain to the US, which they described as intended to be "mass murder on an unimaginable scale". The reported arrest in Pakistan of a British citizen named Rashid Rauf, allegedly a key "terror plot" figure, triggered the major alert in Britain, yet Britain is seeking Rauf's extradition from Pakistan not on the basis of any "terror plot" but in connection with a murder in 2002.

No actual evidence of any plot was provided to the public—the sensational press reports are based only on

police "intelligence". On this basis, police arrested some two dozen British Muslims and made it known that thousands of others are under state surveillance. Predictably, the hysteria fuelled racism against Muslims and immigrants: on 1 September in London, cops raided a restaurant and arrested 12 Asians under the Terrorism Act 2000. Arson attacks were reported against a mosque in Basingstoke and another in Chester. These attacks come in the wake of a spate of racist murders: Christopher Alaneme, an 18-year-old Nigerian, was murdered in Kent in May; in July 20-year-old Shezan Umarji was murdered in Preston and 41-year-old Mohammad Parvaiz died

of injuries received in a racist attack in Huddersfield.

While many people believe that a terrorist attack might have been planned, this scare was met with massive public scepticism, not least because of the disastrous results of previous "anti-terrorism" operations in Britain. These include the July 2005 London police execution of Brazilian electrician Jean Charles de Menezes, shot seven times in the head and this summer's massive police raid on an Asian family home in Forest Gate in which the cops shot Mohammed Abdul Kahar in the chest and found nothing. Meanwhile the criminal July 2005 Tube and bus bombings were carried

out completely unanticipated by British security forces. So why should anyone believe anything issuing from the Blair government about the latest arrests?

The "security" furore was a gift to this massively unpopular Labour government. The day before the airport alert, Labour home secretary John Reid made a speech in which he ranted against a large swath of those in the press and legal profession who, Reid said, "just don't get it", that Britain faced "probably the most sustained period of severe threat since the end of the second world war" (*Guardian*, 11 August). The timing

*continued on page 3*

## On the abolition of ranks in the Red Army

The letter below corrects an error in the article "Revolutionaries and World War II", first published in *Workers Hammer* no 193, Winter 2005-2006. The article was an edited version of a presentation given by comrade Olly Laing at a Spartacus Youth Group forum in London on 22 October 2005.

New York  
10 March 06

The fine article in *Workers Hammer* No. 193 (Winter 2005-2006)—the first part of which was reprinted in the *Young Spartacus* pages of *Workers Vanguard* No. 865 (3 March 2006) contains a factual error that is politically significant, and that has repeatedly

appeared in our press:

"Stalin's regime had been consolidated by bloody purges in the 1930s in which many of the Red Army's best officers were murdered, including Marshal Tukhachevsky, one of the most brilliant generals in the civil war of 1918-21."

The problem here is that Tukhachevsky was never a general. *Lenin and Trotsky's Red Army was built on the principle of abolishing the rank of general, along with all other ranks of the tsarist officer caste.* Tukha himself was on the editorial board of the *Small Soviet Encyclopedia* (1929) which explained, "In the Red Army the rank of general, along with all other ranks of the tsarist army is abolished" (Vol. 2, p. 418). In those days commanders of particular units were referred to as simply that. For instance,



Marshal Mikhail  
Tukhachevsky,  
Red Army hero,  
murdered in  
Stalin's purge.

Sovfoto

Tukhachevsky was Commander of the Western Army, or of the Seventh Army that was formed to put down the Kronstadt mutiny. Commanders in the collective sense were referred to as the commanding staff (*komsostav*). It is thus a grave offense to refer to Tukha, or any other commander, of Lenin and Trotsky's time, as a "general." It was a curse word for that generation.

In 1936 Trotsky explained the significance of the eventual restoration of the officer corps by Stalin's Thermidorian caste (in which Tukhachevsky was briefly and precariously ensconced):

"A still more deadly blow to the principles of the October revolution was struck by the decree restoring the officers' corps in all its bourgeois magnificence. The commanding staff of the Red Army, with its inadequacies, but also with its inestimable merits, grew out of the revolution and the civil war. The youth, to whom independent political activity is closed, undoubtedly supply no small number of able representatives to the Red Army. On the other hand, the progressive degeneration of the state apparatus could not fail in its turn to reflect itself in the broad circles of the commanding staff...."

"In September 1935, civilized humanity, friends and enemies alike, learned with surprise that the Red Army would now be crowned with an officers' hierarchy, beginning with lieutenant and ending with marshal. According to Tukhachevsky, the actual head of the War Department, 'the introduction by the government of military titles will create a more stable basis for the development of commanding and technical cadres.' The explanation is consciously equivocal. The commanding cadres are reinforced above all by the confidence of the soldiers. For that very reason, the Red Army began by liquidating the officers' corps. The resurrection of hierarchical caste is not in the least demanded by the interests of military affairs. It is the commanding position, and not the rank, of the commander that is important.... The elevation of the five senior commanders of the Red Army to the title of marshal, gives them neither new talents nor supplementary powers. It is not the army that really thus receives a 'stable basis', but the officers' corps, and that at the price of aloofness from the army. The reform pursues a purely political aim: to give a new social weight to the officers...."

"It is worthy of note that the reformers did not consider it necessary to invent fresh titles for the resurrected ranks. On the contrary, they obviously wanted to keep step with the West. At the same time, they revealed their Achilles' heel in not daring to resurrect the title of general, which among the Russian people has too ironical a sound...."

"The restoration of officers' castes eighteen years after their revolutionary abolition testifies equally to the gulf which already separates the rulers from the ruled, to the loss by the Soviet army of the chief qualities which gave it the name of 'Red', and to the cynicism with which the bureaucracy erects these consequences of degeneration into law."

—*The Revolution Betrayed*, pp. 221-225

The resurrection of the officer corps bound military lackeys to the ruling caste through political and material privileges. It was a prelude to the physical annihilation of those Red Army commanders who retained some degree of political independence and authority not beholden to Stalin. Tukhachevsky did not survive two years in Stalin's officer corps.

Comrade Olly and the others who worked on the article are not entirely to blame for the misformulation in "Revolutionaries and World War II" cited above. I am sure it was loyally taken from a "citation" of Trotsky in our article "In Defense of Marshal Tukhachevsky":

"Trotsky in *Stalin* (1941) wrote of the young Tukhachevsky.... 'He distinguished himself almost immediately at the front, and within a year had become a general of the Red Army. His brilliance as a strategist was acknowledged by admiring foes who were the victims of that very brilliance.'"

—*Workers Vanguard* No. 321 (14 January 1983); subsequently reprinted in *Spartacist* [English Edition] No. 41-42 (Winter 1987-88)

The problem here is that this erroneous citation is *not from Trotsky, but from Charles Malamuth*—the English "translator" who grotesquely deformed Trotsky's unfinished manuscript. The "citation" from Trotsky on p. 327 of *Stalin* appears in Malamuth's brackets, and does *not* appear in Trotsky's Russian original text (*Stalin*, Vol. 2, p. 119, Terra, Moscow 1990). This error was discovered when we translated "In Defense of Marshal Tukhachevsky" for the first issue of our Russian-language *Byulleten' Spartakovisev* (Winter 1989-90). In our Russian bulletin, we noted that the article was slightly edited, and we removed the erroneous, falsified passage.

But apart from this editorial history of 16 years ago, *it should be a part of comrades' knowledge that the revolutionary Red Army had no need of, and in fact was forged in battle against the very idea of an officer corps and military ranks!*

CGs,  
Victor G.

## Correction

The article "Revolutionaries and World War II" published in *Workers Hammer* no 193, Winter 2005-2006, stated, referring to the "Proletarian Military Policy" (PMP), that Trotsky "was murdered by a Stalinist assassin shortly after its formal adoption". The PMP was formally adopted by the American Socialist Workers Party in September 1940, after Trotsky's assassination which was in August 1940.



TROTSKY

### The Fourth International and the Near East

Our Marxist perspective for a socialist federation of the Near East is counterposed to that of reformists such as the SWP who argue that the solution lies in pressuring imperialist powers such as Blair's Britain to intervene and looking to the United Nations to broker "peace". The statement below, excerpted from "The Trotskyist Position in Palestine" published by the Revolutionary Communist League

of Palestine on the impending UN partition that established the state of Israel in 1948, decisively refutes these reformist arguments and puts forward a proletarian revolutionary programme.

Politicians and diplomats are still trying to find a formula for the disastrous situation into which Palestine has been plunged by the UNO deciding upon partition. Is this a "breach of international peace" or are we dealing with merely "hostile acts"? As far as we are concerned there is no point in this distinction. We are daily witnessing the killing or maiming of men and women, old and young, Jew or Arab. As always, the working masses and the poor suffer most.

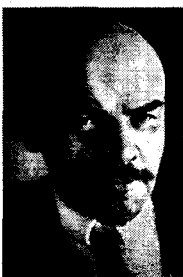
Not so very long ago the Arab and Jewish workers were united in strikes against a foreign oppressor. This common struggle has been put to an end. Today the workers are being incited to kill each other. The inciters have succeeded....

"Keeping order" in Palestine costs England over 35 million Pounds a year, an amount which exceeds the profit she can extort from this country. Partition will release her from her financial obligations, enable her to employ her soldiers in the productive process while her source of income will remain intact. — But this is not all. By partition a wedge is driven between the Arab and Jewish worker. The Zionist state with its provocative lines of demarcation will bring about the blossoming forth of irredentist (revenge) movements on either side, there will be fighting for an "Arab Palestine" and for a "Jewish state within the historic frontiers of Eretz Israel (Israel's Land)." As a result, the chauvinistic atmosphere created thus will poison the Arab world in the Middle East and throttle the anti-imperialist fight of the masses, while Zionists and Arab feudalists will vie for imperialist favors....

And what promises does the Jewish state hold out? Does it really mean a step toward the solution of the Jewish problem?

The partition was not meant to solve Jewish misery nor is it likely ever to do so. This dwarf of a state which is too small to absorb the Jewish masses cannot even solve the problems of its citizens. The Hebrew state can only infest the Arab East with anti-Semitism and may well turn out—as Trotsky said—a bloody trap for hundreds of thousands of Jews.

— Published in *Fourth International*, May 1948



LENIN

## WORKERS HAMMER

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

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EDITOR: Eibhlin McDonald  
PRODUCTION MANAGER: James Palmer  
CIRCULATION MANAGER: Mick Connor

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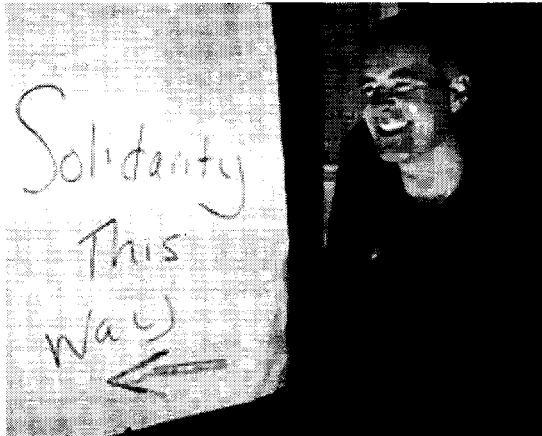
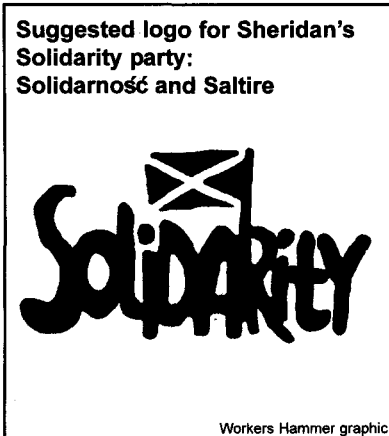
Schism in Scottish Socialist Party

'Holier than thou' parliamentary hopefuls fall out

"Well, brothers and sisters, what today's verdict proves is that working-class people, when they listen to the arguments, can differentiate the truth from the muck. The working-class people on the jury who have found in our favour have done a service to the people of Scotland..." So declared Tommy Sheridan upon winning his defamation case against the *News of the World*. What Sheridan hailed as a "service to the people of Scotland" was the jury's verdict that Sheridan—a respectable Member of the Scottish Parliament (MSP)—did not attend swingers clubs; did not have an affair with a former prostitute, nor did he commit any of the other sins that Rupert Murdoch's rag accused him of. In fact, the good "people of Scotland" can sleep content now, assured that this particular MSP—who regards himself as God's gift to Scottish "socialism"—is a respectable family man. While the scurrilous *News of the World* was trying to smear a leftist politician with a "sex scandal", for Marxists, consensual sexual activity is a private matter. However Sheridan wants us all to believe he is a paragon of virtue who only ever has sex with his (adoring) wife, to whom he is devoted and who would drown him in the Clyde if he were unfaithful!

The Edinburgh court drama outdid any theatre event at the Festival. It was a classic case of a reformist politician insisting that he is a God-fearing upholder of bourgeois morality. According to this, sex must take place only between one man and one woman, within the confines of the "holy family", with the husband on top. (Arguably, the court drama was better stage-managed than some fringe events: Sheridan's mother Alice sat in court daily reciting novenas to the Virgin Mary while Mary Magdalen-type women alleged they performed wicked sex acts with her beloved son.) Sheridan was appealing to dour Presbyterian (and Catholic) moral hypocrisy, asserting that, to paraphrase George Galloway, he never, ever engages in sex standing up "in case it might lead to dancing".

The *News of the World* "sex scandal" was to become part of a bitter power struggle in the Scottish Socialist Party (SSP) that has now resulted in an acrimonious split with Sheridan launching his own rival party. The rip-roaring fight has gutted the SSP which was once held up by reformists as the model party. Formed by Scottish Militant Labour, the



Glasgow, 3 September: Sheridan splits to form new party called Solidarity, a mirror image of the SSP, including its capitulation to Scottish nationalists.

Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and the Taaffeite Committee for a Workers International dived into the SSP. Despite disagreeing over Scottish independence, these consummate opportunists have lately become Sheridan's cheerleaders. With Labour widely despised because of Iraq, the SSP scored considerable electoral success in 2003, winning six seats in the devolved Scottish parliament. Sheridan & Co saw the tantalising prospect that they might soon become a significant factor in Holyrood, assuming their rightful place as reformists in parliament administering the capitalist order. With a view to an electoral bloc, the SSP embarked on a major orientation to the Scottish National Party (SNP), a bourgeois party that aspires to represent the Scottish bankers and bosses in an independent Scotland. The SSP has been working towards forming such a classic popular-frontist lash-up with the SNP and the Green party, on the basis that all three are "pro-independence" parties. Such a cross-class coalition would surrender even nominal independence of the working class in an electoral pact with openly bourgeois parties and for us revolutionaries would rule out giving critical support to the SSP.

The Blair government has changed the boundaries and the voting system for the Scottish elections in 2007 and polls show that the SNP may become the biggest party in Holyrood next year, while the changes mean the SSP may well be reduced to one MSP. Deep divisions had already erupted within the SSP over how far to go in the capitulation to the nationalists. Sheridan's rival faction includes

hard line pro-SNP elements but both wings accept a bloc with the bourgeois nationalists in principle. However the prospect of losing several seats (not to mention the generous salaries that their six MSPs earn) fuelled tensions within the party. Sheridan, who had resigned as SSP leader over the "sex scandal" in November 2004 sued the *News of the World* to re-establish his leadership. When senior SSP members (including MSPs) were cited to appear in court, many testified that Sheridan had previously admitted to some of the allegations about his sex life. Sheridan won his case, denounced SSP members who had testified against him as "scabs" and on 3 September set up his own rival party known as Solidarity.

Fittingly, its name is associated with Solidarność which was the spearhead for capitalist restoration in Poland and was backed in the 1980s by Margaret Thatcher, Ronald Reagan and the Vatican—as well as the reformist left, including the SSP's forerunner Militant and the SWP. It is a travesty that the SSP purports to represent the Scottish proletariat, which historically openly identified with the Soviet Union and Communism. During the 1980s Cold War we appealed to such sentiments by raising evocative slogans such as "Turn Holy Loch into a Soviet U-boat pen!" and "For a Scottish workers republic as part of the USSR!" to distinguish ourselves from the anti-Communist, "Sassenach" Labourite left, of which Militant was the prime example, and to express our opposition to English domination.

The SSP All-Members Bulletin (August 2006) describes their own former comrades who have now quit with Sheridan

as a "disparate mish-mash" saying: "Some are pro-independence, others anti-independence; some are pro-gender equality, others anti-gender equality; some are ultra-libertarian on crime and punishment, others are to the right of the Tories." This sounds entirely plausible, not to mention a triumph of the SSP's vaunted "broad unity". As we have noted, there is nothing remotely socialist about the SSP's reformist programme, which merely consists of a series of bourgeois-democratic demands and some phrases about "socialism". While looking to the SNP to institute an independent, capitalist Scotland, Sheridan the consummate opportunist has reassured the Scottish bosses and foreign multinationals that: "What we're saying is that in a future independent socialist Scotland we want to work on training, on skills. We want to offer a very highly skilled economy, a motivated work force for big business" (*Glasgow Herald*, 30 April 2003).

The SSP's capitulation to Scottish nationalism is the opposite of the Leninist policy towards the national question on these islands. We uphold the right of self-determination for the oppressed nations of Scotland and Wales, which includes the right to form independent states (or not) if they so choose. At present, given the lack of decisive national differences in either language or religion, we do not call for independence for Scotland and Wales but advocate a course of common class struggle for the revolutionary overthrow of the British state. We oppose all forms of nationalism, first and foremost the dominant English chauvinism, as well as Scottish and Welsh nationalism. The duty of the revolutionary party is to fight to win the working class in England, the oppressor nation, to the need to champion the right of self-determination for Scotland and Wales. It follows that the duty of the proletarian vanguard in Scotland and Wales is to fight for voluntary integration with the proletariat of England. In counterposition to the SSP—and Sheridan's Solidarity—we seek to build a multi-ethnic revolutionary workers party that fights for British troops out of Northern Ireland and fights for workers revolution on these islands that will do away with the reactionary "United Kingdom" and replace it with an Irish workers republic within a voluntary federation of workers republics in the British Isles. ■

"Terror" scare...

(Continued from page 1)

was also suspiciously convenient for the government which was facing a "mutiny" against Blair, not only over the neocolonial occupation of Iraq but against Blair's avid support for Bush and Israel during the murderous assault on Lebanon. Government ministers were incensed when Muslim leaders, including normally pliant MPs and Lords, sent an open letter to Downing Street complaining about the government's foreign policy, saying: "To combat terror the government has focused extensively on domestic legislation. While some of this will have an impact, the government must not ignore the role of its foreign policy". Indeed the terrorist followers of

Osama bin Laden—who were created by US and British imperialism—and the like are responding in their own distorted way to the ravages of imperialism.

Yet when it comes to the "war on terror", Blair is far from "Bush's poodle". Many of the draconian measures in place in Britain—such as the powers to detain suspects without charge for up to 28 days—are the envy of the Bush administration. Blair & Co chafe against the 28-day legal limit and hope to push through the 90-day limit that was defeated in Parliament earlier this year. The EU seized the opportunity to announce a raft of new "counter-terror" measures, including profiling and plans to compel airlines to provide passenger lists to be checked against "biometric identifier" eye scans or fingerprints. The government forges ahead with police-state measures, arrogantly

believing that capitalist class rule can no longer be challenged by the working class.

The airport security "threat level" was downgraded when the airline chiefs, particularly Willie Walsh of British Airways (BA), screamed bloody murder about the dramatic loss in their profits. Walsh is intent on busting the unions at Heathrow, described by the *Financial Times* (19 August 2005) as the "largest remaining bastion of unionised labour in the country". This points to the Achilles heel of the "war on terror" which targets Muslims in particular but is designed to regiment the whole population and repress social struggle. Heathrow airport is strategic to British capitalism and its multiethnic workforce has enormous social power. This was spectacularly shown a year ago when BA workers downed tools and forced

BA's worldwide operations to a halt in protest against the sacking of over 600 Gate Gourmet catering workers. As we said at the time: "The government's 'anti-terror' campaign singles out the country's darker-skinned minority population in order to divide the working class. But at Heathrow the workers gave a splendid demonstration of how class solidarity can transcend ethnic lines, with the integrated workforce, including ground crew workers, recognising that their own interests and those of the more vulnerable and mainly female and Asian catering workers were the same" (*Workers Hammer* no 192, Autumn 2005). Key to mobilising the social power of the unions in opposition to the Labour government's repressive measures is the forging of a new revolutionary leadership of the working class. ■



# Workers Power splits over who to tail: Pro-imperialist Labour Party or imperialist-funded social forums

On 1 July Workers Power's League for the Fifth International (LFI) announced it had expelled a minority that included half the membership of the leading British section and most of its historic leadership. The bitter dispute centred on "perspectives", including whether or not we are experiencing a worldwide "pre-revolutionary" situation today. In a political climate dominated by the triumph of counterrevolution in the Soviet Union in 1991-92, one might ask what planet Workers Power exists on. But the view that the world is on the verge of revolution did not drop from

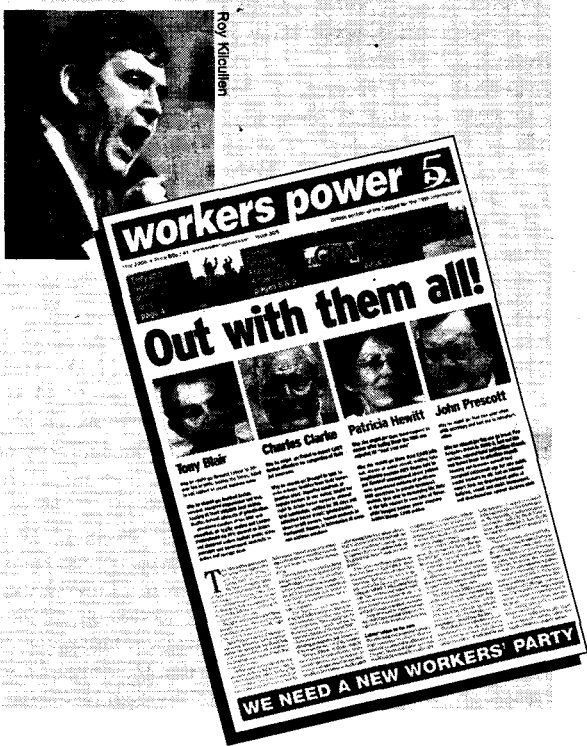
the Soviet Union and their loyalty to "democratic" imperialism, particularly under a Labour government. Like much of the Labourite left, Workers Power deluded themselves that, with the Soviet Union dead and buried, they would now be rewarded with unprecedented opportunities for growth. By 2003, following the mass mobilisations of youth against "global capitalism" and the mammoth protests against the Iraq War, Workers Power's "new dawn" was elevated to a global "pre-revolutionary" situation. This was to justify their opportunist capitulation to the anti-

got it", *Workers Hammer* no 194, Spring 2006).

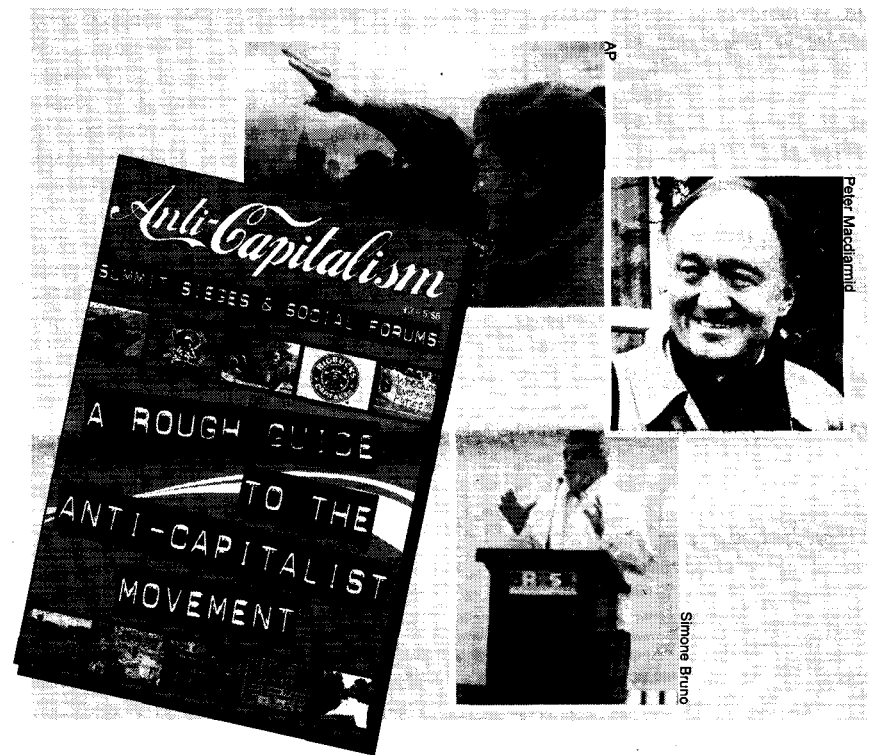
Following the expulsion of Workers Power's minority, documents published by both sides reveal the sorry state of its "international", which had barely 100 members before it expelled the minority numbering over 30 people. The much-hyped youth group "Revolution" is a sham, having only one putatively stable branch on the whole planet (in Leeds) and a handful of people in Germany and the Czech Republic, five of whom left after the split. What now remains of Revolution youth is aligned

Leninist or Trotskyist party (except in Nepal!).

The majority is also bowled over by Venezuelan bourgeois populist president, Hugo Chavez. While admitting that "certainly his 'socialism of the twenty first century' and 'internationalism' have a reformist/populist character" these opportunists cite the classic argument for tailism—"Chavez is moving left under pressure—talking of socialism—scornfully defying the offensive noises of US imperialism" (*International Perspectives of the League for the Fifth International*, July



Workers Power blows apart over conflicting opportunist appetites. Minority upholds perennial Labour-loyalism. Pre-split headline in May calls for purge of Blairite ministers, but not Gordon Brown (left). Majority tails imperialist-sponsored, petty-bourgeois social forums, vehicles to build credentials for Hugo Chavez, Ken Livingstone and Lula (right).



the sky—it flows from this organisation's fulsome support for counter-revolution.

When Boris Yeltsin's forces seized power in Moscow in 1991 it signalled the beginning of the end of the state that issued from the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. The imperialist ruling classes around the world rejoiced, hoping to bury forever the prospect of proletarian revolution. Workers Power too rejoiced, as part of a headlong rush by the pseudo-socialist left to repudiate any remaining trace of association with the programme of Bolshevism, having long ago renounced its central aim: the dictatorship of the proletariat. Justifying their support to Yeltsin, as well as to other counterrevolutionary forces from Poland to the Baltic states, Workers Power aped the imperialist propaganda mills saying: "These movements brought an end to decades of Stalinist dictatorship. All genuine revolutionaries rejoiced at the downfall of these bureaucratic, totalitarian monstrosities" (*Workers Power*, October 1997).

This statement is from the manifesto for their Fourth Congress—held within months of the election of Blair's Labour government in 1997—which proclaimed a "new dawn for humanity". Thus it captures their visceral hatred of

globalisation movement, which they claimed could be transformed into a new revolutionary international. But their hopes were not to be fulfilled and failure to realise their overblown projections was a major factor in the split.

Workers Power are not unique in facing a crisis of expectations in the post-Soviet world. The Socialist Workers Party (SWP) welcomed Yeltsin's counter-coup saying: "Communism has collapsed, it is a fact that should have every socialist rejoicing" and exhorted their members to "now fight for real socialism" (*Socialist Worker*, 31 August 1991). The SWP leadership then tried to conjure up a mass radicalisation, but despite having led the mobilisations against the Iraq War on a programme of "little England" pacifism, the party didn't grow and in fact lost upwards of 5000 members. This led dissident SWP honcho John Molyneux into revolt at their January conference, complaining bitterly that "the SWP not only hasn't grown (despite innumerable urgings to do so), but is now numerically and organisationally weaker than it was in the 90s" ("Why I intend to stand", by John Molyneux, published in *Weekly Worker*, 5 January. See "SWP wanted the post-Soviet world, now they've

with the majority while the minority has launched a paper called *permanent revolution*.

## Majority: shameless adaptation to social forums

Neither side in the split rejects any fundamental aspect of Workers Power's politics; they differ mainly over how best to pursue their different opportunist appetites. The majority thinks revolution is on the immediate agenda, as evidenced by the fact that people can be mobilised in the streets, regardless of the level of political consciousness, or the aims of the "movement". Thus it fully embraces the trendy, petty-bourgeois, imperialist-funded and -sponsored social forum movement and presents it not only as a vehicle for revolution, but as the embryo of its new "Fifth International". The majority's call for a "Fifth" International—ie one that is "free" of any even nominal association with Leninism or Trotskyism, is blatant pandering to the vitriolic prejudices against Leninism and the dictatorship of the proletariat among anarchists and liberals in the anti-globalisation milieu. In fact, in its international perspectives document, which runs to over 30 pages, the majority avoids any identification of itself as Trotskyist and does not call for a

2006). We have exposed the fake left's fawning over Chavez (see "Venezuela: populist nationalism versus proletarian revolution", *Workers Hammer* no 194, Spring 2006) as well as their wholesale adaptation to the popular-frontist social forums, which are funded and backed by capitalist states, NGOs, as well as banks and big corporations from the Ford Foundation to the Bank of Brazil. These forums have been supported by serving heads of capitalist states such as Lula and later Hugo Chavez, and in Britain by London mayor Ken Livingstone and the TUC. In our article "Churches, charities and CIA cash, Social Forum con game" (*Workers Hammer* no 191, Summer 2005) we also indicted Workers Power for their shameless adaptation to them, saying: "the crackpot conception of the LFI, Workers Power and its youth group Revolution, is that they can build not only a 'movement' but even a 'revolutionary' party out of these cross-class, state-funded alliances". Although they whined over right-wing bureaucratic control of the social forums, as we pointed out, "left out of Workers Power's equation is any political fight in opposition to the whole purpose of these Social Forums, which are premised on the *maintenance* of the capitalist system, merely trying to give

it a more 'democratic' and 'humanitarian' face lift".

### Minority: cosying up to Labour and Gordon Brown

The minority derides the majority's liquidation into the "anti-globalisation" movement, not mainly because of its opportunism, but because it hasn't paid off. It rightly points out that the majority's call for a Fifth International within the World and European Social Forums is a call for a "new revolutionary international led by the likes of the Rifondazione's Bertinotti!" (*permanent revolution*, July 2006). But the minority's real problem is that: "The masses at the WSF/ESF had not responded to [the LFI's] shrill calls to form the Fifth International in the months or years following the 2003 call. Indeed no allies amongst other organisations had been found to unite with to fight for the Fifth International — or even take the next step in that direction" (*permanent revolution*, July 2006). And while it makes noises about the need to break with the reformist leaders and describes the social forums as "an obstacle, not a vehicle for the constitution of a revolutionary International", nowhere does the minority criticise the LFI for having built them and given them a left cover.

The minority sees fewer "pre-revolutionary situations" than the majority (and sees them mostly in places where Workers Power does not exist, such as in Venezuela and Bolivia, as well as France during the anti-CPE protests earlier this year). But overall the minority views the prospects for revolution as pretty hopeless. Therefore while it objects to capitulating to the social forums under Bertinotti, its alternative is... to rally round the Labour Party! Today this can only mean joining the pathetic appeals of dissident union bureaucrats and MPs to "reclaim Labour", under Gordon Brown. Upholding Workers Power's years-long practice of "critical support" to Labour, the minority writes:

"The united front — placing demands on Labour, trying to win its working class supporters to struggle and revolutionary politics, and mobilising reformist workers in a fight with their leaders, inside and outside the Labour Party — is still a critical tactic in our view. Critical electoral support was part of this tactic — gaining a hearing with reformist workers, putting their party to the test of office, winning these workers to a revolutionary alternative."

— *permanent revolution*, July 2006

The idea that New Labour needs to be put to the "test of office" beggars belief, after nine years of a government that is responsible for the Iraq occupation, the racist "war on terror" and relentless attacks on the working class. The minority adds a rider that voting Labour was a tactic and not a strategy for Workers Power, which:

"supported 'class struggle candidates' where workers in struggle represented a real break from Labour and stood against the party. We actively supported and helped build the Socialist Alliance (SA). One of our faction's members was a parliamentary candidate for it in Greenwich while another was on the SA's executive."

— *permanent revolution*, July 2006

Far from being a break from Labour, leading forces in the Socialist Alliance (SA) such as the SWP openly called for votes to Labour where there was no SA candidate, which is why we refused to give SA critical support. Moreover, at its launch in 2001, the wretched SA refused to call for British troops out of Northern Ireland — and met nary a whimper of protest from the spineless souls of Workers Power who had sneaked this

demand into the SA's draft manifesto! Today both wings of Workers Power are reeling from the fact that the SWP pulled the rug from under their feet by abandoning the SA in favour of the Respect coalition, a cross-class alliance with a section of Islamic forces. The Socialist Party has stepped into the breach and taken upon itself the task of trying to resurrect a version of the old Labour Party, the so-called campaign for a "new mass workers party", which the Workers Power majority enthuses over. It boils down to building a party based on the trade union bureaucracy — starting with the Socialist Party's own supporters in the PCS union bureaucracy who agreed a sellout deal on civil service pensions. Whether they want to "reclaim" Labour from Blair, or to revive its rotten traditions under the Socialist Party, both wings of Workers Power are wedded to revitalising the politics of Labour, a party with a decades-long history of

allows it to plunder neo-colonial countries such as Iraq with impunity, while the capitalist ruling classes of the world feel emboldened to further grind the working class and poor.

The destruction of the Soviet Union by counterrevolution in 1991-92 represented the final undoing of the Russian Revolution of October 1917. A defining event of the 20th century, the Bolshevik Revolution was the greatest victory for the toiling masses in history. For the first time ever, the programme of proletarian socialist revolution became reality. Under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky, the newly founded workers state replaced the class dictatorship of capital with the dictatorship of the proletariat, in the form of a government based on workers and peasants soviets (councils). The revolutionary government was a beacon of liberation: it decreed land to the peasants; pulled Russia out of



LY Leonidov

Lenin and Trotsky (centre), co-leaders of the 1917 October Revolution.

betrayals of the working class and minorities at home — from strikebreaking to "virginity tests" for Asian women entering Britain, to sending British imperialist troops to Northern Ireland and presiding over the bloody partition of India.

### Workers Power: defined by the "Russian Question"

In the post-Soviet world, the minority acknowledges some of the impact of capitalist counterrevolution, saying it allowed the imperialists to "offset structural crises of capitalism", but does not acknowledge its own *support* for it. Nor does any side own up to what Workers Power's political past actually contributed to: *counterrevolution in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe was a defeat of historic proportions for the working and oppressed people of the entire world*. In the former Soviet Union alone, from 1991 to 1997 gross domestic product fell by over 80 per cent; even according to official statistics, capital investment dropped by more than 90 per cent. By the middle of the 1990s, 40 per cent of the Russian population was living below the official poverty line and a further 36 per cent only slightly above it. Millions were starving; unemployment was massive; life expectancy plummeted and life for women was dramatically altered for the worse. This was the culmination of a tide of counterrevolution that swept the former deformed workers states in Eastern Europe and led to the capitalist reunification of Germany in 1990. The net result was that US imperialism's domination of the world was greatly enhanced. Its military strength far outstrips that of its imperialist rivals and

the imperialist war; abolished laws discriminating against women and homosexuals and recognised the right of self-determination for oppressed peoples. It set about organising a planned economy based on collectivised production and planning according to need — for jobs, housing, healthcare and education.

Under tremendously difficult conditions imposed by imperialist encirclement, extreme poverty, scarcity and social backwardness, a bureaucracy developed around JV Stalin. The proletariat, particularly its vanguard, had been decimated by the imperialist war of 1914-18 followed by the civil war of 1918-20 against internal counterrevolutionary forces that were backed by invading armies of no less than 14 capitalist countries. The Bolshevik programme was premised on the idea that a successful proletarian revolution in an advanced capitalist country was needed to aid the Soviet workers state and the defeat of the German revolution in 1923 was a critical factor in the degeneration of the Soviet state. The Stalinist bureaucracy usurped political power in 1923-24. This was a political counterrevolution, later adopting the nationalist dogma that "socialism" could be built in one country — a repudiation of the Marxist understanding, upheld by the Bolshevik Party under Lenin and Trotsky, that socialism is a classless society based on the abolition of scarcity and creation of abundance, requiring an international division of labour, which in turn means it requires proletarian revolution in several advanced capitalist countries.

Trotsky and the Left Opposition which he led were the foremost fighters

against the degeneration of the workers state under Stalin and his henchmen. But throughout his life Trotsky simultaneously insisted on unconditional defence of the Soviet Union, which remained a workers state based on the planned, collectivised economy. Defending the workers state which embodied these gains was a precondition for ousting the bureaucracy through a proletarian political revolution. As he wrote in *The Class Nature of the Soviet State*, published in 1933:

"Every political tendency that waves its hand hopelessly at the Soviet Union, under the pretext of its 'non-proletarian' character, runs the risk of becoming the passive instrument of imperialism. And from our standpoint, of course, the tragic possibility is not excluded that the first workers' state weakened by its bureaucracy will fall under the joint blows of its internal and external enemies. But in the event of this worst possible variant, a tremendous significance for the subsequent course of the revolutionary struggle will be borne by the question: *Where* are those guilty for the catastrophe? Not the slightest taint of guilt must fall upon the revolutionary internationalists. In the hour of mortal danger they must remain on the last barricade."

The ICL upholds the Trotskyist programme as outlined here and, as revolutionary internationalists, we did our duty and remained on the last barricade. We fought against counterrevolution with all the resources at our disposal. While the SWP, Workers Power and sundry other pseudo-Trotskyists were rejoicing for Yeltsin and the supposed triumph of "democracy", our comrades in Moscow mass distributed a leaflet dated 27 August 1991 that headlined: "Soviet Workers: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!" and said:

"Workers and soldiers soviets (councils) must orient to defeating the counterrevolutionary Yeltsin regime and establishing a government based on soviet democracy such as was established by the October Revolution of 1917. In this hour of dire need more than ever, the key to successful defense of the Soviet proletariat is the forging of a new, authentically communist vanguard party of the working class. Return to the road of Lenin and Trotsky!"

— reprinted in Spartacist pamphlet, *How the Soviet Workers State was Strangled*, 1993

Workers Power's track record on the "Russian Question" makes them not-so-passive instruments of imperialism. This organisation originated in the mid-1970s as a left split from Tony Cliff's International Socialists (now the SWP). They formally moved to the left and rejected Cliff's "state capitalism" which was a cowardly renunciation of the Trotskyist programme of defence of the Soviet Union. Workers Power acknowledged the Soviet Union was a workers state and formally adopted a defensive position towards it. This important step was taken in the face of intense anti-Soviet hysteria whipped up by the imperialists over the Soviet army intervention into Afghanistan in December 1979. On the invitation of the Afghan government, the Red Army fought against anti-communist Islamic-fundamentalist forces that were massively backed by the CIA and British imperialism (creating the Frankenstein's monster of al-Qaeda today). We said forthrightly, "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!" and "Extend the gains of the October Revolution to the Afghan peoples!"

Unlike the rest of the Labourite left, Workers Power did not call for withdrawal of Soviet troops. But Afghanistan posed point-blank the "Russian Question", the question of revolution and under pressure of the Cold War Workers Power waffled. They never

*continued on page 9*



**Defend Canadian public workers and British lecturers unions!**

**Defend the Palestinians!**

## Zionist backlash over "boycott Israel"

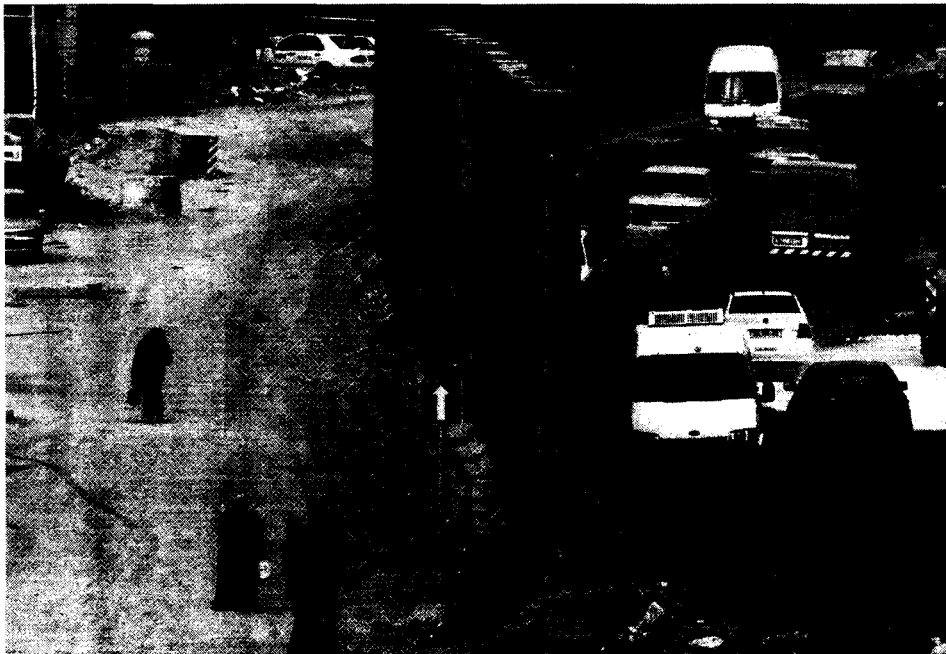
We reprint below a *Spartacist Canada* supplement, written by our comrades of the Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste, defending the Ontario division of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) against the pro-Zionist backlash which met the trade union's call for Palestinian national rights and the boycott of Israel.

In Britain there has been a well-publicised campaign for boycotts of Israel within the university unions sparked by a letter in 2002 to the *Guardian* by Stephen Rose, professor of biology at the Open University, arguing for a moratorium on European funding of Israeli research. The Association of University Teachers (AUT) and the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education (NATFHE), which have recently amalgamated into the University and College Union (UCU), had adopted various boycott resolutions. This has ranged from the boycott of two Israeli universities, Bar-Ilan and Haifa, (the AUT) to the boycott of Israeli universities and academics who would not dissociate themselves from Israel's policies (NATFHE). For protesting the Israeli Zionist state's crimes against the Palestinian people, the unions and their officials were subject to a campaign from worldwide Zionist groups and their supporters, smearing them as "anti-Semitic", a favourite tactic of the Zionists. According to *Socialist Worker*, AUT union member, Sue Blackwell of Birmingham University, who proposed the original boycott motion in her union, even received death threats.

The vicious Zionist backlash launched against the boycott campaign included the threatening of the AUT with legal action by Haifa University, before this boycott was overturned, and calls from the Israeli education minister for the British government to intervene against NATFHE. The campaign sent shockwaves through the Israeli parliament which called an emergency meeting to discuss the boycott plans in Britain.

The Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Group call for the defence of the UCU and other unions and organisations against the Zionist backlash and recognise that the boycott campaign is motivated out of solidarity with the oppressed Palestinians. But, as our Canadian comrades explain below, we are politically opposed to campaigns for ongoing boycotts and divestment against Israel because they are not only ineffective, but counterposed to the international working-class struggle on which the liberation of the Palestinians is premised.

We make a distinction between ongoing boycotts and temporary boycotts, such as the refusal by the organised working class internationally to handle shipments of material bound for Israel as it carries out atrocities against the Palestinians or, such as recently, against Lebanon which we would support. This would express international proletarian outrage and be a concrete act against the ability of the Zionists to wage their war. An example would be



**Palestinians in West Bank are ghettoised behind massive steel and concrete wall constructed by Zionist oppressors.**

what Terry Teague of the Sacked Liverpool Dockworkers, referring to the bombardment of Lebanon, called for when he said "If we were still working we'd have refused to touch any ship bound for Haifa while Israel were bombing innocent civilians" (*Mirror.co.uk*, 27 July).

But we do not support ongoing boycotts and open-ended divestment, sanctions and consumer boycotts against Israel, which the Sacked Liverpool Dockworkers also endorse. In a statement, they call for boycotting Israeli consumer goods. Why not call for a



**Spartacists at 22 July London demo against Zionist attack on Lebanon.**

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. If successful, it would hit the Israeli proletariat the hardest, causing

mass layoffs and weakening its social power that could and must be mobilised to defend its Palestinian brothers, and the peoples of Lebanon, and to smash the Zionist state from within through socialist revolution.

The main argument of supporters of the boycott and divestment movement, is that it helped overthrow apartheid in South Africa. It was the mass social struggles of the black and other non-white toilers, centred on the working class, which brought an end to apartheid in South Africa. The significant wage gains won by black class struggle and the instability caused by the strike movement deterred investment in South Africa. The imperialists and a section of the apartheid ruling class responded by agreeing a "power-sharing" deal with the African National Congress (ANC) to better defend capitalism in South Africa against a social revolution.

Our comrades argued that the struggle against apartheid was the struggle for socialist revolution led by the black working class in South Africa, while we were for working-class actions internationally against the apartheid rulers. For instance in September 1984, in response to strikes by the South African miners the Militant Caucus in the International Longshore and Warehouse Union, whose work was politically supported by the Spartacist League/US, issued a leaflet "LONGSHOREMEN: HOT CARGO ALL SOUTH AFRICAN SHIPPING!!" and intervened into the mobilisation of the longshoremen that resulted in their refusal to handle South African cargo on board the *Nedlloyd Kimberley* (See "The Truth About the 1984 *Nedlloyd Kimberley* Boycott", *Workers Vanguard*, no 873, 7 July).

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.

In arguing the case for the boycott, a letter sent to the *Guardian* by the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel on 30 May, stated "Collaboration with the intelligence services and the occupation regime is part of the routine work of the Israeli academy." But it is also equally the case that providing technocrats and scientists for the military, operatives for the intelligence services, bankers for Britain's financial institutions exploiting the "Third World" and intellectual justification for British imperialism is the central, routine work of British academic institutions. To take just one example of a British university: the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in London was set up to train colonial administrators for the British Empire.

You only have to look at the members of the governing body of SOAS to see the bond between British academic institutions and British imperialism today. The chairman is Lady Barbara Thomas Judge who, among other things, is also the chair of the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority. Also on the board is Andrew Lloyd, a former member of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, whose CV includes Head of Post in Kosovo after the imperialist NATO war from 2000 to 2002. Then there is Lord Mayor DW Brewer, head of the City of London Corporation, a role—the SOAS website brags—concerned with "promoting the world's leading international financial centre", which we know as the centre of British imperialism.

\* \* \*

For standing in defence of Palestinian national rights, the Ontario division of the Canadian Union of Public Employees has come under furious attack from the government, media and sections of the labour bureaucracy and NDP [New Democratic Party]. Apologists for Zionist state terrorism. Others have viciously slandered the union stance as anti-Semitic. All opponents of Israel's murderous assault on Lebanon and its ongoing oppression of the Palestinian people must defend CUPE Ontario against this pro-Zionist right-wing backlash!

CUPE Ontario's late May convention, attended by 900 delegates representing 200,000 union members, unanimously adopted a resolution calling to "support the international campaign of boycott, divestment and sanctions against Israel until that state recognizes the Palestinian right to self-determination". Endorsing a July 2005 call to action by 180 Palestinian organisations, the resolution specifically demands the dismantling of the "apartheid wall" built to seal off the West Bank, as well as the right of return for all Palestinian refugees. These demands are squarely in the interests of working people

throughout the world. Unions elsewhere, including the COSATU [Congress of South African Trade Unions] labour federation in South Africa, have now raised similar calls.

CUPE Ontario's stance slammed into a ramped-up "war on terror" that targets the Muslim population for state repression, as well as the Harper government's hardline support for Israel. Canada was the first country to cut off aid to the Palestinian Authority following the election of Hamas earlier this year, acting even before the United States, Ottawa's senior partner and Israel's chief paymaster. Harper has obscenely described the death and destruction raining down on Lebanon as a "measured" response by Israel.

CUPE Ontario's call for active labour support to Palestinian national rights marks a break with the pro-Zionist consensus that has historically dominated in the Canadian labour bureaucracy and especially the NDP. Some unions, notably the Steelworkers Toronto Area Council, have defended CUPE Ontario against the right-wing onslaught. But in the main, the labour misleaders have distanced themselves from or actively oppose CUPE Ontario's stance. Among the most vile is New Democrat MP Pat Martin, who raved in a letter to the rabidly Zionist *National Post* (5 June) that "the state of Israel deserves the support of the international labour movement.... As a trade unionist and an NDP MP, I do not want to be associated in any way with the Ontario CUPE resolution."

Both the national and BC [British Columbia] CUPE leaderships have made clear that they disagree with the CUPE Ontario resolution. The president of CUPE Local 2063 led a pro-Zionist picket of the union's Toronto offices. It has been widely reported that a member of the University of Toronto teaching

Seeking to line up the working class behind the bourgeoisie's anti-Palestinian backlash, this labour traitor reserves his ire for "the election of the terrorist organization Hamas".

Contrary to Hargrove's whitewash, Israel's "disengagement" from Gaza, combined with the wall sealing off the West Bank, has allowed the Zionist rulers to even more effectively strangle the Palestinian population economically while giving the army a freer hand for military terror. Gaza is little more than a concentration camp: an impoverished, devastated strip where 1.4 million Palestinians are trapped, surrounded by the sea, an electrified fence and a wall sealing its border with Egypt.

Relentless state terror and devastation by Israel have long been visited upon the Palestinians. Combined with the political bankruptcy of Palestinian nationalism, exemplified by the ignominious 1993 Oslo deal between the Palestine Liberation Organization and Israel, this has driven much of the Palestinian people into the arms of the reactionary, anti-woman and anti-Semitic outfit Hamas. The latter's electoral victory was met with a starvation embargo. Now, with their imprisonment of much of the Palestinian cabinet, the Zionist rulers, like their US patrons, are asserting their "right" to carry out "regime change" against any Palestinian government not to their liking. **Down with the starvation embargo! No US/Canadian aid to Israel! Free the Hamas ministers, legislators and other victims of Zionist repression! Israel out of Lebanon, Gaza, the West Bank and all the Occupied Territories!**

### Boycotts, divestment and the class struggle

To his credit, CUPE Ontario president Sid Ryan has refused to buckle in



March 2002: Palestinians rounded up as Zionist war machine reoccupies West Bank.

merely ineffective: it is counterposed to the only road to social and national liberation for the oppressed Palestinians, which lies through the *class struggle* of the international proletariat.

The CUPE Ontario resolution appeals to "international law", ie, the United Nations. A CUPE Ontario call to join a 12 August protest at the Israeli consulate prominently includes the slogan "Support UN Peacekeeping". And in a 31 July letter to Stephen Harper, Sid Ryan calls for the Canadian government to stop backing Israel and return to "the proud history and tradition of Canada's role as an international peacekeeper".

The UN and the Canadian imperialist rulers are not and have never been "peacekeepers"! From the 1950-53 Korean War to the starvation sanctions that killed 1.5 million Iraqis, the UN has acted as a tool of imperialist predation around the world. It was the UN that disarmed Palestinian fighters during Lebanon's 1975-90 civil war, setting up the 1982 massacre of 2000 civilians in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps by Christian rightist forces directed by Israeli troops under the leadership of Ariel Sharon. Under successive Liberal and Tory governments, Canadian UN troops have for decades acted as border guards for the Zionist rulers, including today in south Lebanon. Against the current Israeli attack on Lebanon, we stand in military defence of Hezbollah without giving that reactionary fundamentalist outfit any political support whatsoever. **No to UN intervention!**

Campaigns for divestment and sanctions sow illusions that pressuring the Canadian government, corporations and campus administrations will produce a more benevolent policy toward the Palestinians. This is often promoted as a "peaceful" alternative to military defence of the Palestinians against Israel's rampage. What is urgently needed is the mobilisation of the working class in this country (and in the US and elsewhere) in concrete acts of solidarity with the besieged Palestinian and Lebanese masses—for example, refusing to handle military goods to Israel and organising material aid to the Palestinians.

This perspective can only be realised by mobilising workers *against* their own rulers, not by fostering illusions in the supposed benevolence of the imperialist state. While defending CUPE Ontario against the Zionist hysteria, reformist left groups like the International Socialists (IS) and Communist Party (CP) have uncritically backed the calls for sanctions and

divestment. This reflects their own dead-end stance of pushing the Canadian rulers to take a stand against their senior partners in Washington. Typical is a 15 July statement by the Canadian Peace Alliance, whose steering committee includes IS and CP supporters, demanding "in the name of humanitarianism and Canada's historic diplomatic role that our government reverse its shameful support for US and Israeli aggression".

As revolutionary Marxists, we advance the perspective of a socialist federation of the Near East. That requires struggle by the Arab, Hebrew-speaking and other working classes of the region to smash the Zionist state and the despotic regimes in the surrounding Arab countries. We defend the Palestinians in their struggle against Zionist rampage and occupation. However, as long as the conflict remains one of nation against nation, the Palestinians can only lose out to the heavily armed (including with nuclear weapons) and more technologically advanced Zionist state.

At bottom, the Israeli/Palestinian conflict is one of interpenetrated peoples, two populations laying claim to the same small piece of land. There can be no equitable resolution to the conflicting national claims of the Palestinians and Hebrew-speaking people under capitalism. It is necessary to break the Hebrew-speaking proletariat from Zionist chauvinism and the Palestinians from Arab nationalism and Islamic fundamentalism. That requires the construction of Leninist-Trotskyist parties committed to the overthrow of capitalist rule in Israel and throughout the region. We have no illusions that this will be an easy task. Winning the Hebrew-speaking proletariat to champion defence of the Palestinians will likely require a historic event like the victory of social revolution in another country in the Near East extending a hand of proletarian internationalism to the Israeli workers.

From North America to the Near East, a *class* axis of struggle is desperately needed. Here in Canada, we fight to break the working class from the grip of the pro-capitalist NDP and labour bureaucracy, winning it to champion the cause of the oppressed—from the Palestinians abroad to immigrants, Native people and the Québécois at home. In the fight to forge a revolutionary workers party, the proletariat will become conscious of its power as a class to sweep away the rapacious, war-mad capitalist system through socialist revolution. ■



London, 29 July: Demonstration against Israeli assault on Lebanon organised by Stop the War Coalition. Calls to "boycott Israel" dovetail with appeals to British imperialism/UN to intervene.

assistants Local 3902 is preparing a lawsuit against the union, attacking its right to defend causes that are "irrelevant" to its members' interests. This is a frontal attack on the right of the labour movement to champion causes on behalf of the oppressed and an open invitation to union-busting by the capitalist state. **Defeat the Zionist backlash—Defend union rights!**

Also joining the chorus against CUPE Ontario is Canadian Auto Workers president Buzz Hargrove. While denouncing CUPE Ontario's "finger-pointing and boycotts", Hargrove salutes Israel's rulers—including war criminal Ariel Sharon, who he calls a "brave leader"—for making "genuine progress" by pulling out of Gaza last year (*Toronto Star*, 5 June).

the face of the pro-Zionist barrage. He told one reporter, "I come out of Ireland and know about the right to self-determination. You can't have self-determination without a viable state." Indeed, there are many parallels between Israel's oppression of the Palestinians and the long history of Britain's suppression of Irish national rights.

As defenders of the Palestinian people and opponents of Israel's blitzkrieg in Lebanon, the Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste stands with CUPE Ontario against the Zionist-orchestrated anti-union offensive. At the same time, we oppose the political strategy of calling for boycotts, divestment and sanctions against Israel promoted by the CUPE Ontario resolution. Such a strategy is not

# Lebanon...

(Continued from page 1)

denounced Hezbollah for “provoking” Israel, have backtracked in the face of growing popular support for Hezbollah. Gratifying though it may have been to see Hezbollah hold out against the Israeli war machine, there must be no illusions that Hezbollah is anything other than a reactionary fundamentalist movement. Hezbollah represents a deadly danger, especially for women, secular Muslims and Christians.

As they carried out their slaughter in Lebanon, the Zionist rulers continued their campaign of repression and murder in the Occupied Territories. Nearly 200 Palestinians have been killed since late June, when militants seized an Israeli soldier. Dozens of Palestinian legislative and government officials from Hamas remain in Israeli prisons, while several imperialist powers, as well as Israel, have continued their embargo of the Palestinians as punishment for the election of a Hamas government in January. **Defend the Palestinian people! Down with the embargo! All Israeli troops and settlers out of the Occupied Territories—Gaza, the West Bank, East Jerusalem, the Golan Heights!**

The International Communist League has intervened in protests against Israel’s offensive in cities in Europe, the US, Canada and Australia, putting forward our perspective for proletarian internationalist defence of the Palestinians and the peoples of Lebanon and for a socialist federation of the Near East. Our comrades underlined our opposition to any imperialist military force being sent into Lebanon, whether under the banner of NATO, the UN or some other “multinational” force. The true enemy of the working people, minorities and the oppressed in Britain is the British capitalist class; our perspective is for socialist revolution to overthrow their class rule. In contrast, pseudo-Marxist groups issued groveling appeals to the imperialists—either their “own” governments or the UN—to intervene into Lebanon or to pressure Washington to pressure Tel Aviv into a ceasefire. And now they’re getting the “ceasefire” they called for, in the form of the biggest “peacekeeping” force in the EU’s history.

In Britain, Lindsey German of the Stop the War Coalition (StWC) and the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), signed a letter circulated by the StWC. Addressed to Tony Blair—*butcher of Iraq*—it declares: “We are dismayed that the British government, almost alone in the world, is not calling for a ceasefire” while complaining of the British government’s “total subservience to the foreign policy of the US administration” and the fact that: “our country is being humiliated.... We therefore call on the government to change its position and join the vast majority of the world’s states, the UN secretary-general and the Archbishop of Canterbury in calling for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire....” Then, shortly after the UN-brokered ceasefire went into effect, the StWC cancelled a 19 August London demonstration. For the StWC there was nothing left to protest, even as the imperialists were gathering forces to occupy Lebanon!

The sanctimonious SWP-sponsored letter to Blair echoed the bleating of dissenting voices in Blair’s cabinet and in the Foreign Office—among whom is Jack Straw, former foreign secretary who oversaw the invasion of Iraq—that British imperialism is losing influence among its former colonies such as Egypt by being too closely identified with the US and Israel. The expressed “dismay”

of the SWP reformists stems from their programme which is to pressure British imperialism to act as a benign, “democratic” influence in the region. This flies in the face of all known history of British imperialism, not to mention its contemporary role. The present bloody mess in the Near East is the legacy of the carnage, savagery and “divide-and-rule” machinations of British imperialism when it was the dominant world power, a role later taken over by American imperialism. With the 1917 Balfour Declaration, Britain opened the door for the creation of the state of Israel which was carved out by forcibly driving the Palestinian people off their lands. The state of Iraq is an artificial creation of British imperialism following a period as colonial occupiers at the end of World War I, during which time they shelled Arabs and used aerial bombardment for the first time in history against the Kurds, to brutally suppress revolts against the occupation. Today the British Army in Northern Ireland, butchers of innocent civilians on Bloody Sunday in 1972, back the sectarian Orange state and the anti-Catholic Loyalist paramilitaries, about which the StWC is silent. The SWP’s reformist appeals to the British capitalist rulers only serve to bind the working class more closely to its “own” bourgeoisie, the class enemy. This is counterposed to our demand for class independence of the working class, which is a precondition for a genuine socialist opposition to imperialism.

## Imperialist hands off Iran!

The US seeks to build its “new Middle East” by stamping out any regime that does not bow to its dictates, and by fully backing Israel’s assaults against Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in the Occupied Territories. Decrepit British imperialism, which is unable to afford a military that can police its own investments around the world, is the most slavish and loyal supporter of US militarism abroad. The US and Britain are embroiled in bloody occupations in Afghanistan and Iraq while openly targeting Iran and Syria for “regime change”. In Iraq, the bloody US/British occupation is resulting in the deaths of thousands each month, mainly now through sectarian violence. Meanwhile, US/NATO forces continue to pound the peoples of Afghanistan, where the imperialist occupation has meant continued brutal oppression of women and tribal warfare.

With the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92, the US imperialists proclaimed a “New World Order”, and in 2001 declared an unlimited global “war on terror” as a pretext for unbridled imperialist depredation and attacks on the population at home. Washington has openly declared several countries, including the Chinese and North Korean deformed workers states, to be on its nuclear “first strike” list.

Syria and Iran, both of which support Hezbollah, have been repeatedly threatened by the US and allied imperialists. A 21 August *New Yorker* article by Seymour Hersh stated that the US and Israel had made preparations for an attack on Hezbollah well before the group abducted two Israeli soldiers on 12 July. Hersh quoted a “Middle East expert” who said, “The White House was more focused on stripping Hezbollah of its missiles, because, if there was to be a military option against Iran’s nuclear facilities, it had to get rid of the weapons that Hezbollah could use in a potential retaliation at Israel.”

In the event of an attack on Iran or Syria by the US—or by Israel acting as a proxy for the US—we would stand for the military defence of those

countries without giving an iota of political support to the Ba’athist dictatorship in Damascus or the Persian-chauvinist Shi’ite clerical regime in Tehran. The US, Britain, France and Germany are pushing for crippling UN sanctions against Iran after it ignored a 31 August deadline to give up its nuclear programme. However, it is far from guaranteed that Russia and China would vote in the UN Security Council to impose sanctions.

On 26 August, Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad announced that the country was opening a new heavy water plant, which is used to create nuclear fuel. The Iranian regime says that its development of nuclear technology is entirely for energy purposes. Regardless, what is clear is that in the face of imperialist belligerence and threats, Iran needs nuclear weapons and effective delivery systems to defend itself and deter attack. Additionally, as part of our unconditional military defence of the North Korean deformed workers state, we support that country’s development and testing of nuclear weapons and delivery systems.

## For new October Revolutions!

It is the ABC of Marxism to fight for the complete political independence of the proletariat from any and all non-proletarian forces and social classes, which certainly includes the anti-woman, anti-Semitic Hezbollah. We stood for the military defence of Hezbollah because an Israeli victory would have deepened the oppression of the Lebanese masses, strengthened the Zionists’ whip hand against the Palestinians and furthered US designs in the region.

Building on the popularity it acquired by standing up to the Israeli military onslaught, Hezbollah is today taking the lead in rebuilding southern Lebanon and in providing relief. But Hezbollah’s increasing authority represents a dire threat to women, Christians, the Druze, Sunnis and also Shi’ites deemed by Hezbollah to be “non-believers”. Far from an expression of “anti-imperialism”, the rise of Islamic mass movements reflects despair in the face of brutal oppression. Their increased popularity is the reactionary product of the political bankruptcy of nationalism, the absence of a communist alternative, and of the historic betrayals by the Stalinist parties that tailed and capitulated to them. In the 1950s, Communist parties in Iran and Iraq attracted mass support based on their association with the 1917 October Revolution, which overturned capitalist rule in Russia. But the Stalinists betrayed the aspirations of their supporters, derailing potentially revolutionary situations by supporting bourgeois nationalists like Nasser in Egypt, Mossadeq in Iran, and Qasim in Iraq (see “Near East, 1950s—Permanent Revolution vs. Bourgeois Nationalism”, *Workers Vanguard* nos 740 and 741, 25 August and 8 September 2000). Throughout the Cold War, the US and British imperialists manipulated and cynically reinforced religious fundamentalism as an organised force against Communism, most clearly expressed in the billions funnelled to arm and train *mujahedin* reactionaries fighting Soviet forces in Afghanistan in the 1980s.

The Respect coalition, which repudiates the struggle for socialist revolution in Britain and elsewhere, can only offer capitalist “solutions”, which proves their utter political bankruptcy. George Galloway, the Respect MP, laid out such

a scenario in the *Guardian* (31 August):

“A comprehensive settlement now would of course look much like it has for decades: Israeli withdrawal from land occupied in 1967; respect for the legal rights of Palestinian refugees to return; the emergence of a real Palestinian state with east Jerusalem as its capital—a contiguous state with an Arab border, with no Zionist settlements and military roads, and with internationally guaranteed Palestinian control over its land, air, sea and water. In exchange there would be Arab recognition, normalisation and, in time, acceptance of Israel into the Middle East as something other than a settler garrison of the imperial west.”

Such “solutions” are illusory under capitalism and necessarily at the expense of the oppressed. The desperate situation the Palestinians face today flows from the 1993 Oslo “peace” accords brokered by US Democratic president Bill Clinton between Israel and Yasir Arafat’s Palestine Liberation Organization. The PLO agreed to police the Occupied Territories on behalf of the Zionist rulers in exchange for Palestinian “autonomy”. In the years since, the Palestinians have been partitioned into ghettos towards which exit and entry is controlled by Israeli troops. The entire West Bank is dotted by military outposts, criss-crossed by the “bypass” roads that are off limits to Palestinians. The 600-mile-long wall completes the segregation of the Palestinian West Bank population. In 2005, when Israeli settlers were pulled out of Gaza, Olmert suggested that without Israeli settlers, the army could strike even harder.

Even were the Palestinians able to achieve a statelet on the territories of the West Bank and Gaza—economically unviable and under Israeli suzerainty—this would hardly be a realisation of Palestinian self-determination. And as Israel/Palestine, the Balkans and Northern Ireland have demonstrated repeatedly, under capitalism the only possible outcome to geographically interpenetrated peoples who claim the same land is one nation on top with the others either exterminated, expelled, subjugated or some combination thereof.

What is needed in the Near East is the forging of revolutionary internationalist workers parties through irreconcilable struggle against bourgeois and petty-bourgeois nationalism and religious fundamentalism. It is capitalist rule, which fuels national, ethnic and religious divisions, that has driven the constant bloodshed in the region. There will be no equitable resolution to the conflicting claims of the peoples of the Near East until bourgeois rule is overthrown and imperialist subjugation ended. This is particularly the case for Israel/Palestine, a case of two interpenetrated peoples who lay claim to the same piece of land. Assuring the right of self-determination for both the Palestinian and Hebrew-speaking peoples requires shattering the Zionist garrison state from within through Arab/Hebrew workers revolution and the overthrow of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the bloody Ba’athist bonapartist regime in Syria and the capitalist regime in Lebanon, establishing a socialist federation of the Near East.

We reprint below a 4 August leaflet distributed by the Spartacist League/Britain.

\* \* \*

With Israeli troops poised to invade

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# Workers Power...

(Continued from page 5)

drew the key programmatic conclusion that their formal line change meant in practice: **unconditional military defence of the Soviet Union against imperialist attack and internal attempts at counter-revolution.** Despite having had a faction fight over their line change, Workers Power did not split because the left wing effectively agreed that the "Russian Question" was a tenth rate question. That meant capitulating to the right-wing faction led by Keith Hassell, a leading light in today's minority and a visceral anti-communist who called for **immediate** withdrawal of the Red Army arguing: "It simply is not true that a pro-imperialist Kabul government would necessarily be a worse political option for the Afghan masses than Stalinist occupation" (*Workers Power Internal Bulletin* no 36, February 1980). As of today, Hassell's programme for Afghanistan has been realised: Kabul has a pro-imperialist government, installed and backed by "democratic" British and US imperialist troops, under which the Afghan masses suffer untold brutality.

Workers Power's refusal to break theoretically and programmatically from their origins took them ever deeper into the camp of counterrevolution. In the early 1980s they hailed Polish Solidarność, even while acknowledging it was an openly counterrevolutionary movement backed by the Pope, arguing that it was necessary to be "with" the workers who had been driven into the arms of counterrevolution by Stalinist betrayal. By 1990, such "anti-Stalinism" led them into the infamous Yuri Butchenko affair. With Socialist Organiser (today the Alliance for Workers Liberty) Workers Power organised a British speaking tour for a fascist-connected Russian "trade unionist". Only when Butchenko appeared at a press conference as part of a witch hunt of Arthur Scargill and the National Union of Mineworkers alongside the scab leader from the coalfields, Roy Lynk, did Workers Power admit that they knew all along that Butchenko favoured capitalist restoration and that his tour was sponsored by Russian fascists. Workers Power had met with his "control", the London representative of the Russian NTS, which fought alongside the Nazis in World War II and was a creature of British and US intelligence during the Cold War. (See "Chickens come home to roost over Balkans Betrayal", *Workers Hammer* no 148, November/December 1995.)

In August 1991, Workers Power's supporters bragged about having stood on Yeltsin's barricades, in the name of supporting "democratic rights" of course. They wrote that: "No matter what the socially counterrevolutionary nature of Yeltsin's programme, no matter how many spivs and racketeers joined the barricades to defend the Russian parliament, it would be revolutionary suicide to back the coup mongers and

support the crushing of democratic rights" (*Workers Power*, September 1991).

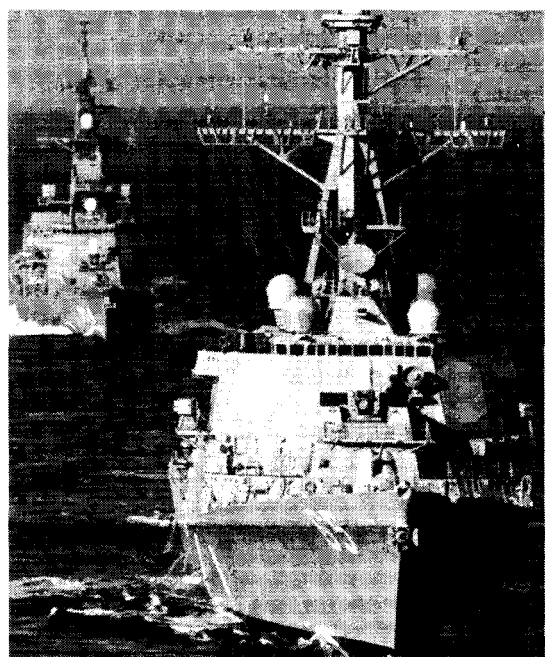
## Restoring capitalism in China without counterrevolution

Upholding Workers Power's track record of support to counterrevolution in the Soviet Union, both sides in the split reject defence of the 1949 Chinese Revolution today. The majority's perspectives document asserts that capitalism has already been restored in China, saying: "Restoration of capitalism has undoubtedly created a new bourgeois class within China but it has not yet raised itself to the level of a class for itself." It portrays this new bourgeoisie as a potential **ally** of the working class and peasants, albeit an unreliable one, saying: "Although elements within this class, especially its ideologues, will identify with and champion the cause of democratic reform, its well-grounded fear of social disorder will always ensure that it is an unreliable ally of the majority classes." It further advocates that the working class must stand at the

a 'communist' regime, the forces that will combine to launch a democratic revolution will be at least as varied and politically incoherent as any that have been seen in Eastern Europe or Central Asia. It can be guaranteed that imperialism, when it judges it appropriate, will provide support not only for reactionary neo-Confucian movements such as the Falun Gong and the 'qigong' underground societies but also for pro-capitalist 'labour' leaders and parties."

—International Perspectives of the League for the Fifth International, July 2006

Viewing China as the driving force of the "other" capitalist economies in the world, the minority declares: "The true weight for China in the world is the role it plays in pulling the rest of the world capitalist economy along" (Alternative International Perspectives proposed by the Minority Faction, now Permanent Revolution tendency, May 2006). This completely ignores the fundamental hostility of the imperialist ruling classes—centrally in the US, but also including the British bourgeoisie—to the very existence of the People's Republic of China.



US and Japanese warships on manoeuvres, December 2004. Counterrevolutionary military alliance targets Chinese deformed workers state.

head of this "democratic revolution", declaring:

"The key to the re-establishment of a revolutionary communist movement in China will be the fight for politically independent working class leadership of what will initially be democratic revolution against the party state as well as the depredations of restoration and rampant foreign owned capitalism."

What Workers Power is actually proposing here is bourgeois "democratic" counterrevolution, in the form of the proletariat and peasantry mobilised in a bloc with the Chinese bourgeoisie—behind which stands imperialism—against the Stalinist bureaucracy and the so-called "party state". To underline the point, Workers Power draws parallels with capitalist-restorationist movements in Eastern Europe, which they themselves supported, saying:

"The powerful contradictions within Chinese society will continue to mature. Because of the decades of repression under

This stems from the fact that it is a workers state created by the 1949 Chinese Revolution.

The American rulers have been trying to encircle China with military installations and last year concluded a pact with Japan to defend the capitalist bastion of Taiwan. We side militarily with China against Taiwan and its imperialist patrons; we also call for revolutionary reunification of Taiwan with China. The Pentagon is planning to neutralise China's modest nuclear arsenal in the event of a nuclear first strike by US imperialism, a strategy openly proclaimed by the Bush administration. We Trotskyists stand for the unconditional military defence of China and the other remaining deformed workers states—North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba—against imperialist attack and capitalist counterrevolution. This includes supporting China and North Korea's testing and possession of nuclear arms as a

necessary defence in the face of imperialist nuclear blackmail. It is quite revealing that in its lengthy perspectives document, the majority entirely disappears North Korea—which happens to be an immediate target of imperialist nuclear blackmail—and makes no mention of Vietnam, while Cuba is cited only as a trading partner of Venezuela.

The Chinese Revolution was led by Mao's peasant army, not by a revolutionary proletarian party and therefore the state that emerged was bureaucratically deformed from the outset. Nonetheless this was a social revolution that overthrew the rule of the Chinese capitalists and landlords, liberated China from imperialist subjugation and instituted a workers state based on a collectivised economy modelled on the USSR under Stalin. To this day, the core elements of the Chinese economy, established following the revolution, remain collectivised. Even the LFI majority admits that state-owned enterprises are dominant in the strategic industrial sectors such as steel, electric power, oil refining, etc. Workers Power "discovered" in 2000 that China had become capitalist (although they couldn't say how or when this happened) but they posited that the Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy had transformed itself wholesale into a capitalist ruling class. By investing the Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy with the power to single-handedly transform the class nature of the state, Workers Power denies Trotsky's understanding of the **contradictory** nature of the Stalinist bureaucracy, which balances between a state based on collectivised proletarian property forms and world imperialism.

Today both wings go along with the assumption that the market-oriented reforms and the volume of capital investment in China amounts to a gradual restoration of capitalism. The notion that counterrevolution has come about through incremental shifts from state ownership to private ownership, or that when 51 per cent of the formerly collectivised economy is in private hands, capitalism will have triumphed, without any need for a decisive counterrevolution, is a variety of Labourite parliamentary cretinism. It simply reverses the Labourite notion that "socialism" can be achieved through nationalisation of the "commanding heights" of the economy without any need for the proletariat to seize state power from the bourgeoisie.

Arguing against such views we wrote in "China's 'Market Reforms', a Trotskyist Analysis" (*Workers Vanguard* no 874, 4 August) "as was the case in the former Soviet Union, the decisive arena in which a capitalist counterrevolution would have to triumph is at the political level, in the conquest of **state power**, not simply through a quantitative extension of the private sector, whether domestic or foreign". The article points to the contradictions of the ruling CCP, saying:

"The ruling bureaucracy is clearly divided between elements who want the economic 'reforms' to continue unabated, those who

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**Spartacist League/Britain Forum**

**"Market reforms" exacerbate contradictions in China**

**Defend, extend the gains of the 1949 Chinese revolution!**

**For a China of workers and peasants councils in a socialist Asia!**

**2 pm, Saturday 4 November 2006**

**Room 2B, University of London Union, Malet Street, London WC1**

For more information phone 020 7281 5504 or email [WorkersHammer@compuserve.com](mailto:WorkersHammer@compuserve.com)

**Contact Addresses**

<p><b>Spartacist League/Britain</b> PO Box 42886, London N19 5WY Tel: 020 7281 5504</p>	<p><b>Spartacist Group Ireland</b> PO Box 2944, Dublin 1, Ireland Tel: 01 855 8409</p>
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**International Communist League**  
Box 7429 GPO, New York, New York 10116, USA

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# Mumia...

(Continued from page 12)

with prostitution, gambling, drugs and police payoffs, and that "Jamal had nothing to do with the shooting".

The courts have suppressed the Beverly evidence because it demonstrates that the injustice done to Mumia was not the work of one rogue cop, prosecutor or judge but the workings of a "justice" system whose purpose is to repress the working class, minorities and the poor on behalf of the capitalist ruling class. The fight to free Mumia must be waged on the basis that he is an innocent man, the victim of a political and racist frame-up. The need to mobilise around this understanding is underscored by the fact that Beverly's confession and other proof of Mumia's innocence—including the suppression and coercion of eye-witnesses by police and prosecutors and their fabrication, some two months after his arrest, of a phony "confession" by Mumia—cannot even get a hearing in the capitalist courts.

The Beverly confession has been derided by liberals like the writer Dave Lindorff and all but ignored by reformist left organisations. Many liberals object to Mumia's treatment in the courts but see it as at most an "aberration" in an otherwise fair and just legal system, and they regard the idea that the cops would frame up an innocent man as absurd. But to see that such frame-ups are routine procedure requires looking no further than a special prosecutor's report released on 19 July, which examines nearly 150 cases in which Chicago cops used electroshock, suffocation and torture to beat bogus confessions out of black "suspects". Although the Chicago report is mainly a damage-control job, it nonetheless confirms that there was widespread torture and that police brass knew about it and gave a commendation to the cops who were doing it. It was well-documented at the time of Mumia's trial that the Philly police used similar methods.

Mumia's frame-up was not only racist—it was politically driven as well. The police and FBI had Mumia in their sights since his Black Panther youth and continued their vendetta as he became known as "the voice of the voiceless" for his searing commentaries on racism, poverty and repression—a role Mumia continues to play through his writings from death row.

The three issues covered in Mumia's new brief point to the racist and political bias that saturated his trial and appeals, proving that Mumia, like Dred Scott in 1857, has no rights that a court is bound to respect. One issue is the racist bias of the late hanging judge Albert Sabo, a member of the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) who presided over Mumia's 1982 trial and again at his post-conviction (PCRA) hearings in the 1990s. The court filings highlight a 2001 affidavit of court reporter Terri Maurer-Carter, who disclosed that at the time of the trial she overheard Sabo say, "I'm going to help them fry the n-----." During the 1995 PCRA hearings, Sabo routinely quashed Mumia's subpoenas,

sustained prosecution objections and found all of Mumia's witnesses "incredible". Sabo jailed PDC attorney Rachel Wolkenstein, then a member of Mumia's legal team, and told another defence lawyer, "Counselor, justice is just an emotional feeling."

The brief also exposes the prosecutor's racist jury-rigging at the trial. Excluding black jurors was an official policy of the Philadelphia District Attorney's office, codified in a 1987 training video directing prosecutors to strike "blacks from the low-income areas" from juries because they have "a resentment for law enforcement". Statistical studies prove that this was the practice throughout the 1980s. Mumia's brief documents that for his trial "a black person's odds of being struck were *ten times* higher than someone who is white" (emphasis in original).

Mumia's third challenge strikes at the prosecution's outrageous closing argument that the jury should err on the side of convicting Mumia because he would have "appeal after appeal". This argument blatantly erased the reasonable doubt standard, telling the jury that in case of doubt they should convict Mumia. Mumia's brief also responds to the prosecution's own appeal of Judge Yohn's 2001 ruling, which seeks to reverse the overturning of Mumia's death sentence. Yohn found the sentence to be unconstitutional because the sentencing form and jury instructions did not allow jurors to freely consider all the "mitigating circumstances" weighing against a death sentence. Yet Mumia has remained on death row this entire time.

Mumia's case is what the death penalty is all about. It is a legacy of chattel slavery and the ultimate weapon in the government's arsenal of repression aimed at the working class and oppressed. The capitalist rulers want to see Mumia dead because they see in him the spectre of black revolution, a voice of defiant opposition to their system of racist oppression. Acting as their spearhead is the FOP, which has tried to intimidate Mumia's supporters at every step.

On 19 July, the day before Mumia filed his court brief, more than 130 British lawyers released a letter to the court calling to overturn his conviction. Their letter emphasises that the courts' blatant bias against Mumia must be seen "in the light of the Katrina hurricane disaster in New Orleans, when television viewers in every country of the world witnessed an unparalleled display of racism on a massive scale, allowed (some would say enabled) by the US government". The National Lawyers Guild and the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund will be filing *amicus* (friend of court) briefs on Mumia's behalf.

The frame-up of Mumia Abu-Jamal is an object lesson in the class character of the capitalist state—centrally the cops, courts, prisons and military—which is an apparatus of violence used to preserve bourgeois rule by suppressing the working class and oppressed. An international movement of millions stayed the executioner's hand in 1995 after Mumia's first death warrant was issued. But that movement was systematically demobilised by reformist organisations that tailored their appeals to the liberal "mainstream", to those who saw in Mumia's case a "miscarriage of justice" that could be remedied if only he got a new, "fair" trial. As Rachel Wolkenstein stated earlier this year, in a talk printed in *The Fight to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal*:

"This meant tying Mumia's defense to what Democratic Party politicians would accept, like the need for a new trial to clean up the image created by Sabo's

# Workers Power...

(Continued from page 9)

want more state intervention to check the ravages of marketization and thereby stifle discontent, and others who seek a return to a bureaucratically planned economy. At some point, likely when bourgeois elements in and around the bureaucracy move to eliminate CCP political power, the multiple explosive social tensions of Chinese society will shatter the political structure of the ruling bureaucratic caste. And when that happens the fate of the most populous country on earth will be starkly posed: either proletarian political revolution to open the road to socialism or a return to capitalist enslavement and imperialist subjugation."

China today is a seething mass of discontent and protest by workers and peasants. We stand for a proletarian political revolution that would sweep away the Stalinist bureaucracy and replace it with a government based on democratically elected workers and peasants councils, under the leadership of a Leninist-Trotskyist party. But such a political revolution can only come about through unconditional military defence of the workers state against imperialist attack and attempts at capitalist restoration from within.

## For Leninist-Trotskyist parties!

It's no accident that none of the documents emanating from the split admits that capitalist counterrevolution had a tremendous, negative impact on the consciousness of political activists today. Underlying Workers Power's desperate search for "perspectives" is the fact that, like the rest of the social-democratic left, they have bought into the predominant myth that class struggle against the capitalist order is a thing of the past; the working class is irrelevant

as a factor for social change and new October Revolutions are off the historic agenda. This is what lies behind the headlong dive into the petty-bourgeois social forums and the crass adaptation to New Labour.

Recognising that this is a reactionary period is not a recipe for passivity but a guide for how to intervene in the struggles that inevitably do take place. We addressed these issues in an article on our fourth international conference, saying: "While this is a reactionary period, it is also a very contradictory one. The U.S. imperialist war against Iraq engendered the biggest demonstrations in years in North America, Europe, the Near East and many Asian countries—impelling millions of young people into political struggle—and even political strikes and labor actions against the war." At the same time we noted: "Yet the political worldview of the generation that has been politicized by hatred of 'global capitalism' and opposition to the war against Iraq is for the most part far removed from historical materialism and a proletarian perspective, and these youth confront a world in which Marxism is widely portrayed as a relic of the past" ("The Fight for Revolutionary Continuity in the Post-Soviet World", *Spartacist* [English Edition] no 58, Spring 2004). The article concluded: "What is critical is that future workers revolutions must have a Bolshevik political arsenal; their cadres must be educated in the experiences of the Bolshevik Revolution, the early Communist International, Trotsky's Fourth International and our own ICL. New gains will be won only by those who prove able to fight to defend past gains. The ICL tenaciously fights to uphold the banner of new Octobers." ■

indisputably racially biased trial and PCRA proceeding. This meant denying the truth about the capitalist state and its vendetta against black militants, the COINTELPRO targeting of Mumia, the murderous attacks on the MOVE organization.

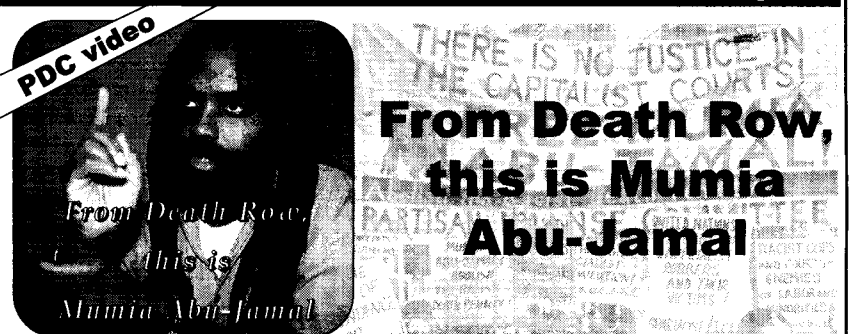
"Appealing to the 'mainstream' also meant ambiguity on the question of Mumia's innocence—on whether he lives or dies, is entombed for life or goes free—so long as there is a new trial. It meant rejecting the very reasons that millions around the globe had taken up Mumia's cause: revulsion with the injustices inherent in capitalism—poverty, racial and ethnic bias, war. There was broad identification with Mumia's fight against the 'system' and for justice for all of humanity."

Every legal remedy must be pursued on Mumia's behalf. But Mumia himself told the French Communist Party's newspaper *L'Humanité* (25 April) that he had "very little hope in a favorable

decision" by the Third Circuit court. Since first taking up Mumia's cause in 1987, the PDC has warned against any illusions in bourgeois "justice", placing *all* our faith in mobilising the social power of the working class and the oppressed in defence of Mumia. If successful, the fight for Mumia's freedom would, as Wolkenstein stated in her talk, "strike a blow against the government's 'anti-terror' campaign and the evisceration of democratic rights. It would give labor a sense of its own power. The fight for Mumia is the fight for black liberation, for the liberation of us all, part of the struggle for socialist revolution."

We must mobilise now to make Mumia's fight once again a rallying cry against racist "legal lynching", against black oppression, against government repression. *Free Mumia! Abolish the racist death penalty!* ■

## Spartacus Youth Group video showing



3.30 pm, Saturday 30 September 2006

Room B104, Main building, School of Oriental and African Studies,  
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Nearest Tube: Russell Sq. or Goudge Street

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# Lebanon...

(Continued from page 8)

southern Lebanon, relentless Zionist bombardment is turning large areas of the country into a pile of rubble and twisted metal. At least 350 civilians have been slaughtered, the country's infrastructure is in ruins, and Beirut is once again being devastated. Out of a population of less than four million, some 500,000 have been displaced. Meanwhile, the bloody Zionist rulers continue their murderous rampage against Palestinians in Gaza, pounding the densely populated strip, murdering dozens. The master-race mentality of the Zionist rulers dictates that for every Israeli killed, whether soldier or civilian, a score of Arabs must die. Behind Israel's latest harvest of blood stand the US and British imperialists, who have given Israel a green light while continuing to enforce their own savage occupation of Iraq and beating the war drums against Syria and Iran. This alone should underscore the futility of appealing to the same imperialists or the United Nations to come to the aid of Lebanon or the Palestinians. **The myriad peoples of the Near East will not know peace, prosperity or justice until bourgeois rule in the region is overthrown through a series of socialist revolutions.**

some 3000 civilians had been slaughtered — 100 per day. In the first half of this year, on average, nearly 80 civilians were killed each day. Now Blair and Bush are ratcheting up their sabre rattling against Syria and Iran, claiming they are the real powers behind Hezbollah.

In the event of an attack on Iran or Syria, whether by the US or by Israel acting as its proxy, it is the duty of the proletariat in the US, Britain and around the world to stand for the military defence of Iran and Syria, without giving political support to either the Ba'athist dictatorship in Damascus or the reactionary mullah regime in Tehran. In the face of imperialist nuclear blackmail, we say that Iran needs nuclear weapons and adequate delivery systems to defend itself and to deter an imperialist attack. Additionally, as part of our unconditional military defence of the North Korean deformed workers state, we support that country's development and testing of nuclear weapons and delivery systems. **Hands off Syria and Iran! No UN sanctions against North Korea! Britain/US out of Iraq, Afghanistan, the Near East and Central Asia!**

While the Beirut government, which came to power last year with Washington's support, appeals to the Bush administration to rein in Israel, the capitalist Democratic and Republican parties

demned Hezbollah for "adventurism" after it seized two Israeli soldiers. In the face of Israel's savage offensive, there are increasing calls for a UN "peacekeeping" presence in southern Lebanon. An undated Web statement by the US-based liberal "antiwar" outfit United for Peace and Justice demands a "Security Council resolution calling for an immediate and unconditional cease-fire" and "an end to US blocking of UN action". Beware illusions in the UN, an imperialist den of thieves and their victims.

From the Korean War to the starvation sanctions against Saddam Hussein's Iraq, the UN has acted as a tool of imperialist depredation around the world. It was the UN that disarmed Palestinian fighters during Lebanon's bloody civil war, setting up the 1982 massacre of some 2000 civilians in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps by Christian rightist forces directed by Israeli troops under the leadership of the now-comatose butcher Ariel Sharon. **No to UN intervention!**

Israel and the US state that their aim is to disarm and crush Hezbollah. This can in the end be accomplished only by the annihilation of southern Lebanon's plebeian Shi'ite population, one of the larger of the numerous mutually hostile communities in the country. Far from being a nation, Lebanon is an artificial statelet carved out of Syria by the French imperialists following World War I. The civil war that ravaged Lebanon and killed over 150,000 people represented the bloodiest expression of the intercommunal strife that has always plagued the country.

The reformist SWP prettifies the Islamic reactionaries of Hezbollah as an anti-imperialist "resistance" movement, declaring that Hezbollah drove Israel out of Lebanon in 2000 and ever since "has kept up a stance of uncompromising opposition to imperialism" (*Socialist Worker*, 5 August). Far from an opposition to imperialism, during the period of the Cold War against the Soviet Union, US imperialism (and Israel vis-à-vis Hamas) fostered the growth of Islamic reaction as a counterweight to Communism and secular nationalism. This was most clearly expressed in the billions funnelled by the US to the bloodthirsty *mujahedin* butchers fighting Soviet troops in Afghanistan in the 1980s. While the SWP openly sided with the US and British imperialists against the Soviet Union, we said: "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!" and called to extend the gains of the 1917 October Revolution to the Afghan peoples. It is an indictment of the political bankruptcy of Arab nationalism and a sign of the reactionary political climate

ushered in by the 1991-92 capitalist counterrevolution in the USSR that millions of Arabs today perceive the Islamic fundamentalists to be the best fighters against imperialism and Zionism.

Capitalist rule, which fuels national, ethnic and religious divisions, has driven the constant bloodshed that defines the Near East. As one after another "peace" plan heralds further massacre and immiseration of Palestinians, as every proclamation of "democracy" covers for bloody imperialist occupation and internecine bloodletting, it could not be clearer that there will be no equitable resolution to the conflicting claims of the peoples of the region until bourgeois rule is overthrown and imperialist subjugation ended. This is particularly the case in assuring the right of national self-determination for both the Palestinian Arab and the Hebrew-speaking peoples.

The fight for workers rule in the Near East crucially includes shattering the Zionist garrison state from within through Arab/Hebrew workers revolution. Key to this perspective is the forging of Marxist workers 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 against the Zionists, mullahs, sheikhs and all the other capitalist rulers. Such parties, sections of a reformed Trotskyist Fourth International, are essential to break the proletariat from fundamentalism and from all forms of nationalism in the struggle for a socialist federation of the Near East.

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 only be consolidated through the international extension of the revolution, particularly to the advanced, industrialised imperialist centres. Defence of those subjugated by the imperialists around the globe demands the pursuit of class struggle in the US, Britain and other imperialist centres, pointing towards a proletarian struggle for power. The Spartacist League/US, section of the International Communist League, is committed to the fight to forge a revolutionary workers party to lead the multiracial proletariat in the struggle to sweep away US imperialism through socialist revolution. The Spartacist League/Britain is dedicated to building a revolutionary workers party whose task is to lead the multiethnic proletariat here in a socialist revolution that will sweep away British imperialism. ■



New York City: Spartacists at protest against Israel's attack on Lebanon, 29 July.

Israeli Lieutenant General Dan Halutz has ominously stated that Israel would "turn back the clock in Lebanon by 20 years", a threat of total devastation recalling the 1975-90 civil war. Israel has called up thousands of reservists, having already made several incursions into southern Lebanon where they faced fierce fighting by Hezbollah forces. It is notable that amid the chauvinist frenzy whipped up by Israel's rulers, some 2000 people demonstrated in Tel Aviv on 16 July against the assault on Lebanon. As Trotskyists, we in the Spartacist League militarily defend Hezbollah against the Israeli military machine in this conflict, while maintaining our political opposition to this reactionary fundamentalist outfit. **Israel out of Lebanon, Gaza and all the Occupied Territories! Defend the Palestinian people! Down with US aid to Israel!**

Israel's latest offensive comes in the context of the murderous British and US occupation of Iraq. American and British imperialist barbarism, which includes the torture chambers of Abu Ghraib and mass murders such as in Haditha, has also stoked and unleashed an orgy of ethnic and religious bloodletting there. A recent UN report on Iraq stated that in the month of June alone

pledge their solidarity with the murderous Israeli rulers. For their part, the European imperialist powers and the United Nations debate whether or not Israel's onslaught is "excessive" or "disproportionate", and several bourgeois Arab leaders have con-

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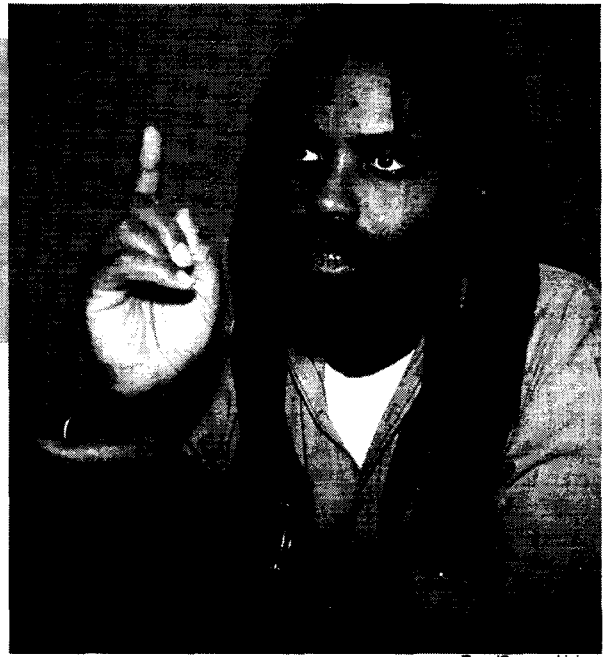
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## Freedom now for Mumia Abu-Jamal!

### New legal papers filed



Terry/Gamma-Liaison

We print below a 1 August statement issued by the Partisan Defence Committee in the US. The fight to free Mumia Abu-Jamal requires the mobilisation of millions in the US and worldwide against the racist American "justice" system and its barbaric death penalty. In Britain the Spartacist League and the Partisan Defence Committee—a class-struggle legal and social defence organisation associated with the SL—are bringing the campaign to trade unions, to anti-war protests and campuses, striving to make Mumia's case known among class-conscious workers, leftists and all those who oppose racist US and British imperialism.

In June the National Union of Journalists, which first took up Mumia's cause in 1995, issued a statement declaring that it "backs the campaign to free Mumia Abu-Jamal, an award-winning journalist and honorary member of the NUJ" and noting that Mumia was convicted of murder and sentenced to die "despite the sworn confession of Arnold Beverly admitting the murder". The refusal of the courts to hear the Beverly evidence was noted as well in statements written by the Southwark branch of UNISON, as well as the Tower Hamlets College (Poplar) branch of the college lecturers union NATFHE. Two branches of the RMT—Finsbury Park (London Underground), and the Hull Rail branch—have thus far signed the PDC's internationally distributed statement calling for Mumia's freedom. As noted in the statement below, 130 British lawyers including noted civil liberties lawyers Gareth Peirce, Ian Macdonald and Michael Mansfield wrote to the court in July calling for Mumia's con-

viction to be overturned.

On 8 July the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Group held a public meeting in London which was addressed by Rachel Wolkenstein, attorney for the PDC (US) and a former member of Mumia's legal team. The audience comprised, among others, youth who were attending forums in the area at the Socialist Workers Party's (SWP) "Marxism 2006" event, as well as trade unionists who had attended a conference nearby of UNISON's black workers section.

Wolkenstein's talk, like those she has given throughout the US and in France since last February, presented in detail the evidence of Mumia's innocence and the conscious racist frame-up by cops, courts and prosecutors, designed to uphold the capitalist rulers' interests. In response to a question from the floor about whether we should fight for a new trial, Wolkenstein said, "We cannot operate on the basis that [Mumia] will get a legal remedy absent mass mobilisation, pressure put on the courts of the only sort that the courts will listen to, which is some sort of social and class struggle."

As our leaflet for the meeting noted: "The British state may not have an official legal death penalty today, but *it kills*: Army/RUC collusion with Loyalist death squads in Northern Ireland, including in the murders of Catholic solicitors Pat Finucane and Rosemary Nelson, is not aberrant 'misconduct' but the very essence of the capitalist state's *modus operandi*." In mobilising for Mumia's freedom, we

fight to bring the understanding that his case exposes the essence of the capitalist state, which is the bourgeoisie's machinery for the violent suppression of the workers and oppressed in order to maintain their own class rule. That state machinery cannot be reformed, but must be overthrown through socialist revolution. This must be understood by those who oppose the colonial occupation of Iraq, the British government's backing for the slaughter in Lebanon, and its witch-hunt of Muslims in the "war on terror" at home. We urge all who would fight the bloody rampages of the US imperialists and their staunchest ally, Tony Blair, to unite in a battle to free Mumia, America's foremost class-war prisoner.

\* \* \*

The fight to free Mumia Abu-Jamal is at a critical juncture. A prize-winning journalist, former Black Panther Party spokesman, supporter of the MOVE organisation and defiant opponent of racist state terror, Mumia was railroaded to death row in 1982 on false charges of killing Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner. On 20 July, Mumia filed his opening legal brief in the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit in Philadelphia, which last December put his case on a "fast track" for decision. The forces of the capitalist state have long been determined to carry out Mumia's legal lynching as a warning to those who

challenge racist cop repression, to fighters against US imperialist depredations, to workers who stand up for their rights on the picket lines. The Partisan Defence Committee—a legal and social defence organisation associated with the Marxist Spartacist League—calls on all opponents of racist injustice, and in particular the labour movement, to mobilise for *freedom now* for Mumia!

Mumia's life is in grave danger. The court is expected to rule in a matter of months whether he will live, die or have further legal proceedings. Both Mumia and the prosecution are appealing a 2001 ruling by US District Court judge William Yohn, who overturned Mumia's death sentence but upheld every aspect of his frame-up conviction. The Third Circuit has refused to hear any evidence of Mumia's innocence and has only allowed him to challenge three of the more than two dozen constitutional violations in his case. For more than five years, state and federal courts have refused to hear the sworn confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Mumia, shot and killed Daniel Faulkner. In an affidavit reprinted in the PDC pamphlet *The Fight to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal—Mumia Is Innocent!*, Beverly says that he was hired to kill Faulkner, who was reportedly interfering

*continued on page 10*

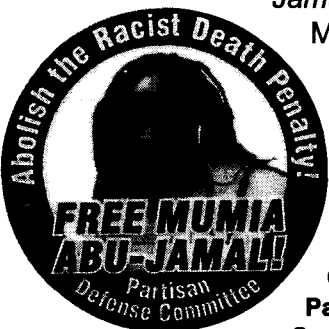
### Join the campaign to free Mumia Abu-Jamal!

#### Funds are urgently needed for legal defence!

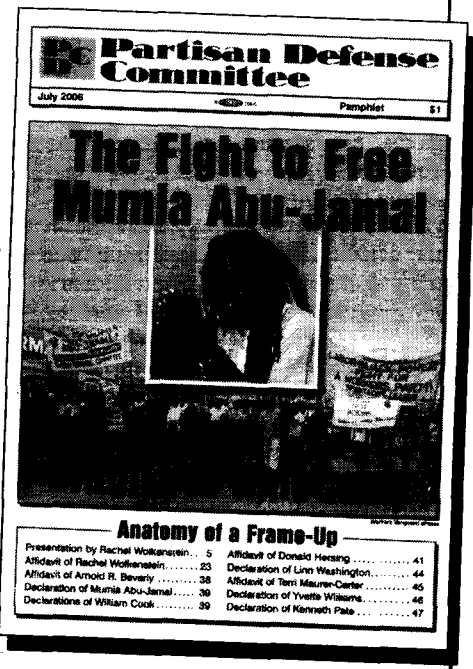
Make a contribution today, payable to Partisan Defence Committee. Write 'Jamal legal defence' on the back of the cheque and mail to the address below. Every penny of such contributions is transmitted to Mumia's legal defence team via Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal in New York.

**Organise protest!** Pass motions in your unions, campus, community and religious organisations demanding Mumia's freedom. Get your union or organisation to make a contribution and join rallies and protests for Mumia. Publicise Mumia's case in your union or organisation's newsletter.

**Spread the word!** Contact the PDC for copies of our pamphlet, *The Fight to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal—Mumia Is Innocent!* This pamphlet arms activists in the struggle for Mumia's freedom by presenting the political basis of the state vendetta against Mumia and the explosive evidence which completely destroys the more than two-decades-long frame-up of this eloquent fighter for black freedom. It is available for 70p. Get the PDC badge: "Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!" £1 each. Order the DVD made by the PDC, *From Death Row, This is Mumia Abu-Jamal*, £5 each.



Order from, make cheques payable to:  
Partisan Defence Committee, BCM Box 4986, London, WC1N 3XX.  
Contact us at: [partisandefence@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:partisandefence@yahoo.co.uk) Telephone 020 7281 5504



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