

Statement of the International Communist League

Down with the UN Starvation Blockade! Defend Iraq Against U.S. and Allied Imperialist Attack!

We print below an International Communist League statement of 23 October 2002.

U.S. imperialism is leading the world to war. Tens of thousands of American and British troops are getting positioned for a full-scale attack on Iraq, while other powers from Australia to Turkey elbow each other for a role in the slaughter and a share of the loot. The White House has already revealed plans for a post-Saddam Hussein military occupation of Iraq. Look at the war chest of nuclear weapons the U.S. has and threatens to use today and it's clear that the fate of life on this planet is threatened by the continued existence of this imperialist order.

In the war against Iraq, the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) clearly takes a side: we stand for the military defense of Iraq without giving a milligram of political support to the Saddam Hussein regime. Hussein is a bloody oppressor of Iraqi workers, leftists, Shi'ite Muslims, the Kurdish people and others. As such, he was a close ally and client of U.S. imperialism for two decades before he made a grab for Kuwait in 1990. Now the U.S. wants a more pliant regime and tighter control of the oil spigot, not least to put economic rivals like Japan and Germany, who are more dependent on Near East oil, on rations. With its renewed saber rattling over North Korea, Washington makes clear that that country will be next on its hit list in the event of an easy win in Iraq. The fact that the imperialists have not already threatened to bomb North Korea in response to news that it may be developing a nuclear capability only underlines that nuclear weapons are the sole guarantor of a country's sovereignty in today's world. Every victory for the imperialists in their predatory wars encourages further military adventures; every setback serves to assist the struggles of working people and the oppressed.

The colossal military advantage of the United States against neocolonial Iraq—a country which has already been bled white through 12 years of UN sanctions which have killed more than 1.5 million civilians—underscores the importance of *class struggle* in the imperialist centers as the chief means to give content to the call to defend Iraq. Every strike, every labor mobilization against war plans, every mass protest against attacks on workers and minorities, every struggle against domestic repression and against attacks on civil liberties represents a dent in the imperialist war drive. To put an end to war once and for all, the capitalist system that breeds war must be swept away through a series



Workers Hammer

London, 28 September: Spartacists raise the call to defend Iraq against US/British attack, without giving an iota of political support to the Saddam Hussein regime.

of revolutions and the establishment of a rational, planned, egalitarian socialist economy on a world scale. ***Anti-imperialism abroad means class struggle at home! Defend Iraq against imperialist attack!***

The extent to which Washington's allies in the United Nations, especially Germany, have openly criticized the Bush administration's rabid provocations in the Near East is a measure of the growth of tensions among the imperialist powers in recent years. But while objecting to the rudeness of an American cowboy boot on their necks, all the subordinate imperialist states will acquiesce to the diktats of the master of capitalist ruling classes, U.S. imperialism, because they lack the might to oppose the U.S. and they want to be rewarded with at least a share of the spoils. As an official for the French oil company TotalFinaElf bluntly stated, "We want the oil and we want to be in the game of rebuilding the country. If there were a new regime and we have not been with the Americans, where will we be?"

War: The Continuation of Politics by Other Means

The American ruling class cynically manipulated the grief and horror felt by millions at the criminal and demented attack on the World Trade Center to wage war on Afghanistan. But the patriotic consensus in the U.S. is wearing thin, and elsewhere there is massive opposition to a war against Iraq. War demands civil peace, and from Los Angeles to London the imperialist warmakers are revealed as vicious domestic union-busters and strikebreakers. Declaring that a strike could "threaten national security," the Bush administration has brought down the force of the capitalist state to coerce the powerful American dockers union, the ILWU, to work under the dictates of the union-busting employers association. Across the seas, British firefighters are threatened with strikebreaking by the army. Plunging stock markets rob millions of workers of their pensions while public scandals expose insatiable corporate greed. Tens of thousands of working people, including the entire workforce at a number of Fiat plants in Italy, face a future of being chopped off like a gangrenous limb by owners seeking to protect their own profit margins amid the capitalist economic crisis. Civil liberties have been shredded and the capitalists have intensified their assault on social welfare and other gains wrested through decades of workers struggles.

Everywhere, the anti-immigrant witchhunt has been whipped up to fever pitch in an effort by the capitalist rulers to deflect working-class struggle with racism and xenophobia. The anti-immigrant hysteria provokes a tide of blood as *thousands* of desperate refugees die trying to cross the U.S. border from Mexico or to land a rickety boat in Australia or

Europe. Having brought in large numbers of immigrants when their labor was needed, in the face of recession the bourgeoisies of West Europe do not need more immigrants as a supply of cheap labor. All this shows clearly that the capitalist system is the biggest threat to working people everywhere. A decade ago, the rulers crowed about the supposed "death of communism." But capitalism has brought the world to an impasse which the Iraq war illuminates with the terrifying glare of missiles streaking across a night sky. The fight for authentic communism (not its Stalinist perversion) through the instrumentality of revolutionary workers parties is the only way forward.

In the U.S., not even dizzying flag-waving or the heavy fist of state repression has induced the masses to embrace war with Iraq. In Europe, hundreds of thousands of workers and anti-imperialist youth have demonstrated their opposition to this war. The problem is that the antiwar protests in Europe have all been channeled into a national-chauvinist direction of getting one's "own" rulers to stand up to the Americans. In the U.S., antiwar liberals and leftists bleat, "Money for jobs, not for war" and so fuel the lie that fundamental priorities of the capitalist rulers can be altered to serve the interests of working people.

The truth is that this whole capitalist system is based on the extraction of profit for the owners of the means of production through the exploitation and subjugation of the workers who produce the wealth of society. War is a concentrated expression of this, as competing capitalist ruling classes scramble to steal natural resources and to carve out new markets for export of capital and fresh sources of cheap labor. The leader of the Russian Revolution, V.I. Lenin, emphasized the difference between *bourgeois pacifism*, which lulls the masses into passivity and embellishes capitalist "democracy," and the yearning for peace by the masses. Following the outbreak of the first interimperialist world war, Lenin wrote:

"At the present time, the propaganda of peace unaccompanied by a call for revolutionary mass action can only sow illusions and demoralise the proletariat, for it makes the proletariat believe that the bourgeoisie is humane, and turns it into a plaything in the hands of the secret diplomacy of the belligerent countries. In particular, the idea of a so-called democratic peace being possible without a series of revolutions is profoundly erroneous."

—"The Conference of the R.S.D.L.P. Groups Abroad," February 1915

In wars between the imperialist predators and plunderers and their colonial and semicolonial victims, the proletariat has a side. As Lenin stressed in his 1915 pamphlet *Socialism and War*: "If tomorrow, Morocco were to declare war on France,

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Striking Miners Killed in the Service of “Black Empowerment” Elite

The following article first appeared in Workers Vanguard no. 790 1 November.

In the first two days of October, the powerful Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) called a general strike/stayaway action against the drive to privatise government assets, which has already resulted in massive job losses and hikes in payments for basic services like electricity and water. The two-day action was widely effective, with the auto and transport sectors hardest hit.

But when mine workers at the East Rand Proprietary Mines (ERPM) in Boksburg extended the strike by an extra day to protest low wages, ERPM bosses responded by threatening to terminate these striking workers if they didn't return to work by Sunday. By the time the workers returned to the mine shafts the following Monday, the company had already brought security guards to enforce a lockout. As the workers gathered to protest the lockout, the guards opened fire with shotguns, killing two and seriously wounding scores of others. One of the wounded later died in hospital. We stand in solidarity with those victimised miners and the injured, and share our grief with the families of those killed.

This coldblooded killing was an attack on the whole of the South African labour movement. Indeed, Thabo Mbeki's regime is intent on waging war against the working class and poor in order to please the white capitalist class and their senior partners on Wall Street and in the City of London. The “tripartite alliance” government led by the African National Congress (ANC)—which includes

COSATU and the thoroughly reformist South African Communist Party (SACP)—rules over the South African masses at the behest of the white bourgeoisie. Harking back to the days of outright apartheid repression, the bourgeois daily Johannesburg *Star* (9 October) aptly editorialised: “All too often we find ourselves thinking that the more things change, the more they stay the same. If ever there was cause for déjà vu, it must be the headline ‘Two Striking Miners Shot Dead’.”

In the aftermath of the strike, the ANC trotted out four top SACP ministers to attack the COSATU leadership for calling the general strike. In turn, the COSATU leadership, which is dominated by SACPers, claimed that it was the workers who had forced their hand. As the *Star* (4 October) headlined: “COSATU Chiefs Succumbed to Pressure—Union Leadership Wanted to Postpone the Strike but Were Accused of Selling Out.” The ERPM strike clearly went beyond the aims of the labour tops to simply have the workers blow off steam. The mining sector has seen a substantial amount of labour unrest in the past year, and the bureaucrats are fearful that such action could threaten “business as usual.”

The backdrop to the attack on the miners is a “black empowerment” takeover of ERPM by black capitalists who used a labour contractor to “implement inhuman working and living conditions,” as a National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) spokesman put it. Labour contractors are notoriously used to circumvent union contracts on wages, working conditions and retrenchment issues. The miners had been



**Cape Town, October 1:
Mass rally starts the
two-day nationwide
general strike/stayaway
called by COSATU
against privatisations.**

AP

protesting since early April because the bosses had planned to fire 4 000 of them, and the black elite moving in said they'd only rehire 2 800 workers.

The miners' labour struggle is particularly significant as the ANC regime moves to implement a "mining charter" that proposes a target of 26 per cent "black empowerment" in ten years' time. Through "black empowerment" moves, the bourgeois-nationalist ANC seeks to create a broader layer of black exploiters to act as a buffer between the overwhelmingly black African proletariat and the white bourgeoisie. Whatever cosmetic changes happen in the corporate boardrooms, the "new South Africa" remains a seething pit of racist rule where blacks are kept at the bottom. The murders on the picket lines are the face of what's to come.

What conditions in South Africa cry out for is the forging of a revolutionary vanguard party that acts as the tribune of the people. The combative and powerful South African working class, if it is to struggle for its own liberation against capitalist exploitation, must lead the fight against the brutal oppression of women, immigrants, the rural poor and the millions who languish in the country's destitute shantytowns.

As the largest COSATU affiliate, the NUM is a key strategic union that, with its hands on the economy's central resources of gold, diamonds, platinum, coal and electricity generation, has the social power to bring the country to a standstill. But instead of mobilising for a shutdown of all the mines and other subsidiary industries in protest against the outrageous killings of the miners, the NUM bureaucracy appealed for class peace and assured the miners' exploiters that the bureaucrats would contain any protest action and commit themselves to "negotiation." One of the miners at ERPM told *Spartacist South Africa*: "If all the mines had come to a standstill, this would have been resolved in just ten minutes." It wasn't until October 18 that the COSATU leadership, in a press statement touting its "health and safety campaign," made any mention

about the attack on the miners at ERPM. The slogan "An injury to one is an injury to all" emblazoned on COSATU banners is treated with contempt by the treacherous union tops.

The labour bureaucracy is made up of lieutenants of the capitalists whose purpose is to maintain class collaboration. In the aftermath of the killings, the SACP sent its general secretary to cool the situation down. The COSATU president and the NUM general secretary had gone to ERPM earlier for the same reason. This string of bureaucrats appealed for calm and sapped the working-class action, calling for "the law to take its course." Two security guards were arrested in order to assuage the workers' anger. But, of course, the master criminals—the owners and managers of ERPM—remain free to exploit the miners and, when they protest, to shoot them down.

As the murders at ERPM show, the battle lines are being drawn against the rising black elite—the *amabhunu amnyama*. Recently, striking municipal workers also faced cops and security goons in a struggle against a layer of black ANC councillors enforcing the privatisation of utilities supplying electricity and water. Cops and security guards are armed thugs of the state whose purpose is to protect private property. *Spartacist South Africa* says: ***Cops and security guards out of the unions!***

Outrage over the killing of the ERPM miners underscores the rapidly growing disillusionment with and hostility toward Thabo Mbeki's ANC regime. As one shop steward at ERPM told *Spartacist South Africa*: "What has changed is the jockey, but the horse remains the same." To protect jobs being shed under the guise of "black empowerment" will take a fight to unleash the social might of the unions. What is needed is a revolutionary leadership in the unions to oust the pro-capitalist leaders in COSATU, who tie the working masses to the cart of bourgeois nationalism. Break with the ANC/SACP/COSATU Alliance! We are for the construction of a Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party that fights for a socialist society where those who labour rule. ■

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or India on Britain, or Persia or China on [Tsarist] Russia, and so on, these would be 'just', and 'defensive' wars, *irrespective* of who would be the first to attack; any socialist would wish the oppressed, dependent and unequal states victory over the oppressor, slave-holding and predatory 'Great Powers.'

There are palpable opportunities to organize class-struggle opposition to imperialist war and to break the narrow nationalist and economist limits of strikes contained by labor lieutenants of the capitalist class. During the 1999 U.S./NATO war against Serbia, Italian COBAS unions organized a one-million-strong political general strike against the war. Fiat workers, who today battle plant closings in Italy, organized a campaign of material aid—a campaign which all sections of the ICL actively supported—for their class brothers and sisters at the Yugoslav Zastava car plant, which had been bombed by the imperialists. Last year, Japanese dock workers at Sasebo pointed the way forward by "hot-cargoing" (refusing to handle) Japanese military goods destined for the war in Afghanistan. Today, courageous Turkish workers at the U.S. airbase in Incirlik, which is planned to be a major launching pad for the Iraq war, threaten a strike.

What's essential is to draw a class line and unshackle the working people and anti-imperialist youth from bourgeois politicians, their agents in the trade unions and their left servants, who seek to channel justified hatred of war into illusory calls for parliamentary reforms of the profit-driven system that breeds war and, in West Europe, into support for their own national bourgeoisie against the Americans. In the heart of the imperialist beast, the Spartacist League/U.S., American section of the ICL, has pointed the way forward with revolutionary internationalist contingents in the antiwar protests. We demand: ***For class struggle against the U.S. capitalist rulers! Defend Iraq against imperialist attack! Down with the UN starvation blockade! All U.S./UN/imperialist troops out of the Persian Gulf and the Near East!***

Bush Doctrine: Nuclear Top Cops of the World

In September, the Bush administration released its "National Security Strategy," a diplomatic bombshell enshrining the principle of "pre-emptive" war, including with nuclear weapons, against anyone who steps in America's way and avowing that no power will ever catch up with the huge military advantage the U.S. has amplified since the Soviet Union was

destroyed through capitalist counterrevolution in 1991-92. (The U.S. military budget is now greater than that of the next 19 countries combined.) This threat is directed first and foremost against China, as well as against America's imperialist rivals. The new policy represents a significant shift from how America has dominated the world since it emerged triumphant over its rivals in the first and second imperialist world wars. For decades, the U.S. has wrapped its outright brigandage in the guise of "democracy" and "liberating" people from "dictatorship." The United Nations often served as the "humanitarian" fig leaf for the terror and destruction of U.S imperialism worldwide, from the 1950-53 Korean War to the starvation blockade of Iraq.

Complaints by European social democrats and fake leftists about American "unilateralism" do not represent any *class* opposition to U.S imperialism, merely the squeals of less powerful states and their apologists who want a bigger cut of the take and would prefer to be treated less rudely. Their maneuvers in the UN are essentially power plays to squeeze the U.S. a bit for their own rival national interests. Lenin called the UN's predecessor, the League of Nations, a "den of thieves," and the UN serves that purpose today: regulating global disputes within the framework determined by the most powerful imperialist powers, covering all its maneuvers as "peace" missions. Now the U.S. feels confident to drop this mask and snarl an overt "Roll over, or you could be next." And they do roll over, acquiescing to exempting the American military from international war crimes tribunals and to U.S. appeals to Iraqis to assassinate their head of state!

The White House policy change is not merely semantic nor an absence of diplomatic niceties. This is the shape of the "new world order" emerging from the demise of the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union was the homeland of the October Revolution of 1917, the world's first and, to date, only victorious workers revolution. The exploitative capitalist system was overthrown and replaced by a planned, collectivized economy. Yet in the absence of socialist revolutions in Germany and other advanced industrial countries, the young workers state remained impoverished and encircled by hostile imperialist powers, and the Soviet workers themselves were politically expropriated by a conservative bureaucratic caste, akin to the labor bureaucracy which sits atop the trade unions in capitalist countries. Leon Trotsky, co-leader with Lenin of the October Revolution, fought the bureaucratic degeneration of the Soviet Union under Stalin and struggled to return the Soviet Union to the road of revolutionary internationalism. In 1933, Trotsky called for a political revolution to oust the

bureaucracy, while continuing to insist that it was the duty of the proletariat internationally to militarily defend the world's first workers state from internal or external attempts at capitalist restoration.

Despite Stalinist deformation, the Soviet Union represented the industrial and military powerhouse for every state that overthrew capitalist rule, from Vietnam to Cuba. Without Soviet military might to stay its hand, U.S. imperialism has been riding roughshod over and expanding its military presence on every continent and on every sea. Interimperialist rivalries that were usually subordinated to the common cause of destroying the Soviet Union have now come to the fore. The re-election of German chancellor Gerhard Schröder on the basis of his anti-American stance in the Iraq conflict, the first time since the end of World War II that capitalist Germany has expressed overt opposition to a major American military-strategic policy, is one indication of the widening rift in the imperialist camp. Japan's wooing of North Korea in September in defiance of Bush's aim to starve and quarantine that "rogue state" is another. Mexican president Fox, who wants to be Bush's man in Latin America, can't even get a diplomatic crumb tossed from Washington's table for his services rendered. During the 1991 Gulf War, Germany and Japan alone paid over 25 percent of the cost of the war, with other U.S. allies (like Saudi Arabia) covering almost all of the rest. Yet Schröder vows not to pay a pfennig this time, and Japan has made clear it does not intend to contribute either. The deepening world economic recession is exacerbating tensions between the West Europeans, the United States and Japan. Economic trade wars between and within the rival blocs for larger shares of the world market will ultimately lead to military conflicts.

Today the U.S. has its sights set on holding and grabbing more of the oil wealth of the Near East, but the ultimate prize it wants is China. Emboldened by capitalist counterrevolution in the former Soviet Union, the U.S. is mounting military pressure on China—from the expansion of U.S. bases in the Philippines to new bases on the Afghan border. At the same time, the U.S. and other imperialists, as well as overseas Chinese capitalists, promote incursions of the capitalist market in "Special Economic Zones" for free-market exploitation in the heart of the Chinese deformed workers state. China is one of seven potential targets in the cross hairs of U.S. plans for a *nuclear first strike*, as laid out in the "Nuclear Posture Review" issued by the Pentagon earlier this year. Nonetheless, the miserable Beijing Stalinist bureaucracy endorsed the U.S. "war on terror" in Afghanistan. As well, elements of the bureaucracy seek to become a new capitalist ruling class, assisting the economic penetration of China by the imperialists and the overseas Chinese bourgeoisie. The terrible reversal of human progress

by every measure, from infant mortality to life expectancy to literacy, since capitalist counterrevolution in the former Soviet Union and East Europe is a warning to the Chinese working masses that a sellout to the "free world" means a free fall into capitalist exploitation and misery—and so much the more so for China, with its vast expanses of economic backwardness. The gains of the 1949 Chinese Revolution, which lifted China from the yoke of imperialist domination, ended the enslavement of women and vastly improved the conditions of life of the worker and peasant masses through the creation of a planned, collectivized economy, are at risk. We Trotskyists fight for the *unconditional military defense* of China—as well as North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba—against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution, while fighting for proletarian political revolution to oust the treacherous Stalinist bureaucracies which undermine the workers states.

The ICL threw every resource at its disposal into the fight to stop capitalist counterrevolution in the former Soviet Union, and earlier in East Germany. We sought to reimplant the authentic communism of Lenin's Bolsheviks, and to bring to the working class Trotsky's brilliant analysis of the contradictory character of the deformed workers states, in order to build revolutionary internationalist parties as the instrument to defend the old gains and conquer new ones. We did not succeed, but the bitter result of capitalism's victory—a far more dangerous world of unbridled imperialist exploitation and war—makes the struggles at hand all the more urgent and steels our resolve. In contrast, virtually the entire "left" howled along with the imperialist wolves in backing the forces of counterrevolution in the Soviet Union and the deformed workers states of East Europe. In so doing they expressed their rapprochement with their national bourgeoisies. Thus it is not surprising that, reflecting growing differences among the major capitalist powers, these "leftists" went on to act as "human rights" drummer boys for their imperialist rulers against Serbia in 1999 and today adopt an "antiwar" posture which is nothing but pink window-dressing on the national interests of their own capitalist ruling classes.

Fake Left Marches to the Beat of Their Own Capitalist Rulers

It is correct to oppose American imperialism, but to promote the idea that the European imperialists are more benevolent and progressive than their American rival is nothing but vile social-chauvinism. Yet this is precisely the counterfeit currency of the European "left." Thus the Italian Rifondazione Comunista (RC), the French Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR) and the British Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and Workers Power (WP), among a raft of

others, signed a call "To All Citizens of Europe and to All Their Representatives" which proclaims:

"Those who show solidarity with the people of Iraq have no hearing in the White House. But we do have the chance to influence European governments—many of whom have opposed the war. We call on all the European heads of state to publicly stand against this war, whether it has UN backing or not, and to demand that George Bush abandon his war plans."

What a poignant appeal to the German bourgeoisie of Auschwitz, to the French imperialists who soaked Algeria in blood, to the British who pillaged the Indian subcontinent and carved up the Near East and whose imperialist troops enforce brutal repression of the Catholics in Northern Ireland! How about today's minor players, like the Belgians, whose colonial occupation of the Congo was unrivaled in brutality, or the Dutch, who subjugated Indonesia and also engaged in an intercontinental slave trade? Let's not forget it was the Italian bourgeoisie which set up concentration camps in Libya and which used poison gas against the Ethiopian population. Moreover, this bloody colonial past paved the way for the murderous repression of dark-skinned immigrants by West Europe's rulers today, from the racist *Rasterfahndung* (a computerized system for racial profiling of mainly Muslim immigrants) in Germany to the institutionalized racist cop terror of France's "Vigipirate" campaign, Italy's drowning of boatloads of Albanian refugees, Britain's deportations of asylum-seekers, and on and on.

Perhaps the "leftist" signatories of the above-quoted statement feel their imperialist masters "owe" them one. After all, they *did* help install the reactionary governments in place across Europe. The British SWP declared itself "over the moon" when Bush's poodle Tony Blair first became prime minister. The French LCR vigorously campaigned "in the streets and at the polling booths" to "stop Le Pen" and install the right-wing Gaullist Jacques Chirac. The German Cliffite group Linksruck helped put Schröder, who seized on the Balkans War to become the first man to roll Bundeswehr tanks out of Germany since Adolf Hitler, back in office as an anti-American "peace" candidate. Italian RC leader Bertinotti talks out of the left side of his mouth about a "European general strike for peace" (conspicuously excluding the American workers), while simultaneously appealing to the European heads of state, including the right-wing, fascist-allied Berlusconi, to oppose the war. In effect, Bertinotti calls for a "strike for peace" by capitalist governments. *Proposta* and Falcemartello (the Italian offshoot of the British Grantites), nestled inside RC, refuse to take a side to *defend Iraq* and promote mobilizations against U.S. military bases in Italy without addressing Italian imperialism. Indeed, *Proposta* supported the previous RC/"Ulivo" government which invaded

Albania in 1997. In cyberspace, Workers Power and its League for a Revolutionary Communist International (LRCI) calls to "defend Iraq," but on the streets of Britain they campaigned for Tony Blair, who wages war on Iraq. Workers Power openly campaigned for the defeat of Serbia by the Kosovo Liberation Army—tool of NATO imperialism in the Balkans War—and turned up at a London demonstration which featured the call "Good luck NATO!" WP also issued the demented proclamation that "in the aftermath of NATO's victory in Kosova, a pre-revolutionary situation is maturing" ("The Fight to Overthrow Milosevic in Serbia," 11 August 1999 LRCI statement).

In Britain, the Cliffite SWP froths mightily against "Bush's war," yet it supported the entry of British imperialist troops into Northern Ireland in 1969 and still can't bring itself to call for their immediate unconditional withdrawal! While occasionally denouncing the United Nations in their newspapers, various international affiliates of the Cliff tendency make up the right wing of the antiwar movement and criminally build illusions in the UN, whose sanctions against Iraq are *a murderous act of war*. In 1990-91, the SWP built the Committee to Stop the War in the Gulf headed by Tony Benn, who supported UN sanctions. Now Linksruck has published a petition on its Web page demanding: "We appeal to the German Federal Government with much concern: To do everything possible in the framework of the UN in response to the U.S.A. to avoid the threatened war!"

In Australia, the International Socialist Organisation (ISO) announces in its 4 October issue of *Socialist Worker* that it backs the Victorian Peace Network (VPN), an antiwar confab which states, "UN resolutions on disarmament and human rights will only work if they are applied equally, without fear or favour. All the nuclear powers and all Middle East states must abolish their stocks of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons." This is an openly pro-imperialist call for the *disarmament of Iraq* in the face of impending U.S./British attack. As for the imperialists, they will only be disarmed when they are expropriated by victorious workers revolutions. Clinging to the coattails of liberals like the VPN, the ISO ends up again in the camp of the imperialists.

Similarly, the Marcyite Workers World Party (WWP) in the United States talks a little more left in its newspaper but in practice dedicates its efforts to subordinating the antiwar movement to capitalist politicians in the Democratic Party of war and racism. The WWP promotes Ramsey Clark, who was top cop under the Vietnam War administration of Lyndon Johnson and today demands that U.S. imperialism "lead us on the road to peace"!

U.S. military bases across Europe and Asia, as well as high-tech spy installations such as Australia's Pine

Gap, have become deserving targets of antiwar protests by leftists and trade unions. It would be a good thing if the U.S. were deprived of its international launching pads for war against Iraq. For all of German chancellor Schröder's electioneering against war in Iraq, it is highly unlikely that he will interfere in any way with the key American air bases and military installations across Germany which house some 70,000 American troops. What we need is not an "antiwar movement" of social-chauvinist support to one's "own" bourgeoisie, but a revolutionary proletarian and internationalist opposition to the U.S./NATO bases. The Spartakist Workers Party, German section of the ICL, calls for the immediate withdrawal of all German troops from the Balkans, Afghanistan and the Near East. And while much of the left campaigned for imperialist intervention in East Timor in 1999, the Spartacist League/Australia opposed the Australian military presence there from the outset.

The French Lutte Ouvrière (LO) group appears to have set itself apart from the swamp and even denounced "the total hypocrisy of the European states regarding the escalation of Bush's war-mongering" (*Lutte Ouvrière*, 6 September). Yet LO offers *no* perspective for any class-struggle fight against war, much less against the domestic reflection of this war drive: an escalation of police-state terror against immigrants, *sans-papiers* (undocumented immigrants) and "second generation" youth. LO has swung wildly in recent months, from grotesque support to cop "strikes" and calls for *more* cops in poor neighborhoods to opposing police brutality. Yet where LO is consistent is precisely in their steadfast refusal to fight for anything but the most narrow economic demands in the proletariat. Incredibly, in months of LO factory leaflets you can not find one word against anti-immigrant racism, but plenty of their perpetual reformist babble about "banning layoffs." Thus LO does its bit to tie workers to their exploiters with the lie that the capitalist system can somehow be regulated under a "good" government to be humane.

In Lenin's classic antiwar primer *Socialism and War*, written in 1915 in the crucible of World War I, he wrote:

"Opportunism and social-chauvinism have the same politico-ideological content—class collaboration instead of the class struggle, renunciation of revolutionary methods of struggle, helping one's 'own' government in its embarrassed situation, instead of taking advantage of these embarrassments so as to advance the revolution."

Indeed, the pseudo-Marxists' support to their own rulers as somehow more moral and humane than the American bourgeoisie is the same argument used by the German Social Democrats as "justification" for "defense of the fatherland" and voting war credits to the Kaiser in 1914. This renunciation of the funda-

mental Marxist perspective of class vs. class—encapsulated in the clarion call of the *Communist Manifesto*: "Workingmen of all countries, unite!"—impelled Lenin to rip off the dirty shirt of the Second International and build a new, Communist, Third International. The betrayal by the Social Democrats made Lenin realize that opportunism had a material base in the workers movement itself, particularly in the trade-union officialdom which tied its fortunes to the capitalist system. Lenin's greatest contribution to Marxism was his conclusion that a decisive *split* from the opportunists was the *precondition* for the proletariat to fight for its own class interests and its own class rule. Contrast this understanding with the base opportunism of groups like Peter Taaffe's Committee for a Workers International, headed by the British Socialist Party, which may occasionally make orthodox-sounding statements about capitalism being the root cause of war but is wedded to support to social democrats like the German Party of Democratic Socialism.

Lenin explains in *Socialism and War*:

"Today *unity* with the opportunists *actually* means subordinating the working class to their 'own' national bourgeoisie, and an alliance with the latter for the purpose of oppressing other nations and of fighting for dominant-nation privileges; it means *splitting* the revolutionary proletariat of all countries."

He concludes that the task at hand is:

"To rally these Marxist elements, however small their numbers may be at the outset; to reanimate, in their name, the now forgotten ideals of genuine socialism, and to call upon the workers of all lands to break with the chauvinists and rally about the old banner of Marxism—such is the task of the day."

Near East Trip Wire for World War Three

In order to fully and effectively mobilize the workers and rural toilers of Iraq against American imperialism, it is necessary that the Iraqi regime be overthrown and replaced by a government of workers and peasants councils (soviets) such as was established by the 1917 Russian Bolshevik Revolution under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky. A Leninist-Trotskyist party in Iraq today would thus seek to combine the struggle for national independence against American militarism with a social revolution against the Iraqi capitalists and landlords. Arab leaders throughout the Near East fear that a U.S. invasion of Iraq will ignite social turmoil in their own countries. Meanwhile, Israel continues to pound the Palestinians, shattering every building block of society in the Occupied Territories and posing the very real possibility of mass expulsion of the Palestinian people. It is the U.S.-led war on Iraq that would provide the "cover" for Sharon's genocidal plans. Turkey fears that the destruction of the Saddam Hussein regime could incite struggle by

the oppressed Kurdish people in Iraq—and Turkey—for their national rights. The Near East is a patchwork of artificial states whose borders were literally drawn by the imperialists to suit their colonial appetites, including control of vital oil reserves.

Imperialist domination has *reinforced* social backwardness and the brutal repression of women, of homosexuals, of national, ethnic and religious minorities in the Near East. Not least, it was U.S. imperialism's anti-Soviet "holy war" in Afghanistan in the 1980s which, along with the bankruptcy of Arab nationalism and the nationalist betrayals of the Stalinist Communist parties, helped fuel the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in the Near East. Where much of the rest of the left marched in lockstep behind the imperialists and against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, uniquely we took a side *with the Red Army* against the CIA-backed Islamic reactionaries. The Soviet presence brought the hope of liberation to the Afghan peoples, especially the women enslaved by Islamic law and the veil. We proclaimed: Hail Red Army! Extend social gains of October Revolution to Afghan peoples! We opposed Gorbachev's treacherous withdrawal from Afghanistan and presciently warned of the impulse it would give to counterrevolution, noting "It's better to fight in Afghanistan than in Moscow."

In urban centers throughout the Near East, there is a modern industrial proletariat which has the social power and class interest to transcend ethnic and religious division and sweep away the capitalist order. The task is to render the proletariat conscious of its interests, combatting all variants of nationalism, including the "progressive" nationalism of the Palestine Liberation Organization, and all manner of religious fundamentalism. The key is forging a revolutionary leadership based on Trotsky's program of permanent revolution, which teaches: "With regard to countries with a belated bourgeois development, especially the colonial and semi-colonial countries, the theory of the permanent revolution signifies that the complete and genuine solution of their tasks of achieving *democracy and national emancipation* is conceivable only through the dictatorship of the proletariat as the leaders of the subjugated nation, above all of its peasant masses" (*The Permanent Revolution*, 1929).

Trotsky stressed that "the subsequent fate of the [proletarian] dictatorship and socialism depends in the last analysis not only and not so much upon the national productive forces as upon the development

of the international socialist revolution." Today in the Near East, the struggle against imperialist war and domination and against oppressive capitalist rule by the despotic sheiks, colonels and Zionist rulers cannot be resolved within the confines of a single country. Justice for the Palestinian people, national emancipation for the Kurds, freedom from the veil and *sharia* (Islamic law) for women, require sweeping away the medieval fundamentalists in Iran and Sudan, the bloody butchers in Syria and Iraq, the reactionary monarchies in Jordan, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states, and the kill-crazy Zionist rulers of Israel. ***U.S./NATO and all imperialist forces out of the Near East! Israel out of the Occupied Territories! Defend the Palestinian people! For a Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan! For a socialist federation of the Near East!***

These struggles must be linked to the fight for socialist revolution in the advanced capitalist countries of Europe, North America and Japan. Throughout the imperialist centers, immigrant workers and their children represent a living bridge linking class struggle between the metropolis and the former colonies and linking racially oppressed immigrants to the power of the proletariat as a whole. A struggle against war and against national and racial oppression cannot be waged through the politics of compromise pushed by the social democrats, the ex-Stalinists and their so-called far-left tails. The struggle against war pre-supposes a revolutionary instrument of struggle, an internationalist Trotskyist party. This is the task to which the International Communist League is dedicated.

The vast machinery of death in the hands of the imperialists is a measure of the enormous scientific and technological progress made possible by the Industrial Revolution. Today, science and technology are centrally deployed to advance the bourgeoisie's untrammled pursuit of profit through grinding exploitation of the overwhelming mass of the world's population and threaten the very existence of human civilization. Turning science and technology to the benefit of humanity requires wresting the means of production from the hands of the capitalist imperialist rulers and creating an international planned economy. Only in this way can the needs of the billions of toilers now consigned to dreadful and stultifying poverty begin to be met and the threat of war ended once and for all. ***Only socialist revolution can end imperialist war—Reforge Trotsky's Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution!*** ■

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Immigrants...

Continued from page 16

Bongo Maffin is "justified" under the apartheid era Aliens Control Act, because "illegal immigrants had flooded the country and were impacting negatively on its resources."

For all President Thabo Mbeki's obscurantist and reactionary talk about an "African Renaissance," the new legislation is decidedly anti-African, sending a clear message to African governments that their citizens are not welcome in South Africa, legally or otherwise. The bill empowers raids in communities and workplaces and institutionalizes the identity card, or hated *dompas*. The possession of documentation guarantees nothing, as it is common for police raids to seize and destroy identity papers and to extort money from their victims. The enforcement strategy has been likened to the apartheid era Influx Controls Act, which restricted the movement of Africans out of the so-called homelands. The deportation figures for immigrants from Southern Africa are already staggering. The state "repatriated" about 24 000 people in January and February to Mozambique and Zimbabwe. The latest official composite figures available are from the year 2000 when 146 000 immigrants were deported. By contrast, the number of legal immigrants to South Africa in 1999 was less than 1 400 from all other countries.

Depredations of capitalism and imperialism inevitably mean a surge of immigration to South Africa, which is the economic hub of the continent. In a country where "official" unemployment among the African majority hovers around 50 per cent, the ANC-led regime has sought to blame "foreigners" for rising unemployment caused by mine closures and job losses due to its massive privatisation drive. The devastating HIV/AIDS pandemic, accelerated by the cruel and criminal obstructionism of the ANC/SACP regime, is straining to the breaking point the social fabric. The political climate is rife with resurgent tribalism, reflected in references to the domination of the "Xhosa nostra" and in chauvinist calls for anti-Indian pogroms, embodied in Mbongeni Ngema's "Amandiya." As we wrote in *Black History and the Class Struggle* no.12, "South Africa Powder Keg," given the massive and stark inequalities between the white capitalist class and the impoverished black African toilers, "so long as the struggle over the redistribution of the country's wealth is defined in national-ethnic terms and limited to a purely South African framework, it could well trigger race war, bloody tribalist conflict and economic collapse. Only a *proletarian internationalist* perspective, linking the reconstruction of South Africa to a world socialist revolution, can

ensure that a just and egalitarian society will be erected..."(February 1995)

Anti-Immigrant Attacks and Bourgeois Triumphalism

Anti-immigrant bigotry has come to define racist, right-wing politics from West Europe to South Africa to East Asia. In the Western countries, as much as in South Africa, many immigrants are actually refugees from imperialist wars, for example in the Balkans and Afghanistan, or from fratricidal conflicts in Africa. The South African bourgeoisie bears particular responsibility in the Congo, where, under the rubric of UN "peacekeeping," it has sought to further its aims as a regional gendarme.

Capitalism needs a bogeyman. Since the demise of the Soviet Union, the "red menace" has been largely replaced with an orchestrated hysteria against the immigrant "hordes" and in Europe and America, since September 11, against the "green menace" of Islamic fundamentalism. The ascendancy of counterrevolution in the former Soviet Union a decade ago was a monumental defeat for the international proletariat. In its wake came bourgeois triumphalism hailing the supposed "death of communism" and a reactionary social climate with a resurgence of nationalism, a sharp rise in anti-woman, anti-homosexual bigotry, fratricidal war and "ethnic cleansing" especially in Europe, but also in Africa. As we wrote in the International Communist League statement "Capitalist Europe's War on Immigrants Is a War on all Workers—Workers of the World Unite!" (*Workers Vanguard* no. 784, 12 July):

"According to its economic needs, capitalism brings into the proletariat at its bottom new sources of cheap labor, principally immigrants from poorer countries...We in the ICL fight for the unity and integrity of the working class against chauvinism and racism. The struggle in defense of immigrant labor today is a vital task for the working class as a whole. We fight for: Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! No deportations! Organize the unorganized! Cops, prison guards and security guards out of the unions! For labor/immigrant mobilizations against fascist attacks!"

Since the criminal and indefensible attack on the World Trade Centre on September 11, capitalist governments around the world, not the least South Africa, have seized upon the US-led "war on terrorism" to bolster the repressive apparatus of the state against immigrants, workers and the oppressed. In every country where we exist, the ICL has fought to expose the lie of "national unity" between workers and bosses and to rally the proletariat in class solidarity with immigrants and minorities. The "war on terrorism" is a pretext for a stepped-up offensive against the working class as a whole.

North of the Limpopo River and south of the Sahara, joblessness frequently runs as high as 70 per cent and yearly per capita income may fall to 2 865 Rands a year. AIDS is eliminating a disproportionate number of breadwinners and leaving behind an army of orphans and dependents unable to tend to fields as effectively as their parents. In the Middle Ages, the ravages of the "Black Death" (Bubonic plague) were blamed on Jews accused of poisoning wells. Then too, poor people from rural areas who flooded the cities were labelled as "misdoers." Along with Jews, they were made the scapegoats and victims of pogroms. Today, it is immigrants, and asylum-seekers who are the "misdoers" of sub-Saharan Africa—at whose feet the scourge of AIDS is falsely laid—but with a crucial difference.

Immigrant workers, including "illegal" immigrants, are not simply defenceless victims of the capitalist exploiters and their state. They are a living link between the South African proletariat and the workers throughout the region. Detainees at the Lindelani centre conducted a courageous protest against the two murders in March, which was suppressed by police lockdown. In May, the immigrant defence organisation International Organisation of Foreigners (INOF) brought out thousands to protest these murders and called for the shutting down of Lindelani. At a subsequent INOF protest, *Spartacist South Africa* salesmen saw Nigerians, Mozambicans and Zimbabweans hovering in separate clots waiting for a chance to speak, and heard appeals to Pan-African "unity." Some demonstrators lamented the non-participation of Chinese or Pakistani immigrants. Pan-Africanist rhetoric is counterpoised to an international working class fight against capitalism or any appeal to Chinese, South Asian or Arab immigrant workers. To cite one hideous historical example, the persecution and expulsion of Indians from Idi Amin's Uganda was perpetrated under the banner of "Africa for Africans." In the hands of South Africa's Mbeki, "African unity" serves the interests of the South African bourgeoisie's regional interests and also means continued domestic oppression.

At the INOF protests we have seen no representation from COSATU, a fact consistent with the perspectives of its pro-capitalist leadership. The unions should be a crucial bulwark against South Africa sliding into a vortex of racial and tribal strife and anti-immigrant racism, but this won't happen as long as it's a partner in the "tripartite alliance" government with the reformist South African Communist Party and the bourgeois-nationalist ANC. COSATU makes noises about opposing attacks on black foreigners from southern Africa and calls for an immigration policy that "reflects South Africa's democratic transition." The politically dominant

force in COSATU is the South African Communist Party whose chairman, Charles Nqakula, is the Safety and Security Minister directing the hated cops spearheading terror against immigrants.

In press statements, COSATU evinces concern for immigrant workers in mining and farming, saying that the "Department of Labour must take full responsibility to insure the enforcement of immigrant workers rights." But this is paper-thin. For example, in Gauteng in August, inspectors from the Department of Labour raided several chemical and textile plants. COSATU condemned the conditions under which the immigrant workers toiled as "tantamount to slavery" *even as they were deported*. Such actions are typical of reformist union bureaucrats, thus allowing the cruel exploitation to continue. Immigrants without papers can therefore be mercilessly exploited, which is why the fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants is all the more critical. In 1999, miners' union leaders pushed for a moratorium on hiring Mozambicans during wage negotiations. And at a COSATU Congress, a furore was raised against union caps produced in China. Such anti-Chinese diatribes are not only protectionist but anti-Communist, dovetailing with the threats of imperialism against the Chinese bureaucratically deformed workers state. The working class in South Africa and internationally should defend China against imperialist attack and internal capitalist counterrevolution. The Beijing Stalinist bureaucracy driving capitalist market restoration must be ousted through proletarian political revolution to establish a regime of workers democracy committed to proletarian internationalism and to reviving the planned economy.

On May Day, COSATU announced its launch of the "Buy South African" campaign against what it called a backdrop of "rising unemployment and poverty." This campaign pushes the lie of the essential identity of interests between the employers and the working class. Its basic premise is that consumer purchases expanding the profitability of the employers will lead to hiring of more South Africans. Such chauvinist poison only reinforces the false consciousness that non-South Africans steal "our jobs" and is an obstacle to organising immigrant workers en masse into COSATU.

Only a Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party, committed to an internationalist perspective, can effectively mobilise the workers movement and oppressed against the forces of tribalism and murderous nationalism. This requires a fight for revolutionary leadership of the trade unions, against the nationalist class collaboration with the bosses' parties. A party with a perspective of workers revolution in South Africa would militantly fight the chauvinist attacks on immigrants and seize every

such means to extend the struggle beyond the borders of the country.

Fake-left Illusions in ANC Capitalist State

The Anti-Privatisation Forum (APF) has drawn various disaffected elements behind Trevor Ngwane, an expelled ANC councillor, into struggle over basic services like electricity, housing and clean tap water. It includes pseudo-Trotskyist groupings like Keep Left!, followers of the late Tony Cliff, and the Democratic Socialist Movement (DSM), formerly known as "Militant Workers Tendency of the ANC." The APF stock in trade has been to pressure the ANC government for structural adjustments within the framework of capitalism. More recently, the APF has spouted some socialist rhetoric, denouncing the ANC government. But the APF does not address immigrant rights in its programme, despite the fact that many victims of forced removals and electricity and water cut-offs include immigrant workers.

In their publications, Keep Left! has opposed the "new racism against immigrants." In the more recent period Keep Left! has even acknowledged that this government is not acting in, but rather against the interests of workers, blacks and immigrants. The October issue of Keep Left! says the Mbeki regime "attacks the workers to please the capitalists and advance South African economy among the world's capitalists." The fact remains Keep Left! supported the bourgeois-nationalist ANC coming to power in the first place by campaigning for them in the last two general elections. And until quite recently, Keep Left! was in the SACP, a component of the Tripartite Alliance implementing capitalist austerity and racist attacks. Keep Left's attempt to distance themselves from the government parties (while burying their own track record) reflects the reality that in the unions and among the plebeian poor there is increasing disillusionment with the ANC-led government and they deem it smarter to take up a more oppositional stance. Instead of warning the African masses against support to the bourgeois-nationalist ANC and its allies when it counted (and was unpopular), now that there is widespread discontent with the arrogant Mbeki regime, the reformists too express criticism. Keep Left! are inveterate tailists whose approach of tying the working masses to the bourgeois-nationalist ANC was simply imitating the much larger SACP, which has played a more critical role in that regard.

In a similar vein, the DSM (affiliated with the Committee for a Workers International of Peter Taaffe) programme correctly calls for "an end to persecution" of immigrants and for housing, jobs and legal rights. Yet it was only in 1996 (!) after decades of so-called entryism, that the Taaffeites launched DSM after leaving the ANC, which they suddenly

discovered was a capitalist party. In addition, this outfit ardently argues that police are really "workers in uniform" and potential allies of the working class and the oppressed. A view held in common with the Cliffites. In 1993 under the government of FW de Klerk, writing as *Congress Militant*, they demanded: "Hands off Popcru!", championing the struggles of the union for police and prison guards as a question of "labour rights." They demanded that the ANC and COSATU, "defend Popcru with all of our strength. Cosatu should make Popcru a full affiliate, and pour as much resources as possible into strengthening the union" (*Congress Militant*, no. 13, September 1993). They have never renounced support to Popcru.

Political support of the cop "union" reveals the utter incapacity of the Taaffeites to recognise a central premise of Lenin's *State and Revolution*—that the workers cannot lay hold of the readymade machinery of the bourgeois state; it must be smashed by the working class and replaced by the dictatorship of the proletariat. Genuine communists know the police and security guards are the hired thugs of the bourgeoisie who break workers strikes and smash the heads of immigrants. Lindelani, the prisons, cops, courts and laws are the core of the state apparatus. Anti-immigrant racism is a key component of capitalist rule. It will take workers socialist revolution to sweep away the capitalist state and to bring an end to anti-immigrant racism. Under ANC rule, the cops, courts and military that enforced apartheid have remained intact.

Any pretence the Taaffeites might have to being any kind of "tribune of the people" is given the lie by the attitude taken by their British and Irish affiliates to the Catholic minority in Northern Ireland. Oppression of the Catholic minority is at the very foundation of the bourgeois order in Northern Ireland; it is reinforced by British imperialism and enshrined in the so-called peace deal, which rests on the British Army presence. Spartacist Group Ireland and the Spartacist League of Britain call for the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of British troops from Ireland as a necessary starting point for a proletarian revolutionary perspective. No good can come of British troops there and the British working class cannot make a revolution against their "own" capitalist rulers if they accept imperialist oppression in Ireland. The Socialist Party (Taaffeite group in Britain) refuses to oppose the British Army in Northern Ireland. The need to combat the oppression of Catholics is a critical point that Protestant workers must understand in order to fight in their own class interests. The Socialist Party in Ireland is known for defending the reactionary Protestant Orangemen's "right" to stage their anti-Catholic marches. Both Taaffeite groups have done their best to give credibility within the workers movement to Billy

Hutchinson, who is a spokesman for Loyalist death squads:

For a Socialist Federation of Southern Africa!

The nationalist ANC defends the same state borders that the British colonisers arbitrarily drew in 1910 for the old Union of South Africa—borders which have no relationship to tribal or ethnic groupings. As we noted in the pamphlet “South Africa Powder Keg:”

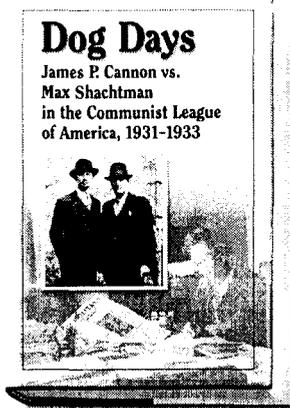
“Anglo American and the other Randlords economically dominate all of southern Africa. A large percentage of the gold miners on the Witwatersrand—a key value-producing proletariat in the region—come from *outside* the borders of South Africa, mainly from Lesotho and Mozambique. Clearly, a democratic, egalitarian and rational solution to such questions can be worked out only in the framework of a socialist federation of southern Africa....The struggle for a socialist federation of southern Africa linked to international proletarian revolution is the road to the social and economic emancipation of the continent.”

Under a revolutionary party that is armed with *the programme of permanent revolution*, the powerful South African proletariat can use its decisive social weight as the producers of wealth in society in defence of all the oppressed and exploited. The workers can place themselves at the head of a struggle to sweep away the system of capitalism and to reorganise society on a socialist basis. Socialist revolution in South Africa would not long survive without its international extension to the imperialist centres in Europe, the US and Japan. The industrial and mineral wealth of a revolutionary South Africa would not be limited to the region south of the Limpopo River, but would be used to enable the impoverished masses of all of Africa to escape famine and destitution. Thus the fight of Spartacist South Africa to forge a genuine Leninist-Trotskyist party, that would place the struggle against racism and chauvinism at the centre of the fight against capitalism, is inseparable from the struggle of the ICL to reforge an authentically Trotskyist Fourth International.

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Defend Labour! Defend Immigrants!

Down With ANC Government Anti-Immigrant Dragnet!

The following article is adapted from a presentation at University of the Witwatersrand in April to protest immigrant murders.

The poisoned fruit of neo-apartheid capitalist rule is seen in the unremitting roundup, detention, deportation and murder of immigrants and the massive obstacles thrown up to political asylum. The anti-immigrant witch-hunt starkly reveals the reactionary face of the bourgeois-nationalist African National Congress and its allies. In March, Nigerian and Malawian immigrants were killed at the Lindelani detention centre in Krugersdorp on the West Rand. Five guards beat and sjambokked them to death. Detainees said the guards responsible had taken money to release the men but brought them back to the centre instead. In April a Zimbabwean, who had fled the firebombing and looting of an "informal settlement" in Zandspruit, also died in detention at Lindelani, where he fell ill. Roundups like "Operation Crackdown" routinely target immigrants for having skin deemed "too dark" or for not speaking "South African" languages. The front page of *The Star* (5 April) carried a dramatic photo showing a documented Burundian ensnared in one such dragnet, with a caption including his plea: "Don't Send Me Back—Just Kill Me Now."

The ANC-led government orchestrates and manipulates an anti-immigrant backlash, fomenting countless attacks. There were pogromist attacks against Angolans in the Du Noon suburb in the Western Cape and Somali-owned shops in Port Elizabeth. Nor are these atrocities simply a recent phenomenon. In the late summer of 1998, a rabid mob, whipped into frenzy against "foreigners" at a rally of unemployed in Pretoria, brutally murdered three immigrants from other African countries on a commuter train. (See "South Africa: Protest Lynch Mob Murder of Immigrants", *Workers Vanguard* no. 696, 11 September 1998.) The bourgeois press feeds into rising fratricidal hatreds, as exemplified by a typical headline from *Sowetan*: "Nigerian criminals must be expelled" (4 August). Anti-immigrant racism is a timeworn method to divide the proletariat and deflect

class struggle. Spartacist South Africa stands for full citizenship rights for all who manage to cross the borders, and seeks to drive home the understanding that the source of exploitation of all labour is the capitalist system.

The South African capitalists have long exploited migrant workers, coming mostly from Mozambique, Lesotho, Zimbabwe and Swaziland, who form a strategic component of labour in the gold and diamond mines. These neighbouring countries often sheltered South African exiles during the apartheid era and identified strongly with the ANC. Following the ANC's rise to power in 1994, South Africa became a magnet for labourers and merchants from across the continent looking for jobs and shelter. Some immigrants are refugees from war and famine in places like Rwanda, Nigeria and Congo—countries where the South African bourgeoisie has sought to realise its own regional expansionist ambitions, and to act as the junior partner of Anglo-American imperialism. The ascendance of a layer of ANC politicians as black front men for white capitalist rule has facilitated South Africa's growing appetite to dominate the region.

To maintain capitalist order, the ANC increasingly relies on even the most reactionary and repressive aspects of the previous white supremacist regime. In a scene reminiscent of Nationalist Party rule, 1998 video footage showed cops from Benoni, eastern Johannesburg, laughing as they used three immigrants from Mozambique as training bait for police dogs. The essential continuity from anti-immigrant policies of the apartheid rulers and the "neo-apartheid" Tripartite Alliance is readily apparent. Thus, even the bourgeois-liberal *Mail and Guardian* (24 to 30 May) characterised the recently enacted immigration law as "just a more sophisticated version of the Aliens Control Act of 1991." In an article titled "Home Affairs denies targeting Africans" (*Sowetan*, 5 April), the deportation of Zimbabwean musician Adrian Anesu "Appleseed" Muphemhi of the highly successful

Continued on page 10