



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



AFP

Israeli missile attack on Gaza, June 10. Down with Zionist terror! Defend the Palestinians!

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

On June 4, President Bush, at a meeting with Sharon and Palestinian prime minister Mahmoud Abbas (a/k/a Abu Mazen) in Aqaba, Jordan, launched his "road map" for the (eventual) creation of a rump Palestinian "state" in (part of) the Occupied Territories. The announcement was followed by a series of Israeli military assaults, including missile strikes into densely populated Gaza City, that left 24 Palestinians dead in a single week. Supposedly aimed at heading off terror attacks by assassinating Hamas militants, the Zion-

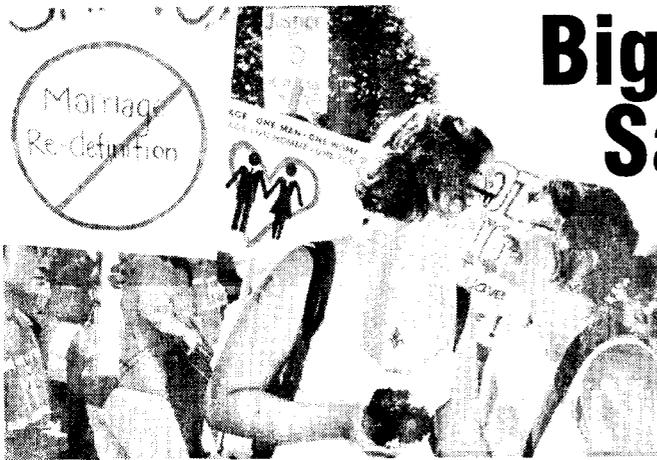
ist atrocities were in fact designed to provoke *more* suicide bombings. The Islamic fundamentalists of Hamas responded by killing 21 Israelis in the same week of bloodshed, most of them civilians criminally cut down simply because they were Israeli.

It was a similar Zionist provocation that triggered the current cycle of Israeli terror and Palestinian resistance in the fall of 2000, when Sharon marched through the Muslim holy

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Wattie/CP

Supporters of same-sex marriage staged counterprotest as religious right-wingers rallied in Ottawa, August 23.

Full Democratic Rights for Gays!

The image of Canada as a tolerant, “gay friendly” country where you can smoke pot unmolested by the cops (if you’re white) may be consoling to some, but it’s a far cry from reality. The door opened for gay couples to marry when the Ontario Court of Appeal struck down the common-law definition of matrimony in June. The B.C. Court of Appeal did likewise in July, and the federal government introduced a bill to legalize same-sex marriages. With this, a wave of bigotry against homosexuals has rolled across the country.

Deeply divided over the issue, the federal Liberals have gone all-out to prevent gay marriage being legalized. Their earlier appeal against the Ontario case stalled it in the courts for months. They are still appealing a 2002 Quebec decision in favor of gay marriage. Now they are referring their own bill to the Supreme Court to ensure it’s “constitutional,” i.e., doesn’t bar religions from viciously discriminating against gays. A revolting mélange of reactionary anti-gay, woman-hating outfits will be granted official “intervener” status in this case.

The Catholic Church is leading an all-out war on gay rights, uniting Muslim and Hindu clerics and demented right wingers. A highly inventive crackpot from “Canadians Against Same-Sex Marriage” raved, “Will it mean that if a man wants to marry his dog, he can legally? If a grandmother wants to marry her cute little grandson, can she?”

Bigots in Frenzy Over Same-Sex Marriage

(*Globe and Mail*, 25 July). In the Vatican, the Pope and High Inquisitor Ratzinger cursed same-sex marriage, calling to ban it everywhere. Priests across Canada inveighed against it from their pulpits and a Calgary bishop threatened Jean Chrétien with eternal damnation if he approved gay unions. George W. Bush intoned that gay marriages in Canada would not be recognized and threatened a constitutional amendment to bar them in the U.S.

For the bourgeoisie, marriage is “one man on one woman for life.” Period. What drives the bigots nuts is that for gays to attain marriage would give homosexuality a modicum of acceptance it now lacks. Precisely because the institution of the family is a central prop in capitalist society, the right to marry is an important *legal* right. Married couples are accorded legal, social and medical protections denied to many common-law and gay couples. These include access to your partner’s medical insurance and pension benefits, the right to choose a partner from another country and live together, the right to adopt and have some protection against the state tearing your children from you because of your sexuality. Everyone, regardless of marital status, citizenship or sexuality, should have access to things like free medical care and decent pensions. It is an indictment of this society that such things are only accorded to those who do not breach the sanctimonious “moral codes” enforced by the ruling class on the exploited and oppressed.

We communists are committed to full democratic rights for gays and we welcome any legal advances that can be wrested from this cruelly bigoted society. We oppose all the laws and conventions that discriminate against gay people, including those barring marriage. Yet the right to marry is, for gays, a paradoxical and contradictory gain. The institution of the family, held forcibly together by “holy matrimony,” is the main source of oppression for women as well as gays. The patriarchal family decreed monogamy for the woman in order to determine the inheritance of private property, ensuring a man’s wealth and property passes to his own offspring. Anti-gay bigotry flows from the stereotyping decreed by the sexual division of labor in the family and its resultant, hypocritical “morality.”

It’s more than a little ironic that as the number of “traditional” marriages falls—now only about 70 percent—gay marriage is gathering steam. In Quebec, where approval for gay marriages is highest, the marriage rate is the lowest in the country and close to 60 percent of children are born “out of wedlock.” Last year the *Globe and Mail* editorialized in favor of gay marriage, declaring that “The state’s interest is in supporting the commitment and stability, imperfect as they are, that marriages can help nurture” (30 July 2002). Others piously speak of gay monogamy and marriage “for life.” Little wonder many gay activists are deeply conflicted by the question of marriage rights. The U.S. *Advocate* captured this well:

“Within our community, many see this opening for marriage as

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Bill Logan: From Krafft-Ebing to Mother Teresa?

BT: Renegades for Hire

The following article and accompanying Editorial Statement have been reprinted from Workers Vanguard No. 807, 1 August.

Lately we have been on the receiving end of a collective howl slandering us as “chauvinists” coming from a collection of putative leftist organizations that are as disparate as they are minuscule. In the U.S., the League for the Revolutionary Party (LRP) declares that we are “Zionists” because our forthright defense of the Palestinian people against the genocidal Zionist rulers is not predicated on the elimination of the Hebrew-speaking people. Next comes the Internationalist Group (IG) raving that we are adapting to “social-chauvinism” because we speak openly about the need to combat retrograde consciousness among workers and the oppressed (see “Cynics and Demagogues: An IG Provocation,” *Workers Vanguard* No. 789, 18 October 2002). Simultaneously the IG is running an international campaign in defense of its *líder mínimo* Negrete *falsely* charging that we accused him of being an agent provocateur, i.e., a police agent. Why? Because we had the temerity to point out that their slanders of us as racists were a set-up for provocations and worse against our organization.

Now this chorus smearing us as “chauvinists” has been joined by an outfit with a pathology all its own—the International Bolshevik Tendency (BT). Offering its services to the British Socialist Workers Party (SWP) at a recent “Marxism” conference in London, the BT appeared with a leaflet smearing Jim Robertson, one of the founding leaders of our international tendency, with the charge of “vulgar chauvinism.” And no less than that, an American whose supposed “self-satisfied great-power chauvinism” is aimed at peoples from the Near East, specifically the Kurds. The BT smears Robertson with the scurrilous claim that he characterized Kurds as “turds.”

It should be noted that slanders against communist leaders are commonly flung by anti-Marxist opponents (Marx as a “chauvinist,” Lenin as a “German agent,” Trotsky as a “bloodthirsty butcher,” Cannon as a “window-smasher,” etc.). These attacks are not “personal”—they are meant as attacks on the very existence of the Marxist movement and have always rightly been viewed as such.

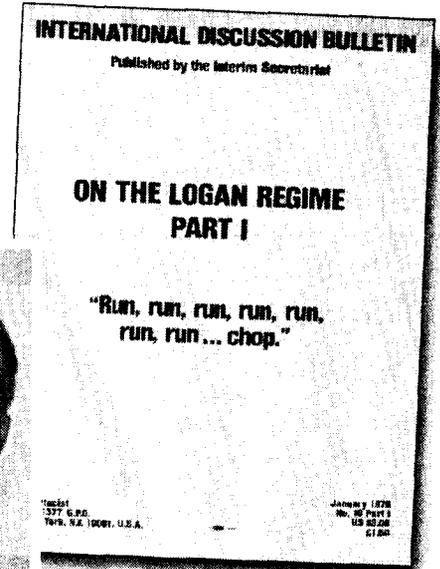
The BT’s role at “Marxism” is a case in point. The SWP seeks to salvage the “good name” of British imperialism (and above all its “honorable” Labour Party representatives) by denouncing “Bush’s war” against Iraq. The BT leaflet was an incitement for the goons and censors of the SWP, who proceeded to surround our lit table, trying to block our salespeople and threatening that if any of our people got into one of their putatively “public” forums we would be “dealt with.” And they were as good as their word. Some of our comrades who were inadvertently called on to speak had their tickets ripped up and others were barred from getting in altogether.

As millions took to the streets around the world in protest against the impending war on Iraq, ICL sections built revolutionary internationalist contingents calling for the military defense of Iraq and for mobilizing the proletariat in struggle



Workers Vanguard

Bill Logan.



against their “own” capitalist rulers. What we fought for in the antiwar movement didn’t go down well with the reformists, who were busy trying to dupe people into thinking that the war could be stopped by building the broadest possible movement, particularly by allying with the representatives and institutions of the very imperialist system that breeds war. When two of our young women comrades took the floor at an antiwar teach-in in London last February to point out that opposition to the impending war on Iraq meant opposition to the very Labour government that was prosecuting it, Chris Bambery, a lead honcho of the British SWP, threatened that anyone who didn’t politically support the Stop the War Coalition “deserves a bullet in the head.” As the Spartacist League/Britain wrote in its statement of protest (WV No. 799, 14 March): “This is the real face of the SWP’s ‘give peace a chance’ coalition-building: you’ve got to silence the reds to get workers and youth to lie down like lambs with the wolves of the Labour Party whilst they wage war on Iraq and against working people at home!”

Some years back our forthright recognition of and struggle against racial and ethnic hostilities also was met with a barrage from a rotten mélange of rat groups charging us with “racism.” As we wrote in our response, “Hate the Truth, Hate the Spartacist League: New Left Moralists’ Big Lie Campaign” (WV No. 217, 20 October 1978): “The charge of racism (like the charge of ‘cop’) is the dirtiest mud that can be slung. In this racist society it is a charge that presumes guilt until proven innocent. To reply presumably confirms that suspicion is widespread and perhaps justified. To remain silent is taken as evidence of guilt.”

As Marxists we do not pander to the national conceits or chauvinism of *any* people, but fight for the socialist emancipation of the proletariat and liberation of all the oppressed. This gets under the skin of those who are animated not by

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FTTM Excludes Trotskyists! **“Fire This Time” Feels the Heat**

Printed below is a July 22 leaflet exposing Vancouver-based Fire This Time’s cowardly exclusion of the Trotskyist League and Spartacus Youth Club from their recent public forum on Native rights. As we explain, the underlying logic of exclusion is violence. A week after we issued this statement, one of our comrades was assaulted by a supporter of the Palestine Solidarity Group, who thug-gishly rammed him during an argument that followed a PSG forum. *Down with violence and exclusion in the left and workers movement!*

Unable to answer our criticisms of their abjectly nationalist and reformist politics, the PSG and FTTM then slandered us as racist, Zionist, fascist and worse than Christian fundamentalists. Earlier, the PSG sneered at a young SYC comrade of Near Eastern descent who denounced the veil and argued for our program of women’s liberation through socialist revolution. According to these arrogant Lotus Land “radicals,” she doesn’t know what it is like to be a woman from the “Third World”! Lies, violence and just plain stupidity are the inborn reflexes of political fakers—and the PSG and FTTM have gone out of their way to prove that they are no exception.

* * *

On June 30, three supporters of the Trotskyist League and Spartacus Youth Club were barred by leaders of the Fire This Time Movement (FTTM) from a public forum on the First Nations Governance Act. Why? According to FTTM’s political police, our politics don’t accord with their vision of “community” discussion. What threw them on the defensive were our comrades’ political arguments at FTTM’s June 15 conference on the war against Iraq—chiefly our criticism of FTTM for giving left cover to the antiwar coalition, stopwar.ca. United behind Canadian nationalism, this coalition embraced everyone from mayor Larry Campbell, whose cops were busy terrorizing the Downtown Eastside, to NDP advocates of UN-sponsored “human rights” imperialism and even a federal Liberal cabinet minister.

While stopwar.ca pleaded with the Canadian capitalists to “stand up” to the U.S., the TL and SYC built Revolutionary Internationalist Contingents based on opposition to our “own” rulers. In this imperialist war of aggression against semi-colonial Iraq, *we took a side*, calling for military defense of Iraq without giving an iota of political support to the bloody Saddam Hussein regime. Given the overwhelming military force arrayed against Iraq, we emphasized that the chief means of giving content to defense of Iraq was through class struggle against the imperialist rulers, including in Canada.



SC photo

TL/SYC contingent at Vancouver antiwar demo, February 15. We fought against “unity” with pro-imperialist forces like the NDP.

The question facing antiwar activists and workers was not simply one of more militant tactics, but of the absolute necessity of getting rid of this deeply inhumane system through workers revolution—the only way to put an end to imperialist war. Warning that the class-collaborationist nationalism of stopwar.ca was counterposed to any perspective of mobilizing the working class in struggle against their own imperialist exploiters, our contingents chanted: “NDP wants billions more for Canadian military, we say not one person, not one penny for the imperialist military”; “Down with Anglo chauvinism, independence for Quebec”; and “Labor must defend immigrant rights!”

We look to the multiracial working class which has the social power to end the capitalist system of racism and war. FTTM instead sought to rope more youth and immigrants into stopwar.ca, a vehicle for Canadian nationalism and class collaboration. Following imperialism’s win in Iraq, FTTM sought to justify their strategy with absurd claims that “Vancouver effectively influenced imperialist politics. It’s undeniable that the war would have played out differently if the largest protests in history had not been occurring” (*Fire This Time*, May 2003). FTTM’s parochial visions of grandeur notwithstanding, it should be clear to all

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Join the Spartacus Youth Clubs!

The U.S. and its allies continue the bloody colonial subjugation of Iraq, which was preceded by a brutal one-sided slaughter by the world's most powerful military against a defenseless, impoverished nation. From the outset the Spartacus Youth Clubs called for class struggle against the Canadian capitalist rulers and raised the slogan "Defend Iraq against imperialist attack!" Today we say: *U.S./Canada/UN out of the Near East! Down with the colonial occupation of Iraq! All UN/Canadian troops out of Afghanistan!* During the antiwar protests, the SYC helped to build Revolutionary Internationalist Contingents that sharply opposed the nationalist pacifism promoted by the mainstream of the movement. We also stood out for our opposition to Zionist terror against the Palestinians and our defense of the remaining deformed workers states, raising the slogan: "Defend North Korea's right to nuclear weapons!"

During the antiwar movement we sought to expose the fraud of Canada's supposed antiwar stance. Far from being opposed to the slaughter of Iraqis, the Canadian bourgeoisie sent vessels to the Persian Gulf to escort American warships, embedded Canadian troops in the American and British army units and dispatched "peacekeepers" to Afghanistan to free up American soldiers for the occupation of Iraq. The role of the NDP during the antiwar movement was to promote the lie that Canada's rulers were opposed to the war, and to direct youthful opposition to the war into parliamentary channels. Reformist left groups like the International Socialists and the Communist Party praised the pro-imperialist NDP's "antiwar" stance, while holding vigils for "peace" and pleading: "War is not the answer."

But the myth preached by the reformist and bourgeois organizers of antiwar protests that we could "stop the war" by building the broadest movement possible was shown to be a treacherous lie, as the biggest antiwar demonstrations in history had no effect whatsoever on the rapacious American ruling class and their imperialist allies. The truth is that war is not a question of bad policy, but is in fact endemic to capitalism. Thus, we insisted that the struggle against war cannot be separated from the struggle against the capitalist system that breeds war. Our answer is *class war* to end a system that is premised on brutal exploitation, oppression and war.

Many youth repelled by the pacifism of the mainstream of the antiwar movement have looked to anarchism or "direct action" as an alternative. The SYCs defended Iraq militarily, without giving any support whatsoever to the murderous regime of Saddam Hussein. The anarchists refused to defend Iraq against imperialism, failing to make the distinction between military defense and political support, and equated the imperialist aggressors with their neocolonial victims. Anarchism, with its moralistic arguments and its individualistic direct actions, has no real program or strategy to prevail against capitalist class rule. Rejecting the need for revolutionary leadership and proletarian state power, it abdicates leadership of the working class to the social democrats and state power to the bourgeoisie.

The mass cop terror unleashed against Natives and immigrants in Vancouver's destitute Downtown Eastside and the prosecution of OCAP's leadership in Toronto provide concrete and murderous demonstrations of the highly



V. Deni and M. Cherenmykh

**Lenin sweeps globe of bankers, priests and kings. Join us!
We are the party of the Russian Revolution!**

organized and ruthlessly efficient forces of the bourgeois state. To prevail against that might requires an organized and disciplined vanguard party that can mobilize the power of the one class that can defeat capitalist rule—the proletariat. Only the working class has the social power and objective interests to liberate mankind from oppression. The purpose of the revolutionary party is to infuse the proletariat with that understanding.

The SYCs are a training ground for young revolutionaries. Armed with the revolutionary program of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky, the SYCs seek to build the youth auxiliary of a Leninist vanguard party that intervenes on the side of the working class against the capitalist exploiters, fighting for the rights of immigrants, Native people and all the oppressed, opposing Anglo chauvinism and calling for Quebec independence. This revolutionary party will lead defensive struggles and transform them into an offensive battle for socialist revolution and workers power, laying the basis for a world free of capitalist exploitation and imperialist slaughter. Join us!

What We Fight For

1. Mobilize students behind the social power of the working class! Picket lines mean don't cross! On strike means shut it down! For union-run job recruitment and training programs for minorities and women! For union hiring halls!

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Join the SYC...

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Down with union-busting “workfare” schemes! Jobs for all at union wages! Organize the unorganized! Down with multi-tier wages, which pit younger and older workers against each other! Cops, prison guards, security guards out of the unions! Keep the capitalists’ government and courts out of the unions!

2. Independence for Quebec! Down with English Canadian chauvinism! Down with the “Clarity Act” and Ottawa’s other machinations against Quebec’s national rights! Chauvinism and nationalism are poison to working-class struggle! Equal language rights for all! Down with chauvinist “English-only” ordinances and restrictive French language legislation!

3. Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! Down with racist anti-immigrant laws! Down with anti-immigrant, anti-Semitic and all racist bigotry! No deportations! No detention of immigrants or refugee claimants! Down with the government’s “anti-terrorism” scare! For mass labor/minority mobilizations to stop the fascists and race terrorists! No reliance on the capitalist courts! Fascist terror is not a question of free speech! Stop the Nazis! Stop the KKK!

4. For free, quality education for all! For an end to streaming! For open admissions, no tuition and a state-paid living stipend for all students! Abolish the administration—the universities should be run by those who work and study there! Cops off campus! Drive army and police recruiters off campus! For a single secular school system! No prayer in the schools! For separation of church and state! Defend science against superstition and mysticism! For the right of people to be educated in the language of their choice! Defend bilingual education programs and ESL training!

5. For women’s liberation through socialist revolution! For free abortion on demand! Down with parental consent laws and “squeal rules”! For free, quality 24-hour childcare! Down with attacks on medicare—for free, quality health-care for all! For mass, labor-backed mobilizations to defend abortion clinics! Equal pay for equal work! Down with reactionary age of consent laws! Full democratic rights for gays! Government out of the bedroom! Down with the anti-sex witchhunt! Down with all laws against prostitution, consensual sex, drugs!

6. The capitalist state—at its core consisting of the cops, courts, prisons and the standing army—is the executive committee of the ruling class, an instrument of organized violence by the capitalists against the working class and the oppressed. The state is not neutral and cannot be reformed—it must be smashed through workers revolution! Defend victims of racist cop terror and police frame-up! Down with the “war on drugs,” a racist war by the ruling class against blacks, immigrants, Natives and other minorities! For mass labor protests against cop terror! Free all class-war prisoners! There is no justice in the capitalist courts! No illusions in civilian review boards or “community control” of the police! Abolish the Senate and reactionary relics like the monarchy and governor-general! No to gun control! For the right of armed self-defense!

7. Labor must defend Native rights! Abolish the racist Indian Act and the Department of Indian Affairs! Police and courts keep off the reserves and other Native land! Only



Washington, D.C. antiwar demo, October 2002: SYCs across North America fought to win antiwar militants to understanding that only socialist revolution can end imperialist war.

socialist revolution can end the deep-going oppression of Native people.

8. Down with Canadian nationalism! Defeat Canadian imperialism through workers revolution! For the defeat of Canadian imperialism in all its military adventures! Not one person, not one penny for the Canadian military! Beware the fraud of “human rights” imperialism! Canadian imperialist troops are not “peacekeepers” but bloody enemies of the world’s workers and oppressed! The UN is a den of thieves, their victims and their lackeys! All Canadian/UN/NATO troops out of Afghanistan, the Persian Gulf! Down with the colonial occupation of Iraq! Defend the Palestinian people against Zionist terror! For a Socialist Federation of the Near East!

9. Down with anti-communist China bashing! Defend the gains of the 1949 revolution which smashed the rule of the landlords and capitalists, and collectivized property! No to imperialist penetration of China! For unconditional military defense of China and the other bureaucratically deformed workers states—Cuba, Vietnam and North Korea—against imperialism and internal capitalist counterrevolution! Defend their right to nuclear weapons! For workers political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucrats and establish regimes of workers democracy based on the power of workers councils and revolutionary internationalism! Workers of the world unite!

10. Break with the Anglo-chauvinist, pro-imperialist NDP: a bourgeois workers party that upholds the rule of racist capitalism! The trade union bureaucracy is an agency of the capitalist class—for a class-struggle leadership of the unions! For international working-class solidarity! Smash NAFTA through united class struggle from the Yukon to the Yucatán! Down with the chauvinist poison of protectionism! For a revolutionary, multiracial, binational workers party that fights for socialist revolution! Look to the example of the heroic, Bolshevik-led workers of 1917 Russia! For new October Revolutions! For the international rule of the working class!

The Spartacus Youth Clubs are the youth groups of the Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste, Canadian section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist). ■

Fire This Time...

(continued from page 4)

that the class-collaborationist antiwar coalitions that mobilized millions around the world did not stop nor even limit the ability of the world's bloodiest imperialist power to devastate Iraq. FTTM justifies whoring for social democracy by claiming that they approach people "where they are at," displaying typical liberal condescension towards the oppressed. Approaching people "where they are at" means telling the truth about the politics of the social-democratic misleaders, not uncritically building their coalitions. But FTTM has no fundamental political criticisms of either stopwar.ca or the NDP.

While to this day celebrating the "effectiveness" of the antiwar movement, recently the FTTM has been forced to recognize that widespread demoralization does in fact exist. At the June 15 conference they attributed this to a lack of "a common set of goals, demands, and strategies with which to effectively deal with the new situation." But those whose false program prepared the outcome bear central responsibility for the ensuing demoralization among antiwar youth, who for months were told by the likes of FTTM that a "big" movement could prevent this war of imperialist conquest. At the conference our comrades pointed to the futility of appealing to the moral sensibilities of U.S. and Canadian imperialism, and the need to break the working class from those forces who worked to dissolve the tremendous outrage over this war into a trans-class "peace" movement—criticisms FTTM leaders clearly don't want people to hear!

During the war FTTM sought to offset the brazen "Maple Leaf" chauvinism of stopwar.ca by launching the "Youth-3rd World Alliance" and taking a side with the Iraqi and Palestinian resistance against imperialism and Zionist terror. But this stance of solidarity twists itself into a grotesque farce through their refusal to criticize, or even acknowledge, the deathly reactionary role of forces like Islamic fundamentalism or Arab nationalism.

For example, at the June 15 meeting, an FTTMer bragged about participating in the 1979 Iranian "revolution" and the June issue of their paper claims that "The US, in order to achieve hegemony in the Middle East, must reverse the relationship of forces that turned in favor of oppressed people of the Middle East and North Africa after the Iranian revolution of 1979." The "revolution" FTTM upholds brought to power the reactionary mullahs who butchered thousands of leftists, secular women, Kurds and gays. It is obscene that FTTM prettifies this regime as "anti-imperialist." In 1979, our party declared "Down with the Shah! No support to the mullahs! Workers to power in Iran!" Today, as tens of thousands of Iranians are protesting the government, we fight for workers revolution to sweep away the Islamic dictatorship, and oppose all imperialist intervention.

FTTM asserts that they oppose

oppression and racism "by any means necessary." They defend asylum seekers and run headlines like "Stop the Racist War at Home and Abroad." Unlike most of the left, FTTM denounces the brutal cop rampage on the Downtown Eastside. While this is in some ways at variance with social-democratic "national unity," FTTM is blind to and silent on the oppression of the Québécois people by the Anglo-chauvinist Canadian ruling class. Bereft of a program of struggle against capitalism, FTTM instead tails whatever moves, and in so doing finds itself in a bloc with the existing misleadership of the working class.

FTTM's posture as a young, vibrant group of radicals, better and more open than the established left, is a fraud. In excluding the Marxists, FTTM looks like every International Socialist or Stalinist hack for whom communist politics is by definition "disruptive." Political clarity on how to overthrow this system of exploitation, racism and war can only be gained through the clash of political debate. In contrast, FTTM's exclusionism stifles debate and degrades consciousness. In barring us Marxists from a meeting about the Liberals' current attack on Native rights, FTTM actively deflects the struggle against anti-Native racism *away* from revolutionary politics. Its logic is violence, the politics of the fist rather than the brain.

Ending the system that breeds war will require wrenching power from the capitalists and their state, replacing it with the rule of the working class, the *only* way the oppressed can achieve social justice. Instead of bringing up the rear of the social democrats that preach reliance on the imperialist rulers, what is necessary is the forging of a multiracial vanguard party—a party which champions the cause of all the oppressed. FTTMers and others seeking the road to uprooting the whole system of imperialist exploitation and subjugation can do no better than investigating the proletarian, revolutionary and internationalist politics of the Trotskyist League and Spartacus Youth Clubs. ■

TROTSKYIST LEAGUE/SPARTACUS YOUTH CLUB EVENTS

Toronto	<p>Down With Colonial Occupation of Iraq! Canadian Troops Out of Afghanistan!</p> <p>Saturday, September 20, 3:00 p.m., Room 8200, OISE, 252 Bloor St. W. (above St. George Stn.)</p> <p>Fall 2003 SYC Class Series: OISE, alternate Saturdays, 3:00 p.m., starting on Sept. 20. For class topics, readings and room numbers contact the SYC at (416) 593-4138, email spartcan@on.aibn.com or write to: SYC, P.O. Box 7198, Stn. A, Toronto ON M5W 1X8.</p>
Vancouver	<p>SYC Class Series: Marxism and World Revolution</p> <p>U.S./UN/Canadian Imperialism Hands Off the World! Out of Iraq/Afghanistan! For International Workers Revolution!</p> <p>Thursday, September 11, 3:00 p.m., Forum Chambers, Maggie Benston Building, Simon Fraser University</p> <p>Classes 2-5: alternate Thursdays, 6:00 p.m., starting on Sept. 25, Room 2290, Maggie Benston Building, SFU. For readings and more information contact the SYC at (604) 687-0353, email TLLT@look.ca or write to: SYC, Box 2717, Main P.O., Vancouver BC V6B 3X2</p>

Canadian Troops Out of Afghanistan!

More than 1,800 soldiers from the Royal Canadian Regiment landed in Afghanistan in July and August as part of a joint United Nations/NATO operation in Kabul. The explicit mission of this "International Security Assistance Force" is to pacify Kabul on behalf of the U.S.-installed puppet president, Hamid Karzai. While Canadian, German and other troops try to secure the capital, the U.S. military is still engaged in a war of extermination, literally, against all its perceived enemies, loosely termed "former Taliban." Since its invasion, the U.S. together with its Afghan allies has engaged in indiscriminate terror and outright massacres of prisoners, such as at the Mazar-i-Sharif fortress in November 2001. Hundreds of "enemy combatants," including young teenagers, have been caged like animals at the U.S. base in Guantánamo, Cuba.

Despite its subordinate role as a U.S. junior partner, Canadian imperialism is no less an enemy of the world's workers and oppressed. Canada's "peacekeeping" image has always been nothing but a convenient cover to back up the more openly belligerent U.S. in its wars of conquest and plunder, for which the Canadian capitalist class is generously rewarded in superprofits. Its fraudulent "antiwar" posture notwithstanding, the Chrétien government maintained 1,000 troops in the Near East during the colonial invasion of Iraq, and has backed the U.S. "war on terror" to the hilt. At home, this has translated into roundups of immigrants and refugees, repression of leftist militants and attacks on workers' jobs and livelihoods in the airline industry and elsewhere.

The labor movement must be mobilized in defense of the oppressed at home and in the "Third World," as part of a fight against the North American capitalist rulers. But the flag-waving bureaucrats who run the unions and their "political arm" in Jack Layton's NDP are working overtime to prop up illusions in "Canada the good." Opposed to the unilateral U.S. invasion of Iraq, Layton instead offered up Canadian "peacekeepers" to "protect" Iraqi civilians. It was just such "peacekeepers," from the fascist-infested Canadian



Power/Toronto Star

Kabul, August 21: Canadian troops are not "peacekeepers" but enemies of oppressed masses.

Airborne Regiment, who notoriously tortured and killed young Somalis in cold blood during their 1993-94 murder mission. Today the same elite force, refashioned as Joint Task Force 2, is part of the Canadian mission to Kabul. We fear for the downtrodden population of the Afghan capital, who are directly in the crosshairs of these butchers.

Not so the International Socialists (I.S.), whose central concern is for the welfare of the Canadian imperialist troops. "The tragedy is," they write, "the longer they are in Afghanistan, the more likely it is that some at least will come home in body bags" (*Socialist Worker*, 6 August). According to these Maple Leaf "socialists," the problem with this colonial occupation is that "Canadian troops are heading into an impossible situation" where "their mission has no chance of success."

The anti-Communist I.S. has a long and ignoble history of supporting imperialist intervention in Afghanistan. During the 1980s they cheered on U.S. imperialism's Islamic cut-throat *mujahedin* against the Soviet Red Army. We Trotskyists hailed the Red Army intervention in support of a modernizing nationalist Afghan regime and called to "Extend social gains of the October Revolution to the Afghan peoples!" The medievalist reactionaries championed by the I.S., who were backed to the hilt by Washington and Ottawa, demanded the enslavement of women and murdered teachers for teaching young girls to read. When the Stalinist rulers of the Soviet Union criminally pulled the army out of Afghanistan in order to appease U.S. imperialism in 1988-89, we denounced this as a betrayal. The I.S. celebrated. The eventual result was the ascent to power of warlords and fundamentalists like the Taliban who turned Afghanistan into a living hell, devastating capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union itself, and a deadly dangerous "unipolar" world where the rulers of American imperialism, their Canadian junior partners in tow, ram-page over oppressed peoples across the globe.

**All U.S./Canadian/NATO/UN troops out of Afghanistan!
Down with the colonial occupation of Iraq! For class struggle against the U.S. and Canadian imperialist rulers! ■**

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For Workers Revolution in Iran!



Worker-Communist Party of Iran
Workers demonstration in Behshahr in April. At left, Iranian students demonstrate against Islamic fundamentalist regime in June.

Chanting "The clerical regime is nearing its end!" and "Down with the Islamic Republic!" thousands of students and other protesters took to the streets of Iranian cities this summer in another round of mass demonstrations against the bloody theocratic rulers. The regime cracked down with brutal ferocity, unleashing its police and paramilitary Ansar

out the Near East. In most of the region, the depredations of imperialism combined with the evident bankruptcy of bourgeois nationalism and the betrayals of the Stalinist Communist parties have fueled the growth of Islamic fundamentalism. But in Iran, which has lived through 25 years of "Islamic paradise," the entire tendency of struggle is away from the forces of religious reaction.

While the deeply corrupt religious leaders live like kings, life is ever more miserable for the working class and urban and rural poor. Real incomes have fallen by fully three-quarters since the onset of Islamic rule. Some 25 percent of the workforce is unemployed while at least a million workers with jobs have not been paid for months, in some cases for years. Despite this desperate economic situation, sections of the working class are becoming restive. Thousands defied a government ban to demonstrate this May Day. Around the same time, 2,000 textile workers in Behshahr went on hunger strike to protest non-payment of wages for more than two years. Rallies of up to 25,000 workers and their families backed the strikers, leading the regime to declare martial law in the city.

The population of Iran is very young, very highly educated and very repressed. Some 70 percent is under 30, in large measure the result of the slaughter of a whole generation of young men during the sordid 1980-88 Iran-Iraq War. That war was fueled by the U.S., which had an anti-Iranian tilt. The struggle against the all-pervasive social restrictions of the Iranian regime finds its most explosive expression in the fight for women's rights—from being able to walk down the street without having to wear the stifling *hijab* (veil) to being able to choose your own partner. Barbaric punishments, including death by stoning, have been meted out to women, homosexuals and others for "deviant" behavior. Hundreds of thousands of women have been driven into

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Iran Fake Left:

1979: With the Mullahs
Against the Monarchy

2003: With the Monarchy
Against the Mullahs

Hezbollah thugs to arrest at least 4,000. One demonstrator was killed in the southern city of Shiraz, while an Iranian Canadian photojournalist was beaten to death by authorities after taking photos near Tehran's infamous Evin prison. Another center of protest was Kurdistan University in Sanandaj, where troops besieged and occupied the campus, reportedly killing one student. Faced with the threat of more widespread protests on July 9 to mark the suppression of the 1999 student revolt, the government closed Tehran University and banned all public gatherings.

Twenty-four years after a reactionary Islamic movement led by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini rode to power on the back of a popular upheaval against the despised U.S.-backed Shah and his SAVAK secret police torturers, Iran is again seething with discontent. The Islamic regime is facing all-sided social unrest, the impact of which will be felt through-

Iran...

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prostitution which, along with widespread drug addiction, has grown dramatically amid the economic and social devastation.

At the same time, unlike in many other Islamic-ruled states, women are not barred from higher education, and many are integrated in the workforce in fields like education and medicine. Women make up a majority of university students, and many are active in pro-reform movements. This spring, thousands of women defied the regime to publicly celebrate International Women's Day, and women have played a prominent role in the recent protests. The hold of the mosque over the population has drastically declined. Last year, the regime's own Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance admitted that 99 percent of the population no longer even bothers to attend Friday prayers.

With the fraying of Islamic rule, wildly diverse forces are now emerging to vie for leadership of the anti-regime struggle. These range from Islamic "reformers" to would-be communists, bourgeois nationalists and right-wing, pro-U.S. supporters of the former Shah. U.S. president Bush cynically praised the recent student protests as "the beginning of people expressing themselves toward a free Iran." The U.S. has vilified Iran as part of its international "axis of evil" and has more recently tried to whip up a furor over its supposed development of "weapons of mass destruction." And over 150,000 American troops are now directly across the border in occupied Iraq and Afghanistan. **U.S. hands off Iran! Imperialist troops out of Iraq and Afghanistan!**

The youth who spearheaded mass protests against the hated Shah 25 years ago overwhelmingly considered themselves leftists, avidly reading Lenin and chanting slogans against U.S. imperialism. The pro-Moscow Tudeh (Masses) Party had a mass base among the working class, notably the powerful and strategic oil workers, while the more left-wing guerrillaist Fedayeen attracted tens of thousands of student youth to its banners. But these organizations literally handed the working masses, oppressed nationalities, women and youthful leftists over to the new torturers of the Islamic theocracy. Upon coming to power, the Khomeini regime embarked upon the mass slaughter of the Baha'i religious minority, Kurds and other national minorities, unveiled women, militant trade unionists and all oppositionists. An entire generation of left-wing militants was wiped out. Having waded through the blood of their comrades killed by a regime they helped bring to power, the remnants who made it into exile were defeated, broken, demoralized and most became burnt-out cynics.

Criminally, the re-emerging Iranian left today has gone from supporting Islamic reaction against the monarchy to blocking with monarchist and other pro-U.S. forces against the Islamic rulers. Many of the recent international protests in solidarity with Iranian student demonstrators, particularly in the U.S., saw leftist groups march alongside royalists and other pro-imperialist reactionaries. If you reject the possibility of bringing the working class to revolutionary con-



Worker-Communist Party of Iran

Tehran, March 8: Demonstrators defy Islamic regime by openly celebrating International Women's Day.

sciousness, then you necessarily end up tailing one alien class force or another.

Uniquely, the International Communist League (then known as the international Spartacist tendency) warned *from the outset* of the 1978-79 upheaval that, absent a decisive break by the working class with the Islamic forces, the struggle would have a disastrous outcome. We said "Down With the Shah! Don't Bow to Khomeini! For Workers Revolution in Iran!" Today, again, we underscore that the only road to freedom for Iran's working people, women and oppressed nationalities lies in the independent mobilization of the working class and the fight for socialist revolution.

The 1979 "Revolution": Mass Struggle and Left Betrayal

The new generation entering into struggle today in Iran has a frame of reference vastly different than that of the 1970s. The Soviet Union, the world's first workers state, which bordered Iran and provided a global counterweight to U.S. imperialism, has been destroyed through capitalist counterrevolution, throwing back the consciousness and struggles of the working class and oppressed internationally. This effect is magnified in Iran, where Islamic terror physically annihilated the left.

If their struggles are to go forward, the most farsighted elements among today's young Iranian activists must assimilate the bitter lessons of the 1979 "revolution," including the betrayals of a whole host of leftist organizations in Iran and internationally.

In an article in *International Socialist Review* (August-September 2000), the U.S. International Socialist Organization (ISO) writes: "The failure of the left was also crucial in allowing Khomeini's forces to take power. The workers and the left could have challenged both the Shah's regime and the mullahs' leadership based on the power of the workers' strike committees. But their political strategy made this impossible.... Much of the left subordinated workers' interests to building a coalition with the clergy and liberals who were hostile to the working class. They argued that the main

task was to maintain unity in the movement in order to get rid of the Shah's dictatorship."

The ISO's analysis is both correct and utterly cynical. The fake left in Iran and internationally—including the ISO—promoted the mullah-led reactionary movement, whose most prominent slogans were "God is great!" and "Death or the veil!" They dismissed the emancipation of women, along with every other revolutionary perspective, because they all, to a greater or lesser extent, *liquidated into the reactionary Islamic mobilization.*

The January 1979 issue of the ISO's *Socialist Worker* unabashedly hailed Khomeini's "mass movement" which aimed to enslave women and throw back social progress centuries, headlining one article: "The Form—Religious, the Spirit—Revolution!" In this, they were far from unique. Today, an editorial in the *Militant* (7 July), newspaper of the American Socialist Workers Party (SWP), squirms: "Some of the *Militant's* past coverage may have also conveyed the impression that the current Iranian regime, in a warped form, is a defender of the remaining gains of the revolution." Wonder why! The SWP has touted the Tehran regime's "gains" for years. When the mullahs came to power, the SWP ran the banner headline: "Victory in Iran!" (*Militant*, 23 February 1979), and declared some months later that "women are freer than ever before in Iran" (*Militant*, 14 December 1979)!

It was the betrayals of the left that ensured that the workers did not challenge *both* the Shah and the mullah leadership. The Shah's brutal regime remained in power solely through naked terror and the backing of American imperialism. Its days were numbered; the only question was, what would replace it—workers rule or Islamic reaction. It was powerful proletarian struggle, such as a sit-down strike by 37,000 oil workers, that led to the toppling of the tyrannical Shah. We stressed at the time:

"The hundreds of thousands who are now marching behind the mullahs are by no means all Muslim fundamentalists. Many are primarily motivated by hostility to the real crimes of the shah.

Many leftist workers have probably joined what they view as a potentially successful opposition to the hated regime. But the masses, particularly the workers, who are now supporting the Khomeinis and the Shariatmadaris can and must be won away from the present Islamic reactionary offensive in favor of a *social revolutionary* opposition to the shah."

—"Iran in Turmoil," *Workers Vanguard* No. 215, 22 September 1978

As it does today, Iran in 1978-79 exemplified the Marxist conception of combined and uneven development. Alongside a sizable, militant and strategic industrial proletariat, particularly in the oil industry, were thousands of rural villages and impoverished urban shantytowns under the sway of the Shi'ite clerical caste. A chauvinist "prison house of peoples," Iran oppressed non-Persian nationalities like the Kurds and Arabs, who together make up nearly half the population. At the very bottom of the social ladder were millions of hideously oppressed peasant women. In these respects Iran resembled the tsarist empire on the eve of the Russian Revolution of 1917. But it lacked a revolutionary leadership like the Russian Bolsheviks, acting as a tribune of all the people in the struggle to lead the working class to the conquest of state power.

All wings of the bourgeoisie in Iran and other countries of belated capitalist development are too backward and dependent on imperialism to play any progressive role. Only the proletariat leading the urban plebeian and peasant masses can lead a struggle for liberation from imperialist subjugation and reactionary traditionalism. In seizing state power and establishing their own rule, the workers will be compelled to institute socialist measures, expropriating the means of production and establishing a planned economy. At the same time, a workers revolution in Iran would be immediately besieged by the imperialist powers. It could only survive and flourish by being extended internationally, not only throughout the Near East, but most crucially to the advanced imperialist powers of West Europe, North America and Japan.

The "Islamic revolution" of 1979 represented a negative confirmation of Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky's concept of permanent revolution. In countries like Iran, whose economic and social development has been retarded by imperialist enslavement, the historic tasks posed by the bourgeois revolutions of West Europe and North America remain on the agenda: equality for women, freedom for national minorities, agrarian revolution, social and economic modernization. From this, many self-styled leftists draw the utterly false conclusion that there must be a "two-stage revolution," with the first stage led by "anti-imperialist" elements of the bourgeoisie and limited to "democratic" capitalist rule. For much of the Iranian left, "anti-imperialism" meant unity between the working and oppressed masses and the "progressive" (and not so progressive) elements of the bourgeoisie. The outcome of this schema is that the "second stage" invariably means not the ascent of the workers but

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Victims of Islamic regime's terror are hanged in Tehran, July 1980. We uniquely fought to mobilize proletariat against both Shah and Khomeini's forces.



WORKERS VANGUARD 25c
 For Workers Revolution In Iran!
Down with the Shah!
Don't Bow to Khomeini!
 15 December 1978

Iran...

(continued from page 11)

the massacre of communists and trade unionists, as happened in Iran.

As we wrote in our "Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program":

"The 1979 'Iranian Revolution' opened up a period of ascendant political Islam in the historically Muslim world, a development which contributed to and was powerfully reinforced by the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union. Khomeini's seizure and consolidation of power in Iran was a defeat akin to Hitler's crushing of the German proletariat in 1933, albeit on a narrower, regional scale. The international Spartacist tendency's slogan 'Down with the Shah! No support to the mullahs!' and our focus on the woman question ('No to the veil!') stood in sharp contrast to the rest of the left's capitulation to mullah-led reaction."

—*Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 54, Spring 1998

Washington's current war on "Islamic terror" was preceded by decades of support to Islamic terror in the name of the war against "godless communism." Osama bin Laden and his fellow *mujahedin* are creatures of U.S. imperialism. Faced with a U.S.-backed Islamic insurgency on its southern flank in Afghanistan, in late 1979 the Soviet Red Army intervened on the side of the left-nationalist Kabul government that had tried to implement such reforms as lowering the bride price and setting up literacy programs for girls. We Trotskyists proclaimed: "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!" and called to extend the gains of the Soviet October Revolution to the peoples of Afghanistan. But rather than fighting to win, the treacherous Soviet Stalinist bureaucracy withdrew its forces from Afghanistan in 1988-89 to appease the U.S. imperialists, directly paving the way for the victory of Washington's Muslim fanatics and opening the door to capitalist counterrevolution in the USSR itself.

WCPI Calls for "Dialogue" with Monarchists

Today, the mullah regime in Tehran is widely despised, and the question of who will rule Iran could soon be posed again. Faced with broad unrest, the regime has fractured between hard-liners around Ayatollah Ali Khomeini, Khomeini's successor as the Islamic "supreme leader," and "reformers" around President Mohammed Khatami. The latter was first installed in office six years ago as a pressure valve to contain discontent. But popular illusions that Khatami would institute significant reforms have dissipated, as he works alongside the hard-liners to suppress discontent. A spokesman for the main reform student group, the Office for Consolidating Unity (OCU), told *Middle East Report Online* (15 July):

"Previously, the students distinguished between the reformers in government, whom the students helped to elect and with whom they shared many concerns, and the hardliners, whom they had not elected and who were intent on maintaining their authoritarian grip on power....

"At a minimum, we want to ensure civil and social rights and liberties, and we want a democracy. But the students have lost any illusion that working for reforms within the system can bring this about."

But if Iranian student activists have lost their illusions in the Islamic "reformers," there are from all evidence widespread illusions that an idealized form of Western bourgeois

democracy can provide an answer. Some look back to the bourgeois-nationalist Mossadeq regime in the early 1950s, which was propped up by the Tudeh Stalinists, who channeled a working-class upheaval against the Shah and the imperialists into support for the "progressive" Mossadeq. But Mossadeq called on the army generals, who were working with the U.S. to bring him down, to crack down on Tudeh. The army, in league with Mossadeq's former Islamic allies, then brought him down (see "Near East, 1950s: Permanent Revolution vs. Bourgeois Nationalism," Part Two, WV No. 741, 8 September 2000). If the Mossadeq interlude shows anything, it is that in a country like Iran, whose economic and social development has been stunted by imperialism, there can be no stable bourgeois democracy; under capitalism, Iran can never look like Western Europe or North America. Only workers rule can begin to lift Iran from its economic and social backwardness.

Today the fraying of illusions in Islamic "reformers" has provided an opening for the monarchists around Reza Pahlavi, exiled son of the former Shah, to sharply increase their activities toward and in Iran. These monarchists are based among the hundreds of thousands of mainly right-wing Iranian exiles in Southern California. Their Farsi-language satellite TV stations and Web sites are a major source of information for many Iranians, given the widespread media censorship within the country. But these pro-U.S. royalists face major obstacles to winning widespread support in Iran. Iranians can look next door to Iraq and Afghanistan to see that the real face of Washington's vaunted "democracy" is naked colonial brutality. And memories of the CIA-organized coup that overthrew Mossadeq in 1953 run deep. In his *Middle East Report Online* interview, the OCU student leader commented, "For the students, at least, a monarchist alternative is taken as an insult.... Why should they go back to a monarchy, even a constitutional one, where a hereditary sultan is set to rule over them as subjects?"

Yet the Worker-Communist Party of Iran (WCPI), which appears to be the largest and most influential force among the Iranian left today, openly seeks to accommodate such monarchist forces. The WCPI rightly denounces any idea of allying with any wing of the current regime, and is also unique on the Iranian left in its emphasis on women's rights, including forthright opposition to the veil. At the same time, the WCPI holds positions which are outright reactionary. This is shown clearly in its program "A Better World," which rails "against the act of abortion" and calls this basic, vitally necessary medical procedure "testimony to the self-alienation of people"! Far from upholding a perspective of proletarian class independence, the WCPI are in fact anti-clerical reformists who foster terrible illusions in "democratic" Western imperialism.

For years, one of the WCPI's main campaigns has been for imperialist governments in Europe and Canada to shut down the Iranian embassies in their countries. By raising this demand, the WCPI lends credence to the democratic pretensions of these imperialists and calls on them to act as cops of the world. The WCPI has also repeatedly called on the United Nations to intervene on behalf of the oppressed in the Near East. Its sister group in Iraq is currently agitating for a UN military intervention in that country, calling for the U.S. and British forces to be replaced by "the intervention of the United Nations" to "safeguard free and secure conditions" (*WPI Briefing*, 28 April). As was shown by its decade-long starvation embargo of Iraq, which killed at least a million and

a half men, women and children, the UN is nothing more than an instrument for upholding the imperialist status quo against the oppressed masses of the underdeveloped "Third World."

The WCPI's grotesque accommodation to the Iranian monarchists was clearly seen at a 4,000-strong rally in support of Iranian students in Toronto on July 9, which featured a sea of monarchist and Iranian national flags interspersed with WCPI banners and placards. A WCPI representative spoke from the official platform and, far from even criticizing the monarchists, the WCPI's own statement for the event, titled "Resolution in Solidarity with the People's Struggle to Overthrow the Islamic Regime of Iran," avoided all mention of these royalists or of U.S. imperialism. For the occasion, the WCPI even dropped the last part of its customary slogan, "Freedom, Equality, Workers Rule," as its banners in Farsi and English solely called for "Freedom, Equality!"

This transparent opportunism aimed at accommodating deeply reactionary forces is no accident. Two years ago, in an interview in *International Haftegi* (10 August 2001, summarized in English on the WCPI's Web site), WCPI founder-leader Mansoor Hekmat (since deceased) characterized the WCPI and "the pro-West nationalist current which has primarily gathered around Reza Pahlavi" as the "two main currents in the opposition demanding the ouster of the regime." While rejecting "unity" with the monarchists, Hekmat continued:

"What can be done is to establish an official dialogue among the opposition currents demanding the regime's overthrow. We do not have a problem with this. We invited all the opposition, from Left to Right, to our Third Congress. Not only do we not have a problem with setting up an official dialogue with any organisation opposing the Islamic Republic, we welcome it and think it necessary."

The forces around Reza Pahlavi are the literal heirs of the bloody Shah and his henchmen who butchered Iranian workers, leftists and minorities by the thousands. In the late 1970s, the Iranian left allied with Islamic reaction against the hated Shah, with horrific results; now the WCPI wants a "dialogue" with the Shah's forces against the Islamic regime! Such a perspective expresses profound political bankruptcy. It would prove literally suicidal for a new generation of Iranian leftists.

For Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

Iran today is in the throes of a profound social crisis. The only road to genuine social emancipation, to freeing Iranian women from enslavement, to winning national self-determination for the Kurds and other oppressed nationalities, lies through the smashing of capitalist class rule. An Iranian workers revolution would send shock waves throughout the Near East, showing a way forward for the beleaguered masses who chafe under the grip of Islamic theocracies, military dictatorships and bloody imperialist overlordship. It would act as a spur to struggle, as well, for working people in the U.S., Canada and throughout the imperialist world, who must be won to the perspective of proletarian opposition to their "own" ruling classes.



SC photo

TL at July 1999 Vancouver protest in defense of Iranian students.

In the countries of the East, the question of women's oppression is one of the most powerful motor forces of socialist revolution. Indeed, when the Bolsheviks arrived in Central Asia in the years following the October Revolution, it was among women that they found the main point of support for their program and won their key cadres. The same holds true for Iran. A Leninist-Trotskyist party, championing women's rights against the age-old stranglehold of religion and the family, will find its most loyal and courageous fighters among women.

The emancipation of women not only from the veil but from the daily drudgery of hearth and home will only come about when the proletariat conquers state power and establishes a socialist society, which will lay the material basis for the replacement of the institution of the family through collective childcare, kitchens and other social institutions. As we wrote in *Women and Revolution* (No. 18, Spring 1979) following the first challenge to mullah rule in 1979, with the outpouring of 100,000 women in Tehran on International Women's Day:

"The Iranian masses today urgently need an independent, working-class revolutionary party, capable of struggling in its own name against the reactionary social program of the mullahs. In this task, the question of women's oppression will play a major role. We salute the masses of outraged women who took to the streets in defiance of Khomeini, in defiance of 1,300 years of brutal institutionalized repression, in defiance of those 'leftists' who hail as liberators the clerical reactionaries who would keep women gagged, locked away and enslaved from birth to death. But unless the defiant women find a programmatic base of support in a class-conscious proletarian opposition to the mullahs, their militancy will be dissipated or smashed by the clerical reaction.... Only the perspective of a new, socialist order can show the way forward for the militant women. It is as cadres of a vanguard party of the Iranian working class, armed with the fighting program of revolutionary Trotskyism, that the courageous women of Iran will win their liberation and the liberation of all the exploited and oppressed."

—Adapted from *Workers Vanguard* No. 807, 1 August

Palestinians...

(continued from page 1)

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

Through every Zionist campaign of slaughter of Palestinians, Israel has been backed to the hilt by the U.S. imperialists—Democrats and Republicans—with arms, supplies and billions in cash. For their part, Washington's junior partners in Ottawa are also fully committed to backing the Zionist state, while the bourgeois media whips up a hysterical campaign branding defenders of the Palestinian people as "violent" "anti-Semites."

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

For Arab/Hebrew Workers Revolution!

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



Jenin, West Bank, May 27.

AFF



SC photo

Trotskyist League calls to defend Palestinians, warns against illusions in UN at March 2002 Toronto protest.

drawal is now equated with the call for zero withdrawal, as pundits condemn the ‘extremists on both sides’.”

Just a few years ago, calls for forced expulsion of the Palestinians—euphemistically called “transfer”—and the labeling of the West Bank by their biblical names of Judea and Samaria were publicly voiced only by the fringe elements (like Sharon) on the ultraright of Israeli society. Today these extreme positions are common not only in the Zionist ruling establishment but also in sections of the American ruling establishment.

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

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

Various speakers in the plenary session on “PLO: Past,

Present and Future” tried to identify the moment at which the PLO went wrong. One speaker pointed to the 1993 Oslo accords as the PLO’s key betrayal. Another went back further, focusing on the PLO’s acceptance of the idea of a Palestinian “mini-state” in the 1970s. Yet another concentrated on 1970, when the PLO refused to fight to overthrow the regime of Jordan’s King Hussein, who slaughtered more than 10,000 PLO fighters in the infamous “Black September” massacre: “Holding talks with King Hussein as an ‘Arab brother’ was a betrayal of all we stood for.... Israel was not the only one to use phosphorous bombs against us, King Hussein did as well.”

(As an expression of disgust at the current PLO leadership, one speaker retailed the following joke: There’s a bathhouse that charges clients depending on how much soap they will need. Sharon comes up and asks, “How much?” “100 shekels,” replies the attendant. “You are quite big and I’m not even sure we have enough soap.” Then Abu Mazen comes up and asks for soap. “For you, 200 shekels,”

says the attendant. “What? Sharon only paid 100 shekels and he is way fatter than me,” says Abu Mazen. The attendant replies: “Yes, but you are much filthier.”)

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

Like all nationalism, Arab nationalism preaches the unity of the downtrodden and exploited with their “own” exploiters

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Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste

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Palestinians...

(continued from page 15)

and would-be exploiters. In this view, the allies of the Palestinian people in their struggle for liberation are to be sought not among the proletariat of the region—including the Hebrew-speaking working class in Israel—but rather among the Arab rulers. Even the most militant Palestinian nationalists recognized that they did not have the power to defeat the Zionist state militarily. Rather, the strategy of “armed struggle” pursued by the PLO in the 1960s and ’70s was aimed at pressuring the Arab regimes to take up the cause of “Arab unity” against Israel. That is why the PLO pledged “non-interference” in the Arab states, including Jordan, which was majority Palestinian and where the PLO had its main base.

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

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

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

oppression of the Palestinians.

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

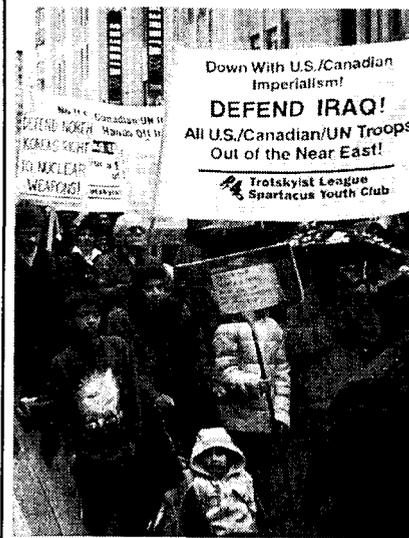
While many speakers at the conference put forward the vision of a democratic and secular state where both Palestinians and Israeli Jews could live together, not a single speaker put forward a program of how to get there. The reason is simple. They reject the only *realistic* program for social and national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

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

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

— Adapted from *Workers Vanguard* No. 806, 4 July

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SC138

Workers Vanguard Editorial Statement

In publishing the exchange with the International Bolshevik Tendency (BT) in *Workers Vanguard* No. 806 (4 July), the editor and other comrades centrally responsible for the production of the paper did not inform comrade James Robertson of the BT's scurrilous, lying smear of him as a "chauvinist" in a "P.S." to a letter ostensibly on the Kurds. Instead we unilaterally decided to excise the "P.S." On July 4, the BT surfaced with the "P.S." in the form of a leaflet at the Socialist Workers Party's "Marxism" event in London, sneering that *WV* "implicitly accepts" their vile accusations. No we don't! We excised the "P.S." because it was a contemptible lie, but in so doing fell into the BT's trap and implied guilt with our evasive silence. Behind this lay a bloodless conception of politics taking as good coin the BT's screed on the Kurds, which was nothing other than a wrapper for a poison pill.

The BT's 4 July leaflet proves that their provocative "P.S." was the whole point of their letter. We should have known. The BT could not care less about the Kurds or any other oppressed people. From its inception, the BT has been a dubious outfit with a hostile obsession for the Spartacist League and in particular its founding co-leader, Jim Robertson.

Slanders against leaders of the communist movement are nothing new. They are the stock in trade of opponents of revolutionary Marxism to set up entire organizations for hostile attack and state repression. The method is: kill an

organization by chopping off its head.

The Editorial Board's actions flouted the democratic-centralist norms on which the Spartacist League and International Communist League operate. Comrade Robertson is a member of the Editorial Board and Spartacist League National Chairman, and was personally the target of the BT slander. Yet he was never sent a copy of the BT letter including the "P.S." Beyond stupid, arrogant and uncomradely, this break in collaboration was an attack on our own revolutionary continuity. The Spartacist League is, and has been from its inception, an organization that says what is, without bowing to petty-bourgeois sensibilities. The actions of the Editorial Board could be borrowed from the practices of centrism, i.e., a divergence between what we stand for and what we do.

Our Declaration of Principles adopted at the 1966 founding conference of the Spartacist League/U.S. cites Trotsky's injunction: "To face reality squarely; not to seek the line of least resistance; to call things by their right names; to speak the truth to the masses, no matter how bitter it may be; not to fear obstacles; to be true in little things as in big ones; to base one's program on the logic of the class struggle; to be bold when the hour for action arrives—these are the rules of the Fourth International." Consistent with this purpose, we publicly acknowledge the disservice we have done to our party, to comrade Robertson, and to our readers. ■

BT Renegades...

(continued from page 3)

Marxism but by liberal moralism and vicarious "Third World" nationalism. (Such does not animate the Bolshevik Tendency, who in fact have nothing but sneering contempt for struggles against racial, national or ethnic oppression, but we will get to that later.) But their lies against us are in the service of larger, truly social-chauvinist, reformist outfits that are out to get us *because* we fight for proletarian revolutionary internationalist opposition to the imperialist rulers and the brutal depredations they, and their neocolonial satraps, visit upon oppressed peoples around the globe.

Defense of the Palestinians against the genocidal onslaught by the Zionist rulers of Israel was central to our efforts to mobilize for our revolutionary contingents. We stood out in sharp relief against the pacifism and outright social-patriotism peddled by the rest of the putative left, which mostly dumped any mention of the Palestinians in the name of "unity" with everything from pro-Zionist Democratic Party politicians in the U.S. to bourgeois pacifists who abhor all "violence," especially that of the oppressed against their oppressors. At the same time that fake leftists are denouncing us as Zionists, our comrades in Germany are being physically attacked by the so-called "anti-nationals"—who are pro-Zionist stooges for German imperialism—for our defense of the Palestinians.

The Pathology of Renegades

The BT's leaflet, titled "Robertson's 'Vulgar Chauvinism,'" quotes a postscript to a letter they had written to *Workers Vanguard* complaining because we had nailed them on their chauvinist opposition to independence for the Kurdish peo-

ple. Said postscript cites a 15 October 1978 presentation given by comrade Robertson to the New York local of the Spartacist League/U.S. The subject was the fight to remove the national chairman of our British section, Bill Logan, who had been running a nasty and brutal operation.

Premising his remarks with examples of how oppression oppresses, comrade Robertson spoke to how Logan had built his "regime" by playing on the internalization of oppression, particularly of young women as well as any considered to be of the "lower orders" by the viciously class-conscious and racist powers that be in British society. The speech observed: "Internalized oppression is an evil, evil thing. And I think it lay at the root of some of the bad regimes that we have uncovered here and there in our organization. Because it always takes two. It takes those who are insecure, become brutal or sadistic or pretentious, little Stalins. It also takes victims. And the victimization comes, generally, out of the playing upon internal insecurities and fear." Indeed every paragraph of Robertson's speech conveyed our party's intolerance toward all forms of chauvinism and oppression, which is fundamental to our purposes as a revolutionary Marxist organization.

In this context, Reuben Samuels, a leading cadre of our international who was in London at the time, was criticized for absenting himself from the urgently posed fight for the survival of a Spartacist section in Britain: "Criticism of Reuben: the whole time, where was Reuben? He was off in the library, studying about the Turds for his class. Right? He wasn't playing any role." The BT cries that is a "pig-gish" reference to the Kurds. Only in the minds of those genuinely inspired by chauvinism could "turds" be seen as

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BT Renegades...

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referring to Kurds! And that is the BT. Insofar as this organization has taken any note of the national oppression of myriad peoples around the globe, and that isn't much, the BT has been strident in declaring its opposition to the exercise of their right to self-determination—with the exception of Kosovo just at the time when Kosovo Albanian separatists were acting as bomb-spotters for the 1999 U.S./NATO war against Serbia. For the BT, the Kurds number among those whose demands for independence get in the way of the "struggles of the workers and peasants against the existing oppressor states."

And it doesn't just apply to the Kurds. The BT has achieved some notoriety for its opposition to independence for Quebec, winning the BT an official invite from the organizers of a mass Anglo-chauvinist "Maple Leaf" unity rally in Montreal on the eve of a 1995 referendum on Quebec sovereignty (and also losing them their only Québécois member, who quit protesting the BT's "de facto bloc with the Canadian bourgeoisie"). Here too the BT tries to hide its chauvinism behind appeals for "joint class struggle," echoing the Anglo-chauvinist labor bureaucrats in Canada who also argue that independence for Quebec would be harmful to "labor solidarity."

And speaking of adaptation to "great-power chauvinism," how about the abjectly reformist Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB), which the BT tried to woo into discussions "for political regroupment" a few years back? It didn't bother them that the 1995 draft program of the CPGB openly pronounced: "The capitalist state in Britain has an official ideology of anti-racism" (*Weekly Worker*, 5 September 1999). In fact, these fusion negotiations fell apart only because the CPGB rejected the BT's advances.

In the U.S., the BT similarly dances to the political tune of the pro-capitalist labor bureaucrats, mirroring their indifference to the struggles of the black masses. When the Spartacist League in 1982 mobilized the power of labor and the black community to successfully spike a Ku Klux Klan

provocation in Washington, D.C., and launched Labor Black Leagues based on that victory, the BT claimed we were turning our backs on the unions and disparaged this as "community organizing"!

In America, where anti-black racism has always been the handmaiden of reaction and black militancy has always been seen as profoundly subversive, the fight to mobilize the multi-racial working class in defense of the oppressed black masses is the key to the socialist revolution. Fortunately, black workers and youth in Washington and black longshoremen and shipyard workers from union locals throughout the South did not share the BT's disdain for our anti-Klan mobilization. Only those for whom "the working class" means the labor aristocracy could see our mobilization for the unity and integrity of the working class against capitalist "divide and rule" racism and its fascist shock troops as anything but a fight *for* the survival of the unions as instruments for the elementary defense of the proletariat.

Garbage Doesn't Walk by Itself

In "BT Doth Whine Too Much" (WV No. 806, 4 July), we published excerpts from the BT's letter which charged that we had "grossly" misrepresented their views on the Kurdish people; in response, we demonstrated their opposition to Kurdish independence, largely by citing the BT's own words from articles in its press, 1917. But the purpose of the BT's letter was its postscript—to slander the SL and comrade Robertson in particular as "chauvinist." The leaflet which the BT fed to the SWP's goons at Marxism snidely intones that our omission of "any comment on the letter's postscript" in WV is evidence of our "implicit acceptance" of their "vulgar chauvinism" slander. What we plead guilty to is fatuous gullibility. As we write in our editorial statement (see page 17): "We excised the 'P.S.' because it was a contemptible lie, but in so doing fell into the BT's trap and implied guilt with our evasive silence." We responded to the BT's letter as if it were some kind of legitimate political dispute in the workers movement and as though the purpose of their letter actually had anything to do with the plight of the Kurdish people. More fool us; we should have, and do,

know better.

The BT isn't an outfit that has any concern with the clash of political opinion that is critical to raising the consciousness of workers and radicalized youth. And it never has had such concern. The founders of the BT all individually quit our organization coincident with the onset of anti-Soviet 1980s Cold War II, when the stakes of being "red" got a lot higher than they were in the period of the "New Left" and Vietnam anti-war movement when most of them joined. A couple of years later, this ragtag collection of political cowards got together to concoct a political rationale for their lack of intestinal fortitude, claiming that they had been "purged" for their political views. They didn't have a word, much less a document, they could point to as evidence of their putative political

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THE WALL STREET JOURNAL
16 June 1995

*Not Much Left:
'The Movement' Is
Pretty Still Nowadays*

* * *

Despite the GOP Revolution,
Radical Groups Can't Win
Converts to Their Brand

Communist Party USA inc.
The Spartacists are led by a man
named James Robertson, prompting the
International Bolshevik Tendency, a group
of former Spartacists, to deride their old
party as "Jimstown," a takeoff on Jones-
town in Guyana, the jungle site of mass
suicide.



Workers Vanguard

As Spartacist League/U.S. and PDC mobilized during urgent 1995 campaign to stop execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal, capitalists' house organ picked up BT's "cult" smear to vilify Mumia's supporters.

opposition, just their pathetic resignation statements.

But although their political appetites—which are generally rightist and generally reflect the fringes of petty-bourgeois academia they overwhelmingly inhabit—should lead them elsewhere, the BT has throughout its existence pursued an unnatural obsession with our organization. And they have a rather consistent history of staging provocations against us just when other forces—ranging from the reformists straight up to agencies of the bourgeoisie—are gunning for us. Thus in 1983, the BT (then calling itself the External Tendency) launched an international campaign labeling us as “violent,” lying that we had assaulted one of their members. We were at the time engaged in a very serious legal fight against the FBI, which had targeted our organization as “violent.” And here we have a group of ex-members of our organization screaming that we are “violent.” Whose interests did this serve?

In 1985 they published a highly inventive piece of reptile journalism titled “The Road to Jimstown,” smearing our party as an “obedience cult” and spinning lurid, slanderous tales of corruption and waste. In 1995, these slanders against us were picked up by no less a mouthpiece for the American capitalist rulers than the *Wall Street Journal*. The purpose was to try to undercut growing domestic and international protest in defense of black death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, who was then under immediate threat of execution. In their efforts to portray Jamal as a depraved “cop killer,” the *Wall Street Journal* (16 June 1995) happily picked up the BT’s smears to depict the Partisan Defense Committee—the central organization that had been fighting for others to take up his case—as associated with a crazed “cult.” As we wrote almost two decades ago, “Those who are guided by intense subjective malice as a political program are just asking to be someone’s tool, witting or unwitting (sometimes both)” (“ET: New Name, Same Game?” *WV* No. 388, 4 October 1985).

The addition of Bill Logan as the BT’s own dear leader in 1990 added a whole new dimension to the BT’s obsession with trying to get us by any means necessary. Logan was

expelled at the first international conference of our tendency in 1979 following a thorough investigation by an international Control Commission and trial body which found him to be a twisted sociopath who manipulated the most intimate details of comrades’ personal lives for his own power purposes and gratification. The charges against Logan were brought by the Central Committee of the Spartacist League of Australia and New Zealand. The documents on the Logan regime in Britain had unleashed a torrent of painful testimony by the overwhelmingly young comrades of the remote Australian section, of which Logan had formerly been national chairman for years. As Reuben Samuels, who was sent to Australia on behalf of the international at the time, recounted in a recent document: “Exploiting their inexperience as well as deep devotion to our program, in Australia Logan ran a personality cult based on poisonous intrigue and manipulation of the most private details of comrades’ personal lives. ‘Loyalty’ was measured by loyalty to the ‘Chairman’s’ latest whim. Comrades were told who they should couple up with or not. Offspring were considered a curse and abortion a party ‘duty,’ so that one comrade with a baby was rendered suicidal.”

Logan was expelled for crimes “against communist morality and its substrate elementary human decency.” The motion passed unanimously by delegates at our international conference (including some who would later found the BT) concluded that Logan “cannot be and should never have been a member of a working-class organization.” As a measure of protection of the workers movement, we took the unusual step of making our internal bulletins documenting the Logan case publicly available and expending some effort to get them into major libraries in Australia and New Zealand.

One Sick Puppy

Eleven years later, the BT embraced Logan as one of its own. Unlike the Saudi royal family, who merely granted asylum to deposed Ugandan dictator Idi Amin, the BT anointed Logan as its *lider maximo*, and launched itself as

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BT Renegades...

(continued from page 19)

an "international" tendency. And now the BT seizes on a statement from comrade Robertson made *25 years ago*—a statement that never elicited a single objection from the several future BTers then still in our organization—from our publicly available internal bulletins. Today, the BT contorts this statement in order to make the lying charge of "vulgar chauvinism" and peddles the slander to larger reformist outfits (and who knows who else).

It is notable that the postscript to the BT's 12 June letter to WV, recounted in the written ammo they gave the SWP at "Marxism," omits any mention of Logan. They can't manage to mention that the quotation from comrade Robertson that they pulled out and twisted beyond recognition comes from a bulletin titled "On the Logan Regime Part I." How come? Why has Logan become the equivalent of that empty space on retouched photos? What is the BT hiding?

A look at Logan's Web site (bl.co.nz) might offer some answers. Here Logan advertises his services as a "counselor, narrative therapist and celebrant." The man who tried to force a young woman comrade to have an abortion and when that failed pressured her to put her child in a foster home now provides sample texts for funerals for babies. The man who aped all the attitudes of the long-decayed British "empire" to play on internalized oppression of working-class youth, women and those from the "colonies" now offers a "secular grace" worthy of a fat bourgeois sitting down to his dinner as he gushes with condescending thanks "to those who planted the crops...to those who gathered the harvest...to those who prepared it and those who served it." The man who spoke the language of her majesty's Parliament in objecting to any criticism of himself that might find its way into the membership as a "breach in diplomacy" when he was in our organization,

now advertises the "Anglican and Presbyterian influences of my childhood" on his Web site. A sadistic Colonel Blimp turned "all god's children" missionary—to say that this is one sick puppy is a vast understatement.

Tell Me Who Your Friends Are...

An early sign that something wasn't quite right with Logan was when he started writing documents arguing that bands of armed guerrillas were sufficient for the establishment of a workers state on any piece of territory, including coming very close to arguing that a workers state could be built in "one cave." This particular "theory" has much in common with the views of Pol Pot. And with the benefit of hindsight, one can see the shared and grotesque distortion of Marxism into a vicious personality cult that characterized Logan's "methods" of leadership. On the other side of the equation in looking at what makes the BT tick, there's Al Richardson of the journal *Revolutionary History*. A raving anti-Communist inspired by the "democratic traditions" of parliamentary Labourism, Richardson was cheek by jowl with the BT at "Marxism."

Such is the political company in which the BT logically belongs. The second leaflet that the BT was handing out at Marxism ("Compare and Contrast—ICL vs. IBT on Stalinism & Soviet Defencism") provided a veritable compendium of the BT's anti-Sovietism. This ranged from their denunciation of our call to "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan" fighting the CIA-backed, anti-woman Islamic reactionaries to their claim that our statement of military support to the Kremlin Stalinists should they have intervened to stop the bid for power by the anti-Semitic, clerical-reactionary Solidarność in Poland in 1981 was a "Stalinophilic perversion of the Trotskyist position of unconditional military defense of the bureaucratized workers states."

Given this track record, the BT's charge that we "flinched" on Soviet defensism by not giving military support to the impotent Kremlin coup plotters against Yeltsin's counterrevolutionary forces in 1991 would appear all the more remarkable. The "Gang of Eight" coup makers made no move against Yeltsin, militarily or otherwise, for the simple reason that they were as committed as Yeltsin's clique to capitalist restoration but lacked the backing of U.S. imperialism. In fact, the BT's after-the-fact support to the "Gang of Eight" was simply a convenient means for the BT to be able to drop its always highly nominal position of Soviet defensism by declaring the battle against capitalist restoration already lost. In contrast, the ICL distributed tens of thousands of copies of our leaflet "Soviet Workers: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!" in the Soviet Union. It was only when it was clear that the working class was not going to move against Yeltsin, who was rapidly consolidating a capitalist state, that we accepted that the USSR had been definitively destroyed.

Special ICL Bulletins

On the Logan Regime

(Three parts)

In 1979, Bill Logan was expelled from the international Spartacist tendency for crimes "against communist morality and its substrate human decency." Logan is now the leader of the "International Bolshevik Tendency." As a service to the workers movement we have made our international bulletins documenting Logan's crimes publicly available.

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ON THE LOGAN REGIME PART III

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Bolshevik Tendency—
What Is It?

And you can bet your boots that the BT forgot about its military support to the coup plotters in the company of the SWP, which cheered Yeltsin's counterrevolution as a cause for "rejoicing." On the contrary, an intervention by a BT speaker at an SWP forum at "Marxism" on "Russia 1917 and Soviet Democracy" was so pusillanimous that he got sustained applause from much of the audience, which was replete with state-capitalist, anti-Communist SWPers. And what about the BT's line that imperialist troops should "live like pigs, die like pigs"? The BT charged us with "social-patriotism" because we didn't cheer the deaths of 240 U.S. Marines blown up by a car bomb—planted by persons and forces unknown—in Lebanon in 1983 as an act of "anti-imperialism." As we noted at the time, the BT's vicarious bloodthirstiness was both a convenient posture against us and directly proportional to their distance from where the blood was being shed. At "Marxism" our comrades challenged the BT to apply its supposed convictions a little closer to home and intervene into a forum on Northern Ireland to demand that the British troops there should "die like pigs." Not bloody likely. Instead the leader of the BT's British outfit politely asked why the Socialist Alliance, which has been little more than an electoral front group for the SWP, does not "call for British troops out of Northern

Ireland now." Why? Maybe it has something to do with the fact that the SWP *supported* the intervention of these troops in 1969?! But that's the BT's standard operating procedure—they reserve their bile for the revolutionists while crawling before the large reformist forces.

Thus to the extent the BT has a political profile, it is as centrists who use their anti-Spartacism as the entry ticket into the swamp of social democracy. But the BT is also something else altogether: a vicious gang of crazed "god that failed" renegades, eager to serve the purposes of those who would like to destroy us. Lies and slanders are their weapons of choice, as they are the first recourse for the bosses when they want to break strikes and for the defenders of the racist status quo when they seek to destroy fighters for black liberation.

From the time of Marx on, Marxists have always been committed to elementary sanitation in the workers movement. We do not know whether the BT is motivated simply by its obsessive malice or by something even more sinister. But in seeking to destroy the nucleus of the indispensable Leninist vanguard, they serve the interests of all the enemies of the revolutionary proletariat. To smear the ICL as "chauvinists" is to strike at the very heart of what we are and what we must be to play a role in the liberation of all mankind from capitalist tyranny. ■

Immigrants, Natives, the Poor...

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the NDP with other self-proclaimed "progressives" in tow—were elected last fall on a program of "cleaning up" the Downtown Eastside. Instead of implementing the promised detoxification program and legal safe injection center, they only jacked up "law enforcement"—i.e., cop terror. The police crackdown was launched as part of the city's drive to prettify its image for the 2010 Olympic bid, and comes in the context of a generalized assault on civil rights in the name of the "war on terror" and the devastation of social programs under the right-wing provincial Liberal government. The Liberal offensive was directly prepared by a decade of NDP provincial rule, during which the New Democrats carried out their own attacks on welfare and other social services on behalf of the capitalists.

The rulers' onslaught against immigrants and the poor goes hand in hand with attacks on union rights and the livelihoods of all working people. Thus it is in the direct and material interest of the labor movement to lead a struggle against this savage offensive. The potential power of B.C.'s working class was shown last year in the mass demonstrations of up to 40,000 workers—including thousands of Asian, Latino and other minority unionists as well as prominent Native contingents—against the provincial Liberals' austerity drive. But the B.C. Federation of Labour bureaucrats only used these protests to blow off steam and refurbish frayed illusions in the NDP. And now these labor tops are doing nothing to defend the besieged Downtown Eastside—precisely because, beholden to the NDP, they uncritically supported the election of Larry Campbell and COPE and continue to back them to this day!

A host of pro-NDP "socialists" are also covering for Mayor Campbell—himself a former RCMP narc—and his assault on the poor. An editorial in the Communist Party's *People's Voice* (August 1-31) denounces Tent City organizers

for "placing equal blame for social problems" on the provincial Liberals and "the progressive majorities on Vancouver's City Council and Parks Board." For their part, the International Socialists (I.S.) have maintained a guilty silence on the months-long police assault on the Downtown Eastside. This is no accident: the I.S. hailed the election of Larry Campbell and COPE, calling it "a key lesson for the federal NDP leadership race and the BC renewal process." They added: "The lesson is simple: go left and campaign on real issues like affordable housing, safe injection sites, restrictions on development, and you will get that support" (*Socialist Worker*, 20 November 2002). The idea that the viciously anti-poor Larry Campbell administration is a model of how to "go left" tells you everything you need to know about these sham "socialists," whose whole purpose is to shore up the parliamentary fortunes of the pro-capitalist NDP.

The Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice (FTTM) acknowledges that Larry Campbell "endorses and supports the police action" (*Fire This Time*, May 2003). But they too aim their fire elsewhere, calling to "focus on the attacks of the Liberal Governments" in Victoria and Ottawa. During the mass protests against the Iraq war, FTTM gave a left cover to Larry Campbell and COPE, helping build platforms for the "antiwar" mayor even as his cops were busting up the Tent Cities and jailing dozens of activists.

The Anti-Poverty Committee (APC) has been a prominent organizer of many actions on behalf of the poor. But far from fighting for proletarian class struggle as the only effective means to defend the poor, the APC raises the shopworn call for "Community control of policing for an end to racist police brutality" (*APC News*, August 2002). The police are the armed fist of the capitalist state. Like the courts and prisons, their role is to uphold capitalist property and "order" against the working class and the oppressed. Calls for "community control" of the cops promote deadly illusions that this consummately violent and unjust system can be reformed;

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Immigrants, Natives, the Poor...

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it must be dismantled and replaced in a thoroughgoing socialist revolution.

For a Revolutionary Workers Party!

“Operation Torpedo” shows how the purpose of the rulers’ “war on drugs” is to legitimize a virtual occupying army of police in poor, heavily immigrant and Native districts of the major cities. The escalation of this war today, even as Ottawa tries to burnish its “liberal” image by decriminalizing marijuana possession, is an expression of the overall ratcheting up of repression against workers and the oppressed. In Toronto, the police chief has declared open season on the city’s 300,000-strong black population. In Montreal, the cops have repeatedly arrested hundreds on left-wing demonstrations, most recently rounding up more than 230 activists as well as journalists and passers-by at a July 28 protest against the World Trade Organization.

The cutting edge of this repressive offensive is the anti-immigrant “war on terrorism.” Hundreds of Muslim immigrants have been locked away in the state’s “security” scare. Most recently, 20 Pakistani and Indian students in the Toronto area were detained indefinitely without charges under the Orwellian “Immigration and Refugee Protection Act.” Such attacks are meant to have a chilling effect on the population, in the first instance immigrants but ultimately all of the working class. **Down with the “anti-terror” witchhunt! Free the detainees!**

Trotskyist League supporters have joined protests against the “war on terror,” for immigrant and Native rights and against the attacks on residents of the Downtown Eastside. Pointing to the need for labor to fight on behalf of the poor, we have emphasized that Larry Campbell, COPE and the NDP are not potential allies but pro-capitalist enemies of this struggle.

Chronic unemployment and poverty are endemic to capitalism, which is based on the exploitation of the many by the few. Widespread drug use among brutally downtrodden Native and immigrant minorities is a reflection of the social degradation engendered by this twisted system. We call for the decriminalization of drugs, which would also take the huge profits and much of the violence out of the drug trade, as well as safe injection sites and needle exchanges, combined

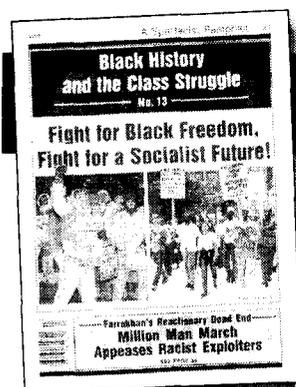


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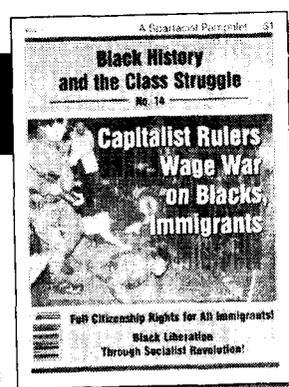
“War on terror” = anti-immigrant racism. Protest outside refugee detention center in Toronto, February 2002.

with free, quality, voluntary medical care. As for the crisis of homelessness, socialist revolution could solve this overnight by expropriating the bourgeoisie’s mansions, luxury hotels and office towers and turning them over to the poor.

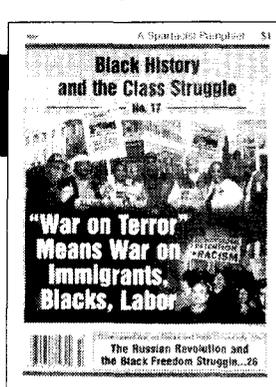
The working class must take up the fight against the racist “war on drugs” as part of a fight for the rights of immigrants, Native people and all the oppressed. B.C. today has tens of thousands of Asian and other minority workers, many of whom have been at the forefront of struggles against capitalist austerity, notably in the hospitals. Winning these and other workers to the fight to sweep away the *system* of mass poverty and wage slavery requires political struggle against the New Democrats and labor misleaders who betray the struggles of working people and tie them to the “national interests” of the ruling class. In B.C. and beyond, we fight to forge a multiracial revolutionary workers party which can link today’s defensive struggles to the goal of sweeping away the entire capitalist system and ushering in an egalitarian socialist future. ■



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Same-Sex Marriage...

(continued from page 2)

the shining pathway to equal rights under the law. Others see it as the antithesis of liberation, the epitome of assimilation, forever short-circuiting the progress we have made in winning new forms of legal recognition and protections for families that don't come with all the negative baggage of marriage. And still others are ambivalent, downright confused, or both."

—Advocate.com, 29 July

Legal marriage will do little to stop the bigotry and violence faced by gays and anyone else who steps outside the stifling boundaries of bourgeois morality. "Coming out" remains a dangerous gamble, especially for teens, and certainly for those in the suburbs and small towns where there isn't even a veneer of "tolerance." The 2001 beating death of Aaron Webster in Vancouver, the brutal gay-bashing of Robbie Petersen in New Brunswick, the suicide of Hamed Nastoh, 14, after repeated homophobic harassment despite not being gay are the tip of a large iceberg.

Prominent gay NDP politician Svend Robinson, who has been baited viciously in the hallowed halls of parliament, recently wrote about these horrible crimes. But his solution is... stronger "hate crime" laws. So the cops who harass and arrest gays are supposed to take special note of anti-gay violence? In Vancouver, Canada's supposed gay Mecca, the largest number of "hate" crimes is against gay men and the cops are notorious for their contemptuous indifference to the victims of these crimes. "Hate crime" laws strengthen the repressive apparatus of the bourgeois state used to keep the capitalists in power. Calling for them only fosters illusions that the government which foments anti-gay bigotry can be a vehicle for liberation. Laws passed to "protect" gays today will be used against them, the working class and other oppressed minorities tomorrow.

The backlash against gay marriage comes on top of a years-long state-run anti-sex witchhunt aimed at regimenting society and instilling fear and guilt. Gay men are especially targeted, but the dragnet includes teachers who have sex with their students, adults who have consensual sex with youth, those who like pornography and youth, who, according to the state, should be abstaining from sex, not enjoying it.

An aptly titled series in the gay newspaper *Xtra*, "Getting the Criminal Code out of your sex life," details a panoply of laws criminalizing consensual sexual activity. If you're under 18 or if more than two people are involved, then anal sex is illegal. Cops have carried out raids and mass arrests on the gay Taboo Strip Club in Montreal and on bathhouses in Calgary and Edmonton. Mere possession of "child" pornography is a crime. In Vancouver, John Robin Sharpe challenged Canada's anti-porn laws after he was charged for possessing his own short stories and photos depicting nude teens kissing. Infuriated when he was finally acquitted, the cops went on a fishing expedition, dredging up someone who claimed to have had sex with Sharpe over 20 years ago when underage. Sharpe now faces frame-up "indecent assault" charges. Stop the state witchhunt of John Robin Sharpe! Cops, courts, government out of the bedrooms!

The only principle that should govern sexuality is effective mutual consent, nothing more and nothing less. We oppose the reactionary "age of consent" laws and indeed all attempts to legislate sexuality. The Trotskyist League and our comrades of the Spartacist League/U.S. are proud of our decades-

long defense of NAMBLA (North American Man/Boy Love Association), hounded by the state for speaking out on the explosive issue of sex between youth and adults.

A measure of the hysteria over this issue is that today the article "Men Loving Boys Loving Men," first published in the Toronto gay newspaper *Body Politic* 25 years ago, is once again in the dock. In 1997 Ontario teacher Narcisse Kuneman was convicted for possessing the article and some critiques of it; today in arguing against Kuneman's appeal the crown prosecutor asserts that mere possession of the article is a crime under Canada's draconian anti-porn laws. *Body Politic* was subjected to a wholesale state vendetta for printing the article, which described the sexual experiences of several men with youths under the "age of consent" and made the simple assertion that such relationships are not inherently abusive. From jackboot cop raids on the paper's offices, to repeated, unsuccessful efforts by prosecutors to secure convictions under "obscenity" laws, the most elementary civil rights were shredded in the service of a vicious and far-reaching witchhunt. We actively joined the fight against this onslaught, declaring "Defend the *Body Politic*!" and calling on the organized labor movement to take a stand in defense of gay rights.

Two decades ago, raids on bars and bathhouses and anti-porn busts were met with huge protests. Today the raids still happen but the protests have vanished. Meanwhile, advocacy of (some) gay rights has gone "mainstream," as shown by the federal Liberals' current stance on gay marriage. Gay Pride Day is a corporate celebration replete with vote-hustling bourgeois politicians who could care less about gay rights. But on the shop floors of factories, anti-gay epithets and violence still occur with sickening frequency. Women in "non-traditional" or industrial jobs are taunted by bosses and co-workers as "dykes"—lesbian or not, you're outed.

Last year, when Oshawa teen Marc Hall had to get a court order to bring his boyfriend to a high school prom, the Canadian Auto Workers went to bat for him. Unions increasingly insist on contract language that ensures equal benefits and rights for gays. These are good developments. But the union leadership, whose flag-waving patriotism and "Canada first" chauvinism bring the reactionary ideology of the capitalist rulers into the working class, can hardly lead a fight for the liberation of anyone from this deeply oppressive system. And while NDP leaders like Robinson and Jack Layton campaign for gay rights, they simultaneously work to buttress the capitalist state and increase its repressive reach. Three years ago, the NDP premier of B.C. was campaigning to *raise* the age of consent to 16.

Our struggle for full democratic rights for gays means a commitment not only to fight against job discrimination and legal inequality, but crucially to mobilize the power of the working class in defense of gay rights. That means struggling for a new leadership of the workers and oppressed dedicated to anti-capitalist class struggle. Sweeping away bourgeois rule and tsarist autocracy, the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution eliminated all laws against homosexuality. Today, exposing and combating every injustice and every outrage, communists fight to forge a revolutionary party that will combat every form of oppression, for this is central to the task of leading the proletariat to power. Only then will we be able to sweep out all the garbage of bigotry and build a socialist society that will make equality and freedom a living social reality for all. ■

Labor Must Defend Immigrants, Natives, the Poor!

Racist Police Rampage in Vancouver

VANCOUVER—The largely Native and immigrant population of the Downtown Eastside is being subjected to a truly vicious campaign of racist police terror. Under “Operation Torpedo,” an army of cops has staged daily blitzkriegs through the neighborhood, beating and arresting people at random in the name of a “war on drugs.” This no-holds-barred state repression of minorities and the poor is being carried out on the direct behalf of the city’s new “progressive” city council under mayor Larry Campbell.

Some of the atrocities are documented in a scathing May 2003 Human Rights Watch report titled “Abusing the User: Police Misconduct, Harm Reduction and HIV/AIDS in Vancouver,” which cites cases of “torture and beatings, unreasonable use of force, arbitrary and unlawful arrest, unlawful searches, and harassment at the hands of the city police.” In January, the cops took three accused drug dealers to Stanley Park and beat them savagely. In another incident, Honduran refugee Jose Cardona was kned in the groin so violently he is likely to lose a testicle. Others told of beatings and arrests after they tried to assert their right to remain silent and to refuse to be searched. The police have also busted up Tent City protests organized for the homeless and raided the homes of members of the militant Native Youth Movement, seizing computers, files and e-mail lists.

By every measure, the Downtown Eastside is Canada’s most destitute urban neighborhood. Thousands of Native people and Hispanic and Southeast Asian immigrants have been dumped in this ten-square-block hellhole in the middle of what the media touts as “the most beautiful city in the world.” At least 60 prostitutes, mainly Native women, have “disappeared” from the area in recent years. For years the cops ignored pleas from desperate relatives to investigate; now, after what appears to be the largest serial murder in Canadian history, the remains of many of these women have been unearthed in a grisly search through a suburban pig farm.



SC photo

Vancouver, May 2002: Tens of thousands of unionists, Native people and immigrants march against B.C. Liberal government.

The Downtown Eastside is believed to have the worst AIDS epidemic in the developed world. HIV prevalence among injection drug users approaches 40 percent, while over 90 percent have contracted hepatitis C. Residents have tried to stem these epidemics through a free needle exchange and safe injection site. But the cops raided and temporarily shut the exchange last year, and more recently have been surrounding it, intimidating users from getting the clean needles they need to stop the spread of disease. The police crackdown is *directly fueling* Vancouver’s AIDS epidemic.

Reformist Left Backs the “People’s Mayor”

“People’s mayor” Larry Campbell and the Coalition of Progressive Electors (COPE)—essentially a civic version of
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