

British troops out now!

Northern Ireland: imperialist “peace” fraud

Not Orange against Green but class against class!

For an Irish workers republic in a socialist federation of the British Isles!

We publish below a joint statement issued on 21 April by the Spartacist League/Britain and the Dublin Spartacist Group, sections of the International Communist League.

The “historic” agreement signed in Belfast’s Stormont Castle on 11 April cannot and will not bring peace to Northern Ireland. This reactionary imperialist deal will reinforce the subjugation of the oppressed Catholic minority. It will be enforced by the 18,000-strong British Army and the viciously sectarian Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), who work hand in glove with the fascist Loyalist death squads in the murder of Catholics.

This agreement was imposed by British prime minister Tony Blair and Irish taoiseach (prime minister) Bertie Ahern, and brokered by US president Bill Clinton and his emissary, former senator George Mitchell. The hypocrisy of their tirades against “terrorism” is exposed not least by US and British imperialism’s starvation embargo of Iraq, which has killed over 600,000 children and a million people overall. Barely a month ago these self-proclaimed imperialist “peacemakers”, with the active support of the capitalist Dublin government, were on course for a massive bombing attack against the people of Iraq.

The Spartacist League/Britain and the Dublin Spartacist Group (DSG), sections of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist), categorically oppose the reactionary Stormont deal. We have warned from the beginning of the grossly misnamed “peace” process: “Any imperialist ‘deal’ will be bloody and brutal and will necessarily be at the expense of the oppressed Catholic minority. And it would not do any good for working class Protestants either” (*Workers Hammer* no 138, November/December 1993). We demand: *British troops out of Northern Ireland now!*

As we wrote in our 1977 document, “Theses on Ireland” (*Spartacist* [English edition] no 24, Autumn 1977):

“An essential element of our program is the demand for the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of the British army.

British imperialism has brought centuries of exploitation, oppression and bloodshed to the island. No good can come of the British presence: the existing tie between Northern Ireland and the British state can only be oppressive to the Irish Catholic population, an obstacle to a proletarian class mobilisation and solution....

“At the same time we do not regard the demand as synonymous with or as a concrete application of either the call for Irish self-determination (that is, a unitary state of the whole island) or for an independent Ulster — two solutions which within the framework of capitalism would be anti-democratic, in the first case toward the Protestants and in the second toward the Irish Catholics....

“Thus, the demand for the immediate withdrawal of the British army from Northern Ireland must be linked to and constitute a part of a whole revolutionary program.”

There can be no just, equitable resolution to the communal conflict in Northern Ireland short of workers revolution on both sides of the Irish border and both sides of the Irish Sea.

The key to breaking the bloody cycle of imperialist repression and communalist terror is to unite the proletariat — Protestant and Catholic; English, Scottish, Welsh and Irish — across national and religious lines in common struggle against the capitalist class enemy. That requires intransigent proletarian opposition not only to blood-soaked British imperialism and Orange supremacy, to anti-Catholic terror and discrimination, but also to Green nationalism and the clericalist state in the South. The ICL fights to forge Leninist-Trotskyist parties to lead the workers in the revolutionary overthrow of all their oppressors and exploiters and in

the establishment of proletarian state power throughout the British Isles. *Not Orange against Green but class against class! For an Irish workers republic in a socialist federation of the British Isles!*

No to a new Stormont of Orange supremacy!

The new agreement, whose terms are to be submitted for approval in referendums to be held in both the North and the South next month, proposes a Unionist-dominated assembly in Belfast and an impotent “North-South” body, which is a sop to the Republicans. The proposed Belfast assembly is reminiscent of the old Stormont parliament which lorded it over the Catholics prior to the imposition of direct rule from Westminster in 1972. However, the new assembly will have powers Stormont never had. The Unionists will have effective veto power over the North-South “consultative” body and all matters within Northern Ireland itself, including any change in its constitutional status as an integral part of the “United Kingdom”. The referendum in the South is intended to repeal Dublin’s historic claim to the Six Counties of the North. Loyalist die-hards such as Ian Paisley and elements within the Orange Order oppose any deal involving Dublin. But as Ulster Unionist Party leader David Trimble (slated to be First Minister in the new assembly) crowed, the agreement is “good for unionism and bad for republicanism” (*Irish News*, 17 April).

Leaders of Sinn Féin, petty-bourgeois nationalists committed to securing a capitalist united Ireland, entered the negotiations peddling the illusion that the British government, particularly under Labour,

would “persuade” the Ulster Unionists to distance themselves from Britain and accept closer links to the South. The British Army has been unable to defeat the Irish Republican Army (IRA) militarily, and Northern Ireland is a net drain on the decaying British economy. Sinn Féin also viewed US imperialism and the Dublin government as their allies and hoped to secure a commitment to British withdrawal and “reform” of the RUC. Contrary to nationalist illusions, the capitalist forces they look to are intent on breaking the IRA and subjugating the Northern Catholic population. But the Green nationalists of the IRA/Sinn Féin also serve to reinforce British imperialism’s bloody divide-and-rule policy over the working class, pitting Protestant and Catholic workers against each other.

The Belfast agreement shows the social-imperialist British Labour Party — a bourgeois workers party, as Lenin called it — in its true colours. The Labour government is a capitalist government: viciously anti-working class, racist to the core and totally committed to the monarchy and British imperialism. We base ourselves on irreconcilable opposition to Labourism; we seek to split Labour, winning its working-class base away from the pro-capitalist misleaders to a revolutionary programme and party. As opposed to reformists like the Socialist Party (SP) and Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and centrists like Workers Power (WP) — who all march in lockstep behind Labour — the SL/B refused to extend an iota of support to Blair’s Labour Party in the election.

We gave critical support to Arthur Scargill’s Socialist Labour Party (SLP) — recognising that its opposition to Blair represented a crack in Labour’s political hold over the workers movement — while opposing the SLP’s “old Labour” reformism. While calling for withdrawal of British troops, the SLP accepts the framework of the imperialist “peace” process, which means at bottom placing confidence in the British state to reach a just solution.

When IRA prisoner Bobby Sands died

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An Phoblacht

British Army patrol in Belfast. We demand the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of the British Army from Northern Ireland.

Indonesia seethes under IMF austerity

SEE PAGE SIX



Privatisation of London Underground:

Labour prepares union-busting assault

Labour deputy prime minister John Prescott's so-called "third way" of "Public/Private Partnership" means union-busting, job-slashing, wage-gouging *privatisation*. The Underground's infrastructure — the track, tunnels, signals, and train maintenance — is to be handed over to private contractors. Under Tories and Labour, the tube system was chronically and deliberately starved of investment in preparation for a sell-off, while many services are already privatised.

The Underground bosses are intent on breaking the unions. A leaked company document refers to management options,

using terms such as a "strategic hit" on the RMT union. The London *Evening Standard* (6 April) reported "a growing desire among some senior members of LU to let the RMT hold another summer of strike action and — when they feel anti-union commuter anger is 'ripe' — move in and attempt to smash the RMT's stranglehold once and for all by refusing to recognise or deal with them any more. The 5,000-plus RMT members would be offered personal contracts and left to join other unions."

While the government and the tube bosses are gearing up for a major assault on the Underground unions, the Labourite

union tops are *undermining* the level of union resistance to the attacks on working conditions. The tube workforce is divided along craft lines between ASLEF and the RMT. Two years ago, both unions waged a series of token one-day strikes over pay, conducted separately, which meant one union was on strike while the other was working. Recently, RMT guards on the Northern Line have waged one-day strikes over working conditions when driver-operated trains are introduced. Yet the RMT refuses even to bring out all its own members during strikes. While the whole Underground workforce is under attack, the union leadership has restricted these strikes to the Northern Line, and has only belatedly balloted the RMT drivers. It restricts these token, 24-hour strikes to guards only, while ASLEF officially sanctions scabbing on the RMT strikes by its members. Playing by the bosses' rules — the anti-union laws — the union misleaders are sowing demoralisation in the workforce, and destroying class consciousness.

There is widespread hatred of privatisation of public utilities such as British Rail, out of which capitalist sharks make enormous profits. Meanwhile the working conditions go to hell, services get worse, fares go up, safety deteriorates and the workers get the blame. The Southall rail crash last September, in which seven people were killed and 170 injured, was a direct result of cost-cutting, but while the train companies rake in vast profits, the driver Larry Harrison has outrageously been charged with manslaughter. *Drop the charges now!*

To defeat the attack on the unions in London Underground requires solid strike action, which would shut down the entire network. Solid picket lines would paralyse transportation and hit the City fatcats' profits. *For one industrial union across the rail network!* Mobilising the social power of this multiracial workforce could also turn the tables against the racist Labour government, which oozes contempt for workers and racial minorities. A successful tube strike, which also demanded free public transportation, would be incredibly popular with the downtrodden working people of this city, who are sick and tired of getting fleeced by relentless attacks under Tories and Labour. But any effective struggle by the working class

immediately poses the question of how to defeat the anti-union laws, enforced by the capitalist state. This is the question the Labourite bureaucracy won't touch because any strike action would mean confronting *their* Labour government. It is fundamentally a political question, which requires that workers break with Labour and forge a new revolutionary leadership of the working class. This was the crucial lesson of the miners strike of 1984-85.

The Socialist Labour Party (SLP) bases itself on defeatist conclusions from the outcome of the miners strike, which was led by Arthur Scargill to just about the limits of trade union militancy. What the Spartacist League fought for, a "fighting Triple Alliance" of dockers and railworkers striking alongside the miners, posed the way forward to working-class power. Scargill's idea of power did not transcend the idea of electing a Labour government.

The RMT leadership includes many prominent members of Scargill's SLP, such as Bob Crow and Pat Sikorski, who are based in London Underground. At the time of the general election, we said no vote to New Labour, and gave critical support to SLP candidates, who stood in opposition to New Labour. At the same time we also stated that the interests of the working class cannot be met by the SLP's political programme, which is simply old Labour reformism.

This has been demonstrated already in the case of the Liverpool dockers. Forced to accept a bitter defeat after more than two years of struggle, the dockers were openly knifed by Bill Morris of the TGWU. But dockers leader Jimmy Nolan of the SLP dismissed the possibility of strike action alongside the dockers by other workers in Merseyside such as at Ford Halewood. And following the election, Nolan also ended up proposing that the Labour government "intervene" on behalf of the dockers, which we pointed out would likely be the kiss of death for their struggle.

The RMT's tokenistic strikes in London Underground accept the Labourite lie that effective class struggle is a thing of the past. We seek to split Labour, winning workers away from the pro-capitalist leadership, in the process of building a revolutionary party to overthrow the system of capitalism and replace it with working-class rule. ■



TROTSKY

Enlightenment rationalism and the origins of Marxism

Having succeeded — aided and abetted by the betrayals of the Stalinists — in destroying the gains of the Russian Revolution that remained in the former Soviet Union, the imperialist rulers want the world to believe that there is no need for new October Revolutions. That is the meaning of the bourgeois triumphalism over the "death of communism". This ideological offensive against Marxism has

been extended back to attacking the rational humanism of the Enlightenment. Thus, to justify their increasingly brutal class rule, the bourgeoisie repudiates the most progressive aspects of its own origins.

Enlightenment rationalism was the highest intellectual expression of the struggle of the nascent, and then-revolutionary capitalist class to destroy the feudal barriers to capitalist development. Similarly, Marxism — scientific socialism — is the expression of the historic interests of the proletariat, the only revolutionary class in modern capitalism, to break the fetters of the outmoded and decaying capitalist system and replace it with an international, planned socialist economy. In the retrograde climate of post-Soviet reaction, the struggle to reassert the validity of the programme and purpose of revolutionary Marxism is crucial to the fight for new October Revolutions. As VI Lenin, the leader of the October 1917 Revolution in Russia, wrote in a 1913 article:

The genius of Marx consists precisely in his having furnished answers to questions already raised by the foremost minds of mankind. His doctrine emerged as the direct and immediate continuation of the teachings of the greatest representatives of philosophy, political economy and socialism.

The Marxist doctrine is omnipotent because it is true. It is comprehensive and harmonious, and provides men with an integral world outlook irreconcilable with any form of superstition, reaction, or defence of bourgeois oppression. It is the legitimate successor to the best that man produced in the nineteenth century, as represented by German philosophy, English political economy and French socialism. . . .

People always have been the foolish victims of deception and self-deception in politics, and they always will be until they have learnt to seek out the interests of some class or other behind all moral, religious, political and social phrases, declarations and promises. Champions of reforms and improvements will always be fooled by the defenders of the old order until they realise that every old institution, however barbarous and rotten it may appear to be, is kept going by the forces of certain ruling classes. And there is *only one* way of smashing the resistance of those classes, and that is to find, in the very society which surrounds us, the forces which can — and, owing to their social position, *must* — constitute the power capable of sweeping away the old and creating the new, and to enlighten and organise those forces for the struggle.

— VI Lenin, "The Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism"



LENIN

WORKERS HAMMER

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For a Socialist United States of Europe!

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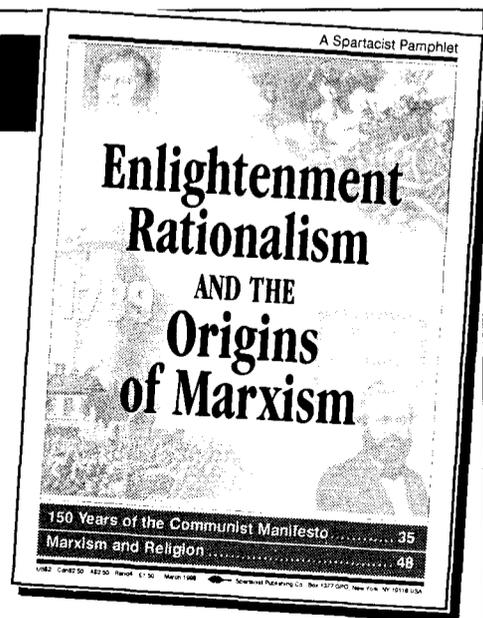
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War on the waterfront

Smash bosses' union-busting offensive in Australia!

As we go to press, the Australian High Court are about to rule on the appeal made by Patrick Stevedores against the Federal Court's order that the company employ union labour. Nearly one month ago, Patrick Stevedores, in league with the Liberal/National government, sacked their 2000-strong workforce who are members of the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA).

Regardless of the High Court's ruling, the fact remains that the fate of the MUA, which is battling for its life, will be decided in the course of class struggle and not in the capitalist courts.

SYDNEY, 20 April — From Melbourne and Sydney on Australia's eastern coast to the Indian Ocean port of Fremantle, the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) is fighting a battle for its very existence. Backed up by the full power of the capitalist state and the right-wing Liberal/National coalition government of Prime Minister John Howard, the waterfront bosses are carrying out long-prepared plans to destroy one of the country's most powerful and militant unions.

Late on the night of 7 April, Patrick Stevedores sacked their entire unionised workforce at ports around the country. In a coordinated military operation, hundreds of black-uniformed security guards with attack dogs swarmed onto the docks. One unionist reported: "They jumped into the forklift cabins, grabbed the drivers and said turn the lifts off, you've been sacked." A Queensland docker called it "a military-style junta". Within hours, some 2000 MUA members had been thrown out of work, their jobs taken by scabs.

The next day, construction workers in Sydney — many of them Maoris and Pacific Islanders — walked off the job in solidarity. As picket lines including MUA members, their wives and other supporters went up at the ports, the government deployed armies of baton-wielding riot cops. On 15 April, Patrick was forced to suspend its operations in Newcastle, citing "fears for the safety of its new non-union workforce" (Reuters, 15 April). Two days ago in Melbourne, the country's largest container port, a mobilisation of hundreds of cops failed to clear some 3000 MUA members and supporters who occupied rail lines and roadways to keep trucks and trains from the Patrick docks. Today, a thousand building workers joined the picket line in Melbourne, while 70 truckers tied up rush hour traffic by parking their rigs along a main road. Now the Victoria Supreme Court has issued a draconian strikebreaking injunction barring any pickets within 200 metres of the key Melbourne docks, while the cops are preparing two prison facilities to hold arrested picketers.

The outpouring of support for the MUA indicates a widespread sense that a defeat for this union, in what is the last closed-shop industry in the country, would greatly embolden the capitalist rulers' drive against all unions. But the evident determination to defeat the union-busters

is being sapped from within by the pro-capitalist Australian Labor Party (ALP) and trade-union misleaders. With federal elections likely later this year, the *Australian* (13 April) reports that the ALP tops are directing the unions to "limit disruptive and violent industrial action as far as possible for fear of alienating voters".

The Australian Congress of Trade Unions (ACTU) has now vowed to defy the court injunction. *That is absolutely*



Sydney: Dock workers face cop attack on picket lines as they fight to defeat union-busting assault.

necessary. But ACTU president Jennie George earlier declared that the union misleaders would not be "provoked" into an "all-out war" (*Australian*, 13 April). And the MUA leadership has worked to keep this crucial battle within the straitjacket of the bosses' anti-union laws — many of them introduced by ALP governments — and appeals to the capitalist courts.

The attack on the MUA is only the latest in a series of attempts by the shipping bosses and capitalist governments around the world — from Liverpool to Manila — to "rationalise" the industry. Thus, a defeat here would lead to escalated attacks on dock workers everywhere, particularly in Japan where the shipping companies are intent on smashing union controls over shifts and working conditions. Railing that "the MUA accounts for 25 per cent of all worldwide dock disputes" and has a "working-class mystique that in Britain once surrounded the miners", the *Financial Times* (17 April) clamoured to "resolve" the dispute "on terms that remove the MUA's closed shop and leave Australia more competitive".

The capitalists' screaming for the blood of the MUA should be a clarion call for genuine international labour solidarity action. But union bureaucrats from Tokyo to San Francisco have offered nothing more than token protests at Australian consulates to plead with the strike-breaking Howard government. And the London-based International Transport Federation (ITF) has used legalistic excuses to refuse

to mobilise real union power, such as "blacking" — refusing to handle — struck cargo from Australia.

As the showdown with the waterfront bosses loomed, MUA leader John Coombs promised defeat in advance, wailing, "When governments attack us they inevitably win" (*Australian*, 26 March). *This strike can be won.* But that requires a political struggle against the class-collaborationism of the ALP/ACTU tops. As the

sarily rule for the bosses. Fighting under these misleaders is like fighting with both hands tied behind your back: workers need a class-struggle leadership imbued with the understanding that the interests of workers and capitalists are irreconcilably counterposed. A revolutionary workers party, able to lead all of capitalism's exploited and oppressed, is the crucial instrument for victory not only in this struggle, but in the battle to do away with the profit system once and for all."

ALP, ACTU tops push "partnership" with capital

Howard came to power in 1996 vowing to crush the MUA and to intensify racist repression. Now he hopes to impose a stinging defeat on the union to kick off a racist re-election campaign which is also aimed at furthering the government's attack on Aboriginal land rights. Howard's attacks were prepared by the ALP governments of Bob Hawke and Paul Keating, which oversaw the loss of thousands of jobs on the wharves and carried out the destruction of the airline pilots union and the militant Builders Labourers Federation. This went hand in hand with the escalation of racist attacks against immigrants and Aborigines.

Everyone knew that a showdown between the waterfront workers and the Howard government was coming. For nearly a year, the government and maritime bosses have staged one anti-union provocation after another in the name of "waterfront reform". A brazen attempt to use scabs on the Cairns docks in Queensland last September was turned back by the union. Then in December, details emerged of a sinister plan to train former Australian military and police personnel in the Arabian port of Dubai to work the waterfront. The scab mercenaries were hired by the "Fynwest" outfit, which is run by two former Special Air Service commandos. In the face of a threatened ITF boycott, the government of the United Arab Emirates pulled the plug on the scheme, cancelling the Australians' visas.

On 28 January, the Patrick bosses locked out 170 workers while an army of private security thugs invaded Webb Dock

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Just out!

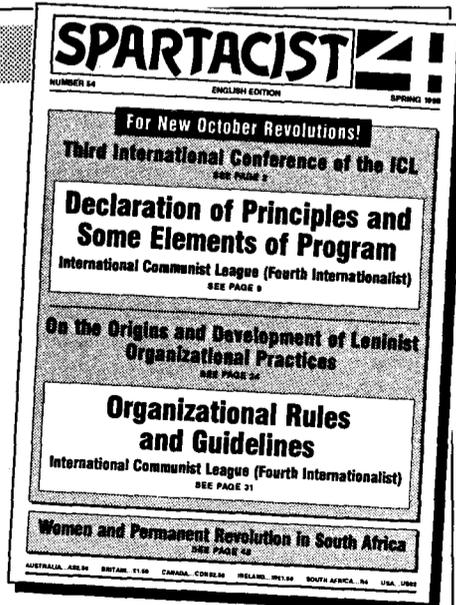
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Ireland...

(Continued from page 1)

on hunger strike in British imperialism's H-Block prison in 1981, we denounced Tory prime minister Margaret Thatcher and the Labour lackeys — "left" and right — who supported her as "Westminster Butchers" (*Spartacist Britain* no 32, May 1981). We declared:

"The British labour movement today bears the brunt of endless vicious attacks by a government seeking to make them pay for the decrepitude of British capitalism. And this is the same government that has unleashed the troops on the population of Northern Ireland. To the labour movement of Britain we say: Black [boycott] all military transport to Northern Ireland! Demand troops out now! Throw out your misleaders who uphold imperialist repression in Ireland just as they betray your own struggles at home!"

This is no less the case today under Blair. From the time of Karl Marx it has been clear that the struggle of the British workers against the capitalist rulers can only go forward on the basis of firm opposition to imperialist oppression in Ireland.

No to forcible reunification!

Successive Dublin governments, often including the wretched Irish Labour Party, have backed British Army repression in Northern Ireland. The DSG fights for the revolutionary overthrow of the clericalist state in the South. We oppose this capitalist state's vicious oppression of workers. In the face of state repression and Youth Defence clerical-fascist terror against abortion rights for women, we call for *free abortion on demand*. As a tribune of the people, we call for defence of Travellers against hideous oppression and attacks by police and vigilante mobs.

If endorsed, as is expected, the Stormont agreement will be taken by the governments in London, Dublin and Belfast as a mandate for intensified repression. Ominously, RUC Chief Constable Ronnie Flanagan has called for increased "security" and "vigilance" in the wake of the deal and "security sources" in the South have warned that the police "response to the peace-breakers will be unprecedented and decisive" (*Irish World*, 17 April). These threats are directed against nationalist groups, leftists, militant workers and anyone deemed to be an opponent of British imperialism, the Orange statelet and the capitalist state in the South. Meanwhile, mass Loyalist mobilisations in the North have grown dramatically since the "peace" process began. Last July, Catholic Garvaghy Road in Portadown was subjected to a massive assault by the British Army and RUC as they cleared the way for a thousand Orangemen to march, flaunting their bloody Union Jacks.

The latest agreement is designed to replace the 1986 Anglo-Irish Accord, a Cold War, pro-NATO deal which granted the Southern state the pretence of a "say" in the running of the North and tried to cajole the Unionists into "power-sharing". In return, Ireland was to provide a base for NATO's war drive against the Soviet Union. That deal saw 100,000 outraged Loyalists marching through Belfast, a big crackdown on the IRA and more British troops in Northern Ireland. The "model" for Northern Ireland today is meant to be the disastrous US-sponsored Near East "peace process" which followed in the wake of the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union and which has meant increased Zionist terror against the Palestinian people, buttressed by United Nations forces which include Irish troops. We say: Irish/UN troops out of Lebanon! Israel out of the Occupied Territories!

In the South, the referendum to be held in May involves removing Articles 2 and 3 of the constitution, outlining Dublin's

London, June 1981:
Spartacist League
contingent marches
in protest at
Westminster
butchers' H-Block
murders.



claim to the Six Counties. We recognise that in revising these articles Bertie Ahern is stitching up a deal with British imperialism and Ulster Unionism to break the back of the IRA and to cow the Northern Catholics into submission. At the same time, we do not uphold the irredentist nationalist claim of the Dublin bourgeoisie to rule the whole island.

Prior to 1922, revolutionaries opposed partition, striving to cement revolutionary unity in the struggle for independence of all Ireland from British imperialism. However, since partition, which resulted in the consolidation of the bourgeois, clericalist republic in the South and the hardening of communal lines in the North, it is necessary to oppose the forcible reunification of Ireland. The oppressed Catholic minority in the North is geographically interpenetrated with the Protestants, who represent a *distinct community*. As we wrote in "Theses on Ireland":

"In the case of interpenetrated peoples sharing a common territory, we oppose the exercise of self-determination by one nation where this flatly conflicts with the same right for another nation.... Under capitalism this would simply be a formula for reversing the terms of oppression, for forcible population transfers and expulsions and ultimately genocide. It is a 'solution' repeatedly demonstrated in history, for example in the cases of India/Pakistan, Israel/Palestine and Cyprus....

"Though not yet a nation, the Protestants are certainly not a part of the Irish nation and are distinct from the Scottish and English nations. Presently their separate existence is defined in large part as against the Irish Catholic nation and at the ideological level is expressed in religious terms."

Our call for an Irish workers republic within a socialist federation of the British Isles leaves open what form a democratic resolution of the Protestant question will take under proletarian rule. As proletarian internationalists, we seek to *undercut* legitimate Protestant fears of their being oppressed in an enlarged clericalist state of Ireland — an outcome they would violently resist. Such fears serve to compact the Protestant working class behind Orange demagogues who fuel anti-Catholic Loyalist terror. Within the framework of imperialism, the door is open to a "Bosnian solution" predicated on undoubtedly bloody forced population transfers.

Disillusion with the outcome of the negotiations has fuelled sentiment in the ranks of Sinn Féin and the IRA to renew the armed struggle. Yet the "armed struggle" and "negotiations" are two sides of the same coin, designed to *pressure* the imperialist oppressors. Terrorism as a method of struggle is antithetical to the task of mobilising the proletariat against its imperialist oppressors, of imbuing it with the consciousness of its historic task in sweeping away the murderous capitalist system. Nonetheless, when the IRA strikes a blow against the forces of British imperialism or fascistic Loyalist killers, we defend the perpetrators of such acts against the capitalist state. But we take a fundamentally different attitude to indis-

criminate terror, such as the Shankill bombing in Belfast or bombings in British cities. From a proletarian perspective, these are criminal acts which only serve to deepen hatred between Catholic and Protestant, English and Irish workers, expressing the genocidal logic of nationalism.

We fight for *programmatically based, anti-sectarian workers militias to combat Orange and Green terror*. Such militias, integrating Protestant and Catholic workers, would necessarily have to be organised on an internationalist basis, requiring the leadership of cadre of a Leninist vanguard party.

For an internationalist proletarian vanguard party!

Notwithstanding their occasional "revolutionary" flourishes, that the various reformist and centrist groups in Britain capitulate to British imperialism is clear from their unfaltering loyalty to the Labour Party. Both the SP, which spent decades buried inside the Labour Party, and Tony Cliff's British SWP refuse to raise the elementary demand for the withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland (which is raised, in the fine print, in the Irish Cliffite press — some "international"!). The Cliffites *cheered* when an earlier Labour government sent the troops in in 1969, lying that this would provide the oppressed Catholics with a "breathing space"! Today the SWP's *Socialist Worker* (18 April) appeals to Blair to carry out his imperialist "peace" deal, whining that the "only way to secure real peace in the future is if the British government stands up to Paisley and confronts the Orangemen".

Particularly given their acceptance of the imperialist presence in the North, the economist "unite and fight" rhetoric pushed by both the SWP and the SP is simply a capitulation to the Labourite trade-union bureaucracy and the prejudices of the most backward sections of the working class — ie, to British imperialism and Orange reaction. The SP are outright apologists for Billy Hutchinson, spokesman for the Progressive Unionist Party, a front for the fascistic Ulster Volunteer Force death squads. In January, both the SP and SWP supported and participated in a Belfast "peace" demonstration sponsored by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions that was in fact an anti-Catholic, pro-Unionist, pro-imperialist mobilisation embracing Hutchinson and British Northern Ireland secretary Mo Mowlam. The SP openly justified attempts to exclude placards protesting Loyalist murders of Catholics, shamelessly calling them "one-sided slogans and sectarian undertones". The Irish *Socialist Worker* (7-20 February) cheered, "ICTU Rallies in the North Show the Way".

For their part, the equally Labour-loyal centrists of Workers Power, while calling for the withdrawal of British troops, tail behind Green nationalism. *Workers Power* (April 1996) argued:

"We recognise that a progressive solution

requires that the working class come to the head of the national struggle. But that does not prevent us from solidarising with those who are fighting for independence under the banner of petit-bourgeois nationalism — i.e. a capitalist united Ireland."

In other words, WP want to yoke the working class into pulling the ox-cart of petty-bourgeois nationalism and the Southern bourgeoisie. Far from combatting the communal divisions within the working class, WP's line can only result in deepening them. Its support to the forcible reunification of Ireland is a recipe for drowning the proletariat in communalist slaughter.

Intervening at an 18 April SP public meeting in Belfast which featured Irish SP parliamentarian Joe Higgins, a DSG spokesman denounced Higgins' stated intent of meeting with the Orange Order. Our comrade noted that this anti-Catholic outfit "was used throughout its history to smash unity of the working class in struggle — in Belfast in 1907, 1912 and especially in 1919 in the crucially important engineering strike. This strike of mainly Protestant workers was led by a Catholic: the defeat of this strike was sealed in blood. The result of this defeat of the working class in struggle laid the basis for the reactionary partition."

The Orange Order worked hand in hand with the British imperialists and the trade-union bureaucracy to smash the 1919 Belfast engineers strike. They were aided in this by the Green nationalists. In its aftermath, Catholic and Protestant shop stewards and strikers were driven out of the shipyards and tens of thousands of Catholics were forced to flee from their homes. Likewise, the mass unemployment marches in the 1930s, which also cut across the sectarian divisions, were countered with massive sectarian mobilisations intended to wipe out the fragile proletarian unity.

The struggle to unite Catholic and Protestant workers around their common class interests will not be an easy one. But there will be no class unity on an economist basis, which accepts the oppression of the Catholic minority, nor without uncompromising combat against the nationalism both of the oppressed and the oppressor. Both the Loyalist chauvinists and the Green nationalists will attempt to sabotage, as they have in the past, any possibility of joint proletarian struggle. On the other hand, through the intervention of a revolutionary-internationalist vanguard, even transitory instances of working-class solidarity can provide the basis for altering the course of the conflict towards a class determination and proletarian revolution.

In any case, there can be no other road to peace and social and national justice in Northern Ireland. The ICL commits itself to the urgent task of forging the revolutionary leadership needed to lead the proletariat in transcending the bitter sectarian hatreds which divide it and struggling in common for socialist revolution and an egalitarian, classless society. ■

SYG protests South Korean president, Kim Dae Jung

On 4 April the Spartacus Youth Group (SYG), youth organisation of the Spartacist League/Britain, called a protest against Kim Dae Jung, president of the South Korean police state, who was speaking at the London School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) on capitalist reunification of Korea. Our slogans demanded "For unconditional military defence of North Korea! For revolutionary reunification of Korea! US troops out of Korea now!" The protest was one of a series of speakouts and demonstrations held by the International Communist League to coincide with the so-called peace talks taking place between North and South Korea, sponsored primarily by US imperialism with the full backing of the imperialist Labour government.

Kim Dae Jung, elected as president at the end of last year, is presented as an advocate of "human rights" and democracy. Speaking at the protest for the SYG, Melanie Kelly said: "This is a lie. He supports the massive US military presence, which has been maintained since 1945, and which today amounts to almost 40,000 troops, armed with nuclear weapons." She went on to say that since being in office he has well earned his credentials as imperialism's hatchet man in South Korea, carrying out the IMF's vicious austerity plan against the South Korean working class. This has meant massive wage cuts, workers laid off at a rate of 10,000 a week and ongoing political repression of militant workers and leftist students. At a campus speakout in the US, our comrade Michelle Oberman of the Los Angeles Spartacus Youth Club said: "It is the elementary duty of the international working class and anti-imperialist youth to rally to the defence of the workers and students of South Korea in struggle against capitalist repression. We



London, 4 April: SYG protests Kim Dae Jung at SOAS.

Workers Hammer

demand the immediate release of all jailed South Korean labour militants and leftist students!"

The Labour government today fully backs Kim Dae Jung's drive towards capitalist reunification in Korea and the severe attacks on the working class. As we said at the SOAS protest: "The Labour Party has always been pro-imperialist and anti-communist. We of the International Communist League fight for the revolutionary overthrow of British imperialism which for centuries has extracted enormous wealth as private profit from the super-exploitation of the working classes of the world. From the days when the Empire lorded it over the colonial peoples, to decaying British capitalism today, racist British imperialism has waged war on workers and minorities at home and

abroad." We reprint below our leaflet issued for the 4 April SOAS protest.

- For proletarian socialist revolution in South Korea!
- For proletarian political revolution to oust Stalinist bureaucracy in North Korea!
- Down with IMF bloodsuckers! Defeat US/British imperialism through workers revolution!

Kim Dae Jung, newly-elected president of the South Korean police state, is being presented with an award at the School of Oriental and African Studies this Saturday, 4 April. In South Korea "dissident" Kim Dae Jung has begun implementing the IMF "bailout" programme, which aims to impose massive wage cuts and millions of layoffs on the powerful proletariat and

opens the door to a stream of takeovers of Korean companies by foreign capital. Beginning last summer, IMF moves in the region touched off massive protests, including by workers in South Korea chafing at the threat to their livelihoods and the depredations of imperialist moneymen. We say: *Down with IMF bloodsuckers! Defeat British/US imperialism through workers revolution!*

For the past half century, the Korean peninsula has been divided at the 38th parallel between a capitalist police state in the South and, in the North, a bureaucratically deformed workers state issuing out of a social revolution which overthrew the capitalists and landlords. Forty-five years after the 1950-53 Korean War, in which some three to four million were killed and North Korea was virtually levelled, nearly 40,000 American troops remain on South Korean soil. This military presence is not only a dagger aimed at North Korea and the Chinese deformed workers state but also serves as a warning to South Korea's working masses, threatening to drown in blood any challenge to the capitalist order. And it is also an assertion of US imperialist interests in Asia against their rival Japanese imperialism, and of dominance over South Korea and the region as a whole.

On 21 March, "peace" talks aimed at bringing to a formal close the 1950-53 Korean War collapsed as the US refused to even discuss a North Korean demand for the removal of the American troops from South Korea. As proletarian internationalists, the Spartacist League/US, section of the International Communist League, has recently organised protests calling for the *immediate withdrawal of*

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Japanese Spartacists' statement to Korea protests

We print below a 29 March statement by the Spartacist Group Japan, section of the International Communist League, addressed to the Spartacist League/SYG protests against imperialist troops in Korea.

The Spartacist Group Japan sends revolutionary greetings to your demonstration.

The North Korean deformed workers state was created in 1945 with the rout of fleeing Japanese imperial army troops by the Soviet Red Army. Since that time, the Japanese and American bourgeoisies have been on a relentless drive to destroy North Korea. Today, the imperialists are attempting to starve the North Koreans into submission while the viciously chauvinist Japanese ruling class has refused to ship them one grain of the 3.5 million tons of rice it is hoarding.

The Japanese occupation of the Korean peninsula from 1910 to 1945 was one of untold horror. More than 100,000 Korean women were forced into sexual slavery

and more than one million men were brought to Japan to work as forced labourers during the Pacific War, as the Japanese imperialists vied with their American counterparts for mastery over Asia and the Pacific.

Today, with the collapse of the Soviet Union, rivalries between competing imperialist powers are heating up — in the Pacific region, between Japan and the US. The ruling class of both countries and their labour lieutenants push protectionist poison preparing for a new inter-imperialist slaughter. As Lenin wrote of World War I, this war would be a war "between the biggest slaveholders for the maintenance and consolidation of slavery". The main enemy is at home! The main enemy of the Japanese proletariat is in Tokyo! It is the job of the American proletariat to settle accounts with its own rulers.

As the Japanese and US capitalists compete for spheres of exploitation and influence, they are still militarily allied under the ANPO pact, a dagger aimed at

China, Vietnam and North Korea. The proletariat of Japan and America must join together to defend these workers states against imperialism's counterrevolutionary designs. Smash the counterrevolutionary alliance between Japanese and US imperialism through workers revolution!

We, the Japanese section of the International Communist League, seek to build a multinational, multiracial Leninist-Trotskyist party that fights for full citizenship rights for Koreans and other minorities. We fight to build a revolutionary party that will sweep the rapists of Nanjing and the enslavers of the "comfort women" into the dustbin of history. It is only under the red flag of a Japanese workers republic that the countless victims of Japanese imperialism will be avenged.

For unconditional military defence of North Korea! For a workers revolution in the South and for proletarian political revolution in the North! For the revolutionary reunification of Korea!

Indonesia seethes under IMF austerity

**Down with anti-Chinese terror!
Independence for East Timor!**

We print below in edited form a presentation by Spartacist League of Australia spokesman Margaret Rodda at an SLA forum in Sydney on 27 March.

Two weeks ago, amid growing social turmoil in Indonesia over the economic crisis racking Asia, the dictator Suharto was re-elected to a seventh term as president. In mid-February, the government banned public protests and deployed massive police and army forces on the streets in an attempt to ensure order. Nevertheless, large anti-Suharto protests have occurred almost daily on universities across Java over the past month. These have been met with fierce repression whenever students have tried to take the protests outside the campuses.

Indonesia is a powder keg. Engulfed by the Asian financial crisis, the Indonesian rupiah has undergone a massive devaluation — some 70 to 80 per cent since July 1997. Business collapses, soaring prices and shortages of goods have led to panic buying and so-called “food riots”, raising the spectre of economic chaos and further social unrest. Already bristling under the extreme corruption of the Suharto dictatorship, the middle class has had its expectations of success under the Asian “economic miracle” utterly dashed as international market forces hit home.

For the working class, the austerity measures dictated by the imperialist bloodsuckers of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) mean deepening immiseration. Millions have already been laid off, with building and factory workers worst hit. Unemployment is now officially reported to be eight million, rising from 2.5 million in mid-1997. The state-run SPSI (All Indonesia Workers Union) predicts that the number of workers who don't earn enough to cover their daily needs will reach 40 million out of a workforce of 90 million this year. The situation has been heightened by the worst drought in 50 years, with villagers pouring into cities like Jakarta in search of work. While the economic crisis has sparked worker unrest, it has also fed the growth of Islamic fervour. This has had serious consequences not only for the largely Christian Chinese minority, who have met with violence and arson at the hands of rampaging mobs, but for women workers who have played an increasingly strong role in strikes and protests.

From Thailand and Indonesia to the Philippines, massive imperialist investment over the past two decades, centrally by Japanese capital, has created a vibrant, young proletariat. This is the force which can and must fight to sweep away the bloodsoaked Suharto dictatorship, not by



Riot police attack student demonstrators in Surabaya, eastern Java, in early March. As prices skyrocket and food shortages spread under IMF dictates, protests against Suharto regime have swept Indonesian campuses.

looking for an alliance with an illusionary “democratic” wing of Indonesian capitalism, but through socialist revolution against the entire capitalist-landlord ruling class and its imperialist patrons.

To lead this struggle to victory requires the forging of a Leninist-Trotskyist party which seeks to link the class struggles in Indonesia with those of workers throughout Asia and across the world. The road to the emancipation of the working class of the region — and with them women, the peasantry and oppressed ethnic and national minorities — lies in the fight for a socialist federation of Southeast Asia, linked to the struggle for proletarian revolution in Japan, Australia, the US and other imperialist powers and for workers political revolution in China to stop the threat of capitalist restoration there.

The family: mainstay of social reaction

Fighting for the right to organise in independent trade unions and for wage increases and better working conditions, including maternity leave rights, women have played a militant role in workers' struggles against the Suharto dictatorship over the past decade. This is exemplified by the case of Marsinah, a young militant who became a hero to millions of women and youth after she was brutally murdered in the wake of labour struggles in East Java in 1993. Many of these new proletarians are recently arrived from villages where traditional jobs have been replaced by mechanisation or lost through encroaching urbanisation. While horribly exploited in the factories, these young women also find some freedom from the social pressures of family and village life, particularly the pressure to marry, including through arranged marriages.

Central to women's oppression in

Indonesia, as in all class societies, is the institution of the family — an economic and social unit subjugating women as dependent domestic slaves and serving, along with organised religion, as a mainstay of social reaction. Suharto's “New Order” military regime, ushered in with the horrific 1965 anti-Communist bloodbath in which over half a million people were slaughtered, has strongly inculcated an ideology relegating women to the role of wife and mother. In 1974, the government passed a national marriage law which in its original form provoked widespread revolt from Islamic leaders because it threatened to abolish polygamy and weaken the role of the Islamic courts which mainly deal with family law and inheritance. To appease the Islamicists, the final, revised law codified and greatly expanded the role of Islamic courts, allow-

ing as well for the institution of polygamy, although somewhat circumscribed. The law also codified the wife's role as family housekeeper and the husband's as the family protector and provider.

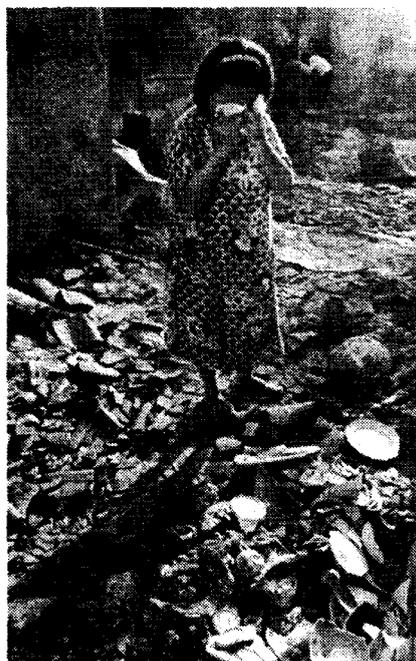
The regime's key vehicles for inculcating this ideology have been government-controlled women's organisations such as Dharma Wanita and particularly the PKK (Family Welfare Movement) which permeates both urban and rural areas throughout the Indonesian archipelago. These organisations promote the doctrine of *Panca Dharma Wanita* — the “Five Duties of Women”. This is a companion piece to the regime's *Panca Sila* doctrine, which has been promoted from the time of Sukarno. Indonesia's first nationalist ruler following independence from the Dutch in 1948. Where *Panca Sila* puts forward the five “principles” of belief in one god,



Women workers have played key role in labour struggles throughout Southeast Asia, as in this strike in Indonesia.

humanism, patriotism, democracy and social justice, *Panca Dharma Wanita* lays out the five basic roles making up the fundamental oppression of women in the family: companion and supporter of one's husband, caretaker of the household, producer of future generations, prime socialiser of children and an Indonesian citizen.

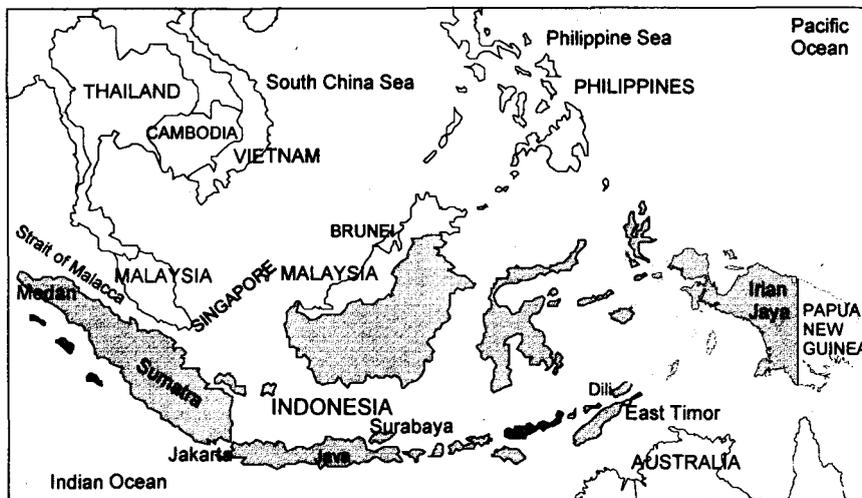
At the same time, the contingencies of economic development have required the government to encourage women to take on employment outside the home, even as they are supposed to maintain their primary role within the family. Increased participation by women in the workforce has been accompanied by greater access to education, at least for a layer of women, along with declining birth rates, delayed marriages and greater population mobility. One reflection of the position of middle-class and bourgeois women in Indonesian society, where economic development has taken place alongside continuing social backwardness, is the development of a distinct but small Islamic feminist movement which tries to bridge the unbridgeable gulf between access to the modern world and the demands of religion and the family.



Chinese shop owner victimised in racist riots.

Imperialist capital investment has also led to the emergence of an urbanised and educated, though deeply exploited, proletariat, particularly in manufacturing. Twenty million workers live in urban areas like the Jakarta-Bogor-Tangerang-Bekasih industrial belt. Women, particularly those who come from villages and have little education, form the bulk of superexploited workers in the prison-like factories in such areas. Huge factory complexes in Tangerang are surrounded by barbed wire and patrolled by "ex"-military guards. Workers housed within the compounds — three or four to a cell — are not allowed to leave without permission. Despite such hellish conditions, the ability of women to work outside the home means that their relationship to male workers increasingly becomes one of comrades in the class struggle, not household slaves shut away from the world.

The struggle for women's emancipation is tied to the proletarian class struggle to overthrow the system of capitalist exploitation. We fight to end patriarchal practices oppressive to women, like the polygamy system and the bride price — legacies of social backwardness which are today upheld by religious reactionaries in league with the capitalist rulers. Women's liberation can only come about through socialist revolution extending to the advanced capitalist countries. In a socialist planned economy, the family as a social unit will be replaced by socialisation of childcare and



household duties. Only then can relationships be entered into freely and without economic compulsion.

As in the 1917 Russian Revolution, women workers will be in the forefront of the fight against capitalist and semi-feudal enslavement in Indonesia. As revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky said in 1924 of the newly liberated Muslim women of the Soviet East: "There will be no better communist in the East, no better fighter for the ideas of the Revolution... than the awakened woman worker."

Indonesian prison house of peoples

An important question addressing the oppression of women in Indonesia is abortion, which is illegal. This issue was highlighted earlier this year when a number of doctors and nurses were arrested for performing abortions and their clinics closed and files seized. At the same time, abortions are reportedly not uncommon among middle-class women, who have greater access to education and a certain degree of personal freedom, along with the money to pay for the procedure. For poor and working-class women, access to free, safe abortion is an explosive issue. There is a huge stigma attached to pregnancy outside marriage, with illegitimate children and their mothers shunned by society. According to a report in the *Sydney Morning Herald* (3 January), 1994 statistics revealed that 450 out of every 100,000 pregnant women died in Indonesia — the highest maternal death rate in Southeast Asia. Sixteen per cent of these deaths were reportedly from unsafe abortions.

The fight for free abortion on demand is closely linked to the struggle for free, quality health care for all. Medical care in Indonesia is poor even by standards for the so-called "developing" world. Along with very high rates of death in childbirth are high infant mortality rates. In the countryside, some 80 per cent of pregnant women and children under five years of age are undernourished. This situation is aggravated by the collapse of the rupiah and skyrocketing costs for goods like medical supplies.

With a population of over 200 million, Indonesia is the fourth-largest and one of the most densely populated countries in the world. The Suharto regime has pursued an aggressive population control programme, from which single women are excluded. While the government's KB (*Keluarga Berencana*) programme provides free access to contraception for married women, many have been threatened or bribed into participating. These pressures are intensified by the involvement of the Indonesian military (ABRI) in the programme as part of its so-called "dual function" in military and civilian affairs — the recipe by which bloody military terror has been repeatedly unleashed to regiment and suppress the population.

Another aspect of the population con-

trol programme is the regime's "transmigration" policy, resettling landless poor from densely populated areas, particularly in Java, to outlying and ethnically distinct areas such as Irian Jaya and East Timor. This policy has stoked the flames of long-standing ethnic and religious unrest. For example, the East Timorese have been struggling for independence against the genocidal Indonesian military occupation since 1975. More than 200,000 East Timorese — fully one-third of the population — have died either by direct murder, such as the slaughter of over 200 demonstrators in the East Timor capital of Dili in 1991, or from disease and starvation.

The infant mortality rate in East Timor is one of the five worst in the world. East Timorese suffer high levels of malnutrition, TB, malaria and sexually transmitted diseases, while desperate economic conditions have led young women into prostitution or forced marriage. East Timorese women, who are largely Catholic and reject birth control on religious grounds, are often coerced into compliance, intimidated when visiting health care facilities where doctors and nurses are often accom-



March 26: Malaysian security forces stand over bodies of "illegal" Indonesian immigrants they gunned down at detention camp. Thousands of immigrants are slated for deportation as financial crisis deepens.

panied by soldiers. Covert sterilisations and injections are widely suspected, such as when only female students at a senior high school were given alleged anti-tetanus injections. Such barbarity underscores the very real fear of the East Timorese that the Indonesian government intends to carry out the genocide of their people.

Only a revolutionary overthrow of the existing capitalist imperialist system can even begin to address the oppression, degradation and misery of women as well as the rights and emancipation of national minorities throughout the archipelago. Indonesia is a prison house of peoples — home to some 300 different ethnic and national groups who suffer under the repression of the Java-centred bourgeois regime. Most notably, there have been struggles for independence waged by the Acehnese of north Sumatra and the people

of Irian Jaya, as well as by the East Timorese. We call for the immediate independence of East Timor — not through appeals for some imperialist, UN-brokered deal as pushed by the Indonesian leftist People's Democratic Party (PRD), but as part of the fight for workers revolution in Indonesia.

The reformist Democratic Socialist Party (DSP) in Australia promotes the PRD's class-collaborationist politics, fostering illusions in "democratic" Australian imperialism. However, we make clear that the Australian ruling class is no friend of the East Timorese or Indonesian masses. In a letter last December to the Australian immigration minister, the Partisan Defence Committee denounced the denial of entry visas to East Timorese activists at that time as "an act of blatant political censorship, underscoring the Australian government's complicity in the Indonesian government's slaughter and suppression in East Timor". The letter went on: "Following the 1991 Dili massacre the Australian military stepped up its arming and training of the Indonesian military, including of the elite Kopassus counterinsurgency torture/killer units, who are the cutting edge of repression throughout the archipelago." We also noted that this ban on East Timorese activists marked another step in the Australian government's racist war on immigrants, refugees and Aborigines, the spearhead for broad-gauged attacks on the trade unions and the working class as a whole.

Islam as a political factor

Some 90 per cent of Indonesia's 203 million inhabitants describe themselves as Muslim, making Indonesia the largest Islamic country in the world. However, particularly on Java where Islamic beliefs were syncretised with pre-existing animist, Hindu and Buddhist traditions, a large proportion of Muslims have been described as *abangun* (nominal). Along-

side the *abangun* are the *santri*, or devout, Muslims. Approximately 56 million belong to two organisations reflecting the main strands of *santri* Muslims: the traditionalist Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), based on the rural Islamic schools called *pesantren*, and the urban-based, "modernist" organisation Muhammadiyah. With widespread resentment among the new middle classes at the nepotism, cronyism and corruption of the Suharto clique, there has been an increasing "santrification" of *abangun* Muslims.

The Suharto regime has nurtured a special relationship with the "modernists", reflected in shifts in the army leadership and in the formation in 1990 of the Indonesian Association of Muslim Intellectuals (ICMI), led by Suharto's newly appointed vice president Habibie. Suharto has also

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Hatred of Suharto regime has fed growth of bourgeois-nationalist and Islamic "opposition". Left: January march by supporters of Megawati Sukarnoputri, banned leader of Indonesian Democratic Party. Right: May 1997 election rally for Islamic United Development Party (PPP).

Indonesia...

(Continued from page 7)

sought to appease conservative Muslim interests by elevating the status of the Islamic courts and passing laws mandating, for example, compulsory religious instruction in the schools. In the late 1980s, registry offices were no longer permitted to perform marriages, making marriage between people of different religions virtually impossible to obtain. The rise of Islam as a political factor in Indonesia can only be as a force for reaction. It is necessary to fight for the separation of state and religion and to combat theocratic reaction, including opposing discrimination against all religious minorities.

The past few years have seen an increasing number of violent attacks by Islamic mobs on Sino-Indonesians and Christian churches, such as the attacks that broke out in towns around Tasikmalaya in West Java in 1996. Today, the Chinese minority, which includes a fabulously wealthy elite, is being made a scapegoat for the economic crisis besetting Southeast Asia. The British television programme *ITN World News* carried a report recently that at least one of the recent anti-Chinese pogroms, in the town of Praya on the island of Lombok, was organised by government security forces. In the wake of the attack, many Chinese residents simply fled, too frightened to reopen their shops. Muslim shopkeepers interviewed by *ITN* described how they were warned in advance by cops to stay out of the marketplace that day. They said that the "rioters" had never been seen in the village before, but had been bused in by the police. It was only when the mob, finding Chinese shops closed, moved on to non-Chinese areas that security forces stepped in.

The capitalist rulers have long fostered national and communal divisions to ward off multiethnic class struggle. Chinese Indonesians have historically been the target of racist reaction. In the 1965 blood-bath, ethnic Chinese were singled out by anti-Communist mobs. In the wake of the massacres, Chinese organisations affiliated with the Stalinist regime in Beijing were proscribed and all Chinese-language schools closed down. Only since the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between Indonesia and China and the expansion of tourism and trade between the two countries has Jakarta been compelled to make some concessions. In 1994, the ban on teaching Chinese was eased and Chinese-language tourist pamphlets were permitted. However, restrictions on the import, sale or distribution of Chinese-language material remain in force, and the prominent display of Chinese characters on buildings is banned. This year, the Suharto government even banned public celebrations of the Chinese

New Year.

Today, anti-Chinese attacks are reaching a level not seen since 1965. In the absence of a revolutionary proletarian party uniting workers across ethnic and national lines, discontent is likely to be further deflected in the direction of pogroms. Every manifestation of anti-Chinese chauvinism must be fought down the line by class-conscious workers throughout Indonesia. Down with anti-Chinese terror!

Throughout Southeast Asia, there are millions of poor and working-class Chinese who are class brothers in the struggle against capitalist exploitation. The need for united, internationalist proletarian struggle is underlined by the fact that increasing numbers of Indonesian workers have been compelled to cross the straits to Malaysia and Singapore, where Chinese make up 30 and 78 per cent of the population, respectively. There they often replace

in the factories, oil fields, mines and rubber plantations. Particularly in land-starved Java, industrial expansion has transformed the rural sector, with peasant households displaced by development projects. One result has been a significant depopulation of villages, particularly of women. Those from rural areas moving to the cities in search of work cannot fail to notice the vast gulf between the rich and poor. In Jakarta alone, millions live in shantytowns without running water or electricity.

Indonesia is a country where Leon Trotsky's theory and programme of permanent revolution is manifestly applicable. In the backward countries in this century, the epoch of imperialist decay, the democratic gains achieved by the earlier European bourgeois revolutions, such as political democracy and agrarian revolution, can no longer be carried out by bourgeois nationalists, who are weak and dependent on

facilities and communal dining rooms and laundries were established to free women from household drudgery.

But in an isolated, backward country, these efforts could only hint at the possibilities for women had socialist revolution spread to the advanced industrial countries. In 1923-24, a consolidating, conservative bureaucracy led by Stalin usurped power through a political counterrevolution. Under the nationalist dogma of "socialism in one country", the Stalinist bureaucracy opposed the fight for international extension of the revolution. It glorified the backwardness of the young Soviet state and reversed many of the Bolsheviks' measures to liberate women. Strangled by the Stalinist bureaucracy, the Soviet Union was finally destroyed through capitalist counterrevolution in 1991-92. This was an enormous setback for workers and oppressed the world over. However, it was not communism that died in the Soviet Union, but its nationalist perversion, Stalinism. Today, we raise the call for new October Revolutions — the only solution to the wars and poverty rooted in capitalism.

No to class collaboration!

The austerity measures dictated by the US-dominated IMF clearly illustrate the dependent nature of the national bourgeoisie in backward countries like Indonesia. With unrest mounting under the rule of the aging Suharto, the US and other imperialists are likely to play a big role in deciding his succession. We warn against any support to such bourgeois "oppositionists" as Megawati Sukarnoputri — the daughter of Sukarno — who was banned in 1996 from running in the regime's rigged presidential "elections". A recent historical analogue was Washington's promoting of the aristocratic Cory Aquino in the Philippines as a successor to the venal, hated regime of Ferdinand Marcos in the mid-1980s. Backed by fake leftists such as the DSP, who mislead the workers movement into the trap of class collaborationism, Aquino wholeheartedly defended the interests of her class, the capitalist rulers, and their imperialist patrons against the working class and oppressed masses.

Reformist "socialists" who seek to tie the working class and oppressed to a "progressive" wing of the capitalist class follow the Menshevik/Stalinist schema of "two-stage" revolution: fight for "democratic" capitalism today and socialism some time in a future that never comes. As repeatedly demonstrated by history — from the defeat of the Chinese Revolution of 1925-27, which was drowned in blood by Chiang Kai-shek's Guomindang Nationalists, to the Chilean military's overthrow of Allende's popular-front government in 1973 — this programme means the mass murder of communists and workers.



Community Aid Abroad

East Timorese in city of Dili demonstrating in 1991 for end to Indonesian military rule, moments before troops massacre over 200 people.

Chinese, Malay and Indian workers in the lowest-paid, hardest and dirtiest jobs. Over a million Indonesians legally worked overseas in 1997. Alongside them are an estimated equal number of so-called "illegal" workers, whose ranks have been swelled in the past year as thousands cross the straits to find work and even food. In the past three weeks, almost 4000 Indonesians have been rounded up by Malaysian security forces, part of the mass of foreign workers throughout Southeast Asia who have been deported since last summer. We say: No deportations! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!

For permanent revolution!

Just as the Dutch plundered massive wealth from Indonesia during its colonial rule, the country today is a rich source of superprofits for the imperialists, with impoverished workers brutally exploited

their imperialist masters. The 1917 Russian Revolution showed the way forward for countries like Indonesia. Under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky, the capitalist class was expropriated and a workers state erected on the foundations of a planned, collectivised economy — the precondition for an egalitarian socialist society. This happened in a country with a small but socially concentrated working class, alongside a large, backward peasantry and many national minorities.

The Bolshevik Revolution represented an enormous leap forward, particularly for women. The new Soviet government immediately removed all impediments to legal equality for women, giving them the right to vote, making marriage and divorce simple matters of civil registration, legalising abortion and outlawing discrimination against homosexuals. Daycare

In Indonesia in 1965, the predominantly Javanese-based PKI was the largest Communist Party outside the Soviet Union and China, comprising some three million members and another 14 million supporters in trade-union, peasant, women's and youth organisations. But the PKI's political support to Sukarno under the watchword of *gotong royong* — "national unity" with the "progressive" bourgeoisie — paved the way for the massacres which decimated the organised working class and destroyed the PKI. Under Sukarno, the PKI gained cabinet posts, while using its authority to repeatedly ban strikes and suppress militant peasant movements. Pledging to enforce "the co-operation between the people and the Armed Forces, in particular the Police Force", the PKI served to strengthen the very repressive apparatus which later came down on it.

This regime was an example of a popular front, a class-collaborationist coalition in which the proletariat and oppressed are chained to the class enemy. The Indonesian masses were politically, organisationally and militarily disarmed when the generals, backed by imperialism, struck to behead the PKI. In carrying out the repression, reactionary Islamic fundamentalists were unleashed against the PKI, its allies and the Chinese minority. Members of Gerwani, the PKI-linked women's organisation, were particularly targeted for murder, torture and imprisonment. Those who survived were blacklisted and ostracised by their communities.

The US and Australian imperialists were up to their necks in the 1965 massacres, providing the Indonesian generals with a hit list of 5000 Communists. The mobilisation of Islamic reactionaries was also promoted by Washington. In 1950, John Foster Dulles, who later became US president Eisenhower's secretary of state, explained:

"The religions of the East are deeply rooted and have many precious values. Their spiritual beliefs cannot be reconciled with Communist atheism and materialism. That creates a common bond between us, and our task is to find it and develop it."

— quoted in Paul Baran, *The Political Economy of Growth* (1973)

This "bond" was cemented in the blood of Indonesian workers and peasants.

The smashing of the PKI and stabilisation of Indonesia as an anti-communist bastion both emboldened Washington to massively escalate its war in Vietnam and created the conditions for the development of a "defeatist" wing of US imperialism, which felt that withdrawal from its *losing* war in Vietnam would not jeopardise its strategic interests in the region. Since that time, Indonesia has played a key role in the counterrevolutionary ambitions of imperialism in East and Southeast Asia,



EP Dutton & Co

First meeting of young women's political group in Tashkent, Central Asia, following October Revolution of 1917. Bolshevik victory was giant step towards liberation of women throughout former tsarist empire.

for example as the central local player in the ASEAN anti-China bloc.

Today, the Stalinist regime in Beijing has brought the Chinese bureaucratically deformed workers state to the brink of capitalist counterrevolution. As Trotskyists, we call for the unconditional military defence of China and the other deformed workers states — Vietnam, North Korea, Cuba — against imperialism and internal counterrevolution, while fighting for proletarian political revolution to stop the bureaucracy's drive towards capitalist restoration.

Vast amounts of military equipment, training and funds have been provided by the US and other imperialist powers to prop up Suharto's generals and crush internal dissent. Agreements for joint military exercises between the US, Indonesia and Australia reflect not only the imperialists' strategic interest in China but their fears of instability in Indonesia itself. This is critical for the US as it pursues its ambitions in the region against rival Japanese imperialism. The post-Soviet world is marked by the intensification of such inter-imperialist rivalries, which had previously been restrained in the greater interest of Cold War anti-Soviet unity.

Indonesia has special importance to the imperialists because of its strategic location. The Malacca Strait, running between the Indonesian island of Sumatra and the Malaysian peninsula and Singapore, provides the quickest shipping route between the Pacific Ocean and the oil-rich Persian Gulf. In the event of imperialist conflict, control of the strait will be vital. Indonesia is also the largest supplier of oil to Japan outside the Near East, while 90 per cent of Japan's oil imports pass through Indonesian waters. Reinforcing the appetites of Japanese imperialism towards Indonesia is the memory of the US naval blockade of oil which impelled Japan's entry into

World War II.

For a Leninist-Trotskyist party!

Over the last decade, workers' struggles in Indonesia have led to the formation of independent trade union organisations such as the Indonesian Workers' Welfare Union (SBSI), founded in 1992 by Muchtar Pakpahan, and the Indonesian Centre for Working-Class Struggle (PPBI). The PPBI is led by Dita Sari, who has repeatedly been imprisoned for her role in organising strikes and protests, such as a 1995 demonstration against the

New York Times



Hundreds of thousands were massacred in 1965 anti-Communist bloodbath which ushered in Suharto's rule.

occupation of East Timor. It is aligned with the left-nationalist PRD, which like the PPBI was formed in 1994. An umbrella group of student, worker and peasant associations, the PRD includes many students who have gone on to organise trade unions, strike struggles and anti-government protests in key industrial centres. A number of them have been arrested in the course of these struggles. Free all class-war prisoners in Suharto's dungeons!

The courage and dedication displayed by these militants in the face of military repression is evident. However, the PRD's political support to Megawati reveals its class-collaborationist strategy. The PRD explicitly calls for alliances with the two legal non-government parties, the Islamic-based United Development Party (PPP) and the bourgeois-nationalist Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI), and all other so-called "democratic forces". Political groups which are simply the left wing of the existing capitalist order cannot offer any perspective for the liberation of women, or anyone else for that matter. As part of the fight to forge a revolutionary vanguard party of the working class, we seek to win the most advanced workers to the understanding that the political independence of the proletariat from the ruling class is a necessary precondition for suc-

cessful struggle against the capitalist system of exploitation and oppression.

We seek to build an internationalist revolutionary party to act as a tribune of the people, mobilising the proletariat in defence of all the oppressed against the common class enemy. Particularly in Asia, the fight for the emancipation of women is a key component of this perspective. We call for equal pay for equal work, and for their full integration into the workforce. We champion the complete equality of women. The elimination of women's oppression requires a tremendous leap from the existing material conditions. And this can only be achieved through socialist revolution, leading to the creation of an *international planned economy* based on elevating human production to meet the needs of all.

For Indonesian workers, revolutionary internationalism is a matter of life and death. A proletarian revolution would immediately face hostile imperialism. Thus the fight for proletarian power must be linked to a perspective of workers revolution in the imperialist centres — Japan, Australia, the US — a perspective which requires the construction of internationalist vanguard parties. The Spartacist League of Australia, section of the International Communist League, stands with our class brothers and sisters of the region in opposition to all the imperialist machinations of the Australian ruling class — from its depredations in



Spartacist League/Australia contingent at May 1997 Melbourne protest against Suharto dictatorship.

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Racism...

(Continued from page 12)

use — the poorest, who are overwhelmingly black, are to be targeted. The prison population, now at its highest level since World War II, includes a huge proportion of blacks and Asians, who are killed with impunity by cops and prison warders. In Blakenhurst prison, Alton Manning, a young black man, was brutally killed by prison warders. The Home Office, under Labour's Jack Straw, tried to get the High Court to prevent an inquest jury from returning a verdict of unlawful killing. And when this verdict was returned despite Straw's efforts, the director of prisons, Richard Tilt, went on TV to spew out a racist "explanation" that blacks were suffocated because: "Afro-Caribbean people are more likely to suffer positional asphyxia than whites."

Britain locks up more asylum seekers for longer periods with the least access to legal representation than any other country in Europe. Asylum seekers are treated as criminals and imprisoned in isolated places like Campsfield. Last August riot cops arrested 13 detainees who protested against their hellish conditions. Some of those protesters now face criminal charges. We say: *Drop the charges!* Mike O'Brien, Labour's immigration minister, is promising to build more detention camps which will be more tightly controlled; and if an asylum seeker's claim is rejected, deportation will follow within seven days, making appeals virtually impossible. We say: *No racist deportations! Close down Campsfield!*

The sinister rise of fascism across Europe today is a direct product of the capitalist counterrevolution in East Europe and the former Soviet Union — a counterrevolution the fake-leftists of the SWP and WP supported. The imperialist "New World Order" brings heightened inter-imperialist rivalries in its wake, which leads to intensified attacks on workers and fans the flames of chauvinist hatred. Across Europe, social-democratic parties have taken office in capitalist governments, explicitly committed to dismantling reforms and to carrying out racist measures against immigrants, who are scapegoated for the ravages of unemployment. This has fuelled the rise of fascism, notably in France, Italy and Germany.

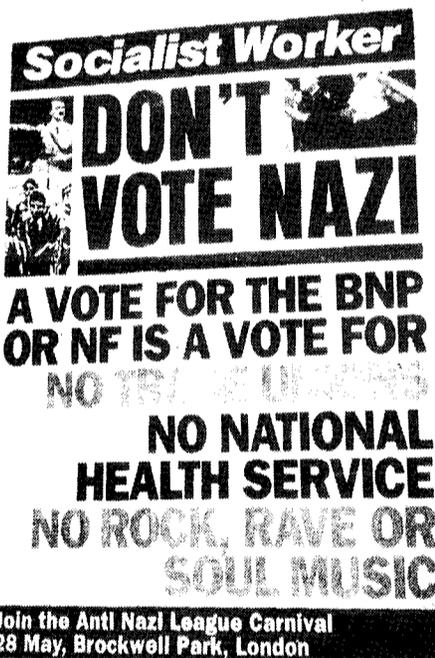
The Labour government sets itself as a model for others. Blair used his position as head of the European Union to counsel the governments in Germany and Italy on how best to exclude the oppressed Kurdish refugees fleeing military repression in Turkey. Racial minorities are an integral

part of the multiethnic working class in all the major countries of Europe. They will form a vital component in the forging of internationalist Leninist vanguard parties. We fight for *full citizenship rights for all immigrants.*

The anti-revolutionary politics of the Anti Nazi League

The SWP's Anti Nazi League is calling a counter-mobilisation against the NF march in London on 23 May. At the same time their paper, *Socialist Worker* (11 April), cautions: "it would be a mistake to over-estimate the threat that Britain's Nazis pose today. It would be wrong for anti-Nazis and socialists to 'drop everything' and go around hunting individual Nazis, however foul they are." However, ANL members are expected to "drop everything" and go hunting for votes for the wretched Labour Party in the council elections. *Socialist Worker* (18 April) boasts that "ANL members who have been out leafleting estates around the country against Nazi candidates have received a brilliant response." *SW* neglects to explain how voting Labour will stop the fascist scum, such as the murderers of Stephen Lawrence, who are on the loose in London.

This "don't vote Nazi" campaign is a re-run of the SWP's game in the 1994 local elections. The SWP sought to "defeat" the fascists by telling potential BNP voters: "Don't vote Nazi/A vote for the



"Anti-fascism" SWP-style: no mention of racism.

BNP or NF is a vote for no trade unions/no National Health Service/no rock, rave or soul music". This poster was an appeal to those that Tony Benn described as "soft racists", and scandalously avoided mentioning that the fascists are racists or that they must be smashed. In those elec-

not stop the fascists is the reformist political programme on which it, and the SWP, are based. The ANL is a popular-front organisation: it is a cross-class alliance that has boasted the inclusion of bishops and lords, along with prominent Labour figures like Neil and Glenys Kinnock as



Workers Hammer

Spartacist League contingent at 16 October 1993 anti-fascist mobilisation in Welling, London.

tions the BNP lost their seat in London's Isle of Dogs. The SWP lyingly called this a victory, but the fascists increased their vote and the number of racist attacks went up.

Voting Labour was the ANL's way of demobilising anti-fascist struggle. In October 1993 the ANL, together with "Youth against Racism in Europe" (YRE — front group of the Socialist Party, formerly Militant), had mobilised 50,000 anti-fascist youth against the BNP in Welling, south London. Both organisations petitioned the Tory council of Bexley (part of the capitalist state) to close down the BNP headquarters, asked the cops to "deal" with the fascist menace, and both outfits say the cops are part of the workers movement. Marxists know that the capitalist state is not neutral: it belongs to the class enemy. It is suicidal to rely on the capitalist state to deal with the fascists, whom the state seeks to protect. Our banner on the Welling march read "Not wretched appeals to the capitalist state! For trade union/minority mobilisations to smash the fascists!" This perspective has been exemplified by mass united-front, union-centred actions initiated by our comrades of the Spartacist League/US, which have succeeded in stopping Ku Klux Klan and Nazi provocations in major US cities.

The fundamental reason the ANL will

well as anti-fascist youth. The ANL's designation of Union Jack-waving British fascists as "Nazis" (ie German, foreign to British soil) is an attempt to paint blood-drenched British capitalism as inherently "democratic" and to appeal for "unity" with elements of Labour and the ruling class. In 1978 close to 2000 fascists marched through the Asian-populated Brick Lane area of London. At the time the ANL criminally defied repeated appeals by East End Asian and black community groups to mobilise against the fascists. Instead the ANL mobilised 60-100,000 people to an "anti-racist" rock carnival on the other side of town! The Spartacist League mobilised its forces to defend Brick Lane, calling for militant union/minority defence of the East End!

The only way to eradicate the threat of fascism is for the working class to take state power in its own name. This requires the building of a Leninist vanguard party through winning workers to the need for a political break from Labour and its left hangers-on. Unlike our centrist and reformist opponents, our struggle is not for maintenance of the status quo, mere reforms within the capitalist framework, but for the creation of a revolutionary egalitarian socialist society, which can only be achieved by the proletarian seizure of power and international socialist economic planning. ■

Korea...

(Continued from page 5)

all US forces from Korea!

After decades of imperialist military encirclement and starvation embargo, the North Korean deformed workers state has been pushed into near-terminal decline by the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Beijing bureaucracy's drive towards capitalist restoration. With famine spreading in the North, US and British imperialism and the South Korean capitalists hope to finish the job they were unable to carry out nearly 50 years ago when the Korean workers and peasants, fighting alongside the Chinese People's Liberation Army, heroically defeated their attempts to reverse the social overturn in the North. *For unconditional military defence of North Korea against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution!*

From enforcing military repression against the oppressed Catholics in Northern Ireland to backing the US preparations

to bomb Iraq, the Tony Blair Labour government are imperialist butchers. We say: *British troops out of Northern Ireland now!* We fight for the revolutionary overthrow of British imperialism!

At the time of the Korean War, the Labour government swung in behind the US and sent troops to massacre the Koreans and later also the Chinese. In 1950, British Socialist Workers Party leader Tony Cliff, whose organisation was then nestled inside the ruling Labour Party, was rightly expelled from the Trotskyist Fourth International for publicly opposing defence of North Korea against US and British imperialism. This abject capitulation to imperialism marked the origins of the British SWP, parent organisation of the International Socialists of South Korea.

The imperialist-imposed partition of Korea places the question of national unification directly on the agenda. Under the Stalinist regime of Kim Jong Il and his father, "Great Leader" Kim Il Sung, the Pyongyang bureaucracy has pursued the

autarkic programme of *Juche* (self-reliance), a variant of the nationalist Stalinist dogma of "socialism in one country". Thus the North Korean Stalinists oppose the extension of social revolution throughout the peninsula, calling instead for "peaceful reunification" under nationalist colours — a recipe for capitalist reunification, which would destroy the North's collectivised economic foundations and throw the working class back to conditions of untrammelled exploitation and servitude.

The only way out of imperialist oppression and degradation in dependent countries like South Korea lies in the Trotskyist perspective of permanent revolution: the seizure of power by the proletariat, marching at the head of all the oppressed, linked to the struggle for socialist revolution in the imperialist centres. *For the revolutionary reunification of Korea — for socialist revolution in the South against the chaebol capitalists and their police-state terror! For workers political revolution in the North to sweep*

away the Stalinist bureaucracy!

This fight must be based on a perspective of internationalist unity with the combative Chinese workers, who are today facing the threat of capitalist counterrevolution, and with the proletariat of Japan, the industrial powerhouse of Asia. Events such as the Asian financial crisis and the US/British military build-up in the Persian Gulf reveal that in the "post-Soviet" world the contradictions of capitalism, far from being overcome, are finding a renewed expression, interimperialist rivalries are heating up, threatening the ultimate devastation of a third world war. While the capitalist ruling classes trumpet the "death of communism" with the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union, the ICL fights for new October Revolutions — in Korea, Japan, the US, Britain and around the world — as the only alternative to capitalist enslavement and imperialist war. *Reforge the Fourth International — world party of socialist revolution!* ■

Australia...

(Continued from page 3)

in Melbourne. Having kept MUA members at other firms working, on 16 February Coombs called off the Melbourne strike, bowing to an order by the government's arbitration board, the Industrial Relations Commission.

For the past two weeks, Patrick scabs have been loading and unloading ships. That the company has moved almost no cargo on or off the wharves is largely due to the courage and determination of MUA picketers and their supporters. But instead of building mass, militant picket lines, the bureaucrats insist that the MUA pickets are merely "peaceful demonstrations", ordering picketers to sit down in the road to be dragged away by the cops and actually aiding the cops in opening up the lines to let busloads of scabs through. Criminally, the MUA leadership has kept the rest of the union — including the strategic tugboat crews and linesmen — working, even as another major stevedoring company, P&O, is gearing up to go after the MUA.

A solid national strike that shuts down the docks by mobilising not only trade unionists but youth, immigrants and Aborigines is clearly necessary. Heavily based on exports of bulk materials, the Australian economy is highly dependent on the ports, giving dock workers exceptional social power. But, particularly in the face of a government-orchestrated union-busting effort, militancy alone is not enough to win this fight. The ALP-loyal union bureaucrats push the lie that there can be a "partnership" between labour and capital. What is required is a leadership armed with the Marxist understanding that the capitalist state — with its cops and courts — is the *enemy* of the working class and the oppressed.

Before the Howard government opened fire on the MUA it prepared its legal arsenal. The Workplace Relations Law makes secondary boycotts and virtually every other key union weapon illegal. It's now even a crime to give money to a strike deemed "illegal"! This anti-union law was drawn up with the help of Cheryl Kernot, a former bourgeois Democrat who is now a star in the ALP. Bowing to the bosses' anti-union laws, MUA and ACTU leaders cry that it is "illegal" for pickets to stop scabs. They also push to *strengthen* the Arbitration system, which for a century has directly tied the unions to the capitalist state and mandates the compulsory settlement of labour disputes in special, supposedly "neutral" courts. The ACTU tops police the workers on behalf of the bosses, helping transform the unions from fighting organisations of labour into auxiliary instruments of the capitalist state for shackling the proletariat.

The union tops' role in this regard was made clear during the February strike at Webb Dock, when the MUA leadership launched a violence-baiting tirade against "political agitators" and banned militant workers from the picket line. In notes for a meeting of the local Trades Hall Council, MUA leaders grotesquely slandered Trotskyists: "Keep control over trots/made people/spies etc." The Labor Party, MUA and ACTU tops are doing everything they can to sacrifice the waterfront workers' struggle in the pursuit of an ALP victory in the federal elections. A Labor government, no less than the Liberal/National Coalition, would be a *capitalist* government committed to enforcing the dictates of the racist exploiters. This is clear not only from the record of the Hawke and Keating governments, but is evident today in Britain, France and Italy, where bourgeois workers parties — either in their own name or in coalition with capitalist parties — are carrying out savage attacks

on the working class.

The workers movement has never won a decisive gain by relying on the bosses' laws, courts and Parliament. The strength of the working class lies in its numbers, organisation and discipline, and above all in the fact that through its labour it uniquely makes the wheels of profit turn in capitalist society. We fight for the proletariat to take power through a socialist revolution, replacing the capitalist state with a workers state that expropriates the bourgeoisie.

This was the political consciousness which the American Trotskyists under James P Cannon brought to bear in leading the 1934 Minneapolis general strike and the successful fight to organise over-the-road truckers, forging the Teamsters as a powerful industrial union. As Cannon explained in *The History of American Trotskyism* (1944):



Spartacist contingent at 1997 Melbourne anti-fascist protest. Unlike Labor-loyal fake left, Marxists fight to split ALP and win working-class base to revolutionary programme.

"The modern labor movement must be politically directed because it is confronted by the government at every turn. Our people were prepared for that since they were political people, inspired by political conceptions. The policy of the class struggle guided our comrades; they couldn't be deceived and outmaneuvered, as so many strike leaders of that period were, by this mechanism of sabotage and destruction known as the National Labor Board and all its auxiliary setups....

"Therefore they prepared everything from the point of view of class war. They knew that power, not diplomacy, would decide the issue."

Build a revolutionary workers party!

The stepped-up attacks on the unions and racial minorities are a direct by-product of the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state and the sharpening of inter-imperialist rivalries. This was seen last October in the US government's outrageous threat to embargo Japanese ships, which in turn was linked to a campaign by US and Japanese shipping companies to cripple the Japanese dockers unions. This only underscores the need for an *internationalist* leadership of the working class, which understands that the main enemy is our "own" capitalist rulers.

While the MUA has a record of carrying out acts of often heroic international solidarity over the years, including protest strikes against the imperialist war in Vietnam, the union leadership has also long carried the torch for Australia's "national interest", ie the interest of the capitalist ruling class. At a strike rally at the Fremantle docks on 8 April, one union sign called for "Aussie ships, Aussie cargos". This nationalist line is also promoted by

the so-called Communist Party of Australia (CPA — formerly the Socialist Party of Australia), who have long acted as auxiliaries to the chauvinist Laborite bureaucracy. Thus the CPA's *Guardian* featured a photo of a placard reading "Soldiers for wars not for wharves" at the very time Australian troops were being sent to aid the US imperialists' drive to slaughter Iraqi men, women and children.

Chauvinist protectionism is *poison* to workers struggles, fuelling xenophobic "White Australia" racism. This was seen in Sydney and Fremantle, as some strikers grotesquely hurled racist epithets at dark-skinned security guards. There is no place in the labour movement for such bigotry. The racist chauvinism fostered by the ALP and the ACTU tops is counterposed to the urgent need to link up with the tens of millions of workers in Indonesia, Thailand, South Korea and throughout the

was exemplified at the mass Canberra protest in August 1996, when militant unionists came to the defence of Aborigines against racist cop attacks.

We fight for a Leninist vanguard party which would serve as a tribune of the people, championing full citizenship rights for all immigrants and placing the trade unions in the forefront of the defence of Aborigines against the racist onslaught. Combatting the profound anti-woman bigotry that permeates every level of this misogynist society, a class-struggle leadership would mobilise trade unionists to defend abortion rights. Against the retrograde craft-union divisions which have historically meant the exclusion of minorities and women, a revolutionary party would fight for industrial unions and union-run programmes to recruit among the oppressed.

The various reformist "socialist" groups which are wedded to Laborism and other forms of class collaboration cannot even conceive of unchaining the power of the working class, because that requires *breaking* the political stranglehold of the "labour lieutenants of capital". Both the International Socialist Organisation (ISO) and the Democratic Socialist Party (DSP) offer themselves as tactical advisers to the union tops. The ISO, inveterate supporter of the ALP, hails the call by the Victoria union brass for "solidarity" with the MUA through a one-day protest strike...more than two weeks from now. The DSP calls on the ACTU to launch an "industrial campaign"...as long as it doesn't "inconvenience" the "community" too much. Not surprisingly, the DSP has no problem in calling for votes to the *bourgeois* Democrats!

Unlike these opportunists, the Spartacist League seeks to *split* the Labor Party, winning its working-class base to a revolutionary programme to unite all the oppressed behind the proletariat in the struggle for socialist revolution to expropriate the capitalist exploiters. As the *Australasian Spartacist* article on the waterfront struggle stated:

"By sowing racist division at home and dividing Australian workers from their class brothers and sisters in Asia, the ALP and union tops serve to line up the working class behind the capitalists, including in imperialist wars for markets and spheres of influence. It is the job of a revolutionary vanguard party to introduce communist, i.e., class consciousness, countering the backwardness fostered by the union bureaucracy and by bourgeois society in general. We Trotskyists fight for a workers republic of Australia, part of a socialist Asia."

Victory to the MUA! Smash the union-busters! Those who labour must rule!
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WORKERS HAMMER

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WORKERS HAMMER

Forge a multiracial revolutionary workers party!

Labour's racist rule emboldens the fascists!

The racist policies of the Labour government, which are an integral part of the relentless attacks on the working class, have led to escalating racist terror by the capitalist state and have emboldened the fascists. On 13 February, Imran Khan, a 15-year-old Asian pupil at Shawlands Academy in Glasgow, was fatally stabbed by a racist gang. In Catford, south London, black teacher Alison Moore was sadistically beaten and had her house daubed with swastikas by the fascist National Front (NF). The NF (together with the Ulster Loyalist Apprentice Boys) plan to strut through central London on 23 May. Last year when Roma refugees fleeing fascistic terror in the Czech Republic arrived in Dover, they were met with racist hysteria initiated by the Labour government. The NF saw the green light and have subsequently staged two race-hate marches in Dover. In January they carried out a provocation against a London demonstration commemorating the victims of Bloody Sunday in Northern Ireland. *We call for trade union/minority mobilisations to stop the fascists in their tracks!*

Capitalism is the breeding ground for fascists, who feed off the misery generated by severe economic decline, appealing to the frustrated desire of the petty bourgeoisie for economic stability. The fascists are racist terror gangs of lumpen elements, held in reserve by the capitalist state. While their immediate targets are oppressed minorities — blacks, Asians, gays, Jews and Irish — fascism ultimately aims to smash the organisations of the working class. British fascists have well-known connections with the Ulster Loyalist paramilitary killers, with whom the British Army and the RUC work hand-in-glove in the murder of Catholics. Recent exposés have pointed to the role of the British Secret Service in running one Charlie Sargent simultaneously as a leading British fascist and member of the Ulster Defence Association.

The working class in Britain is multiracial — the workforces in London Underground, rail, Ford Dagenham, the textile factories, hospitals and the postal service, for instance, are racially integrated, incorporating large numbers of black, Asian and Turkish workers. The fascists can and must be smashed by the organised working class, which has the social power and the self-interest to crush the fascists. The fight for trade union/minority mobilisations to stop the fascists requires sharp political combat against the pro-Labour, ie pro-capitalist, trade union leaders, who tie the working class to the capitalist order. For the working class in Britain as a whole, understanding the need to fight fascism and racism, and the need to op-

pose British imperialism in Northern Ireland, is a vital step towards the achievement of revolutionary consciousness.

The struggle against racist terror is inseparable from the struggle to overthrow the entire system of capitalist exploitation and oppression, replacing it with the rule of the working class. This requires forging a multiracial revolutionary workers party. The Spartacist League/Britain (SL/B) is committed to building such a party, which will be what Lenin described as a "tribune of the people". Labour ran for election waving racist, chauvinist emblems — the Union Jack and the British bulldog. Uniquely on the left the SL/B said no vote to New Labour in the general election: "New Labour is pledged to maintaining the sickening reality of life under capitalism — keeping the unions in shackles, slashing welfare programmes, waging war on workers, racial minorities and immigrants, women and youth — everybody who is consigned to the bottom of the heap by rotting British capitalism" (Spartacist League statement, 21 April 1997).

Self-styled "socialist" groups such as the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and Workers Power (WP) who back Labour at every opportunity will predictably be out hustling votes for Labour in the council elections as the way to stop the fascist British National Party (BNP), who are standing candidates. But the racist terror perpetrated by the fascists cannot be stopped at the ballot box; *voting Labour has not, will not and can not stop the fascist scum*. Mobilisations of the working class, independent of the capitalist state and relying on their own strength and social power, could inflict a well-deserved defeat on the fascists now when they are relatively weak. This would make them think twice about showing their faces, including in elections. The fascists grew significantly under the last Labour government and will do so again under Blair. But while the SWP mobilised 8000 to lobby "their" government at the Labour Party conference in Brighton, they brought out only a few dozen in token protests against the NF in Dover, which handed the fascists a victory, allowing them to march with impunity.

The April issue of *Workers Power* prints its conference statement on "New Labour in office", with *not one* mention of racism or fascism. In the recent regional elections in France, where the fascists polled 15 per cent, WP voted for the racist government parties, Jospin's Socialist Party and the French Communist Party, who have deported thousands of immigrants while in government. Our comrades of the Ligue trotskyste de France were the *only* left group in France which did not



Edward Sykes

Stephen Lawrence funeral in April 1993. The capitalist Labour government stands by its cops and courts who shield Lawrence's killers.

vote for this racist, strike-breaking popular-front government.

Blair's Britain — hell-hole for workers and minorities

The Labour government is planning a draconian Crime and Disorder Bill, part of which purports to deal with "racially aggravated offences". The legislation deems Sikhs and Jews to be "ethnic groups" for supposed "protection", but excludes Muslims. This designation denies that attacks on Muslims are racist and will thus give official sanction to racist terror against Muslims and all Asians. The bill also mandates longer prison sentences for crimes of racist intent. But the interpretation of "intent" and its imputation is in the hands of the racist capitalist state and will be used (as it was when the first Race Relations Act was introduced by the 1965 Labour government) to arrest and imprison blacks and Asians defending themselves against racist attacks.

The whitewash of the record of arch-racist and former Tory MP Enoch Powell speaks volumes about the climate of racist reaction in Britain today. Upon Powell's demise, an obscene public debate took place, as to *whether or not* he was a racist! Labour "left" MP Tony Benn was at the forefront of those who lined up to honour Powell, joining all manner of imperialist and establishment figures at the funeral of

this right-wing demagogue. Powell is infamous for his 1968 "rivers of blood" speech in parliament, which led to reactionary anti-immigration demonstrations, including by London dockers, and an escalation of racist attacks.

The government's "public inquiry" into the murder of Stephen Lawrence by fascists in 1993 is virtually Labour's only pretence to "anti-racist" credentials. What it actually shows is that Labour stands firmly by its racist henchmen in the capitalist state — the cops who have shielded the fascist murderers, and William Macpherson, the racist judge in charge of the Lawrence hearing. When the Lawrence family lawyer, Michael Mansfield QC, asked for an adjournment, so the family could meet with Jack Straw to discuss their objection to this judge, Mansfield was denounced by Lee Jasper, head of the pro-Labour National Assembly Against Racism, for pulling a "stunt". Jack Straw stuck by the racist judge and said the inquiry would go ahead even if the family withdrew from it. The Lawrence family have fought for years, including taking out a private prosecution, but their son's killers have been shielded by the capitalist state from the outset.

Labour's commitment to "law and order" means criminalising that section of the population for which capitalism has no

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