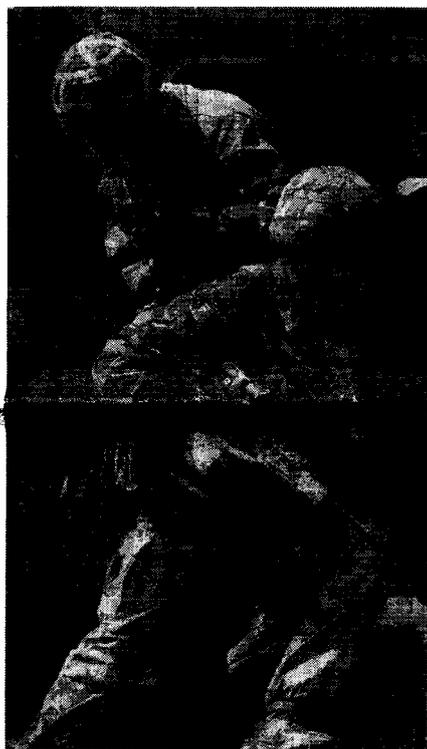


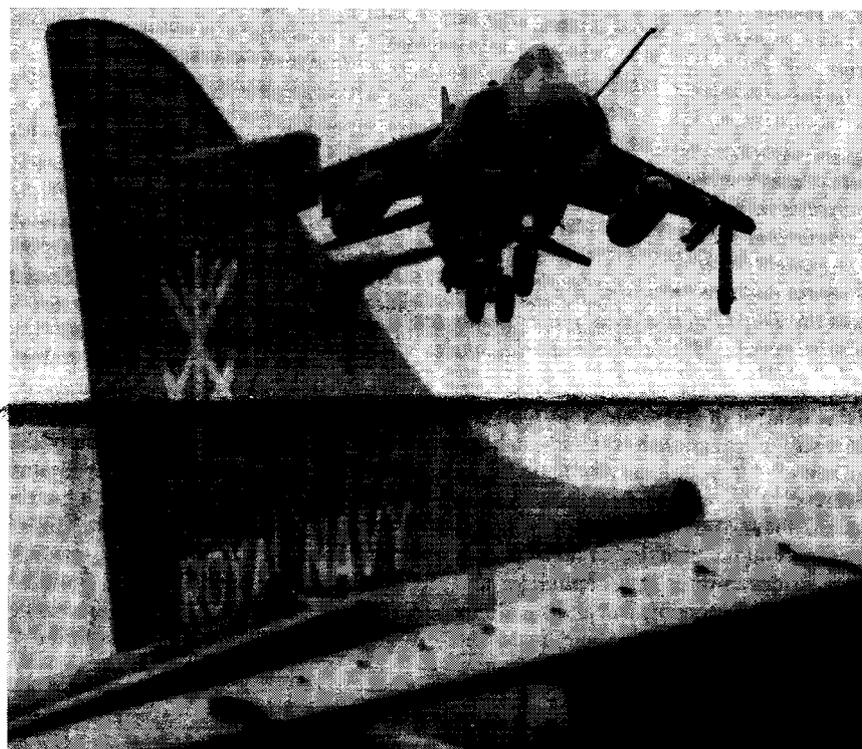
International Communist League declaration

Defeat imperialism through workers revolution—Defend Serbia!

All US/British/UN/NATO troops out of the Balkans! For a workers' Europe!



Independent



PA

Terror-bombing of Serbia continues amidst imperialist plans for full-scale invasion.

We print below an International Communist League statement of 21 April.

The imperialist war against Serbia is already the biggest military conflagration in Europe since World War II. Having pounded Serbia for weeks with bombs and cruise missiles, there is a growing crescendo among the Western imperialists for a full-scale invasion of the rump Serb-dominated Yugoslav republic. Once again the Balkans have become the powder keg of Europe, bringing us a step closer to a new world war. As proletarian internationalists fighting to build a world party of socialist revolution, the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) says: *Defeat imperialism through workers revolution! Defend Serbia against U.S./NATO attack! Down with the United Nations economic sanctions! All U.S./UN/NATO troops out of the Balkans!*

A 25 March statement of the Spartacist League/U.S. asserted:

"Every blow against U.S. imperialism in the Balkans will help to weaken the class enemy, providing an opening for the working class and oppressed here to fight against the torrent of attacks being leveled by Wall Street and its political agents, the Democratic and Republican parties. We fight to build the multiracial revolutionary workers party, forged in the crucible of

class struggle, which is the necessary instrument to lead the working class to the overthrow of this entire system based on racism, exploitation and war through a socialist revolution which rips industry and power away from a small handful of filthy rich and creates an egalitarian socialist economy."

In Europe, the brutal imperialist attacks on Serbia are being carried out by capitalist governments headed by social democrats and ex-Stalinists. As the military historian Clausewitz once said, war is the continuation of politics by other means. Having demonstrated their loyalty to the bourgeoisie at home by enforcing racist capitalist austerity, today the social democrats are if anything more vigorous than their right-wing predecessors in doing the imperialists' dirty work abroad. The *Berliner Zeitung* (25 March) observed: "That a red-green government sent units of the Bundeswehr into a military intervention for the first time since the founding of the Federal Republic is saving the country from an unproductive ideological and political conflict." At the onset of the war, sections of the International Communist League immediately issued statements unmasking the imperialist war propaganda and seeking to mobilize the workers of the world against their "own" bourgeoisies.

The destruction of the Soviet degener-

ated workers state ushered in a sharp rise in regional wars and imperialist military adventures, as a virulent new nationalism became the hammer of counterrevolution. Interimperialist strife, previously held in check by the need for a common anti-Soviet alliance, erupted anew. Just beneath the surface of the current unity of the

NATO "allies" over the bombing of Serbia lie fundamental and escalating inter-imperialist rivalries expressed in the growing trade war between the U.S. and Europe, as well as Japan. The post-Soviet world increasingly resembles the pre-1914 world. It was imperialist machinations stoking nationalist hatreds in the Balkans which led directly to World War I.

Today, NATO bombing is a trip wire for a broader and even bloodier international conflagration, potentially drawing in Greece, Turkey and Russia. While acting as a soft cop for NATO, capitalist Russia's denunciation of the U.S./NATO military attack on Serbia is in line with its ambition to assert itself as a regional imperialist power. Both Russia and the U.S. have huge nuclear arsenals, and the U.S. has already demonstrated its readiness to use these weapons with the nuclear incineration of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. Who could believe that the French, the British or the Israelis would be any more restrained? Capitalism is an irrational system, and the mad drive for profit and power inherent in this system will inevitably lead to a nuclear third world war if it is not stopped through international proletarian revolution.

Imperialists rain terror on Yugoslavia

NATO's war against Serbia has nothing to do with "human rights" or defense of the Albanian population of Kosovo against "ethnic cleansing." This war is not about the Kosovo Albanians. It is a war of domination aimed at realizing longstanding American plans to insert a substantial U.S./NATO military presence in Serbia through subduing, or if necessary dislodging, Milosevic. Since when do the imperialists care about the oppressed peoples? Hundreds of thousands of immigrants are

continued on page 4



Workers Hammer

London, 25 March: SL contingent protests Britain/US/NATO's bombing of Serbia and fights for perspective of workers revolution to overthrow imperialism.

“I have chosen a different course of action”

Young SLP member breaks from Old Labourism to Trotskyism

The following letter was sent to the Socialist Labour Party last December by a comrade who has since joined the Spartacus Youth Group.

Dear branch,

Although my absence from recent branch meetings has probably not provoked too much suspicion — there have been pretty overwhelming developments

over recent months that I feel only right to inform you about. Developments within my own political thought that I have been pondering over for several months now. This letter will hopefully explain them and I would be very appreciative if it could be read out during the meeting.

First and foremost I must point out my decision not to renew my membership of the SLP. I decided this at least three months ago. This move signifies not so

much a split with the SLP specifically but with social democratic politics in general (and certainly with anything that smacks of Tony Benn style “Little England” Labourism). Without going into too much detail I have chosen a different course of action, one might say. Since the summer I have been corresponding with a small London-based revolutionary group known as the Spartacist League — one of fifteen such groups operating under the banner of the Trotskyist Fourth International. Their biggest and oldest section is based in the US, other countries include Japan, Russia, France, Italy, Mexico, Ireland, Germany and South Africa. Collectively called the ICL — International Communist League, the structure of each section is that of a homogeneous group of cadre, much like the Russian Bolshevik Party on which they’re based. Their programme calls for the building of a truly multi-cultural workers party embracing all those beneath the yoke of this repressive capitalist world. A world that has grown even more repressive with counterrevolution in the Soviet Union and the Eastern European states — regardless of their deformed nature.

Their programme is one of a truly Marxist nature, I believe. They refuse to operate in a bourgeois parliamentary manner and to embrace any element of the repressive state apparatus, an apparatus that must be crushed before anything even resembling socialism can be built. This is a basic Marxist-Leninist theory, one that I (though still something of a political novice) have understood and figured to be true for a considerable amount of time. It

is also a theory preached by many a self-professed Marxist, though seldom put into practice.

The Spartacists stood alone in their defence of the Soviet Union for decades, seeking to oust the nationalistic bureaucracy and return to the internationalist goals of Lenin’s time. Today, with the “Death of Communism” lie still on the order of the day, the ICL calls for the defence of China, Cuba, Vietnam and North Korea from capitalist restoration at the hands of the West. During the time of the Stalinist sell-out in East Germany they struggled valiantly to defend the gains of the last forty years, organizing a demonstration in Treptow Park, [East Berlin, protesting Nazi desecration of the Red Army monument]... which was attended by more than 250,000 people. Equally unique was their stance towards Polish Solidarity (The Pope’s Union!). Whilst the rest of the left, Stalinists and pseudo-Trotskyists alike, cheered the movement on, the ICL stated that it was a counter-revolutionary outfit intent on a return to capitalist austerity. They were proven 100% correct. I would like to detail a little more of what the ICL stands for but I realise that it would take too much time. However, anybody who wishes to find out more — don’t hesitate to contact me.

I hope this letter has proven a point and cleared up any suspicions as well. I thought it beneficial to make my motives clear...

Comradely regards
Lawrence



TROTSKY

Lenin and the First World War

The inter-imperialist slaughter of World War I marked the final demise of the social-democratic Second International, as each party rushed to support its “own” bourgeoisie in the war. In counterposition to this social-chauvinism, Lenin fought for revolutionary socialists to mobilise the proletariat against their “own” bourgeoisie, to “turn the imperialist war into a civil war”. Today, the Labour and social-democratic parties in governments across

Europe are engaged in the horrific bombing of Serbia and are preparing for a ground invasion and occupation of this small nation. Like the Third International under Lenin and Trotsky, the ICL fights for international socialist revolution to defeat imperialism.

The truth, of which only a few were theoretically convinced at the beginning of the war, is now becoming palpably evident to an increasing number of class-conscious workers, namely, that a serious struggle against the war, a struggle to abolish war and establish lasting peace, is out of the question unless there is a mass revolutionary struggle led by the proletariat against the government in every country, unless bourgeois rule is overthrown, unless a socialist revolution is brought about. And the war itself, which is imposing an unprecedented strain upon the peoples, is bringing mankind to this, the only way out of the impasse, is compelling it to take giant strides towards state capitalism, and is demonstrating in a practical manner how planned social economy can and should be conducted, not in the interests of the capitalists, but by expropriating them, under the leadership of the revolutionary proletariat, in the interests of the masses who are now perishing from starvation and the other calamities caused by the war.

The more obvious this truth becomes, the wider becomes the gulf separating the two irreconcilable tendencies, policies, trends of socialist activity, which we indicated at Zimmerwald, where we acted as a separate Left wing, and in a manifesto to all socialist parties and to all class-conscious workers issued on behalf of the Left wing immediately after the conference. This is the gulf that lies between the attempts to conceal the obvious bankruptcy of official socialism and its representatives’ desertion to the bourgeoisie and their governments, as well as the attempts to reconcile the masses with this complete betrayal of socialism, on the one hand, and, on the other, the efforts to expose this bankruptcy in all its magnitude, to expose the bourgeois policy of the “social-patriots”, who have deserted the proletariat for the bourgeoisie, to destroy their influence over the masses and to create the possibility and the organisational basis for a genuine struggle against the war.

— VI Lenin, “To the workers who support the struggle against the war and against the socialists who have sided with their governments” (December 1916)



LENIN

WORKERS HAMMER



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

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From death row, this is Mumia Abu-Jamal

Serbian demonstration bombing

"[US Secretary of State, Robert] Lansing strongly objected to any introduction of the concept of 'laws of humanity' and to trials of foreign leaders before any foreign or international court. International law, he contended, regulated relations among nations; it had no jurisdiction over what a state chooses to do to its own people."

— Christopher Simpson, *The Splendid Blond Beast* (1995), p. 25

As a deadly rain of high-tech bombs fall on Serbia, a deadening rain of propaganda falls on Americans, media-manufactured lies designed to prime the populace into supporting harsher military measures against a sovereign nation, in the name of protecting human rights.

NATO is but a fig leaf for American "interests," and the bombing of the Serbian state is but a global demonstration of the ruthlessness of the American empire. A demonstration? The monstrous atomic bombing of Japan, after it was virtually beaten in WWII, was not a military necessity, but a political one, designed to demonstrate to the Russians that the U.S. was, and would ever be, boss. It was a massive, deadly demonstration.

So too, the Serbian bombing treats Serbs as the U.S. treated Japanese during the War — as props to demonstrate the power of the empire. Let us consider the claims that the U.S. is concerned about "human rights" or about the "rights of ethnic minorities" as the corporate press projects hourly: What of America's largest national minority — African-Americans? The world-respected Amnesty International group, speaking through its Secretary General, Pierre Sané, announced just days before the bombing, "Human-rights violations in the United States of America are persistent, widespread and appear to disproportionately affect people of racial or ethnic minority backgrounds." Sané was critical of police violence and executions in the U.S.

Further, internationally, let's see how the U.S. responds to "liberation movements" of the oppressed.

When fighters for Puerto Rican independence began to raise their voices the U.S. didn't support this "ethnic minority," they sought (and continue) to crush, incarcerate and silence them. Consider the case of the Palestinians, the Kurds, the Tamils, the East Timorese, the Colombian rebels — who has the U.S. consistently supported, the oppressed, or the U.S.-armed governments?

This isn't about "human rights." It isn't about "ethnic minorities." And it also isn't about "genocide." It's about establishing who's "boss" in the next century. It's about keeping Russia in its place. It's about keeping the EU under the thumb of Wall St. The bombing of Serbia is an echo of the bombing of three other countries in the past six months — of Iraq, Sudan and Afghanistan. And for precisely the same reason — to show that it can be done, no matter what so-called "international law" states. It is to instill terror throughout the world, in order for U.S. capital to institute what former president George Bush tried to do, but failed: to establish a New World Order.

Days before the bombing, NATO signed up Poland, Hungary and the former Czechoslovakia (Czech Republic) as its newest members, thereby virtually isolating Russia. Only Serbia, and the Yugoslav states, have refused to join NATO — their bombing is their punishment.

Our brilliant, revered nationalist leader, Malcolm X, taught us to examine history. If we look at history, the bombing of Yugoslavia becomes clear.

Empires are maintained, not by reason, but by ruthless terror. It was so in Rome. It is so in the U.S. The brilliant revolutionary, Dr. Huey P. Newton, founder of the Black Panther Party, explained "the United States was no longer a nation... We called it an empire.... An empire is a nation-state that has transformed itself into a power controlling all the world's lands and people" (1973). Huey was right then, and our response then was to oppose the empire. We must do



Workers Vanguard

that now! *Down with Imperialism! Stop the Bombing! NATO/US out of Yugoslavia!*
8 April 1999

©1999 Mumia Abu-Jamal

Mumia Abu-Jamal is a black journalist on death row in the US. A lifelong fighter for the oppressed and against racist police brutality, as a Black Panther in his youth and later as an award-winning journalist, this innocent man was framed for the 1981 killing of a Philadelphia policeman. Last year his racist frame-up conviction was upheld by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, and a new death warrant may be signed for him at any time. With no illusions that the capitalist state lacks either the power or the will to execute Mumia, the ICL and the Partisan Defence Committee fight to mobilise the working class to battle for Mumia's freedom and to abolish the racist death penalty. Join the fight to free Mumia! Contact the Partisan Defence Committee, BCM Box 4986, London WC1N 3XX; tel: 0171-485 1396. *Funds are urgently needed for Mumia's legal defence!* In Britain and Ireland, send/make payable to Partisan Defence Committee and write "Jamal legal defence" on the back of the cheque. All such funds are forwarded in their entirety to the Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal in New York. To write to Mumia: Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM8335, SCI Greene, 1040 E. Roy Furman Hwy., Waynesburg, PA 15370, USA.

Lies...

(Continued from page 8)

supposedly "new" Serb atrocities, including week-old unconfirmed reports of Albanian women being brutalised in Serbian military "rape camps".

The Western press has hammered away at the supposed "genocide" being carried out by the Milosevic regime and Serb-chauvinist militias and talked of the "complicity" of the entire Serbian population in order to justify the terror-bombing of civilians. But what has been going on in the former Yugoslav deformed workers state since it was ripped apart by nationalist fratricide has been "ethnic cleansing" on all sides, aimed at compacting homogeneous capitalist nation-states, with the Croatian and

Bosnian Muslim nationalists playing no less bloody a role than the Serb forces.

The Western "human rights" propaganda blitz about the Albanian refugees — many of whom have been forced from their homes by NATO bombing — is a flimsy cover for an *imperialist war of domination against Serbia*. The strategy of civilian terror-bombing now being pursued by NATO has been employed by the bloody-handed British and US war-makers for decades from the firebombing of Dresden and Tokyo in World War II to the "scorched earth" policy during the Korean War and the carpet bombing of Vietnam. In concert with the imperialists' class hatred, this strategy is often used against industrial areas *especially targeting the proletariat*. During this war, dozens of bridges and factories have been

destroyed, including the huge Zastava car plant in Kragujevac, where in 1941 German Nazi occupation forces massacred 5000 Serbs in a single day. Hundreds of thousands of Serbian workers have been left without jobs and whole cities cut off without water, heat or electricity. These are not accidents but a deliberate effort to terrorise the population.

The point of the lies and the censorship is not to keep information from the Serbs, who know full well that they are being bombed, but from the workers of the US and Europe who may recognise in the perpetrators of imperialist slaughter their own exploiters and oppressors. The arrogant ruling-class spokesmen who lie that their deliberate acts of mass murder in Serbia are "tragic accidents" also try to dismiss the horrendous cop killing of

black African Amadou Diallo in New York as a "tragic accident". They are the same types who gleefully point to the corporate bottom line in announcing mass lay-offs, revel in union busting and proclaim the "beneficial effects" of ripping minimal welfare benefits away from women and children. Our job, as proletarian internationalists, is to bring to the working class the understanding that this profit-driven system of war, racism and immiseration will only be swept away when the capitalist rulers themselves are swept into the dustbin of history and the international working class is in power. ■



Der Spiegel

"Mile of death" north of Kuwait City, February 1991, as US/British planes bombed fleeing Iraqis for 18 hellish hours.

SPARTACIST

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ICL...

(Continued from page 1)

deported every year by the European governments. Indeed, these same governments went into a virtual frenzy at the thought of having to open their borders to the refugees from Kosovo.

The ICL stands in the tradition of V.I. Lenin, whose "Socialism and War," a powerful handbook of revolutionary internationalism written in 1915 and circulated clandestinely to workers and soldiers throughout Europe during the war, teaches:

"The standpoint of social-chauvinism is shared equally by both advocates of victory for their governments in the present war and by advocates of the slogan of 'neither victory nor defeat.' A revolutionary class cannot but wish for the defeat of its government in a reactionary war, and cannot fail to see that the latter's military reverses must facilitate its overthrow."

Lenin stressed that in the case of an imperialist war against a small nation or semi-colonial people, it is the duty of the working class not only to fight for the defeat of one's "own" government but to defend the victims of imperialist aggression. In the present war, we are for the military defense of Serbia, without giving the Milosevic regime a shred of political support. We called for the right of self-determination for the Albanian population of Kosovo against the Serb-chauvinist regime in Belgrade until the Albanian separatists became simply a pawn of NATO's predatory designs. For Marxists,

this, he embodied the link between capitalist restoration and nationalism. But Milosevic was not alone in this regard. His Croatian counterpart, Franjo Tudjman, idolizes the World War II fascist Ustasha — a puppet of the German Nazis — and Bosnian leader Alija Izetbegovic is a rabid nationalist and Islamic reactionary. Marxists oppose the poison of nationalism and fight for the class unity of the workers of Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Kosovo in overthrowing all the bloody nationalist regimes of the region, from Milosevic to Tudjman. For a socialist federation of the Balkans!

The terminal crisis of Titoist Yugoslavia came in early 1991, when newly elected right-wing nationalist governments in Croatia and Slovenia declared secession from the federated state. Germany moved in to steamroller its European allies into recognizing their independence. The U.S. then joined Germany in throwing its weight behind an independent Bosnia under the leadership of Muslim nationalist forces. In Croatia the U.S. and Germany provided the fascistic Tudjman regime with not only large quantities of modern weaponry but also high-level training and advisers. This enabled the Croatian army in mid-1995, in league with NATO's air assault, to rout the Bosnian Serb military forces. Hundreds of thousands of Serb civilians were expelled by Croatian forces in the largest single act of "ethnic cleansing" in the war. At the same time, the U.S. covertly funded and armed Islamic fundamentalist killers in Bosnia including the



Harcourt Brace Jovanovich

Leadership of World War II Communist Partisans was drawn from the many nationalities making up Yugoslavia. Tito (second from left), who was from Croatia, pictured with Slovenian, Serbian and Montenegrin Communists.

means the same as those of the American imperialists. "The partnership with NATO in the Yugoslav crisis is simply a cloak, masking great differences between the United States and its European allies," a former UN official told the *San Francisco Chronicle*. The same article (15 April) quoted a range of people running the gamut from left to right "who view the intervention in Kosovo as a thinly disguised effort to impose Washington's will on Europe's future." In France, the *Chronicle* noted, "newspaper commentaries are so unremittingly hostile to the United States that a reader might well imagine Paris is at war with the Pentagon, rather than with the Yugoslav army," while former German chancellor Helmut Schmidt complained about being "held on a leash by the Americans."

Thus, the "left" is running point for their own capitalist ruling class: their "anti-Americanism" is a cheap substitute for an obstacle to anti-imperialist proletarian internationalism. Swimming with the tide of bourgeois "public opinion," the slogans of the "left" dovetail with those of outright fascists; for example, in Germany the Nazis raise the call, "No German blood for foreign interests!"

Perhaps the most blatant of the *pro-war* "leftists" are the former Stalinist parties, exemplified by the French CP, which is of course in the government. Headlining, "Europe and France must participate in building peace," a leaflet signed by the PCF along with the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR) in Rouen complained that the NATO bombing hasn't gotten rid of Milosevic: "Milosevic is still in place! The Albanians are being hunted down or massacred! These are the first results of the military adventure. In contrast, peace in the region implies active and determined support to the weak social and democratic forces fighting against the nationalist dictatorships and for the right of ethnic minorities."

The fake-Trotskyist LCR, the French organization of the United Secretariat (USec), in its own press is more explicit in beating the drums for war. The LCR openly called for *imperialist military intervention in Kosovo* under the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) — a European-dominated military bloc — or the United Nations. In its 1 April issue, *Rouge* declared:

"NATO was not the only, and above all not the best, linchpin for an accord. The conditions for a multinational police force (particularly composed of Serbs and Albanians) could be found under the auspices of the OSCE to enforce a transitional accord."

The following week a *Rouge* statement advocated an accord with Serbia that would be policed by "a multinational force under UN control." The UN — truly a den

of thieves and their victims — has been an instrument for imperialist militarism from the 1950-53 war against the North Korean deformed workers state to the slaughter of tens of thousands of Iraqis in the 1991 war in the Persian Gulf.

Alain Krivine's USec is acting as a mouthpiece for the interests of French imperialism, counterposing to the U.S.-dominated NATO intervention the call for a European imperialist expeditionary force in the Balkans. Rifondazione Comunista (RC) in Italy and the PDS in Germany (as well as some SPD members like ex-party chairman Oskar Lafontaine) push much the same brand of nationalist anti-Americanism. While the American government is the foremost imperialist military power, this attempt to depict the European imperialist states as more benevolent than the U.S. is nothing but vile social patriotism. Presumably, then, the German bourgeoisie of Auschwitz is morally better than its American counterpart? And what about the dirty history of French colonialism in Algeria and Indochina, or the British empire's history of pillage and murder in Ireland, the Indian subcontinent, Africa and the Middle East? And it was the Italian bourgeoisie which invented concentration camps in Libya, which first used poison gas against the Ethiopian population, and which carried out countless acts of butchery in the Balkans during World War II.

The French pseudo-Trotskyist organization Lutte Ouvrière (LO) has a well-deserved reputation for catering to the backward prejudices of the working class by ignoring special oppression, whether it be women's oppression, homophobia,



Workers Vanguard map

the democratic right of self-determination for the Kosovo Albanians is necessarily subordinated *now* to the struggle against the imperialist bombing and threatened invasion.

In fact, the all-sided nationalist blood-bath in the Balkans was directly instigated by the imperialists in their drive to destroy the former deformed workers state of Yugoslavia through capitalist counterrevolution. The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was born out of World War II, when Tito's Communist partisans battled the occupying Nazi German Wehrmacht as well as the Croatian fascist Ustasha and Serbian royalist Chetniks. Tito's partisans were the only force in Yugoslavia during the war that opposed communalism. But the socialist and democratic ideals to which the Tito regime publicly appealed were undermined by the bureaucratic deformations and the inherent limitations of Stalinism, with its program of building socialism in one country. Tito introduced "market socialism," which opened Yugoslavia to imperialist economic penetration and reinforced disparities among the various regions, fueling resurgent nationalism.

After Tito's death the bureaucracy began to fracture along national lines. Milosevic, who promoted "market reforms" as head of the central bank, launched his political career by appealing to "greater Serbia" chauvinism particularly against the Kosovo Albanians. In

mujahedin cutthroats who had fought against the Soviet army in Afghanistan.

Euro "socialists"

War is always a decisive test for revolutionaries. Trotsky insisted that a proletarian position on war required "a complete and real break with official public opinion on the most burning question of the 'defense of the fatherland.'" The fake left proves Trotsky's point in the negative. They join in the imperialists' war cry over "poor little Kosovo" while rejecting the defense of Serbia, whose very *right to national existence* is under attack by the imperialist powers. Despite a pacifist veneer of opposition to the bombing, they march in lockstep behind the war aims of their own imperialisms and the social-democratic or popular-front governments, whose election they supported. The camouflage: stop the NATO bombing; the message: go to war in the Balkans with ground troops under EU control. For today's "death of communism" leftists, who long ago gave up any confidence in the revolutionary capacity of the proletariat, the bloody imperialists — whether under the flags of the UN or the EU or NATO — are the means for bringing "human rights" to the oppressed peoples of the world!

In its supposedly "antiwar" propaganda, the European "left" is simply acting as the spokesman for their own imperialist bourgeoisies, whose interests are by no



AP

Serbian tank in Kosovo flies flag of World War II Chetnik reactionaries.

racism or the national question in France, where along with the rest of the fake left it denies the right of self-determination for the Basques in France. But they too have suddenly become champions of the right of self-determination of the Kosovo people. In its 9 April issue, *Lutte Ouvrière* writes: "If the French government, as well as the other Western governments, were really helping the Kosovars, it would be noticeable and we would not see the endless lines of refugees that we see on TV." Despite its claimed opposition to NATO military attacks, the logic of this position is that the imperialists should intervene more decisively and really crush the Serbs. By demonizing Milosevic — rather than the imperialists — as the main enemy in this conflict, LO serves as a left apologist for the bourgeoisie.

In the same vein, the minuscule International Bolshevik Tendency (IBT), which sneers at independence for Quebec and more generally is notorious for its indifference to the rights of oppressed peoples, such as the Catholics in Northern Ireland, today howls for "independence for Kosovo" — apparently they only champion independence for those who have imperialist sponsorship.

In Italy, Rifondazione preaches confidence in the UN and calls for a conference of European capitalist powers to resolve

out. Serbian workers are not the enemy of Italian rail workers! The enemy is the Italian bourgeoisie!

As Lenin asserted: "Opportunism and social-chauvinism have the same politico-ideological content — class collaboration instead of the class struggle, renunciation of revolutionary methods of struggle, helping one's 'own' government in its embarrassed situation, instead of taking advantage of these embarrassments so as to advance the revolution." The reformist trade union leaders are bribed with the crumbs of imperialist profit. In France unions get more revenue from the state and the capitalists than from their own members. Fake left groups like LO and LCR emulate this political corruption by taking their own financial subsidies from the bourgeois state. But he who pays the bills calls the political tunes! We struggle for the *complete independence of the trade unions from the capitalist state!*

Under the impact of a major war in Europe involving the imperialist powers, we are presented with the spectacle of erstwhile "revolutionaries" and "anti-imperialists" joining pro-imperialist war rallies. The centrist Workers Power joined the deeply Labourite Alliance for Workers Liberty in a 10 April "Workers Aid for Kosova" rally in London dominated by NATO and Albanian flags and placards screaming, "NATO Good Luck" and



Yevgeni Khaldei

Victorious Red Army tramples Nazi swastika, Austria 1945. The destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state has led to intensified inter-imperialist rivalries and fuelled the rise of fascist terror across Europe.

when the German Fourth Reich was engineering the destruction of the Yugoslav deformed workers state, they called for immediate recognition of the capitalist-restorationist Slovenian and Croatian declarations of independence. A year later WP's Austrian affiliate, the Arbeiter-Innenstandpunkt, was involved in a "united front" with the local chapter of Vuk Draskovic's Serb National Rebirth, an organization of Great Serbian monarchists and Chetniks, then in opposition to Milosevic. During the 1995 NATO air strikes, WP refused even on paper to defend the Bosnian Serbs against imperialism.

It could not be clearer that the fake lefts are social-chauvinists whose bottom line is support to imperialist war aims in the Balkans, despite the theoretical contortions they go through in trying to reconcile their lip-service opposition to NATO with their support to the separatist Kosovo Liberation Army, which is now simply a pawn of NATO. Against the social-chauvinists of his time, Lenin polemicized against Karl Kautsky, a central leader of the German SPD who during the first inter-imperialist war maintained "loyalty to Marxism in word, and subordination to opportunism in deed." Lenin wrote that "Kautsky 'reconciles' in an unprincipled way the fundamental idea of social-chauvinism, recognition of defence of the fatherland in the present war, with a diplomatic sham concession to the Lefts — his abstention from voting for war credits, his verbal claim to be in the opposition, etc" (Lenin, "Socialism and War," 1915). But today's "leftists" like Workers Power are indeed far to the right of a Karl Kautsky.

It took the opening of the first imperialist world war, World War I, and an orgy of chauvinism to shatter the Second International and for the "socialists" of that time to lead the working class to the slaughter. Today, as the first bombs were being dropped on the Balkan peoples, what passes for the "left" was already prostrate before its own imperialism. In the face of World War I, Lenin called on the workers to turn the inter-imperialist war into a civil war in all belligerent countries, demanding a split of authentic socialists from the Second International.

The fake left's ideological prostration before imperialism reflects their many years support to Western imperialism against the Soviet Union in the name of "democracy" and "human rights." As long as the Soviet Union and the deformed workers states of East Europe existed, as Trotskyists we called for their unconditional military defense against imperialism and internal counterrevolution. We fought for proletarian political revolution to oust the nationalist Stalinist bureaucracies. In contrast, the fake left supported all manner of pro-capitalist forces in the name of "anti-Stalinism." The state-capitalist British Socialist Workers Party (SWP) of

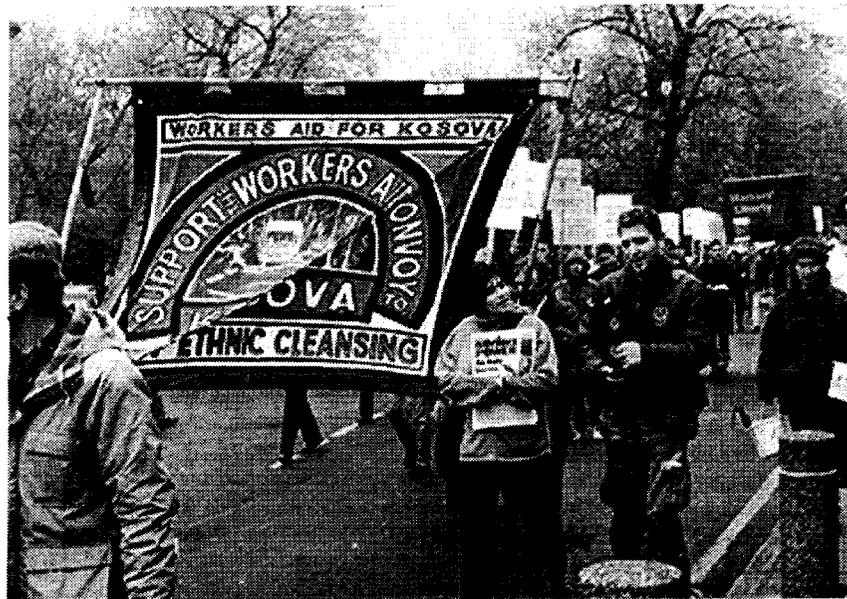
Tony Cliff along with its satellites and fake Trotskyists like the USEC and Workers Power (the latter with some contradiction) all opposed the intervention of the Soviet Army into Afghanistan, the last objectively progressive act of the Kremlin bureaucracy. In the early 1980s they joined in fervent support to CIA/Vatican-sponsored Polish Solidarność, which was in the forefront of the drive for capitalist restoration in East Europe. A decade later, all these groups cheered on Yeltsin and his pro-imperialist "democrats" as they launched the counterrevolution which was to destroy the Soviet Union.

The SWP, who rejoiced when New Labour was elected, tails after Labour "left" Tony Benn, saying, "Tony Benn has opposed the Falklands War, the Gulf War and this war" (SWP pamphlet, "Stop the war," April 1999). Tony Benn is a "little England" nationalist who called for UN sanctions during the Gulf War and today complains the bombing doesn't have UN authorization. Meanwhile, the press of the Socialist Party (formerly "Militant") calls for "workers' action to overthrow Milosevic" (*Socialist*, 16 April) while, needless to say, never calling for British workers to overthrow British capitalism.

Politically apart from the British "poor little Kosovo" crowd is the Socialist Labour Party (SLP), headed by mineworkers leader Arthur Scargill. An SLP press release of 24 March, quoting Scargill, forthrightly branded Labour Party prime minister Tony Blair a murderer. It pointed to the hypocrisy of the imperialists, noting that "Britain still occupies part of Ireland." However, Scargill's statement that the bombing is being carried out "without even the fig-leaf of a United Nations Security Resolution" implies confidence in that institution of the imperialists. A more left-wing statement by the Normanton Constituency SLP is titled: "Defend Yugoslavia and Iraq — Fight Imperialism." The statement correctly nails Blair's New Labour Party as "anti-working class, pro-imperialist." It says, "We firmly believe in the principle of the right of nations to self-determination, and in the case of Yugoslavia that means the right of a sovereign nation to solve its own problems." However, both SLP statements are uncritical of Milosevic's virulent Serb-chauvinism.

Yet in the April/May issue of its *Socialist News*, the SLP says nothing about defeating imperialism, hints at a call for ground troops ("Neither Clinton nor Blair has any intention of putting their soldiers into Kosovo on the side of the Kosovar Liberation Army") and calls on "UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, Russian Prime Minister Yevgeni Primakov and the Pope to devise a form of peace negotiations which would stop the bombing"! Talk about an unholy alliance — the Pope who was a key operative for Solidarność

continued on page 6



Workers Hammer

At "Workers Aid for Kosova" London demonstration, 10 April, Workers Power beats drums for war on behalf of "poor little Kosovo", hypocritical cover for bloody imperialism.

the Balkans crisis. RC revels in anti-Americanism in order to alibi its support to its own ruling class. RC's call to shut down the NATO air base in Italy is raised from the perspective of Italian nationalism and in the interest of a stronger capitalist Europe directed against its imperialist rivals (like the U.S.). We Trotskyists appeal not to the bourgeois state, but rather to the Italian proletariat to mobilize labor actions against the U.S./NATO bases, from which a deadly war is being launched against the interests of all workers — Serbian, Italian, Albanian and American. We say: Smash the counter-revolutionary NATO alliance through workers revolution!

A four-page supplement issued 10 April by *Proposta*, the limp "left opposition" of RC, never calls for immediate withdrawal of Italian troops from the Balkans. *Proposta* supported the previous "Ulivo"/RC bourgeois government which invaded Albania.

Social chauvinism means defense of "national interests," i.e., calling on the working class to identify with the imperialist aims of the ruling capitalist class. It means the explicit abandonment of class struggle by reformists and pro-capitalist trade union leaders. Thus, the Italian CGIL-CISL-UIL bureaucrats called off a railroad strike as soon as the war broke

"NATO Now or Never." "Workers Aid for Kosova" is modelled on "Workers Aid for Bosnia," initiated in 1993, which, under the guise of providing humanitarian aid for workers in Bosnia, promoted support to the Bosnian Muslim government and worked hand in glove with UN troops in the fratricidal war between Serbs, Croats and Muslims. It thereby served as a stalking horse for direct imperialist military intervention against the Bosnian Serbs.

A statement distributed at a London public meeting of 30 March by WP's international, the League for a Revolutionary Communist International (LRCI), claimed to defend the Serbs against NATO attack — "though not in Kosova which they have no right to occupy"! At the same time, WP urges the Albanian separatists "to take full military advantage of the imperialist bombing to drive out the 'Yugoslav' forces," adding: "If [Clinton and Blair's] primary concern were for the Kosovars they would recognise their statehood, and give the KLA the weapons to drive out the Serbian troops." This is an unvarnished appeal to the NATO imperialists.

Workers Power has in fact supported every reactionary force in the Balkans (including in Serbia) as long as they are opposed to the imperialists' current main enemy, Milosevic. Thus, in June 1991

fight to mobilize the social power of the organized proletariat at the head of all the oppressed to smash fascist provocations!

West Europe's dark-skinned proletarians are not just defenseless victims but an important component of the working-class forces capable of destroying the racist capitalist system. To mobilize the power of the integrated proletariat, however, requires a political struggle against the social-democratic parliamentary and union leaderships, which are transmission belts for racist poison into the working class and whose pro-capitalist policies have simply perpetuated the conditions of mass immiseration and despair which serve as the breeding ground for fascism. Only active engagement in the urgent social struggles against racial oppression and repression can lay the basis for the unity of the multi-ethnic proletariat against the bourgeoisie. But the labor "leaders" pursue the opposite policy, for example by organizing the racist cops into the trade unions. Cops are not workers! We demand: Cops out of the unions!

To once and for all smash the fascists—the armed gangs which capital holds in reserve to use against the working class—requires socialist revolution. But the fake lefts who politically tail the larger social democratic bourgeois workers parties are totally incapable of a bold assault on the capitalist system. It is instructive that the electoral platform of the LO-LCR lashup in the European parliamentary elections does not even mention "socialism", let alone "revolution." For these timid reformists the maximum program is to go back to the good old days of the "welfare state"—the program of social democracy! It is a measure of the retrogression of proletarian consciousness since the destruction of the Soviet Union that most of those who once paid lip service to the Fourth International, founded by Leon Trotsky and destroyed by revisionism, have become open mouthpieces for the politics of the Second International, which the heroic Rosa Luxemburg already aptly described as a "stinking corpse" at the time of the First World War! In sharp distinction to these pseudo-Trotskyists, who openly acquiesce to capitalist rule, we fight for *new October Revolutions*, which requires the reforging of the Fourth International as a world party of socialist revolution!

Down with Maastricht! For a workers Europe!

Previously a diplomatic appendage to the anti-Soviet NATO alliance, today the European Union is an unstable adjunct to the economic, military and political priorities of the European capitalists, and is directed against the workers of Europe and non-European immigrants, as well as against Germany's main imperialist rivals, the U.S. and Japan. With Germany as its strongest component, the European Union is also an arena in which the fundamentally conflicting interests of the major European bourgeois states are expressed.

Because capitalism is organized on the basis of particular nation states, itself the cause of repeated imperialist wars to redivide the world, it is impossible to cohere a stable pan-European bourgeois state. The perspective of a progressive European "superstate," as preached by Jospin, Schröder et al. is a bald-faced lie. As Lenin noted long ago, a capitalist United States of Europe is either impossible or reactionary:

"Of course, temporary agreements are possible between capitalists and between states. In this sense a United States of Europe is possible as an agreement between the European capitalists...but to what end? Only for the purpose of jointly suppressing socialism in Europe, of jointly protecting colonial booty against Japan and America."

—"On the Slogan for a United States of Europe," August 1915

In contrast, Workers Power actually maintains that the EU is progressive, or potentially so, arguing that "to some extent European workers will be better armed to fight back on a continental scale after the implementation of the terms of Maastricht" (*Workers Power*, June 1992). Thus WP becomes the mouthpiece for capitalist "united" Europe. As Trotsky wrote of the centrists of his time, "But it is a law that whoever is afraid of a break with the social patriots will inevitably

suffered its greatest crisis in 50 years. Japanese imperialism, for its part, has reacted with an aggressive attempt to refurbish bourgeois militarism. As the U.S. and its NATO allies began their barrage of cruise missiles and bombs against Serbia, the Japanese navy fired at two vessels suspected of being North Korean spy ships. This was only the second time in the postwar period that the navy has fired its weapons, the other time being in 1953 against the USSR off Hokkaido.

A statement by the Spartacist Group of Japan (SGJ) noted:



ICL fights for a perspective of international workers revolution. Clockwise from bottom left: ICL contingents at protests in Toronto and Berlin; speakout at Boston University in the US.

become their agent" ("Lessons of October," 4 November 1935). In a parody of parliamentary cretinism, WP even calls for a Europe-wide constituent assembly!

LO similarly had an abstentionist position on Maastricht. In reality, these groups act as left democrats, seeking to put a "democratic" face on capitalist reaction. We stand with Lenin. The "unity" of the EU has been directed against the proletariat and oppressed: raining bombs on Yugoslavia, policing the borders against "illegal" immigrants, turning over Öcalan to the torture chambers of Turkey.

A statement for the European Parliament issued by Scargill's SLP calls for getting Britain out of the European Union. Entitled "Vote us in to get us out," the statement presents the EU and the Maastricht Treaty as the root cause of rising unemployment and the general worsening of economic conditions. This obscures the fact that, with or without the Maastricht Treaty, the main enemy of the workers of each country is their "own" bourgeoisie. Thatcher's Britain pioneered the dismantling of the "welfare state" years before there was any serious talk of a common European currency. Our opposition to the EU is based on a proletarian internationalist perspective, not the nationalist protectionism of the SLP. Only the overthrow of capitalism through workers revolution and the establishment of a *Socialist United States of Europe*, as part of a worldwide socialist society, can lay the basis for the development of productive resources that will genuinely benefit mankind.

Reforge the Fourth International!

Sharply impacted by the Asian economic collapse, the Japanese economy has

"While endorsing the U.S./NATO massacre of Serbs, the Japanese ruling class is well aware that American imperialism's role as top world cop is also directed against them, America's main imperialist rival in the Pacific. Since the destruction of the Soviet Union, the Japan-U.S. security treaty less and less suits the real interests of the Japanese bourgeoisie. Already the second biggest military spender in the world, Japanese imperialism is pushing the revised military guidelines to prepare its own battle-ready army and navy."

Asserting "Not one man, not one yen for the imperialist military," the SGJ emphasized that the struggle against imperialist war cannot be conducted separate and apart from the class struggle:

"Japanese workers must join with workers from Indonesia to the Philippines in the struggle for a socialist Asia, in the unconditional military defense of China, North Korea and Vietnam against imperialist attack and for proletarian political revolution. What is needed is an uncompromising proletarian party to lead the working class to state power."

The sharp escalation of interimperialist rivalry, reflected in the growth of bourgeois militarism in the U.S., Europe and Japan, expresses a fundamental law of imperialism. Imperialism is not a policy that can be made more humane, as the liberals and reformists contend, but "the highest stage of capitalism," as Lenin defined it: "Imperialism is capitalism at that stage of development at which the dominance of monopolies and finance capital is established; in which the export of capital has acquired pronounced importance; in which the division of the world among the international trusts has begun, in which the division of all territories of the globe among the biggest capitalist powers has been completed."

Lenin sharply polemicized against Kautsky's theory of "ultra-imperialism," today resuscitated as "globalization," which claimed that the great capitalist powers could peacefully agree on the joint exploitation of the world by internationally united finance capital. Lenin asserted, to the contrary, that "the only conceivable basis under capitalism for the division of spheres of influence, interest, colonies, etc., is a calculation of the strength of those participating, their general economic, financial, military strength, etc." The small number of imperialist powers are engaged in a ruthless struggle to improve their relative competitive position by increasing the rate of exploitation of their domestic working class, by plundering the colonial and semi-colonial world and by seizing markets at the expense of their rivals. Thus, the basis is laid for new wars to redivide the world in accord with the changing relative strengths of the imperialists. As Lenin asserted: "inter-imperialist' or 'ultra-imperialist' alliances, no matter what form they may assume, whether of one imperialist coalition against another, or of a general alliance embracing all the imperialist powers, are inevitably nothing more than a 'truce' in periods between wars" (Lenin, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*).

The view held by fake leftists like Workers Power that a European capitalist superstate can be constructed by peaceful means is simply a modern-day variant of Kautsky's theory. Another variant is the view that the existence of nuclear weapons will restrain the capitalist imperialists—at least the "democratic" imperialists—from resorting to a new world war. In a polemic with Peter Taaffe's Committee for a Workers International we pointed out that this demonstrated touching faith in the democratic imperialists, who gratuitously atom-bombed their already defeated enemy at the close of World War II. Today's "leftists" who expect rationality and restraint from the imperialist rulers have deliberately short memories: the bloody-handed carpet bombers of Vietnam have little rationality and even less scruples.

There is an element of fatuousness in the presumption on the part of the American bourgeoisie that Russia's weakness and indebtedness preclude it from military intervention. The Russia of the tsars was not strong when it chose to mobilize against Austria (and therefore Germany) in WWI. None of the combatants indulged in such "rational" calculation; they all expected the war to be over in a few short months. This is how wars start, and our centrist opponents are as foolish as the bourgeoisies they tail in this regard. We are not dealing with a rational social system, but rather with imperialism. *Only world socialist revolution can save mankind from a barbaric outcome.*

Writing on the aftermath of Hitler's coming to power, the Russian revolutionary leader and founder of the Fourth International Leon Trotsky wrote: "The catastrophic commercial, industrial, agrarian and financial crisis, the break in international economic ties, the decline of the productive forces of humanity, the unbearable sharpening of class and international contradictions mark the twilight of capitalism and fully confirm the Leninist characterization of our epoch as one of wars and revolutions." He concluded "War and the Fourth International" (1934) by asserting: "It is indisputable at any rate that in our epoch only that organization that bases itself on international principles and enters into the ranks of the world party of the proletariat can root itself in the national soil. *The struggle against war means now the struggle for the Fourth International!*" We seek to carry forward the work begun by comrade Trotsky: *Reforge the Fourth International!* ■

(Continued from page 5)

counterrevolution in Poland, the chief of the UN which invaded Haiti and Somalia and is starving Iraq, and the prime minister of capitalist "post-Soviet" Russia the SLP now beseeches to bring us peace! Scargill's opposition to the Vatican-sponsored Solidarność was used by the Thatcher government as a union-busting spearhead against Scargill and the British miners before and during their 1984-85 strike.

Militants in the SLP who want to oppose British imperialism must understand that the "old Labour" political tradition which the SLP fondly harks back to is anything but anti-imperialist. The "little England" nationalists of the pre-Blair Labour Party "left" stood on the side of their own imperialism from India to Ireland to the "virginity testing" of Asian women seeking admittance into Britain. The line of Labourism is the so-called parliamentary road to socialism—as though the ruling class would hand over state power to the proletariat after a democratic election; in the meantime, they seek to participate in the "humane" administration of the capitalist system. You can't fight imperialist war without a revolutionary fight against the capitalist system which breeds war.

The working class must fight national and racial oppression

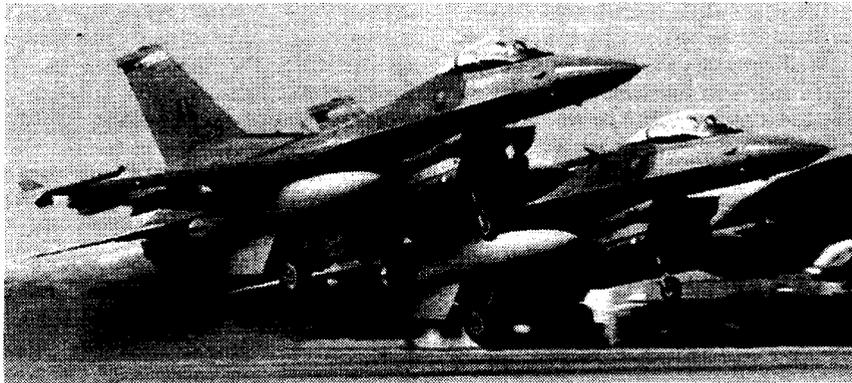
Under Lenin and Trotsky, the Bolsheviks led the Russian working masses to successfully smash the capitalist state in October 1917. The Bolsheviks took revolutionary Russia out of the imperialist carnage, and founded the Communist International for the purpose of spreading the revolution worldwide.

But unlike in Russia, the sharp revolutionary opportunity presented by the first World War did not lead to the proletariat overthrowing the bourgeoisie in Western Europe. The chief responsibility for this lies with the social democracy. These bloodhounds of counterrevolution served their bourgeois masters well, butchering revolutionaries like the German communists Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg. The pressure of imperialist encirclement on the economically backward Soviet state, the devastation of the Russian working class in the civil war that smashed the counterrevolutionary Russian and imperialist forces, and the failure of proletarian revolution abroad set the stage for a political counterrevolution in 1924 (Thermidor), in which political power was usurped by a nationalist, parasitic caste headed by Stalin and his heirs. Their false dogma of "building socialism in one country" meant in practice an accommodation to imperialism. The Stalinist program of class collaboration has led to the defeat of incipient workers revolutions from China in 1925-27 to Spain in 1936-39, Italy 1943-45 and France in May 1968. Having destroyed the revolutionary internationalist consciousness of the Soviet proletariat, the Stalinist bureaucracy finally devoured the workers state, ushering in the capitalist counterrevolution of 1991-92.

U.S. imperialist president Jimmy Carter waged Cold War II under the rubric of "human rights." Today, "human rights" imperialism is the watchword of the imperialists and their hangers-on to justify their war aims. During World War I, Britain and France justified their war against Germany in the name of liberating Belgium while Germany claimed to be fighting for the liberation of Poland from Russia. Lenin savagely ridiculed this bourgeois deception. While strongly supporting Poland's right to self-determination, he argued that raising this slogan in the context of an inter-imperialist war could only mean



DPA



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Pro-imperialist fake-left groups across Europe have come out in support of the Kosovo Liberation Army, pawn of imperialist war against Serbia.

"stooping...to humble servitude to one of the imperialist monarchies" ("The Discussion on Self-Determination Summed Up," July 1916).

While the bourgeoisies today howl about "poor little Kosovo," they perpetuate numerous instances of national and racial oppression, including in Western Europe. The French bourgeoisie oppresses and expels thousands of North Africans and other *sans papiers* from "la belle France." Germany has deported Kurds back to sure repression and possible death in Turkey, while Bosnian refugees were victims of mass deportations by the Fourth Reich. Italy sank a ship of Albanian refugees on the high seas. Roma and Sinti peoples are hideously tormented across "socialist" Europe.

The repression of the Basque people exposes what capitalist "European unity" is all about: trans-national police-state coordination of terror against oppressed peoples fighting for liberation. We demand freedom for the Basque nationalists in French and Spanish prisons, and call for the right of self-determination of the Basques, north as well as south of the Pyrenees!

The ICL fights for the immediate unconditional withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland as part of the fight for an Irish workers republic within a socialist federation of the British Isles. In this situation of interpenetrated peoples, in which the Catholic minority is currently oppressed within the sectarian Orange statelet, we recognize that there is no equitable solution to national oppression short of the mobilization of the proletariat throughout the British Isles for the revolu-

tionary overthrow of British imperialism, smashing the Orange statelet in the North as well as the Catholic clericalist state in the South.

While screaming about Milosevic, the imperialists are silent about the oppression—including massive forced population transfers—of Kurds in Turkey. The government of Turkey, the southeast bastion of NATO, has carried out a 14-year war against the oppressed Kurdish population that has left some 30,000 dead, totally destroyed 3,500 villages and forced more than three million Kurds to flee their homes. It is notable that the leader of the petty bourgeois nationalist Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), Abdullah Öcalan, was tracked down by the CIA and was denied asylum by every European country, while in Germany the PKK is banned. We say: Freedom for Öcalan! Down with the persecution of Kurdish militants! For a Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan!

The domestic face of bourgeois nationalism is the sharp increase in racism directed at Europe's dark-skinned and Eastern European immigrant communities, who face massive deportations and state and fascist violence. Immigrants who are no longer needed as "guest workers" for low-paid dirty work are being thrown out while second-generation youth in particular are viewed with contempt by the rulers: with no jobs and no future for these youth, the ruling class fears them as social tinder

waiting to explode. Across Europe, capitalist regimes administered by supposed "socialists" unleash their cops to terrorize minority youth, while in Blair's Britain the oppression of blacks and Asians has become such an acute embarrassment that the government was forced to acknowledge "institutionalized racism" in the police.

Racist oppression is integrally linked to the mechanism of capitalist exploitation. Social-democratic regimes and popular-front governments (coalitions which tie working-class parties to the bourgeoisie in government) have been put into office since the collapse of the Soviet Union, with the express purpose of destroying the "welfare state." The capitalist rulers no longer feel obligated to maintain a high standard of living for Western workers to compete with the social benefits of the planned economies of the East European deformed workers states resulting from the victory of the Red Army in World War II. As the bourgeoisie seeks to drive up the rate of exploitation, immigrants are not only targeted for deportation but are used as convenient scapegoats for unemployment and immiseration. Anti-immigrant racism is the cutting edge of attacks on the whole working class. The interests of the working class and minorities must advance together, or they will fall back separately. The workers movement must fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants and refugees from right-wing repression.

Along with the intensification of the bourgeoisies' war against their own working masses, the final undoing of the October Revolution has intensified social reaction, and as always, women are among the chief targets. Capitalist counterrevolution in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe has pauperized women, driving them out of jobs and back to the tyranny of "Kinder, Kirche, Küche." Across Western Europe and North America, abortion rights are under concerted attack, while in the so-called "Third World" (but not only there), fundamentalist religious forces are on a rampage of anti-woman terror, seeking to buttress every kind of familial and social obstacle to the emancipation of women.

The fake left spreads the illusion that putting the social democrats into power is a means of "fighting the right" and the fascists. This is a bald-faced lie. These capitalist governments have relentlessly persecuted the immigrants, while protecting the fascist gangs who spread their murderous terror. Appealing to the racist bourgeois state to ban the fascists is simply suicidal and augments the arsenal of state repression, which will invariably be used against the left, not the right. We

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WORKERS HAMMER

NATO Ministry of Disinformation— Big Lies for imperialist war

In 1939, to manufacture a pretext for the Nazi invasion of Poland, Hitler had German troops dress up in Polish army uniforms and stage an "incursion" into Germany. In 1964, US president Lyndon B Johnson fabricated a North Vietnamese "attack" on American warships in the Gulf of Tonkin in order to send ground forces into Vietnam. During the 1990-91 Persian Gulf War, the Western press purveyed outlandish lies, like the one about Iraqi forces murdering 300 incubator babies in a Kuwaiti hospital, to justify the imperialist slaughter of tens of thousands of Iraqis.

The Big Lie is the handmaiden of imperialist war. Now the British/US/NATO rulers and their kept media are churning out a deafening drum beat of supposed "human rights atrocities" by the Serbian forces under Slobodan Milosevic with the aim of building popular support for NATO's war of domination in the Balkans and for the concerted terror-bombing of the people of Serbia and Kosovo. An *Independent* (30 March) headline screamed, "Kosovo's men of ideas are dragged from homes and shot", retailing "confirmed" reports of "executions" of Albanian notables — who turned up alive and well a day or two later. There were the Yugoslav pilots supposedly captured in Bosnia whom NATO promised to parade before the media who were never produced; the story of the Pristina soccer stadium supposedly turned into a "concentration camp" for up to 100,000 ethnic Albanians but which in fact stands empty; the overinflated refugee counts, "reports" of systematic rape and mass destruction, even "genocide" by Serbian forces — all without the slightest evidence.

While maintaining a blackout on hard information about NATO's Balkans carnage, the imperialists have now begun bombing television stations, killing at least 18 people in one Belgrade attack alone. Spelling out the purpose of these attacks, the *New York Times* (23 April) reported: "State television has been the main source of immediate news and film footage for Western television correspondents."

Had it not been for the Serbian media and a handful of Western reporters stationed in Kosovo, one of the biggest atrocities perpetrated by the NATO imperialists would not even have come to light. On 14 April, NATO bombers pounded two convoys of Kosovo Albanian refugees on the road between Djakovica and Prizren, killing 82 people who were fleeing by tractor, van, cart and on foot. For the next six days, NATO spokesmen wriggled, squirmed and lied outright about this blood-bath of the Albanians whom they are allegedly there to protect.

When confronted with the story that morning, NATO Supreme Commander Wesley Clark, an American general, claimed to have "very strong evidence" that the Serbs had perpetrated the slaughter in retaliation for a NATO strike on "military" targets. Later that day, bow-tied Pentagon mouthpiece Kenneth Bacon claimed that NATO had "only hit military vehicles" and cited refugee accounts to United Nations officials that they had been

New Labour: party of imperialist war



Simon Price

Imperialist war chieftain Tony Blair. New Labour government rains bombs on Serbian population; residential neighbourhood in Aleksinac reduced to rubble.



AP

bombed by Serbian planes — a claim denied by the UN officials themselves. And Clark's assertion of "evidence" was revealed to be a total fabrication.

Only after a Reuters reporter filmed the body-strewn site did NATO spokesmen start making noises about a "tragic accident". NATO spokesmen cynically accused the Serbian military of using Albanian refugees as "human shields" and moaned about how difficult it was for pilots to distinguish between farm tractors

and military vehicles from 15,000 feet up. They produced an audiotape of a US F-16 pilot supposedly agonising over whether to bomb what he "mistakenly" thought to be a Serb "ethnic cleansing" operation — a tape which later turned out to involve an unrelated incident.

Finally, slimy Labourite NATO press agent "Jamie" Shea opened his 19 April daily "briefing" by exclaiming, "You want the facts, today you are going to get them." The highlight of this "damage

control" exercise was a flight-suited US Air Force general moaning about a "very complicated scenario". The "complication" was that the facts had already come out in numerous news accounts. NATO planes had dropped a total of *nine 500-pound laser-guided bombs* on the refugee convoys at three different sites over a 12-mile stretch of road and at a fourth site eight miles to the west, even though a British Harrier pilot had made it clear that the convoy contained civilian vehicles.

In an article in the *Independent* (17 April), correspondent Robert Fisk wrote: "Mr Shea — or 'Jamie' as he enjoins us to call him — says he is still trying to find out what happened.... Well perhaps I can help Jamie." Having visited three of the four sites along the convoy route bombed by NATO warplanes, Fisk described the "highway of death between Prizren and Djakovica", the dismembered bodies of men, women and children there and the bomb and missile fragments with American markings on them.

American correspondent Paul Watson, who likewise toured three of the sites, wrote in the *Los Angeles Times* (16 April): "None of the survivors interviewed confirmed NATO's claim that military vehicles were trying to hide in their long convoy." As for the purported mistakes made in bombing from an altitude of 15,000 feet, Watson reported: "The Kosovo Albanian survivors tell of jets diving, circling and then bombing again as tractors and horses pulling wagonloads of terrified refugees tried to escape." One survivor recalled, "They were coming very low and dived down." In the *Independent*, Fisk confirmed "evidence of strafing as well as aerial bombing".

For days after the bombing, every sort of lie was piled on to deflect attention from the ever more obvious fact that NATO bombs had blown away dozens of Albanian refugees in cold blood. On 16 April, the *New York Times* ran a diversion headlined "U.S. Officials Suspect Deadly Chemical Weapons in Yugoslav Army Arsenal", which went on to say that there is "no evidence that the Yugoslav army or the Serbian forces had used or were planning to use lethal chemical agents". Then State Department yuppie James Rubin announced that they had "developed [!] new evidence" of mass killings by Serb forces. NATO spokesmen dutifully produced high-altitude photos of mass graves which, they claimed, the Muslim Albanian victims themselves had been forced to dig — as evidenced by the fact that the graves supposedly pointed towards Mecca!

The truth is NATO has been bombing civilians, including many Albanians, since the war began. When two video-guided NATO missiles crashed into a Serbian passenger train crossing a bridge two days before the bombing of the refugee convoy, US general Clark described it as an "uncanny accident". Yet the pilot launched a *second* missile against the train after seeing that he had hit it once! This attack, too, was then buried in the Western press under a numbing stream of

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